2014

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

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Recommended Citation

Brunning, Dennis (2014) "At Brunning: People and Technology: At the Only Edge that Means Anything/How We Understand What We Do," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 26: Iss. 1, Article 41.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6684>

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Rumors from page 6

Talking about people with new jobs, it was fun to note that the resourceful **Rolf Janke** who founded **SAGE Reference** has just founded a new company, **Mission Bell Media** which will produce digital and print media in leadership and leadership studies. Read all about it in this issue, p.29. I still remember way back when in Thousand Oaks at the **Sage** headquarters, when I was wowed at **Rolf's** Blackberry which was the instrument de rigor at the time.

Had a good brainstorming conversation with **Alex Holzman** the other day. **Alex's** last day as Director of the **Temple University Press** is April 30 but he is far from really retiring. **Alex** is planning on going to Turkey for one thing, and he is also going to drive across the country visiting friends on his way to Denver and other environs. But that's not all, **Alex** says he wants to study the relationships and key university players in the scholarly communications ecosystem. Sounds like an ambitious project! (See this issue, p. 60) I also understand that **Alex** has a career as a sports writer, especially baseball. I have to admit that of all the sports, I love baseball the best probably because I used to play and listen to the games with my two brothers as a young girl.

continued on page 25

@Brunning: People & Technology

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

by **Dennis Brunning** (Director, The Design School Library, Arizona State University) <dennis.brunning@gmail.com>

Watch on Publisher's Row: Google Book Settlement

In a lifetime in libraries I've only run up against the law or authority standing in for the law — once or twice. These were in pre-Internet times, which may as well be prehistoric. What I got caught for probably wouldn't be as carefully watched these days.

One faux move was to allow an entrepreneurial student to use rolls of quarters to photocopy sections of a local business directory. He was creating a direct mailing list of potential customers, and this book, thick and full of addresses, well-organized and thorough, was the only source for this information.

The directory wasn't cheap, costing at least \$400.00 each year. It was as thick as a couple of local phone books and unwieldy, especially for photocopying. Most likely the kid had to pencil the entries that didn't reproduce correctly, illegible by the curve created by the binding.

The publisher painstakingly collected the data and produced it on the computer from which they could, for a fee, create mailing lists for customers. In the early pages, in bold print, the publisher also warned users about copying contents. They declared that would violate copyright and said so.

To protect misuse the publisher made surprise and clandestine visits to reserve rooms and copy

centers of library subscribers to police abuse of their directory. If they saw a violation they would simply hand the offender a cease and desist letter.

Of course that kid got caught and handed me the letter for advice on what to do. I didn't say much, just shrugged my shoulders, but ever more I thought — well, someone means business. This thought has stayed with me, twenty years or more, until today.

Recently, we read that on Friday, November 14th, U.S. Circuit Court **Denny Chen** ruled in favor of **Google Inc** in its court battle with the **Author's Guild** on the **Google Book Settlement**. The judge ruled in favor of **Google** that complete scanning of 20 million library books out-of-print yet in copyright was transformative under Fair Use rules of current law.

Judge Chen did not buy the plaintiff's argument that **Google** broke the law by not getting permission from copyright holders to scan their works cover to cover into their databases. He decided the random snippets, produced from a keyword search, did not violate the author's right to ownership of said snippet.

Judge Chen used friend of the court filings — from librarians, researchers, and other book readers that today we need this full-text indexing of library books to use them for research, entertainment, and other bookish uses.

The news media describes our reaction as one of joy. **Larry Page's** brainiac idea of scanning all of the library books of his alma mater, the **University of Michigan**, into **Google's** millions of computers — using an equally versatile scanning machine that **Page** himself

timed and motioned into a 40-minute cycle to photograph the average library book — thrilled librarians all over the world who did not have Web access to such a large collection. The dozen or so big libraries that joined also contributed their special content and in return

got a digital copy and the snippets database. All they had to do was house **Google** scanners (staff and machines).

Then wait a couple of years for the lawsuit to settle. Of course, no one on the **Google** side of things won the right to have a cover-to-cover database of books from time immemorial until that point, yet to be determined, when this second electronic copy falls outside copyright. This reading suggests the growth of the database is limited by a library's reluctance these days to buy print copies. **Google** could continue by buying books, but this may be too bold a move if it is directed at publishers only.

continued on page 10

Now publishers may relent and just give **Google** the electronic copy, but what control is this of their warehouse?

My own problem is what do I do with all the books I own and those in-print books I want to buy from the second-sale bookstores? May I scan them into my own desktops that are gathering dust in my garage? May I run snippets of this information from my own Website that runs on these desktops gathering dust in my garage?

I won't scan the page that in every book declares that I can't put this book into any electronic system for retrieval. You know me, Iowa boy who wouldn't disobey a no-trespassing sign unless it was to retrieve a book thrown by a bully over the barbed wire fence in the farmer's field. I know the farmer meant it, but of course he would have to catch me. **Judge Chen** just took down that trespassing sign, if only for **Google**. Those guys — they walk on water and all over copyright.

Mobile Me: the OS Wars

Progress in genuine mobile platforms for academic eBooks moved slowly. As mobile devices take over the computing market, our people have yet to come up with handy apps to take the reading and research experience over to mobile screens.

