The Saltire Centre at Glasgow Caledonian

Library Systems: Synthesise Specialise Mobilise

Turning the Pages
CONTENTS
NEWS 35
TURNING THE PAGES 39
BEST OF THE BLOG 44
DVD & VIDEO NEWS 46
CINERGY UPDATED 49
REVIEWS 51
LIBRARY SYSTEMS: SYNTHESISE SPECIALISE MOBILISE 56
TECHNOLOGY ROUNDDUP 60
SALTIRE: A LEARNING BUILDING – A BUILDING TO LEARN FROM 62

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Adam Matthew Digital Launch

Adam Matthew Publications, an independent scholarly publisher based in Marlborough, has recently launched Adam Matthew Digital.

In its 17th year, the publisher will bring an established reputation for primary source material, with a strong presence in university research, to the task of creating major online collections.

Based on the latest digital technology, the first 14 digital titles will provide students and academics with over a million pages of source material. The image above is from Empire Online, which is one of a portfolio of titles which includes:

- China: Trade, Politics and Culture, 1793-1980
- Defining Gender, 1450-1910
- 18th Century Journals I and II
- Everyday Life and Women in America, c1800-1920
- Literary Manuscripts
- Macmillan Cabinet Papers, 1957-1963
- Perdita Manuscripts I
- Slavery, Abolition and Social Justice, 1490-2007
- Virginia Company Archives
- Women in the National Archives

The source material for these collections is taken from libraries and archives throughout the world, with many major collections represented.

Search facilities will be sophisticated. Users will have access to transcriptions in their original layouts, as well as being able to work with interactive chronologies and maps. The use of ancient manuscripts will be facilitated by powerful metadata.

For librarians, Adam Matthew is planning to provide free MARC 21 electronic records for all its digital collections, with coverage of the following collections already in the pipeline:

- Eighteenth Century Journals II
- Empire Online, Section I-V
- Everyday Life and Women in America, c1800-1920
- Macmillan Cabinet Papers, 1957-1963

All of these records are downloadable free of charge to Adam Matthew customers.

Behind the scenes, secure servers are maintained by Rackspace in London. Both pdf and jpeg formats are available, and Adam Matthew says that the best browsers for access to its collections are Internet Explorer 6, Firefox VI, Safari, Opera and Netscape 8.

The facility can be customised easily and integrated with other databases, and there are both 360dpi grayscale and jpeg images. Archival copies are available on DVD.

The pricing structure is straightforward, with a single purchase charge, and the user licence is based on the RLG model.

Support is via a dedicated team which is well-equipped to handle both technical and general queries and problems.

The consultant editors who contribute their expertise to the programme are drawn from the world-wide scholarly community, and they are supported by UK-based IT specialists, part of whose brief is to advise on new technological developments and update the systems. Behind it all lies 17 years of experience in scholarly publishing, and exacting standards and skills. There is a website at http://www.amdigital.co.uk.

Currently, Adam Matthew is offering month-long trials free of charge. These are available to universities, colleges and other academic institutions. During the trials, access details, which can be via IP or password, may be used by anyone in the institution. Students can also enjoy the free trial, but course leaders or library representatives must register on their behalf.

Empire Online is Adam Matthew Digital’s best seller. This world history resource has been completed by the release of Section V: Race, Class, Imperialism and Colonialism, c.1607-2007.

The focus of the content is on population movements, 19th Century exploration, and concepts of race, colonialism and national identity. Appropriately, and with topical interest, Ian and Yaël Fletcher have provided a contemporary analysis of America and Imperialism from the late 19th century to the Iraq War of the 20th.

There are also some new features in Empire Online:

- The front end has been upgraded
- Functionality is better
- There are more options for viewing images
- The bibliography has been brought up to date
- There are new links to other web sites which cover the Empire.

The entire resource makes use of thousands of images – many of which are drawn from unique source material including maps, manuscripts, pamphlets, paintings, drawings and rare books – and which were created over five centuries. They range from a translated version of the story of Columbus’s voyage of 1492 up to major current literature.

Medieval Travel Writing brings together a range of original medieval manuscripts containing accounts of both real and imaginary travel in the Middle Ages.

The journeys include adventures in The Holy Land, India and China, and the resource covers medieval attitudes to race, economics, trade, militarism, politics, literature and science.
The collection also has a European perspective. Highlights include:

- The journeys of Prester John, Marco Polo, Sir John Mandeville and John Capgrave
- Translations and supplementary material, with interactive maps showing the routes of the travellers
- Essays by leading authorities

Women in the National Archives is a guide to the resources on women’s studies in the National Archives at Kew. Also part of this release is some original material covering the Suffragettes throughout the British Empire.

This collection is the result of a project by Kew-based staff, and is said to be the most detailed and wide-ranging web resource available on this and related topics. Of particular note are:

- The Suffragettes campaign in Britain from 1903 to 1928
- The subsequent movement for suffrage in the Colonies between 1930 and 1962

For this resource, Professor Martin Pugh has set the scene in an introductory essay which links directly to many of the documents.

Mass Observation Online is probably one of the most significant resources to be made available by Adam Matthew Digital. The Archive of Mass-Observation, a pioneering social research organisation, has been described as a “treasure trove”, an invaluable resource for sociologists and cultural historians and a fascinating source of precious data for researchers across the widest range of disciplines.

It has been used by anthropologists, cultural and social historians, literary scholars, performance artists, sociologists, and those working in education, war studies and gender studies – all of whom testify to the richness of this resource, which opens up a seemingly limitless opportunity for essays, project work and fresh research. The project offers:

- A complete set of the File Reports, 1937-1972, with full text searching
- Access to all of the Day Surveys, Directives and Diaries, 1937-1940
- Seven previously unpublished Topic collections covering Famous Persons, Household Budgeting, Juvenile Delinquency, Korea, Peace & the Public, Radio Listening and World Outlook
- Nine contextual essays by leading scholars describing the archive and suggesting research and teaching strategies
- Photographs by Humphrey Spender, interactive maps, and much valuable supporting material

China: Trade, Politics and Culture, 1793-1980 (above right) provides a range of comprehensive, clear, intelligible and informative English-language sources relating to China and the West, covering the period from 1793-1980. These can be used in the classroom or in course packs.

The material is also ideal for independent projects on almost any aspect of Chinese history over two centuries of social and political upheaval, leading to the emergence of China as a modern power. It comprises:

- A large body of maps, paintings, photographs and drawings depicting people, places, customs and events which will enliven any study of China.
- Papers of individuals involved in the Chinese Maritime Customs service, from the Bowras to Robert Hart and Frederick Maze.
- Records of diplomatic missions to China from the late 18th and early 19th century missions of Macartney and Amherst to Nixon and Heath in the 20th century.
- Papers of missionaries active in all regions of China from Canton and Macao to Shanghai and Peking.
- A complete, fully searchable run of the Chinese Recorder between the years 1867 and 1941
- Recently opened files, from the National Archives at Kew, covering the thawing of relations between China and the west in the 1970s.

Adam Matthew’s website, with full details of all the resources and the free trial period, is at: http://www.amdigital.co.uk

A forward-thinking primary school in Gloucester is using Hitachi interactive whiteboards to enhance teaching across the curriculum, and to implement innovative initiatives such as Wake And Shake!

Picklenash Primary School in Gloucester – praised by OFSTED for both its secure and happy teaching environment and its strong commitment to standards – began to look at the possible use of interactive whiteboards as a way of creating a range of new and interesting learning opportunities for both pupils and teachers, and of strengthening its commitment to providing a well-rounded education.

The school felt that the user-friendly nature of interactive whiteboards would allow even the most technophobic of teachers to feel at ease in using them to enhance classroom lessons.

In turn, the pupils would be able to enjoy many of the well-documented benefits of the interactive whiteboard, including absorbing more information more easily, becoming more actively involved in the
learning process and being able to work collaboratively.

Having made the decision, the school embarked on a comprehensive review of products from the major players in the interactive whiteboard market. At the end of the three month long review process, they decided they would introduce Hitachi whiteboards into every classroom, and a Hitachi projector in the main hall.

“We chose Hitachi for several different reasons,” said Amy Voss, PE Coordinator at Picklenash. “Hitachi provided us with the leading technology we were looking for and all the reassurances which a big brand offers, at a price which we could afford. Finance is an important part of running any school, and the Hitachi package represented real value for money.”

Picklenash’s close links to the community also played a part in the decision process. “Choosing Hitachi allowed us to employ local people to install the kit and teach us all how to use it. We are very much a community school, and we felt really positive about involving local people in the project, as opposed to bringing in engineers from a large company, which we felt may have been a little clinical,” she continued.

Staff at Picklenash felt that although the motivational power of interactive whiteboards was widely accepted, the real advantages lay in their innovative possibilities. Most users understood the convenience of saving notes for other presentations, but Picklenash teachers felt that using whiteboards in the old-fashioned way would be a waste of the potential of the technology, and this was something the staff wanted to exploit to the full, in an imaginative way.

It was not simply a case of using the interactive whiteboard to enhance lessons across the curriculum, but applying the technology in support of a number of innovative projects.

The first of these was the introduction of Wake and Shake! workshops throughout the school. Wake and Shake! is an initiative designed to help schools hit their targets for physical activity and health. It involves simple, repetitive aerobic exercises set to music. The school is currently using the Hitachi whiteboards to display the exercises which children and teachers follow in their classrooms every afternoon.

“The common perception of technology is that it encourages children to be sedentary, so we really liked the fact that the interactive whiteboard was so crucial to the success of a Wake and Shake, and that the children and teachers have great fun,” said Voss. “The whiteboards have enabled us to involve all of the school at once, and consequently Wake and Shake! has quickly become an accepted part of school life.”

The school has derived real benefits from the implementation of the Wake and Shake! programme, including improved fitness, greater concentration and positive feedback from both pupils and teachers.

Yet Picklenash’s plans for the interactive whiteboard do not end with Wake and Shake! The next stage will be the integration of the technology into the school’s Comenius project activities. Comenius is an international project designed to establish the foundations of international understanding, cooperation, harmony and friendship, through partnerships with schools across the world. Picklenash has partner schools in four European countries, and has welcomed language assistants from Spain and Poland to the school for six month periods, while living during this time in the houses of parents.

“We are really committed to Comenius, and our activities so far have helped extend and enhance the education of our pupils. The interactive whiteboard will allow us to take it one step further as, providing our partner school has the technology, we will be able to set up videoconferences with international schools, and share work and ideas in a realistic manner and in real time. This is going to be an exciting experience for all pupils involved, and we hope it will provide them with a powerful insight into each other’s communities – this is simply not possible from normal lessons,” Voss said.

The introduction of the whiteboards at Picklenash has also improved the variety and content of standard lessons across the curriculum. “Every subject benefits from the interactive whiteboard. For example: in ICT we no longer have pupils crowding around one screen for a demonstration; in maths the class can play numeracy games; in English we can access internet resources which we can use as part of the lesson… the list goes on. Suffice it to say that the interactive whiteboard has quickly become an integral part of teaching at Picklenash and the teachers love it because the kids are so enthusiastic about it. I have even heard it described as a Godsend.”

These benefits have led Picklenash to credit the Hitachi whiteboard with improving standards and attainment across the board, and its benefits extend beyond enriched lessons and collaborative projects. “We have certainly experienced benefits which we weren’t expecting, such as reducing the time taken to engage children with learning tasks. The start of every lesson is no longer necessarily about handing out books or worksheets, and this really gets the children focussed and settled far quicker.”

This has led to the associated benefit of reduced photocopying. “Like many other schools, we are committed to reducing waste and recycling. The interactive whiteboard has supported this by helping us save a substantial amount of paper – a queue to use the photocopier, once so common, is now virtually a thing of the past.”

Picklenash teachers and children have seen the advantages of using interactive whiteboards to create exciting, entertaining lessons which engage the attention of the children and help them learn, and there appears to be no limit to what the school could achieve with this technology. Any school using an interactive whiteboard simply as a glorified whiteboard is failing to capitalise on the opportunities it offers.

