Google Offers Free Tools to Librarians

Google has introduced the first of a series of “free downloadable teaching tools,” offered through its Librarian Center and aimed at helping libraries teach their patrons “how to use Google more effectively.”

Two sizes of an advanced searching poster entitled “Better Searches, Better Results” are now available. According to Google, plans to offer additional posters, cheat sheets, tent cards and even trainings are expected to be available in the future. Google encourages libraries “to download and distribute these materials as widely as you’d like.”

Logon to http://www.google.com/librariancenter/librarian_tools.html to download the posters and learn more.

Open Access: Report from the Field

... Reported by Mithu Mukherjee, Assistant Communications Manager, Oxford Journals

The impact of Open Access for publishers, authors, and readers was the subject of a recent one-day conference held in London and organized by Oxford Journals. Findings from three studies gave participants an opportunity to view how the Open Access business model is working in practice. The studies were conducted by:
- CIBER, http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ciber/ciber.php

This event marks a continued commitment by Oxford Journals towards responsible experimentation with Open Access models, and an equal commitment to disseminating this information. Over 90 delegates from across the international academic spectrum attended the event, including researchers, librarians, publishers, editors, and representatives of several scholarly organizations.

The day focused on the preliminary findings from three key experiments relating to Oxford Journals Open Access content. Findings were presented by Claire Saxby, Senior Editor, Oxford Journals; Claire Creaser, LISU; and David Nicholas, CIBER. Some of the key findings included:
- The importance of search engines in driving up usage
- The relationship of Open Access driving up usage of non-Open Access content in the same journal
- Changes in user behaviour for abstract and full-text usage
- The varying standpoints of authors on Open Access

Presentations are now available online http://www.oxfordjournals.org/news/oa_workshop.html#Presentation%20slides.

A full report of the findings will be freely available online from the Oxford Journals Website in late June 2006.

For further information on Oxford Journals’ open access experiments, go to http://www.oxfordjournals.org/oxfordopen/.


Libraries on the Move

The New York State Legislature has approved $5.7 million in additional operating monies for libraries and library systems in the state, along with another $14 million in addition support for public library construction and renovation projects. The figures represent record increases in library aid from the state. Library Journal, May 15, 2006.

The Las Vegas-Clark County Library (Nevada) has begun user testing of “Community Reviews,” a new product from Innovative Interfaces that allows patrons to comment on library items directly in the Millennium online catalog. Library staffs have the ability to moderate and approve new postings. The feature will become available as part of WebPAC Pro in the Millennium 2006 Release, scheduled for mid-2006. Innovative News: Las Vegas-Clark County Library, May 17, 2006.

Cornell University and OCLC are working together on a “WorldCat Selection Service” designed to help libraries save time and money by streamlining current acquisitions processes. The service will combine information from multiple vendors so that library staff can view in one place everything needed for ordering. Corresponding WorldCat records will be incorporated into library systems early in the ordering process, with ownership tags simultaneously added to WorldCat. The system is based on Cornell’s Integrated Tool for Selection and Ordering, which is said to have saved $100,000 a year in staff costs. www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6336362.html

The British Library has commissioned Electronic Publishing Services (EPS) to provide research on the current trends in the creation and dissemination of information. In a recent report, EPS estimates that world-wide book and serial publishing revenues currently exceed $110 billion. “Research-level” publishing represents around 12% of the total, of which scientific, technical and medical (STM) publishing is largest at $9.3 billion (52% serials and 15% books). Social sciences (SS), and arts and humanities (A&H) are much smaller, around $2.5 billion and $1.8 billion, respectively.

To read the EPS report in full visit: www.bl.uk/about/strategic/pdf/contentstrategy.pdf.
Short Takes

ALA's Booklist Online is up and running, launched during the Public Library Association's national conference in Boston in April 2006. The service features “my alerts,” “my lists,” and email distribution of reviews, as well as the capability for users to share reviews with colleagues. Also featured is the Booklist Book Club, led by the magazine's editors and contributors. 30-day trial subscriptions are now being offered. Logon to www.BooklistOnline.com to learn more. American Libraries, May 2006.

