

# ASIDIC newsletter

No. 90, Fall 2005

ASSOCIATION OF INFORMATION AND DISSEMINATION CENTERS

## Carolyn Finn Elected ASIDIC President Bilotto, Ekwurzel, and Ingoldsby Join Executive Committee Extremely Successful Fall Meeting Held in Napa

ASIDIC held one of its most successful meetings of all time at the lovely Silverado Resort in Napa, CA on September 11-13, 2005. Attendance was 83, second highest in ASIDIC's history (exceeded only by the Spring 1994 meeting in Albuquerque on search engines). Program Co-Chairs **Barry Bealer** (Really Strategies) and **Gerri Potash** (Nerac) assembled an outstanding lineup of speakers and panelists. The theme of the meeting was "The Changing Nature of Content"; as usual, a complete summary follows in this Newsletter. As outgoing ASIDIC president **Kevin Bouley** said in his closing remarks, "From the opening keynote by **Jeff Cutler** (Answers Corporation) to the closing keynote by **Cathy Gordon** (Google) and all the notes in between, this was an especially outstanding meeting!" **Randy Marcinko** (Marcinko Enterprises) was Local Host, and he contributed greatly to the success of the meeting by arranging tastings of the local Napa Valley wines at the Sunday reception, outstanding accommodations at the Silverado Resort, and a wonderful gourmet dinner at Clos Pegase winery on Monday evening. Elections were held at the meeting. **Carolyn Finn** (Thomson Scientific) was elected president, along with three new members of the Executive Committee. Full details appear below.

### Committee Reports

*Treasurer and Finance:* In the absence of Finance Committee chair **Jay ven Eman** (Access Innovations), ASIDIC treasurer **Mike Walker** (NewsBank) presented a combined Treasurer/Finance Committee report. Because of aggressive sponsorship solicitation and increased attendance, the Fall meeting is expected to be profitable. The recent downtrend in ASIDIC's finances has been reversed, and the current outlook is excellent. For the first time in over four years, it might be time to invest some of ASIDIC's funds in CDs.

*Executive:* ASIDIC president **Kevin Bouley** reported on the Executive Committee meeting. He thanked its members for all of their help and support during his term as president. He also thanked **Tom Hogan** (Information Today) for his generosity in donating

a laptop to ASIDIC. The ASIDIC brochure has become outdated. **Iris Hanney** (TechBooks) will work on a new version, which will be posted on the Web site.

*Membership:* **Carolyn Finn** (Thomson Scientific) reported that five new members, listed below, have joined ASIDIC.

*Sponsorship:* **Randy Marcinko** was instrumental in recruiting 17 companies as sponsors—a record number. They contributed a total of \$18,000. Without their generous support, holding a meeting in a place like Napa would be impossible. The sponsors are listed below, at the end of the technical program summary.

*Elections:* Nominations committee chair **Miriam Drake** (Georgia Tech), assisted by **Randy Marcinko** and **Jay ven Eman** in recruiting candidates, presented the slate of candidates for election. All the candidates were unanimously elected. **Carolyn Finn**

was elected President, replacing **Kevin Bouley**. **Frank Bilotto** (Vivisimo), **Drucilla Ekwurzel** (American Economic Association), and **Tim Ingoldsby** (American Institute of Physics) were elected to their first terms as Member-at-Large. **Erica Mobley** (Inspec) was re-elected to her second term as Member-at-Large. A list of the Executive Committee members and committee chairs is appended to this newsletter. ~~~~~



Outgoing ASIDIC president Kevin Bouley congratulates Carolyn Finn on her election as the new ASIDIC president  
(Photo by Donald Hawkins)

of the digitization process. The program will begin with the process of selection of content; discuss the data and image conversion process; probe the ever challenging rights and permissions issues; discuss distribution from both the aggregator and content owners' perspective; discuss selection of partners

and explore new avenues of partnerships; and ask investors what they buy and sell and why. The speakers will have valuable information that spans the world of book, journal and newspaper digitization and distribution.



