December 2004

Bet You Missed It -- Press Clippings -- In the News -- Carefully Selected by Your Crack Team of News Sleuths

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Recommended Citation

Rose, Pamela M. M.L.S. (2004) "Bet You Missed It -- Press Clippings -- In the News -- Carefully Selected by Your Crack Team of News Sleuths," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 16: Iss. 6, Article 30.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.4457>

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long-ago seen his best days. He will be very old and his body will be racked with arthritis and cancer. His kidneys and liver may be failing and he will look up at you through cloudy eyes and you will know that it is time to let him go.

The **BISAC** fixed format is like that dog. The **BISAC** fixed field format was created in the 1970's. The various records have an 80-column limitation because it was created for use with punch cards. **BISG** stopped supporting this format in 1995, yet it has lived on. The **BISAC** format is the primary method of electronic ordering in the retail book industry and is still used by many integrated library systems. The complexity of migrating to a 13-digit world is clearly beyond the capabilities of the **BISAC** format. **BISG** will not release any updates to the **BISAC** fixed field format standard to accommodate ISBN-13. He has been a faithful companion and served us well for many years, but it is time to let Old Shep go to his reward.

This point cannot be overemphasized: If you currently transmit **EDI** orders in the **BISAC** fixed field format, you will need to migrate to **X12**, **EDIFACT** or **XML**.

There are a number of steps that libraries need to undertake in order to ensure a smooth pain-free migration to ISBN-13 ordering.

1. Inventory all applications used in the selection and acquisition process. Don't forget about seldom-used but still active tools. For instance, one library I recently worked with used an old DOS ordering program for one specific purpose that occurred just once a year.

2. Talk to the vendors that supply those products (or internal IT staff for home-grown applications). Find out their plans and timetable for migrating those programs and processes to ISBN-13 compliance. Expect that older products will not be upgraded. Understand your ILS and book vendor's plans for ISBN-13 compliance. Don't be surprised if software needs to be upgraded or ILS add-ons need to be purchased. Discovering this now will facilitate an orderly budget and planning process.
3. Find substitutes for soon-to-be obsolete products. Plan your migration to **X12** or **EDIFACT** if you currently use the **BISAC** format for transmitting orders. Budget and plan accordingly.
4. Document the steps needed to get your entire acquisitions process ISBN-13 compliant. Monitor your vendors' progress. Install and test new software.

Just as Y2K was inevitable, so is the change from ISBN-10 to ISBN-13. The ISBN's evolution will impact every library's selection and acquisitions processes. Those still using older technologies will be forced to find newer solutions and adopt new processes while other libraries will escape with a minimum of change and disruption. Regardless of your situation, beginning the process now will ensure that it can be managed and accomplished with time to spare. Or, you can ignore it and pray the metaphorical lights stay on anyway. I just wouldn't bet the bank account on it.

In addition to his duties at **Baker & Taylor**, **Eric Thronson** is Chair of the Internet Commerce Committee of the **Book Industry Study Group**. As noted, this committee is setting the standards for **EDI** use in the book industry.

The **PVLR (Publisher/Vendor Library Relations)** group of **ALA/ALCTS** will be hosting an **Open Forum on ISBN-13** at Midwinter in Boston. It is scheduled for Monday, January 17, 9:30-11:00 A.M. **Eric** is among the panelists scheduled to speak.

Endnotes

1. Note that there is no mandate that 12-digit UPC codes be replaced by 13-digit codes and some manufacturers may opt to continue using 12-digit UPC's ad infinitum. However, the Sunrise 2005 initiative from the Uniform Code Council urged general retailers to become able to scan 13-digit numbers. It appears that there will be a very high level of compliance. With this hurdle removed, the author expects manufacturers to begin to adopt the EAN.UCC-13 as their standard product identifier.
2. You may have noticed that our Bookland athletes did not fare well in the Athens Olympics. This was no doubt because they were sitting in the shade of an olive tree, engrossed in a good book and missed the starting times of their events.
3. It should be noted that there is also a 14-digit number that is an extension of the 13-digit number already discussed. The 14th digit denotes packaging level such as carton, pallet or truckload. For the sake of clarity, it is not being discussed here. More information can be found on the **BISG** website (www.bisg.org).