Voss felt that technically, the clarity of colour and definition on the Hitachi whiteboards is excellent, and this, together with the extent of the content available, helps to keep the children more focused and interested. Picklenash will continue to look at ways of further integrating the interactive whiteboard into teaching and the everyday life of the school.
TechXtra Expands its Services

**TechXtra**, the free service for finding material in engineering, mathematics and computing, has added a bundle of new sources to its cross-search. It is now possible to search across 31 major collections (over 4 million items) for articles, eprints, technical reports, books, theses & dissertations, teaching & learning resources, the latest industry news and job announcements and other information.

In addition, TechXtra has set up a partnership with GlobalSpec to offer a free Patents and Standards search facility. They have also increased the coverage of the OneStep Industry News and Job Announcement services by adding numerous new sources.

There are new, free, trade magazine subscriptions available, and enhancements to make the service easier to use have also been put in place. The new collections now covered by TechXtra’s cross-search are:

- Emerald – a well-established publisher of academic and professional literature. TechXtra indexes a subset of Emerald Journals relevant to Engineering & Materials Science. Around 6,000 articles are indexed from approximately 15 journals. Full text content is available to Emerald subscribers, or by pay-per-view.
- JORUM – a searchable repository of learning and teaching resources for academic and support staff in the UK. TechXtra indexes around 1,500 JORUM objects. An Athens username and password are required to access the actual resources.
- Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) Virtual Library. TechXtra indexes a sample subset file from the ICE Virtual Library of papers produced between 1836-1998. Over 5,500 papers are indexed (including the Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers). Full text content is available by subscription, or by pay-per-view.

These new resources join arXiv, CISTI, CiteSeer, DOAJ, InSpec, SCI, and NASA Technical Reports, and many more in the TechXtra cross-search. For a full list of the collections covered by TechXtra, see: http://www.techxtra.ac.uk/index.html?

Many new feeds have been added to TechXtra’s OneStep News service at http://www.techxtra.ac.uk/onestepnews/ giving this even wider coverage of breaking industry news. Over 5,000 of the latest industry news items are currently listed. The new feeds include:

- Platts – Nuclear, Metals, and Electric Power news.
- Building Design & Construction News
- IEEE Spectrum
- Brightsurf Science News
- PhysOrg News
- SPIE NewsRoom
- Control Design News
- Wireless Net News

OneStep Jobs, which gives access to the very latest new job announcements, has also increased its coverage, at http://www.techxtra.ac.uk/onestepjobs/. Over 7,000 new jobs are currently listed. New sources include:

- 1Job
- Resource Personnel – Oil and Gas Jobs
- CV – Library
- iMechanica Jobs

Various free trade magazine subscriptions are available via TechXtra’s Magazine Subscription section at http://techxtra.tradepub.com/. Titles are available to professionals who qualify, and the subjects covered include:

- Construction – over 30 additional titles, including the following: Composites Technology, Construction Equipment, Landscape Construction, Consulting-Specifying Engineer, Professional Builder, all to be found at http://techxtra.tradepub.com/?pt=cat&pa ge=Cons
- Internet – 30 white papers, guides and newsletters, at http://techxtra.tradepub.com/?pt=cat&pa ge=Inet

Various enhancements are being made to the TechXtra service interface, making it considerably easier to use. TechXtra’s subject focus makes it an ideal finding tool for technology and technology-related materials. In the majority of cases, the full text of items...
found through TechXtra is available without charge. This includes 8,000 Australian theses, nearly half a million articles in computer and information science from CiteSeer, items found via ARROW, which is Australian Research Repositories Online to the World, thousands of arXiv eprints covering mathematics and computer science, 300 earthquake engineering technical reports comprising part of Caltech Earthquake Engineering Research Laboratory Technical Reports, many articles from the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), theses and dissertations from NDLTD, learning resources from the National Engineering Education Delivery System (NEEDS), and other sources.

TechXtra is a free service, developed at Heriot Watt University in the UK. They receive no external funding for their development, so the service relies on word of mouth and other forms of free publicity to raise its profile and increase its impact. Understandably, TechXtra’s creators would like the service to be talked about, posted on blogs, or linked from other websites.

For more information, contact Roddy MacLeod, Senior Subject Librarian Heriot-Watt University Library Edinburgh 0131 451 3576 r.a.macleod@hw.ac.uk

Main Developments in TechXtra

Emerald Journals relevant to Engineering & Materials Science

JORUM – a searchable repository of learning and teaching resources

Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) Virtual Library

New feeds for TechXtra’s OneStep News:

Platts – Nuclear, Metals, and Electric Power news

Building Design & Construction News

IEEE Spectrum

Brightsurf Science News

PhysOrg News

SPIE NewsRoom

Control Design News

Wireless Net News

New sources for On Step Jobs:

1Job

Resource Personnel – Oil and Gas Jobs

CV – Library

iMechanica Jobs

Construction – over 30 additional titles

Engineering – over 80 titles

Mechanical/Machine – over 25 titles

Enhancements to the TechXtra service interface

User-testing Ensures Accessibility for Turning the Pages

Website – Helped by Microsoft and WUP

Turning the Pages, featured in Multimedia Information & Technology in February 2005, is the latest project to benefit from a user testing programme provided by the Wiltshire-based user-experience consultancy WUP (http://www.wuptld.co.uk).

A sophisticated tool which puts 16 items of the British Library’s collection on display, Turning the Pages (available at http://www.bl.uk) includes some original sketches by Leonardo da Vinci.

It also makes available Mercator’s first atlas of Europe, and the original Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll.

It gives the users an experience akin to actually holding the book in their hands as they turn the pages in a realistic manner – something they could never do with original tomes of such historical value.

Turning the Pages is one of the first applications to use the expanded features of the Windows Vista operating system, which offers users a 3D feel and see-through windows, improved security and connectivity.

Two of the great landmarks of world
The reunification of Turning the Pages 2.0 digital versions of the notebooks was announced by Bill Gates, chairman of Microsoft, and Lynne Brindley, Chief Executive of the British Library at the consumer launch of Microsoft’s new operating system, Windows Vista, which took place at the Library’s flagship building at St Pancras earlier this year.

Codex Arundel, one of the British Library’s greatest treasures, and Codex Leicester, which is owned by Bill Gates, are compilations of the notes, diagrams and sketches Leonardo made while investigating subjects ranging from mechanics and engineering to optics and the properties of the moon. They document the inquiring scientific spirit which underpinned his artistic achievements, and include discoveries and lines of thought which were far ahead of their time.

These precious manuscripts are kept under secure and controlled conditions in locations thousands of miles apart, but Turning the Pages 2.0 allows users to browse high-resolution online versions of both texts, compare the volumes side-by-side in a 3-D workspace, magnify and rotate the pages and even reverse Leonardo’s famous mirror writing so that it reads the right way round. Demonstrating the enhanced graphics and functionality of the new Windows Vista platform, Turning the Pages 2.0 also enables users to make personal and group notes and interact with others who are viewing the notebooks online from all over the world.

These developments open up Leonardo’s notebooks to anyone who has an interest in his life and times. They also have huge potential for the international research community, as scholars exchange ideas, commentary and interpretation on texts that were previously only available for viewing by a small, select number of specialists.

Bill Gates said:

The way Leonardo da Vinci combined incomparable genius with the human determination to strive for knowledge and practical improvement is an incredible inspiration. It’s a privilege to participate in any project with the potential to increase our understanding of the ideas and achievements of this remarkable man. Turning the Pages 2.0 is a great tool for making these amazing works accessible, and it demonstrates the power of Windows Vista as a platform for connecting people to information.

Lynne Brindley, sharing a platform with the Microsoft founder at the launch event for Turning the Pages 2.0 and Windows Vista, said:

For the past decade the British Library has digitised treasures as a means of making our unrivalled collections freely available to as wide an international audience as possible – with Armadillo Systems we developed the Turning the Pages system to provide an attractive, user-friendly interface. Turning the Pages 2.0, enhanced by Windows Vista, offers researchers the first glimpse of the next generation of digitised texts, combining a rich and life-like interaction with the text itself with the potential for collaborative international research. In this exciting virtual space the historian of science will be able to exchange ideas with the historian of art, the Leonardo biographer with the structural engineer, the aeronautics expert with the mathematician – all congregating around a text which facilitates a richer level of engagement than was ever possible in the physical world.

Professor Martin Kemp, one of the world’s leading experts on Leonardo, commented:

The Codex Arundel is the second biggest single compilation of Leonardo pages – second only to the great collection in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan – and it’s virtually unknown. Known to only a few scholars, seen by very few people: at this point, it is the major unknown element in Leonardo’s studies. It is incredibly important to have it available digitally as a scholar. I have privileged access – and I have a substantial Leonardo library – but even for me it is difficult to consult the originals when I need to do so. To have this material online, available at the touch of a button is just amazing and wonderful.

The reunited Codex Arundel and Codex Leicester will be displayed on the British Library website at http://www.bl.uk for six months from the 30th January. 15 of the other existing Turning the Pages treasures, including the Lindisfarne Gospels, Mozart’s musical diary and Lewis Carroll’s Alice’s Adventures Under Ground, will also be available in the Turning the Pages 2.0 format. For users without Windows...
Vista, the existing Shockwave versions of all the Turning the Pages texts will continue to be available.

The British Library has also announced a competition which will be open to public libraries across the UK. The Library is to offer Turning the Pages 2.0 packages worth £10,000 each to four public libraries in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. This will give them the opportunity to make Turning the Pages versions of their own treasures available online.

In addition to the Leonardo notebooks, many other items from the collections are now available on Turning the Pages 2.0, and also in their original Shockwave format at http://www.bl.uk:

- **Lindisfarne Gospels (circa 700):** one of the most magnificent manuscripts of the early Middle Ages written and decorated at the end of the seventh century by the monk Eadfrith who became Bishop of Lindisfarne in 698AD.
- **Sultan Baybars’ Qur’an:** a masterpiece of Arabic calligraphy, produced in Cairo between 1304-1306 AD (704-705 in the Muslim calendar).
- **Golden Haggadah:** a lavishly illustrated 14th century Hebrew Manuscript from Spain (a Haggadah is the Hebrew Service Book used in Jewish households on Passover Eve).
- **The Luttrell Psalter (circa 1325-1335):** one of the most famous medieval manuscripts because of its rich illustrations of everyday life in the early fourteenth century.
- **Sforza Hours:** a masterpiece of Renaissance art by celebrated artists Giovan Pietro Birago and Gerard Horenbout.
- **The Sherborne Missal (circa 1400):** the largest, most lavishly decorated medieval service book (containing the order of service then used in the Roman Catholic Church) to have survived the Reformation intact.
- **The Diamond Sutra:** a Chinese Buddhist scroll printed in 868 AD, the world’s oldest, dated, printed book.
- **Mozart’s Thematic Catalogue:** this manuscript is Mozart’s record of his compositions in the last seven years of his life, and thus is a uniquely important document.
- **The Notebook of William Blake:** William Blake is famous today as an imaginative and original poet, painter, engraver, and mystic. Blake wrote and sketched in this notebook, which came into his possession after his brother’s death in 1787, for 30 years.

Turning the Pages can be viewed at http://www.bl.uk.

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The testing programme used by the Web Usability Partnership was a very important component of this successful project. They conducted two rounds of user testing involving academics and members of the public, and identified issues which needed to be addressed in order to make the application more usable.

Testers were impressed, and a wide range of positive views were expressed, with comments including:

- This is a highly useful website . . . the sheer ability to see original documents . . . absolutely excellent.

Peter Collins, Managing Director at WUP, said:

When something as high profile as the launch of Turning the Pages and Windows Vista is planned, it is important to get the user experience right from the start. Turning the Pages is receiving rave reviews from those who have tried it, which is down to the fact that the application has a user-centred approach which is absolutely integral.

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consultancy, established in 2002. They are customer – not technology – led, and have a reputation for ensuring that their reports are translated into actions.

