

ORGANIZATIONS AT THE MARGINS: PROSPECTS AND NEW DIRECTIONS

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COUNCIL ON LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

**Private, Non-Profit Think Tank
Catalyst**

Its mission . . .

To expand access to information, however recorded
and preserved, as a public good.



CLIR's Approach

In partnership with other organizations, CLIR helps create services that expand the concept of “library” and supports the providers and preservers of information.



CLIR's Funding

- Institutional Sponsors (170 ±)
- Private Foundations
- Individual Contributions
- Federal Agencies



With so many at the margins,
who is at the center?

User!

? New roles for:

- Libraries
- Publishers
- Aggregators



Roles worth retaining

Publishers

- Maintaining quality control
- Soliciting authors
- Managing peer review process



Roles worth retaining

Librarians

- Collection development / matching curriculum
- Preservation



Roles worth retaining

Aggregators

- Streamlining processes
- Convenience
- Critical mass / economies of scale



New world that is user-centered

What remains important?

- Quality
- Convenience (redefined)
- Preservation ?



Confidential Statement

Librarians may well be marginalized . . .

Publishers may be marginalized. . .

But critical missions of libraries and publishing are more important than ever



The roles must be expanded

- Less territoriality among individuals/
institutions
- Meet users' needs by becoming what
we should have been in the first place



What users want:

- Highly personalized, customized information
- Environments that present information and associated services at the time they are needed



What users do not care about:

- The library's tales of woe
- The publisher's tales of woe
- Doing what is best from librarian's perspective



Lessons learned of users' behavior

- Seamless presentation of collections and services
(irrespective of where, by whom, or in what format)
- User profiling technologies
(for customized information network)



Implications for the library

- Traditional stand-alone library is at great risk
- Library as portal to broader information network is questionable
- Reference endangered; research more important



Implications for the publisher

- Users want searching across titles and formats
 - Branding of a journal less important
- E-scholarship among authors in a discipline may be more important than journals
- Increase in available alternatives
 - Scholar-led innovations in scholarly communications
 - Experiments in production and dissemination of scholarship



What is e-scholarship?

Initiatives that allow scholar to produce and disseminate “publications” with little or no intervention by third party commercial publishers



Libraries can play important role

- Supply services that help researchers, teachers, and learners to navigate, find, interconnect, interpret, and use information that is relevant to the information seeker



But – a question!

What do libraries gain from their efforts to diminish the publisher's influence over the market for scholarly journals by becoming publishers of such journals in their own right?



Problem:

Librarians have neither a tradition or expertise in publishing



A question about preservation

Publishers, not libraries, own digital content

Will publishers preserve that content?



Problem:

Publishers have no expertise in ensuring preservation and long-term access to content



The next-generation digital library

- Extends definition of “library”
- Transcends organizational boundaries



Digital library not a silo

- But part of a complex networked array of information services
- A star in wider constellation



Mediates between diverse
and distributed information
resources on the one hand

- and among a range of user
communities on the other



Establishes digital library service environment -
networked, online information “space”

Users can discover, locate, acquire access to, and
(we hope) use information



Characteristics of next-generation digital library

- Makes no distinction among formats
- Combines online catalogs, finding aids, abstracting and indexing services
- Combines all electronic holdings:
 - e-journals
 - e-print
 - digitized collections
 - geographic information systems
 - Internet resources



Next-generation digital library's role

- Configuring access to a world of information of which it owns or manages only a portion
- Success not determined by collections it owns but by its services associated with electronic collections



Aggregators now compete on the
terms of value-added services
layered on electronic collections



In much the same way, digital libraries

- Establish distinctive identities
 - Serve their user communities
 - Emphasize their owned collections
 - Promote unique institutional objectives by
 - disclosing
 - providing access to
 - supporting
- } virtual collections



New features of digital library

- Also supports administrative, business, curatorial, and educational functions
- Promotes and ensures fair use of its “collections” and services
- Integrates information repositories that are openly available
- Manages information about collections and items within collections
- Incorporates patron, lending, and other management databases
- Integrates procedures for user registration, authentication, authorization, and fee-transaction processing



In other words . . .

Electronic space that supports very
different views and very different uses
of networked information



Designed for:

- Library patrons
- Library staff

→ Also with an eye on needs and capacities of those who supply it with information content and systems

- Publishers
- Aggregators



Design principles

- Information technologies will evolve and change rapidly
- Technology is to support research, learning, and cultural engagement



Return to the center

New system created by
librarians, technologists,
publishers, and aggregators



Rethink

- Ownership
- Governance
- Control
- Education for information professionals



Emphasize

- Collections and services to meet users' needs

