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

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

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**Papa Abel Remembers**

from page 65

in the late 1960s, I made the first of several strategic errors, which badly hurt the firm. Increasingly, my time and attention were turned to matters of finance, personnel, and similar “executive housekeeping” concerns. I was far more interested in dealing with books, ferreting out internal and library problems, and developing systems to solve them. As I became aware of my growing disinterest and diminishing involvement in the “executive” things, I should have sought a first-class manager, who enjoyed and was good at “executive” responsibilities. I should have fallen back to a bibliographic and systems (manual and software) research, design, and implementation position. I failed to do this because I saw so much developmental work ahead and thought it the role of the “executive” rather than a staff member to carry out that development. In retrospect: too bad.

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**A Book with a View**

Let’s Vook.

Founded in 2008 by Brad Inman, Vook’s goal is to blend story-telling with words to story-telling in video, connecting author and reader through words, image, and social networking.

Vook’s idea is to create a new media experience. Books are not books anymore but a reading experience. Take the Kafka Stories Vook. Vook commissioned two European film-makers, Michel Franchetti and Adad Warda to write and direct thirteen video documentaries that accompany each story. Stories like Metamorphosis are accompanied with documentary detail in iPhone, iPad, and Web browser format.

The e-commerce part is easy — can we imagine otherwise? Vook takes the major credit cards, has you fill out the pertinent information as you setup MyVook. Once submitted, an email confirms your purchase, and you’re good to go.

Text displays on the right, and the first video is on the left. You click thumbnails to advance videos. You can watch, read, mix (watch and read), or connect to social networking — mostly reading groups.

The Kafka Vook’s first video introduces us to modern Prague street scenes. Soon, with the voice over of a Professor of Kafka, we learn about Kafka’s childhood, upbringing, and education. The style is the familiar documentary — expert talks over still and moving images — mostly reading groups.

Users expecting links between text and video — or content and explication de texte — will be disappointed. In the text there are links from words or concepts to Wikipedia entries.

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**Where the Wild Things Are**

Where the Wild Things Are eBooks December 2010

Ssh! After a hungry 2009 where a mighty appetite for all things “e” couldn’t be satisfied, 2010 slowed down. Time to digest.

**Kindle** — New Kindles — smaller, trendier, cheaper, appeared on the market. At $139.00 you can buy a wifi model, thinner and sexier than version 2. $189.00 will buy a standard 3G/ wifi model. The marketing angle: you can read with this one anywhere, the beach, the subway, in the air. The bigger story: the Kindle Store dominates eBook market despite Barnes and Noble E Book Store and iBooks for the iMachines. And the Kindle app brings Kindle to almost any device.

**iPad** — Millions have sold since the April 2010 debut. 300,000 sold in the U.S. in the first month clearly outing all the early adopters and clearing the way for the followers. The big question: will it deliver major newspapers and magazines back to profit? Major publications have jumped on board with fantastic apps that deliver enhanced versions of print editions. Clearly, the iPad is more fun than the dedicated readers. On a Kindle you can only read about drag racing; on the iPad you drag.

**Google Book Settlement** — All is Quiet on the U.S. front as His Honor, Danny Chin, failed to rule on GBS. The groundbreaking case, with its new take on copyright, got hung up with federal concern over, well, copyright. Iced it down well through the summer, and now it’s winter.

**Hachette Job — Google** settles with Hachette to not violate French copyright law and “partner” with Hachette in the scanning, searching, and sell of books. The agreement breaks to the favor of Hachette: they will determine what will be scanned, searched, and sold by Google and what will merely be “discovered” there. Apparently Google Book Settlement, unsettled still in the U.S., doesn’t translate into French. Droit d’auteur prevails.

**E Textbooks** — Textbook barrier may be broken by the stitching together of textbook and course content — cheaper for students? It will seem cheaper...

Perhaps the biggest motive to go e is the big push by higher education into online. More popularly known as “college in pajamas,” online students need everything on the desktop. Think about it, with every e-text you get a coupon for Abercrombie and Fitch for the sleepwear of your choice.