Their objectives can be simply stated as to help achieve clients’ aims for their sites, and to make these sites more effective. Based on rigorous user-focused research, their process generates agreed and actionable results quickly and cost effectively.

Clients have included – as well as The British Library – Hilton Hotels, The Home Office, Scottish Life, First Choice Holidays and the Small Business Service. They offer:

- Usability Testing
- User Centred Research
- Accessibility Audits
- Information architecture development
- Site strategy development
- Training & Mentoring

Their facilities are built around two brand new, state-of-the-art, spacious, and comfortable studios, which can be configured in a variety of ways, for usability testing, focus groups, in-depth interviews, training and meetings. This means they can accommodate formal or informal studios for up to 12 respondents, viewing rooms seating up to 15, usability testing, with picture-in-picture data capture, for up to eight simultaneous testers, a mini-studio for in-depth interviews, single interviews and usability testing. Their training and meetings rooms will take from three to 20 people, while their video and audio recording facilities – individually air-conditioned – work with DVD, VHS, audio tape and digital audio. There is both broadband and wireless internet, and playback is on 50”interactive plasma screens.

Usability testing reveals the website issues which impede the provision of a good user experience, assessing how users achieve their goals, the usefulness and relevance of the content and assessment of behaviours and attitudes. Improving the user experience increases the successful take up of information on information sites, and increases return visits and recommendations. Applied correctly, it can also help organisations become more user focused, by communicating the insights gained from the research.

Usability testing can be used at all stages in a website’s development from the paper prototypes to the final designs.

For disabled users, conducting an accessibility audit is an essential part of evaluating the accessibility of a website. In combination with usability testing with disabled users, it forms a comprehensive accessibility evaluation, as recommended by the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative.

Testing also reveals the technical issues which are likely to prevent or hinder access for disabled users. Improving the technical accessibility for disabled users further increases accessibility for all users. Accessible sites can be used by more people: people with disabilities; older people; people with low literacy; people who are not fluent in the language of the site; people with low bandwidth connections to the Internet; people with older technologies; new and infrequent Web users. In general, testing:

- Ensures compliance with the obligations enshrined in the Disability Discrimination Act (part III) and also the Disability Equality Duty. The latter will then require an action plan, performance improvement, an impact assessment, the creation of an information base, and finally the practical improvement of access to websites for disabled people. Public authorities will be required to report annually on progress.
- Improves the visibility of the site for search engines
- Improves the performance of the site with newer technologies such as mobile phone browsers

An accessibility audit can be conducted while a new website is at the template stage, or on a working site as part of an improvement cycle. It is most effective when combined with usability testing with disabled users. Effective websites depend on clear analysis of the target users, what the site wishes to achieve and the user goals the site wishes to support. WIP’s approach is to develop a strategy based on user research and understanding of user goals and behaviour.

After an initial workshop, discussions are held to develop a collective view of the key issues to be addressed, the implications of these, and the required actions and priorities. These are the factors WUP concentrates on to help create an effective website.

National Library of Wales Expands its Services

Through NetLibrary and OCLC PICA, the National Library of Wales has supplemented its book collection with 295 eBooks on Welsh interests and culture, with better remote access to its resources for over 350,000 registered users. Its collections, as well as printed volumes, contain manuscripts and archives, pictures and photographs, posters and ephemera, in electronic as well as more traditional forms. In addition, the Library has radio and TV recordings, films, videotapes and sound recordings ranging from wax cylinders to CDs – everything to reflect Wales and the Welsh people throughout the world. Go to: http://www.nlw.org.uk/

Robert Lacey, acquisitions librarian at the National Library’s Department of Collection Services said:

The National Library of Wales has the world’s largest collection of works about Wales and the other Celtic countries: books and pamphlets, archives and manuscripts, magazines and newspapers, paintings and photographs, microforms and ephemera. Also, as an important general reference library, we are constantly seeking to add to our electronic resources so that users from afar can access information at any time, and the new eBooks are an excellent addition to our collection.

Users accessing the National Library of Wales’ website can link to the eBobbs via the library’s web catalogue.

NetLibrary, available from OCLC PICA, is an established leader in eContent delivery, with 15,000 customers in over 50 countries. NetLibrary acquires over 1500 new titles every month, and is currently offering 127,000 titles from over 450 publishers.

NetLibrary is a single source for full-text eBooks, eAudio books and journals, providing academic, public and special libraries with eContent to support research, reference and learning. Proven in more than 15,000 libraries worldwide, material is offered in a variety of languages, from Chinese to Spanish, and from an ever-expanding number of leading publishers across the world. For more information contact info@oclcpica.org.
Developments in Online Peer Review From Emerald

EMERALD has entered into a partnership with Thomson Scientific, in order to use ScholarOne’s Manuscript Central as its online peer review system.

Thomson Scientific is part of The Thomson Corporation (NYSE: TOC; TSX: TOC), and is a leading provider of information services to the worldwide research and business communities.

Manuscript Central offers a number of features designed to address the needs of scholarly publishers, and enables users to submit, review, annotate and format technical manuscripts in innovative ways. Essentially an automated system for supporting innovative, web-based, database-driven peer review and online submission application for scholarly publishers, it provides easy-to-use administrative, editing and reviewing capabilities. With over 170 societies and publishers, over 1700 books and journals, 44000 monthly submissions and 2.7 million registered users, Manuscript Central is the proven industry leader.

Manuscript Central Key Features

- Easy-to-use
- Quick decisions
- Cost-cutting
- Flexible and can be customised
- Full training and support
- Access to ScholarOne expertise
- Innovative, web-based and data-driven

Dedicated support is also available through all stages of implementation, including administrative training and live help desk support.

In addition, the recent acquisition of ScholarOne by Thomson Scientific gives authors and publishers access to additional expertise, information and tools which span the entire research process.

The system is said to be easy to use, with face to face prompts allowing quick and simple completion of tasks.

The clients of ScholarOne include prestigious nonprofit societies, university presses, government agencies, and the world’s leading commercial publishers.

The great strengths of Manuscript Central are to be found in its flexibility and comprehensiveness in terms of the system configuration. There are graphical user interface guides which will help even inexperienced authors, reviewers, and editors through editorial activities quickly with step-by-step prompts. The hands-on implementation and journal education services of ScholarOne also allow editorial offices to focus on manuscripts, and not on the administration and maintenance of the system. With years of experience and excellence in the academic, scientific, technical, medical and humanities disciplines, Manuscript Central is a proven leader in web-based peer review systems.

Editors using ScholarOne report that the time from submission to the decision on whether to publish or not can be reduced by as much as 50% when compared with the time taken by manual systems.

Thomson Scientific is also launching a Manuscript Management Toolset which integrates elements of Manuscript Central with Web of Science® and EndNote®. Emerald will be able to offer journals these tools to enable authors to output their manuscripts in EndNote, and then use Manuscript Central to submit them for review easily.

ScholarOne Inc. provides comprehensive workflow management systems for scholarly journals, books, and conferences. Its Web-based applications enable publishers to manage submission, peer review, production, and publication processes more efficiently, increasing their profile among authors, decreasing time-to-market for critical scientific data, and lowering infrastructure costs. The Manuscript Central user base has grown to 2.6 million registered users worldwide. For more information, go to http://www.scholarone.com/

Jane Rowlands
(nee Barton)
1963-2007

Jane Rowlands, until recently Head of Development at the BMA Library, died on February 10th, peacefully, from cancer, at her family home in Essex.

For the past two years Jane had been suffering from a brain tumour, which she fought with all the energy, optimism and determination which marked her whole approach to life.

Jane’s whole library career was spent at the BMA, which she joined as a library assistant in 1987, and she was the driving force behind the library’s many technological initiatives.

She was active in the health and IT fields, and her professional bibliography was worthy of a full-time academic.

She contributed for many years to this Group and its IT Group predecessor. Her enthusiasm and expertise in the general area of multimedia technology, and specifically in the management of the group website and electronic news update for the journal, was sadly missed when she fell ill.

As well as being distinguished professionally, Jane took an irrepressible and infectious joy in everything she did, and was, beyond reach of the cliché, the life and the soul of BMA library life.

All who worked with her feel the loss; she is truly irreplaceable.

Tony McSeán
Formerly BMA Librarian
Director of Library Relations,
Elsevier

(written with the assistance of Lyndon Pugh)
Recognition for Three Outstanding Collections

THREE OF THE UK’S outstanding collections have been formally recognised by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). Having met the rigorous criteria of the Designation Scheme, collections held in Warwick, Reading and London have received this highly-regarded status.

Collections meeting the criteria in libraries, archives and other organisations across England are recognised as being of outstanding national and international importance.

MLA Chairman, Mark Wood, welcomed the added collections to the scheme, saying, “These three collections form part of the fabric of our nation’s history, making their preservation, as well as access to them, essential. Designation status not only gives these fantastic collections a well-deserved quality mark, but confers a standing that will raise additional funds.”

The collections which have recently been given this accolade are the

● Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick Library
● Archive of British Publishing and Printing, Reading University
● The Women’s Library, London Metropolitan University

In terms of its scope and size, the Modern Records Centre’s collection of the archives of national trade unions and employers’ organisations is unrivalled in the United Kingdom. The archive includes collections of Ernest Bevin, Jack Jones, and Sir Bill Morris as well as those of industrial relations experts such as Sir George Bain and Hugh Clegg.

The Centre’s collection also includes the archives of pressure groups, political parties, businesses, individuals, the National Cycle Archive, and educational organisations.

The Reading University Archive of British Publishing and Printing illustrates the full range of British publishing activity from 1800 to the present day. Most of the major literary, general and educational publishers are represented, including Allen & Unwin, A & C Black, Heinemann Educational Books, Longman, Macmillian, Routledge and Random House.

The Random House section includes: the Bodley Head; Jonathan Cape; Chatto and Windus; the Hogarth Press; Secker and Warburg. This comprehensive collection of material relating to books of all kinds leaves scarcely a subject unrepresented.

The Women’s Library is the oldest and most extensive collection of women’s history in Europe, and charts the changes in women’s lives in the UK across the last 150 years, telling the history of activism from the campaigner’s perspective.

Unrivalled in scope, it includes 60,000 books and pamphlets dating from 1592; over 3,000 periodicals dating from 1745; unique ephemera from over 4,000 women’s organisations; over 460 archives dating from 1770 and over 5,000 objects dating from 1786. For further information on how the Designation process operates, please visit: http://www.mla.gov.uk/

ITN have announced that their ITN Source website, now offers producers and filmmakers access to a wide range of high quality footage online, for purchase and delivery to their desktops.

Visitors to http://www.itnsource.com can browse, select, buy and download a selection of ITN Source’s digitised footage. Hundreds of hours of digitised content from the ITN and Reuters catalogues is also available to buy online.

Creative users can enjoy the ease and convenience of searching thousands of keyworded authentic stock shots from the inew Stock Footage section.

These clips cover a variety of genres, themes and moods represented in ITN Source’s extensive collection of footage libraries, and all can now be purchased at the touch of a button.

Other new features give customers the unique facility of being able to self-edit clips so they are only charged for the exact footage used.

A simple online pay as you go system supports the flexibility of buying digitised footage in 10-second blocks, and easy to use online clip pricing gives users the convenience of budgeting and self-servicing their own orders.

Other exciting new features include Project Areas where customers can set up ClipBins for individual jobs.

Customers can also send messages to their project partners, invite other users to view their selected footage, add comments and rate clips, making it the most advanced digital and user-friendly footage resource available.
Geography Lessons by Satellite

ICT TEACHERS IN KENT have recently used a satellite link and webcam to beam a geography lesson from Herne Bay to Chartham School. Pupils in the classroom were able to interact with the teachers and investigate changes in the beach and the pier.

The latest GIS (Geographical Information System), digital Ordnance Survey maps and aerial photography provided by Canterbury Christ Church University’s Dakini Project were used to create the learning experience. Photographs, video and sound recordings were then used to create a series of multimedia-based activities and maps to be shared by other Kent schools. The expectation is that the experience will encourage teachers to embed ICT in their geography lessons.

