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Acquiring Minds Want to Know - Information Policies and Intellectual Property

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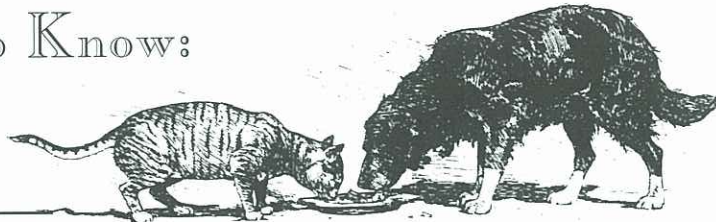
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Acquiring Minds Want to Know: Information Policies and Intellectual Property



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In my last column I gave an overview of the CAUSE conference and promised an expansion on the topics of information policy and intellectual property issues. Let me start with information policies.

As librarians, vendors, and publishers, we deal with information every day, and we have developed policies to govern the acquisition and use of this information. Information policies on campuses have tended to focus on computing issues and information technology. Information policies give a lot of attention to access, security, privacy, abuse, misuse, liability, and the like. Typical examples of the coverage of these policies include access to email and computer accounts, free speech and academic freedom, assignment and use of pass-

Distance education classes strain the concepts of fair use.

words, misuse of another person's account, use of the university logo, storage of information, disallowance for commercial use or personal gain, and so on. Policies usually have provisions for enforcement and compliance. In short, information policies emphasize what is often called "responsible computing."

It follows that many information policies focus on issues associated with hardware and software, not data. This makes sense, since information policies tend to come from computing centers, where their biggest concerns are supporting, managing use of, and providing access to centralized information technology. Intellectual property, which relates more to content and data, has received less attention than issues traditionally associated with computing. This situation is changing, as it is recognized that the more information goes online, the greater the need will be for policies that address intellectual property.

Librarians, on the other hand, have spent less time on technology policies and more on content and intellectual property. This also is changing, for in order to deliver content, librarians are managing more technology; indeed, as we all know, in many cases content and technology are inseparable.

The integration of technology with content, along with the development of the Internet and the World Wide Web, have prompted the merger of policies on information technology and intellectual property rights. While Web policies that focus on the format and look of Web pages predominate, some policies talk about intellectual property rights, particularly in regard to the Web, so copyright and fair use are getting more play.

Old Dominion University is presently developing guidelines on intellectual policy and Web pages. In the process, we are finding that when

content and technology are addressed together in a policy, conflicting perspectives quickly come forward. The ODU Committee is attempting to cover the protection and use of content created at the university and that created by others to which we acquire access rights. In other words, we have three aims: 1) to protect our content and resources from misuse (e.g. protecting personnel records from unauthorized access); 2) to ensure our content does not infringe on the rights of others (e.g. copying any copyrighted content without permission and placing it on our Web sites); and 3) to protect the content of others from improper use in any other fashion (e.g. copying content into term papers or sending articles electronically to a colleague).

Many university services are now Internet-based, and so are our resources. Because their management and creation is so dispersed, it is easy to forget how entwined intellectual property and technology have become. The ease of copying and the potential for abuse of resources and technology suggests a need for stringent policy statements and strong security measures. However, an emphasis on policies and security may be seen to conflict with academic freedom and responsibilities. The ODU committee has disagreed over the wording of a section on personal Web pages on university servers. Since the university may face liability problems if material on the Web is not managed in some fashion, the first drafting of this section accentuated the university's responsibility and right to allocate the resources and space to have personal pages. Some committee members argued against this approach, stating that this conflicted with academic freedom and could lead to the university denying someone space for political or other reasons. At this writing we have not resolved this tension between ensuring academic freedom, protecting intellectual property rights and assuring appropriate use of university resources.

At an institution like ODU, distance education is a driving force behind the deployment of technology in the delivery of course materials. Using the Web is the next big step for delivering courses, virtually without limitations on space and time. The use of the Web for teaching has brought to the forefront several issues: who owns course materials — the faculty member or the university; how does fair use apply to delivering course materials anywhere and at any time; what kind of security must be in place to protect the materials from misuse or improper access; and what can be retained and made available for use at a later date for the same or a different course.

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University Policies Websites:

American University, Computer Use Policy. <http://www.american.edu/70/0/other.depts/ucc/policy.html>

The BYU Intellectual Property Policy. <http://www.byu.edu/~ttdata/intell.html>

Guidelines for Publishing Web Pages at Cornell University. <http://www.cit.cornell.edu/cit-pubs/www/content.html>

Intellectual Property Policy (Johns Hopkins University). <http://www.jhsph.edu/Research/IPG/nspolicy.htm>

Publishing Guidelines for World Wide Web Pages at U of L (Louisville). <http://www.louisville.edu/groups/vpit-www/wwwgd106.htm>

Pulse Policies Affecting Documents and Document Providers: Authors. University of Kansas Medical Center. http://www.kumc.edu/Pulse/puls_pol.html

University of Alberta World Wide Web Task Force. <http://www.ualberta.edy.ca/TRG/taskforce/>

UT Austin Publishing Policies. <http://www.utexas.edu/policies/>

University of Minnesota. Publishing Information on the World Wide Web. http://www.fpd.finop.umn.edu/2/Sec9/Pol291/Publishing_on_WWW.html

Wright State University World Wide Web Policy. <http://www.wright.edu/aboutwsu/publish/webpolicy.html>

Welcome to the University of Kansas Intellectual Property Information and Discussion Site. <http://www.ukans.edu/history/unigov/intela.html>

Articles about policy development:

Covington, Michael A. (1995) Design and Implementation of a Campus Computer Ethics Policy. *Internet Research: Electronic Networking Applications and Policy*. 5(4): 31-41.

