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

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## View From New Zealand from page 70

such good feedback from the students about the mixed media publication that they decided to abandon the book only edition. This title, undoubtedly being a good one for students, was included in the reading lists as "Recommended reading." The library guarantees to supply to students the titles on the reading list and as there was a book only edition available at the time it was possible for the library to do so. With the book only edition abandoned by the publishers and restricted access to the mixed media edition the problem is how to loan multiple students copies of the latter. In the mixed media edition the Website ac-

cess is limited to one paper copy and the book can not be used independently.

One possibility is for libraries to note the first login details and make them accessible to other students so that they can use the same when they borrow the book but it is not as simple as that. Most new software now identifies logins with the specific computer and this could well be the student's own computer or a specific library computer in the library's study area. This will help on campus students who visit the library but what about distance learning students who have remote access and delivery of library materials? Electronic resources and remote online access is a boon to the delivery of distance learning. Why is it that mixed media are restricted by one book one login?

Particularly when the book has to be used along with the online material.

It is understandable that publishers want to maximize their profits by the sale of individual copies to students but why do they not think of marketing a library edition that includes multiple logins. At a time when electronic databases and eJournals have proved their worth, and when there is increased interest in eBooks particularly for remote delivery of learning materials it is surprising that multiple use of the mixed media publications have not been thought of. On the other hand if separate library editions are a serious impossibility, then publishers could work with the aggregators of eBooks to make these titles available via eBook collections. 

## 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

### NEW TECH FOR THE CLASSROOM by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

The iPod, Steve Jobs' new brainchild, is poised for a major impact on education delivery. Eighty percent of the students at the **Medical University of South Carolina** own one of these Apple gadgets. In South Carolina, MUSC, USC at Columbia and Clemson join Stanford, Brown, Duke, U-Wis Madison, the dental school at U-Michigan, and the journalism school at the U-Missouri, an elite group selected by Apple to receive free space on its iTunes Website. That will mean an explosion of podcasts delivering lectures and graphics.

See — **Diane Knich**, "Palm-sized digital device redefining the classroom," *The Post and Courier*, May 12, 2006, pA1.

### THERE'S BIG BUCKS IN CLAIRVOYANCE by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Psychic author **Sylvia Brown** — *If You Could See What I See* — has fifteen books in print which adds to seven million hardcovers and paperbacks. She's so wildly successful, two rival publishers are content to share her — **Dutton** and **Hay House**. A claimed medium and clairvoyant, she talks to the dead, sees the future and solves crime.

While a slew of academics scoff at her claims, she appears on **Montel Williams** and charges \$700 for a telephone reading. She draws an estimated 75,000 listeners to her lectures annually at a charge of \$75 a head.

And if you don't have that \$700 for a phone call, her son will take you call for \$400.

See — **Jeffrey Trachtenberg**, "In Publishing, One Medium Looms Large," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 29, 2006, p.B1



### SO WHO NEEDS A CAMPUS? by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Overall college enrollment is stagnant, but online is booming. **State U** is leading the charge. **UMass** has 9,200, mostly working adults. **Univ of MD University College**, the open-enrollment arm of **UMD**, has 51,000. Projections nationwide are for one in ten students to be online by 2008.

See — **Daniel Golden**, "Degrees@StateU.edu," *The Wall Street Journal*, May 9, 2006, p.B1.

### COPYCAT WEBSITES JAM THE WEB by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

"Original content" on the Web has exploded as owners try to get hits that will bring them ad revenue. But most is not so original; in fact cut-and-paste jobs with superficial changes. The *Journal's* investigative reporter was offered \$100 to modify a bird flu article lifted verbatim from the **WHO** Website. His conclusion was much legitimate information was being crowded out by junky, spammy imitations.

And imagine what professors and librarians are having to deal with from students.

See — **Lee Gomes**, "Our Columnist Creates Web 'Original Content' But Is in for a Surprise," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 1, 2006, p.B1.

### PRINT NEWS MEDIA TWISTS IN THE WIND. SLOWLY. by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Fear, depression and denial reign as print news continues its slow death of cancellations and sliding ad revenue. But the **American Society of Newspaper Editors** is acting upbeat in their annual meeting. They claim it's a mere cyclical downturn despite more than half of the USA not reading the news. Any day now they'll find a new "diversified business model" which is to say they'll figure out a way to make readers pay for using the Web.

See — **Elizabeth Gillespie**, "Editors Seek Next Format for Newspaper Content," *The Post and Courier*, April 28, 2006, p.7B.



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## PRODUCT PLACEMENT GOES ... WELL, COMICAL

by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Product placement has long been rife in movies and TV. Now it comes to comic books. **Time Warner's DC Comics** has a new series boosting the **Pontiac Solstice**. **Marvel Entertainment** has the **Nike** swoosh on the t-shirts of the **New X-Men** and may feature the new **Dodge Caliber**.

