Publisher's Profile -- BEP

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But, despite this general trend, one would without much doubt, on any large scale, imagine the contours of debate, should the idea get so far as to enter the mainstream of our political discourse. Altogether a deliciously complicated scene, as the contexts for all this content get worked out in the wake of the recent voiding by a federal court of the Google Book Settlement.

For those of us who play on smaller stages, in some ways it’s not so very different. If your organization sells eBooks that means you might work for a book vendor, a bookstore, an online bookseller, or for Google; or for a serials vendor, a database vendor, or a publisher; or for an aggregator, maybe commercial and maybe nonprofit; or for a network or consortium. While your content may be similar your context won’t be, and everyone is trying to find the right combination. Your competitor today might be your partner tomorrow. Or the reverse. Or it might be hard to tell one from another.

For librarians, the job is to figure out which combinations will work best. Which ones will stick and which will fall apart. Difficult questions and another of those things they didn’t teach you in library school. It’s been so long for me, though, how would I know? Maybe they do teach it today, and if they do, I should go back and take the course — most likely, online.

**Vendor Library Relations**

Can for his “National Digital Library” proposal, where the aim so far seems to be to serve as gadfly to the others.

Lots and lots of content there, and many millions of books already online thanks to Google. OCA, and Hathi. But, despite similar missions and overlapping content and principals well-known to one another, we have five different online contexts being presented. Four are wary, in differing degrees, of Google and of commercial underpinnings in general. One of those four plays ball with Google but one would call that game off. Two have roots in large universities, and while our major academic institutions are often beloved by alumni and their NCAA fan base, mega-universities in general would without much doubt, on any rating scale of love and trust from the larger public, underachieve if compared to Google, the business whose commercial motives it’s the business of these others to counter with their own more altruistic aims. Then the two “national digital library” initiatives, in their early arguments, have both mentioned “lobbying Washington” as a way to go, and one has referred to a “national information stimulus plan.” When it comes to public love and trust, we all know where the federal government stands these days for many outspoken Americans, and can imagine the contours of that debate, should the idea get so far as to enter the mainstream of our political discourse. Altogether a deliciously complicated scene, as the contexts for all this content get worked out in the wake of the recent voiding by a federal court of the Google Book Settlement.

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