Short Takes

Nearly 60% of households with children aged seven or younger have personal computers. IDC/LINK Research Corp.

The U.S. has the highest illiteracy rate among all industrial nations. Over 40 million American adults are - at best - able to perform tasks involving brief, uncomplicated text given their poor reading skills. U.S. Department of Education.

In promoting Web sites, "If we feel a site is extremely important (such as the ALA Parents Page), we add the link to our home page. If we feel it is useful but not essential, we add it to the list of Internet links that can be accessed from our home page. Finally, if we feel it's merely interesting, we can add it to the read-only bookmark file that we keep on our workstations." John Blegen, Glenview Public Library, IL.

The average American spends about 165 hours a year reading newspapers, 99 hours with books, and 84 hours with magazines. In contrast, the average American watches more than four hours of TV a day. American Demographics, March, 1997, pg. 43.

Who Listens in Libraries?

The first step in mailing, telemarketing, and making presentations to libraries is to find the appropriate person in the library with whom to communicate. If you're selling a book or journal, the person responsible for selection can hold a variety of positions. In large public and academic libraries, the collection development manager may have responsibility for all formats in all subjects. In public libraries with a large central facility, the head of the subject departments will select titles in their areas and may act as coordinator for the same subjects in the branch system.

Similarly, in academic libraries, the range of the collection may be divided into individual bibliographer's responsibilities. In schools, the media specialist in the individual school usually selects the titles while the order is often coordinated and sent out from the district office.

The complexity of issues involved with electronic materials is changing the responsibility for selection of an electronic title from an individual to a collaborative group within the library. A number of staff have input including the head of reference or public service to represent the front line perspective, the collection development manager to fit the title into the context of the rest of the collection, the automation person who deals with technical coordination, an attorney for licensing issues, and technical services heads who must order, catalog, facilitate access, and process the material. The director of the library could act as chair of this committee. As with the above pattern for books and serials, probably the best person to begin the education process about the electronic title is the collection development manager.

Leaders Speak

"Until now, the phrase 'virtual library' has referred to library collections, services, and information converted into electronic format. If the expansion of outsourcing that is occurring in Hawaii [the State Library] and Florida [Florida Gulf Coast University] begins to be replicated in libraries everywhere, that phrase may also come to refer to the evolution of the library from a cohesive institution into an alliance of institutions working together for a common purpose. This is, after all, what its sister phrase 'virtual corporation' is all about," David Dorman, American Libraries, March, 1997, "Technically Speaking," pg. 78.

"Bringing technology into libraries is about keeping them vibrant institutions in tune with all the ways we get and give information." Andrew Blau, Newsweek, March 3, 1997.

Marketing to Libraries Conference

The Charleston Group is sponsoring a conference on "How Libraries Buy; Selling Materials to Libraries" to be held on November 5, 1997 immediately preceding the Charleston Conference on Acquisitions and Collection Development in beautiful Charleston, South Carolina. The meeting will feature librarians, publishers, and booksellers who are all good marketers. The emphasis will be on practical advice and strategies that really work. A flyer on both conferences is enclosed.
Electronic Journal Options Exploding

New developments and products in the area of electronic journals keep appearing at an amazing pace. How do you make sense of all these offerings? And what, if any, action should you as a vendor or publisher take? The following groups are all active participants, each with a different angle. This summer’s ALA meeting in San Francisco promises to offer a good opportunity to learn more about electronic journal developments, both at exhibit booths and in educational programs.

- **Primary Publishers.**
  The most active sector in offering Internet- and Web-accessible journals is scholarly publishers. Pricing models which are most common: 1) FREE access with print subscription; 2) PERCENT SURCHARGE above print subscription. Active publishers in this area include Johns Hopkins University Press’ Project Muse; Springer-Verlag; Academic Press; Blackwell Science; and Elsevier.

- **Subscription Agents/Other Middlemen.**
  Most agents are now offering products which manage subscription-based access to electronic journals. They are working with primary publishers in two ways: 1) storing actual articles on behalf of publishers; and 2) linking to publisher servers based on proprietary article indexes. Active agents and products already on the market include Blackwell’s EJN (Electronic Journal Navigator); Dawson’s InfoQuest; Swets’s Swetsnet; EBSCOhost; and OCLC ECO (Electronic Collections Online).

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Evaluating Software for Young Children

From the editors of Book Links (ALA, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611), comes the following criteria that they recommend to evaluate software for young children:

1) Is the interface design simple and intuitive enough that a young child can navigate with minimal adult intervention?

2) Can a prereader follow the directions and engage in the activities?

3) Is the content age-appropriate?

