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Geoscience Information Society's Digital Database Forum: Issues Concerning Electronic Journals and Books: Viewpoints from the Researcher, Publisher and Librarian

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Digital Database Forum
October 27, 1999
Adonna Fleming, Presiding

**Issues Concerning Electronic Journals and Books: Viewpoints from the Researcher,
Publisher and Librarian**

Introduction

The Geoscience Information Society's Digital Database Forum provides a venue for geologists and information specialists to discuss issues concerning electronic resources and view the latest in electronic data. The 1999 Forum was a panel discussion of issues concerning electronic journals. In addition, Elsevier and Blackwell publishers demonstrated their on-line, full text journal databases, and netLibrary demonstrated their electronic, full text books.

The panelists included: Dr. Bernard Aleva, Publishing Director of the Earth and Biological Sciences Division of Elsevier Science; Joy Moore, Journals Manager at Blackwell Science Publishers, Brad Norris, Director of Library Programs for *netLibrary* electronic books, Dr. Brian Penn, Pan American Center for Earth & Environmental Studies (PACES), University of Texas, El Paso; and Jim O'Donnell, Geology and Science Librarian, California Institute of Technology.

The following contains excerpts from the panel discussion as well as a short summary of the databases demonstrated.

"Do existing copyright laws and guidelines apply effectively to electronic information, or are changes needed? From an information producer's point of view? From a consumer's point of view?"

Joy Moore, Blackwell Science—

Changes are needed. A paradox has occurred with the onset of the Internet. The Web was designed as a tool for free exchange of information. As publishers, we want to work within that environment while

at the same time we need to protect copyright for our authors and continue to be a viable operating business. It is much easier to get information from one point to another in an electronic environment, so fair use has become an issue. Also, we understand that the cost of interlibrary loan is very costly for libraries. We are hoping that a system where the user purchases each article individually alleviates the situation.

• Jim O'Donnell, Earth Science Library, Cal Tech—

I think that for electronic journals, copyright is virtually irrelevant. We are bound by licensing agreements that are drawing up the rules we need to follow. I don't think that is necessarily bad, but in fact, for electronic journals, the topical copyright is superseded by the licensing agreement we have to sign. With the Internet, libraries are licensing data and access; this lessens the pressure on the copyright law.

Dr. Bernard Aleva, Elsevier—

From the owner's point of view, the transfer of copyright to the publisher is still a very important issue. The Intellectual Property Treaty of 1996 and 1998 states that all copyright rules that apply to written information apply exactly the same to electronic information. The reason that publishers support copyright laws is to protect the users as well as the authors. Users want to know that a published article has been submitted by the author and has been edited, peer reviewed, and verified by the publisher. Commercially, the electronic distributors have taken enormous financial risks to distribute journal articles

electronically, and the licensing agreements protect their rights to recoup their expenses and make profits.

Dr. Brian Penn, PACES, University of Texas, El Paso—

We are witnessing a true paradigm shift. We are going from something tangible such as paper, to something that moves along in terms of electrons. Economics will drive the new paradigm. How do you make electronic publishing economically feasible? That is the bottom line and that will drive the copyright issue.

Brad Norris, netLibrary—

Right now the Internet is causing a lot of challenges in copyright law, but most of that will be settled in case-by-case instances. At its very core, the copyright law is sound. What will change are the economic laws driven by the new technology. Again, being able to transfer rights and being able to bind together and protect the authors rights as well as the publishers and libraries will be worked out with creative business laws. There won't be a big shock to the core of the copyright laws.

"How do consortiums make their decisions? Does each member have equal say? Or does size and collection drive the process? What are the advantages for small libraries with specialized clientele?"

Brad Norris, netLibrary—

There are four types of consortia:

1. The cooperative delegate – This is a central bodied group, which makes decisions collectively, with input from members, and in most cases the members influence the decision. This type of consortia tends to have state funding, with few fitting into this category.
2. Cooperative facilitator – This type surveys their members and determines who wants to participate in an endeavor, whether it is subscriptions, or to collectively purchase electronic books. The facilitator plays a role in being an

intermediary to help with the purchase. In many cases, decisions are based on numbers.

3. Agent or proxy – This type of consortia negotiates with a vendor, and then advertises the agreement with its members. The more members who go along with the agreement, the better the price. Member participation is after the decision is made.
4. Provider – They pass on information to individual institutions, and have no authority to purchase collectively.

"How do you see electronic publishing affecting your business/profession over the next 5 to 10 years?"

Dr. Brian Penn, PACES, University of Texas, El Paso—

The fastest way to disseminate information is on the Web, but the science profession only recognizes research published in peer reviewed journals. The Web adds another dimension but doesn't diminish the print journal. When I publish my research, I add additional information that doesn't appear in my article to my Web page, such as unpublished statistics, or additional graphics. However, the meat and potatoes are in the journal article.

Dr. Bernard Aleva, Elsevier—

Electronic publishing has a very bright future for all parties. ScienceDirect, Elsevier's on-line journal database, offers additional services for authors as well as libraries. User statistics allow libraries to measure how much an article or journal is read, and thus help in the budget process. In the future, scientists will be able to submit manuscripts electronically and track where they are in the production process.

Dr. Brian Penn, PACES, University of Texas, El Paso—

Keeping track of which journals and papers are being used is the "Home Depot" approach to publishing; i.e. publish only what has a high demand. There has to be a niche for information that is not reviewed or

deemed publishable by a prestigious journal. The Web could provide access to this type of information.

