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ATG Report: 21st Annual Charleston Conference-Issues in Book and Serial Acquisition: The Trends They Are A'Changing

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publishers and libraries. All that's missing is the technology to host content (including support for searching), manage rights in a library environment, and to deliver eBook content.

Baker & Taylor has been experimenting with eBook hosting for more than a year now, designing a product known as "ed," very short for "eContent delivery." During **ALA** in July 2000, **B&T** demonstrated a version of "ed" that delivered eBook content via a Web-based reader. They worked first with **Digital Owl**, and subsequently with **Reciprocal**, to design an infrastructure that made content both secure and shareable. With **Reciprocal's** demise in November 2001, **B&T** decided to take what it learned and write its own hosting and transaction software. They project that "ed" will be available in the first quarter of 2002.

"ed," when he arrives, may represent an important milestone in eBook distribution to libraries. For the first time, a traditional book distributor is attempting to reinvent itself as a digital warehouse and distributor—i.e., moving digital objects from publishers to libraries. **B&T** and its subsidiary **YBP** are both companies that understand the needs of libraries—including what content is most important, the coordinated selection of print and electronic editions, and the types of controlled sharing transactions that characterize libraries.

Because **B&T** has been in the book business for 150 years, it already has well-established relationships with publishers. Unlike **netLibrary** in its early days, **B&T** does not need to explain who they are. Because they sell so much content in other formats, publishers may be receptive to the idea that **B&T** can sell digital content—provided that the rights are secured, and that the formats are standard.

Both conditions appear to be met. **B&T** says it will accept files from publishers in the standard Open eBook format—making it cost-effective for publishers to provide them. However, **B&T** will also contract with **Texterity** to add some proprietary tags, and convert the XML-based Open eBook files to PDF. These conversions will mean that "ed" can offer two different reading experiences: online, using a browser-based reader that **B&T** will design, and offline, using **Adobe Acrobat eBook Reader**. To our knowledge, the latter format will make PC-based eBooks available to libraries for the first time, a significant development.

How is the content controlled? "ed" is intended as an enabling tool for libraries. When a library adopts the service, the eBook site will feature the library's name and logo, with only a small notation that the site is "powered by ed." (Maybe that's why his name is in lower case—ed is humble?) An administrative module will allow the library to set loan periods based on patron type, or other criteria. When the loan period expires, the content becomes garbled in the online reader, and "times out" in the **Adobe** reader.

Like **netLibrary**, "ed" will use the "one eBook, one user" approach that makes publishers comfortable. According to **Pamela Smith**, Chief Marketing Officer, "The users will have an ability to print or copy, however, there will be limitations in order to insure copyrights." As for the novel "timed access" feature, it is part of both the "ed" and **Adobe** software, and is similar to the methodology announced by **Rosetta/Reciprocal** earlier this summer.

"ed" plans to emphasize frontlist content, and its initial offering will include 5-10,000 titles, all with 2001-2002 imprints. Although participating publishers cannot yet be named, Reference, Technology, Travel, and Cookbooks will be well represented, with plans to expand as quickly as the market warrants.

Perhaps most importantly, **B&T** plans to provide eBooks not only to its library customers, but to other wholesalers. Like **netLibrary**, they'll produce new title records that other vendors can import into their own title databases. This will allow other vendors to assist with content identification and order/payment transactions, with **B&T** handling rights management and content delivery. In short, they intend to become another eBook aggregator. For eBook titles sold to their own library customers, they'll discharge all functions. For

titles sold through other vendors, they'll activate and manage them, sharing the margin with the ordering vendor.

For now, there is no title overlap between **netLibrary** and "ed" so **B&T**, like other vendors, will sell eBooks from both hosts. But **netLibrary** has increasingly moved toward frontlist, and publishers, once a title is converted, will want it available through every channel. Over time, these two will differentiate or compete!

