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I Hear the Train A Comin' -- SPARC

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straightforward. In most cases it is not necessary to have any knowledge of HTML to edit a **wiki** page, as most **wikis** make use of a simpler mark-up language. Editing a page in **Wikipedia** is as simple as clicking on the 'edit' link to the right of the section to which you want to contribute. The text of the page is opened in a plain text format, and users can type in their additions. Minor formatting of the text, such as making it bold or italicized, can be done using a few buttons at the top of the screen. The procedures and options for editing will vary, depending upon the features of the **wiki** software.

While contributing to and editing a **wiki** can be relatively simple, creating and maintaining one can be more complicated. The **wiki** engine, the software that runs the **wiki**, is typically installed on a server and the content of the **wiki** is usually stored in a relational database system. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki_software) A single **wiki** engine can run several **wikis** at a time.

Before selecting a **wiki** engine, it is important to think ahead to how you want to use your **wiki**. Each **wiki** engine will have different features and functionalities, and what you want to do with your **wiki** will affect your final decision. There are a number of open source **wiki** engines, including **Twiki** (<http://twiki.org/>), **MoinMoin Wiki** (<http://moinmoin.wikiwikiweb.de/>), and **MediaWiki** (<http://www.mediawiki.org/wiki/MediaWiki>).

For more information on these and other **wiki** engines, **Wikipedia** includes in its entry for **Wiki Software** a fairly comprehensive table comparing the attributes of various **wiki** engines. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_wiki_software)

Drawbacks

Because of the open nature of application, the accuracy and quality of the content in **wikis** are legitimate concerns. Contributions to **wikis** like **Wikipedia** are anonymous, and there is no way of knowing whether or not what you are reading is correct or if the person wrote it was qualified. It is advisable to maintain a certain amount of skepticism when using **wikis** as reference resources. **Wikipedia** makes a good starting point for research, providing background information, but dates and other facts probably should be double-checked in other resources.

Some of the misinformation in **wikis** is intentional. **Wiki** vandalism is the "deliberate deletion of true statements or the insertion of clearly and obviously false statements, wrong spelling." **Wiki** spam is the insertion of irrelevant links for commercial purposes. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki_vandalism)

Wikis at Work in the Library

The beauty of a **wiki** lies in the collaborative nature of the application. Regardless of their drawbacks, **wikis** offer libraries a means to make their services more collaborative and interactive for patrons. For example, reference librarians could use a **wiki** to share information about recently taught information fluency ses-

sions. As questions about a particular class or assignment are handled at the reference desk, additional information can be added to the **wiki**, such as answers to particular questions or annotations indicating which of the library's resources are the most useful for the assignment. To personalize reference services for classes, individual pages could be created for each class, and students could be invited to submit their own opinions about which resources they found helpful.

The possible areas of implementation are many, including assisting in collection development, providing reference services, and resource annotation. Below are some examples of institutions and individuals that have put **wikis** to work.

Oregon State University Libraries — <http://oregonstate.edu/~reeset/RDM>

The **OSU Libraries** have put a **wiki** to use in providing reference services. The libraries created an open-source database system called Reference Desk Manager which has recently been linked to a **wiki**. "Reference librarians log into the RDM, and are then able to add or edit pages on the RDM **Wiki**, as well as leave comments, blog-like, on existing pages." (Frumkin, 19)

Butler University Library Wiki — http://www.seedwiki.com/wiki/butler_wiki/

The **Butler University Library** is using a **wiki** to provide information about reference resources. **Butler** faculty, staff, and students are invited to add comments to the **wiki** about the classes that are using the resources and how useful the resources are for particular assignments.

UMM CSci Library Wiki — <http://csci.mrs.umn.edu/UMMCSciWiki/bin/view/Library/WebHome>

The **University of Minnesota, Morris** has set up a **wiki** soliciting suggestions from faculty, staff and students about what books and resources to order for the computer science department. Included in the **wiki** is a table listing each request and the status of the order.

Library Success: A Best Practices Wiki — http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Main_Page

Created by **Meredith Farkas**, the Distance Learning Librarian at **Norwich University** in Vermont, this **wiki** is a collaborative space for librarians to share ideas and stories about particularly successful initiatives at their libraries.

University of Connecticut Libraries' Staff Wiki — http://wiki.lib.uconn.edu/wiki/Main_Page

Set up and operated by the **UConn Libraries Information Technology Services Department**, this **wiki** makes available all of the documentation provided by ITS.

