

On the circuit

Report from the Charleston Conference, USA 31 October - 4 November 2002

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The Charleston Conference, held every year at the end October/early November in Charleston, South Carolina, has become one of the notable success stories on the scholarly conference and seminar circuit, despite, or perhaps even because of, its lack of organisational pretentiousness. It was started as a small, informal meeting of a group of librarians at Charleston College, co-ordinated by the energetic Katina Strauch, and has grown over the decades to become an international venue for discussing topical issues affecting all the key stakeholders in the scholarly communication process.

Like the UKSG and NASIG, the Charleston Conference is a broad church. Though the librarians are more numerous, attendance by both intermediaries and publishers, in all their various guises, means that the discussions about sensitive topics are not narrow, blinkered or introspective. In fact lively debate, in an informal setting, is a key feature of Charleston's success. The degree of agreement on central issues tends to vary, and the 2002 meeting was perhaps more disputative than most, mainly because pricing of journals loomed large in the discussions. But the Charleston Conference is not noted for too much blood being spilled and a level of conviviality and harmony still prevailed.

Another reason for the conference's success is location. Charleston in late autumn usually has balmy weather, and that combined with the impressive Historical District, and the charm of its natives, attracts information aficionados from all over the world.

But whilst the setting, and the ambience of the Charleston Conference are welcoming, the organisational aspects of the conference are perhaps more spartan. Not that the conference is badly run – it is a tribute to the organisers that they arrange a

programme which is invariably enticing and stimulating – but in a conference hall which is minimalist in décor, usually bursting at its seams and where comfort is not high on the list of priorities. And the conference lunches are not much to write home about. Local hotel accommodation is also often difficult to find for late registrants.

Nevertheless, the 2002 Charleston Conference was typical of its predecessors – attendance at a stable 600 or so included a large number from the UK. A keynote speaker also came from the UK in the form of Richard Charkin, chief executive of Macmillan. As well as outlining the emergence of the Macmillan UK group, and relating a somewhat risqué but well received anecdote, Richard described how his group is looking at the techniques of on demand printing to solve their out-of-print problem. Surprisingly, the strongest resistance to keeping books in print is coming from authors, according to Richard Charkin.

There were a number of key themes which arose during the meeting. Prominence was given to the extensive amount of linking which is being put in place between primary and secondary publishers, aggregators, hosting services, portals, document delivery agencies and subscription agents. Primary journal publishers linking to other primary journal publishers is now well established within CrossRef. Evidence was offered by several speakers that if your information was not being linked, 'it did not exist', to borrow an internet epithet. Many presenters described a doubling and more of the downloads, month on month, achieved as a result of a link from an A&I database to full text (whereas those databases where there were no such links in place, usage had fallen 40% in accesses). Linking has become a mature process to

the extent that the process has perhaps become the 'killer app' for e-journals in some eyes.

Bibliometrics, and in particular user statistics, was a key part of the programme, with the whole of the final morning being devoted to this topic. COUNTER seems to be the main game in town and is an international forum for getting consensus on what librarians, publishers and intermediaries want and need from statistics. Peter Shepherd, COUNTER's newly-appointed director, was able to describe current progress on this project. A more traditional way of counting usage was presented by Professor Carol Tenopir (Tennessee University) who, together with her co-author Don King who was also in attendance, described the difference in behaviour patterns between engineers, scientists, chemists, medical researchers and their current focus, astronomers. Such differences cannot be ignored in determining appropriate ways of scholarly communication.

Though OhioLink was not presenting its much quoted data to the same extent as previous years, a challenge to some of the conclusions from OhioLink's data was again made by Philip Davis from Cornell University, based on his interpretation of a smaller sample study of the New England library network. Citations and impact factors were in general lambasted as inaccurate ways to assess the 'value' of Science. Closer to concepts of value are demand-generated bibliometrics – user-based statistics – which traditionally could have come from looking at document delivery statistics, and more recently from web logs of document downloads. At a pre-conference meeting arranged by the Ingenta Institute, Professor David Nicholas from City University described the skill set which had been developed within his Ciber unit to evaluate user behaviour based on web log analyses of Emerald data. Also, a system known as a Link Logger was presented by Eric Hellman, a representative from Openly Informatics. It is an attempt to measure value rather than just use; value in this sense being a reflection of the strength of the links between articles. The service, ICATE (one click access to everything) sits in the same technical environment as Handle, CrossRef and library users with CrossRef affiliation.