In Conclusion:

It's clear that eBooks for libraries is still in the early stages of development. Expanded delivery options, including more PC-based content, eBooks on PDAs, and on dedicated eBook devices remain to be addressed. But we can already see that traditional book vendors will continue to play an important role in eBook distribution. Whether eBook content is ultimately obtained from **netLibrary**, **ebrary**, the incipient "ed," a new host, or from publishers themselves, library booksellers continue to "add value to the acquisitions process" by serving as a kind of content portal to libraries. But there are other intermediaries who may also see themselves in that role, and we'll address some of them in the sequel, as we continue to seek "the host with the most." 🐼

ATG Report: 21st Annual Charleston Conference

Issues in Book and Serial Acquisition: The Trends They Are A'Changing

by **Michael Young** (Head of Acquisitions Services, University Libraries, State University of New York at Albany) <youngm@albany.edu>

The 2001 Charleston Conference further consolidated Charleston's position as the most intelligent, provocative and useful of library conferences. This year's theme was "The Trends They Are A'Changing," which unfolded as an extended examination and discussion of the new and volatile ways of building and acquiring library collections, and of the emerging criteria for selection (or lack thereof), to which user demand for full-text online access has given rise.

One radical response to the dilemma of rising costs, shrinking budgets and staffs and increasing user demand for unprecedented breadth of access is the **OhioLINK** consortium. **OhioLINK's** Executive Director, **Tom Sanville**, gave the Thursday Keynote address, "The Rules of the Game Have Got to Change." With the goal of obtaining "economically sustainable increased access to information as a consortium," **OhioLINK** negotiates state-wide

"Big Deals" for electronic resources and consolidates rapid access to print materials for all users throughout the state. **Sanville** juxtaposed the Old Rules, based upon the individual library as a discreet economic unit limited to print formats and marked by rationing of physical and economic resources, with the New Rules. These rules recognize a group, in this case the entire state of Ohio, as an economic unit of purchase and use, and promote a mentality of evolving and expanding use via electronic information resources, in contrast to the rationed use of print resources under the "Old Rules." **OhioLINK** is

able, through multi-year collective licenses, to purchase a much greater number of electronic titles than individual libraries could ever purchase in print, and to provide access to all titles purchased to all users in the state. Implicit in **Sanville's** keynote was the necessity for adop-

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tion of **OhioLINK**'s user-driven selection for the long term by other large groups of libraries if those libraries are to remain vital and satisfy their users' demands. Although **OhioLINK** has yet to perform any outcome assessments of its usage statistics, **Sanville** acknowledges the need for such assessments. Outcome assessments were mentioned frequently throughout the conference, with no clear delineation of how to achieve them ever being put forward.

The specter of **OhioLINK** loomed large in what was probably the high point of this year's conference, a Point/Counterpoint Discussion between **David Kohl** and **Ken Frazier** on Mass Purchase vs. Selection. **Kohl**, Dean of the **University of Cincinnati Libraries**, began by contrasting the very limited access to relevant journals that libraries provided in the print-only era with the vastly expanded access provided by **OhioLINK**'s "Big Deals." According to **Kohl**, these deals cost a little more and get a lot more for users; they can be negotiated to reduce inflation rates and result in reduced per-title cost. Besides limiting inflation, they can result in savings from canceled print subscriptions. **OhioLINK** usage statistics indicate that titles newly available through big deals were more heavily used than electronic versions of titles which had been selected in print. **Kohl** insists that the familiar, traditional model of collecting is too timid, that collections should be built with a broad brush, not slowly, title by title. The goal should be great and rapid expansion of access, which, in the case of **OhioLINK**, has resulted in a huge increase of use of both print and electronic resources.

Ken Frazier, Director of Libraries at the **University of Wisconsin, Madison**, offered an opposing view and interpretation, in which he claimed that libraries are "Hostages of the Big Deal." **Frazier** argued that, with big deals like **OhioLINK**'s, we join forces with our captors by defending costs that exceed budget growth, by cutting back on low-cost, high-use content, by accepting onerous license terms, by giving up responsibility for collection management and by trading diverse print collections for a uniform digital database. **Frazier** challenged the assertion that use increases as the number of accessible titles grows. He cited the **New England Research Libraries** consortium usage data for the **International Digital Electronic Access Library**, where there were significant differences in use patterns among the consortium's 25 libraries for the 173 current and 30 archival titles, with no library using all the titles and two thirds of the titles accounting for virtually all of the use. The need for selective licenses is apparent from such data, although publishers have been reluctant to grant such licenses. **Frazier** reminded us that many publishers offer superb quality at low prices—archival quality reference books for 25 cents per page, while the

cost of the most expensive scientific journals ranges from \$.83 to \$4.46 per page. He cautioned that many students do not know how to find articles and are choking on the array of databases we provide, and that graduate students do not know how to use the primary literatures of their disciplines. **Frazier** urged librarians to publish usage statistics, to reward quality non-profit publishers and to support new models for scholarly communication.

