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## At Brunning: People and Technology-At the Only Edge that Means Anything/How We Understand What We Do

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## @Brunning: People & Technology

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

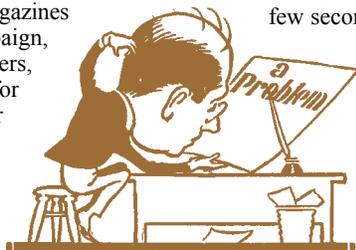
by **Dennis Brunning** (E Humanities Development Librarian, Arizona State University) <[dennis.brunning@gmail.com](mailto:dennis.brunning@gmail.com)>

Most of us still read magazines. We read them online, we read them in print. We may not buy them, though, and this has magazine publishers worried.

How worried? Enough for the industry to put its readers on notice that Magazines embody the power of print. This year, on March 1st, major publishers launched a multimedia advertising campaign to show us just how important magazines remain. In eye-catching and thought dazzling image and font, a series of full page ads appeared in major titles to state the case for magazines.

Eighty-eight publications simultaneously ran the power of print ads. They are still running.

The eleven facts about magazines incorporated in the ad campaign, facts reported by the publishers, are strong, assertive claims for magazines and the power of print. These include the growing readership of the past five years, mostly adults (4 out of 5) reading magazines, the growing



Facebook crowd of young magazine readers, time spent reading magazines (and consuming adage) and so on.

But all signs point to it not happening at libraries. True, we're dropping subscriptions like the **Oakland Raiders** are missing field goals. But as **Trump** says, it's just business. On more or less fixed budgets, you've got to weed. But there is a bigger problem; the magazine industry does not support us in providing us the best digital versions.

The best digital versions of magazines are those aimed for the most visually resourceful platforms. Think **Apple** and even the PC. You need those large displays and that computing power to offer compelling graphics and software functions. You need only spend a few seconds with **Kindle's** version of a magazine or newspaper to realize **Amazon** has not provided you much more than text. Good enough for some readers. Historically, though, magazines have achieved much more than words. A magazine is layout, font,

photographs, drawing — all the graphic arts have developed.

What libraries need are a chance to find an economic and social model that allows us access to the magazines envisaged by the industry's ad campaign. They are right — a magazine is the power of print. The next step is to empower libraries to bring this power to our users.

#### Your Links:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2009/07/my-new-favorite-gadget-livescribe-pulse-pen/22468/>

#### Downloads from the Zeitgeist

**A la Carteing:** newly coined term from the brain of **Barry Diller**, media mogul and **Google** basher, an infelicitous phrase to depict yet another tipping point in media. **Diller** means it to describe the sudden explosion of options for video customers. Instead of the traditional *prix-fixe* of cable or satellite, now Americans have buffet choices in how, what,

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and how much they pay for movies and television shows. **Barry** is tickled. Why? Easy, it spells the death of the monthly pay-TV subscription.

Now wouldn't it be great if such diversity, this "a la carte"ing" would take hold in library publishing? Of course it would. If big media is threatened by large technology companies, why not library publishers?

**Annoyed Librarian:** almost part of the old **Zeitgeist**, pre **Twitter** and **Facebook** — whoever you are you channel that part of our librarian soul that puts up with low pay, obsolescence, and nagging concerns of disorganization. One thing, though, what's up with the *Library Journal* gig? You belong on E.

**Bookless:** The **University of Texas** in San Antonio, announces its bookless library, the first one on a campus. Bookless? Blogosphere and library listservs saw library-less. What's so new about that?

**Cloud:** where library computing will eventually take place, as they say, going forward. The skyward metaphor more resonant, apparently, than "hosted" or "thin client" technologies we heard about last decade. That clouds change shape and meaning is what **Joni Mitchell** taught us and **Mick Jagger** warned us off. Now it is where all that social stuff happens. Here comes that rainy day...

**COPE:** Compact for Open-Access Publishing Equity. COPE will subsidize OA author fees. A big player, the **University of Michigan**, has just been "coped." Maybe Big Blue will help the rest of us handle another line item in the old information budget.

**Drupal:** not to be confused with **Ron Paul**, **Pen Pal**, or **Pay Pal**. Pronounced like ruble but not to be confused with that closed society. Drupal is open software that joins talent with community at a low price — free — to manage web content. Libraries all over have embraced the effort; as a result many costly Web resources can be managed on a shoestring. Now if that could be applied to...

**Forward thinkers:** new phrase for library leaders. The forward thinker leads thought. So library leaders now attend seminars where thought is encouraged but lubed with sufficient grease to not be stalled or stopped by friction or other types of cognitive inertia.

**Fun:** catch **Eric Schmidt**, **Google** CEO, on the **Colbert Report**. This guy is having so much fun doing what he does that even **Colbert** can't trip him up. Fun must be running a company where everyone is rich, catered, massaged, and own the opportunity to succeed spectacularly (**Google Mail**; **YouTube**) or fail quietly (just about everything else).

