November 2013

And They Were There-Reports of Meetings

Sever Bordeianu
University of New Mexico

Julia Gelfand
University of California, Irvine

Follow this and additional works at: http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Recommended Citation
Bordeianu, Sever and Gelfand, Julia (1996) "And They Were There-Reports of Meetings," Against the Grain: Vol. 8: Iss. 3, Article 33.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.1924

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.
And They Were There

Reports of Meetings

Column Editors: Sever Bordeianu (U. of New Mexico) <sbordeia@unm.edu> and Julia Gelfand (UC, Irvine)

ATG encourages reports on meetings. Please contact Sever Bordeianu if you are interested in reporting on a meeting or in suggesting a meeting for review by ATG! — KS


Report by Jack G. Montgomery <MONTGOMERY@law.missouri.edu>

Editor's note: Jack wrote this report many months ago. I apologize for my tardiness in running the report and remind you that ATG, February 1996 (v.8#1) ran both Michael Gorman's and John Secor's papers from the 1995 Charleston Conference. — KS

The annual Charleston Conference: Issues in Book and Serial Acquisition held at the Lightsey Conference Center in Charleston, South Carolina was special in that the conference celebrated its fifteenth year and has grown to the point that concurrent educational sessions were employed. Approximately 500 librarians, publishers and vendors from all parts of the United States, Great Britain, Europe, and even Russia gathered to review the many issues surrounding our profession today.

The programs began with the first of three keynote addresses by Laura Gasaway, UNCG School of Law entitled "Copyright: What libraries and universities seek in the electronic environment." Ms. Gasaway outlined four major expectations librarians have for the information age including fair use, browsing capability for electronic titles, increased capacity of interlibrary loans and the ability to create electronic reserves. Ms. Gasaway outlined how each has recently been challenged by governmental agencies who feel the need for a more restrictive informational environment. As an example, a clause within earlier green paper which supported the ability to search/browse electronic titles now has been deleted from the 9/15/95 white paper on "Intellectual Property and the National Information Infrastructure." Ms. Gasaway also indicated that such educational programs as distance learning, common in professional and college extension programs, is threatened by a recent recommendation that ownership of every transmission will remain with the holder of the copyright. Ms. Gasaway's greatest concern was that all statements concerning the public's rights have somehow disappeared from the earlier text and that in the white paper restrictive license agreements could adversely affect the concept of fair use for many years to come.

The next keynote address was presented by Michael Melling of Data Research Associates of St. Louis and was entitled "Objects of Desire: Hype and Hope for Next Generation Systems." Mr. Melling began with an amusing analysis of today's "buzzwords du jour" surrounding the information industry. In his discussion of the term "Z-neophilia" or "fear of the Z39.50 standard, the myth that a) it's not finished, b) it doesn't work, and c) it's too complicated. In reality, no such system/standard is ever finished, tests on location indicate that the standard works and if it's complicated, so are libraries and information in general. With regard to the economics of the Web, Mr. Melling realizes that the complexity of the Net is changing and in fact, we are surfing on a rented boat. Future development will evolve on the interoperability between systems and the growing interdependency of libraries to one another. Mr. Melling indicated we desperately need new paradigms for resource sharing, organization of the Web and a greater role for libraries in the development of institutional systems. Mr. Melling advised us not to be "bulldozed by our institutional computer centers" but to get more involved in such decision-making.

The third keynote address was delivered by Lisa Freeman of the University of Minnesota Press. Tracing the history and traditional role university presses have played in the transmission of scholarly information, Ms. Freeman outlined the rather dismal outlook many university presses face, including the leveling and deduction of traditional university support and the increasing centralization of commercial book vending. As a result, most university presses find themselves becoming more commercial, more committed to desktop publishing, more concerned with the marketability of potential titles often resulting in strained relations with their own university faculty. Citing the commonly held myth that electronic publishing will be cheaper, faster and better for scholarly information, Ms. Freeman stated that most work associated with a text is during the pre-publication stage. She added that shifting the responsibility of editing and production to the author results in lessened quality control and reduces the traditional role of peer review and interdisciplinarity scholarship. Being forced to focus on more commercial titles also threatens the non-profit status of the university press.