A revealing discrepancy between **Frazier**'s spoken words and his **Power Point** slide cut to the heart one of our profession's central dilemmas: his slide directed librarians to gain a better understanding of what users *need*, but his voice told us to understand better what users *want*. The question inevitably arises: are we colluding in the diminution of an already seriously shrunken knowledge base (outside of the quantitative sciences) by striving to provide full-text online resources at the expense of other formats? As a service profession, is it any of our concern that what users *want* is not always what they *need* most in their research or course work?

Fugal variations and embellishments upon all of these themes permeated the other sessions of the Conference. **Mary Reichel**, University Librarian at **Appalachian State University** and current President of **ACRL**, gave Friday's Keynote address on "The Future of Scholarly Publishing," and argued that we are quickly reaching the time when print on paper will not be adequate to capture the richness of current scholarship. This prediction was qualified somewhat by the session called "The Monograph is Dead," presented by **John McDonald** of **CalTech**. **McDonald** compiled data on publication types authored by and cited by the Social Sciences and Humanities faculty at **CalTech** to determine whether there was any significant diminution in the frequency of book citation in their publications. In a compelling presentation, **McDonald** showed that the rate at which this faculty cites books has remained stable over time (1994-2000). One wonders whether the Humanities, within living memory the very centerpiece of a liberal arts education, risk being marginalized and eviscerated by the rush to exclusive use of fulltext online resources. With so much of their essential literature available only in print, can serious study of the Humanities survive in a student population unwilling to use sources that are not fulltext online?

These sessions stimulated rumination upon the future of print serials in academic libraries and of the traditional labor intensive procedures of serials acquisitions. **Penn State's Robert Alan**'s concurrent session on "Migration of Serials Data" reminded us how fraught with problems are the migrations and upgrades to ever more sophisticated Integrated Library Systems, particularly for print serials. New systems require compliance with **NISO** standards, and migration of non-compliant data that predates these standards may result in a loss of "re-

ceiving" history and much else. Can we justify the maintenance of elaborate and labor-intensive serials data for print journals that are used less and less? **Rick Anderson** and **Steve Zink** of the **University of Nevada Reno** said "NO!" in a bracing concurrent session entitled "How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Give Up Serials Check-In." **Anderson** and **Zink** found that, with 16,000 journal subscriptions of which only 3,000 titles were print, most of their serials staff time was devoted to maintaining 20% of their collection. Recognizing that users want online journals, **Anderson** and **Zink** decided to deploy more of their staff time on maintaining access to formats for which there was the greatest demand, rather than on time-consuming traditional check-in of print journals. They still check in and claim high cost and high use journals, and they still bind graphics intensive journals, storing the rest in pamphlet boxes in the stacks. As the need increases for the restructuring of work in Acquisitions and Collection Development, it appears that practical sessions like **Anderson's** and **Zink's** will become increasingly *de rigueur* at future **Charleston Conferences**.

The emerging role of the **OPAC** in meeting the burgeoning demand for fulltext online was glimpsed in the concurrent session "Unlocking the Potential of Your Electronic Collection through Linking," presented by **Oliver Pesch** of **EBSCO**, **Chris Pierard** of **Serials Solutions** and **Jenny Walker** of **Ex Libris**. Lack of consistency in interfaces and fragility of some links continue to be obstacles to seamless cross linking between citation databases, fulltext articles and citations. Some libraries have begun the use of context-sensitive linking (SFX) with promising results that suggest a rejuvenation of the **OPAC** as the hub of cross-linking. Such a rejuvenation could counteract the tendency of some users to shun the **OPAC** in favor of Library Web Sites as primary points of access to electronic journals, and provide users with the added value of alternate titles and subject headings, both of which are lacking in the frustratingly literal databases that link to e-journals on Library Web Sites.

