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

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much more than simply providing a mailing address: access models, purchase models, archival rights, backfile access, registration/subscription ID numbers and more must be considered. The agent serves as a clearinghouse for this information. Agents can assist with registration and activation of titles, link management, publisher format changes and much more.

For e-journal packages, libraries spend an immense amount of time reconciling title lists with publishers, verifying invoices when they are received (often late in the year), tracking titles that move in and out of packages, and more. Have you asked your agent for help? An agent's order history records and relationships with publishers put us in a unique position to handle these tasks in an automated way on a large scale.

A complete list of agent e-journal services will not fit in this space — and while many already exist, many are in development and will change as the environment changes. From EBSCO's perspective, one thing is certain: providing superior customer service will always be a driving force behind all we do, and this now includes helping our customers manage e-journals efficiently. Indeed, im-

proving existing and developing new services, systems and products to assist librarians in the management of e-resources is our company's number one priority.

We all understand the need to save money. But by ordering directly from the publisher, will the money you might save in service charges be worth the service you are losing? Agents can and want to provide service for e-journals. Librarians should be sure to engage in discussion with their agent about services that can be provided prior to making direct-purchase decisions.

Direct purchasing also has an effect on the balance of the library's business with the agent. An agent's business is high volume but low margin. This margin comes from two sources: publisher discounts and library service charges. A certain level of income from these sources must be reached on every account in order for agents to maintain a viable business. Much of our profit is reinvested in services that benefit our customers. Significantly reduced profit means a compromised level of service.

If a library chooses to order a number of titles direct, and these titles are from STM publishers who have typically offered the agent a reasonable discount while the balance of the list is from publishers who offer insuf-

ficient discount, then the agent must raise the library's service charge in order to continue to service the account. The increase in service charge is not intended to be a vindictive move; it is simply a result of employing sound business practices. A library may initially save money by purchasing journals direct only to find that staff time for managing the direct purchases has increased along with the agent's fee on the remaining titles.

For librarians who are weighing the option of going direct for their electronic journals versus ordering them through an agent, here are a few suggestions. First, call your agent. Talk about e-journal services and determine whether you are taking full advantage of what the agent has to offer. Second, consider total costs and not just the cost of the material. What is it going to cost you in employee time to handle the e-journals that are ordered direct? Are there other tasks on which their time might be better spent? Will it cost you more for the agent to handle the balance of the subscription list if you order these titles direct? While some libraries do purchase direct, many have determined that the value an agent brings to the process of purchasing and managing e-journals and e-journal packages is something they don't want to do without.

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**

FEASIBLE FILTERING

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

Collaborative filtering technology today plays a growing role in the choices we make about books, music, film and other purchases. The technology looks for patterns in likes and dislikes and applies those patterns to find and recommend similar items. In order for collaborative filtering to be feasible, it had to overcome two obstacles: scalability (tracking millions of users) and seamlessness (no preference surveys to fill out). Filtering works by gathering information from transactions carried out on the Web. There are two ways to generate recommendations from this information: similarity of interests to other users (user to user) or similarity of items (item to item). Item to item filtering works better in the real world because there is less data to compute. Privacy is one of the issues raised by such collaborative filtering, and researchers are developing ways to protect information about your choices from outside parties. For instance, **TiVo's** filtering system is localized, preserving privacy. Another concern is the possibility of manipulation by those who want to subvert ranking systems for their own profit. Researchers at **Harvard's Kennedy School of Government** have proposed a technique to detect such manipulation. The ultimate limitation of filtering is that users can change their minds and their tastes rather unpredictably — that may prove impossible to control. For the moment, though, filtering helps many people find what they might otherwise miss.

See — "United We Find" — *The Economist*, no. 8417 (March 12, 2005), p. 26-30.

NIH WANTS IT NOW!

by **Pamela M. Rose** (University at Buffalo)

The **NIH** unveiled a policy in early February aimed at making the research it funds more freely available, but the language has authors worried that they'll have to challenge publishers' release dates. Librarians, patient advocates, and scientists who feel journal prices are too high support the plan, but publishers are worried that free access to results so soon after publication could bankrupt them. The final policy states **NIH** will wait up to one year to post the papers, but "strongly encourages" posting asap.

See — "NIH Wants Public Access to Papers 'As Soon As Possible'" by **Jocelyn Kaiser**, *Science*, Feb. 11, 2005, p. 825.

NETMOVIES

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

Later this year **Netflix** — the online movie rental company — will launch a service to download movies thru the Internet. The choices are bound to be limited initially, since studio fears of illegal file-sharing remain strong. **Netflix**, with its huge inventory of available titles — has stood up well to competition from **Wal-Mart** and **Blockbuster**. It is now positioning itself to be a main player when Internet movies become the norm.