After a general discussion session, attendees adjourned to separate meeting rooms for "lively lunches." Lively lunches are 90-minute discussions and presentations. Topics this first day included — International Resource Sharing and Networking, Approval Plan Core Lists, and Outsourcing.

Following lunch, the attendees regrouped for a CEO panel discussion entitled "Takeovers, Mergers, Acquisitions and Failures: Can you buy your way to the future?" CEOs included Bryan Ingleby of Dawson, Jane Burke of Endeavor, Ward Shaw of CARL and management consultant Gerald Garbacz. This part of the program took the form of a question-and-answer session and first centered on the question of reactions to the trend toward the merging of the companies. All CEOs felt the trend would increase as would problems and occasional failures. Mr. Garbacz indicated that most acquisitions of this kind fail because the company is looking for a quick economic or organizational fix. They succeed when the acquisition fills a specific niche and is part of an overall strategy for growth. Ms. Burke also indicated that the successful merging of corporate cultures is another key element to a successful corporate acquisition. She cited the cultural difficulties posed when trying to work with the new emerging cultures of Eastern Europe. After a lively discussion, CEOs discussed the business climate and culture after a merger. After a break, a second CEO panel included Mike Markwith (Swets), Dan Tonker (Readmore), Frans von Eysinga (Wolters Kluwer), Jim Ulsamer (Baker & Taylor) and Fred Philipp (Blackwell North America). At 5PM, the conference officially ended and many conferences attended a 15th Birthday Celebration for the Charleston Conference at the Charleston Visitor Center.

Friday's program commenced with presentations on document delivery by Chuck Hanaker of LSU and on future trends in acquisitions and collection development by Tony Ferguson of Columbia University. At this point, the conference broke up into simulation sessions on topics as diverse as Project Muse, Acqweb and Acqnet, E.D.I.T., and RoweCom Subscribe 96. After reconvening, John Secor of Yankee Book Peddler provided a concise look at "Why some vendors will endure and some will not." Noting the steady decline in new library vendor start-ups, Mr. Secor cited the long-term decline in library budgets, the lowering of publisher discounts to vendors, and the corresponding demand by libraries for greater discounts and services from the vendors. He feels that the future environment will see vendors unbundling their current service packages toward a continued on page 65

<http://www.spidergraphics.com/atg>
charge for each service environment. Librar-
ies must be willing to pay for value-added
services. Mr. Secor feels that we will witness
the demise of several major booksellers and
an increase in strategic alliances between those
remaining, adding that “failure starts at the
top” when we fail to develop a workable
vision for the future.” Mr. Secor advised li-
brary managers to develop similar visions for
their own growth. In the question and answer
session, Mr. Secor’s thoughts were echoed by
the audience that many libraries have also
suffered from a lack of leadership and vision.
Like vendors, libraries, too, need to develop
realistic management goals and strategies for
their implementation.

Friday’s lively lunches centered around
the “Financial Exchange Rates, Approval
Plan Core Lists, Prompt Cat/PromptSelect
and a report on CD ROM Sales by Norman
Desmarais of Providence College in Rhode
Island. Mr. Desmarais cited several industry
studies of the commercial CD-ROM market
which indicate the number of titles available
are not an indicator of market success. To
illustrate, of the approximately ten thousand
CD titles currently available, only 111 of those
titles actually made a profit last year. With an
estimated three thousand new CD titles com-
ing out each year, the competition between
producers is great. Despite these statistics for
commercial titles, professional CD titles sales
topped 1.8 billion in 1994. Problems with CD
titles include no effective method of monitor-
ing usage, slow development of high density
disks and the slow response time of network
CDs. Mr. Desmarais feels that regardless of
the problematic, the CD-ROM industry will
come together and further standardize its
product. He looks to its future with
guarded optimism.

