

On the circuit

National Seminar on Electronic Publications Hyderabad, India 23–24 March 2006

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The 'National Seminar on Electronic Publications' was organized by the Centre for Information Science of Mahatma Gandhi National Institute of Research and Social Action (MGNIRSA), Hyderabad, and took place in the premises of the Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University (JNTU), Kukatpally, Hyderabad. The seminar attracted about 150 participants from all over the country.

A total of 78 papers was received, of which 60 were accepted for presentation and subsequent publication in the seminar volume (now available). Of these, two were keynote addresses, eight themed papers and the remainder, general presentations. The seminar was in six sessions spread over the two-day programme. It was inaugurated by the Chief Guest, *Prof K C Reddy*, Chairman, A P State Council of Higher Education. *Dr T A V Murthy*, Director, INFLIBNET, Ahmedabad, was the Guest of Honour and *Prof D Swaminadhan*, President, MGNIRSA, presided over the function.

The first technical session on 'Electronic Publishing' consisted of five papers, including one themed paper on '*Electronic publishing and the online journals roll-out in India – an Elsevier ScienceDirect perspective on usage*' by *Mr Perdeep Kumar*, Sales Director, Science & Technology, Elsevier, New Delhi. This paper focused on the trends in electronic publishing (e-publishing) and provided an insight into the investment of a publishing company in maintaining online journals. It analysed the usage of electronic resources in the emerging electronic era and related it to the research output in the corresponding subject area. The speaker also stressed the role of publishers in archiving back-volumes of their journals. He examined the increasing trend in the usage of these back-volumes in India. An analysis by subject showed that material science, engineering and biotechnology attract

more back-volume use than other subjects, such as psychology. The papers in this session mainly discussed the developing trends in e-publishing, the promoting factors for e-publications, particularly e-journal publishing in India, and the impact of e-publishing on library and information science (LIS) education.

The second technical session had two parallel tracks. The topic of Track 1 was 'E-books and related issues'. In this session seven papers were presented which dealt with various aspects of e-books such as the basics of e-books, their advantages, disadvantages, publishers of e-books and e-book reading devices: the various e-book reading devices/formats; technological aspects of e-book reading devices, criteria for selecting an e-book reading device, specific advantages of e-books (particularly to the visually challenged); implications of e-books on libraries in acquiring, processing and providing access to them; and two case-studies were presented on e-book usage. The topic of Track 2 was 'E-Journals'. Altogether, five papers were presented in this session including one themed paper. This paper, on '*A Bibliometric Study of Two Web-based Journals in Information Science*', by *Mr S K Senapati*, Library Officer, Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee and *Jagtar Singh*, Department of Library & Information Science, Punjabi University, Patiala, was presented by Prof Jagtar Singh. He presented the results of the analytical study of two web-based

journals called *South African Journal of Information Management (SAJIM)* and *Informing Science (IS)*. The speaker discussed an analysis of the bibliometric data based on year-wise distribution of papers, authorship pattern, institution-wise distribution of papers, country-wise distribution of papers, and subject-wise break-up of papers. The findings of the study revealed that (a) both the journals have no uniform policy in respect of number of papers to be published in a volume, unlike printed journals; (b) single authors have made maximum contribution in both the journals; and (c) the majority of papers in both the journals have been contributed by authors from academic institutions. The salient points discussed in this session were: usage of e-journals, value-added services of e-journals (such as the content page services), growth of e-journals, features, the methods of evaluating, and advantages of evaluating e-journals and impact on college libraries.

The third technical session started with a Keynote Address by *Mr V Rama Rao*, CEO, SAPNET, Hyderabad on '*E-learning through Media Networks: the Indian Scenario*'. The speaker discussed how distance education has changed rapidly over the years from correspondence education to media-supplemented learning, to interactive networks and, currently, to e-learning. The keynote speaker also elaborated on various e-learning initiatives in India and discussed the problems associated with e-learning. He pointed out that intellectual property rights, quality and authenticity of content, and hardware and software issues are some of the problems which will have to be dealt with, and concluded that e-publishing and e-learning will dominate in the near future.