Time and space limitations preclude doing justice to the many other excellent sessions at Charleston this year. Brief mention can be made of two lyrical interludes: **Nicholas Basbanes'** explications of the making of both his books on **Bibliomania** and **David Levy's** poetic meditation on the role of documents in our lives. A rump session on Copyright with **Bruce Strauch** of the Citadel examined the consequences of the **Tasini** decision for libraries, in particular the withdrawal of free-lance articles from aggregator databases. The uncertainties and unresolved problems surrounding the archiving of digital information, and the modest progress that has been made in this area, were the subjects of a session entitled,

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Adventures in Librarianship — Not Very Smart

by **Ned Kraft** (Serials Librarian, Ralph J. Bunche Library, U.S. Department of State) <kraftno@state.gov>

For most of my life I've wished I were smarter. When other boys were crafting models of B-29s and battleships, I was trying to stare down the neighbor's cat. When my friends were obsessed with learning the constellations and spotting meteorites, I was enumerating the many ways one could kill a vampire (I came up with seven, but because I'm not very smart, I didn't write them down, so they are forever lost). When homework time came around and the neighborhood grew quiet, I wandered through the back yards kicking the heads off dandelions. Study didn't suit me.

In college, when the topic of conversation turned to Immanuel Kant, I couldn't. I learned to nod my head knowingly, rub my chin, and squint as if trying to untwist the complexities of pure reason, all the while wondering whether the cafeteria might be serving fish sticks for lunch.

But all adults grow to know their strengths and weaknesses. We learn to build on our strengths (mine are small talk, and an almost encyclopedic knowledge of local brew-pubs) and turn our weaknesses, wherever possible, into assets. For me, ignorance has become my premier negotiating device. Let's say Vendor X calls and wonders if we'd like to order the new edition of the International Directory of Hokum.

"Hmm, the IDH," I respond, "can't say as I've ever heard of it."

"Well," Vendor X insists, "we see that your library bought the 1999 edition and we just thought..."

"Couldn't a' been us," I tell him. "There's not much call for Hokum here."

Vendor X is desperate at this point. He recites the shipping address, billing address, account number, and the contact name on file

and asks if they are correct. I wait a few moments, then respond with "Hello?"

"Yes, I'm still here. Is that information correct?"

"I thought maybe you were talkin' to someone else."

"So that information is NOT correct?"

"Which information is that?"

Vendor X and I go around this way for a few more minutes until I hear his voice begin to tremble and I know that both of us will be just as happy if the line inexplicably went dead. Though playing the ignorance card is not the quickest way out of a sales call, I do find that investing the time now will reduce the number of future calls significantly.

Yes, I wish I were smarter. As I age I wait patiently for the wisdom they say will come. I imagine that certainly the sheer accumulation of experience, the insight gained from time's perspective will put me in the know. Someday I'll be able to name Beethoven symphonies, rather than recite

the lyrics from television theme songs. Someday I'll know the best years for California cabernets, not just the best bus line to downtown. But in the meantime, one must use one's lack of talent to the best of one's ability.

"Mr. Kraft, Emma Johnson here from Vendor Y."

"Why?"

"Uh, yes, Vendor Y. Listen, I'm going to be in town next Thursday and I was hoping to come by to meet with you."

"Why?"

"Well, just to discuss business, make sure all is well."

"I'm fine. And you?"

"I'm fine, too, Mr. Kraft. Just hoping your calendar was free and..."

"Oh yes. My calendar was free. I picked it up at ALA from Vendor Y."

"That would be us, Mr. Kraft."

"You and me?"

I still hold out hope that my mind will ripen with time. Perhaps someday *New Yorker* cartoons will make sense to me. Maybe I'll reach that mental pinnacle where one can intuit the source of system error messages and not just attribute them to goblins and such. One day, with any luck, I'll understand the difference between "capitol" and "capital." Until then I must use what I lack as well as I can.

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"Electronic Archiving: The Mellon Grants," presented by **Ivy Anderson** of **Harvard**, **Craig Van Dyck** of **Wiley** and **Victoria Reich** of **Stanford** and the **LOCKSS** project.

The **Charleston Conference** heightens our awareness that Acquisitions and Collection Development librarians are, *nolens volens*, making decisions that will shape the future of Higher Learning and the Sociology of Knowledge in hitherto undreamed of ways—an exciting and terrifying prospect!

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