During the afternoon, concurrent programs
focused on such diverse topics as
multicultural acquisitions, setting up a
homepage, weeding, and selection and evalua-
tion of electronic resources. During the last
hour of the day further sessions focused on
buying out-of-print materials, faculty lia-
sions in the electronic age and organizational
problems with Internet resources. The day
concluded with the traditional reception held
at Charleston’s historic Old Exchange Build-
ing and included tours of the 18th-century
dungeon located in the basement.

Saturday’s activities commenced at 7:45
AM with the “Hyde Park Corner Break-
fast” an open forum discussion of diverse
interests of interest. Much of this Saturday’s
discussion revolved around problems with
CD-ROM interfaces and Internet connec-
tivity and the overall marketing of these prod-
ucts. During the first two formal presentations
Tom Leonard (U. of Oklahoma) and Jack
Walsdorf (BNAM) gave seminal, but his-
torical accounts of their adventures in the book
industry and book collecting in general.

After a publisher’s panel on the future of
scientific publishing, the attendees were
entertained, inspired, or annoyed (depending
on their own opinions) by Michael Gorman
of California State University and author of
Future Libraries. Mr. Gorman expressed con-
cern that the “flight into the all digital future is
not well conceived.” Reminding the audience
that “the people of the future will know only
that which we preserve,” Mr. Gorman specu-
lated that “the saddest person in the 21st cen-
tury may be the historian,” given our current
crisis in archival preservation and the myth
that mass digitization of resources will solve
the current needs. Mr. Gorman stated that we
need to move away from what he terms
“bumber-sticker thinking” which fosters catch
phrases such as “access, not ownership”, in
place of critical thinking and review, ignoring
the fact that the best way to provide access is
through ownership. Mr. Gorman outlined that
at the current rate of change the Net attempt to
sell us the myth of access to and presentation of all
materials, the reality is that if we are to provide
access to this resource, we will per-
forn a form of informational triage, selecting
what is most useful and of highest quality
to our patrons. The specter of unenforceable
copyright laws in the electronic environment
will eventually lead to an unwillingness of the
writer to produce what cannot be protected.
We must move from the idea that all that
matters to patrons is information, as such think-
ing can only lead to a post-literate society,
intoxicated with an electronic Tower of Babel
and easily manipulated by those that control
it.

This thought was echoed by the next pre-
senter Clifford Lynch who asserted that a
library is more than a collection of data con-
ected by search links. He likened the current
attempt to call a group of URL:s a library to
collecting every bit of printed information
produced in the last year (including re-

taurant menus, posters, and other ephemeral
materials) and calling it a library. As URL:s
and sites go unmaintained, a form of “link rot”
will settle in. One could witness this phenom-
en already when visiting a site that’s no longer
at that location or hasn’t been maintained in
several months. Mr. Lynch feels that the Net
will become a part of the raw data from which
the new library will be formed, searching must
become more refined so as to provide a deeper,
better quality of information to the patrons.
Mr. Lynch indicated “there is something dras-
tically wrong” with our current generation of
search links like Web Crawler that find links
and process information through some index-

ing mechanism. Such tools operate as if the
entire universe of information is just out there
for the scanning. We have produced an infor-

mation-rich environment with too much rel-

vant information. Consequently, this envi-

ronment will necessitate the development of
new levels of quality review due to the very
basic limits of a human’s attention span and
time to wade through this universe of knowl-
edge. Mr. Lynch posed the question of how do
we integrate such quality assessment into our
information retrieval systems as currently in
our enthusiasm to promote the Net we have
forsaken the message for the medium. Mr.
Lynch asserts that people will demand better
indexing, organization, and quality control of
Internet resources, and that these factors will
dictate the future of the Internet. Whether or
not everyone agreed with Mr. ’s Gorman and
Lynch, they were both entertaining and pro-
vided a welcome balance to the current cli-

tmate of the almost religious evangelism of the
Internet.