See — "Movies to Go," *The Economist*, v.376:no.8434 (July 9, 2005), p. 57.

POWER STRUGGLES IN INDEPENDENT BOOK STORES

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

Barbara Meade and **Carla Cohen** own the **Politics & Prose** bookstore in Washington, D.C., one of those lauded independents that have survived **Borders** and **B & N**. Planning on retirement, they hired ambitious young **Danny Gainsburg** to take over and buy them out.

Wanting the 50 store workers to get used to him, they let **Danny** start at the bottom and work his way up. But his intended succession was kept a secret.

You guessed it. The secret leaked in the hothouse atmosphere where eccentric folks work at salaries way below their education level and jealously guard their subject area fiefdoms. Acrimony and uproar was instantaneous. Staff rebellion forced him out.

See — **Jeffrey A. Trachtenberg**, "Succession Plot At Bookstore Took A Surprise Twist," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 21, 2005, p.A1.

TECHVELOPMENT

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

The **United Nations** has launched an initiative to create rural telecentres to address the inequality in computer access among poorer nations. However, the real problem is lack of more basic commodities — food, safe water, electricity — and the better goal would be to seek ways to use technology to promote development. Mobile phones are already proving to be the medium that promotes development best in underdeveloped countries — they do not require a constant electrical supply and can be used even by illiterate persons. They can be used to reduce costs, broaden trade networks and reduce the need for travel to find work. The real problem then is providing wider access to mobile networks, and the UN would do better to direct its efforts to that end.

See — "The Real Digital Divide" — *The Economist*, no.8417 (March 12, 2005), p. 11.

COPYRIGHT — STILL

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

Media companies were relieved at the **Supreme Court's** decision to hold **P2P** firms responsible for users' copyright infringement if evidence showed they encouraged it. The Court stopped short of holding the firms liable for any copyright infringement — which is what the media companies wanted. The real problem lies in trying to apply current copyright law to digital content — and this is a problem that only legislation can solve. As new technologies make publication and distribution of content easier and cheaper, regulating the length of time during which publishers have a monopoly on content — the original aim of copyright law — makes less sense. Instead of lengthening the copyright period (now up to 95 years in the U.S.), reducing that term is recommended. The original period of 14 years would seem to allow plenty of time for profit-making, while allowing consumers more access to back catalogues.

See — "Rip, Mix, Burn," *The Economist*, v.376:no.8433 (Jul 2, 2005), p. 13-14.

WEB 'R US

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

Even early pioneers of Web thinking did not envision its emergence as a new culture based on sharing and as the nexus of a new way of thinking — part human, part machine. In 1995, before the **Netscape IPO**, the Internet was envisioned as a "bigger tv" with a huge monetary commitment needed to develop content. Early on, commercial use was in fact banned. Then **Netscape** made its **IPO** and the Internet world expanded dramatically. The biggest surprise has been that most of the content is actually generated by Internet users, not corporate or governmental or educational institutions. The Web has become a vast storehouse of knowledge, much of it given away for free. The Web's power to allow participation has turned passive consumers into active producers. By 2015, the Web will be — already is to some extent — the operating system for a worldwide "computer." And there are those who believe it just may be the base from which artificial intelligence arises. It already shares the intelligence of us all and it's always on, always taking in more information. Millions of clicks made by users each minute add connections and cross-references within the Web and from the Web to us. It will become our memory and our identity. The amazing thing is that we are all here watching it happen.

See — "We Are the Web," by **Kevin Kelly**. *Wired* 13.08 (Aug 2005), p. 93-99, 132-133.

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GOOGLE GENESIS

by Sandra Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

The styles of **Larry Page** and **Sergey Brin** clashed when they first met on the **Stanford** campus, but their later research collaboration had a better outcome. **Page** was interested in how Web links worked, and made the intellectual connection between Web linking and bibliometrics: the science of citations. That connection led to investigation of back links in a project **Page** called **BackRub**. As with academic citations, **Page** thought Web links could be ranked according to their importance. The challenge was creating the math to describe that ranking — and that's where **Brin**, a math prodigy, came in. Together **Brin** and **Page** created an algorithm (**PageRank**) that counts those back links, thus establishing the importance of any given Website. At that point they realized that **PageRank** could be adapted as a search tool. Comparing search results to those of existing Web search engines proved the superiority of the **PageRank** system. They set up a machine lab in **Page's** dorm room and a programming center in **Brin's**, begged and borrowed equipment, and used the **Stanford** broadband connection as their way into the Web. Named **Google**, after a mathematical term, their new search engine quickly caught on and now dominates Web searching.

See — “The Birth of Google,” by **John Batelle**. *Wired* 13.08 (Aug 2005), p. 103-110.

