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People Profile: Michael Levine-Clark

Editor

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able to multiple eBook vendors, at least one major publisher has provided separate content to **EBL**, **ebrary**, and **netLibrary**.¹⁰ Obviously, this requires a library to work with multiple vendors to get complete coverage of subjects. Further complicating this is the fact that some publishers have decided to push their own eBook platforms. **Thomson Gale**, for instance, makes their reference titles available only on the **Gale Virtual Reference Library (GVRL)** platform. **Springer**, though cognizant of the need to make books available as individual titles through the eBook aggregators, also believes strongly that their **SpringerLink** platform is a valuable tool that allows multiple books to function as a database.¹¹ Just as it is impractical to work with multiple approval vendors to get coverage of books from different publishers, it would be impractical to work with multiple eBook vendors unless they could all be integrated into the same approval plan.

Solutions

All three of the major approval vendors have begun to work with eBook vendors to some extent. **Coutts** seems to have the strongest integration at this point by virtue of their partnership with **MyiLibrary** under common ownership. **MyiLibrary** provides access to 60,000 titles from over 200 publishers, all of which are fully integrated into the **OASIS** ordering system.¹² **OASIS** allows customers to develop approval plans for print and electronic books and to examine the eBook content prior to purchase of either format. Within **OASIS**, eBooks are simply another format type, allowing them to be easily integrated into the approval process. In September, **Stanford University** announced that it was working with **Coutts** and **MyiLibrary** to develop an approval plan covering both formats.¹³ Many other libraries have begun working with **Coutts** to receive slip notification rather than automatic delivery of eBooks. This is partly because of the concern about duplicating print holdings and partly because there is often still a delay in publication of the electronic version of a book.¹⁴ **MyiLibrary** is only a few years old and continues to grow at a fast rate. Currently they are adding over 1,000 titles a week, "most of it new and much of it unique to **MyiLibrary**."¹⁵ However, given the facts that many titles are still unavailable through **MyiLibrary** and that **Coutts** works only with this one vendor, **Coutts** may not be the best solution for full integration across all publishers and subjects at this time.

Blackwell works with **ebrary** and **EBook Library (EBL)** as well as selling some books directly from the publishers.¹⁶ At this point, though eBooks are not part of the approval process, **Blackwell** has integrated many perpetual-access titles into **Collection Manager**, their acquisitions system, through their new **ECHO** platform.¹⁷ **ECHO** uses **ebrary's** technology but provides access to books from sources additional to **ebrary**. Some of the eBooks available through **Blackwell** are not available on **ECHO**, primarily because the publish-

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BORN & LIVED: Born in New Haven, Connecticut. Grew up in Branford, Connecticut. I've also lived in Iowa City, Iowa, Champaign, Illinois, and Denver, Colorado.

FAMILY: Wife, Marjorie, and daughter, Isabel.

EDUCATION: B.A. in history, **Wesleyan University**; M.S. in LIS, **University of Illinois**; M.A. in history, **UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**.

FIRST JOB: Cashier at **Waldbaum's Food Mart** — before there were scanners. First good job: Clerk at **Atticus Books** in Middletown, Connecticut.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: I've been a documents librarian, a reference librarian, and now a collection development librarian. I'm an active member of the Collection Development and Evaluation Section (CODES) of the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA). My research interests focus broadly on the acquisition and use of library materials.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO: Spend time with my family, ski, run, and read.

FAVORITE BOOKS: The list is always changing.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: I think that we will have figured out eBooks. Most books from most publishers will be available in both print and electronic formats. Pricing will be structured to allow libraries to get both formats or one or the other as needed. But the print book will be around for a long time. We're still many years away from people wanting to read eBooks for pleasure. 🐷



ers wish to maintain their own platforms.¹⁸ Though **ECHO** is a useful tool for eBook acquisition, it is not yet incorporated into the approval process for print books. **Blackwell** is well into the development of a new **Selection Services** system that will allow full integration of eBooks into the approval process. At this point, perhaps as early as the summer of 2007, eBooks will simply be another format that can be selected as a non-subject parameter.¹⁹

YBP has integrated eBooks from **netLibrary** into the approval process and has plans to do the same with **ebrary** and **EBL**, as well as publisher-specific titles over the course of 2007. The **netLibrary** titles are non-returnable, so libraries have generally chosen to receive slip notification of these eBooks rather than automatic receipt. **Ann-Marie Breaux**, Vice President for Academic Service Integration at **YBP**, notes that many libraries have adjusted their approval plans to eliminate print coverage for series available electronically.²⁰ For example, libraries with an online subscription to *Lecture Notes in Computer Science* have blocked coverage of this title in approval plans or have canceled standing orders for the print version.

Conclusions

It is clear that the approval vendors are making significant headway toward integration of eBooks into the approval process. All three

of the major vendors have already incorporated some eBooks into the process or will do so by the end of the year. And the major eBook vendors have indicated that they recognize the need to supply frontlist coverage and work with at least one of the approval vendors.

It is not so clear that all publishers recognize the need to supply their books electronically in a way that makes them fit easily into the library acquisition process. **Matt Naumann**, Director of Publisher Relations for **Blackwell**, points out that "We have heard over and over that publishers will maybe provide out-of-print titles to an eBook aggregator to see how it will do."²¹ It appears that many publishers have been concerned that eBook sales would erode print sales so have been reluctant to make new eBooks available. However, some publishers are beginning to see that it makes sense to make frontlist content available. **Oxford**, for instance, will make all 2007 titles available to **ebrary** as they are released. In some cases, this may be before the print version is available.²² If this is any indication of future trends, publishers may have figured out the need to supply this current content electronically.

In order for eBooks to be successfully and meaningfully integrated into the approval process, approval vendors need to have a significant amount of frontlist eBooks available to them at the time of publication. It does not

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