The UKSG (United Kingdom Serials Group) has created a new Working Group, provisionally called TRANSFER, to create a Code of Practice for the transfer of journal titles between publishers. Publishers that adhere to the Code of Practice could become “compliant” in much the same way as the COUNTER logo is displayed by publishers and vendors compliant with the COUNTER Code of Practice. The goal is to ensure that the transfer of journals between compliant vendors, and, in time, all vendors, follows agreed standards which will reduce the administrative load for librarians and ensure seamless access. The first meeting of the Working Group was held in Oxford, UK, on March 30, 2006. To learn more, logon to http://www.uksg.org/transfer.asp.

EBSCO is extending free access to its Teacher Reference Center, which indexes more than 260 top periodicals and trade journals for educators. The database covers relevant topics including assessment, best practices, continuing education, curriculum development, elementary and higher education, language arts, and teacher training. To try out the service, logon to www.libraryresearch.com and search for “curriculum development.” Library Journal, May 15, 2006.


By the Numbers

2,000...the number of librarians attending BookExpo America (BEA) held in May 2006 in Washington, D.C., versus 2,242 who attended the show last year in New York City. http://www.libraryjournal.com/clear/CA6338145.html#news1

$350,000...the amount raised to date by the American Library Association (ALA) Hurricane Katrina Library Relief Fund to help hundreds of libraries that were damaged or destroyed by hurricanes in the Gulf Coast region. http://www.ala.org/ala/prpressreleases2006/may2006/fundstatus.htm

20 million...the number of content entities registered in the CrossRef system since its inception in early 2000. Over 1.6 million DOIs are now assigned to conference proceedings and books, at the chapter as well as title level. CrossRef Press Release, April 26, 2006.

48.5%...the percentage of online searches using Google in February 2006, according to Nielsen/NetRatings. Yahoo! was second with 22.5%. Overall searching has increased 30% in the past year with the average user casting 33 searches in February 2005 and 43 searches in February 2006. http://biz.yahoo.com/prnews/060330/sft088.html?v=37

3rd...most visited site (in terms of page views) on the Web is MySpace.com, according to comScore Media Metrix. Using this measurement, MySpace is ahead of Google, AOL, and eBay. http://webservice.about.com/b/a/217628.htm

1,000...the number of libraries required each year to satisfy the Interlibrary Loan needs of students, faculty, and staff at Virginia Tech. Read the full report at http://www.ill.vt.edu/ILLiadReports/StatEssays/How_Many_Lenders.htm.

40,000...the number of different Netflix titles rented every day to satisfy subscribers, from a base library of 60,000 titles. New York Times, June 7, 2006.

Did You Know?

Librarians Outspell Nuns! A team of three librarians from Boone County (Kentucky) Public Library outspelled the former champion team of Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburgh Monastery in Villa Hills, Kentucky. The sisters had come out of retirement for the spelling challenge. The annual Corporate Spelling Bee for Literacy in Northern Kentucky raised roughly $15,000 to be used to promote literacy services in three counties. American Libraries, April 2006.

Don't Miss This!

The Charleston Conference Vendor Showcase is set for November 8, 2006, from noon til 6:00 p.m. Sign-Up kits have been issued. Tables are selling out quickly. To receive registration materials, send an email with your name and contact information to Toni Nix, Showcase Coordinator, <justwrite@lowcountry.com>.
Publishers invest a great deal of time and money in creating, maintaining and promoting their Websites to users. Do librarians use these Websites? If so, how? What, if anything, can publishers do to improve the usability of their Websites for librarians?

This issue’s survey sought to answer those questions by asking 86 librarians about their thoughts on publisher Websites today. The majority of the respondents (80.2%) work in academic libraries, so the survey results primarily reflect their ideas.