The University is working in collaboration with Dr Gerard O’Sullivan, the project leader (Advanced Skills Teacher and Chartered Geographer at Homewood School, Tenterden) and Philip Bracegirdle, Hands On Support Consultant from ASK (Advisory Service Kent), who lead the teachers in this innovative activity. Kent EIS have provided the mobile satellite wireless broadband unit to allow primary pupils live video access to teachers on the beach.

The extensive technology supporting this ICT and Geography event includes Digital Worlds GIS – a satellite link from a mobile broadband unit to enable the teachers to study the digital maps using personal digital assistants (PDAs).

A Global Positioning System (GPS) will allow the teachers to plot where they are standing, and secure videoconferencing software for schools will then enable the children to participate fully in the virtual Geography field trip.

New Home for Google Librarian Center

GOOGLE HAS ANNOUNCED that the Librarian Center will make its home at http://librariancentral.blogspot.com.

This is the place to find the latest Google news, updates, and tips relevant to the librarian community.

The blog includes links to the Newsletter Archive, the Your Stories page, and the Tools and Videos sections, and is full of dynamic content.

Potential users can sign up to receive the blog posts by email, read them from their Google Personalised Homepages or Google Reader, or other preferred blog reader.

The Librarian Newsletter will continue to appear quarterly for those who prefer their information in this format, and will include the best of the previous month’s blog posts (taking a leaf out of Multimedia Information & Technology’s book).

Consumer Web Use

THE WEB IS BECOMING a primary customer service channel for businesses, as more consumers shop and access information online, according to Transversal (http://www.transversal.com).

Transversal’s Web Self-Service Index(tm) has highlighted a sharp increase in the number of consumers asking questions through web self-service systems, in order to obtain customer service information. In the quest to avoid calling or emailing contact centres, the number of customers turning to this channel for faster responses to questions has risen by 224% between 2004 and 2006.

This positive trend continued between 2005 and 2006 with the number of questions asked increasing by 107%.

Transversal’s annual Web Self-Service Index monitors consumer behaviour by analysing usage and volume through client sites, looking both at the overall rate of adoption and the number of customers and questions handled by individual client applications.

It provides a view of the market, supported by specific information on key vertical sectors such as financial services, retail, travel and consumer electronics.

These figures highlight the growing acceptance of automated, online customer service systems, allowing businesses to benefit from service advantages, cost savings and better management of seasonal customer service peaks.
AXIOM FILMS HAVE introduced a number of new releases, including Ryan Fleck’s Half Nelson. Dan Dunne, played by Ryan Gosling, is a young inner-city junior high school teacher whose ideals wither and die in the face of reality.

Though Dan is brilliant, dynamic, and in control in the classroom, he spends his time outside school on the edge of consciousness.

His many disappointments and his general disillusionment with life have led to a serious drug habit.

He juggles his hangovers and his homework, keeping his two lives separate, until one of his equally troubled students – Drey, played by Shareeka Epps (right) – discovers him getting high after school. From this unlikely and awkward beginning, Dan and Drey stumble into an unexpected friendship.

In spite of the differences in their ages and situations, both their lives are at an important intersection. Depending on which way they turn, and which choices they make, everything will change.

For this part, Epps earned an Oscar nomination for the best performance by an actor in a leading role, and the release date for the film was April 20th 2007.

EUGENE JARECKI’S FILM Why We Fight (above top and right) won the Grand Jury Prize at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival. It is an unflinching look at the anatomy of the American war machine, weaving unforgettable personal stories with commentary by a number of prominent military and Washington establishment insiders. Featuring John McCain, Gore Vidal, William Kristol, Chalmers Johnson, Richard Perle and others, Why We Fight portrays in Libero. It is a family which is struggling to stay afloat, with the father trying to work as a cinematographer and look after his children. He struggles to cope with debts and loneliness.

In the film, the children’s mother is an occasional, disturbing presence. Unreliable and fickle, she returns to the household for brief periods and then abandons her family for other relationships. All of this we see through the eyes of Tommy, who wants his family to be back together.

He also has a growing, slightly envious relationship with a boy who has just moved into the apartment block. His friend comes from a much more stable and affluent family.

Using this as the basis for the drama, on his debut as a director, Kin Rossi Stuart fashions an honest, deeply affecting and heartfelt story. There are no easy answers in this all too believable scenario.

The film was the winner of The Director’s Fortnight Prix Art & Essai at the 2006

7 Digital and the BFI have announced the launch of the BFI Film Download Space, which will provide film watchers with access to a range of fiction and non-fiction films and shorts from The BFI National Archive.

7 Digital’s involvement will help the BFI – which has one of the largest and most diverse archives in the world – to offer formats which suit every viewer.

With new material being added every month, the BFI Film Download Space will provide users with access to a wide range of films including:

- Early works by top directors such as Peter Greenaway, Tony Scott, Ridley Scott and Alex Cox
- A selection of shorts, ranging from vintage Charlie Chaplin to 2006’s Oscar nominated Cashback
- Classic documentaries such as South, which details Shackleton’s trek across the Antarctic
- Pioneering black and Asian cinema from the 70s and 802

Content will be available to buy and download from the BFI’s site at http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmdownloadsp ace

“The BFI film download store provides a new distribution channel for short film, features and other material, which is unlikely to meet a wide DVD audience.

We are pleased to be joining the partnership with 7 Digital to provide the widest possible range of cultural and specialist film to a growing audience” said Catharine Pusey, Director, BFI Trading.

TOMMY IS AN eleven-year old living with his father, and it is their family life which Kim Rossi Stuart portrays in Libero. It is a family which is struggling to stay afloat, with the father trying to work as a cinematographer and look after his children. He struggles to cope with debts and loneliness.

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Cannes Film Festival. The production will be released in the UK during this month.

Tsai Ming-Liang’s film The Wayward Cloud is set in Taiwan, and it is a Taiwan beset by a terrible water shortage.

TV stations are advising the population to economise drastically, and to drink watermelon juice. But, as always, people are finding their own solutions to the drought. Shiang-Chyi secretly fills discarded bottles in public toilets, while Hsiao-Kang takes midnight baths in rooftop storage tanks.

They drift like clouds, never touching. Survival is hard, but loneliness is impossible to bear. Shiang-Chyi finds a watermelon, and on the same day encounters Hsiao-Kang. She remembers buying a watch from him when he worked as a street vendor. He is now an actor in pornographic films, but she does not yet know that.

This film won three awards during 2005 – the Silver Bear Award for Outstanding Artistic Achievement, the Alfred Bauer Award and the Firpesci Award. It will be released during the summer of 2007.

The Last of Axiom’s releases for this issue is Wim Wenders’ Land of Plenty (below).

After years of living abroad with her American missionary father, Lana (played by Michelle Williams) returns to the United States to begin her studies.

Instead of focusing on her education, Lana sets out to find her only other living relative.

This is her uncle Paul, played by John Diehl. A Vietnam veteran, her deceased mother’s brother, Paul is a reclusive vagabond with deep emotional wounds as a result of his war experience.

A tragic event witnessed by the two unites them in a common goal to rectify a wrong, and takes them on a journey of healing, discovery, and kinship.

Starring 2006 Academy Award nominee Michelle Williams, Land of Plenty is a personal social commentary, and is seen as an investigation of the anxiety and disillusionment of post-9/11 America. The release date is September 2007. The Axiom Films website is at http://www.axiomfilms.co.uk

About Axiom

Axiom Films is an integrated film company, which brings together all its film-related activities. These include: the production of feature films in which Axiom also invests; its theatrical, DVD and television distribution in the UK; and its international sales.

The company is also involved in the production of documentary films, both as features and for television.

The Axiom brand was established in 1995. In May 2004 the group took a major step forward, and merged with the production company UKI Films. This created a new and larger structure, embracing interests in documentary film making as well as features.

It has an expanding portfolio of diverse and award-winning theatrical films, most which have been made in co-production with established producers worldwide.

Axiom is a company with close working relationships with some of the most creative filmmakers from all parts of the world including Europe, Australia, South America, North America and Asia.

Films are also acquired for distribution.
TO CELEBRATE THE RE-RELEASE of the all-time classic Casablanca, on 14th February 2007, Film Education has announced the details of a brand new online teaching and learning resource to be found at http://www.filmeducation.org/casablanca/. The study notes, linked to key sequences from the film, aim to bring the classic film to a new audience through contextualisation and analysis. Aimed in the first instance at AS/A2 Film Studies and Media Studies, A Level students studying History or Politics may also find the material useful.

Elements in the Highers Media Analysis include representation, purpose and narrative structure. Resource author Alice Crystal contributed some thoughts on the resource:

Casablanca contains all the ingredients for a near-perfect film experience. The narrative reveals complex tensions between character, desire and duty. The characterisation in the film provides a richness, resulting in romance, heroism, tension and comic moments. The new digital version makes the visual experience more pronounced, enabling viewers to appreciate the expertly constructed sets and overall visual impact of this classic film.

The film is categorised as U certificate and runs for 102 mins.

In wartime Casablanca, Rick Blaine, exiled American and former freedom fighter, runs the most popular nightspot in town. He comes into possession of two valuable letters of transit. When Nazi Major Strasser arrives in Casablanca, sycophantic police Captain Renault does what he can to please him, including detaining Czech underground leader Victor Laszlo. Much to Rick's surprise, Laszlo arrives with Ilsa, Rick's one time love. Rick is very bitter towards Ilsa, who left him in Paris, but when he learns why, they plan to run off together again using the letters of transit. Well, that was the original plan...
The February issue of MmiT included a review of the Cinergy T USB XE: Mini Digital TV Tuner. The device has since been upgraded through the release of the improved Cinergy DT USB XS Diversity. Some other reviews have also reported great difficulty in tuning the earlier model, and these two developments mean that an early return to this product is justified.

Putting the this latest version through its paces reveals significant improvements, as well as some innovative additions. The new model comes with two digital tuners and two aerials, along with what is known as a Diversity function, but more of this later.

Following a straightforward set-up procedure as before, scanning for programmes immediately found as many as 33 TV channels and 49 radio stations – as I had hoped – and this time including the ITV channels which were not picked up previously without using at least a set-top aerial.

I do admit that my city-based location helps in this respect: there is such good signal strength that my usual Freeview box runs off a boosted set-top aerial. However, reception with the XS Diversity showed an improvement on that of the XE model.

The two integrated TV tuners permit users to watch one channel while recording another, or to record two separate broadcasts simultaneously.

Two tuners is a standard which any modern TV set should incorporate, but that does not seem to be the current practice. Many wide-view, flat screens are in production with only an analogue tuner. The addition of a digital tuner often commands a premium of as much as £150.

...

...and a Look at a New Headset

Ken Cheetham
(UWIC Student Support Services)
Yet a set-top digi box of equal quality can cost as little as £30.

**Three Integrated** tuners in the XS Diversity are also in fact the key to its Diversity function. When this function is operating, signals from both antennae combine to create a stronger, improved signal. This helps to achieve clearer reception, without the need of a rooftop antenna, in more fringe reception areas.

The quality will still depend on local signal strength, so it seems fair to conclude that whilst watching TV when travelling may be possible, the receiver may not be able to guarantee clear reception under those conditions. I have not been able to put it to the test in remote conditions.

The device ingeniously switches automatically between the two modes (combined or separate signals) depending upon the strength of the signal received. A good signal yields dual tuner functionality, but a weak signal surrenders this in favour of combining to give a higher quality picture. If one or other signal should lose adequate strength, this too could prove frustrating when trying to use two channels simultaneously. I should also add that much of the problem lies not with the receiver, but with the unreliability of Freeview TV and coverage in a chosen area.

The two antennae come with magnetic bases, and suction cups for easy attachment. Included are adaptors for rooftop or standalone aerials as well as a small USB extension cable. This latter helps to avoid an adjacent USB port being blocked by the slightly oversized USB key-styled plug-in receiver.