The roll-out of Windows 8, **Microsoft's** answer, hasn't helped. If you've bought a Windows 8 device, it's rather brilliant in its blend of desktop and mobile touchscreen, but Windows it isn't. The touch tiles and 64-bit speed create a super-charged interface to an integrated Web environment, especially if one elects to use Office 2013, Internet Explorer all nestled in the software as a services cloud of Skydrive.

Sadly, **Microsoft's** late entry into the crowded on-the-go mobile environment dominated by **Apple**, **Google**, **Facebook**, and **Twitter** did not push sales of its versatile Surface tablet or the Windows Phone, both of which are very enterprise and consumer friendly. Too many of us are sold on our iPhones, iPads, and Android-based products. True, we probably still use Windows at work on our aging desktops and laptops. We don't need Windows 8 to run these.

Microsoft's new marketing strategy highlights how well Windows 8.1 works with the Surface for work, school, and play. They are pitching it as the little black dress, perfect for many occasions.

Unfortunately, this socialization approach was tried before. Several decades past, **Apple** tried to put at least one Apple II or Mac in many elementary and secondary schools. The thought was to get students used to **Apple** computers and encourage parents, school systems, and colleges to use **Apple** computers as the computer of choice in education. You may remember the **Apple** computer sitting, royalty on a throne, in your classroom. Some may have used it but not many. It was the Wintel era where one chip and one operating system and interface dominated.

Now we have a new computing age where there are several platforms which require loyalty. Shift brands and there go your apps, your data, your data contract.

There can be no **Apple**-only educational platform, just as there can't be a **Google** Android platform. And not every kid can own a Surface, which like the other hardware becomes quickly obsolete.

Downloads from the Meh Zeitgeist 2013

"we've become indifferent to our indifference...whatever"

From anywhere in the world...we get it, there's the Internet, and we're all connected; disconnect at your own peril. Perhaps, though, it would prove wise to limit patron book renewals to the old paper system — you know, outside the NSA's Prism...

Open access: If it's another way of doing business, it's smart and forward-looking. If it's not business and just wealth redistribution, well Houston, we have a problem...

Elsevier as diagnosis for what ails STM publishing: it's like going to the doctor and complaining it hurts when I do this — Doctor: don't do that...

Wearable technology: don't even get it started...what next, the wearableBook? Once read, sell it back to My Sister's Closet?

Google barges and other extraordinary sightings: the **Google** Guys rule a sovereign state that launches spaceships, drives (sic?), driverless cars, and engineers life over death. The big question is REALLY?

healthcare.gov — no joking matter, but finally technology that performs worse than the average library hook-up — the problems, though, highlight the problems of technology trying hard to do something complicated more than uploading photos or videos of talented cats.

Discovery Services: Discovery is pitched all through the IT world. The thought is that it's all there online; we just need to find it. It's our war with **Google**. Sadly, the threat down is way beyond orange. There are too many fronts in the discovery wars — vendor vs. vendor, librarian vs. vendor, and at times skirmishes among librarians for which service and its shortcomings will front their collections with the best discovery service.

Digital Life: like virtual life, on the verge of the oxymoronic. Controlled vocabularies

typically drop the conceptual term that defines the vocabulary. There is no need to include "art" as a term in an art index. At least not belabor its use. Besides, ever been to Second Life or Sim City? Right, that's living...

eBooks: let's just call them books. It would save us a syllable, and aren't we all in for time management? It would also drive attention back to the fact that we are in the book business whatever the platform.

Platform Agnosticism: we love it and flaunt its virtues. Why not? Forever we were stewards of a perfect platform, the book, and now we demand the same ease and consistency for our no-shelf-required books. Digital content is as accessible as the software and hardware allows. Differences here are theological difference systems, hardly agnostic.

BYOD: embraced by business, the bring-your-own-device saves money even as it complicates security. In libraries, it only complicates how we accomplish everything for everyone. In those libraries who have eschewed print books we should have BYOB.

Virtual Reference Service: c'mon, its reference with a computer between the librarian and someone who wants to know something. The assumption that it should and can be this way comes from assumptions that users want this. If we just called it reference service we'd have to work harder at the ways we accomplish it. Besides, the virtual librarian looks nothing like Iron Man or RoboCop, so it can't really be virtual.

Big Data: it's more than big, it's huge, gargantuan, fat. And we collect so much of it, and like hoarders, keep it forever to tell us something about right now. "Information wants to be free" becomes "information wants to fill a bottomless super-sized beverage." We are heading toward data obesity...

Librarianship: not Meh but needs rescue, put into all caps and spoken freely and often. Yes, let's remain **Ranganathian** but clue the listener into the special depths of what the guy pointedly wrote all those years ago.

Next Gen: or any version number to stand in for progress: there will always be another generation and another generation...

Eponymous Empires: no sooner did **Microsoft**, **Intel**, and **IBM** lose their historic cachet than we got the empires of **Google**, **Apple**, **Facebook**, and **Amazon**. The mere mention of any one of these seems to freeze thinking into finite patterns: is this all there is? 🌧

Against the Grain Taking Stock ... from page 1

in the initial discussions as well as the current transition, and then gives us her take on what we can expect in the future from eBooks at **ProQuest**.

As we look back over 2013, we have much to contemplate about our future as librarians, publishers, and vendors. Admittedly, we

are confronted by multiple challenges and accelerating change. However, there are also tremendous opportunities to innovate, re-energize, and play the essential roles in information management and delivery that our patrons and customers have come to rely on. For our part, we here at **ATG** are looking forward to keeping the discussion focused on the most relevant issues and reporting on all the late breaking news. 🌧