Digital archiving was also discussed with no real solution on who takes ultimate responsibility for guaranteeing access to published information in

perpetuity. Digital Archiving is a big problem for publishers – librarians ask for a guarantee that their electronic services will be available forever, particularly as they contemplate longer-term site licence agreements through a consortium. Publishers, however, are in aggregate unable to respond positively as yet despite the description at the meeting of Elsevier's agreement with the Dutch National Library to hold a dark archive of Elsevier's material in perpetuity. A number of national centres worldwide could provide an interconnecting digital archive service (Library of Congress, BL, KB, etc), and these in turn could link to subject-based digital repositories such as NLM for biomedicine, CERN, ADAS for astronomy, etc. This is similar in conceptual terms to the LOCKSS project of distributed interconnectedness which was initiated by HighWire/Stanford University Libraries.

As one may expect where there is a gathering of more than one librarian, new alternative publishing systems were debated vociferously. The emergence of Open Archives as an alternative, or complementary communication system, was explored. The growing pressure from academe and funding agencies, particularly in the US, is stimulating great interest in subject-based e-print services (such as Ginsparg's e-print service in physics) and institutional repositories (as advocated recently by SPARC in a White Paper which essentially urges authors to deposit their published material to the institutions' server as a first stage in the publication process). Harvesting of the standardised metadata will enable new identification and access services to be built. One crucial announcement at the Charleston Conference was the launch of MIT's DSpace service which is in effect a free service which MIT has developed with Hewlett-Packard to allow any institution to set up their own open archive services. That such support systems exist was exemplified by other presentations made by Caltech and Ohio State.

The Charleston Conference increasingly offers a reality check on what is happening in the US information market as well as offering a chance to feel the pulse of current developments and concerns. It represents a valuable spot in the annual calendar at which such issues are explored in a friendly, convivial surrounding. The challenge it faces is how to sustain the logistics in running such a conference essentially on a shoestring whilst its increasing popularity puts stress on the available facilities.

ALA Midwinter, Philadelphia, USA 24-28 January 2003

ZUZANA HELINSKY gives some personal impressions of the meeting:

ALA was very cold this year; the freezing wind was unbelievable even for me coming from Sweden. It was big, as usual, and well organized, as usual. All these people in the same place always amaze me. The exhibition was interesting of course, even though I thought that it was smaller this time, but it made it easier to find everything. The main trends seem to be more and more OpenURL servers around the place and a proliferation of journal and e-resources listing services.

As I worked at the Alfred Jaeger Inc. stand (an American back issue company I am representing in Europe) I had many opportunities to talk to American librarians. I felt that the atmosphere there was very much influenced by all the rumours and announcements about RoweCom/Faxon and EBSCO. Also, there were some dark predictions from some American librarians about next year's budget cuts, because of the economy.

As I am also working with a project for the Nordic National Board for Publishing finding possibilities for electronic publishing for small Nordic scholarly journals, I was involved in a lot of discussions about the Big Deal. There was no difference from how and what is discussed in Europe, but I would say Americans are more radical in their suggested solutions. Discussions about licensing problems and all the 'new' administration costs, which come with electronic publishing and are difficult to explain and extremely time consuming, was also something I recognized from Europe.

Among the 12,000 people, I unexpectedly met my American/Czech colleague, a professor from Charles University in Prague, formerly a librarian with the US Navy, and also some Nordic colleagues. This happens each time, but of course you never know who you will run into among so many people. Of course our mobile phones don't work over there and we have to use the public phones. That mystery I didn't solve at all, so all my calls had to wait to the evening when everyone went out, so one of my main memories of the

meeting was leaving and receiving messages. (There were some problems with the public phones in the lobby.) Super Bowl night was a really quiet night both in the city and at the parties, but again it was easier to find people and have more relaxed and unexpected chats.

By the way, there is a new phrase – instead of saying “goodbye”, “see you” or something like that, all our conversations whatever subject was discussed, always ended with a “check the website!”