4) Does the content avoid gender, age, and ethnic stereotyping?

5) Is the educational content clear, accurate, and consistent with current early childhood pedagogical concepts?

6) Does the software engage the child actively in a constructivist manner, avoiding passive, pointless point-and-click activities?

JSTOR: The Industry’s “Hot” New Archiving Project

Q: What is JSTOR?

A: A New York City-based not-for-profit organization, initially created with Mellon Foundation funds, whose primary purpose is to convert complete runs of 100 core journals in 10-15 fields to digital format over the next three years.

Q: How does JSTOR work with publishers?

A: JSTOR’s focus is on serving as a trusted archive. JSTOR negotiates rights with the publishing community for back issues, up to a “moving wall” of 3 to 5 years from the current issue. The wall “moves” as each year passes, adding to the electronic archive.

Q: How many titles have been selected so far?

A: 50 publications have already been selected for inclusion in JSTOR.

Q: Which library sector is JSTOR’s target?

A: JSTOR is presently aimed at the academic library community. The April 1, 1997 list of participants (available at <http://www.jstor.org>) is 200 strong and includes most Association of Research Libraries members and many other prestigious colleges and universities.

Q: Will libraries pay additional fees for electronic archives?

A: The JSTOR project points to an answer of “yes,” though not without grumbling.

Q: Will libraries actually discard the paper copies of JSTOR journals?

A: Most libraries queried say “no”—these are core journals. But, the same libraries want to participate in what is seen as an “innovative” project—one in which the most important libraries are playing and which is backed by one of the library community’s most generous funders, the Mellon Foundation.
Approval Plans in Academic Libraries

Academic libraries use primarily one of three approval plan vendors, Academic Book Center, Blackwell North America, or Yankee Book Peddler, as a source for the automatic shipment of new titles from major publishers. The vendor becomes aware of the new titles through Library of Congress Cataloging In Publication data and through publishers' catalogs. They create a profile of the library's interests and match the new titles with those interests.

Using Academic Book Center as an example, its President, Daniel P. Halloran, says they distribute over 38,000 titles per year from 1,100 to 1,200 imprints to their library customers. They add publishers to the list based on general interest coming from libraries and on new and the developing reputation from the publisher. The plan's success is measured by the quality of the materials distributed and by the low return rate from libraries, somewhere between three and 10%. These return rates are insured because Academic Book Center uses knowledgeable persons who actually look at all the books before they are distributed.

So, how do publishers get their titles included in an approval plan? A publication notice, or, better yet, a marketing presentation should be given to the three companies named in the first paragraph. These companies are looking for quality material as evidenced by accuracy, uniqueness in the field, quality of writing, good editorial work, and a scholarly approach. In order to be included, the publisher needs to offer a reasonable discount and to accept returns. It is helpful to include any reviews of the book and to show evidence that academic libraries have purchased other earlier titles by the publisher. Books in advance of publication should be distributed along with the current catalog. Vendors may check with a few of their larger customers on the reputation of a publisher before adding titles to their list.

Academic librarians like approval plans because the plans save time in finding out about thousands of new publications. Approval plans give librarians the privilege of returning titles not appropriate for their collections, although they do not exercise this option often. According to Halloran, the latest developments in plans are the ability to use the Internet to access titles selected for a library and to download title information into a local library's system.

1997 Academic Library Spending Projections

According to an Association of Research Libraries (ARL) survey, the rate of serials cancellations in 1997 is less than expected. Expenditure increases for serials in 1997 will be 11%, although price increases for 1998 are expected to be the same at 10%-11%. Of the 69 library respondents, 38 (59%) intended to cancel serials during 1997.

Twenty-nine of those libraries reported a combined serial cancellation target of $5.4 million, or a per institution rate of $187,844. Sciences are expected to take the greatest hit because the titles are expensive and because that is where electronic alternatives to paper subscriptions are available on the largest scale.

Only 16 (25%) of the survey respondents reported that they were purposefully trimming monographic purchases during 1997. This is down from 43 institutions in 1996 (50%). A typical ARL library in 1996 was able to purchase an additional 543 titles with approximately 6% more in monographic expenditures. When monographic expenditures were reduced, it was to support serials funds, to purchase electronic resources, and to subsidize document delivery.

In the area of document delivery, 36 (56%) of the libraries reported that they were using collections funds to support commercial document delivery services. The amounts reported by these institutions total $1.18 million, an average of $32,666 per institution. From the ARL, A Bimonthly Newsletter of Research Library Issues and Actions, April, 1997, pg. 8-9.

The Trends...

✔ The share of academic library expenditures as a percentage of total higher education revenues has fallen from 2.7% in 1980 to 2.1% in 1996. Primary Research.

