

June 2010

# @Brunning: People & Technology: At the only Edge that Means Anything / How We Understand What We Do

Dennis Brunning

Arizona State University, [dennis.brunning@gmail.com](mailto:dennis.brunning@gmail.com)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Brunning, Dennis (2010) "@Brunning: People & Technology: At the only Edge that Means Anything / How We Understand What We Do," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 22: Iss. 3, Article 28.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.5567>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact [epubs@purdue.edu](mailto:epubs@purdue.edu) for additional information.

## At the only Edge that Means Anything / How We Understand What We Do

by **Dennis Brunning** (E Humanities Development Librarian, Arizona State University) <dennis.brunning@gmail.com>

### Zinio Digital Editions

Chances are if you only do academic serials management or reference you've not encountered **Zinio**. **Zinio's** trademark is "Be Well Read." And through **Zinio** you can be well-read, especially if you like newsstand magazines. **Zinio** is a digital editions distributor and publisher for a many popular magazines we all read — *Golf*, *Maxim*, *Car & Driver*, *Business Week*, *Playboy*, and the *Economist*. If it is enjoyable to read, **Zinio** probably has it.

**Zinio** has led technology development in the mass magazine market since early 2000. They were one of the first to develop applications and distribution for the **Microsoft Tablet**. They've delivered digital versions of magazines for a decade to laptops and desktops. With an **iPad** application already deployed, they are ready to engage the many early adopters of this exquisite device.

One thing **Zinio** isn't; they are not your typical library version. A **Zinio** edition of say, *Road & Track*, matches the pictorial, editorial layout, and flow of the print magazine while providing digital tools to find, navigate, and manage online content. You need only visit their Website — or better, click on a trial of a digital edition — to immediately realize **Zinio** has the stuff to make your magazine reading enjoyable online.

Somewhere along the line library vendors took a distribution road to become what we've grown to identify as "ASCII" versions of magazines. These were the data feeds of magazine publishers sold a day late and a dollar short. This model produced the infamous "embargo" but also lulled librarians into consumption of a lesser product. Granted, with time and technology, our vendors have improved this approach mainly with PDF technology but let's be frank: the parts do not comprise the whole. The library edition is a "databased" version of the original.

Some of this is going on in eBook publishing. **Amazon** is an example. Reading a magazine on the **Kindle** is just about text and little else. An illustrated magazine loses its graphic value in **Kindle's** "just the words" approach. Photographs, graphs, and other visual information are there — just barely. Most images require a zoom in or two and, depending on the graphic, there seems to be a limit how large and accurately you can enlarge the image. Text trumps images.

In contrast, take the *Economist* on **Zinio**. Reading this venerable weekly on your **PC** is far superior an experience than on the **Kindle**. **Zinio** supports readers for **PC**, **MAC**, and most smart-phone and tablet appliances. The experience is akin to reading PDF, yet it is more fluid, intuitive, and quick.

And reading the **Zinio Economist** is vastly

easier and rewarding to any version supplied to libraries. Even **EIU's** portal, which incorporates *Economist* articles as linked PDF into a news portal putting all economic intelligence into one big pot, doesn't match the **Zinio** reading experience.

Although there isn't an *Economist* app ready for the **iPad's** international release, the fit with the **iPad** is perfect. The industry knows this. Right now it doesn't do much for the cost — a **Zinio** edition is sold separately from a print subscription. Bummer. But if — and always this is the big if — if libraries could license **Zinio** or **Zinio-like** editions, it does not take a fancy **iPad** to bring extraordinary magazine experience to the user, a simple laptop, netbook, or e-reader that supports a Web browser will be a reading tool par excellence.

#### Your links:

<http://www.zinio.com/whatiszinio/>

<http://www.applettablet.net/apple-ipad/road-track/>

<http://www.digitalmagazinenews.com/>

### Where the Wild Things Are More on eBooks

A world record of words were written about the **iPad** months before the first unit was sold. First sales were decent, pre-orders and stores in the U.S. moved more than 300,000 devices in the first few weeks and a million the first month. Still, since the hype has cooled — and the evaluations, opinions, and e-opinions wash in, there is no way to measure if the **iPad** lived up to its hype. In the end it just has to sell.

For most of us, the **iPad** is priced beyond an impulse purchase. Only the self-pronounced (and self-promoting?) early adaptors have gone on record in the I-blogsphere.

First takes? Neat, clever, cool, are adjectives we encounter. Most, though, still wonder "how am I going to use this?"

Hands down, librarians with **iPads** love the video. It is your "bedside friend while partner sleeps" alternative media device. Most mentioned is the **Netflix** app that allows subscribers to download videos. Right now the catalog is small but it is an entertaining one.

Few are coughing up for the 3G. We prefer the kindness of strangers — Wi Fi at work, in the airport, at the coffee bar, wherever people with electronics gather. Who can blame us? No one can figure out **Apple's** insistence on **AT&T** 3G exclusivity especially when the 3G makes the **iPhone** the epitome of "Can't you hear me now" telephony.

The 3G version which shipped just last week has already won the ire of many. As with the **iPhone**, the **AT&T** network just can't handle broadband demand.

Interestingly, few librarians or others, for

that matter, are reading books or subscribing via apps to magazines. These cost. In fact, **iBooks** ring the register at more than twice the price of **Amazon** titles. **Steve Job's** deals with major book publishers to use the Agency model for pricing and distribution explain this. **Job's** has agreed with major publishers to serve as a distribution agent. The publisher sets retail, and **Apple** charges a constant percentage fee. This puts king publisher back on the throne — for now.

At the moment, you can still buy **Amazon** books for much lower prices than **Apple's**. **Amazon's iPad** and **iPhone** apps bring your **Kindle** content to your device.

