

DIGITAL CONTENT AND LIBRARIES WORKING GROUP REPORT

This report was written prior to the Digital Content and Libraries Working Group meeting held January 21, 2012 and reflects the proposed plans and work generated from conversations held from August 2011 to January 2012.

In June 2011, ALA Council requested that the President establish a working group bringing together the expertise and experience of member leaders to advise the Association on matters related to digital content (attachment 1).

Status report:

- **Working Group Appointed.** Molly Raphael appointed the 25 members of the Digital Content and Libraries Working Group (the roster and other information are posted on ALA Connect under the Digital Content and Libraries Working Group community at <http://connect.ala.org/node/159669>). Sari Feldman (Cuyahoga County Public Library) and Robert Wolven (Columbia University) are the co-chairs and Maureen Sullivan is the Executive Board Liaison. The Group has met virtually and met for the first time here in Dallas.
- **Articles on E-books.** For Midwinter 2012, *American Libraries* published a special edition on e-books that includes an introduction by Molly Raphael and Keith Michael Fiels and four articles. The articles were published online beginning on January 11, 2012 and the print special edition is available on-site. A digital supplement for *American Libraries* on digital content is now in the works for a May/June 2012 release.
- **Publisher Engagement.** In September 2011, Molly Raphael, Keith Michael Fiels, and Alan Inouye (OITP Director) met with the President of the Association of American Publishers (AAP), which resulted in an ongoing relationship with AAP. Sari Feldman and Bob Wolven hosted a small reception with publishers on Saturday night at the conference. An ALA delegation that includes Molly Raphael, Maureen Sullivan, and Keith Michael Fiels will be meeting with MacMillan, Simon & Schuster, and Penguin in New York on January 31 and February 1. Finally, Jim Neal and Molly Raphael (with Anthony Marx, President of the New York Public Library) will participate on a panel at the AAP General Annual Meeting in March.

- **Staff and Unit Coordination.** The effort to coordinate the relevant activities across the Association has begun. Alan Inouye, the program manager for the Initiative, has met with staff from many units and already has engaged some of them on specific components of the work.
- **Analysis from Economists.** Drs. Stanley Besen and Sheila Kirby are developing a white paper for ALA on e-book economic models and licensing. ALA provided comments on a draft version.
- **Talking Points.** Preliminary talking points on e-book lending and principles for digital lending were developed in the fall. These materials will be reviewed and revised by the Working Group.
- **E-content Blog.** *American Libraries* established a new blog on e-content issues to provide a mechanism for rapid response. Christopher Harris, a school librarian and member of the Working Group, serves as the editor of this blog.
- **E-content News Dissemination.** *American Libraries Online* created a dedicated section on E-content issues in AL Direct.
- **Transforming Libraries Website.** The primary repository for materials related to digital content and libraries will be on the transforming libraries website, managed by the ALA Library.

The Working Group will conduct the majority of their work through subgroups (which are in the process of being appointed). Each subgroup will produce a charge and goals. The sample topics listed below only are intended to help clarify the general scope of the subgroups sufficiently so that members could volunteer for them.

- Subgroup 1: Obtaining/accessing digital content from intermediary organizations
Sample topics: Business models, license agreements, trends in publishing and the information industry
- Subgroup 2: Generating digital content through libraries and allied organizations
Sample topics: Large-scale digitization projects (DPLA, Internet Archive, Hathi Trust, etc.), digitization of hidden/smaller collections, libraries as facilitators of publishing
- Subgroup 3: Accessibility
Sample topics: Access for people with disabilities, accommodation of varied languages and cultures, cost of access, user interfaces
- Subgroup 4: Privacy and ethics
Sample topics: Protection of borrower records, protection of user reading behavior, vendor agreements, mechanisms for ensuring that agreements are fulfilled

- Subgroup 5: Communication for the library community
Sample topics: Transforming Libraries website, educational products (reports, articles, etc.), presentations, conference panel and training sessions

- Subgroup 6: Communication beyond the library community
Sample topics: External messages, articles, presentations, other public outreach activities

The term for the Working Group is two years.