University of Otago Library Staff Wiki — <http://www.otago.ac.nz/librarytest/pmwiki/pmwiki.php>

This **wiki** acts as an intranet for the **University of Otago Library** staff. It includes links library documents, such as collection development policies, postings of articles that may be of interest to the librarians and staff, lists of new fiction titles, and even information about upcoming social events.

Resources

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I Hear the Train A Comin' — SPARC

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With **Heather Joseph** succeeding **Rick Johnson** this summer as Executive Director of **SPARC** (The Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition), it seems an appropriate time to check in on this **Association of Research Libraries** offshoot. Launched in 1997, **SPARC** is an international alliance of more than 300 academic and research libraries "working to unleash the potential of the Internet

to enhance scholarly communication," according to its mission statement. This work has included convening conferences on alternative models in scholarly communication such as institutional repositories, creating toolkits for libraries and nonprofit journal publishers, and partnering with scholars and institutions to launch Open Access journals and other alterna-

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tive avenues for scholarship. **Heather Joseph** comes to **SPARC** from **BioOne**, an aggregation of high-impact bioscience research journals that was developed under **SPARC**'s auspices. What has **SPARC** accomplished, what is its view of the current scholarly communication landscape, and where are we headed? **Heather Joseph** was kind enough to provide her perspective.

What is the status of the "scholarly communications crisis"?

HJ: Well, first, I'm struck by the fact that you asked about the "scholarly communications crisis" rather than the "serials crisis"...to me, that's a telling indicator that the scholarly community has moved beyond thinking about the issues facing us as simply questions of price. While the issue of journal pricing was without a doubt the wake-up call that brought many of us to the table, it has been critically important for us to try to understand the broader context in which these pricing trends are occurring, as well as the wider consequences.

By acknowledging that we've got adjustments to make on a system-wide level, I think that the stakes have become higher, but I do think that the potential benefits are well worth the risks. It's been particularly notable to me to see the discussion of access to scholarly scientific research results gain such traction as a public policy issue, not only in the U.S., but worldwide [with the **PubMed Central** and **Research Councils UK** initiatives, among others].

I'm encouraged that the community seems to have made so much progress in collectively working to try to better understand our shared landscape. I think we've reached a point in this process where there is a greater willingness in many parts of our community to roll up their sleeves, take some risks and try to implement positive, collective solutions. In particular, I think initiatives that are essentially joint ventures between publishers and librarians have made some really valuable contributions in changing how we view the potential role of different constituents in our community. When librarians are involved in the hands-on business decision making processes of a publishing venture, as they now are in **Project Euclid**, **BioOne**, **AnthroSource**, etc., a fundamental new awareness is built. Ditto for publishers in ventures like these, who then have to walk a mile in the library community's shoes to make similar decisions. Of course, we've still got a long way to go!

What are the most promising developments in terms of emerging forms of scholarly communication?

HJ: The way that researchers interact with their data has always driven scholarly communication. The question of how to enable the widest possible use and, especially, re-use of data is, to me, one of the most exciting issues currently on the table. I can't imagine living in a more exciting time in terms of the possibilities that technology has opened up in this arena! I'm intrigued with the idea of what I've heard referred to as "radial journals" — where the data are the main items, and commentary

and peer-reviewed articles grow out of a particular data set. As the data set becomes the destination for interested scholars, and new ideas and conclusions are posted around the data set, a whole new kind of researcher-driven learning environment springs up — very exciting.

SPARC's three objectives are incubation, advocacy and education. What have been some of the notable successes in each area?

HJ: **SPARC** has an admirable track record in identifying opportunities to effect change in each of these areas, which is one of the main reasons that I am so pleased to have the opportunity to be associated with **SPARC**. **Rick Johnson**, **SPARC**'s Founding Director, while a very tough act to follow, set a terrific example for how **SPARC** can act strategically in each of these areas — simultaneously and effectively.

I think that **SPARC**'s educational activities have served to lay the foundation for each strategic direction that **SPARC** has pursued, and in many ways, the incubation and advocacy activities have grown up around these educational campaigns. This perspective is of course, largely influenced from my vantage point outside of **SPARC** for the past five years, so it will be interesting to see how this shakes out in actual practice!