JUDY LUTHER of Informed Strategies felt that the most interesting sessions for her were on the **Impact of Metasearch Engines:**

The Google type search being introduced along with portals promises to provide the novice patron simplified access to the diverse holdings of the library including the many databases of content licensed from aggregators. However popular with libraries and end users, the incorporation of this new capability by ILS system vendors is having an impact on content providers that requires industry wide co-ordination.

During ALA, EBSCO initiated a meeting attended by representatives from EBSCO, ProQuest, Gale and OCLC, who met with representatives from the major ILS systems, and NISO. After exploratory discussions, the group asked NISO to take the lead in addressing three areas:

Defining best practices for libraries that use Link Checkers to verify URLs that are part of their web sites.

Exploring standard approaches in meta-searching, including authentication, searching, content classification and sorting.

How are usage statistics counted when one user can simultaneously search multiple databases with a single machine-based search.

Aggregators are reporting a huge increase in activity as a result of machine-generated searches, and participants agreed that these were not areas of competitive advantage and that the customer would be well served if the industry had best practice guidelines for all participants. There is a sense of urgency to address these

areas, as March and September are the heaviest times of usage.

JULIA BLIXRUD of SPARC and **KATE THOMES** of the University of Pittsburgh report on the session '**And Then There Was One: Industry Consolidation In Journal Publishing And What It Means For Libraries.**'

James Neal, Vice President for Information Services and University Librarian, Columbia University, introduced the speakers and moderated the discussion. The speakers were Mark J. McCabe, Assistant Professor, School of Economics, Georgia Institute of Technology; Theodore T. Bergstrom, Aaron and Cherie Raznick Chair of Economics, Economics Department, University of California Santa Barbara; Mary M. Case, Director, Office of Scholarly Communication, Association of Research Libraries. The points made by the speakers and highlights of the session included:

Commercial publisher mergers establish an environment that promotes price increases on individual titles.

Commercial publishers create new journal titles at a much greater rate than do not-for-profit publishers. These new titles are automatically added to the subscription bundles made available via site licenses. The number of titles in a bundle grows and the price/title continues to increase.

Site licenses are designed to maximize profits for commercial publishers. The library is used as a fiscal agent or gatekeeper to manage access for the publishers rather than for the scholars.

Copyright transfer agreements that scholars sign as part of the 'publication process' remove control of content from authors and academe and give it to commercial entities. These commercial entities then have the right to set access fees and terms in ways that maximize their own profits, and drain rather than benefit academe.

Libraries are increasingly frustrated by ever increasing site license costs and are beginning to seriously consider options for collective action to change course.

At the end of the program Sarah Thomas, University Librarian, Cornell University, spoke briefly to update the audience on the launch of Project Euclid, the partnership of independent

publishers of mathematics and statistics journals. Free trial access is being offered through February to libraries interested in subscribing. For more information please see <http://projecteuclid.org>

The Forum presentations are available online at: <http://www.arl.org/sparc/core/index.asp?page=h25>

CINDY HEPFER of SUNY Buffalo was at the **CONSER-at-Large Meeting**

A crowd of around 200 turned up at 8:00 am on Sunday, January 26, at ALA MidWinter in Philadelphia for a widely advertised, open-to-everyone CONSER-at-Large meeting. Many of those present represented CONSER libraries, but many were individuals from libraries across the U.S. who simply had an interest in the rapidly changing landscape of serials cataloging and from serials management services.

After reports on AACR2 implementation, CONSER's Publication Pattern Task Force, and the CONSER FRBR Task Force, Jean Hirons (CONSER Co-ordinator, Library of Congress) announced that CONSER will be dropping 510 indexing and abstracting information from its records. The exceptions are services actively maintained by the National Library of Medicine and Chemical Abstracts services. It was, however, not these reports or announcements that attracted people from their warm beds into a frigid morning, but a discussion on CONSER policies regarding journals in aggregations.