## Spring 2006 Meeting

The Spring 2006 meeting will be held March 12-14 at the Sanibel Harbour and Resort ([www.sanibel-resort.com](http://www.sanibel-resort.com)) in Fort Myers, FL. Local Host is **Iris Hanney**, and Program Co-Chairs are **Iris Hanney** and **Mike Walker**. Activities such as golf and a spa/pool day are also being organized. The preliminary program and local arrangements information are now on the ASIDIC Web site at <http://www.asidic.org>, and updates will be posted there as they become available. **Please note: It is extremely critical that you make your reservations early. March is prime spring break time in Florida, and hotel rooms and airline flights are in heavy demand.**

## Spring Meeting Theme

### Digitization: From Inception to Income

Digitizing content is changing the world for publishers, aggregators, universities, libraries, associations, and investors. At the same time the explosion of available content is expanding the world of research for all end users.

Come to the ASIDIC meeting and learn the challenges and benefits of each of the steps

## President's Column

By Carolyn Finn

It is a great honor to serve ASIDIC as president, and I wish to thank the Nominating Committee (**Miriam Drake** of the Georgia Institute of Technology, **Randy Marcinko** of Marcinko Enterprises Inc., and **Jay Ven Eman** of Access Innovations Inc.) for their confidence in me.

Filling the shoes of past president **Kevin Bouley** will be a great challenge. Kevin's dedication to ASIDIC is contagious. During Kevin's tenure, ASIDIC increased membership and made solid progress to assure a stable financial future for ASIDIC. We thank Kevin for his strong leadership and generosity of his time and knowledge. We look forward to his guidance and support going forward.

I am fortunate to have a strong support system in the ASIDIC Executive Committee.

Members include **Kevin Bouley** (Immediate Past President) of Nerac Inc., **Mike Walker** (Treasurer) of Newsbank Inc., **Frank Bilotto** (Secretary) of Vivisimo Inc., **Barry Bealer** (Membership Committee) of Really Strategies Inc., **Drucilla Ekwurzel** (Standards Committee) of the American Economic Association, **Iris Hanney** of TechBooks Inc., **Tim Ingoldsby** of the American Institute of Physics, and **Erica Mobley** of Inspec, Inc.

I look forward to working with the membership to continue ASIDIC's legacy of providing relevant and timely conference topics, and a forum to inform, network, and challenge our information industry leadership. Membership renewals will be mailed in November. We thank you in advance for your continued support.

Please plan to attend ASIDIC's Spring 2006 meeting in Ft. Myers, FL on March 12-14, where we will explore the challenges and benefits of each of the steps of the digitization process. Our program is entitled "Digitization: From Inception to Income". Many thanks to **Iris Hanney** and **Mike Walker** who have graciously volunteered to co-chair this meeting. Sponsorship opportunities are still available.



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### Past-President's Column

By *Kevin Bouley*

**D**ear Friends,  
The Fall meeting was a success in so many ways: an inspiring venue at the Silverado in Napa Valley flawlessly orchestrated by **Randy Marcinko**, from Marcinko Enterprises, Inc.; a truly great program, "The Changing Value of Content," assembled by **Barry Bealer**, Really Strategies and **Gerri Potash**, Nerac, Inc.; and a record

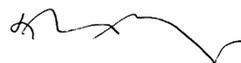
number of attendees and sponsors. Thank you again to all involved.

Value is in the eye of the beholder. I am reminded that Access Innovations had a practice or custom of spending one to two days following ASIDIC meetings in the equivalent of a corporate retreat, capitalizing on the knowledge shared and lessons learned from the meeting content. I wish that I had the foresight to schedule just such a session at the conclusion of the Fall Meeting, as there was so much value to be gleaned from the sessions.

Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup> marked the end of my second term as president of the association. I believe that the changes proposed and undertaken during my tenure have served to strengthen the organization. Those changes would not have been possible without the guidance, encouragement and support of the Executive Committee and Secretariat. Thank you for all of your help.

Congratulations to **Carolyn Finn** and the other new Board members as they take on their new roles. I look forward to seeing you all in Ft. Meyers in March.

Regards,



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### New Members

**A**SIDIC welcomes the following new members:

Agilent Technologies  
3500 Deer Creek Road MS 26U-1  
Palo Alto, CA 94304-1392  
Phone: 650-485-4027  
Fax: 650-485-5206  
Representative: Cindy Alfieri  
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The British Library  
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Representative: David Brown  
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Representative: Kate Noerr  
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Plunkett Research  
P. O. Drawer 541737  
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Representative: Jack Plunkett  
E-mail: jack\_plunkett@plunkettresearch.com

Mark Logic Corporation  
2000 Alameda de las Pulgas, Suite 100  
San Mateo, CA 94403  
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Fax: 650-655-2310  
Representative: David Spenhoff  
E-mail: david.spenhoff@marklogic.com



