



Smart Libraries™

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The Blue Devil's Digital Details

Whether a cause for jubilation or consternation, it seems inevitable that eventually most library users—especially academic users involved as students, faculty, administrators, or staff—will carry some sort of personal, portable device for communicating, storing, and utilizing information. The devil—perhaps the Blue Devil—is in the details: what, how, when.

Duke University has undertaken a substantial effort to begin filling in the details. While other universities are trying to integrate personal digital assistants, laptops, and other computing devices into the day-to-day teaching, learning, research, and service activities, Duke is standing eye-to-eye with the beast and expanding its testing to arguably the most popular computing device among college students in this decade: the Apple iPod. The Center for Instructional Technology (CIT), a department of the Duke University Libraries, is leading a multiyear project to equip all first-year students—which amounted to 1,650 students in the previous 2004/05 academic year—with Apple iPods.

As a result of the iPod project, according to a statement posted on the university's "CIT Support for iPod Projects" Web site, this year Duke will continue to build on its iPod enterprise. "The Duke Digital Initiative for 2005–2006 has been largely shaped by the experiences of the 2004–2005 iPod initiative, lessons learned, and the conversations that resulted among faculty, staff, and administrators. In particular, this initiative is intended to build on successes with digital audio from the 2004–2005 iPod project, but to also provide support for additional innovation with digital images, digital video, tablet PCs, and collaboration technologies."

This past June the final evaluation report of Duke's "iPod First Year Experience" was released. The number of courses actually requiring students to use their iPods seems to be trending upward: fifteen courses in the fall 2004 semester, thirty-three during the spring 2005 semester, and, according to an update on the CIT Web site, there are at least twenty-six confirmed course-related uses for the current fall 2005 semester.

Duke's first-year report outlines five major categories of academic uses of iPod devices: 1.) course-content dissemination tool, which includes lectures, guest speakers, historical speeches, foreign language content, and music; 2.) classroom recording tool; 3.) field recording tool; 4.) study support tool; and 5.) file transfer and storage.

In the July/August/September issue of the *OCLC Newsletter*, CIT Director Lynne O'Brien stated in an interview about the project: "Students have the option to download and listen to audio book." It is unclear, however, whether the Duke University Library, the iPod iStore, or some other source is providing these audio books for student use.—*Tom Peters*

Contact: http://cit.duke.edu/about/ipod_project.do
http://cit.duke.edu/pdf/ipod_initiative_04_05.pdf
<http://www.oclc.org/news/publications/newsletters/oclc/2004/265/downloads/duke.pdf>

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THE ILS SCOOP BY MARSHALL BREEDING



Some of the early adopters in the U.S. have completed their installation and now offer AquaBrowser as the primary or alternative interface to their online catalogs.

AquaBrowser Gaining Traction in U.S.

Interest in providing patrons with a more visual method of displaying online catalog search results seems to be growing among libraries. In order to assume this more visual approach—as well as to provide users with a more sophisticated way to organize their results—many libraries have deployed alternative online catalog interfaces. AquaBrowser Library, developed by Medialab Solutions, is a product that facilitates this visual approach to online catalog search-results display.

The April issue of *Smart Libraries Newsletter* (25, no. 4, p. 5) provided an overview of the technologies behind AquaBrowser Library. At that time, the product found use primarily on its home turf in the Netherlands. In recent months, though, AquaBrowser has gained traction in the United States; a number of libraries have purchased the product, and several are now using it as the primary interface for online catalog searching.

In September 2004, The Library Corporation (TLC) inked an agreement with Medialab Solutions to sell and support AquaBrowser Library. At that time TLC also offered a product from Endeca called “Guided Navigation” as an extended interface for TLC’s library automation systems. At the same time last year, other companies, such as VTLS, were promoting the AquaBrowser technology. But by April 2005, Medialab Solutions appointed TLC as exclusive

distributor for the U.S. and Canada. (VTLS’s pre-existing agreement allows it to sell AquaBrowser Library to its existing clients.)

This business arrangement has resulted in a significant number of sales of AquaBrowser Library. More than thirty libraries in the U.S. have contracted to implement AquaBrowser Library in recent months. Most are public libraries, but some K–12 school districts and college libraries are represented as well.

Making the Switch

Some of the early adopters in the U.S. have completed their installation and now offer AquaBrowser as the primary or alternative interface to their online catalogs. Libraries that switched to production use of AquaBrowser in August 2005 include the Grayslake Public Library in Illinois, Southfield Public Schools in Michigan, and the Carroll County Public Library in Maryland.

