

June 2012

## Back Talk

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### Recommended Citation

Ferguson, Anthony W. (2012) "Back Talk," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 24: Iss. 3, Article 13.  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6272>

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## Wandering the Web from page 84

can be easily corrupted) and using a local computer to retrieve the data from the drive, which often causes a lag. But take along the USB drive back-up anyway, just in case of an Internet failure.

Many people also use **Dropbox** ([www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com)). To use **Dropbox**, software must be downloaded to one's local harddrive. Their software supports Windows, Mac OSX, and Linux. Free storage includes up to 2GB. With referrals, users can up their free storage to 8GB. I have not personally used **Dropbox**, but my Internet-savvy Aunt Lori loves it.

### Temporary Storage

Sometimes you need to send a large file to someone, and you don't want to use a USB drive or burn a CD/DVD. Instead, **YouSendIt** (<https://www.yousendit.com/>) allows you to upload large files so that someone else can download it elsewhere. At present, files up to 100MB can be sent for free. To send whole folders, simply zip the folder into a single file and send it as one item. You then specify the email addresses for the recipient(s). If you're worried about the recipients getting marketing messages from **YouSendIt**, simply send the file to yourself and then forward it privately from your own email account. **YouSendIt** notifies the recipients (which can include yourself) of the link when it's ready to download the file and the time frame for which the file will be available — currently ten days.

### Apple Mobile Device Storage

**Apple** recently launched a "free" cloud storage service for users of their mobile devices: mainly **iPhones** and **iPads**. I put "free" in quotes because you have to buy a data plan through (currently) **AT&T** or **T-Mobile** to even use these mobile devices. But **Apple** provides free storage to back up and sync your mobile device(s) to one another and/or to your home computer.

Currently, **iCloud** offers the first 5GB of cloud storage free, which can be accessed directly from an application on the mobile device or through a Website. This service is brand new with the October release of iOS5, **Apple's** new operating system made exclusively for their mobile devices. I am as yet unaware of any equivalents for other mobile devices outside of **Apple** products.

To sum up, why use free cloud storage? Because it's free! It's also serviced for you: harddrive crashed and burned? Laptop sto-

len? Not a problem if your data lives in cloud storage servers. Not computer savvy? Professionals monitor, update, and maintain the servers for you. Your information can be transferred from old servers to new servers and from old formats to new formats with no effort (or even awareness) on your part. Best of all, you can access cloud storage from absolutely anywhere. All you need is an Internet-enabled device and an Internet connection.

Finally, cloud storage takes away the synchronization factor. Own a laptop for work, a desktop for home, an iPhone for the go, and an iPad for meetings? (Yes, I'm a Mac person, sorry.) Without cloud storage, we have to manually transfer data from one device to another to keep them up-to-date with each other. With cloud storage, there's no such problem since everything you need is centralized online and you simply access and change it from wherever you are. This means no more carrying a USB drive around to transfer that important report to whichever computer you happen to be using at the time.

On the other hand, if the Internet access or data network you're using goes down, it's lights out. But the bigger these networks get, the more redundancies and failsafes the companies add to prevent this from happening. When it does happen, outages are usually for only a short time. Even power outages aren't a problem if you keep your mobile devices fully charged and use G3/G4 data services instead of local wireless networks.

So, overall, Cloud Storage is a wonderful thing that keeps getting better and cheaper. And, if you play your cards right, you can even get it for free.

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things, blanket acceptance of everything new is not good (when I ate my first deep-fried scorpions I was jokingly told I was safe as long as I didn't eat more than seven or eight at a time). But being open to every new thing is only meaningful if it meaningfully contributes to one's goals. In my view, measures like "user convenience" and setting goals on the basis of user needs analysis are among the best ways of deciding what to do. 🌱

## Technology Left Behind from page 83

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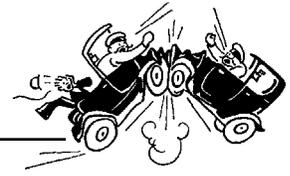
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# Back Talk — Sashimi, Global Trends and Deciding What to Adopt



Column Editor: **Anthony (Tony) W. Ferguson** (Library and Information Science Consultant and former Hong Kong University Librarian; now relocated to Sahuarita, Arizona) <anthony.ferguson185@gmail.com>

**I**t began innocent enough when my Taiwan academic library conference host asked me if I could eat a little sashimi — that is, raw seafood. Since I don't drink much beyond water and Coca-Cola, I have over the years willingly eaten anything placed before me at dinners like this in the hope that this would make my behavior more acceptable to my Asian hosts. In this case, I wrongly assumed a "little bit of sashimi" might end up being a sliver of fish on a thumb-sized block of sticky rice or a slice of a rice, veggie, and fish roll. After weaving in and out of small streets in search of just the right restaurant, I found myself in one specializing in very fresh raw fish. The owner asked if fresh mackerel would be good. Not knowing much except the phrase "dead as a mackerel," I said, "Sure, sounds great." I admit to wanting to quickly Google "raw mackerel" AND "intestinal diseases," but I decided that would be a bit tacky and less than gracious.