# Technical Program Summary

*Note: For more detail on those summaries for which Presentation Available is indicated, see the Final Program at <http://www.asidic.org/spring05.htm> and click on POWERPOINT SLIDESHOW.*

## Program Introduction

Value is in the eye of the beholder. The ASIDIC fall meeting looked at the changing value of content; how publishers continually have pressure to add more value to content; how aggregators need to create value added tools; and how the user now has the opportunity to add value (e.g., personalization), even freely editing content in popular wiki environments. Leaders in the information industry spoke about how their companies are addressing the value added equation and producing content that users feel is worth paying for.



## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

### The Changing Nature of Content

*Jeff Cutler, Chief Revenue Officer, Answers Corporation (creator of Answers.com)*

In *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens said, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times," and this is true of the information industry today. It is the best of times because everyone is on the Net, which means that product developers have immediate access to new customers, product development times are shortened, and many strategic partners are available. It is the worst of times because everyone is on the Net, so customers' expectations are constantly increasing, and competitors can appear from anywhere.

Major content trends today include instant gratification, moving beyond books, and workflow integration. Although many users wonder, "Is content premium if it is free to me?" a whole generation of users has grown up knowing nothing else but free content. Libraries for them were never the primary access to research and reading materials. Online product research and price compari-

sons have become mandatory for serious consumers.

The online advertising market is maturing, and the shift from print to online advertising is growing rapidly. If an advertisement can be targeted, advertisers are much more willing to pay for it. Monetization of the content industry is also growing with the recognition that somebody must pay for information, whether it is users, advertisers, or producers. Paid search led online advertising with a 34% growth in 2004. There is an intense competition between Google, Yahoo!, or Microsoft. As search engines improve, online advertising will need to become more creative.

In the content area, access to information has become decentralized, and the total individual use of premium content in enterprises exceeds centralized use. According to a recent Outsell report, the top criteria for information use are quality and relevance, update frequency, and ease of access. Users are spending 58% of their time gathering information, up from 44% a year ago, and they are demanding that information be integrated into their workflow. Most users (87%) are willing to use the open Web to find information, and many say that Google is a good source to find business information. Usage of non-traditional sources such as blogs is growing rapidly.

As the amount of information grows, the time available to find it is shrinking, which causes pain and problems for users. Search engines are not responsible for the content they index, and it can be outdated, inaccurate, manipulative, or inappropriate. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) techniques, in which some results are placed at the top of a retrieval list, are affecting relevance and accuracy, leading to many result pages becom-

ing distracting to users. Although search engines pride themselves on speed, they do not measure how long it takes the requester to search through the list of retrieved items. Economist and Nobel laureate Herbert Simon said it well, “What information consumes is rather obvious: it consumes the attention of its recipients. Hence, a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention and a need to allocate that attention efficiently among the overabundance of information sources that might consume it.”

Answers.com has developed the ability to provide one-click access to concise information on anything, anywhere. It uses a patented search engine to deliver answers, not links to information and makes money using an advertising-based business model. It also makes extensive use of partners. The company was founded in 1999, went public in 2004, and launched its product in January 2005. Answers are retrieved from a variety of sources and then delivered to the user in a single consolidated view. An innovative add-in, 1-Click Answers, is available for free download; a version is also available for mobile devices.

Many of the answers are enhanced by an editorial team or by linguistic analysis to disambiguate terms (“did you mean...”) and unify content from multiple sources. An-

swers.com also maintains a large database of terms, and if a term is not in the database, a Google search is automatically performed. Added features include weather data, currency conversion, and translation.

Answers.com is actively pursuing vertical markets, particularly education. It is also active in public relations and is marketing its service to journalists and bloggers. It offers a Web-based API that makes it easy for Webmasters to incorporate Answers into their sites, thus providing true workflow integration. A citation feature provides a list of data sources, formatted and ready to be integrated into reports, etc. (The user can choose the desired citation style.)

Since its launch in January, Answers.com has been very successful. At its last public disclosure, it was experiencing 1.8 million hits a day. It earned \$425,000 in revenue in the second quarter of 2005. Media reaction has been extremely positive, with accolades in such respected publications as *The Wall Street Journal* and *Forbes*. The challenges to its business model include achieving the right balance of useful content vs. aggressive advertisements, expanding beyond classic reference by providing content from more data sources, and placing content on affiliates’ sites appropriately.