The Charleston Conference concluded
with a final open forum on copyright and fair
use. For many attendees, the yearly Charle-
ston Conference provides a comfortable atmo-
sphere for expanding one’s knowledge base,
for meeting with and learning from other pro-
fessionals in our business. As one first-time
conferee remarked, “it’s so nice to be around
a group of people who are interested in the
same things you are.” With its emphasis on a
practical educational experience in an open
egalitarian forum, the Charleston Confer-
ence will remain a valuable resource for Ac-
quisions, Serials, and Collection Develop-
ment librarians, for many years to come.

University of Oklahoma
Libraries Conference,
March, 1995, Norman, Oklahoma

Report by Linda K. Lewis
(U. of New Mexico)

The theme of the conference, held in
Norman, Oklahoma, was “Emerging Patterns of
Collection Development in Expanding Re-
source Sharing, Electronic Information and
Network Environments.” The word that reso-
nated through the presentations was “partner-
ship”; the issues are too complex and too
interrelated for any library to solve alone, so
we must all seek to improve partnerships and
strengthen existing ones in order to thrive —
or even survive.

Harold Billings, University of Texas at
Austin, spoke of the role of librarians in man-
aging information and shaping their local
collections. Resource sharing is not a new topic,
but is becoming more necessary as informa-
tion expands and funding remains stable. Just
as the health care field has moved into man-
aged care, the information field may also move
into managed collecting, with organized pro-
grams such as the ARL Foreign Acquisi-
tions Program that divides responsibility for
collecting by geographic areas. The expan-
sion of electronic resources only adds to the
need for cooperative approaches and for the
definitions of what must be collected locally.

Genevieve Owens, Bucknell University,
used a case study of American Express to
suggest possible steps for libraries. American
Express had been a traditional company, rely-

ing on its image to maintain its earnings. In
the face of intense competition from credit
cards, which created innovative links with
other companies, expanded the services avail-
able, and targeted segments of the market,
American Express saw its market share drop
dramatically. Although libraries may not be
continued on page 66

<http://www.spidergraphics.com/atg>
And They Were There from page 65

losing clients yet, as American Express did, this is a time of transition, and the lessons and eventual rejections of American Express may be relevant. Libraries must recognize the need to meet the challenges and competition of new technologies. Owens suggested that libraries must focus on our users to determine what approaches and services would be most effective. American Express followed others into "co-branding," becoming partners with other companies such as airlines or hotels; they began offering new services; and they began targeting specific services to special customers. In selecting partners, it’s crucial to pick partners carefully so that both benefit and the needs are complimentary. In offering new services, such as Bucknell’s new interactive multimedia CD-ROM collection, you must balance the risks with the benefits. The ability to target services depends on the library’s ability to gather and manipulate data; not all systems have sufficient capability in this area, but libraries should encourage vendors to develop increasingly flexible reporting abilities.

