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People Profile: Stephen Rhind-Tutt

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metadata about those subjects. As an example, it's not just tagging content for occurrences of a particular battle, it allows one to say: "Give me all battles in which more than 1,000 people were killed." Or, "Give me documents written by women under the age of 20 that talk about marriage." Or, "What Phase 2 clinical trials of ACE inhibitors have been successful in the past 2 years?" The benefit to users is that it allows richer reference.

This *Scientific American* article³ on the Web does a better job than I of describing the importance of the concepts behind it.

ATG: *Last year at the Charleston Conference you dared the audience to "imagine ... that for each term within a discipline there was a page on the web that organized all of the surrounding content for a particular subject within a discipline." You also said that is what you were aiming for at Alexander Street Press — and that you were close to achieving it for music and drama. What would such a page look like and have you achieved it in your databases?*

SR-T: Yes, we're aiming for this. We're relatively far down the tracks in music, less so in drama. I don't think that such pages necessarily need to be controlled by **Alexander Street**. What's exciting to me at the moment are initiatives that allow third party content to be easily linked. To this end we've just spent much of the past year developing an **Alexander Street Metadata Repository** that will allow third parties to link to any and all of our content. Commercial and non-profit organizations alike will be able to build reference pages and links directly into our content, and to have those pages update easily and at a low cost.

ATG: *Pricing is always an issue. We hear from librarians that they are impressed with your innovative and valuable products but that the prices are too steep — especially from the perspective of small- and medium- size libraries. Is there any fairness to that perception?*

SR-T: I think it's an outdated perception. Philosophically, our approach has always been to price to allow broad access — we've always had lower prices for smaller institutions.

I'm sure every vendor thinks that it offers good value — so what I've tried to do below is give you some objective comparisons. Perhaps the greatest proof that we're pricing fairly is that many partners license to us, and despite tough economic times our products are selling well to libraries.

Practically, I think the easiest way to show this is in examples: *American History in Video* has approximately 5,000 video titles in it and academic subscription prices range from \$1,100 to \$2,500 depending on the type and size of the institution. The *Music Online* listening package contains the equivalent of more than 58,000 CDs and costs from \$1,950 to \$12,495 for an entire university to subscribe to for a year. The same content on **iTunes** would cost a single professor \$700,000 to buy, and that's without all the tools and searchability we provide.

against the grain people profile

Stephen Rhind-Tutt

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BORN AND LIVED: Windsor, England. Lived in London, Belgium, Germany, Boston, San Francisco, and Washington, DC.

EARLY LIFE: Boarding school in the UK, studied English Literature at **UCL**, salesperson for Hellman's Mayonnaise, brand manager for **Frank Cooper's** marmalades, changed to the information industry.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Early employee at **SilverPlatter**, led health science division; was Director of Product Management for **IAC** (now **Gale**); then President of **Chadwyck-Healey** (U.S.) before founding **Alexander Street Press**. Currently sit on the boards of the **Council for Library and Information Resources (CLIR)** and the **University of California Press**.

FAMILY: Janice (spouse), Michael (8), David (5), Serafina (2).

IN MY SPARE TIME: Resting, TV, reading, movies, Mayan culture, Polar Exploration, history of technology.

FAVORITE BOOKS: *The Cat in the Hat*, *Empire of Sound*, *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, *Flight 714*, *Meet Mr. Mulliner* — too many to mention!

PET PEEVES: Accelerate, don't slow down when you merge in traffic. Use of the word "try" in company reports as in: "try to get this sorted out next week."

PHILOSOPHY: "Do it with all thy might."

MOST MEMORABLE CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Still to come.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: I'd really like **Alexander Street** to fulfill its potential. That's not to make it a huge company — rather it's to have it publish some really long-lasting, landmark collections that stand the test of time. I'd just love to have created publications like the *Dictionary of Literary Biography* or the *Grove Dictionary of Music*.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: I'm not sure about everything that will happen in five years, but I am sure this will happen: All content of lasting value will be online. All of it will be accessible via phone, tablet. It will be integrated with DOI-like links. We'll have stopped arguing about whether free or for-fee is the best model and realize that we have to have both. We'll have automated tools that help us analyze the vast body of information at our fingertips, and software that helps us understand it better. Libraries and publishers that have embraced the future and focused on what they can best do for patrons will thrive. 🌱

We do offer the ability to purchase content — and this costs more. But again I don't think it's excessive to ask for \$15,000 to \$30,000 for our *Filmmakers Library* — that's \$13 to \$26 per title for titles that sell for hundreds of dollars each.

ATG: *Can libraries customize selections from your databases and come up with a mix that is more affordable? For example, will this type of flexibility be available with your new integrated online repository of academic video titles that is available via the new platform, Academic Video Online?*

SR-T: The documentaries — from our *Filmmakers Library* imprint and the counseling and therapy videos from our *Microtraining Associates* imprint are available as single-streaming titles for \$200 to \$300 individually. We're in the process of securing licenses to sell more titles

like this. However, for some of our collections the original licensors will not give us single-title rights, and even when they do, they're naturally concerned about losing money if we discount too heavily. So by far and away, the best value for libraries is through our collections.

ATG: *While most of your recent offerings have been audio and/or video collections, you are releasing a new database called Anthropology Online that will focus on primary sources like written ethnographies, field notes, seminal texts, memoirs, etc. However, it will be cross-searchable with your Ethnographic Video Online collection. Is this the wave of the future? Can text-only resources stand alone, or do today's scholars expect access to multimedia resources?*

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