Soon we had a plate each of mackerel, squid, and large prawns plus veggies, noodles, and the requisite green wasabi paste which is designed to blow the top of your head off in a horse radish-ignited explosion. The prawns were nicely broiled with a sprinkling of salt, pepper, and other delicious spices. Now, while years ago I had forced my brain to accept that pink fish on a thumb-sized pellet of rice is not raw pink pork, when the purple red mackerel arrived I decided that my brain would have to allow for this new color of what is acceptable. Thankfully, it was super fresh and had a wonderful slightly chewy texture — I enjoyed three or four half-inch slices to my own amazement. I have always enjoyed raw squid, and that night's experience was not an exception. After several bowls of soup and other good things, we were finished and walked around the small

town of Makung on the island of Penghu just off the western coast of Taiwan.

The Penghu islands are perhaps better known by their former Portuguese name, the Pescadores or "fishermen" islands. Inhabited by Chinese migrants, they have been invaded and or controlled by pirates, the Dutch, the French, and were ceded along with Taiwan proper to Japan at the conclusion of the First Sino-Japanese War in 1895. At the conclusion of WWII they became part of the Republic of China. After Chiang Kai-shek's government fled to Taiwan, Penghu had several hundred thousand troops garrisoned there to prevent their being invaded by the mainland government. Now in more peaceful times, a major part of the soldiers are gone, and the islands are becoming prized for their white beaches, seafood, and friendly people.

The conference at which I spoke was the annual meeting of **University and College Librarians in Taiwan**, May 24-25, 2012. It was officially billed as the 100th annual meeting of China's academic librarians, the group having begun toward the end of the Qing Dynasty and continued during the periods of war lord domination, the Republic of China, and then transplanted to Taiwan. A similar group meets annually in the People's Republic of China, as well. The focus of this meeting was on continuity and change in the midst of globalization. At such meetings I am always struck by how similar the concerns of librarians the world over seem to be: collection building, technical processing, and public services — but now in the context of change brought about by the growth of IT in virtually all aspects of life. There were many high-quality presentations at the conference.

My job as a keynote speaker was to intro-

duce the concept of globalization, the process of replacing local ways of doing things with international standardized policies/norms of behavior, and to provide a scan of the new trends now gaining strength among academic libraries in the United States particularly. At the conclusion of my talk I discussed two approaches which might be used when deciding which of these trends should be adopted: select those which make it more convenient for readers to meet their information needs, and for librarians to first analyze reader needs, then set general goals which will help them meet those needs, and only then consider which of the many global goals/standardized ways of doing things should be adopted.

Indeed as I was preparing my presentation for Taiwan I wrote in the April Issue of *ATG* that when we look at new trends and existing programs, we need to determine if they "make it easier for them [readers] to access this information." **Becky Kornegay**, upon reading my piece and **Ari Weissman's** original article in *UX Magazine* (<http://uxmag.com/articles/convenience>), suggested that pursuing professional expertise, as opposed to reader convenience, was a goal well-worth pursuing. I have no argument with this suggestion but my intent was to use "convenience" as a way of deciding among the various options what libraries needed to do to survive in our IT-centric globalized world.

Shortly before I spoke in Taiwan I read another thought-provoking article which provided an additional approach to decide which trends are the most relevant: **Brian Mathews'** "Think Like a STARTUP" (<http://hdl.handle.net/10919/18649>). **Mathews** indicated that "when searching for 'what's next' we can't focus on building a better vacuum cleaner, but rather, we need to set our minds to maintaining cleaner floors." I illustrated this excellent suggestion during my talk by showing pictures of an old vacuum cleaner, the sort of super new vacuum which looks a bit like a **Buck Rodgers'** space ship, and a baby on the floor, and posed the question: what should our goal be, a new vacuum cleaner or a clean floor? I suggested that if our goal was the world's best cataloging system, the world's best new building, etc., we might achieve these goals through lots of hard work. However, I observed that we should probably first analyze reader needs and then set goals which will meet those needs — and that some of the trends I had introduced might be useful means of achieving those goals, and some might not. Otherwise, we might be tempted to seize upon each new trend to come along, even though they had little to do with meeting local needs.

I began by noting that when it comes to Asian food, I tend to eat everything set before me. While this suggests an openness to new

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