Chuck Hamaker, of Louisiana State University, tossed out Mardi Gras beads to the audience, and then spoke about LSU’s cancellation and document delivery efforts. They asked the science/engineering/agriculture faculty to list the titles needed on site and the titles for which table-of-contents access with 24-hour document delivery was sufficient. The library had about 2/3s of the titles listed by faculty, but didn’t have the other 1/3. The library now knows which faculty members consider which titles important; about 44% of their titles are important to only one faculty member; should that individual leave, the library can re-evaluate the subscription to the title. For the journals wanted by the faculty but not owned by the library, over 20% would become unacceptable with table-of-contents access and document delivery, and those 20% turned out to be the more expensive titles. The faculty also identified some journals that were already owned by the library as ones where document delivery would be fine. The library promised free document delivery for faculty and graduate students for the titles canceled. They have canceled over $600,000 since 1993. In 1994, they asked the faculty to review collections as part of an overall restructuring rather than a cancellation project, in order to support university priorities. They didn’t plan for a cancellation for 1995, but continued to identify some titles as they evaluated collections, so did some cancellations and reallocated funds. It has been a very intensive and time-consuming effort for selectors, and has increased liaison and communication between the library and the departments. The library demonstrated the Reveal service from CARL to departments. They set up an unmediated document delivery service, paid for by the library, for faculty and graduate students, via CARL. This service is managed through their interlibrary loan section; they have not had to add staff there. They had very few complaints, with about a 2% error rate from CARL. In 1994/5, they ordered 2,092 articles from 936 journals, for about $28,000. Of those journals, only about 20 were requested more than 10 times each. It has meant a change in attitudes, and a redefinition of where they are building archival collections. The purpose is service, and an complete run of an unused journal doesn’t serve their patrons. The library now has about 8,500 paid subscriptions, a drop from about 12,000, and purchase about 15,000 to 20,000 books, and they feel they are meeting the research needs of a very active faculty. Hamaker stressed that librarians must have hard facts of costs and delivery alternatives when talking with faculty. In addition to looking at requests of specific faculty, libraries must look at the interdisciplinary and multi-departmental interests that are sometimes missed in traditional reviews by department. Their experience at LSU is in the sciences; it might not work as well in liberal arts areas, depending on the availability of electronic indexing and document delivery. On the other hand, if the science areas, which are the most expensive, can be brought under control, the other areas might be less problematic to deal with. Libraries can no longer ignore the issues of cost-effectiveness.

Kirt Kennedy, of Readmore Academic Services, spoke of partnerships between libraries and vendors, in a talk that included references to John Donne (as the father of resource sharing), who man is an island...), nesting dolls, the Oakland Bay Bridge, and Edith Piaf. You must read this one when the proceedings are published, since I can’t to justice to it. Partnerships, which may take many forms, are crucial for libraries and vendors; those that satisfy the needs of both partners will thrive. It is a delicate balance, but worth pursuing.

Tony Ferguson, of Columbia University, described their use of periodicals price histories to make subscription and cancellation decisions. He categorized periodicals as friendly, i.e., those whose price increases aren’t far greater than the increases of the institutional budget, and unfriendly or predation, i.e., those with increases far higher than that of the institutional budget or national inflation rates. Libraries should look for periodicals that meet the needs of their users, are of high quality, are reasonably priced, and have a history of reasonable price increases. They should avoid periodicals with a history of outrageous price increases. The predation journals take more money, but fund libraries into canceling other titles and preventing libraries from adding newer titles. Columbia used vendor statistics covering 5 years of price histories. They excluded reference titles, then did a sampling of titles in five price groupings. They did find that nearly 2/3s of the titles had increased at the same rate or lower than the rate. They found that the social sciences were even more predatory than the sciences, perhaps catching up with earlier science increases. The science journals may cost more, but the science social increases are as high or higher. They did not find significant differences between foreign and domestic publishers in the number of friendly or unfriendly journals. They did find that most predatory journals are published by commercial publishers. Ferguson recommended his rule of 5: (1) Look back at the pricing history when considering subscriptions; (2) Look at specific titles, not at categories of publishers or even at a specific publisher; (3) Involve the faculty; tell them about the worst cases and tell them about document delivery options for those titles; (4) Tell the publishers that you are canceling, or not subscribing, because of their pricing history. And tell them that you are subscribing in part because their pricing history has been reasonable; (5) Cancel loudly; let the faculty, the library committee, the editor, and the publishers know why. Currently the publishers, vendors and libraries and intertwined, spinning down together; all the games and accusations don’t change the downward fall. Libraries must support the friendly periodicals and publishers, and work together in order to make any impact.