**Other Aspects of the XS Diversity** provision are the full software bundle, including tuner and drivers, Terratec’s Home Cinema and Ulead’s DVD MovieFactory, which permits the editing and burning of recordings to DVD.

An infrared remote control is also in the box, along with a free, 12-month subscription to the tvtv electronic programme guide service. Teletext is also available, the screen aspect can be altered, it is possible to capture still images and pause and rewind live TV.

The system can be programmed to record, scan through current television listings via remote programming over the Internet and switch between full and window mode with a click of the mouse.

The tvtv service can be used to boot the PC from standby or sleep mode to record selected programmes and save them automatically to the hard drive. Better Freeview coverage, of course, is probably the only improvement to be wished for.

The specification of the Cinergy DT USB XS Diversity is quite extensive:

- Plug and Play
- Voltage: 5V DC (USB bus powered)
- Current: 480mA
- Housing colour: white/grey
- Dimensions: 80 x 30 x 15 mm
- Infra-red remote control has 48 buttons and uses 2 x AAA batteries

Its system requirements are:

- Intel Pentium 4 / AMD Athlon XP / Centrino certified Notebook 2 GHz or higher
- 512 MB RAM
- One available USB 2.0 interface
- Audio hardware with DirectX support
- DirectX compatible graphics board and video overlay support
- CD/DVD drive for driver and software installation
- CD/DVD drive for creating CDs/DVDs
- Terrestrial digital TV reception (DVB-T, Freeview, TNT)
- Microsoft Windows® XP with Service Pack 2 or Windows Vista

The recommended retail price including VAT is £99, but it is available for less than £75 including VAT from some retailers. For more information, please contact Kathryn Lamb at KL Associates:
Tel: +44 (0)1327 844880;
Email: kathryn@klassociates.com.

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**The Terratec Headset Master 5.1 USB**

The Headset Master 5.1 USB is a true 5.1 surround-sound headset with six speakers, microphone and a convenient cable-mounted remote control. The set is clearly aimed at Gamers, the intention being to accompany computer games and films with high sound quality, using a software equalizer and separate volume controls on the cable remote for each channel. The aim in the game is to hear your opponent first, securing the advantage. The main features are:

- 5.1 Headset with 6 separate speakers
- USB 2.0 port
- Plug and Play
- Supports 48 / 44.1 Khz sampling frequency during recording and playback
- Frequency response: Front, Surround, Center 20-20,000, Subwoofer 20-120 Hz
- Subwoofer with bass shaker
- Separate volume control for each channel
- Removable microphone with mute function
- Maximum comfort
- Software equalizer and karaoke effect

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**Features**

- Two Integrated Tuners for Simultaneous Recording/Viewing
- Diversity Function with Two Aerials – Combining Signals for Stronger, Clearer Reception of More Stations
- Automatic Switching Between Combined or Separate Signals to Maximise Reception
- USB Extension Cable
- Adaptors for Rooftop or Standalone Aerials
- Full Software Bundle – Tuner, Drivers, Home Cinema from Terratec, Ulead’s DVD Movie Factory
- Infrared Remote
- Teletext
- Subscription to tvtv Electronic Programme Guide

**System Requirements**

- Intel Pentium 4 / AMD Athlon XP / Centrino Certified Notebook 2 GHz or Higher
- 512 MB RAM
- One Available USB 2.0 Interface
- Audio Hardware with DirectX Support
- DirectX Compatible Graphics Board and Video Overlay Support
- CD/DVD Drive for Driver and Software Installation
- CD/DVD Drive for Creating CDs/DVDs
- Terrestrial Digital TV Reception (DVB-T, Freeview, TNT)
- Microsoft Windows® XP with Service Pack 2 or Windows Vista

**General Specification**

- Plug and Play; 5 Volt DC Voltage, 480mA Current
- Dimensions 80 x 30 x 15 mm
Product Review

Features

5.1 Headset with Six Separate Speakers
USB 2.0 Port
Plug and Play
Supports 48 / 44.1 Khz Sampling Frequency During Recording and Playback
Frequency Response: Front, Surround, Center 20-20,000, Subwoofer 20-120 Hz
Subwoofer with Bass Shaker
Separate Volume Control for Each Channel
Removable Microphone with Mute Function
Maximum Comfort
Software Equalizer and Karaoke Effect
No Sound Card Necessary
Cable Length Approx. 7 ft.
Weight 450 g

No sound card necessary
Cable length approx. 7 ft.
Weight 450 g

The system requirements are:

One GHz Intel Pentium III or AMD Athlon CPU
256 MB RAM
One free USB 2.0 interface
CD or DVD drive for software installation
Windows 2000 or Windows XP

This headset is immediately seen as being of robust and thoughtful construction, but weighing in at 450 grams may seem slightly heavy. It is of course inevitably bulky as it has to house the six speakers.

The set-up process was straightforward. It is possible to simply plug the USB lead into a PC, and it will be recognised and working without delay.

Installing the application allows fine tuning of the audio, again with little trouble. This Control Panel software is the central configuration tool for the Headset, and is used to set up its full range of functions to suit individual needs. It is user-friendly, with a flexibility ranging from basic settings up to effects, with lots of choice, depending on the activity. Two to six channel modes may be chosen.

The mixer allows independent configuration of levels of audio sources. The effects control allows configuration of special environmental variables, such as the size of the listening environment or even its nature: concert hall, padded cell or stage.

Both listening and recording tests were made, and overall the sound is very good.

There have to be reservations, simply because the effects of surround sound created in a headset are not currently going to match that from six speakers set up in a room.

The sound stage is inaccurate (or at least, inconsistent) and lacks width and depth. Having said this, the surround sound effect of course works and it is better than much I have heard with headsets. However, it is still not a real room experience.

I found the best application of this set to be for watching film, possibly because one tends to move around less than when gaming.

Probably because of the weight, I found the headset to be rather tiring on prolonged use, and, given that some gamers will while away hours at the machine, they may be in for a thick ear or two. It is not only heavy, but seems to embrace the head a little too strongly.

Overall I would say that this is a good piece of equipment at its price, though hardly essential. Its recommended retail cost is £45, but it is available at less than £35. For additional information, please contact:

Kathryn Lamb at KL Associates
Email: kathryn@klassociates.com
Tel: +44 1327 844880

ISBN 1-85604-510-2, £39.95

Whether you take a positive approach to the role of electronic resources and the way they are making information more accessible, or the negative view that they are encroaching on the role of information professionals, it is becoming ever more apparent that they now have a major impact on the way people obtain information. This book has been written with this focus in mind, beginning with the statement:

At the core of the book is the goal to have the reader work creatively when using ICT in a public setting

then proceeding to highlight the crucial factors, now facing public libraries and learning centres, of information literacy and lifelong learning. It explores ways of enriching both library information holdings and the communities in which they are based, through the creation of new sources of information targeted on key users.
The book is divided into three sections, covering policy and legal background, front-line issues such as e-government and the need for enhanced ICT skills, and web content creation.

The first section, covering policy and background, emphasises the importance of the role public libraries play in promoting lifelong learning, and relates ICT skills to this. It covers the context of the People’s Network initiative, and details aspects of copyright, licensing and the Disability Discrimination Act.

This is all useful information, though in terms of what the book is trying to do it could be said that a little too much time is spent on explaining why these initiatives have been implemented. The book claims that:

Staff need to learn new skills to sit alongside old skills; they need to play the part of teachers, gatekeepers, and content creators

with the first section clearly analysing why this is now the case in public libraries. It also reiterates the idea that the Internet is not the panacea many people believe it to be, emphasising the standpoint that, with so many additional information sources to choose from, the role of the librarian has become even more crucial in public libraries.

With the background surveyed, the second section deals with two broad themes: the types of ICT skills public librarians would find useful to develop; the importance of public library support in the role of e-government. Here again there is a lot of useful, and practical, information. In a chapter entitled The Importance of Building on ICT Skills, there is a predominance of material on hardware and software issues, but web searching and troubleshooting are also covered. These topics are fairly well linked, and the chapter is completed with a feature on the use of Excel to analyse survey results. Although this is an appropriate subject to cover at some point, it may seem to some that it is an unusual topic to include in this section.

The authors say:

While reading in one sitting should prove beneficial, we hope equally that the book [will be useful] to dip into when planning creation of resources or to build up on knowledge would be equally fruitful.

A full reading of the book suggests that it might in fact be more useful to dip into when necessary. Reading it in one sitting undoubtedly assists in providing a good, intelligible and coherent introduction to the skills required. When this is done, the Excel section feels as if it has been tacked on in a somewhat arbitrary manner. This is particularly so because it follows on from the more system-orientated information. As the details conveyed are genuinely helpful, this is a minor criticism.

The third section covers the creation of content for library websites and intranets, embracing programming languages, portals and digitisation. I feel it is this section which is the real strength of the book. Here, the information is conveyed in a very straightforward manner, and in a way which neither over-simplifies nor indeed over-complicates the subjects dealt with. The essentials of languages such as HTML and XML are presented clearly, and readers are reminded of the important factor that, while websites should look appealing to a user, it is their function and usability that is central, and not how impressive they look.

The section supports the extension of the role of the librarian, and the necessity to see this as not merely assisting with the location of information sources but actually being involved in creating information, thus emphasising the content creator purpose.

The arguments propounded are well-supported by the excellent use of case studies to illustrate ideas, and of exercises to allow the reader to test what the book conveys, and to gain a little experience of what HTML and XML actually look like, and what using the languages entails.

An accompanying website contains illustrations of the exercises it recommends and refers to, and advises that this information can be used for both staff and user training.

The book is well-written, in a style and language which enables it to elaborate on the topics covered without patronising or skimping on explanations. Despite containing chapters by different authors, in tone and style it manages to maintain a consistent voice.

Some areas, particularly chapter five, which covers designing websites and intranets, may require several readings. The exercises might sometimes call for some practice and repetition before the information is absorbed, but what is contained is enough to foster an essential understanding of the languages required to construct web pages.

However, it is interesting to note that, while the book stresses the importance of librarians being aware of technological developments, there is no mention of developments such as Web 2.0, blogs, wikis or RSS feeds. This may be due to its publication date of 2005, or it may be that these topics are outside the remit of the authors, but it does illustrate the rapid speed with which development is happening where ICT is concerned, and how difficult it makes the job of a librarian to keep up with such developments.

As a basic introduction to issues affecting librarians working in the public sector, there is certainly a great deal of salient information which will be useful to them. It provides an excellent starting point, but it is very much an introduction to the topics it covers. The result is by no means a definitive guide to its subject matter, but it does provide enough information to enable readers to make a start, and the information is well supported by an excellent use of references and recommended further reading.

Lyndia Thomas, Law Society Library


In the current climate, there is a greater need for libraries to justify themselves; to show their services are not only valuable but that they are also appreciated by those people they are intended for. Conventionally, most libraries keep performance information which is predominately quantitative, and concentrates on measuring library services.

Unlike many books which cover library evaluation, Evaluating the Impact of Your Library shifts the focus from services to the impact the library has on the customer base it is intended for. In its introduction, Markless and Streatfield argue that

what is required now is better information about the effectiveness of services, or the impact of services on users, including remote users

They stress that, while knowing how efficient a service is can be helpful, knowing the impact of a service can be more beneficial: it is an aid to making a stronger case for resources, assists planning and supports creative thinking.

Such aims are ambitious, and the authors acknowledge that the process of impact evaluation is not an easy one. Throughout the book they emphasise that before reading about, or carrying out, impact evaluation, it is important to possess a precise understanding of the terms used, in the context in which they are used. The introduction is followed by a glossary which defines in detail the key terms – and their relationships – used throughout the book.