• Librarians go to publisher Websites for a variety of reasons, but the most frequently cited include finding pricing information, finding contact information, and for title verification of print and electronic resources that are to be ordered.
• Less frequently, librarians use publisher Websites for direct product ordering, cataloging purposes such as adding the table of contents to bibliographic records, finding licensing information and sample licenses, and to link to the administrative page or usage statistics.
• Most survey respondents (74.4%) reported that they find most publisher Websites moderately useful, but also indicated that this can vary greatly from one publisher to another.
• Many librarians that responded to the survey desire publisher Websites with advanced searching capabilities that will enable them to find the products and information they are looking for on the site. Increased search features such as searching by keyword for authors and titles, by ISSN and ISBN with or without hyphens, by publication status (in print, forthcoming, or out of print), and the ability to search all publisher imprints in a single search would be a welcome improvement to many publisher Websites.
• In addition to advanced searching capabilities, librarians would like to see more publisher sites that are browseable by author, title and series title, and publication status.
• Several respondents indicated that publisher Websites with an area specific to librarians are often very helpful. This area can have useful areas specific to librarians’ needs such as:
  — complete contact, pricing, and licensing (if applicable) information
  — searchable and browsable product pages that have complete bibliographic information, publication status, and reviews
  — links/log-ins to administrative and usage statistics pages
  — ordering information/names of vendors that carry the product
  — lists of the highest selling titles and authors
• Currency is an important factor with any Website. Librarians often look to publisher’s Websites to find up-to-date information and, of course, find it extremely helpful when the publisher Website is updated frequently (especially for information regarding publication status and price/pricing options).

Lund University, Lund, Sweden, hosted its Third Nordic Conference on Scholarly Communication from April 24-25, 2006. The meeting drew well over 200 participants from 20 countries and was organized around the theme “Beyond Declarations — The Changing Landscape of Scholarly Communication.”

Ed Note: The topics listed above are just a few of many important observations from the meeting. Conference presentations for all sessions are now available at www.lub.lu.se/ncsc2006. Be sure to check out the rest of this excellent meeting.
The Charleston Conference 2006 — A Preview

...by Katina Strauch, Charleston Conference Founder

The 2006 Charleston Conference — the 26th — will take place November 8-11 in Charleston, SC. This much-lauded and popular conference has as its theme for 2006 UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES. Keynote speakers will include: Ray English (Oberlin College), Alphonse Vinh (National Public Radio), Tony Ferguson (Hong Kong University) and others. Other speakers include: Gayle Baker (University of Tennessee), Chris Beckett (Scholarly Information Strategies Limited), Chris Boyd (UNC Chapel Hill), Matthew Bruccoleri (University of South Carolina), Tim Bucknall (UNC Greensboro), Jane Burke (Serials Solutions), Michael Cook (Cornell University), Robert Holley (Wayne State University), David Lankes (Syracuse University), John McDonald (Caltech), David Nicholas (University College London), Michael Pelikan (Penn State University), Greg Tananbaum (Consultant), Carol Tenopir (University of Tennessee), Stanley Wilder (University of Rochester ), David Worlock (Electronic Publishing Services Ltd.) and many others.


On November 8, the Charleston Advisor Vendor Showcase will also take place from 12:00 -6:00 p.m. in the Francis Marion Hotel Carolina Ballroom.

For more up-to-date and enhanced information and to register, visit the Conference Website at http://www.katina.info/conference.

See you in Charleston in November!

Top 10 Suggestions to Publishers of E-journals

Excerpted from “Drinking from the Firehose,” by Eleanor Cook, Against the Grain, April 2006, pp.70-72.

1. Send/post/display lists of titles in true alphabetical order — don’t file “The” under “T.”
2. Put your licenses on a diet — 12 page licenses are too long.
3. Title changes matter — use OCLC or some bibliographic entity to document these.
4. If you sell the title to another publisher, we need to know — before the fact, not after the fact.
5. Give us (OUR) detailed coverage information — up front and easy to find.
6. Don’t overly complicate URLs.
7. Work with subscription agents — they have been a tremendous aid in helping us manage.
8. Don’t tie us to historical print subscription lists — with everything “thrown-in” for good measure.
9. Give us consistent, logical use statistics — more and more, these statistics are going to be critical to our decisions.
10. Be open to new pricing models.

Mark Your Calendars!


TCR Quotes

“Google has found that for search engines, every millisecond longer it takes to give users their results leads to lower satisfaction.” From “Hiding in Plain Sight, Google Expands Its Power,” New York Times, June 14, 2006.

Check It Out!


Coming in Future Issues

— Report from ALA New Orleans
— Highlights from the 8th Fiesole Collection Development Retreat
— Best Practices for Content Licensing
— The Latest on eBooks