Bet You Missed It

Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths

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Column Editor's Note: Hey, are you reading this? Your esteemed column editor would like to know what you think! Zip off a quick email to <pmrose@buffalo.edu>. Does **BYMI** fill your needs? Do you have any suggestions for changes? I'm listening! — **PR**

SHOCK VALUE

by **Sandra Beehler** (Lewis & Clark College)

In July, 2004, 50,000 Quebecois turned out to protest what they saw as a strike at free speech — a notice from the **Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)** that it would not renew the license of a popular "shock" radio station in Quebec City when it expired at the end of July. The station carries programming offensive to women, foreigners and the mentally ill, and many others. The problem is that the **CRTC** only has power to admonish or withdraw licenses from stations. Many believe that the **Commission's** powers should be extended to enable it to impose fines appropriate to the levels of offense. Further discussion awaits the return of the federal Parliament in October.

See — "The Purge of the Shock Jocks," *Economist*, Aug 7, 2004, p. 30-32.

ENGLISH FOR EU

by **Sandra Beehler** (Lewis & Clark College)

As Latin, German and Russian before it, English is now poised to become the language of choice for business and government within the European Union. English is now the most-studied language in secondary schools throughout Europe. Another factor in the choice of English is the demands of foreign investors, whose international working language tends to be English. The dominance of English is likely to have most impact on institutions of the EU and on European integration. Among the three main working languages of the EU, English is winning the battle over French, with German a distant third. As use of English spreads, it will serve to lower language barriers that have slowed the process of integration.

See — "After Babel, a New Common Tongue," *Economist*, Aug. 7, 2004, p. 41-42.

OPEN ACCESS OPENING MORE DOORS

by Sandra Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

Scientific progress depends on the speedy and open publishing of discoveries, which has been accomplished largely through printed journals. Scientific, technological and medical (STM) publishing is a huge empire of over 2,000 firms publishing 1.2 articles per year in 16,000+ journals. The importance of publishing articles in prestigious journals is deeply embedded in educational institutions. As the journals usually claim copyright on articles they publish, a virtual monopoly on scientific information has developed — one which has become more and more expensive to acquire over the past 20 years. Both universities and governments are stepping up to call for a new approach — allowing open access to scholarly publication. Initiatives in Britain, Europe and the U.S. aim to require open online access to research funded by governments and universities. In response to these concerns, many new online journals ask authors to pay the cost of publishing (thus transferring cost to another part of the university/government — editor's comment). Another proposal has been put forth to put a 6-month time limit on the exclusivity of information in STM journals. Currently, open access literature is less than 1% of publication, but that could change swiftly if governments require open access to results of research they fund.

See — "Access all Areas," *Economist*, Aug. 7, 2004, p.64-65.

VOYNICH VERIFIER

by Sandra Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

The Voynich manuscript is a 400-yr-old coded text that has defied cryptographers since its discovery in 1912. Now a British professor, **Gordon Rugg** — using his self-invented "verifier approach" — has persuasively argued that the text is actually a hoax. **Rugg**, a psychologist, drew on psychological tools to develop his approach, which poses a seven-step method of observation to verify the methods used by science. Looking critically at the way human beings think, conduct research and develop expertise, he attempts to identify areas of human error in the scientific process and outline gaps in knowledge or expertise. By applying the verifier method, he hopes to suggest new avenues for research into thorny problems — such as Alzheimer's — that have long stumped scientists.

See — "Scientific Method Man," *Wired* 12.09, Sept. 2004, p. 112-121.