**Patron-Driven Book Selection** — Far from this Madding Crowd, academic eBook publishers press forward with new collection development models that put customers in control. Patron-driven collection development allows users to select content under the watchful eye of librarians who used to do this. The idea is very Ranganathanian — get ‘em what they want, when they want it. Time is saved, money even; whether or not it builds collections is the very unRanganathanian question.

**E Apps** — Perhaps the most interesting development this year is the steady growth of magazine and newspaper for the browser and reader devices. These are special versions developed by electronic publishing companies like Zinio and ReadView to join print and digital in a unique reading experience. The industry hopes to renew interest in paying for their medium (both in subscriptions and higher advertising rates) and reverse a decline engineered by the Internet. As librarians we can only hope that these new and improved products become part of our market, reversing a decline in our own tired and tried versions sold to libraries. The breaking point: will consumers return to reading magazines in apps beyond the superficial interest consumed by clicking and moving on?

As we go to press...

Shh...don’t disturb the kids and their video games. Let the adults have another Shiraz...

Google Ebookstore has arrived just before
Christmas. Guess Serge and Larry thought the world more nice than naughty because it is pretty neat. More about this new wrinkle in the eBook tug of war in our next issue. 2010 got a teeny bit more wild...thanks Google Guys!

Your Links:
http://www.zinio.com/ and www.realview.com — Check out e-magazine apps…
http://paidcontent.org/article/419-google-and-hachette-livre-reach-book-scanning-deal/ — Your expert in paid content analyses the Google Hachette deal…

Predicts for 2011…
• Private Sector accountants cautiously optimistic that their sector is in recovery. Education — well, this recovery always trails a return to profitability where money is made and not just spent. Some bean counters fear the shoe has yet to drop for those of us who just use money. Oops — let’s hope all that early cutting was not just the vig. Solution: we have the answers, now let’s make apps.
• Google’s “Sue us, we’re Microsoft” problem just grows and evolves...everything from net neutrality, privacy, copyright, sovereign operations, Rupert Murdoch, hacking androids — like the Vandals outside the Gates. Will hire Gates as Sherman Anti-Trust consultant.
• GBS judge, Danny Chin, will emerge from chambers only to not see the eBook which casts no shadow — more befuddlement in the digital book realm...
• Open Access will remain open. Plans to temporarily close for inventory shelved in favor for more access to access about open access. On the horizon another OA: Open Authorship. First entry in Wikipedia flagged as stub nab.
• Bowerbird retires donating personal digitized collection available on BitTorrent. Becomes de facto national online library as Google lawyers waive off GBS in favor of moneymaking projects.
• ALA continues lukewarm interest in National Digital Library; they want more than one subscription to American Libraries.
• As library vendors go to the cloud, concerns mount. How high should they go? Some suggest sidling up to the Dali Lama for a Tibetan location, more modest figure the mile-high city to be less symbolic but more secure. Now that we trust the cloud, do we get religion?
• Librarians, befuddled, bedazzled, bored, will drop “customer” and return to “patron.” Patron — because it sounds better and gifts former customers with librarian skills; at some point librarians will become patrons themselves, and we will move forward to the patron-driven library (backseat drivers do not need to apply).
• “Why pay?” becomes the sixth Rangathan principle. Librarians in the field breathe a sigh of relief — it will not be on the next test.
• Lost in Stacks — Searchlight announces new sequel to Sofia Coppola’s Lost in Translation. It will be a romantic comedy about another lost world — library stacks. Two bookish types lose themselves and get lost in the stacks. First joke: call-for-help phone rings to local pizza joint.
• The vocabulary of librarianship will continually morph to a language preferred by a new generation of users. Links will be served up instead of books and articles. Lending, a term compromised by the subprime debacle, will lose purpose as an assumption of everything on the Web becomes canon.