In the past, **SPARC** has created campaigns aimed at both enhancing awareness of issues affecting the scholarly community, as well as encouraging and supporting community participation in the scholarly communication process. Of course, the Open Access campaign has been arguably the most visible of **SPARC**'s education campaigns, and is certainly our most active current drive. This campaign is specifically designed to promote the awareness and adoption of Open Access models, and does this through a variety of different avenues. **SPARC** created a rich Web-based resource articulating the potential benefits of Open Access, and followed that up with a widely-distributed brochure targeted towards educating faculty — to date, nearly 20,000 of these brochures have been distributed (by request) to various universities. We've produced and published a two-part business planning guide for running Open Access journals, and coordinated and run workshops and forums on this topic. Additionally, **SPARC** became the publisher of the very popular *Free Online Scholarship Newsletter*, created and edited by **Peter Suber**. It's an incredibly vibrant program — updates on activities appear in **SPARC**'s **Open Access News Blog** on a daily basis.

Earlier in **SPARC**'s history, The "Create Change" and Declaring Independence campaigns were very effective in raising awareness among librarians and authors about the consequences of the decisions over which they have direct, day-to-day control — what journals to submit articles to, review articles for, edit and subscribe to. They served as a call to introduce increased competition in the marketplace, driven by scholars, not commercial entities. The "Create Change" campaign, which was driven in close collaboration with the **Association of Research Libraries**, has had an impressive reach. Over the past 4 years, **Julia Blixrud**, **SPARC**'s Assistant Director for Public Programs, has given invited presentations related to this campaign on dozens of university cam-

puses, not only in the U.S., but worldwide. We've also seen more than 50,000 supporting brochures be requested by campuses for distribution to faculty members.

One of the things that I have long admired about **SPARC** is that, through its incubation strategy, it does more than just pay lip service to the importance of increasing competition through the creation of alternative ventures. **SPARC**'s activities have run the gamut from partnering with individual organizations to introduce reasonably-priced alternative journals into the marketplace to organizing much larger, multi-publisher ventures, such as **Project Euclid**, **ASCUS**, and of course, **BioOne**.

Over the past five years, people have often asked me what role **SPARC** played in launching **BioOne**, and the answer serves as a great example of just how powerful a tool **SPARC**'s Incubation program can be. I'm not sure people

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realize that **SPARC** served as essentially **BioOne**'s venture capital and business planning partner. That is to say, that along with working to establish the critical partnerships that sustain **BioOne**, **SPARC** raised the start-up capital needed to launch **BioOne** in the form of pre-subscription commitments from its members in the library community. **SPARC** also donated the services of a business consultant to help in the design and incorporation of **BioOne**'s operating model. It's a very practical, business oriented tool in **SPARC**'s portfolio.

On to the advocacy plank. While advocacy has always been one of **SPARC**'s major strategic activities, this program area really gained

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national and international attention with SPARC's focus on Open Access. Initially, the advocacy program focused on outreach targeted at stakeholder groups internal to the scholarly communications community (e.g., librarians, faculty, and editorial boards), along with communications and public relations activities. In recent years, though, it has been greatly expanded to include an extremely active public policy focus. SPARC has been outspoken on policies that pertain to public access to federally funded research results, in particular on the recent **NIH Public Access Policy**.

The focus on public access to federally funded research led SPARC to spearhead the formation of an unprecedented alliance of leading library groups, public interest organizations and patient's advocacy groups, the **Alliance for Taxpayer Access**. This group quickly coalesced into a growing voice in the Open Access movement, calling for greater access to taxpayer-funded research to help drive the return on investment of public funds.

In what ways is SPARC poised to make the biggest impact over the next 2-3 years?

HJ: I think that SPARC's biggest opportunities will center around our ability to effectively combine a continued, aggressive, focused public advocacy campaign on Open Access with concrete, market-based activities that support the kind of changes that a successful campaign are likely to bring.

For example, I often hear the concern that small, society publishers who have traditionally been "good citizen" players in the scholarly communications arena are among those at greatest risk should funding agencies mandate a move to Open Access. As someone who has spent the majority of my career working to support scholarly societies, I am not unsympathetic to that concern. I believe that SPARC is uniquely positioned to leverage its education and outreach programs to focus on identifying and implementing market-based initiatives that can help create the kind of market conditions in which scholarly society (and other non-profit publishing organizations) can continue to play a vital role.

The challenge is to find ways to keep the development of SPARC's three strategic areas driving in the same direction, and at roughly the same pace. It's the combination of our efforts in education, advocacy and incubation that have the potential to truly effect the greatest change.