## Authoring Content

(Panel discussion moderated by John Blossom, President, Shore Communications)

JB: *John Blossom*

AD: *Anil Dash*, VP, Business Development, SixApart, Ltd.

AL: *Adina Levin*, VP, Products, SocialText, Inc.

JF: *Janice Fraser*, CEO, Adaptive Path

BP: *Barney Pell*, Entrepreneur-in-Residence, Mayfield Ventures

JB:	<i>Introduction to the panel:</i> New Tools, New Paradigms, New Value Points. Good content is where you find it. Publishing has moved from a black art to a pervasive tool. The major trend today is User-Generated Media (UGM), which includes blogs and wikis. A blog is a simple content management system with no costs. It is not chat but represents “where I stand now”. Wikis provide simplified text and hypertext publishing capabilities. The number of blogs is doubling approximately
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	<p>five months. It is interesting to note that of the top 500 blogs, <u>none</u> are produced by mainstream media! 28% of business information buyers read a blog at least once weekly, and 51% of US journalists use content from blogs in their writings. Here are some questions for the panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the most powerful aspects of UGM? What are the weakest?</li> <li>• What is the long-term value of UGM for publishers? For authors?</li> <li>• How can publishers best take advantage of UGM?</li> <li>• What does it take for collaborative UGM to succeed?</li> <li>• What are the best paths to profits in developing or supporting UGM?</li> </ul>
JF:	UGM is massive and powerful. How is authority being ported to UGM?
AD:	SixApart makes blog publishing tools for a mainstream audience. Younger audiences use these tools to produce personal journals. The variety of blog topics is large; trivial things to some people are important to others (often a small audience). Blogs can bridge the entire world of topics. The main problem with them is explaining the medium.
AL:	SocialText produces software for corporations and institutions and makes wikis scalable. The strengths of wikis are that they make communication faster, and no previous editorial control is needed. Content can be posted as drafts, so quality is improved faster. This removes barriers to contributing. The drawback is that wikis are a social convention, and rules for revisions and editing must be learned.
BP:	General content is free but valuable because it is created by individuals. A “push” platform produces faster and fresher content, and the “long tail” means that there is something of interest to everyone.
JF:	There is much apprehension about UGM because its authority comes from outside the traditional edited publisher world. It has much value, and we must find a way to harness the UGM dialog in a way that maintains its expert voice. The value of actual reporters who observe and ask questions will never be lost.
AD:	Traditional publishers must give people a relationship and attach value to it. Then they must extend the social contract to readers and earn their trust so that people can distribute important ideas.
JF:	Information no longer stands alone. When an article is published in a traditional print medium, its publication date is the end of the process, but when it is published on a wiki, the date is the beginning. Publication starts discussions.
AL:	In wikis, content gets smarter over time because of community editing. Researchers can get opinions on topics. Wikis are different from blogs, which only present the newest posts: content gets better, people can link to each other, and the link patterns become intelligence which search engines can use to discover a community.
AD:	Blogs and wikis complement each other. A blog is owned by its creator, but a wiki is edited and updated by a community. Blogs and wikis show that the assumption that people want to be passive consumers of information is not true; people want to write about their passions.
BP:	Blogs and wikis are the “annotation economy”, and they give people the ability for live additions of metadata. Content is in context—people talking about articles. Citation links become live. Blogs and wikis give perpetual value to content; no article should die any more! [Ed note: See Barney’s blog at <a href="http://www.barneypell.com">www.barneypell.com</a> for further information about the search industry, startups, etc.]

JF:	Wikipedia is an example of editorial excellence. It is a “semi-closed” network; edits are reviewed by others in the community, and people support one another.
BP:	Peer-to-peer is not the entire future of content; we will always need reviewed content.
What is the best way to make money?	
BP:	Move to blog analytics. Advertise on blog search engine sites.
AL:	A series of articles at <a href="http://www.napsterization.org">www.napsterization.org</a> gives an analytical comparison on blogs. (See <a href="http://napsterization.org/stories/archives/000513.html">http://napsterization.org/stories/archives/000513.html</a> , <a href="http://napsterization.org/stories/archives/000514.html">http://napsterization.org/stories/archives/000514.html</a> , <a href="http://napsterization.org/stories/archives/000518.html">http://napsterization.org/stories/archives/000518.html</a> , <a href="http://napsterization.org/stories/archives/000519.html">http://napsterization.org/stories/archives/000519.html</a> , <a href="http://napsterization.org/stories/archives/000525.html">http://napsterization.org/stories/archives/000525.html</a> , and <a href="http://napsterization.org/stories/archives/000528.html">http://napsterization.org/stories/archives/000528.html</a> .)
AD:	If you have a blog, it will help people find out about you. This is good for corporations and corporate blogs. The potential of blogging is shown by the fact that the <i>New York Times</i> bought about.com for over \$400 million.