Hirons explained that in the fall of 2002, CONSER conducted a survey regarding how to handle records for journals in aggregations (note: this did not address full text article databases, but aggregations of full text journals). The vast majority of respondents wanted a single record for titles in aggregations, rather than one record for every aggregation that includes a title. While the majority of libraries indicated that they saw no need for aggregator-specific information in this single record (Option B), a substantial minority believed that aggregator-specific information should be included (Option A). As a result, Option B Plus was developed. Features are:

- using a single record for all online versions of a full text journal

- basing the description on the journal as found on the publisher's website, whenever possible

including the URL of the serial as found on the publisher's website, when the publisher's website forms the basis of the description including the ISSN of the print in the 022 \$y (as a short-term solution)

adding 246 fields for variant titles found on aggregations, using \$i "Distributed as:" notes including multiple 856s for known journal-based aggregations (i.e., those from existing records to begin with)

dropping 710s and 730s that name aggregators

Hirons added that there are still many points to work out, including how dates in the 260 field should be handled. CONSER would also like to find out whether URLs are usually searchable by aggregator name. She indicated that there are probably between 25,000 and 35,000 records in the OCLC database that would be affected by the adoption of Option B Plus, including some 5,000 duplicates. OCLC figures that it will take between one and two years to merge these records. In the interim, Hirons recommends adding URLs to existing records, rather than continuing to create new records for each aggregator version. Option B Plus approach will allow libraries to have multiple URLs on a single record, and each library is free to strip out URLs for any versions not offered locally. Option B Plus does not negate the single record approach, where libraries add online access information to the record for the printed version.

Adolfo Tarango (Head of the Serials Cataloging and CJK Division at the University of California at San Diego) led a review of assumptions that underlie development of Option B Plus. The points covered are:

Many libraries want to provide access to serials in aggregations via the catalog (those present agreed)

Libraries need and will continue to need record sets (agreed)

Creators of record sets need base records that can be customized (agreed)

The base records should be CONSER records (agreed)

The base records should be separate records that reflect the online version (there was some controversy on this point)

Separate records may be either created by catalogers using Option B Plus or machine-

derived from existing records populating the CONSER database (agreed)

The Task Group on Journal Aggregator Databases should define the fields for a machine derived separate record that can be later enhanced (agreed, although it wasn't clear whose machine would derive the record)

For titles for which there is no record, records should be created by CONSER (agreed; this calls for expanded CONSER membership)

For changes involving the aggregations themselves, i.e. titles added/deleted, maintenance will be handled by serials management companies [like Serials Solutions, TDNet, and EBSCO], aggregators, and OCLC, where possible (libraries agreed, the serials management companies present did not)

For bibliographic changes to the serial, e.g. title changes, changes will be handled by CONSER (agreed)

CONSER will continue to work out the details of Option B Plus. Catalogers and others interested in following progress may find useful information on the CONSER website: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/acq/conser/>.

Both **CINDY HEPFER** of SUNY Buffalo and **HELEN HENDERSON** were at Elsevier's Digital Libraries Symposium 'The Future of Digital Libraries'

Elsevier Senior Vice President for Strategy, Karen Hunter, presided over the sixth Elsevier Digital Libraries Symposium. She had invited three library leaders, Deanna Marcum (President of the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR)), Ann Okerson (Associate University Librarian at Yale), and Clifford Lynch (Executive Director of the Coalition for Networked Information) to describe their visions of the future of digital libraries and what it will take to make them happen.

Marcum said that the library community must build massive, comprehensive digital collections that are widely accessible. But she added that such an effort will not be easy or inexpensive. Problems that stand in the way of achieving this vision include copyright, fair use issues, funding, the need for collaboration – rather than competition – among libraries digitizing collections, the need for genuine collaborations with scholars, and

preservation and long-term stewardship of our intellectual and cultural heritage.

Overall, Okerson agreed with Marcum. In her presentation, intriguingly titled 'Asteroids, Moore's Law and Star Alliance' she talked about new modes of collection development, presenting a number of concepts including:

national libraries, like Sweden, capturing information that pertains to the country in question off the web and preserving it.

'synthetic web guides' to specific disciplines, where library groups and scholarly societies team up to create subject portals.

repositories of electronic information created on individual campuses

shared collections, in print and electronic format; an example: the rich shared resources of the Research Triangle libraries in North Carolina

Okerson explained that what all too often gets in the way of collaboration is: local ambitions, organizational drag, unsustainable price increases for formally published information, competing libraries, disciplinary boundaries, inadequate strategic direction and the fact that libraries are not

funded for risk-taking. She sees that building appropriate productive alliances has to become libraries' new core competency.