Major magazine and newspaper publishers sell **iPad** subscriptions separately and at prices that match print or online. Using the **iPad Safari** browser you can read Web newspapers, but you can't read them in the optimized fashion of the **iPad** editions. Rumors are swirling that magazine publishers who get into **iPad** distribution will follow the leader and expect newsstand or subscription level prices.

It is way too early to guess about the true impact of the **iPad** on us. Hype takes the fast lane in marketing communication. Librarians prefer the slower, reality lane which surely includes a steep decline in that plus-\$600 price tag.

#### Your links:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/01/technology/personaltech/01pogue.html>

[http://www.newyorker.com/talk/financial/2010/03/29/100329ta\\_talk\\_surowiecki](http://www.newyorker.com/talk/financial/2010/03/29/100329ta_talk_surowiecki)

<http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/newsdesk/2010/01/ipad.html>

### On the Steps of the 42nd Street Library in NYC

**Kindle 1:** It's huge...

**Kindle 2:** What?

**Kindle 1:** My God, all bow down...to iMoses!

**Kindle 2:** Are your batteries finally wearing out that you don't hear me? What's up?

**Kindle 1:** The iPad, man. Where have you been?

**Kindle 2:** Well, frankly, up most publishers...what's up?

**Kindle 1:** I'll tell you what's up — the iPad has launched!

**Kindle 2:** (yawns)...Oh, yeah, I heard about that...

**Kindle 1:** That? Wake up, brother, press alt+ aA and **Kindle** up...more than 300,000 have sold just this weekend!

**Kindle 2:** (thinking about sleep mode) excuse me — I'll have you know **Jeff B** tells me we've sold millions and millions...

*continued on page 53*



## R2: Converting Librarians to Cybrarians

The R2 Digital Library from Rittenhouse makes it easy for librarians everywhere to offer more than 1,000 health sciences titles online.

**SAVE MONEY.** Avoid “all-or-nothing” prices. Add more titles immediately with the push of a button.

**SAVE TIME.** Our easy-to-use interface meets needs of librarians. If you can surf the web, you can use R2.

**MANAGE SMARTLY.** Monitor usage statistic in real time, so you can make informed decisions.

Move into library management’s digital age with a name you can trust: Rittenhouse.

**Rittenhouse**

BOOK DISTRIBUTORS

DISTRIBUTING THE LEADING SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND MEDICAL PUBLISHERS

511 Feheley Dr., King of Prussia, PA 19406 • 800-345-6425 • [www.r2library.com](http://www.r2library.com) • [www.rittenhouse.com](http://www.rittenhouse.com)

### @Bunning: People & Technology from page 52

**Kindle 1:** Snap, oh brother of mine... publishers just love Stevie J and all he can do for them... why it’s the rebirth of high-priced magazine subscriptions and high-margin book prices!

**Kindle 2:** Jobs doesn’t read. You read about this all of the time.

**Kindle 1:** SJ — he’s more than reading, he’s...visual. They say you don’t read the iPad you touch, its tactile information.

**Kindle 2:** Oh, yeah, the new reading... you think with your fingers...

**Kindle 1:** And more...apps.

**Kindle 2:** Apps? What are apps?

**Kindle 1:** OMG — you are so last year... apps do what you can’t, they are hyperbole aside, what the Secret alluded to but could not deliver...

**Kindle 2:** There’s an app for that?

**Kindle 1:** Yes, there is an app for everything...

**Kindle 2:** Tell me more...

**Kindle 1:** Apple figured out that the Web — meaning everything — was too much for us especially if we wanted it on little MP3 players and cell phones. Web big, device small — no one was happy.



**Kindle 2:** Not happy?

**Kindle 1:** Well, all thumbs...and bored... always connected but nothing happening.

**Kindle 2:** So Apple created apps?

**Kindle 1:** Well, we created apps or people like us. We sell them through the Apple App Store.

**Kindle 2:** So there is an app for Kindle books on the iPad?

**Kindle 1:** Yep, just like the apps for the iPhone, BlackBerry, MAC, even the PC. We read everywhere...

**Kindle 2:** I’m down with that — the more the merrier...

*Crowd parts...iPad approaches...*

**Kindle 1:** He cometh...

*iPad (leading a throng of early purchasers, talking to reporters on the steps of the famous library)*

**iPad:** Flash isn’t good enough for the iGuys...Droid, puh-leeze...me, a laptop killer — fugetaboutit — at least for now...

**Kindle 2:** (urgently)...Don’t forget, older brother, we are a lean, mean, reading machine. — Evelyn Wood-optimized and priced right — new books cheaper than paperbacks!

**Kindle 1:** Shish — here he comes. He’s so bright, so cool...

**iPad (to Kindles):** Hey.

**Kindles:** Hey.

**iPad:** What’s up?

**Kindles:** Nice day.

**iPad:** Yeah, nice day.

*Kindles are silent...*

**iPad:** Would talk — late for a reception in the main reading room...something about “the book” and yours truly then...got to roll — Justin Bieber concert...the “Just” is waiting for his “comped” iPad...

*iPad disappears into the future...*

**Kindle 1:** iThink, therefore iAm...

**Kindle 2:** I hope Jeff knows his Bezos... 

### Questions & Answers from page 51

author. Also, outside of copyright, the right of publicity might apply, and some authors claim that all rights belong to them.

Purely on the copyright question, while the university is the legal owner of these photographs, it likely does not own the copyrights in them unless the deed of transfer actually transfers the copyright to the institution. So, the library owns the physical copies but probably not the rights. The library can display the copies locally, but not reproduce them, etc., unless the library owns the copyrights. On the other hand, if the photographer has no heirs or if the heirs agree to reproduction and display more broadly, then the library can do that. 