In the same month, one of the largest public libraries in the U.S. made the same move. The Queens Library launched a new Web site on August 17, 2005, which included a switch to AquaBrowser Library as the primary interface for its catalog.

The Queens Library currently runs DRA Classic as its library automation system and is in the process of selecting a replacement for that aging system.

Queens offers AquaBrowser as its default catalog or “Word Cloud” search. The DRA Web2 interface is available as an “Advanced Search” option.

With a main facility and sixty-two branches throughout the borough, the Queens Library system ranks as one of the busiest libraries in the world. More than ninety-two languages are represented in its collection of 9.9 million volumes. (To try out the Queens Library implementation of AquaBrowser visit <http://aqua.queenslibrary.org>.)

This set of recent implementers reveals the broad appeal of the product—with implementation in small libraries such as Grayslake Public; medium-sized ones as represented by Carroll County, Maryland; and topped out by Queens Library, one of the largest municipal public library systems here in the U.S.

These three libraries also run different library automation systems (Library Solution, Horizon, and DRA Classic, respectively), demonstrating not only

AquaBrowser Library’s technical compatibility but also TLC’s interest in working with libraries outside its current customer base.

Amsterdam-based Medialab Solutions was founded in 1990 as a research facility and began marketing search technologies in about 2000. The company has enjoyed great success in its home country, with more than sixty percent of public libraries, and some large academic libraries, using AquaBrowser.

In addition to expanding its market to North America, the company plans a larger presence in Scandinavia. Medialab Solutions recently entered into a business agreement with an organization called Biblioteksentralen, a non-profit organization that supplies library products and services to libraries in Norway. With this agreement in place, we can expect to see increased sales of AquaBrowser in that country.

As the company expands geographically, its products will require sup-

port for diverse language scripts. The AquaBrowser Library interface was recently expanded to support Unicode, giving it the ability to support many different languages. The interface had already been available in languages that use the Roman alphabet, including English, Spanish, Dutch, German, French, Catalan, and Frisian.

Now with Unicode underpinnings in place, AquaBrowser Library has been expanded to include a Russian interface with its Cyrillic alphabet. As AquaBrowser Browser makes gains internationally, support for Unicode is a pertinent development.

Contact: <http://www.medialab.nl/index.asp?page=aquabrowserlibrary/overview>
<http://www.tlcdelivers.com/tlc/press/pr062205.asp>
 Biblioteksentralen: www.bibsent.no
<http://aqua.queenslibrary.org>

PEOPLE & PLACES

Elsevier-owned Endeavor Information Systems reports new appointments in middle-management positions.

Katrina Anderson will take over as the leader of pre-sales and sales operations. A veteran of the library automation industry, Anderson served for two years as VP of Operations for Ex Libris (2003–2005) and was previously director of customer service at Innovative Interfaces.

Donna Hillcoat, previously director of sales operations, has been advanced to director of library information management systems. Hillcoat will oversee Endeavor’s Voyager library management system and Meridian electronic resource management system. Hillcoat’s previous posts included that of sales director of DRA.

Contact: <http://www.endinfosys.com/cgi-bin/news/viewer.cgi?ID=106>

THE ILS SCOOP

Summer Slows Automation Announcements

The months following the early-summer ALA Annual Conference tend to be slow ones for the library automation industry. The companies work hard on closing deals and polishing announcements that can be released at major conferences, such as the upcoming 2006 ALA Midwinter Meeting in San Antonio. True to the trend, the months of July and August have seen only a trickle of news regarding major sales or product developments.

The few announcements include:

- Innovative's sale of Millennium to the Las Vegas–Clark County Library District. The new Millennium system replaces the library's existing DRA Classic system. Las Vegas–Clark County Library District will also be implementing Innovative's Electronic Resource Management (ERM) System. Innovative also announced that a group of academic libraries in Hong Kong will be significantly expanding their resource sharing network based on the company's INN-Reach software.
- The University of Mittweida in Germany has selected Ex Libris's ALEPH 500 to replace its aging LIBERO automation system. The library will also implement SFX eXpress, the vendor-hosted version of the company's link server software. Also in Germany, the University Center of North Rhineland-Westphalia, a consor-

tium of academic libraries, will implement Ex Libris's DigiTool 3.0 in support of new digital library projects.

- SirsiDynix is beginning to see early sales of its new Corinthian automation system for academic libraries. The University of Huddersfield will upgrade from an existing Horizon system, and a consortium of libraries in Catalonia, Spain, will implement Corinthian. Unicorn sales for the period include the Westfield Public Library in Indiana, the Chester College of New England in New Hampshire, and the Heartland Regional Library System in Missouri.