William Stittig, of the Library of Congress, spoke about the role of the national libraries. Most have become widely used, often helped by legal deposit requirements, but budget problems have forced re-adjustments and re-allocations here as well. There is a growing emphasis on networking and on distributed responsibilities for collecting. Changes in government policies, such as charging for many items previously distributed free, add to the pressure for re-allocations. Some are exploring the digitization of their collections, with hopes for global networking; that raises the major problems of access, especially in less-developed areas. The Library of Congress faces these challenges. It has begun distributing responsibilities for collecting, cooperating with the National Library of Medicine and the Agriculture library to reduce duplication, and with ARL’s Foreign Acquisitions Program to narrow the collecting areas. They are reducing serials holdings by cutting duplicates, reducing foreign subscriptions, and getting only one copy of titles also available electronically. They are seeking private funding for special collections. They are committed to digitization, such as the American Memory Project, in order to share resources.

Frederick Lynden, of Brown University, talked about whether the future of electronic information will actually result in resource sharing. There are futuristic visions of universal access to comprehensive data, but how do libraries maintain collections in the 20th century while re-tooling for the 21st century? Libraries are already out of money and space, with no hope of keeping up with inflation in the costs of or amount of information. The future must include more electronic resources and more resource sharing. Electronic resources bring costs, of course, for the equipment, maintenance, staff time and training, and copyright fees in many cases. Resource sharing today may include: coordinated collection development; collaborative collection development; consortial cost sharing; cooperative holding agreements; consortial shar-
And They Were There
from page 66

ing of electronic resources; common interlibrary loan; cooperative or shared storage; cooperative education and expertise; common or linked online systems; and cooperative delivery systems. Real resource sharing means that the requirements of the users are most often satisfied; that the materials are ready when the users need them; that the materials are readily available when the users are looking for them; that savings are realized; that costs are reduced; that resources are increased locally; that resources are shared nationally; that funds can be procured for the partners; that resources complement each other; and that the plan succeeds and remains in place. Resource sharing does seem to be increasing with the growth of technology and information, and partly due to increasing economic pressures. Shared values, shared commitment, and local political realities still determine success.

Although Rebecca Lenzini of CARL UnCover was unable to attend, her paper was presented by a colleague, Ward Shaw, president and founder of CARL Systems, Inc. The paper discussed some of the new players, or partners, in the world of collection development and access. In the past, librarians worked with publishers, serials vendors, book vendors, and online services handling citation databases. Now there are full-text databases, created by companies or individuals; networked CD-ROMs; gateway access services; aggregated services aimed at the home users; individual publishers; individual authors; printers that handle multiple publishers, and probably others. The pricing methods vary widely as well, ranging from charges based on individual transactions to broader licensing agreements. The issues of copyright and royalties are huge. Collection development librarians are now working with many new players, and with many new issues; they must bring their knowledge and skills to the discussions and help shape libraries relationships within this new world.

The weather was cold, and the Oklahoma winds were indeed sweeping down. Over 100 people who heard and responded to the talks, sharing their opinions about very complex issues.

Born To Network: One Librarian’s View of Network+Interop
Las Vegas, April 2-4, 1996

Report by C. Rebecca Garcia
(Product Manager, Ameritech Library Services)
<checky@aol.com>

I remember when I was in library school at UT Austin and I had a chance to attend my first ALA. I had such awe at the size of the exhibit hall and the technology I saw there. I couldn’t believe the access to information that was available and I had never seen some of the stuff that was being shown everywhere. CD-ROMs, online automation systems, online database services ... it was mind boggling. Plus there was all that great free stuff! I’ve grown somewhat jaded in the 12 or so years since that first ALA. Working for an automation vendor, I see the upcoming technology as it is being developed and at the show, I’m the one that smiles and gives out free stuff.

Well, I found another conference that inspires that old sense of wonder and awe. I just got back from Network + Interop in Las Vegas, Nevada and if you are at all interested in the new technology, networking or seeing the future of information access, you should have been there too. This conference is big. Really big. About 600 exhibitors and at least 30,000 attendees big. And networking professionals (or those simply interested in the new technologies) come from around the world to attend this conference.