This third session also had two parallel tracks: the topic covered by Track 1 was 'E-Resources' and Track 2 covered the topic 'Electronic Publications Usage'. Seven papers, including one themed paper, were presented in Track 1 of this session. The themed paper on '*Digitization and ETDs: initiatives at the IGM Library, University of Hyderabad*', was presented by *Dr E Rama Reddy*, University Librarian (Retd.), IGM Library, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad. The speaker presented his experience of digitizing theses and dissertations and making them searchable for users in the Indira Gandhi Memorial Library of the University of Hyderabad. He explained the entire process and the technical issues involved in digitization and in building a digital collection of electronic theses and dissertations.

The speaker said that no library should be considered fully self-sufficient with just its own digital library and there is therefore a need to network various digital libraries. This session included case-studies on digitizing theses and dissertations and making them searchable, and on college teachers' perceptions about electronic information; the impact of e-resources on users of higher education and research institutions; using e-resources as a source for library marketing in a special library and enhancing usage. One paper discussed a project to demonstrate the significance of the OAI framework for Indian open access journals. Some other issues discussed were the organization and access of e-resources. Three papers were presented in Track 2 of this session, including the various web search patterns in digital libraries used by faculty members; use and usage of e-books and e-journals; and issues in legal deposit of e-publications in India.

The fourth technical session was on 'Consortia' and papers in this session covered various issues like the need for a consortial approach in acquiring e-journals and the advantages of this, and the future of Indian academic libraries in the e-publishing era. In the keynote address, *Dr T A V Murthy* stressed the need for government agencies to work in collaboration with private institutions in the higher education field. He also spoke about the importance of networking in higher education, and briefly spoke about the role played by INFLIBNET's national academic consortium in providing access to electronic information, especially to e-journals through UGC-InfoNet.

The fifth technical session, on Intellectual Property Rights and Digital Rights Management (IPR and DRM,) covered the theme of '*Relevance of DRM technology for E-books and publishing*'. It was presented by *Mr N V Satyanarayana*, Director, Informatics (India) Pvt Ltd, Bangalore. In his presentation, Mr Satyanarayana discussed the lack of security on the Internet and the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) which prohibits providing tools that will enable people to share copyrighted content. He said that the DRM and e-market are growing together. DRM is currently a bundle of too many proprietary technologies but these are converging into new tools/systems for protecting e-content.

The sixth technical session included four presentations, in which various applications of e-publications including e-learning, distance

education, and higher education were discussed. Issues raised were the use of e-books and e-journals in distance education; the impact of e-resources on e-learning in higher education and the need for a network-based e-learning model to provide a flexible, stimulating, and effective learning environment for self-learning purposes.

Some of the recommendations that resulted from the discussions and deliberations in the various technical sessions of the seminar were as follows:

In relation to information services for libraries, in order to adapt to the fast-changing technologies:

- Understand what users need and how they are actually using digital resources.
- Library staff should be professionally trained in the use of latest required technologies.
- Save money through co-operative acquisition of electronic resources.
- Formulate/establish proper strategies to preserve digital resources.
- Indian academic libraries should develop the necessary infrastructure in order to receive the abundance of e-resources being offered by national consortia like UGC-InfoNet and also open access resources.
- The Internet and bandwidth facilities required in libraries, and network connectivity in departmental libraries, should be strengthened further to access e-resources.

Advances in technology should be used and adopted to improve access to e-resources in higher education:

- E-publications can play a major role in imparting education to the students, both in urban and rural areas irrespective of the distance to the main institute. Already information kiosks are being set up in the villages in many parts of rural India to provide information and instruction. E-publications should be made available in these rural information kiosks for the benefit of rural people.
- Access to e-publications should be made available economically to students. With this aim in mind, government institutions and universities have an important role to play, both as users and producers of electronic content.
- Networking and the sharing of resources would enhance the use of e-publications and

facilitate e-learning. Hence, all universities and research institutions should be networked so as to share their electronic resources. This way even the production costs of e-publication would go down.

- Lack of infrastructure due to persisting, wide inequalities in economic and social conditions in India is causing severe problems in accessing electronic information. The government should therefore become more involved in higher education.
- E-learning is a boon for school 'dropouts' and working people. The government should therefore introduce more e-learning courses in universities and research institutions.
- Seminars, workshops and training should be organized on a regular basis to enable students to become familiar with e-learning techniques.