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## Publishing Content

Panel Discussion moderated by Tom Hogan, President, Information Today, Inc.

BK: *Bruce Koon*, Executive News Editor, Knight-Ridder Digital

BS: *Blaise Simqu*, President and CEO, Sage Publications

MM: *Michael Morgan*, President and CEO, Morgan & Claypool Publishers

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| BS: | <p>Dramatic changes due to electronic distribution are occurring. Scholarly publishing is a very steady business, where change comes slowly, and changes are perceived as a threat. The customization revolution is happening now.</p> <p>The number of issues published by a journal used to be its metric. Now, the articles are being separated into individual units at every step. There is a significant increase in pay-per-view as a revenue generator. People are not subscribing to journals; they are using search engines to find the articles they want. Libraries are buying electronic content in groups (consortia) and are adding publications to customize their collections. They are now asking for all of a publisher’s articles on a topic rather than individual journals. Using “tokens”, students can get copies of articles even if their library does not subscribe to the journal.</p> |
| MM: | M&C Publishers serves the engineering and computer science R&D community. Electronic delivery of documents is provided. Authors are commissioned to write syntheses of emerging technologies; the resulting documents are online and updatable. This model works because technology is moving too rapidly to accommodate articles in journals or books. Articles are delivered as XML or PDF files.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| BK: | The traditional role of newspapers is being undermined by local alternative services. 18 to 34 year-olds are becoming subscribers as they grow up, and they need classified ads and other features of the printed newspaper. For the first time, this trend is stopping, and the audience is now digital natives. The old business models do not work any more, and mass advertising has evolved. Consumers can                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

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|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                    | <p>create their own newspaper every day if they wish, so control has shifted to the consumer. Younger people tend to multitask; older people use traditional media.</p> <p>Newspapers have powerful brands in local markets, but they are changing, and the change is painful. Newsrooms must become 24/7 operations. Relevancy is governed by immediacy; some blogs are used to collect information. Newspapers must figure out how to use UGM. Today, classified ads provide over 60% of a paper's revenue, but traditional advertisers like large stores are threatened by new business models. News has become commoditized.</p> |
| MM:                                | Real opportunities are in new services, like handbooks and reference books. Most users do not need the printed copies of these works; they want subsets of books on topics of interest.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| When does print become irrelevant? |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| MM:                                | Half of today's users do not want print. We must change our mindset and separate the value of content from its delivery channel. Content must be integrated into workflows.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| BK:                                | Web sites are an interim step. Many users come to us through search engines. We must tag our pages so that every one has its own URL. The loss of control over content is a major challenge.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |



## Disseminating and Aggregating Content

Panel discussion moderated by David Myers, Executive Director, Licensing, Wolters Kluwer Health

DM: *David Myers*

WC: *Wes Crews*, CEO, Infotrieve

DO: *David Oakley*, Director, Licensing, LexisNexis

PS: *Peter Simon*, Vice President, Product Management, NewsBank

|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| DM: | <i>Introduction to the Panel:</i> Aggregators have always found a niche to serve. Often they drive technological advances. They have the skills to negotiate with multiple publishers and have a worldwide sales force. Their brands are powerful ones in content distribution. Today, the role of aggregators is being challenged. The field has become crowded and competitive. Publishers are using new cheap technology to bypass aggregators. Their operating costs are increasing; bidding wars are common; and margins are shrinking. Some publishers are using aggregators to develop products and are then selling them directly. |
| DO: | Aggregators must bring value to publishers, either revenues or exposure. Then aggregators must bring value to end users. Partnerships are important, and relationships must be managed; it is impossible to be all things to all people. Aggregators should let technology companies develop technology!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| PS: | Newspaper information is used to compare different points of view from different regions of the country. Historical articles are used for research to see how they might relate to current events. A newspaper aggregator like NewsBank helps satisfy these needs. The least amount of access in a newspaper database is for current news. We are challenged in building an archive of current news for future uses and at the same preserving our brand and identity as an information service. NewsBank has a "landing page" for users accessing the data from a link to a spe-                                                          |