Astounded? Comic readers now have a demographic reaching into their twenties and thirties and the \$450 million annual business is actually in competition with **Dennis Publishing's Maxim and Stuff**. **DC** intends to bring in advertisers pushing health and beauty care, shaving cream and razors.

See — **Brian Steinberg**, "Look—Up in the Sky! Product Placement!" *The Wall Street Journal*, April 18, 2006, p.B1.

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## CHAOS THEORY RIPPLES OUT OF THE USPTO

by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Admin changes at the **US Patent and Trademark Office** have led to a flood of new patents and a tsunami of litigation. The **USPTO** became a "profit center" leading to pressure to grant more patents leading to patents on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and a method of swinging on a swing invented by a five year old. While those might be harmless, lack of talent at the **USPTO** permitted patents on broad ideas related to mobile email without a whole lot of detail. And that led to the **BlackBerry** fiasco.

Now innovators are regularly being shaken down by holders of dubious patents and most don't have **BlackBerry** level money to ward off the attack. *But see the good news immediately below.*

See — **Adam Jaffe and Josh Lerner**, "Innovation and Its Discontents," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 21, 2006, p.A14.

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## THE END OF AUTOMATIC INJUNCTIONS IN PATENT LITIGATION

by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

The **Supreme Court** unanimously gave **eBay** a victory over **MercExchange** in the fight over the "Buy It Now" function, ruling that injunctions in patent infringement should only issue after weighing a variety of factors including the public interest. Complex systems use scads of minor inventions and can pay money damages for an infringement rather than shutting down the entire product as was threatened in the famous **BlackBerry** case.

Federal courts had been interpreting the patent act's "a court may issue an injunction" against an infringer into "shall issue." And that gave a green light to shake downs. Wait for a successful business to emerge, and then with the threat of shutting it down, rip off far more than the patent is worth.

See — **Jess Bravin**, "Ebay Ruling Changes Dynamic in Patent-Infringement Cases," *The Wall Street Journal*, May 16, 2006, p.B1.

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## IN SOFTWARE, PLUS ÇA CHANGE ...

by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

In the bad old days, acquiring software meant months and millions spent to license it, buy necessary hardware, and get your IT gang to set it running. Along came **SAAS** — **Software as a Service** promising a world of improvement. Now you use a Web browser to connect to the software.

But as the **SAAS** style takes hold, they are growing as complex as the old system they replaced. Once you're hooked, consultants, integrators and add-on pieces of software are suddenly necessary.

See — **Lee Gomes**, "Despite All the Hype, Getting Your Software On the Web Has Limits," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 12, 2006, p.B1.

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# Innovations Affecting Us — Do Web Applications Need to be Cleaned Up?

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Since their introduction Web based applications have rapidly undergone enormous change to improve functionality and the user experience. With the introduction of new Web development languages or Web applications, marked improvements have been made but user expectations continue to rise as functionality improves. With regards to efficiency, functionality, and user experience, the Web of today is stuck in the past in many ways. So what will the Web of the future be like and how will we get there? For some Web developers, the answer to those questions lies with a Web development technique frequently referred to as **Ajax**. **Ajax** and **Ajax**-based Web applications have quickly become the topic of frequent discussion among Web developers and is something to be aware of as the Web continues to evolve.

### What is Ajax?

**Asynchronous JavaScript and XML**, frequently referred to as **Ajax**, is not a newly created language or technology. The sum of its

parts, **Ajax** is an incorporation of several familiar technologies working in kind to create a more interactive Web environment for users. The main technologies at play in **Ajax** include the following:

- **JavaScript** as the scripting language that **Ajax** applications are written in. **JavaScript** defines the user workflow of the **Ajax** application.
- **XHTML (Extensible Hypertext Markup Language)** and **CSS (Cascading Style Sheets)** for standards based content mark-up and presentation. These define the look and feel of the application. In **Ajax** Web applications the styling of a user interface can be modified interactively using **CSS**.
- **The DOM (Document Object Model)** presents the structure of Web pages as a set of programmable objects that can be manipulated with **JavaScript**. Scripting the **DOM** allows **Ajax** applications to modify the user interface quickly or "on the fly."

- **The XMLHttpRequest object** for asynchronous data retrieval. This allows Web programmers to retrieve data from the Web server as a background activity.

### So What Can Ajax Do for Web Applications?

**Ajax** helps to unlock much of the unrealized potential of modern Web browser technologies. One way that **Ajax** overcomes a major limitation in traditional Web applications is by exchanging small amounts of data with the server asynchronously behind the scenes of the Web application. The intent of this design is to make Web pages feel more responsive, so that the entire Web page does not have to be reloaded each time the user makes a change. With traditional Web applications each time the user makes a change to the page, such as executing a search in an internal search engine or adding an item to an online shopping cart, the entire page must reload anytime the user requests new data.

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