I heard three keynote speakers: Bill Gates, CEO of Microsoft Corporation, Bob Frankenber, CEO of Novell, Inc., and John Gerdelman, President of Network/MCI Services at MCI Corp. Of the three, John Gerdelman actually had the most visually exciting and well-presented practice. He spoke about the coming technology as he saw it and showed a video from the father of the Internet, Vint Cerf, who predicted that by the year 2000 there will be more users on the Internet than there are people in the world. The reason?

Machines of all types (your car, your fax machine, your printer, etc.) are going to be built with more and more computers inside of them and they will be using the Internet to hook up. Gerdelman sees the convergence of computer and telephone technology as a real growth area. Computer Telephony Integration (CTI or CTI) was one of the most frequently touted new technologies on the exhibit floor (that’s another thing — this show helps you learn bigger terms for everyday things like digital phone instructions).

One prime example of the use of computer telephony that MCI is deeply involved is in call centers that combine telephone instructions with computer databases and personal contacts with experts who can answer questions using sophisticated computer databases. Two examples are the new 1-800-MusicNow service and the Compaq help line. Both services make use of telephone instructions and can terminate with a person at a call center who has simply been hired by that company to answer customer questions. These people are not employed by Compaq; they just answer questions for you about Compaq. Talk about outsourcing!

At this point, Mr. Gerdelman said that 80% of all 800-number calls terminate in one of these call centers. Another area that Mr. Gerdelman discussed in detail was Information Centered Networks, which are, as he put it, the next big thing. These actually tie in with Intrarnets as a network based on the principle of a network-based server as opposed to physical connections to specific servers each containing certain information. In an information-centered network, files can be stored anywhere on a network and the user would not have to know where these files are in order to access them. Using a specific file name (that, by the way, would not be the unintelligible string of letters and punctuation that are currently used as paths to files but instead would be mnemonically meaningful and easily typed), the user could access any file and never know where it resides on a network. We would move from a client/server model (user’s PC being the client and another designated CPU being the server) to a client/network model with the entire network being the user’s domain.

Bob Frankenber’s speech centered on the Novell tag line of everything’s connected. He talked a lot about client network computing and went head-to-head with the Microsoft announcement of its new foray into the email/messaging world with its MS Exchange software. Frankenber announced an offer for those loyal Novell Groupwise clients who choose to ignore the blandishments of MS.

One very interesting concept he mentioned was the big business of renting software applications online simply for use in opening/viewing/utilizing an email message with an attachment from someone who runs a different software package than you might have. He also had a wonderful presentation of wireless connectivity with their mobile product and a wireless communication system.

Bill Gates’ presentation was the one to see and be seen at, however. It was packed, as it always is when this billionaire speaks. For those of you interested in such things, Gates does seem to be dressing better since he has gotten married. As for his presentation, however, it was rather disappointing. The high point of the hour was when the product manager/engineer for the new Exchange integrated email/messaging server software got up and talked about what it was, how it worked, and why it took them so long (six years). Formation market, yet library budgets continue to shrink and the latest Internet search engine receives front page news and millions of dollars from investors. There is much work to be done to actively promote libraries and the true value that they contribute to a city, university or school.

On a lighter note, Richard Lee, cartoonist for American Libraries, shared his experiences and perspective on being a Librarian through his drawings and the perfectly timed delivery of a stand-up comic. He reminds us to find the humor in our work and laugh at ourselves. It is good therapy.

Elizabeth Martinez, Executive Director of ALA, joined the gathering to update the NMLA membership on the programs being initiated and defended on a National level in keeping with ALA Goals 2000. She introduced Adam M. Eisgran, ALA Washington Office, Legislative Council to explain ALA’s leadership role in challenging the Communications Decency Act of the Telecommunications Act, signed Feb. 8. by President Clinton. He also commented on ALA’s involvement with the Digital Future Coalition, advocates for the public’s interest in Intellectual Property issues. Organizers of the conference to be congratulated for a well planned agenda offering a variety of topics of interest to public, school and academic NMLA members.}

<http://www.spidergraphics.com/atg>

June 1996 / Against the Grain 67