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|                                       | cific article, which tells them where they are and what else is available on the site.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| WC:                                   | We must remember that services are created because there is a problem to solve. People want answers over a broad range of information services. Technology barriers have eroded, and the advantage of aggregation has diminished. Anyone can now dump data to users. All publishers must be a little bit in the technology business by investing in new technology to keep close to users and adding value to content. Aggregators must partner with publishers, which will result in “creative tension”. It is important to let publishers know who is using their content and make their brand visible to users. Aggregators must constrain costs because their operating margins are low (generally less than 20%). |
| How has Google affected your pricing? |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| DO:                                   | Price points of common news and business research products have come down, and improvements in taxonomies have become necessary.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| PS:                                   | Users are focused on search behavior, optimization, and search speed. The “landing page” has help maintain our brand identity.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| WC:                                   | Infotrieve is becoming a search destination—a “deep Google”. We must understand the value chain as well as users’ needs and problems. Metasearching is very valuable because it is relevant and precise. Connections to communities through Weblogs and annotations on articles provide a more valuable user experience than Google can. The biggest challenge is renewals—getting people to use your product year after year.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| DM:                                   | Google has forced us to expand usage reporting to customers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| DO:                                   | We see the same, and we must have knowledgeable sales representatives. It is important to know which department in an organization is using your content.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| PS:                                   | Do librarians recognize our products? Do they know what our product names mean? Younger users do not. Publishers are waking up because of Google. Publishers’ and aggregators’ business models have existed for a long time, and now they are changing. Publishers must learn how to value themselves in the market.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| DO:                                   | This is expanding the market as a whole, which is good for publishers. Aggregators must find their place in it. We cannot survive by just tossing more data into databases.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |



## Using Content

(Moderated by Miriam Drake, Georgia Tech)

*Ruth Amernick*

San Francisco Public Library (SFPL)

Librarians are an important force in getting database and helping users with Websites. They can advocate and even discourage use of some sites. Our customers use databases, search engines, check e-mail, download information to disks, and create printouts. A large library like SFPL must serve all users—parents, teenagers, children, adults, people who do not know English or whose

English is limited, etc. Many users are unfamiliar with libraries because schools have eliminated library training. Many families have never used a library. We also have very talented and skilled users such as information brokers, business people, inventors, etc. And finally we have recreational users and shoppers. Many of our users are remote, and we never talk to them.

Some people want extensive assistance. They want the librarian to train them how to use a PC over the phone. Others want all content to be free with unlimited access, and in full text. They want self-explanatory databases, spell checkers, rapid answers, as

well as fun, fast, pleasant, and painless access to information. Librarians want all this plus the ability to explain things easily!

Web sites must be readable, uncluttered, and have clear directions. Users want to send feedback to the developers. They want everything free, printable, and downloadable. ID theft is a one of their major concerns.



## The Changing Value of Content

*Karen Andrews*

University of California, Davis  
(Powerpoint presentation available)

The “Punch List” is a list of the 11 most vexing areas of concern to librarians, with the aim of eliminating roadblocks and establishing best practices. It is available at <http://eld.lib.ucdavis.edu/punchlist/PunchlistRevision2005.pdf>. Details on some of these concerns include:

- *Access authentication:* Users need access wherever they are, and they should be authorized by IP authentication, not passwords. Geographical barriers must be eliminated.
- *Co-branding:* We want users to know that the library is subsidizing their use of information resources as well as where to go for help.
- *Copyright:* Faculty want to publish on their web sites or in open access repositories. Libraries want the right to send electronic copies to requesters under Fair Use as well as the right to use copies for

electronic reserves.

- *Cover-to-cover digitization:* People want more than just articles, i.e. job ads, author instructions, etc. They want to be able to browse page by page.
- *Quality:* Digital quality must be high—600 dpi is barely allowable.
- *Linking:* We must be able to harvest metadata and link to articles in many ways.



*Richard Geiger*

San Francisco Chronicle

The *Chronicle* serves both archivists and researchers. The Tasini decision has caused problems because material has been removed from databases, creating gaps. Thousands of freelance articles are now gone, which does not serve researchers because they need to see everything. People want stable systems and are not happy with interface changes. The Dow Jones to Factiva move drove many users to LexisNexis. Many people think all systems work like Google and do not understand Boolean operators.