Jim O'Donnell, Earth Science Library, Cal Tech—

The electronic age has given us the opportunity not to subscribe to a whole lot of journals. Now publishers can make money by the sale of the individual article. Libraries subscribe to indexing services, which allow the patron to access full text articles from a variety of journals. Libraries are getting to the point in which they subscribe to journals only when they have good cost benefit information. For example, Cal Tech only subscribes to a journal when the subscription cost is cheaper than the cost of accessing the journal on an article by article basis.

"What is the effect of the Internet on journals that are not published by for-profit publishers? Is it an opportunity for learned societies to take back some of the publishing? The cost of electronic publishing is less than print."

Joy Moore, Blackwell Science—

We publish on behalf of the learned societies. They hold their own copyright and handle peer review, and we handle the business aspects for them. The society journals make up a huge reason why people become members of a society, it could be a bit of a situation if of all of a sudden their members had access to the journals through different means, the government or libraries or whatever. Yes, learned societies are finding alternative ways to publish; i.e. self-publishing or on-line. We have a mutual concern, how can we take advantage of the situation but also protect the tradition?

"Is the print journal dead?"

Dr. Brian Penn, PACES, University of Texas, El Paso—

We are only looking at the leading edge of the curve here. We are looking at a few percentages of people who are on the

Internet, the vast majority of the world is 20 to 40 years behind and they will still read on paper. Look at newspapers, when the majority begins to access them on the Web instead of buying it on the corner, then the paradigm will have shifted.

Joy Moore, Blackwell Science—

I don't think the print journal will die anytime soon. However, we will start to see that it is not going to be able to stand-alone. Already there are journals that are canceling the print-only option, because the on-line version enhances it, by making available additional artwork, data, and links to other resources. Soon we will think it is not fair to offer only the print version, but it will still be there.

Dr. Bernard Aleva, Elsevier—

Most of our electronic subscriptions include paper. I think we will see this for quite some time because of the archiving issue.

Jim O'Donnell, Earth Science Library, Cal Tech—

Print journals will be around as long as academia does not recognize on-line publications in the tenure review process.

The following is a summary of the on-line databases demonstrated at the Digital Forum.

Mary Reilly demonstrated *ScienceDirect*, published by Elsevier. This database provides access via the Internet to the full text of over 1,000 scientific journals, and more than 500,000 science articles from Elsevier Science, AICHe, CRS Press and ASM International. The core of the collection are the Elsevier Science journals which cover chemistry, materials science, engineering and technology, environmental science, economics business and management science, neuroscience, pharmacology and toxicology, physics, mathematics and computer science, earth sciences, social sciences, biochemistry, microbiology and immunology, biological

sciences and clinical medicines. In addition, libraries have the option of adding secondary databases from EMBASE, Beilstein and Ei Compendex.

Library patrons may access electronically the full text of journals their library subscribes to in paper. In addition, patrons have access to the bibliographic citation and abstract of all the articles in the database, as well as the table of contents of all the journals. Patrons have the option to use a credit card to order articles from journals their library doesn't own, or many libraries have additional document delivery options.

Patrons may browse by journal topic or title, or search for articles using search terms such as keyword, article title, journal name, authors, etc. Patrons may view, download, or print the article in either HTML or PDF format.

Patrons may set up a personal journals list and receive "alerts" via e-mail when new articles in their subject area are published.

Additional information is available at the *ScienceDirect* Web site: "<http://www.sciencedirect.com>".

Joy Moore demonstrated *Synergy*, the on-line journal service from Blackwell Science and Munksgaard. The database covers over 200 journals. Most of the journals are published on behalf of learned societies and associations and include some of the leading titles in science, technology and medicine.

Library patrons have access to full text of the articles from journals their library has subscriptions for. In addition, bibliographic information and abstracts are available from all the journals in the database.

Synergy has hyperlinks within articles so that the user can navigate between text, references, figures, tables and associated files. In addition, *Synergy* provides hyperlinks to other on-line databases such as Medline, allowing users to read the abstracts

of articles referenced. Patrons may set up a homepage, which allows for table of contents "alerts" to be e-mailed from selected journals.

Searching in the *Synergy* database can be done by journal title, article title, keyword, and author. Users may limit the search by year, volume and issue. Patrons may also access the table of contents of journals by browsing the journal title list. Articles are available in HTML and PDF format for downloading and printing.

Additional information, contact the *Synergy* Web site: "<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/>".

Brad Norris demonstrated *netLibrary*, an electronic book database. *netLibrary's* collection focuses on reference, scholarly and professional books in all subject areas. Patrons of libraries, which subscribe to the service, can view a book on-line, check it out and view it off-line, and annotate the text with highlights, notes and bookmarks.

Searching in the *netLibrary* database is by author, subject, title, or keyword, as well as by event or specific phrase. Advanced searching allows for the use of Boolean operators and library-controlled vocabularies. Users may conduct a full text search of an individual electronic book or the entire collection of electronic books simultaneously. Users have access to three levels of books. One, is the Public Collection, books of which the copyright is in the public domain. The second is the Library Collection, which has been purchased by their library. Patrons may borrow books from the Library Collection as if they were borrowing from their library's print collection. The third level is the Private Collection, in which users may purchase the book.

For additional information, contact *netLibrary* Web site: "<http://www.NetLibrary.com>"