Contact: <http://www.iii.com/>
<http://www.exlibris.co.il/newsdetails.htm?nid=426>
<http://www.exlibris.co.il/newsdetails.htm?nid=425>
<http://www.sirsidynix.com/Newsevents/Releases/20050824huddersfield.html>
<http://www.sirsidynix.com/Newsevents/Releases/20050809premier.html>
<http://www.sirsidynix.com/Newsevents/Releases/20050803westfield.html>
<http://www.sirsidynix.com/Newsevents/Releases/20050816chester.html>

Microsoft Going Postal?

Microsoft apparently plans to enter the growing radio frequency identification (RFID) market by beginning with Asian postal services. According to a late-August article on *PC World.com* by Dan Nystedt and John Ribeiro from IDG News Service, the Redmond, Washington-based behemoth has made an offer to a Taiwanese postal service and is reportedly in discussion with an Indian postal service. The system would enable the sender, the postal service, and the intended recipient to track the parcel's travels.

Microsoft VPs have been stating, at various recent conferences and trade shows, that the MS RFID system will make the technology cheaper and easier to use in a MS Windows environment.

I could find no mention of Microsoft's plans vis-à-vis the library RFID market, which really is a tiny sliver of the overall RFID pie. Who knows—maybe some future Gates Foundation library grant awards will include a few boxes of complimentary MS RFID tags?—*Tom Peters*

Contact: <http://www.pcworld.com/news/article/0,aid,122270,tk,dn082205X,00.asp>

Academic Commons: A Browser's Paradise

Academic Commons, a new Web site that explores the role of technology in liberal arts higher education, was launched this past August. Sponsored by the Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana, Academic Commons seeks to form a comprehensive online portal that fosters collaborative inquiry among faculty members, academic librarians, administrators, academic technologists, and other academic professionals.

Essentially, Academic Commons seeks to better understand and, in some sense, guide the development of the complex and shifting relationships among liberal arts education, computer and networked technologies, and new forms of media and scholarly communication. The founders suggest that the traditional liberal arts education be reshaped for the twenty-first century.

We may need to broaden our understanding of what it means to be “liberally educated.”

The first “edition” (it’s a mystery why they call it an edition, rather than an issue) is impressive. There are several essays by key thinkers about technology, communication, and education (e.g., an essay by Michael Joyce, an early pioneer of hypertextual fiction); an interview with Gerald Graff, the University of Illinois at Chicago English professor who wrote *Clueless in Academe*; and “show-cases” of interesting initiatives under the rubric of technology and liberal arts education.

Just reading the first sentence of an essay penned (or keyed) by Richard Lanham (“The transfer of information from the printed page to the digital screen has changed the meaning of ownership and authorship in perplexing ways.”) and learning that he has a new book, *The Economics of Attention*, coming out next year, are more than enough to justify a visit to this commons.

The site is more than just a home for an e-journal too. Several of the editors and board members have blogs that are related to the core interests of Academic Commons. There is a news aggregator that displays synopses of recent articles and announcements from related sources.

May this new commons be neither under- nor over-grazed, and may the tender shoots that grow there sweetly nourish all who come to browse and graze. And may the lines from Milton’s late, great pastoral poem never be aptly applied to our current efforts to integrate networked computer technology into the liberal arts:

*The hungry Sheep look up, and are not fed,
But swoln with wind, and the rank mist
they draw, Rot inwardly, and foul conta-
gion spread . . .—Tom Peters*

Contact: <http://www.academiccommons.org>
<http://liberalarts.wabash.edu>
“Copyright 101” by Richard Lanham:
<http://www.academiccommons.org/commons/essay/lanham-copyright-101>



Google Corner(ed)

With 20/20 hindsight I can state with confidence that several months ago—before I began contributing monthly articles about Google’s initiatives and how they could affect libraries—I should have stated my tentative thesis: Any smart and prudent library would do well to pay attention to what Google is doing as it pursues its mission “to organize the world’s information.” Here are some late-summer updates from the Googlenaut:

- As reported in the previous issue of *Smart Libraries Newsletter* (“Google Temporarily Halts Book Scan Project,” p. 5) in order to address publisher concerns, Google has suspended its scanning (until the first of next month at least) of copyright-protected books at the participating G5 Libraries. States an August 11 blog posting by Google Print Product Manager Adam Smith: “So now, any and all copyright holders—both Google Print partners and non-partners—can tell us which books they’d prefer that we not scan if we find them in a library. To allow plenty of time to review these new options, we won’t scan any in-copyright books from now until this November.”

