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Library Marketplace — Looking Forward-Looking Back

Column Editor: **John D. Riley** (National Sales Director, Eastern Book Company) <jdriley@comcast.net>

Now that 2007 is over and we are headed into the New Year I wanted to take a look back at some of the topics that I have been following this year. There are exciting developments all over the map, but for now many of them are just getting rolling, such as “the library as publisher” while others are going ahead full tilt, but haven’t had their full impact yet, such as “scanning book collections” and the “greening of libraries and publishers.” Other topics I’ll cover are occasions where “celebrating the book” becomes a community wide event and I’ll even take a look at the introduction of Amazon’s Kindle.

Library as Publisher

The growing cooperation between university libraries and presses is a win-win concept for two institutions that are re-examining their roles as producers and disseminators of scholarly information. The initial steps in this union have been coming from libraries themselves and in many cases the press has been reporting to the Dean of Libraries. Other schools are hiring “Scholarly Communication Officers,” a shared position between the library and the press. So far the synergies have been helpful to both libraries and publishers and to the university as a whole. Their cooperation is benefiting professors and students who want to see more of their writing and research reach the public. It is unlocking a vast amount of stored print resources and opening the gates for more open access publishing.

I spoke recently with **Mike Furlough**, Assistant Dean for **Scholarly Communications** and Co-Director, **Office of Digital Scholarly Publishing at Pennsylvania State University** about the progress they are making in bringing their library and press closer together. He told me that the library and the press have been working together for nearly six years and that a librarian has been on the university press board for twenty years. Many of the functions that define “library as publisher” are already in place there. The nexus for their work together is the **Office of Digital Scholarly Publishing**, a sort of **Virtual Organization** as **Mike Furlough** describes it. Currently the **Penn State Libraries** are focusing on four projects as the building blocks for their publishing enterprise.

1) Creating a digital back file of journals, on a **JSTOR** model, mainly in Pennsylvania history. This looks to be an appealing approach for other libraries who want to emphasize their regional strengths.

2) Publishing conference proceedings for conferences held on the campus. These are in digital format now and will be available in a print on demand basis.

3) Publishing a monograph series on Romance Language Studies. These are open access and also available in a POD format. RomanceStudies@romancestudies.psu.edu

4) A reprint series of out of copyright books handled by **Lightning Press** and available through the **PSU Press**.

Digitizing and Distribution of Library Holdings

Of course we all know about **Google’s** massive digitization project, but many other libraries are working on their own (such as the **Boston Library Consortium**) or with other partners, such as **Microsoft** and **Yahoo** to accomplish similar ends. Two of the more interesting projects are at **Cornell** and the **University of Maine**. **Joyce Rumery**, Dean of the **Fogler Library** at the **University of Maine**, told me how they are working with the **Maine State Library** to digitize many of the state’s town histories and rare material related

to the native Wabanaki Tribes. They are making their books available through **Book Surge**, a subsidiary of **Amazon**. They also digitized their entire collection of yearbooks and posted them on the Web. It was a big hit at their annual alumni get-together. Likewise, **Cornell University** is working with **Book Surge** to make available many of their scarce materials that are out of copyright. **Oya Rieger**, **Cornell’s** director of digital library and information technologies, showed me some of the new titles being reprinted from their unique anti-slavery and mathematics collections. Reprints from those collections retail at prices far below the rare book market and open up their collection to scholars all over the world. I did suggest however that reprint material needs to follow some of the same guidelines as traditional publishing, such as including a colophon and printing history. Adding introductions by current scholars would also be a good idea to put these works into a contemporary context.

Celebrating the Book

The Pioneer Valley in Western Massachusetts has been the center of a four month long celebration entitled “**Bookmarks: A Celebration of the Art of the Book**” featuring exhibitions and programs dedicated to book making, printing, literature, and literacy. The idea came from the cooperation of ten museums in the area (museums10.org) working together with area bookstores and libraries. One of the highlights of the celebration was a two-day event at **Mt. Holyoke College** called “**Books to Blogs and Back**” focusing on the future of the book in the digital age. **Robert Darnton**, famed historian and Director of the **Harvard Libraries** kicked off the event with his keynote speech “**The Research Library in the New Age of Information**.” His central thesis involved the inherent instability of the text, whether as “constructed” newspaper articles or even the variance in the **Shakespeare** folios. **Google** adds to the question of textual authenticity with their lack of bibliographic control. **Darnton** asks which editions should be scanned and preserved, what was the original format of the text, and how will they be preserved? He envisions that research libraries will be crucial in correcting and maintaining digitized information. And they will become even more important in the future as they foster development of new kinds of scholarship.