The new era of revolution in ICT and information resources has brought with it challenges in the field of legal deposit and preservation. In this context, the Delivery of Books Act needs to be amended to meet these challenges:

- The present Act covers only books and newspapers to be deposited in their respective centres. Formats like journals, maps, music materials, audio-visual tapes, films, microforms and e-publications (both online and offline) do not come under the purview of this Act. It is essential that due thought be given to the question of in how many forms each document should be deposited, if one and the same document appears in many forms.
- Repositories need to be identified and nominated for the task.
- National-level set-up of the infrastructure is needed.
- Proper procedures for the organization of e-resources need to be established.
- Identification of the services and potential users needed.

The major concern of publishers and authors with regard to e-publications is rights management. The following recommendations were made to deal with IPR and DRM issues:

- The mechanism for catching piracy in printed books is good but, due to lack of law enforcement, piracy goes unchecked. Copyright laws should therefore be enforced at usage level only.

- More studies are required to deal with the Intellectual Property Rights issues pertaining to e-publications.
- Sophisticated digital rights management techniques need to be developed.
- Copyright laws need to be enforced strictly, to protect the authors' rights.
- E-books should be incorporated into some system whereby users are able to share knowledge to a minimal extent for academic purposes without infringing the copyright. But

it should be ensured that the 'fair use' concept is followed strictly.

The seminar proceedings are now available from the Registrar, MGNIRSA, 17 Gaganmahal Road, Domalguda, Hyderabad – 500029, India. Details of the publication are: *Electronic Publications: proceedings & papers of the national seminar on Electronic Publications*. Edited by Chennupati K. Ramaiah, A. Lakshman Moorthy and N. Laxman Rao. Hyderabad: MGNIRSA, 2006. Price: \$50.00; xxiv; 531 pages. ISBN: 81-7525-727-X.

STM seminar Book 2.0: The Genie is out of the Bottle

London

4 May 2006

Report by Adrian Driscoll, Caxtonia (co-organizer and presenter)

As a result of many requests from its members, STM embarked on a series of seminars looking at issues in book publishing. The first of these seminars considered the challenge that 'going digital' presents to publishers. Jointly promoted by STM and the Publishers Association, the programme and attendees reflected not only scientific, technical and medical publishing but also the humanities and social sciences and general trade publishing.

The organizers arranged a spectrum of presentations that attempted both to map the landscape and help attendees distinguish solid ground from shifting sands. The conference opened with two items that put the relationship of books to the digital world in perspective. *Richard Charkin's* characteristically informative and amusing take on Internet history led him to argue that publishers will need to re-engineer as organizations to ensure that they do not lose the real value they add. In a complementary presentation, EPS's *Dan Penny* explored the false dawns that have characterized the history of the e-book and why, this time, the electronic delivery of book content may finally break through to the mainstream.

In the next session, *Julianne Ritt* of Springer led a panel emphasizing the here and now by looking

at book marketing and promotions. Of particular interest to *Serials* subscribers was *Louise Reinholt* from Wiley Interscience, who spoke on the very positive experience with their OnlineBooks of adding a one-time fee model to the existing subscription model, with 95% opting for the one-time fee option. *Marika Strauch* from Springer showed how effective (particularly cost-wise) electronic marketing could be, and *Warren Cowan* from the search engine optimiser, Greenlight, made a strong case for understanding how your pages are treated by Google, etc.

After lunch and networking, the seminar resumed with *Paul Carr* from the Friday Project providing a distinct view on the relationship between print and online. An online journalist turned print publisher, he explained with

enthusiasm and wit why this was not some form of retrograde step but simply, as some of the best writing was now on the web and while people still bought books, it was just another case of bringing the right content to the right people in the right form.

The second panel of the day approached from a number of directions the issues that publishers face in delivering books digitally. From Cambridge University Press, *Richard Fisher's* warnings about the nature of academic institutions (and, in particular, the nature of humanities' scholars) should serve as a useful corrective to organizations that just seek to extend the models that have worked well in STM journals into wider scholarly publishing. *Adrian Driscoll* took the existing situation of multiple and multiplying formats for books. When titles are already appearing in up to 12 variants (when the digital forms are included) there are clear consequences of not bringing the new digital forms into the heart of the publisher's enterprise. Recent initiatives by Google and Amazon have galvanized a whole range of publishers. *Jayne Marks* from MPS Technologies helpfully explored the hosting options for publishers for putting book content online – the choice is between limiting costs or retaining control.