✔ A growing controversy in public libraries is the use of filtering software to block users' access to potentially objectionable sites on the Internet. The ALA opposes any filtering. Brenda Branch, director of the Austin Public Library, commented on their use of filters, "I am trying, in addition to supporting the First Amendment, to deal with the legal, ethical, and moral issues arising because of some of the kinds of things that are available on the Internet and out of my control." New York Times, March 9, 1997.

✔ "With a fiber optic backbone at the core of our technology program, the library will integrate computers, communications links, optical disc storage, and other electronic resources to increase public access to information from the library, office, school, or home." Marilyn Mason, director Cleveland Public Library, Library Hotline, April 14, 1997, pg. 6.

✔ "Ten years isn't a long time, but you can say for sure in 10 years that the majority of adults, when they want information, will turn to the Internet." Bill Gates, CEO, Microsoft.
By The Numbers

# Under the Telecommunications Act of 1996, libraries and schools will receive discounts for internal wiring, video, voice and date, Internet connections, and other services from 20 to 90%. Payouts will begin in January, 1998 and are funded at $2.25 billion. ALA Washington Office.

# In a survey of academic librarians, 66% reported an increase in their book budget, and 75% had an increase in their journal budget. Almost three-quarters also had an increase for electronic resources. One-third of the libraries responding are canceling paper subscriptions to create budget support for the acquisitions of new media. Against the Grain, February, 1997, pg. 16.

# A 1997 Library Journal survey showed public library materials budgets jumping by 7.1% in 1997. They spend an average of $100,213 to provide some form of Internet access to patrons and staff. Of the 40% which had to cut back to fund Internet-related activities, nine out of ten public libraries took the funds from their materials budgets. LJ, January 1997, pg. 44-45.

# The average estimated annual library expenditure for books per full time student for academic libraries in the U.S. and Canada in 1996 was $32.50. Primary Research.

# Baker & Taylor bid $20.94 to the Hawaii State Library to buy, catalog, and process their books in the 1996 outsourcing contract. According to the State Library, their internal cost was $35.

# The Des Moines Public Library found the average age of their collection was 12 to 17 years.

Electronic Journals Options, continued from page two

- Digital Archiving.

Organized to store backruns of journals in electronic format, digital archiving is a “hot” area. The goal is to increase access to the journals while eliminating the need to store paper formats and thereby saving costs of physical space, binding, retrieval, etc. Active efforts in this area include JSTOR (see additional article in this issue), the Center for Research Libraries, OCLC, the Research Libraries Group, the National Digital Library Federation, and the Library of Congress National Digital Library program, among others.

Future Issues Will Feature

- Librarians’ Assessment of Effective Brochures.
- What’s Hot at ALA Summer San Francisco Conference.
- Approval Plan Profiles.
- Charleston Survey – Telemarketing.
- OCLC’s New Positioning.

Hot Topics at the ACRL Meeting

The theme of the Eighth National Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) meeting in Nashville, TN, April, 1997, was “Choosing Our Futures.” The 1,900 attendees discussed changes in the library of the future.

- Outsourcing (primarily cataloging and processing of materials) is now being viewed by many librarians as essential.

- Unmediated services (services not requiring a librarian’s intervention) need to target both sophisticated and novice users. Pricing models must be simple, predictable, and easy to administer.

- Decision-making must be based on cost. Libraries must justify the use of resources and budget according to strategic priorities, not by historical models.

- “Customer-focused” services are essential to maintain the central role of the library in the academic process.

- As always, document delivery is hot. Resistance on the part of publishers to transaction-based distribution models for electronic materials may be breaking down, opening the door to transaction-based electronic document delivery.

Martha Whittaker, VP, Marketing, CARL Corp.

Library Journal Chooses the 10 Best Magazines

Library Journal has chosen the 10 best magazines for attracting loyal readers and providing library patrons with “enlightenment and entertainment in the years to come.” (May 1, 1997, pg. 42-43.) They claim that most of the year’s selections are “remodels” of tried-and-true genres and formats:

- Biography, A&E Television Network. From the TV series.
- Black Renaissance/Renaissance Noire, Voices of Black Intellectuals.
- Bloomberg Personal, investment advice.
- The European Legacy, Interdisciplinary journal on European history.

Getaways, vacations and getaways.

Hope, to inspire a sense of informed hope.

Icon Thoughtstyle Magazine, a general interest magazine for men. (595 Broadway, 4th Fl., NY, NY 10012)

Index, conversations with creative people.

Latina, glossy magazine for the Latina woman.

Rare Breed, glossy magazine for young men.