So copyright holders still must take the initiative to notify Google Print that they do not want any of the copyrighted books that may be held at the University of Michigan, Stanford, or the other three Google Print library project partner libraries, scanned. Although this bilateral many-to-one process will not be efficient and certainly will not scale as other massive scanning projects commence, Google must be hoping that this will quiet much of the grumbling they have received from U.S. publisher associations, publishers, and authors.

- On August 31, 2005, Google opened its controversial (at least here the U.S.) Print book-scanning project to European book publishers. According to a September 1, 2005, report from

Associated Press (AP) writer Michael Liedtke, the company asked publishers in France, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, and Spain to submit non-English material. States Liedtke, “By reaching out to European publishers, Google hopes to substantially increase the volume of non-English books in its database, said Jim Gerber, director of content partnership for Google’s print program.” Continues the AP report, “If Google achieves that objective, it could mute European critics who sniped at the company earlier this year for giving top priority to scanning English-language books.”

- Google Desktop Version 2 Beta: Also in August, Google released a “version 2 beta” of its desktop software program, which constructs a full-text index of many of the more popular file types and e-mail programs used on personal computers, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, PDF, MP3, and others. This new version displays a right-hand sidebar feature that provides easy access to recently opened files, RSS feeds, weather information, stock quotes, a scratch pad for random thoughts and notes (automatically fully indexed, of course), and a revolving selection of photos stored on your computer.
- Google Talk: The first beta version of Google Talk enables users to talk and text chat with family members, friends, and others on networked computers. Note, however, that in order to use Google Talk a user needs a Gmail (Google’s hosted e-mail service), to obtain a username and password. With Google Talk, the Mountain View, California-based company enters a very crowded field of software development and service, but some analysts speculate that Google is building up to a full-scale operating system.—*Tom Peters*

Contact: “Google Temporarily Halts Book Scan Project,” *Smart Libraries Newsletter* 25, no. 8: 5.
<http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2005/08/making-books-easier-to-find.html>
<http://desktop.google.com/>
<http://talk.google.com/>
http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20050902/ap_on_hi_te/google_books
http://www.usatoday.com/tech/products/services/2005-09-01-google-books-europe_x.htm

KnowItNow in the Buckeye State

The KnowItNow 24x7 virtual reference (VR) service in Ohio has received a \$1.12 million Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant to continue operating for a second year. This builds on \$950,000 of funding provided to the service during “Year One.” With more than 107,000 reference sessions logged during its first ten months of operation, KnowItNow claims to be the busiest virtual reference service in the world.

KnowItNow is part of Ohio’s three-pronged program to bring online public services to all its citizens. HomeworkNow offers online professional tutoring in school subjects from two in the afternoon to midnight. ReadThisNow is an online readers’ advisory service.

These services are provided by approximately fifty public libraries in Ohio, the Cleveland Law Library Association, and the State Library of Ohio. Three organizations are collaborating to coordinate these services: Cleveland Public Library, coordinating the daytime and evening services, technical support, and the three Web sites; Cuyahoga County Public Library, providing the marketing and fiscal administration; and the Northeast Ohio Library Association (NOLA) Regional Library System, coordinating the “wee-hours” service, training, and evaluation.

Authentication is done by zip code that users input. Based on the first few months of activity, patrons in the southwest quarter of the state are the heaviest users.

One interesting aspect of the KnowItNow service is that for “wee-hours” virtual reference service, instead of a commercial VR service provider, the service utilizes individual Ohio librarians working on contract. The training sessions were planned and presented in-house too.

The three coordinating agencies do have some partnerships with non-library specialty providers, such as social workers, law libraries, healthcare professionals, and tutors. They use the software platform from Tutor.com, and backroom communications are facilitated through Skype. In an effort to minimize the use of paper throughout the system, they built an online-scheduling system that allows individual service providers to set their own schedules.

In September, KnowItNow began offering service in Spanish as well.—*Tom Peters*

Contact: <http://www.knowitnow.org>
<http://www.homeworknow.org>
<http://www.readthisnow.org>
<http://winslo.state.oh.us/publib/lsta98.htmlc>





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iPods and Education: Duke University Library Department Directs Digital Initiative

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Smart Libraries Newsletter delivers hard data and innovative insights about the world of library technology, every month.

Contributing Editors

Marshall Breeding
615-343-6094
marshall@breeding.com

Tom Peters
816-228-6406
tpeters@tapinformation.com

Editor

Teresa Koltzenburg
800-545-2433, ext. 3252
312-280-3252
tkoltzenburg@ala.org

Administrative Assistant

Judy Foley
800-545-2433, ext. 4272
312-280-4272
jfoley@ala.org

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