**P stream/E stream:** New CD lingo for MARC record downloads. The p stream flows print book records into the catalog, the e stream, electronic versions. Certainly helps workflow. Question: when the p stream is deleted are they flushed? Warning: avoid the stairway outside your acquisitions department.

**Search neutrality:** more and more becoming the nom de jour for high stakes internet policy making. First net neutrality argued for free and unfettered access and use of the Internet high seas. Then search neutrality, fair, neutral, and unbiased access to Web content, dictated only by page and link quality.

Big question: where is the Switzerland for search neutrality — certainly not Cupertino or Sunnyvale. We vote for the **Starbucks** with WiFi near where **Steven Harnad** hangs out.

**Self-Plagiarism:** writing the same words, your own, twice for multiple publications. One certain thing: there are apps for it — how about the Web?

**Personal Librarian:** what **Drexel** supplies free of charge to promote student success. Not to be confused with personal shopper which may be good moonlighting opportunity for **Drexel** Librarians — make some money off the cognitive surplus...?

**Sky River v. OCLC:** see earlier entry on cloud. Library IOLS vendor sues big brother for development rights to the library cloud. At stake: the millions in cheaper computing for libraries...what will happen: the rich get richer...

#### Your Links:

[http://www.observer.com/2010/media/barry-diller-coined-phrase?utm\\_medium=partial-text&utm\\_campaign=media](http://www.observer.com/2010/media/barry-diller-coined-phrase?utm_medium=partial-text&utm_campaign=media)

<http://www.utsa.edu/today/2010/09/aellibrary.html>

<http://www.montage.umich.edu/2010/09/u-m-joins-compact-for-open-access-publishing/>

<http://www.colbertnation.com/full-episodes/tue-september-21-2010-eric-schmidt>

<http://blogs.wsj.com/digits/2010/09/20/net-neutrality-activists-target-google-as-talks-heat-up/>

<http://www.drexel.edu/news/headlines/a-personal-librarian-for-every-drexel-freshman.aspx>

#### Do you Livescribe?

**James Fallows**, *Atlantic Monthly's* Senior Editor does, and he is excited. **Fallows** likes gadgets; especially those that help him research and write. His biggest gadget is a plane. Others include Zoot, a personal information management software, Personal Brain, a thinking tool, and any outlining software on PC or Mac.

Livescribe is his latest technological toy. Livescribe is a recording and hand-writing tool. Livescribe Pulse and Livescribe Echo are ink pens that listen to what you hear and digitally capture what you write. With Livescribe note-taking goes Gaga.

Livescribe is three devices. You have a black pen, jumbo in size and profile, with an ordinary ballpoint filled with good old black ink. The pen, though, also has a microphone and speaker, a USB port, and some micro-

chip. You use the pen to write in notebooks that resemble the **Moleskin** products sold at bookstores. But these notebooks don't bind any paper. No, the paper is Livescribe paper engineered to translate your handwriting into computer-legible prose. Pages also feature coded icons that run Livescribe software. They call it dot paper.

Livescribe is designed to take notes at meetings, lectures — anywhere you are listening and jotting stuff down. You touch the ballpoint to a control button on a page, and Livescribe starts recording. When you take notes or draw pictures or scribe lines — Livescribe captures this as a scanned image.

Your hand, that Palmer trained appendage, has become an input device for your computer. And in this Web-enabled world, you can upload your writing to Livescribe's Website and share.

Sharing is called pen casting. You create a pencode and upload it. You can share with others or just yourself. Using Livescribe Desktop software you've created little thumbnails of your notebook's written pages.

Of course, there are apps. There are dictionary apps (*American Heritage English* and *Spanish Dictionaries*) and accounting apps (draw a calculator or piano keys, add or play **Beethoven**). One app, an essential one, is My Script which transcribes your notes into a searchable archive of penned data.

Livescribe's founder, **Jim Marggraff**, is almost messianic in his enthusiasm for Livescribe profitable and humanitarian goals. He foresees tons of applications written by equally zealous advocates some of whom will share their Livescribe innovations freely to Livescribers. And he sees abundant buy-in from content publishers who are looking for cool new markets for interactive and shared media that entertains, informs, and does work.

Any downside? **Fallows** does note:

I shouldn't say too much about another aspect of the system, but still: people who see you using the pen will know that it looks a little funny, compared with normal pens. But they might not know that it's a functioning tape recorder. Unless you tell them, as I have been careful always to do. So far.

Yes, it is a little bit **Dick Tracy** when you think about it. Keep that in mind as you enjoy the **Charleston Conference**. If someone points a big black pen in your face, well, that's **@Bunning**.

#### Your Links:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2009/07/my-new-favorite-gadget-livescribe-pulse-pen/22468/> 