People Profile: Beth Ashmore

Editor
size and structure have different purchasing requirements. There is room in the market for both aggregators and publishers selling direct. Different offerings will have different appeal to different buyers. In any healthy market, there is more than one way to buy the same product. Aggregators have been an essential part of the distribution chain because they enable publishers to focus on what they do best, publishing relevant content, and aggregators enable libraries to focus on what they do best, disseminate and facilitate access to relevant content. The electronic world may seem frictionless compared to that of print but, in reality; the task of innovation in distribution is still a specialized discipline. The role of aggregator will be alive and well for some time to come.

David Bass, SVP of Sales and Marketing, ebrary

This only makes sense if librarians and end-users believe that having to search individual collections is the best use of their time spent finding, indexing, and archiving valuable authoritative content. ebrary believes there is a place for “individual branded collections” and integrated/aggregated collections. It depends on the audience (i.e., academic vs. career colleges) and budgets.

William A. Woisnish, Chairman & Chief Marketing Officer, Knowl Corporation, Knowl Interactive E-Library

Knovel’s publishing model is based on aggregation. Knovel partners with the world’s best science and technical publishers, like Wiley, McGraw-Hill, Kluwer and others, to offer full-text access to their premium titles. So in Knovel’s experience the answer is “no,” we do not see a trend in eBooks of publishers going it alone. The trend we see is aggregation and cooperation.

Lisa Nachtigall, Director, Online Reference Product Development, Oxford University Press

Oxford’s databases have always been viewed as appropriately and affordably priced. Oxford Digital Reference Shelf, our e-reference program, offers libraries a new option for incorporating electronic resources into their collection development programs. This allows the collection development decision to remain with the librarian, while keeping prices affordable.

Bonnie Hawkwood, Program Director, eBook & Distributed Database Programs, Thomson Gale, Gale Virtual Reference Library

There are already a number of eBook models that seem to be working; aggregation is an acceptable model as long as publishers obtain adequate royalties to offset direct purchases.

BORN & LIVED: Born Kankakee, IL; Have lived all over the great state of Illinois; Now settled in the much warmer Southeast.

EARLY LIFE: I grew up in Springfield, Illinois, the Land of Lincoln (sorry Kentuckians) and at one time knew Lincoln’s home like the back of my hand due to numerous school field trips. I have considered being everything from a comedy writer to a veterinarian for stuffed animals (I was 6), however librarianship has come to suit me well.

FAMILY: Two exceptional parents, three beautiful sisters, a couple of goofy brothers-in-law and a niece upon whom the sun rises and sets. I’m thinking of getting a dog.

EDUCATION: BA in Creative Writing from Loyola University Chicago, MS in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois - Champaign/Urbana.

FIRST JOB: Washing dishes for the weekend warriors of the Air National Guard. Needless to say it was character building.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Have worked at Mississippi State University Library and currently at Samford University in Birmingham, AL; Active member of ACRL Instruction Section and current committee chair of their Teaching Methods Committee; Maintain The Researching Librarian Website: http://www.researchinglibrarian.com.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO: Read, go to the movies, travel endlessly to my sisters on the phone.


POLI PEEVES/WHAT MAKES ME MAD: People taking things too seriously and allowing me to do the same.

PHILOSOPHY: If it ain’t fun, it’s funny.

Most Meaningful Career Achievement: Having a career at all. I have done much better than I ever thought I would.

Goal I Hope to Achieve Five Years from Now: Getting that dog.

How/Where Do I See the Industry in Five Years: Five years from now I think the library world will seem pretty much the same, at least philosophically. The fact is libraries have always been in the business of saying “You can’t find what you need?” Let me help.” No number of search engines and databases is going to change the fact that people still can’t find things that they need. If you doubt that, do some laundry. I guarantee a sock will go MIA while I don’t know that we will go into the sock business anytime soon, I do think we will continue to be in the business of finding things with and for people. The tools to do just that will just keep getting bigger and better.

Question 6: Mick O’Leary has commented that institutional customers, not individuals, are a clear eBook trend (“eBook Scenarios Updated,” Online 27, no. 5, Sept/Oct 2003, p59, 2p). To what extent will libraries be involved in the success of eBooks? Furthermore, how can libraries affect the evolution of the eBook industry?

Ronald G. Musto and Eileen Gardiner, Project Directors, ACLS History eBook Project

The future of the eBook is very much tied to libraries. Librarians are involved in the success of eBooks both through their internal development efforts and by subscribing to the resources that they feel worthwhile. The ACLS History eBook Project is unique in that it was created by librarians working with scholars and scholarly societies — the goal was to create a resource that made sense in the library world. Librarians are key to the future of eBooks. They offer and monitor constantly the widest variety of e-resources on a level playing field and are therefore best positioned to speak to the needs of eBook users and the quality of solutions.

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