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ATG Interviews Bob Schatz

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2. **Be a part of the inexorable move to electronic information delivery**, but in doing so, don't forget what got you here. I've witnessed, first-hand, how easy it is to get caught up in the glitz and glamour of what you can *technically* do — regardless of whether your customer actually *needs* you to do it!

As alluded to earlier, many of our customers appreciate the fact that **Bernan** provides print editions of government publications that are otherwise issued only in electronic form, and in some cases we have continued to publish valued data compilations that have been discontinued altogether by the government. We are also now a distributor for online products from intergovernmental organizations such as the UN, OECD, World Bank, World Tourism Organization, and the Pan American Health Organization. And our free monthly *Government Publication News* electronic newsletter is very popular.

3. **Partnerships**. The ever-changing economy, pace of technological change, increasing globalization, and the depth of expertise and extent of outreach required in today's business climate make the development of key partnerships an integral part of today's business operation. This includes strategic partners in building new products, new subject areas, and

new customer markets, as well as partners in reaching and delivering these new products and services to the market.

4. **Resources**. Perhaps the best part of coming to **Bernan** is the strong and experienced core management team already in place. **Libby Bauer**, our Director of Distribution, **Tamera Wells-Lee**, our Director of Publishing, **Bruce Samuelson**, our Director of Marketing & Library Services, and **Sharon Keyser**, our Chief Financial Officer, all have many years of experience at **Bernan** and within the industry.

Also, our experienced Customer Service and Acquisitions staffs have established long-standing relationships with customers and agencies so they understand the unique needs and nuances that are critical to providing excellent service on both ends of our business. An important part of my job will be to help with strategic direction, resources and support where I can — and to know enough to stand out of the way where I should!

And last, but not least,

5. **Always end with your customer**, specifically listening to how well you've delivered on meeting those needs you've hopefully listened to in the first place!

And in that regard, I've enjoyed spending a portion of my time in these early months talking to our library customers about some new product ideas, and I look forward even more to being a part of the many library conferences at which

Bernan exhibits. Whether it's at ALA, SLA, or AALL, I hope your readers will stop by to introduce themselves and share their feedback and ideas. And they don't have to wait for a conference; I can always be contacted via email at <dwilliams@bernan.com>.

ATG: *It's nice to see Bernan's continuing and strong commitment to customer service. And last, but not least, while I'm sure working at Bernan is fun, what do you do for fun outside of Bernan?*

DW: I suppose the normal range of things. A little less of the tennis and skiing we've always done a lot of, now that our kids are out on their own (our son lives in Manhattan, our daughter in D.C.). But I still golf (badly), love going to the theatre — especially Broadway on our trips up to New York, and the **Shakespeare Theatre** here in D.C., and then travel whenever we can fit it in.

And like many of us in this field, I like to write — hopefully maybe just a bit better than I golf, but I suspect not!

ATG: *And with a career in publishing, what do you read?*

DW: While I never have enough time to read as much as I'd like, when I do, it's a really eclectic range — most recently the *History of the Blues* (my "beach read"), quite a few of **Edward Abbey's** works, an anthology of writings from *The New Yorker*, and currently *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*.

Additionally, my wife is in charge of Reading and the Secondary English Curriculum for our county's public schools, so I'm constantly being handed myriad poems, short stories and essays to read — which I promptly do. You never know when there might be a test.

ATG Interviews Bob Schatz

Coutts Library Services

by **Jack Montgomery** (Western Kentucky University) <jack.montgomery@wku.edu>

ATG: *Bob, you're not a new face to most of our readership. Could you take a moment to tell us how you've come to be with Coutts? What is your new title?*

BS: Thanks for asking. After events at **Franklin Book** went down, I was fortunate enough to have several companies express interest in acquiring my services. Frankly, at that time, I didn't think of **Coutts** as my primary interest. As I had discussions with key managers within **Coutts**, including **Andy Alferovs**, **Stephen Wilson**, Managing Director of **Coutts**, and **James Gray**, the company's CEO, I became more intrigued and more interested. After visiting **Coutts' North American** headquarters, I became convinced that this represented a great place for me to continue my career. At that point, I accepted their offer to become Director of New Business Development for the U.S., and I have no regrets about that decision.

ATG: *Can you tell us a little bit about the company's history and its overall philosophy?*

BS: To my way of thinking, there are really two **Coutts**: the **Coutts** of the past and the **Coutts** of the present. The company has been around since the demise of the **Abel** empire, some thirty years ago. **Coutts** at that time built a solid reputation as an approval vendor of some repute. The company faced some challenges, though, and lost ground in the U.S. market at least, to other organizations. Five years ago, **BMBC**, a UK-based wholesaler of medical and business books, acquired ownership of **Coutts**, and this began the rebuilding of **Coutts** into a truly comprehensive, international book supplier. We now see ourselves as rightfully joining **Blackwells** and **Yankee Book Peddler** as one of only three truly comprehensive academic book suppliers in North America, and in other parts of the world for that matter. **Coutts Li-**

brary Supply, the largest division of **Coutts Information Services**, now represents offices in North America (US and Canada), the UK (England, and **Farries**, a public library supplier in Scotland), and in Holland, from which we provide firm orders, approvals, and standing orders to libraries in 130 different countries.

The philosophy is fairly straight-forward: offer true choice and true competition by providing a full array of services, delivered well.

ATG: *Coutts seems to be changing, from hints we've seen in the press and heard at conferences. Can you tell us what's going on? Is the company changing its focus?*

BS: We certainly have changed, from a company that thinks of itself as a regional niche player, to a global organization, fully invested in competing in all arenas in all services related to the supply of books to libraries. And, we've

continued on page 63

made the investments in personnel and technology to make that a realistic objective.