OURSOURCING THE OUTSOURCING

by Sandra Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

Complaints about companies outsourcing work to low-wage economies overshadows the fact that those same companies are often outsourcing work to their own customers. Many customers welcome the chance to self-serve instead of standing in line to be served (airport checkin is a great example), but this option has its drawbacks: phone systems often don't allow one to reach a human operator (worse, they can send you into loops or hang up on you); often charges are higher or services cost more when you do need human intervention; and self-service does not always save customers time. Companies do well to remember that self-service must be well planned, well supported and flexible.

See — "Do it Yourself," *Economist*, Sept. 18, 2004, p. 16.

TO REPORT OR NOT TO REPORT?

by Sandra Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

Negative clinical-trial results often go unreported, particularly when they are sponsored by the pharmaceutical industry. Two recent developments — a legal settlement re: unreported results of tests on an anti-depressant and an announcement from the **Int'l Comm. of Medical Journal Editors** that they would only publish results of trials registered in independent databases — may change that practice. The industry claims that forcing them to report all results will mean fewer trials of new drugs; proponents of reporting all results argue that it will only effect "seeding trials" (trials of drugs already approved for one use), which are in effect a marketing ploy. Legislation is currently being proposed in both House & Senate of the U.S. to require posting of trial data and results in a central database.

See — "The Sounds of Silence," *Economist*, Sept 11, 2004, p. 75-76.

WHERE DOES YOUR DATA GO?

by Sandra Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

Outrage about outsourcing financial services to India and other countries has extended to concern about privacy and security of the data handled by firms in these countries. Complaints have been lodged with **Lloyds Bank** in Britain and legislation posing limits to outsourcing is winding its way through the U.S. Congress. The Indian industry claims its security is better than any in Europe or the U.S., and, indeed, very few incidents of fraud or identity theft have surfaced. All in all, security is probably no bigger issue than it is at home, but convincing customers of that may take time.

See — "Safety Matters," *Economist*, Sept. 4, 2004, p. 70-71.

THE BATTLE FOR BRAINS

by Sandra Beehler
(Lewis & Clark College)

A recent survey of the world's universities revealed a sad state of affairs among European universities. Top professors have long migrated to the U.S., where salaries and research funding are much better. The U.S. spends 2.7% of GDP on universities, compared to 1.1% in Britain and 1% in Germany. European universities' sole reliance on state funding and often state control of admission policies, along with a free ride for students has contributed to the problem. In response to this problem, some countries are trying to change state policies and institute tuition payment. One point for hope is that, since 9/11, the number of international students applying to U.S. schools has dropped drastically, as the U.S. government has made it more difficult for them to get visas. Meanwhile foreign student populations in Europe have risen accordingly. This phenomenon may be shortlived, however, since American universities are asking for a more relaxed policy toward international students.

See — "Charlemagne: Battling for Brains: the parlous state of European universities," *Economist*, Sept 25, 2004, p. 68.

LOCKSS

YES...

all APS

journals are in

LOCKSS

15 Journals of the American Physiological Society

www.the-aps.org

SHARED MEMORIES

by Sandra Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

Anyone who's tried to identify family photos discovered in an old shoebox recognizes that data attached to such objects is important. Burgeoning numbers of digital photographs pose even bigger problems of identification — and some unique ways of providing metadata about the photos are emerging. Commercial firms can afford to hire a cataloger to provide that data; the rest of us may be able to take advantage of new products being developed to help with this task. Digital cameras already tag photos with date and time; global positioning systems may soon be built in. Data-mining, scene & facial recognition, and usage tracking are other tasks that a computer may soon be able to handle. But the key to photo management may lie in making the pictures public — thus taking advantage of the shared memories of all those who view them — one of whom just might be able to say "that's Uncle Seamus."

See — "Point. Shoot. Kiss it Good-Bye," *Wired* 12.10 (Oct 2004), p. 148-152.