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Reports of Meetings — 2010 SALALM and 29th Annual Charleston Conference

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SALALM (Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials) Annual Conference — July 23-27, 2010, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island

Reported by Claire-Lise Bénau (University of New Mexico)

The 2010 SALALM Annual Conference was hosted by Brown University in Providence, RI, from July 23rd to the 27th. This year’s theme was “The Future of Latin American Library Collections and Research: Contributing and Adapting to New Trends in Research Libraries.” In his welcoming address, Richard Snyder, Director of the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at Brown, remarked that when he looked at 20 years of SALALM themes, the words Change, New, Adaptation, and Transformation have been a steady feature of SALALM programming. Still, he pointed out that he was impressed by SALALM’s “truly new” activities: a “Smoothie Time” sponsored by the Libreros (Bookdealers) and a “Haagen-Dazs Ice Cream Social” sponsored by Gale-Cengage.

SALALM (Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials) brings together Latin Americanists, Librarians, and “Libreros” at an annual event, and keeps them connected through publications and electronic communications, especially business transactions, throughout the year. At the annual conference, the Libreros set up a large book exhibit, and librarians have the opportunity to discuss business with their respective vendors. Both groups are an integral part of SALALM and participate in discussions, panels, and of course, enjoy each other’s company at the conference receptions.

We were fortunate to have Deborah Jakubs, Duke University Librarian, as the keynote speaker. Ms. Jakubs is a past SALALM president and was a very active SALALM member for many years. In a thought-provoking address, she discussed old worries, like area studies librarianship, and new worries — archiving full-text, diversity of models for digital dissemination and how digital acquisitions impacts print acquisitions. She outlined library goals — improve users’ experience and understand users’ research needs, provide digital content, and develop new research and teaching partnerships. Finally, she highlighted two major trends: the library’s engagement beyond the walls of the library and an integrated and teaching partnerships. Finally, she highlighted two major trends: the library’s engagement beyond the walls of the library and an integrated and teaching partnerships.

Because technology plays a foremost role today, bibliographers have lost the prestige they once had. Cooperation with other research libraries, which is one of bibliographers’ crucial models, is in jeopardy because digital rights and restricted licensing go against the idea of sharing. He clearly delineated four levels of collecting: core materials to support the curriculum; a record of scholarship, such as materials published by university presses, think tanks, and scholarly associations (a huge body); blogs and popular magazines (a big universe); and raw data (measured in bytes). The cooperation thread was picked up by James Simon from the Center of Research Libraries. He presented data about collections from major U.S. research libraries which show that collaboration is selective and shallow and that ARL libraries only have holdings for a bit over half of Latin American imprints in WorldCat (57%).

Ken Ward and Patricia Figueroa, curators of the De Soto exhibition at Brown University, were part of a panel called “Challenges in Special Collections from the Inquisition to the Digital Age.” Ken Ward presented a paper on Melchor Pérez de Soto, Mexican astrologer and architect, whose collection consisted of nearly 1,600 books. He discussed De Soto’s collecting interests which got him in trouble with the Inquisition and which led to his arrest in 1655. Brown University Libraries owns half of the titles collected by De Soto. SALAMISTAS had a chance to view these books at the John Carter Brown Library reception. Paloma Carbajal from the University of Wisconsin at Madison discussed the “Cartonera” project at her institution. This publishing movement — a challenge to the publishing establishment — began in Buenos Aires in 2003. Cartoneras are books whose covers are different, while the content is the same; the cardboard covers of cartoneras are hand-painted by anonymous people or by known artists. Cartoneras are cheap and designed to be read by all — it is ironic that they are housed in special collection department in U.S. libraries. Andrew Ashton from Brown University brought the panel discussion into the digital age. He gave an enlightening presentation on how to engage students fully with digital resources. He discussed some interesting examples of how students and professors can add value to Brown’s digital collection of Latin American travel accounts.

The Pecha Kucha panel, which consisted of quick presentations by five people, covered what’s new at LANIC at the University of Texas at Austin, new tools for cross-campus collaboration at Tufts University, federated searching at HAPI and data visualization at UCLA, and bibliographic commons at Indiana University, Bloomington. Cataloging trends were also devoted a panel. John Wright from Brigham Young University discussed the shortcomings of cooperative cataloging which has not realized its full potential, the use of vendors for obtaining MARC records, and cataloging benchmarks at his institution. Ana Cristán of the Library of Congress gave a presentation on RDA (Resource Description and Access, the long awaited successor...