Lynch's vision was different than that generally shared by Marcum and Okerson. He called for constructive opportunities, but ones that do not initially call for massive collaboration. In his mind, the future is already here but it's just not uniformly distributed. Lynch believes that librarians need to be open to new thinking and sensitive to how scholarly communication is changing; we need to reconceptualize, not simply digitize, information. He explained that digital collections and digital libraries are not the same thing, because digital libraries include software systems. He also pointed out that scholarly communication hasn't changed much – except in some pioneering areas in the humanities – but scholarly publishing has. Questions he suggests that we must answer: whether digital libraries should incorporate authoring tools, analytical tools, or annotation tools, and whether those creating digital libraries need to rethink privacy and anonymity in some situations – people working on a topic may, in fact, want to be known.

A day in the life of a journal publisher

An overview of the UKSG seminar hosted by Institute of Physics Publishing in Bristol, 29 January 2003

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It was another day of fireman's strikes. On a bitterly cold but clear and frosty day, the fire station across the road gave shelter for the firemen huddled around their makeshift fires for warmth, stoking braziers. Flames leapt into the air as we huddled under the collars of our overcoats finally to settle into the comfortable air-conditioned surroundings provided by Institute of Physics Publishing (IoPP) at their Bristol office. We prepared ourselves for the illuminating gifts of knowledge from a well-chosen cast of speakers.

We listened to, and appreciated the introduction and welcome from Terry Hulbert, Head of e-Development and Strategy at IoPP. He said that in IoPP alone, the number of hits on their web

pages in 2002 had risen sharply to a staggering 46 million. We were to hear in more depth later from Anne Callaghan and Suzanne Ferris, both of IoPP, just how that demand is resourced and researched to cope with increasing demand.

Andrew Wray, Senior Publisher at IoPP presented the first address of the day entitled, 'Editorial strategies and development'.

In launching a new journal, Andrew explained the necessary course of action from the initial idea for the journal, to its marketing and launching, and finally to the review process 3 or 4 years down the road. He highlighted many of the issues, considerations and problems encountered along the way.

The production of a quality journal and the

need to establish/maintain the authors' good reputation and prestige.

The subject coverage; a fair and consistent peer-review process; fast publication whether online or in print.

If online, ensure there are good features to encourage access. Science controlled by scientists, publishing controlled by publishers.

Editorial policies should be clearly defined from the outset with considerations such as scope: is it to be a research paper, review, traditional journal or an online hybrid, the dreaded portal? Editorial Board and Editor-in-Chief must be appointed. Who will make the decisions? Who will set the standards; the number and power of referees in a peer review process? Who has the overall control?

Finally, the pricing issue must be addressed. There are pricing models for e-journals and one must be selected when considering the customer, subscriber and scope. With more readers than ever before through journals and consortia it is important to look to the future to satisfy faster publication.

Lloyd Alan Fletcher, Information Systems Manager, IoPP, presented his first paper of the day entitled, 'Electronic publishing: Why isn't it cheaper?'

Lloyd opened his address with direct questions to analyse the topic heading with which he has been involved since 1984.

What costs does e-publishing avoid?

What new costs are incurred?

How are cost drivers likely to change in the future?

Approximately 80% of the total publishing costs are taken up by acquisition of content, submission, peer review process, editing, quality control and production costs. These costs exist whether publishing is electronic or paper.

That leaves 20% to analyse, and in that, e-publication will include the cost of putting the files online together with article quality and reference link checking. There will be one-off set up costs, design and redesign, archive and troubleshooting costs and of course the demand for new features. The e-publication system will also require an internal network, data storage, internal and online servers, bandwidth, e-publication platform software, upgrades, maintenance, performance and research monitors.

In conclusion, Lloyd posed the question of what will drive costs down and proffered the answer to

include: declining IT costs, declining demand for print, economies of scale. The taboo answer appeared to be Open source software, and Open Archive Systems. But that's another story.