GENETICS FOR ALL

by Pamela M. Rose (University at Buffalo)

Could terrorists use gene sequence data to engineer new bioweapons? A **National Research Council** report concludes that the possibility of bioterrorism should not stop scientists from freely sharing genome data, noting that the genomes of many dangerous pathogens are already in the public domain, and that it is unlikely that such data would help bioterrorists.

See — "Report Upholds Public Access to Genetic Codes" by David Malakoff, *Science*, Sept. 17, 2004, p.1693.

ACCESS, AGAIN!

by Pamela M. Rose (University at Buffalo)

Lauded by librarians and opposed by commercial publishers, **NIH** has drafted a policy requiring grantees to deposit copies of their papers in **PubMed Central** once accepted by a journal. Manuscripts would be posted online six months after publication. The move is intended to increase public access to the results of **NIH**-funded research, but some scientific societies believe it could pose significant risk, and one society calls the plan "an unnecessary expenditure of federal funds for a redundant repository."

See — "NIH Proposes 6-Month Public Access to Papers" by Jocelyn Kaiser, *Science*, Sept. 20, 2004, p.1548.

GDP GYRATIONS

by Sandra Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

Economists are becoming alarmed about the effect of the falling dollar on the world economy. The enormous US trade deficit (currently 6% of GDP (gross domestic product)) must be brought down and a cheaper dollar is one way to accomplish this. Predictions are that the dollar will fall by 20% - 40% in the near future — the question is how fast it will go down and what effect it will have on the world economy. Unfortunately, economic conditions today parallel those in the mid-1970's when the dollar's collapse had severe consequences. Most US debt is held by foreigners, and a drop in the dollar's value reduces the value of their assets. Economist **Paul Volcker** thinks there is a 75% chance of a US currency crisis within five years.

See — "Economics Focus: Checking the Depth Gauge," *The Economist*, Nov. 13, 2004, p. 84.

PECUNIARY PAIN

by Sandra Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

Most economists agree that the US dollar must fall further in value in order to correct the enormous trade deficit. That the dollar has not fallen further and faster is due to Asian countries propping it up in order to avoid inflation in their own economies. Many factors: the inadequacy of personal savings in the US, the rising cost of oil, the trade deficit, and current US economic policies, not to mention the open-ended cost of waging the Iraqi war, indicate that a further fall in the dollar's value will be painful both to the US and to the world economy.

See — "The Wolf at the Door," *The Economist*, Oct. 30, 2004, p. 75-76.

MUSIC TO MY POCKET

by Sandra Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

Most agree that downloading of digitized music files is the wave of the future, but the largest music production companies have been holding back. In order to take advantage of downloading revenue they must rethink business models that have served them profitably for decades. Internet distribution also levels the playing field between large companies and independents. The drop in music sales is not all attributable to Internet file-sharing; other factors include a perceived lack of quality music, CD piracy, competition from other media (video) and less retail space devoted to music products. Major producers have pursued short-term profits at the expense of quality — digital music capability should re-open the market to independent and small-scale production. Meanwhile, no one is quite sure yet how to maximize profits from online sales and major producers are proceeding cautiously in that direction.

See — "Music's Brighter Future," *The Economist*, Oct. 30, 2004, p. 71-73.

CHAOS — The SICI Emerges, Cicada-Like, After Eight Years of Dormancy

by Ted Koppel (Senior Product Manager, Standards Implementation, The Library Corporation)
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Column Editor's Note: Sometimes standards take time to come into their own. As Ted Koppel explains the SICI — the Serial Item and Contribution Identifier — is enjoying a renaissance, a reflection of the forward thinking that went into this standard's development. — PH

Eight years ago, a revised version of the **Z39.56** standard (*Serial Item and Contribution Identifier*, colloquially known as the **SICI**), was approved by NISO's voting members. First released in 1991 the **SICI** proved to be versatile, extensible, functional, and designed for interoperability and was immediately adopted by the then nascent document delivery industry (**CARL Corporation's UnCover** and **Faxon's**

continued on page 89