OPINING OPEN SOURCE

by Jane H. Tuten (USC Aiken Library)

Written by the founder of **Lotus Development Corp.** and the co-founder of the **Electronic Frontier Foundation**, this short article provides both a great explanation and offers some constructive criticism of the open source software movement. **Kapor** discusses the alternative nature of the open source software model including the decentralized and transparent nature of the software and any changes that might be made. Open source software encourages participation from folks around the world with the only requirement being a willingness to contribute. Anyone can participate and the role is dependent only on the individual skills of the participant. **Kapor** points out that the openness might also be a downside because there are certainly no guarantees that the open source product will provide the needed solution. Risk is involved. Open source projects need the proper technical infrastructure to succeed and a solid community infrastructure that will provide some oversight of the project. Additionally, **Kapor** notes that the open source community must have clear values and principles stipulated which provide oversight for the practices of the community. The academic world needs to become more involved in open source projects because both participants will benefit.

See — “How Is Open Source Special?” in Viewpoints section by **Mitchell Kapor**, *Educause Review* March/April 2005, pp. 72-73.

I Hear the Train A Comin' — PubMed Central

by **Greg Tananbaum** (President, The Berkeley Electronic Press, 2809 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 202, Berkeley, CA 94705; Phone: 510-665-1200 x.117; Fax: 510-665-1201) <greg@bepress.com> www.bepress.com

Welcome to the 1.0 edition of **I Hear the Train A Comin'**. My intention is to spend a few hundred words each month discussing, in an informal way, what's around the bend on the scholarly communications track. I will try to draw some general conclusions — and raise some general questions — by looking at a case study or two each column. Why me? As President of **The Berkeley Electronic Press**, I seem to spend a lot of time these days navigating the treacherous terrains of institutional repositories, alternative journal pricing models, open access publications, and new and emerging forms of scholarly communication. Why now? **Katina Strauch** asked me, and I know better than to refuse **Katina** — “stupendiferous” can become just plain “stupid” with a few strokes of her keyboard. And why “**I Hear the Train A Comin'?**” Beyond serving as an appropriate metaphor for a future intuited but as yet unseen, it serves as the opening line to **Johnny Cash's Folsom Prison Blues**, the coolest song ever recorded.

This month, let's focus on **PubMed Central's** recent efforts to capture publicly funded research in an openly accessible archive. As of early May, 2005, the **US National Institutes of Health** recommended, but do not require,

that all **NIH**-funded investigators submit an electronic version of their peer-reviewed final manuscripts, upon acceptance for publication, to **PubMed Central**. **NIH** asks that authors make these manuscripts available immediately after the final date of journal publication. Authors are given the option to delay the release of their manuscripts at a later time, up to 12 months after the official date of final publication. This policy set off loud debate within the academy, with most of the volume provided by one of two “true believer” camps. One camp argues that the **NIH** is stepping on private enterprise by seeking to make copyrighted materials freely available to the world. By offering a competing, free version of an article, this line follows, the government is on the path to state-run publishing, or even government-controlled science. The other camp believes that the couched language of the pronouncement, including recommendation rather than requirement and a 12 month delay, render it stillborn. Indeed, the original recommendation from **Congress** in the summer of 2004 was rather more stringent in its language. Before either side turns blue from shouting about the impending end of the world, let's step back and talk about some practical elements of the policy.

Researchers wishing to post their papers in **PubMed Central** must go through a number of straightforward steps. First, they log on to the **NIH** manuscript submission system at <http://nihms.nih.gov/>. Next, they follow simple Web instructions to enter basic metadata, as well as specific **NIH**-required information such as the grant number. Files may be uploaded in a number of formats, with images provided separately

in high resolution format. Finally, researchers must indicate the length of the embargo for withholding their papers from the general public. The submission statement through which researchers must click reads as follows:

I hereby submit an electronic version of my final manuscript that is the result of research supported, in whole or in part, with direct costs by the **National Institutes of Health**.

This manuscript has been accepted for publication in [JOURNAL NAME] and includes all modifications resulting from the peer review process. The manuscript contains confidential information and I request that it not be disclosed prior to the time indicated below.

I request that this manuscript be publicly accessible through **PubMed Central** [DELAY PERIOD] after the publisher's official date of final publication and am notifying the publisher of this action.

I understand that this submission is voluntary and provides an alternative means for fulfilling the existing requirement to provide publications as part of **NIH** grant progress reports.

Upon submission, the **National Library of Medicine** converts the data into XML and sends notice back to the submitter to verify this new version. The paper is posted within **PubMed Central** upon confirmation from the submitter that the markup version is acceptable.

That is an executive summary of the submission process. Looking deeper, what clues

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