In your view, how well has SPARC partnered with the commercial publishing world?

HJ: I'm not sure that I'd say we really have! The focus of SPARC's extensive partnership program over the past seven years has been, deliberately, on partnerships that support non-profit publishers, particularly scholarly societies. It's never really been part of SPARC's goal to work explicitly with commercial players. One notable exception: SPARC has partnered with **BioMedCentral**, a commercial venture with an Open Access business model, in an effort to promote experimentation on a wide variety of Open Access publishers.

What is your view of the open access movement, in particular its economics?

HJ: I'm completely supportive of the aims of the Open Access movement. Creating barrier-free access to scientific and scholarly research can only advance the process of scientific discovery and scholarship, which has been at the heart of SPARC's agenda since its inception. As far as the economics go — whenever I'm part of a discussion about the economics of the movement, the first thing I usually hear is "there is no proven Open Access business model," and the second thing I usually hear is a claim that any Open Access model is likely to cause economic harm to some subset of the scholarly communications community. While I agree that much more work needs to be done to create viable, market tested models, I think these kinds of statements only look at half of the issue — the potential costs of Open Access.

I would like to see us focus our energies on the other side of that equation — the potential benefits of an Open Access model. I think it will be important for us to find a way to examine, and to try and quantify what the potential

return on investment is that we, as a society, can realize by making the results of scholarly and scientific research openly accessible. I think that generating some data on this side of the equation would be a very enlightening and important exercise.

What are some alternative forms of scholarly communication beyond launching new low- or no-cost journals that institutions should consider?

HJ: Well, I think institutional repositories are potentially rich breeding grounds for new kinds of scholarly communication activities. A trick will be for the community to throw out conventional thinking when considering how to populate them, and with what types of materials. Again, I think that turning the question over to researchers, and directly asking them what they need will be the key to developing the next wave of resources.

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Something To Think About? — Recycle Bin

Column Editor: **Mary E. (Tinker) Massey** (Serials Librarian, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University) <Mary.Massey@erau.edu>

It sits as a small icon on the desktop, crouched beneath all the others. Looks like a trash can and is sometimes empty. I nonchalantly drop things into it as calmly as I throw paper in that blue bin by the desk. Forgetting that it is there, I sometimes put material into its confines that could be of use. Time and time again, I open it up and look at the stuff I've discarded. Sometimes I reinstate a few messages or articles or ideas, but more than likely, what I drop in remains until the day when I clean its contents. Once a week, say Friday, I like to peruse the trash and decide what goes away. I remember the days, as a child, that I used to dumpster dive. I still have that urge to look into the bowels of the large metal containers and see what others find unworthy. I have retrieved lamps and books (of course), bread wrappers with those coupons for contests, and an occasionally interesting table or piece of busted jewelry. Hours of rehab time are spent on those gems and sometimes they prove very worthy of the efforts.

I am not sure why they call it a "recycle bin" on the computer screen. Do we recycle the material in it? I don't think we turn the document over and type on the other side. Do we? Do we reprocess the material typed into something better or different? I don't think I have ever done it or would know where to begin that

process. "To adapt to a new use" is the meaning, but all I can understand is that we may be cleaning space to be reused. I think we do not recycle the messages. Could it be like the "Delete" button? Where do these things go? Are we sending these messages to another place in the universe where they might be used better? Fixed, rehab-ed for a better life in another existence? My last venture asking about "Delete to Where" brought some interesting comments from savvy computer gurus. The rings of Saturn have been loaded with the deletes of our present and past. Now there are rings forming around Jupiter to house the many discarded items, phrases and numbers we bump out of our computers. Data mining? I leave that to your fantasies, but I am assured we will be retrieving these things when we reach those planets. Will they be useful then? I wonder!? Perhaps the recycled materials go there too. After all, it is another name for the trash, isn't it? I, for one, hope there is a deep dark void where these things are stored. I do not want to revisit my mistakes or the many words strung together in manufactured articles. How many tables and lists have you flung into the ether? How much verbiage have you contributed to the Rings?

Recycle bin, Trash bin, whatever we call it, we must think seriously about the way we use it and where the information goes. If I can find that location, I will dumpster dive the theories of the future to find the right words to retrieve and remake for future articles. Perhaps there will be some gems of wisdom or some ideas to help fix the problems in the serials field. Some

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