The book is divided into three parts, which cover the context in which evaluation is required, the evaluation itself, and the application of the results once they have been obtained. As one might expect, the first part of the book justifies the importance of evaluation, and discusses some general principles.
The authors acknowledge that impact evaluation is not an easy task, confirming that it is not a straightforward process and that the concept is a difficult one to grasp. In this context, one of the key themes throughout the book is the necessity of deciding "when collecting evidence is a good idea and what we are doing this for". This is one of the great strengths of the work in that it does not advocate evaluation for its own sake, but retains sight of the necessity that evaluation should lead to the acquisition of useful information.

While the background to impact evaluation is useful to know, a summary box at the start of each chapter in the first section advises the reader that if they wish to proceed to the practical elements of evaluation, the text can be read from part two. This second section deals with all aspects of impact evaluation, from the original conception through to the gathering and interpretation of evidence. It is extremely thorough, comprehensively breaking down the evaluation process, and paying due attention to the initial planning stages.

In this section, the authors identify the key points in planning an evaluation: the critical stages; deciding what should be assessed; the dangers of becoming side-tracked into an early consideration of how evaluation should be conducted as opposed to what should be evaluated.

This section is systematically presented to the reader, with exhortations to think about why you are interested in service impact and what you hope to gain from having better evidence about your effectiveness.

The matter of the use of the correct terminology when setting objectives and impact indicators for evaluation is reiterated, as the authors drive home the importance of engaging with the questions of what is to be achieved and why.

The clarity of this section depends much on the logical way in which the process is broken down into its key components, and set out in seven chapters. Having emphasised the need to set clear objectives for the impact evaluation, and the requirement for clarity in what is to be evaluated, the major evidence-gathering methods, such as observation and focus groups, are analysed. These chapters are thorough and detailed, and although the subject matter is not the easiest to grasp, the whole is conveyed in a succinct and accomplished manner which makes the subject relatively easy to understand.

The third part of the book covers the post-evaluation process, and the use of impact evaluation to create benchmarks for libraries and library services. Here, the writers acknowledge the danger that impact evaluation can frequently be too narrow in its focus, often centring on a library’s micro impact as opposed to its macro effect. It is also emphasised that evaluation, unless carried out over a long period of time, may miss important information – or mislead. Methods of avoiding these pitfalls are considered, some other potential problems are introduced, and sources of help are identified. There is proper stress on the principle that activities such as benchmarking should be the beginning of further discovery, not an end in themselves, and there is also some speculation on how impact evaluation could develop in the future.

This is another volume in which information is presented in a clear and comprehensive way, and the book in general is extremely well written. Each chapter starts with a brief outline of what it covers, and throughout the book important points about impact evaluation are outlined and highlighted as rules. Good use is made of examples from several types of organisations, including health, public, academic and special libraries. Although the examples are indicative of issues such libraries may face, they are never overly-specific, allowing readers the scope to adapt the objectives and indicators for their own evaluation purposes.

The tone of the work is quite informal, the authors writing in the introduction of their desire to present the information in an "active voice". This makes the text easier to work through.

The layout also makes it easy to dip in and out of specific sections, and the chapters lend themselves to a systematic approach.

There is a task set in chapter five, to make sure readers have grasped the difference between impact objectives and activities, and these are two other aspects of evaluation which the authors insist must be differentiated.

The subject matter is dealt with comprehensively, and the book provides many links to websites containing useful tools. Once again there is a supporting website which also contains various tools such as examples of interview schedules, observation checklists, and sample questionnaires.

It is difficult to be critical of this book, and as a practical guide to carrying out an impact evaluation it is thoroughly researched, and provides meticulous guidance. For anyone seeking a practical tool to assist in evaluation, this would be excellent.
The Lonely Life of the Library Marketer

Antony Brewerton, Head of Academic Support at the University of Warwick, ruminates on two contributions to the literature of library marketing


I FIRST BECAME INTERESTED IN marketing library services in the mid-1990s. In those days marketing librarians faced a lonely life. Practitioners were few and far between. Those who were “marketing” were usually really just involved in “promotional activities” like abseiling off the side of library buildings. Anyone looking for training was likely to be sorely disappointed. And nothing was published about bringing marketing techniques to the library world. The one main exception was Eileen Elliott de Saez’s brilliant Marketing Concepts for Libraries and Information Services, the first edition of which was published by the Library Association in 1993 (1).

HOW THE WORLD HAS changed since then. CILIP’s Library and Information Update is full of photo stories of product-focused marketing communications. Workshops are frequent, but still invariably over-subscribed (believe me). And a quick scan of LISA reveals a wealth of materials covering the theory and practice of marketing from a librarian’s perspective.

Librarians always like to hear what other colleagues are doing, and case studies in marketing are especially important for providing inspiration. Subject-specific journals like Public Eye (the journal of CILIP’s Publicity and Public Relations Group) and more general titles like SCONUL Focus have proved useful in this regard (see, for example, issue 31 of Focus, a themed issue on library marketing (2)).

Sometimes, though, we need more of a theoretical underpinning, and the opportunity to discover our own way of doing things.

JENNIFER ROWLEY’S Information Marketing and Terry Kendrick’s Developing Strategic Marketing Plans That Really Work (neat example of marketing, that title) fit into this category, and are welcome additions to any marketing librarian’s library. Scrub that line. These two books are welcome additions to any librarian’s library. As Rowley says (p.3): “Marketing is everyone’s business.”

The Rowley title is a general work which will have a universal appeal. Kendrick’s book is technically aimed at public librarians (as the sub-title states) but can really be adapted for most audiences. Some sections focus on issues of particular relevance to the public library sector (eg. the competition public libraries face, p.7) but aside from these and the sector-specific examples (see the case studies on p.179 and following, for example), the principles are generic and any reader with an open mind will find this book useful.

These books are of particular significance to the readers of this journal, who probably face more of a challenge in marketing institutions and services which often become invisible when delivered through Cyberspace.

Rowley’s book is a hardback textbook. It starts with definitions of marketing and the marketing mix (appropriately for librarians, offering the 7Ps version). Chapter 2 brings us back to librarianship, and roots the rest of the book firmly in our sector. There are hundreds of marketing textbooks out there, but sometimes it is difficult for we librarians to see how marketing concepts relate to us. Rowley makes sure all her examples relate to our world, making marketing seem even more relevant (an achievement which should not be understated).

The rest of the book covers all the key concepts (marketing orientation, branding, CRM) and all the usual models (Porter’s 5 Forces, BCG Matrix and Ansoff). After covering all the building blocks, Rowley concludes her book by bringing this altogether in a chapter on Marketing Strategy and Planning.

This provides a comprehensive coverage of marketing theories and techniques for library professionals. Some concepts can only be covered quickly, and some elements probably need some pre-knowledge to be fully appreciated (positioning maps are mentioned on p.110, but without a diagram, which would have been helpful) but this is only because so much useful material is squeezed into 228 pages.

KENDRICK’S WORK is a paperback toolkit. Although theories and models are covered, this is more of a practical workbook. The author regularly runs marketing workshops for CILIP. Some of the content, but more importantly the voice of these workshops, can be found in this book. This is a very informal – and fun – tour through putting together a strategic marketing plan. Following the model employed by Malcolm MacDonald (Mr Rowley – Information Marketing

Rowley’s title is a general work which will have a universal appeal

... makes sure all her examples relate to our world, making marketing seem even more relevant

Rowley’s tome is the more academic of the two, with a sizeable bibliography at the end of each chapter

★★★★★
Marketing Plans (3)) Kendrick makes techniques accessible and (like Rowley) relevant to (public) librarians.

Kendrick is very practical, providing down to earth tips and, most important of all, lots of worked-through examples, plus twenty blank templates to be used in the workplace (provided as an appendix (p.195) and also electronically via the Facet Web site).

Both books make it very clear what real marketing is (ie. not abseiling off the side of library buildings). Rowley, as I say, includes definitions with which even the doubters cannot argue. Kendrick neatly highlights the real nature of (and general confusion about) marketing in the opening lines of Chapter 7, called Attention-grabbing marketing communication:

Having defined our ambition (Chapter 2), studied the market… (Chapter 3), segmented the user and non-user base and created value propositions for each (Chapter 4), looked at the strategic priorities… (Chapter 5), and devised marketing objectives and strategies for the planning period (Chapter 6), we can now move to the area which is the first thought of a public librarian when thinking of marketing – communication and promotions .(p.137)

Rowley’s tome is the more academic of the two, with a sizeable bibliography at the end of each chapter. Her book is something you can dip in and out of. At times I found myself questioning her chosen structure a little, as segmentation seemed to crop up in places I was not expecting, and the inclusion of the marketing plan chapter to bring everything together at the end meant that market research – one of the first things most marketers will do – does not appear until p.173), but there is more than one way to carry out a marketing programme.

Information Marketing is very closely indexed, making it extremely easy to use. Amongst its many strengths I would point out sections on the challenges of marketing e-services (p.88), the role of customers in the service experience (an important and often overlooked element of marketing libraries, beginning on p.92) and the library brand (Chapter 6).

Kendrick’s book is more of a step-by-step approach, and would probably be most useful if worked through from start to finish. Its host of practical tips includes sections on how to run Focus Groups (p.51), using Mystery Shopper schemes (p.59) and writing effective copy (p.163).

Key strengths are his focus on segmentation (see especially Chapter 4), and developing an offering for particular groups: real marketing, in other words.

Both books use reflective practice. I think this is especially important in a marketing context, where librarians do not always immediately see the significance of concepts which we normally associate with the business world. On the odd occasion this can be a bit frustrating, for example if you have worked through a section on a particularly difficult concept (eg. Customer Lifetime Value in a non-commercial setting, Rowley, p. 81) and still cannot see the relevance, only to be told “now consider how this relates to you”. This is fine in the classroom setting, because the tutor can prompt you in the right direction. With a textbook, there is the danger of the reader feeling as if they are left hanging, but this is always a difficulty when (rightly) trying to bring interactive elements into a format like this.

These really are very small, and hopefully constructive, criticisms of truly excellent books. I have been very impressed by the number of case studies published on marketing libraries over the last few years (4). These two books, different in approach and tone but both readable and highly usable in the workplace setting, complement the case studies marvellously. They are brilliant.

To use some of the least subtle marketing possible: buy ‘em!

Antony Brewerton
Head of Academic Support
University of Warwick Library

Reviews

2. See http://www.sconul.ac.uk/publications/newsletter31
3. McDonald has written several books on this approach. See for example McDonald, Malcolm. Marketing Plans: How to Prepare Them, How to Use Them (5th ed.), Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 2002. His work on marketing plans for service industries may also be worth exploring for our sector.
4. For a recent example providing a global perspective see Gupta, Dinesh K. et al (on behalf of IFLA) (eds.). Marketing Library and Information Services: International Perspectives, Munchen: K.G.Saur Verlag, 2006

Kendrick’s work is … a practical toolkit … a very informal – and fun – tour through putting together a strategic marketing plan … real marketing, in other words

★★★★★

Market penetration is now high, with over 80% of public libraries in the Netherlands – Medialab Solutions was founded near Amsterdam – as well as many academic libraries, now using AquaBrowser Library. AquaBrowser itself is “ a revolutionary library search tool and interface developed specifically for the library user, to gather the most valuable information in the easiest manner”. An intelligent visual search engine is connected with the host library’s resources, and the hybrid search facility delivers a vast amount of information to users. MmIT apologises for the error.

AquaBrowser and Medialab

The article on AquaBrowser (AquaBrowser Online – for the Nosy, Enthusiastic, Broad Minded, Inquisitive and Lazy) on page 9 of Multimedia Information & Technology vol 33 no 1, February 2007, contained an unfortunate error introduced into the copy during the editorial process.

The lead-in to the article correctly identified the relationship between Talis and Medialab Solutions as a platform partnership which has allowed libraries to implement a new approach to catalogue searching.

However, during the main body of the article, AquaBrowser Online was referred to as “Talis’s unique and totally customisable catalogue search facility”. AquaBrowser Online has been developed and made available by Medialab Solutions and as such has no relationship with Talis.