Anne Callaghan, Subscriptions Administration Manager, Journals, IoPP presented a paper entitled 'Customer service for print journal subscriptions'

Anne gave an insight into the problems encountered in administering 12,000 international subscriptions (except the USA, Canada and Mexico) with £9,500,000 revenue. She said her subscription fulfilment team of four staff typically handles invoices, renewals, order processing, label runs and claims. Customers include the internal Sales team, Finance Department and Board members, and external agents and subscribers. Business is seasonal and cyclic and primarily based upon the calendar year with cash received and orders processed before 31 December. With such enormous scope, good housekeeping on a daily basis is essential to keep up product and customer changes and to cope with the volume and wide range of enquiries received by phone, fax, e-mail and post.

Suzanne Ferris, Electronic Product Support Manager IoPP, presented her paper on 'Electronic Product Support'

Electronic Product Support has been set up as the IoPP electronic journal interface to provide research, set up and maintain accounts including guest and trial accounts. It includes Axiom (the web-based online research service providing search support and statistics), and Atom (the online refereeing service providing registration support and advice on using the service).

With a turnaround target of 48 hours, 95% of queries are e-mails and that is 5,000 each week. Queries are compiled and analysed to give the current and previous list of 'Frequently Asked Questions'. Suzanne explained how the service has been designed for access and use and gave examples of the information and screens available.

Robert Bley, Sales Manager, E-Access Solutions, Swets Blackwell, started the afternoon session with his presentation entitled 'Supplying the hybrid library – the agent's role'

Robert introduced us to SwetsWise, described as a modular site for buying, accessing and managing subscriptions. The package offers a full web based service, managing subscriptions from end user and centralised ordering, through

approval procedures, to electronic transfer of order information. Its underlying principles meet the needs of the hybrid/virtual library service incorporating full Science-Direct integration, 1st Web of Science, Axiom and Local OPAC. Robert demonstrated how SwetsWise achieves stable multilevel linking, plus access and integration capability. The built-in alerting facility automatically seeks new journals and articles, and delivers them to the customer in a customised text and choice of format.

The impressive versatility includes essential management tools such as fast set up times and choice of interfaces to accommodate the various formats that ILS vendors accept. The package can be adapted to satisfy any specification and the only question left to ask is,

'Can it get a couple of tickets for the Lords Test match this summer?'

Lloyd Fletcher introduced his second address of the day 'Electronic product development: the never-ending journey'.

In delivering this address, Lloyd clearly demonstrated that with the introduction of new journals and the ever increasing demand for more journals to convert from print to online, how important it is to deploy fundamental project management techniques to ensure safe and reliable product delivery in a continuously developing environment.

Business drives continuous developments to achieve added benefits. Technology changes rapidly, and demands changes with it to improve service delivery time, quality value for money and choice.

Lloyd demonstrated with a visual aid how a development plan is put together to meet the requirements of the customer, business needs and operational practicalities. To summarise:

'Project management is risk management; risk management is success management'

Katy Christomanou, Publisher, CABI Publishing, delivered the final presentation 'One size doesn't fit all: another perspective.'

CAB International is a global not-for-profit organisation with its headquarters in the UK, ownership across 40 member governments, and activities to include publishing, information management, scientific research and development assistance.

The subject coverage can be described as ecological and biological with titles such as 'Crop Protection', 'Human Nutrition', 'Medical and Veterinary Parasitology', 'Entomology' and 'Mycology'. They publish about 60 books each year and the bibliographic databases include print, online, cd-rom and the internet. Additionally, they publish a further 14 primary and review journal titles. Much of their work is carried out in conjunction with partner societies such as The Nutrition Society and the International Society for Seed Science. The production of a title must go through the format previously described and within agreed timescales. Katy went through a list of pros and cons for a publisher with such wide geographical diversity and the need to enter into partnerships in order to succeed.

Summary

I am a new kid on the block when it comes to journals, let alone journals publishing in print and journals publishing online, so some of what I heard today was a revelation in terms of journals availability, in print or online. I did not understand some of the processes or terminology but I am old enough in the tooth to appreciate the knowledge and passion displayed by the presenters. Thank you to UKSG. Thank you to IoPP. Thank you to the presenters. This was a very enjoyable and informative day that I can heartily recommend to others.

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