ATG: *How many staff does Coutts currently employ and how is the company organized?*

BS: The North American operation has about 150 employees, with a further 150 in the UK and Europe. Coutts' sister company John Smith's has a chain of academic bookstores in the UK. We also have established an e-aggregator service for non-governmental organizations, like the UN and the International Labour Organization, called MyiLibrary. In short, this is not your grandfather's Coutts. For someone like me, having worked with smaller booksellers for a number of years, this kind of breadth is quite exciting.

ATG: *Who do you see as the primary customers of Coutts?*

BS: Academic libraries, though we also serve public and special libraries.

ATG: *Can you tell us a bit about how pricing is structured for your services?*

BS: Our ambitions are fueled by a commitment to provide excellent, and broad-based, services, and fair-and-competitive pricing. For libraries willing to make a commitment of volume to us, we are fully prepared to respond with good value, both in terms of service and pricing.

ATG: *Do you see Coutts taking a position in the whole e-books trade? Do you envision e-books as part of your inventory?*

BS: Part of MyiLibrary includes access to e-books from commercial publishers. As that segment of our industry expands, we have every intention of being an active participant.

ATG: *Where do you see Coutts going within five years? What directions will it take?*

BS: We hope to play an ever-increasing role in library supply, earned through the delivery of quality services offered at fair prices. I'm old-fashioned enough to believe that such a commitment leads to success in this lifetime, and I'm glad to be a part of an organization that shares those values.

ATG: *Where did or do you find your greatest sense of professional accomplishment?*

BS: Service. When I can provide honest options to fellow librarians that respond to real needs, it generates a terrific sense of accomplishment and fulfillment. The personal connection to fellow librarians that accompanies that, just adds to the satisfaction. In spite of recent events, I consider myself truly fortunate to live the life I'm living.

ATG: *Finally, what do you do with your "free time"?*

BS: Free time comes at a premium when you sign on with a company as dynamic as Coutts. What time I have is spent enjoying the company of my wife, staying in touch with our daughter in Portland, seeing the occasional movie, and just trying to keep life simple.

ATG: *Bob, thank you so much for your time. Is there anything else you'd like to add?*

BS: Just my thanks to all those in the library community who offered expressions of support during recent events. It was heartwarming, and greatly appreciated.

ATG Interviews Aileen McHugh

Director of Electronic Publishing, The Johns Hopkins University Press

by **Katina Strauch** (Editor, *Against the Grain*) <kstrauch@comcast.net>

ATG: *Project MUSE has recently released a new pricing model. Would you give us some background on what led to this change in policy and content?*

AM: Since MUSE was launched in 1995, libraries have moved from a print-based model to electronic delivery of journals, and the electronic version is no longer an add-on to the print but the primary format. MUSE needed to change its pricing structure accordingly to reflect this transition. In addition, our consortia discount structure created in 1995 did not adequately address the value and depth of the content in MUSE as it grew over the years; in 1995, MUSE provided only one year of content, and now, it provides anywhere from 1 to 10 years of content, depending on when the journal joined MUSE. Finally, MUSE's audience has proved to be much more diverse than originally anticipated, and our pricing structure and collections needed to address this diversity. When MUSE was first launched, it was assumed that it would never have more than 125 subscribers, primarily from research libraries. MUSE now reaches more than 10 million end users worldwide through more than 1100 subscriptions from academic research and undergraduate libraries, community colleges, high schools, special libraries, and increasingly, from international libraries. MUSE now offers the Full Collection, Research Collection, Undergraduate Collection, Arts and Humanities Collection, and Social Science Collection.

We also offer a flex plan option for five or more libraries who wish to create their own package.

ATG: *Duke University Press recently pulled out of Project MUSE. Would you comment on this from Project MUSE's point of view? Is the aggregated Project MUSE model still viable?*

AM: Project MUSE is more than a single aggregated model; its core mission is collaboration between libraries and publishers to communicate scholarship electronically and effectively to scholars and students.

Having said that, the aggregated model is more viable now than it was in 1995, with the transition from a print-based systems to an electronic one. MUSE contains 270 journals from more than 50 publishers, but its competition is one publisher in the humanities and social sciences with 750 journals, another with 700 journals, and another with 250 journals. Except for Oxford University Press, the largest publisher in MUSE has 56 journals. Moreover, the average price of journals in MUSE is \$100, and large sales and production effort for these journals sold singly or in small groups is not cost effective. The costs of usage statistics packages, CrossRef, Athens authentication, 508 compliance, and other standards does not scale for journals in this price range, unless the publishers collaborate. Finally, compared with the large commercial publishers, few of the publishers in MUSE have sufficiently large subject collections that can be sold cost effectively to libraries,

and in our pricing and branding studies this year, librarians almost unanimously asked us to discontinue selling individual publisher packages. The cost of this market research alone could not be borne by most of the publishers in MUSE.

Unlike many of the hosting services that simply distribute metadata to vendors, MUSE sells and markets its collections through an active sales force, supported by customer service and librarian-led customer outreach. The MUSE sales team can negotiate large deals at the national and international level. In addition, MUSE has librarians on staff and works with the Milton S. Eisenhower Library, one of the cofounders of MUSE, to create a library-friendly interface, licenses, and pricing policy.

MUSE enables its publishers to benefit from the same marketing, interface, and production that the larger commercial publishers offer, and it provides publishers individual branding and links back to their own Websites, detailed marketing reports, quarterly financial statements showing expenses and revenue, and the opportunity to participate in decision making. We are developing a new Advisory Board of publishers and librarians to help us navigate the future, and our first meeting was at ALA Midwinter.

ATG: *We understand that MUSE has recently signed up several new publishers. Is the number of publishers 56? Tell us who they are and what will be available.*

continued on page 64