Medialab has been in existence for 17 years, and with a track record of developing search facilities for both commercial and non-profit and government institutions, AquaBrowser Library was developed as part of a focussed strategy to provide services for public, academic, corporate and special libraries.
The role of the library management system is, and always has been, to efficiently and effectively help manage the delivery of library services. This has traditionally been based on the management of the catalogue and physical collection. The core business and service model could have been described as Acquire – Catalogue – Circulate. This is increasingly not the case.

Whilst the physical collection remains a critical aspect of the library service, it is just one of a number of “atomic” or “granular” services presented by the library. The only distinguishing feature of the local collection is the physical location of the resources; a facet which is increasingly irrelevant in today’s networked world. Libraries today present a more holistic information environment; the role of library systems therefore is to make the management and delivery of this effective and efficient.

The business and service model is evolving from acquiring, cataloguing and circulating physical collections to synthesising, specialising and mobilising web-based services. Whilst the transition is undoubtedly evolutionary, it is not at all clear that the systems required to support the new paradigm are an evolutionary development of the traditional ILS.

The current generation of federated search systems, link resolvers, resource sharing systems and ERM systems are starting to address the implications of the new model. The approach, however, is somewhat piecemeal – driven by the identification of specific market opportunities. The fact that these new components are typically being delivered as stand-alone, yet capable of being integrated, is indicative of the current state of evolution:

- No clear model yet exists for the shape of future library services and systems.
- It is unclear where the LMS fits in the future strategy.
- There is a period of market disruption, providing opportunities for new and existing players to reposition themselves in the market.

In the transition to this new model, there are many significant challenges to be overcome by all the players in the information supply chain: libraries, system vendors, content suppliers and network service providers.

Synthesising is a key factor where there are a bewildering and increasing number of “atomic” services which are relevant to library provision. These range from traditional library services such as content and metadata, to more generic web services such as authentication, taxonomies and...
spell-checkers. The role of the library, and its supporting systems, is to synthesise these atomic web services into a cohesive user-centred environment.

A significant change which has occurred in recent years is that, historically, the component services have been provided by players from within the library industry — content providers, cataloguing services, reference services and so on. Increasingly, rich network services are being made available by players outside the traditional library industry. Trivial examples of these today include the likes of the web service access to Amazon book reviews and Google’s spell-checker. As developments progress, such services will become richer and more commonplace; this means that library systems have to be far more open and externally-focused than in the past. It also has profound implications for standards, and for quality measurement and assessment. These have been traditionally internally-focused, and now need to be far more outward-looking.

New-model library systems need to offer a plug-and-play environment, to allow holistic, user-focused services to be synthesised from this ever-changing sea of web services.

There are three core aspects to such an environment:

- Integration: providing the core technological capability to integrate disparate services into the environment.
- Administration: providing a management environment which takes into account the commercial licensing and maintenance issues of the underlying services.
- Measurement: providing an environment which drives continuous improvement by measuring and monitoring user behaviour and system use.

Specialising is critical, in that the key value proposition of the local library derives from its physical presence, integration of local services and detailed knowledge of the user population it serves. In an interconnected world, where information services can be delivered from anywhere on the network, it is essential the library leverages these unique strengths to provide a specialised service for its patrons and maintain its relevance.

It is the library system’s role to support this local specialisation of services. Examples include:

- Respecting local rights and policies: proper, comprehensive authentication and authorisation can only be achieved by integration with the local context; the rights and policies appropriate to a particular individual will include rights derived from local library affiliation. The service provided through the library can therefore be more specialised than that through generic network services.
- Respecting national policies and copyright law – the access policy in the content provider contract which has to be understood, respected and enacted in the specialised service.
- Applying local knowledge of the user population to the service: understanding holistic user profiles and requirements allows the service to be tailored to specific user groups and individuals. The library has greater access to specific profiling information than is available to generic network service providers.
- Integration of local systems and services: specific local systems and services (which may or may not be library services) can be integrated into the overall specialised service offering.
- Mediation and guidance: of critical importance is the library’s ability to integrate a local personal service with an IT-based service. This distinguishes it from generic network-based services. The challenge is to provide this mixed service as an integrated system with a strong unified brand.

It is clear that as the new model evolves, any services which can be abstracted to generic network services will be. This will be driven by the inexorable need to reduce redundancy and generate wider economies of scale. Throughout this evolution:

- Libraries have to be alert and responsive to changes and to take advantage of the economies and service enhancements generated.
- Network service providers must look for opportunities to provide new “synthesisable services”.
- Library systems have to be sufficiently flexible to support the changing nature of service provision.
MOBILISATION is a key catalyst in driving library use and value. The library service must find the users at their point of need, wherever that is: users are on the web; they are using their suite of office applications; students are using their e-learning environments; doctors are involved with clinical management systems; researchers are using their electronic lab books. These are the places where the library service has to meet them if it is to realise its full value.

Mobilisation is the next stage of development for library systems. The ability to integrate tightly the rich, synthesised library services into workplace applications has the promise of unlocking the latent value in information services.

It should be noted that producing well-synthesised services is a necessary precursor to mobilisation. Whilst, for example, there is undoubtedly some value in presenting a library catalogue search within an e-learning environment, the true value is only realised when a comprehensive information discovery service is also a part of that environment.

It is also apparent that generating this level of integration will require significant interaction with bodies from outside the traditional library sphere: integrating library systems into external applications necessarily means interacting with players in those domains.

Sometimes these applications will be mainstream de facto standard applications such as Office suites. In this case the integration standards will be defined by the likes of Microsoft, and the library systems will simply have to fall in to line. In other cases the external systems will be niche applications operating in “island communities” similar to the library community.

In both these situations mobilisation will have profound effects on library system development organisations, and on the relevant standards organisations:

- It will drive the more rapid uptake of modern mainstream technologies within library systems.
- It will lead to bridges being built between niche applications and specialised users in order to foster cross-application integration.

A

EXAMPLE OF THIS can be found in the operation of the UK National Library for Health. The UK National Health Service (NHS) is committed to providing excellence in healthcare, free at the point of use. Everyone in the UK – no matter how much they earn, who they are, how old they are, where they come from or where they live – should have the healthcare they need for themselves and for their families. 80% of the UK population say the NHS is critical to British society and that the country must do everything it can to maintain it.

To achieve this vision, the NHS has grown into a phenomenally complex organisation. It is the world’s third largest organisation, with around one million employees. Every day, the service provides around two million consultations, with approximately 10 million clinical decisions being made.

The mandatory use of evidence-based healthcare is critical to the NHS’s service delivery. To support this, a well-mobilised and synthesised evidence base is clearly essential. The value placed on knowledge services within the NHS is perhaps best summarised by the following quote from Dr. Muir Gray:

Knowledge is the enemy of disease; the application of existing healthcare knowledge will have a greater impact on health and disease than any drug or technology likely to be introduced in the next decade. ¹
The National Library for Health has embarked on an ambitious programme to synthesise, specialise and mobilise the evidence base to support the NHS’s core mission.

At the heart of this programme is a synthesised information discovery and fulfillment service, offering a good example of the evolution of the new library model. Synthesising, through:

- A single search environment provided across multiple specialist library services, commercial databases and internal information sources.
- A search process augmented and enhanced with various web services, such as the Google spellchecker, Amazon book reviews and data enrichment services. These services originate from sources within, and outside, the traditional library sphere.
- Authentication and authorisation via an external, NHS-wide authorisation network service. This forms the basis of a comprehensive user profiling service which can be used to specialise the service to the individual.
- Integrating, for fulfillment services, Open URL resolution, Inter-Library Loan from internal NHS libraries and links to commercial document suppliers.

Specialising depends on

- Appropriate presentation of the evidence base – an essential of the service. Within the health environment there is a specific requirement for grouping information according to types, such as patient information, clinical guidance and clinical evidence. These information types cut across the underlying atomic sources; the specialisation layer performs real-time data analysis in order to categorise and present the information according to the target user requirements.
- Local service integration: the system can direct users to the local library service centres or the appropriate specialist libraries depending on the profile of the particular user.

Mobilising represents the key activity which can drive improvement in the delivery of evidence-based healthcare. The evidence base must be available for the users at their point of need. It is also clear that mobilisation cannot properly occur until the services have been fully synthesised. Initial points of mobilisation include:

- Office suite applications, integrating the evidence base into the Microsoft Research Pane.
- email & RSS, delivering update information tailored to the user’s profile through email and RSS
- Integration with the Map of Medicine. The Map of Medicine is a specific workplace application which maps over 250 different patient journeys. These journeys are symptom-based, and clearly map out the steps to be taken by the clinician. Points in the journeys can be linked contextually to the evidence base through clickable buttons.

This is a compelling example of the synthesise, specialise, mobilise paradigm in action. If this model can be delivered effectively within the health service there is unquestionably an immense and tangible value to be realised. The model is clearly transferable to all spheres of the library service, though clearly the value proposition is particularly dramatic in the health information sector.

Library systems have traditionally been synonymous with the Library Management System. The classical Library Management System is increasingly managing, and focused on, a legacy business process. Whilst the Library Management System will remain a critical component in the management of a library service, its functions will gradually become peripheral to the core of that service.

Although the library model analysed here is an evolution of the traditional model, the IT systems required to support it are clearly not evolutionary developments of the Library Management System. At some point there will be a critical jump in the perception of what the core system supporting the library actually is. This core will support an environment which is focused on synthesising, specialising and mobilising web services to deliver user-centred services at the point of need.

Library and information services can achieve significant added value through this model, based on:

- Maximising the scope and breadth of services which can be synthesised
- Maximising the outreach of the service through mobilising as widely as possible
- Minimising and simplifying the interface with the core synthesised services

So far, the development of this model has been caught in a chicken-and-egg scenario: there is no market for synthesised services until the systems are capable of using them; systems will not be developed to synthesise services until effective and worthwhile services are available. This cycle can be broken either through ad hoc identification of market opportunities, or through some form of vertical market alignment whereby the systems and services are developed in concert; the latter is more likely to generate a strategic catalyst for development.

During this period of realignment, significant opportunities exist for more globalised strategic initiatives, both in development of reusable, synthesisable services and in the front-end systems to exploit such services. All players in the supply network need to be cognisant and alert to such changes:

- Libraries need to maintain awareness of new services which can be synthesised with what they offer.
- Libraries should collaborate with network service providers who can realise economies of scale.
- Network service providers must develop, and provide, new synthesisable services.
- Library systems providers have to ensure plug-and-play compatibility with network services.

Above all, to maximise the value of our library services, the industry needs to be far more externally-focused than it has traditionally been. The services we are synthesising will increasingly be coming from non-traditional players, and will be applied to domains outside the traditional library. The industry needs to foster links with these areas at all levels if we are to realise the full value inherent in our services.


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Library Systems
THE LITHIUM POLYMER DIVISION of Akhter Group PLC, who recently introduced the UK’s first 12-hour battery, the first of its kind for a full size laptop computer, have now launched a handy USB Power Pack for USB-charged devices.

The USB Power Pack is a pocket-sized rechargeable battery pack. It is designed to recharge or provide back-up power to portable electronic devices which are normally recharged via a computer’s USB port.

The rechargeable USB Power Pack has a capacity of 3200mAh, nearly double that of the Sony PSP and more than four times that of the iPod nano. It is just 100 x 62 x 15mm in size, and weighs only 106g. On connecting the USB Power Pack to a device, power is instantly available and the device’s internal battery is simultaneously recharged.

While the USB Power Pack is designed to power the Sony PSP (PlayStation Portable), it will, as indicated above, power any portable device which uses an USB port. As far as the Sony is concerned, for demanding screen applications the internal PSP battery may deliver only a three-hour performance life. By attaching the USB Power Pack to the PSP, extended performance time is gained. Once connected to the USB Power Pack, the PSP’s internal battery begins recharging, whilst powering the application.

The consumption of personal music, since the iPod revolution, has created users with higher expectations which, it is said, Apple’s trendy devices have not always been able to match. The USB Power Pack provides an answer for the power hungry consumer. Plugging the iPod or nano into the USB Power Pack starts the recharging process, and the device can continue to play while the internal batteries are recharged.