Graves, William H., Carol G. Jenkins, and Anne S. Parker. (1995) Development of an Electronic Information Policy Framework. *CAUSE/EFFECT Summer*: 15-23. <http://www.cause.org/information-resources/ir-library/pdf/cem9524.pdf>

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Distance education classes strain the concepts of fair use. Online courses demand online resources, and departments are struggling to provide resources, for example, images for art classes. It is more effective to digitize and provide online access to images; however, it is difficult to acquire rights to images or even to determine who has the rights. Retention and archiving must be dealt with. On the one hand, we need to be sure to archive the important works of the university. On the other hand, we don't want to retain something to which we have no rights.

The nature of these issues demonstrates how libraries and other campus units are grappling with different issues that now overlap. Managing information technology and intellectual property have become the responsibilities of almost every group on campus. Fortunately, librarians have expertise and an abiding interest in protecting rights, so they are ready to speak out and participate in policy development on campus. 🐼

Wandering the Web
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tures; register free.

Greenbook: <http://www.greenbook.org>. Information about market research companies from the NY American Marketing Assoc.

Chain Store Guide Information Services: <http://www.csgis.com> or www.d-net.com/csgis. Directories of retail establishments.

Trade shows: <http://www.industry.net/tools/tradeshows.htm>. Searchable database of 8,000 shows.

MediaFinder Trade Show Calendar: <http://www.mediafinder.com/trade.html>.

Trade Show Central: <http://www.tscentral.com/>.

EXPOguide: <http://www.expoguide.com/>.

Geocities: <http://www.geocities.com/WallStreet/6100>. For research. <http://www.geocities.com/WallStreet/6100/cs.htm>. For customer service ideas

Thomas Register of American Manufacturers: <http://www.thomasregister.com:8000/>.

Food Industry Register: <http://www.tfir.com>.

IANWeb Resources: <http://www.pitt.edu/~ian/resource/thinktk.htm>. Page for institutions think tanks, etc.

Working papers in Economics: <http://econwpa.vvustl.edu/wpawelcome.html>. Full text and abstracts from all over the world <http://www.hbs.edu/knowledge>. From Harvard Business School

Economist jokes: <http://www.eta.fi/>.

Business magazines:

Business Week Online: <http://businessweek.com/>. Archive of articles back to 1994. Abstracts free. Must pay for fulltext.

The Economist: <http://www.economist.com/>.
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Adventures in Librarianship
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Swarms of labeled folk crowd the sidewalks, food joints, tourist shops, and hotels, each taxonomically tagged for easy identification: *Referencium Publicanus Cincinatti*, or *Catalogo Academium Stanford*. Every genus and species is here.

In the convention center, rushing toward some diabolically hidden meeting room, you spot a face rushing the other way. Don't I know her from ... ? from ... ? but you don't have time to think. The exhibit hall, that specialized street fair, that open-air market for library trinkets and hushed deal-making, is even worse. Organized pandemonium. There's the faux-Elvis selling movable shelving. There are the spangled jugglers hawking a system still in development. There's the corridor of US jobbers, so closely packed you wonder if a fight might break out. You grab lunch sitting on carpeted steps leading to some mysterious upper level of the hall. Are the carpets always red, or is that a trick of my memory? Don't I know that guy from ... ? from ... ?

Your first meeting is far below your level. Oh, well. Your second meeting is far above. Darn! But the third ... Ah, the third is just right: a panel of librarians and vendors spilling their experience on just the project you are now designing. Eureka! Overheads and Power Point light shows flash their wisdom in colorful schema, larger than life. You are full of ideas. You are so inspired that later you jot notes all through your lonely dinner.

The next morning you rush to find

the Marriott, or some kindly native to point you in the right direction. Once there, you need "The Appaloosa Room," or is it "Pacific Crest", or "Brandywine." I'm convinced that checking the names of hotel meeting rooms in the OED would paint a spotty but heroic picture of US history — "The Franklin Room," "Ticonderoga," "Bunker Hill Suite."

The good meetings ... Ah, the good ones remind you why you came. They remind you of your very first time, when you were young and breathless, running to every meeting you could possibly make. One speaker looks at you and says, "that's a very good question," and you're on cloud nine for the rest of the day. At another you linger to discuss the issues with three librarians you just met from Seattle, Syracuse, and Sydney. At the end of the day, the moderator asks you to join him and two colleagues for dinner — you have arrived; you are exhausted; you are pleased to belong to a profession so complicated and connected.

As I checked out of my hotel, it began to, literally, rain. Shaking the drops from my hat, I glanced at the taxi driver. Hey, don't I know him from ... ? Could it be the same guy? I sank low in the seat, remembering my rudeness on the way into his fair city. He swerved between three potholes, banging my shoulder into the door. A just punishment.

"Were you in for the convention?" he asked.

I tried to disguise my voice, make it higher-pitched and squeaky. "Yes, sir. I had a great time. This is a wonderful place." 🐼

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