The final two sessions of the day brought some welcome external perspectives. First, *Suzanne Klempener* from NetLibrary showed why they are bullish about the future of e-content (whether it is packaged as books or not) by revealing in her statistical summaries the momentum that is dragging not only publishers but libraries along the digital path. Secondly and lastly, *Ray Lonsdale* and *Chris Armstrong* provided further insights into how libraries are coping (and not coping) with e-books. They threw up a number of challenges faced, from the fact that publishers have not done a particularly good job in drawing attention to the books they have produced electronically, to noting a study that showed a profound lack of knowledge and awareness of digital resources amongst students.

The event was particularly successful in moving the debate beyond the 'will digital replace print?' debate to show how any emerging publishing environment will only be successful if it brings print and digital together. Whether the metaphor was of the genie escaping or the reaching of a tipping point, the day reinforced the assumption that the electronic delivery of books was now a mainstream publishing activity.

The STM website is at <http://www.stm-assoc.org/>

21st Annual Conference of the North American Serials Interest Group (NASIG) Denver, Colorado, USA 4–7 May 2006

Report by Dan Tonkery

Over 600 attendees arrived in Denver for the 21st annual NASIG, and instead of the traditional college or university campus, everyone had the pleasure of staying at a modern hotel with comfortable rooms.

As NASIG has matured as an organization, shifting to a hotel from a college campus has been well received by the members. Certainly UKSG's move

from a campus to a hotel environment cannot be far behind. While the facility at the University of Warwick is well suited to handling the conference,

the ability to go to the hotel room to rest can be a welcome relief. We have an aging population of librarians and it is time to seek out more comfortable environments.

The NASIG program was much improved over the past two years and the three 'vision' sessions were particularly good. *Robin Sloan's* look into the future was enlightening and entertaining as he predicted that all traditional news services would be replaced in 2014 by a community of Internet writers. (See EPIC 2014. www.robinsloan.com/epic/). *T Scott Plutchak*, the Director of the University of Alabama Medical School, gave an insightful view into the future of the serial as a format (it is going away, and soon) and challenged the audience to go back to their campuses and build or improve relationships with faculty and administrators or risk being replaced.

The issue of e-resources workflow in the e-journal world was covered in multiple ways, looking at library operational models, various workflow case-studies, linking the library and course management systems, as well as predicting the future of ERM systems. Everyone is overwhelmed with the amount of clerical work that is involved in supporting the access and management of e-resources in the library. So in the 'tactics' sessions every aspect of e-resources care and feeding was presented. One worthwhile session focused on when to accept training from the vendor, offering a cost-benefit approach to making that decision. In the end training is expensive for both the vendor and the library so don't be afraid to just say no when the objectives are not clear or not in the library's favor.

The pre-conferences this year were for beginning or advanced serials catalogers and NASIG is the perfect place to give that type of in-depth practical help. The NASIG attendees include a large number of individuals interested in bibliographic issues and control of the cataloging systems. Some might consider there are too many technical sessions but everyone there is pleased to have this opportunity to share bibliographic

problems and hear from some of the leading experts in the field.

What is missing from NASIG, and it is indeed unfortunate, is the lack of publisher participation. Having attended annual NASIG meetings over the past twenty years, I have witnessed the continued decline in publisher attendance. Unlike UKSG, where over 30% of the attendees are from non-library positions with a heavy representation of publishers, NASIG does not offer any opportunity for publishers to make a contribution other than for them to compete with librarians in giving a paper. At UKSG there is a limited number of exhibits, which in itself is a draw for librarians. The UKSG's 'product review' approach is a big draw for publishers. There are four major time-slots devoted to product reviews with an in-depth opportunity to present the product, including the availability of the vendor to pass out literature, take questions and answers and give a full-scale sales pitch. Each product presentation stands on its own without any of the NASIG 'rules' about no logos or only one person being allowed to talk from the same company. The present NASIG environment for publishers and vendors continues to drive a wedge in the community.

Having been to both NASIG and the UKSG for many years, I have watched UKSG build strong alliances between librarians, publishers and agents or library supply vendors who come together to work and to have an open dialog. NASIG, on the other hand, is moving away from the community. If not dealt with, the organization may become isolated from the mainstream of scholarly communication. NASIG members are missing an opportunity to influence the future direction of publisher products and services. The marginalization of the US serials librarians is an issue that deserves close attention by the NASIG Board.

The 22nd Annual Conference of NASIG will be held in Louisville, Kentucky from 29 May–2 June 2007.