Where a computer USB power source is unavailable, any other device normally recharged from a PC USB port can conveniently use the USB Power Pack to recharge or to run.

A range of mobile phones are also supported by the USB Power Pack, thanks to converter connectors which are included with the pack. Mobile users who keep their devices switched on will see the advantages.

The product has an expected life of 800 charge cycles. An LED test button indicates red while charging, or green when the charge is sufficient.

The cost is £19.99 inc VAT, plus P&P and the equipment is available from Ultima Store and other retailers. Go to http://www.ultimastore.co.uk/usb-power.asp or call Ultima Store on 01279 821224.

Make Windows into Native Mac Applications

PARALLELS AND AVANQUEST UK have announced an update to their Paralleks Desktop for Mac software. Intel-powered Apple Macs can run Windows, Linux or any other operating system at the same time as Mac OS X, without re-booting.

When users switch to the new Coherence mode, the Windows desktop disappears, leaving Windows applications, such as Outlook and Internet Explorer, running directly on the Mac desktop and from the Mac application dock. Go to http://www.parallels.com

USB Powerpack From Akhter
Canon UK has suggested that UK businesses and other organisations should examine their true printing habits closely. They have warned that the overuse of cartridge-based colour printers in the office is making UK organisations pile on the pounds in weight but unnecessarily lose pounds from their budgets. They identified the cause of the waste:

- Inefficient print strategies and overuse of expensive-to-run cartridge-based desktop printers for colour documents

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- Inefficient print strategies and overuse of expensive-to-run cartridge-based desktop printers for colour documents

and suggested a cure:

- The intelligent use of technology to assist responsible printing and cut flab by 70%
- The use of their Online print cost calculator, to show the true costs of desktop colour printing and subsequent savings possible with a balanced print strategy.

Canon’s online calculator is to be found at http://www.canon.co.uk/smallsteps_calculator and it is this tool which Canon believes could help produce savings of up to 70% on print costs.

The easy-to-use calculator shows print decision-makers how much money they could be haemorrhaging by printing high colour documents on desktop inkjet and laser printers, and illustrates the savings which can be made from a balanced deployment print strategy. That means using the right device for the right job, and deploying a mix of desktop and multifunctional printers.

David Smith of Canon commented:

Cartridge-based printers are ideal in environments where space is at a premium, or where users are printing low volumes and low coverage documents such as emails, word documents or invoices. However, if these devices are used for all printing needs, including colour-intensive documents such as PDFs or PowerPoint presentations, costs soon mount up and this is what our calculator is designed to show.

Canon’s calculator offers a step-by-step approach, and allows the user to select the type and number of documents printed each month in the office, giving them a snapshot of print costs across the organisation. These costs can prove to be substantial, when it is considered that:

- A 10-page presentation costs £3.15 to print on a colour desktop laser printer.
- Organisations which use only desktop printers can stack up an unhealthy £2,700 annually per user – equivalent to four new laptops each year.
- On average, a department which requires high volume colour printing can spend in excess of £100k per year on printing on a desktop printer alone.

Smith continued:

With research from Gartner showing us that print can account for up to 3% of a company’s annual turnover, the cost of print issue is something that cannot be ignored. The key to cost effective colour printing, as in life, is everything in moderation. By developing a balanced deployment of printing devices, an organisation could cut print costs by up to 70%. If businesses just use cartridge-based printers, it is the equivalent of only eating fast food – it is convenient but not good for you. With multifunctional printers and print management software, output can be controlled and printing costs kept down. The first stage of any diet is to look at what you eat, and it is the same principle with a print diet – taking a balanced approach and printing the right documents from the right devices is healthy and will help get your business back in shape.

Canon’s educational programme is part of the company’s Small Steps campaign, which was launched last year and mirrors the process of getting fit in real life, by focusing on four key steps – diet, exercise, coaching and results. The Small Steps website, which is to be found at http://www.canon.co.uk/smallsteps looks at cost savings, but also helps to find ways of creating economies which help protect the environment. These are through the implementation of features such as secure release printing, personal mailboxes and double-side printing. Canon UK are at http://www.canon.co.uk/

All the statistical information in this article is supplied by Winmark Research 2006.
Sitting in traffic at the Glasgow end of the M8, the eye may be caught by a green finger of a building. Rising up out of an area of otherwise largely nondescript modern structures, this round, copper tower draws the attention, and is a sharp contrast to the urban mundaneness.

Inside, it is equally dramatic. The spiral staircase housed by the tower lets out on to raised walkways which rise above an impressive open space. The rear of the building is a curtain of colours, changing from rich reds and yellows to cool greens and blues. To the front, a wall of glass floods the building with light, giving views across the city and out to the hills.

This is the Saltire Centre, Glasgow Caledonian University’s newest, RIBA award-winning, structure. But this magnificent building, the new home of the university library, is about much more than making a bold architectural statement. It is about the future of learning and teaching.

“The Saltire was developed and constructed around the idea that ‘learning is a conversation’,” said Tom Finnigan, Director of Learner Support Learning and Information Services.

If you go back to the early days of the merchant class, a lot of business transactions, a lot of entrepreneurialism, and therefore a lot of learning, took place in coffee houses, through conversations and the exchange of ideas. This building is all about learning, and learning is now very much an interactive thing. Employers today often look for skills which can really only be developed through interaction with others. They want employees who have good interpersonal skills, people who can work as part of a team and show leadership. These skills cannot be taught in an old fashioned way – you have to create an environment in which they can learn and develop. The Saltire allows people to be set tasks where they have to work together in these ways. This is not a teaching building. It is a learning building.

The concept of the Saltire, which was more than two years in the planning, came from the university’s experiences with their Real Learning Café. A social learning space on the ground floor of the old library, the Real Learning Café provided a venue for group, project, and problem solving work, where students could meet to discuss projects and have access to technology.
Sread across four floors, the Saltire encompasses a range of learning environments – from individual study areas to ones specially designed for group working. The structure and interior design of the building, together with an innovative use of technology, indicates which kind of area users are occupying. Hence, group areas have round tables and softer, less structured furnishings, while the individual learning places are more structured.

This environmental concept even carries through to sound. At the very top of the building, as users cross the walkway to enter the study area, a voice whispers ‘shush’. Entering on the ground floor, users are met by the sounds of crows chattering. Level two is the wind, while level three’s audio cue is the sound of waves.

“We wanted the environment itself to be the cue for the kind of activity which was to take place there,” said Finnigan. “We wanted to try and avoid having signs everywhere asking people to be quiet, so we came up with audio cues. Each noise gives a clue to the kind of environment which is about to be entered.

At ground level is the Base, an area designed to increase accessibility to services for students, as well as a 600-seat Learning Café providing a range of formal and informal study space. The whole building is supported by wireless technology with 500 desktop computers and an additional 150 laptops are available to loan out. Finnigan continued:

What is key to the Saltire is that not only does it have a range of study space, from formal to informal, but it also offers access to our existing book stock, combined with the technology to take advantage of the wealth of information and resources which are now available online.

But learning at the Saltire is not just about a fabulous new building, as Professor Allison Littlejohn, Director of the Caledonian Academy, pointed out:

Design for 21st century teaching, for 21st century learning, is more difficult than just producing a building. It is the online space as much as the physical space. Learning does not happen because a building is provided, it happens because students or staff know how to use both the physical and online spaces properly. And it is an ongoing process.

Professor Littlejohn also affirmed that students design their own learning to some extent, by choosing whether to study alone using books, or in groups, with study modes often being dependent on the type of work set. To make use of the wealth of resources available in a building like the Saltire, teachers have to design courses that bring all these elements together in a meaningful way for the students.

To these ends, Professor Littlejohn and her team have been working on a series of initiatives aiming to optimise and develop the use of the Saltire. The first, Learning from Digital Natives, explores the ways students work outside formal classes, in particular examining the types of e-tools students own and use.

“Students are increasingly using a range of everyday tools outside the classroom – things like phones, blogs and games – to aid their learning,” said Professor Littlejohn. “What we wanted to find out was how helpful these tools were in supporting the formal learning process, and what were the benefits – or otherwise – of their integration into formal educational settings. This project will give us an insight into the ways students use e-tools to support study in the Saltire, and how we can develop that activity.”

The Academy is also looking into how students use the different spaces within the Saltire. Saltire Spaces aims to devise effective strategies to support learning within the building:

“The Centre was designed as a hub of learning activity, providing a range of functions, spaces and resources related to learning” explained Littlejohn. “Yet while the Centre embodies the acknowledgement that learning should be a social activity, and that students should be in control of their own learning environments, there is evidence that the potential of new, physical learning environments is not being capitalised on fully because users, both staff and students, do not necessarily understand how to make the most effective
use of them. Learners’ perceptions of these kinds of environments, and the ways they use them to support their work, is limited. Our study aims to address this limitation by investigating perceptions of hybrid spaces, such as formal/informal, physical/virtual, learning/social, within the university and exploring how we can make best use of them for effective learning.”

A further initiative, Mod4l, will look at the way lecturers document the design of their courses. The aim here is to disseminate and implement new ideas in teaching and learning, to enable lecturers to plan the design of courses in ways which will help students make optimal use of the Saltire’s facilities.

Such projects reflect the fact that the Saltire itself is part of the learning process, rather than being a building embodying a rigidity of design and functions, with no scope for development. Instead, it is a place which is open to possibilities – and to change – as the university’s desires and needs dictate.

“The idea is that this is a building for life,” said Tom Finnigan, “and that is why it needs to be flexible. One of the things which we wanted to avoid was having a building where things could not be changed around without having to spend a fortune on structural work like moving walls. There are very few internal walls in the Saltire, and this offers the option of creating them at a later date should they be required. The whole idea of the design was that it was flexible enough to allow us to change layouts as and when we needed to, for example when feedback told us what was working and what was not.”

The Saltire is also a building for living.

One of the key tenets of Glasgow Caledonian’s philosophy is that education should be accessible to everyone. The success of this can be seen in the numbers of students who have followed alternative paths into education rather than entering higher education straight from school.

“Many of our students work, and it is not always easy or convenient for them to come in here within a certain window of time,” said Finnegan. “That is why a key aim of the Saltire project was to create something more than just a new library building. Most universities have a learning resources centre, but equally, most of them are just libraries with computers. We wanted something more, something that the students would feel at home in that it would offer more than just library services. That is why we created the Base.”

Located at the bottom of the Saltire, the Base provides a one-stop-shop for accessing a range of student services, from student disabilities, to housing, to poverty. Two years were spent in looking at what students needed from this project, and how they might make use of it.

One thing that became clear was that we wanted to avoid students having to run around trying to find out where different services were, and when they were open. For example, there were eight different places where they could find out about funding. Can you imagine going to the wrong one, and when you finally discover where the right one is you find that the office is closed?

We felt that all these services should be under one roof, so that the students could find out what they needed to know without having to run around all over the place. It is about providing integrated services rather than fractured ones. It is about students being able to access services when they need them.

To make the system even better, we decided to put as many services as we could online, which means students can access a large proportion of the information they need whenever they want to. The Base, where all these services are located, is now their first port of call when they have a problem.

This innovative approach, coupled with the technological and architectural aspects of the building, has made the Saltire a key destination for those institutions looking to develop their own campus facilities. Indeed, visitors from Sweden, the USA, Holland and across the UK have all expressed a keen interest in learning from Glasgow Caledonian’s example.

“There was a lot of support for the project and it has very much been seen as a successful addition to the campus,” said Tom. “Since it has been built, it has attracted a remarkable level of interest from around the world. Other universities are now looking at what we have done, particularly our approach to student services, and are considering similar projects.” Such interest means that the Saltire is not only a learning building, but a building to be learned from.

It is an organic, ongoing kind of learning, one which will grow and develop with the university, powering its innovative and imaginative development.

Its copper tower is a symbol of Glasgow Caledonian as a beacon of modern learning.