Other speakers at the conference included **Jason Epstein** speaking about his new project “**Espresso**,” the instant book distribution and printing machine. **Espresso** has had some test runs in libraries and bookstores, but it has encountered an old fashioned glitch that has halted its commercial introduction: paper jams. Its sheet-fed printing process needs more tweaking before we see it in wide use. Other speakers included **Sven Birkerts**, **Terry Belanger**, and **Lisa Gitelman**. See (www.mtholyoke.edu/go/booksblogs07)

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and keeping access fees in mind, sometimes we can work it out with one-time new program money that we get from the University. This is always with the knowledge and support of the department involved. Regardless, we feel we should ask for input from faculty, particularly because sometimes we do expect their library fund allocations to support those databases, at least in part. Famous last words, but so far we’ve never regretted it in the six years I have

done it here. And still, in all that time, we don’t really get a lot of feedback.

We do have a database team that makes recommendations, and they review the trial databases. In addition, we ask the subject librarians to pass along the information and logins directly to the department faculty liaisons, who in turn notify interested colleagues. 🌳

The Greening of Libraries

The **Green** building revolution has been going on for a number of years and libraries have been in the forefront at incorporating **LEED** principals into their new building projects. **LEED (Leadership in Engineering and Environmental Design)** is an initiative of the **U.S. Green Building Council**, "...a non-profit organization committed to expanding sustainable building practices... that are working to advance structures that are environmentally responsible, profitable, and healthy places to live and work." (usgbc.org)

One of the finest examples of this philosophy is the **B. Thomas Golisano Library** at **Roberts Wesleyan College** in Rochester, N.Y. **Charles Canon**, Head of Technical Services there, took me on a guided tour the week before it opened last July. What struck me first was the natural light that flooded the building. Power hadn't been turned on yet so the only light came from the expansive windows that made use of reflective shades and white painted walls to send natural light into the core of the building. The building is situated so that the longer sides face north and south to take maximum advantage of the sun.

Not as obvious to the eye is the revolutionary heating and cooling system. **Charles** described it as a geothermal system that depends on the constant temperature of the earth hundreds of feet below the surface. A glucose liquid (similar to antifreeze, synthesized from plant materials) circulates in pipes throughout the building, distributing naturally cool air from the ground in the summer and warm air from compressing the liquid in the winter. The savings from using this system will pay for its construction within eight years. Other unique features include cork flooring, pressed sunflower seed boards for shelving, and low water use bathrooms. The building has a "great room" feel to it with a fireplace and café to warm up the surroundings.

Furthermore, students have formed an ecology club and are working with grounds staff to meet standards for **Audobon International's Cooperative Sanctuary Program** where they are landscaping with native plants to encourage birds and insects to make the campus their home. What an exciting project to get the whole campus involved in saving energy! Through these initiatives **Roberts Wesleyan** has turned both the library and the campus into learning spaces. See also (greenlibraries.org) (aashe.org)

Another exciting development on the **Green** front is the realization by publishers that they can have a major impact on saving old growth forests. Similar to the acid free paper revolution, publishers are working together to implement "best practices" for using recycled paper in their publications. (greenpressinitiative.org)

And on a final note, **Kindle** from **Amazon** came out just in time for the Holidays. I like the description of the device as "a solution

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in search of a problem." The reader itself is clunky and hard on the eyes with its small screen, belying one of its sales pitches as being able to resize fonts for large print: you might only be able to read one word at a time! I would chalk it up to just one more failed e-reader in the lineage of the **Franklin** book reader and the **Sony** book reader, except for its revolutionary distribution model. Using broadband G3 technology it can download a book in less than a minute. Imagine when all of those scanned books are available through the ether at the push of a button! Still the name makes

me skittish. Doesn't **Kindle** bring to mind the burning of books, "the last refuge of analog" as **Jeff Bezos** ominously describes them?

Don't miss the **Out of Print Discussion Group** at **ALA** in Philadelphia where **Lia Hemphill**, Director of Collection Development at the **Alvin Sherman Library** at **Nova University**, will tell us how she has run a successful book sale for six years and raised money to help fund staff **MLS** scholarships. 8-10 Sunday in PCC 109A. 📖