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## Something to Think About -- A Moment's Destruction

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forms. Throughout the book the author uses library terminology and library based examples to illustrate key concepts and definitions, a practice which will help librarians better understand the terms and concepts that are explained.

Using straightforward language, real-world terminology, and clear definitions, **Westman** begins by explaining how database-backed Web pages can be beneficial to library Websites. The introduction points to advantages such as providing users with accurate and up-to-date information in real time as well as easier site maintenance and data publishing. The introduction also provides a clear explanation of the open source software movement, what advantages it has over proprietary software, and how open source software can benefit libraries.

Moving on from the introduction, the text is divided into three parts. The first addresses database basics, setup, and administration with a particular focus on relational databases. **Westman** takes the mystery out of technical terms as he explains, using simple examples, how relational databases management systems work, examines **Structured Query Language (SQL)**, and describes open source alternatives for relational database systems. Moving on from these explanations, the book uses a practical hands-on approach to walk readers through the steps of creating a database, importing data into **MySQL** tables, and establish accounts that can access the data via the Web.

The second section of the text focuses on programming and creating reports. As a librarian with little programming experience, this reviewer was apprehensive about the level of experience necessary to understand the programming chapters of this book. Using a cooking metaphor, **Westman** effectively introduces basic programming concepts that readers will need to be familiar with. The reader will gain an idea of how programs are structured as well as an overview of different types of programming languages that can be used. **Westman** takes the introduction to programming one step further when he outlines, step by step, how to use PHP to create a variety of reports. Hands on experience is invaluable when it comes to many aspects of Web development, and this book expertly combines background information with introductory exercises so the reader can see firsthand how concepts can be applied to actual databases.

Finally, this book examines a database-based Web project step-by-step from the original idea and design through programming and implementation. This section of the book builds on exercises explained in previous chapters. In doing this, the reader truly gets a sense of the effort, knowledge, and steps required to create a database backed Web page.

The text also includes a complete glossary of terms used and an appendix of programming standards. The clearly written style of this book coupled with the increasing user demand for dynamic Web pages make this a title worth considering for any librarian who is interested in Web development. 🌿

## Something to Think About — A Moment's Destruction

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

**L**ife seems so straightforward when we live each day in the comfort of our own routines. I've often wondered what crises bring to the situation that would change these procedures. We want to be prepared for any number of circumstances in life, but the fact remains that there will always be something that strikes out of the blue and upsets our daily patterns. Case in point, Christmas Day 2006 **Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University**, Daytona Beach, FL., when a tornado marched its way across campus destroying over 50 planes, a maintenance hangar, and many buildings, including the damage to our library. Three and four foot square holes were blasted through our rear walls and books were tossed from shelves and soaked in fuel contaminated water/gravel/glass shard mixtures. Professional clean-up teams were brought in a few days later and they cleaned and dried the materials. When we were finally allowed into the building more than a week later, we were looking at a partially reclaimed bunch of books and CD's. Study carrels were full of questionable items. Teams were formed to feel and visually inspect each piece for damage. CD's were put aside for separate inspection because they were all in locked cases. Books were inspected first. We ran our hands over every inch of the bindings, looked at and felt the insides, checked the spines and gutters, then sorted the books into those that could return to the shelves, those that were beyond help and those we might be able to save via rebinding, xeroxing (if copyright eligible), or digitizing (if copyright eligible). This last group was small, about two dozen in total. About seventy to seventy-five percent could actually return to the shelves. We all breathed a sigh of relief, as this was a pertinent part of our business aviation section. Many of the books would have been very hard to replace, while others would have been out of print. Twenty four percent of the damaged books could not be returned to the collection, so teams worked to identify the items, make a list for the insurance company (with dollar values), and withdraw them from the online catalog. Once this was done, we could deprocess them and physically remove them from the building. The insurance list was presented to the university and once approved, we are now able to have the Collection Development Team choose replacements and help the school order them from the best sources. Sometimes, it is bet-

ter to order more recent editions when the older ones have been damaged, so that we not only replace the information lost, but we do so with more enhanced material. In some cases, we replace out of print material with other appropriate and similar information. We had to amend several recent studies of our business materials for degree upgrades by stating that the lost materials would be appropriately replaced by newer materials and that the collection's content would not be diminished by the replacements, but rather enhanced. Some of the few CD's lost were those that matched up to the books that were withdrawn. They were not damaged themselves, but were useless once the books were withdrawn. Teams viewed the discs to make sure they were only supplementary to the texts and not the complete texts, before we discarded them. It was interesting to note that although very dirty, the CD's survived where the books didn't. I was very impressed that we only lost two jewel cases from breakage and only one locked case showed signs of stress fractures.

It appears that if damaged materials are treated quickly, most can be saved. Circulation will watch for further developments as these materials are checked in and out of their desk. We want to make sure that there is no other chemical or biological degradation of the material. As for now, what looked like a huge loss turned out to be very minor compared to the building's damage. We are all very appreciative to the university's quick recognition of the problems, the crisis team's treatment of the materials and our own team actions to save as many materials as we could.

Do you have appropriate plans for action in physical crises? We only had hurricane plans in place, but recent attention to getting rid of mold in the collection alerted us to the procedures we needed to have in place and companies we needed to call for help. I

believe that sped up our response time and turned a disaster into moderate losses to our collection.

There can always be an unplanned crisis ahead, but advanced preparation and knowledge can reduce the impact to your collections. We are currently revising our emergency response manual to cover a number of situations. Do you

have that preparation and

knowledge? That might be something to think about?! 🌿