Journalists love public records where they can get addresses and phone numbers. Stories, especially feature stories, should have photos in them, so we need more digitized photos.



## Improving Content With Technology: The Experts

(Panel Discussion Moderated by David Rees, Director, Partner Programs, Mark Logic)

MF: *Michael Fergusson*, VP, Product Strategy, BlastRadius

IH: *Ian Hersey*, SVP, Corporate Development and Strategy, Inxight

PS: *Patrick Spain*, CEO, HighBeam Research

|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PS: | HighBeam is an online research service, containing 35 million licensed documents. It also does metasearches of 125 Web sites, as well as reference works such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, and almanacs. HighBeam sells convenience to |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|     | <p>answer questions quickly; it serves individuals. Its competitors are LexisNexis and Factiva.</p> <p>We deliver content and the tools to manipulate content. The user interface develops as users do searches. The architecture is flexible so that content can be easily added or deleted. Search results are delivered in about a second; reliability is increasing all the time. All this adds up to a delightful experience for users.</p> <p>High Beam performs several functions for users:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is an aggregator building a content store as a feed to the search engine. The store is updated daily. It tracks who owns the content and pays the owners as it is used.</li> <li>• It searches the content. 26 search engines were evaluated, and FAST was chosen.</li> <li>• It manages content, pushing it to users via alerts or RSS.</li> <li>• It promotes sharing, letting users e-mail articles, integrate search results with MS Office, and creating reports.</li> <li>• It does billing for subscriptions. Advertising was added last year and is growing rapidly.</li> </ul> |
| MF: | <p>With more content, more creators, and more ways to experience the content, the Web is getting bigger all the time. More companies are producing products, and users of those products are unofficially producing “manuals”. People are serving their own needs. Quality improves when everyone can edit; Wikimedia has some of the most accurate content on the Web. Because anyone can edit content, people generally will not bother putting up inaccurate material.</p> <p>At the same time, the Web is getting smaller and more granular. Many sites have many entry paths, not just via their main URL. We can now look deeper into sites and find more detail. XML breaks the tyranny of file formats, so we can now look inside files. Content has become independent of presentation and is expanding beyond files and directories. Many Web sites (e.g. Flickr) have become giant databases. UGM is changing what people think of as content.</p>                                                                                                                                                                               |
| IH: | <p>Inxight adds field tags to data and normalizes languages for treatment by search engines. This allows federated searching: the content returned from searches is analyzed and categorized. Entities, facts, and related information can be extracted to provide the answer that the user wants. It is important to track what was viewed before and only show the user what’s new. There is a tension between the importance of content and the importance of technology.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| PS: | <p>There is no future in selling information by the piece on the Net and no value in the content alone. Google and Yahoo! have created excellent tools to manipulate raw content. No advertising model will support research simply for the sake of knowledge, so that can still be charged for.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| MF: | <p>Many people are not interested in passively consuming information; they want a part in creating and managing it so they can make connections themselves. Context is what is truly valuable.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| IH: | The next move depends on focus—consumers vs. the business market. Consumers do not spend money on content. A blend of technology and content is the wave of the future. A purely content business does not have long to survive in today’s environment. |
| MF: | Metatags are put on information that you want users to find. We can get 80% of the value of a taxonomy by letting users add their own tags (the folksonomy revolution).                                                                                 |
| PS: | We are being pushed from a business services world into a media world because of advertising.                                                                                                                                                           |



## ENDNOTE ADDRESS

*Cathy Gordon*

Director, Business Development, Google

Value starts and ends with users. Google is a switchboard making invisible information visible. In the old days, users paid for everything—searching, displays, and printing—and there was a limited group of entitled users: subscribers to online services. Searching and even connecting to a search service required professional experience. Consumers did not do much online research. The primary focus of information was print, even after it went online. Today searching is free, and there are 870 million people online, many of them entitled. Everyone can search because it is so easy. Individuals are creating content, and we are no longer tethered to our desktops. Information flows to us anywhere and at any time because we are always plugged in.

What has not changed is the difficulty of reaching entitled users and convincing consumers to pay for information. As questions become harder, where do you go for information? Google can answer 88% of the easier questions, but as difficulty increases, we finally must ask a person to help us. We all decide what is “good enough”.

We need to reach entitled users; they are everywhere (half of Google’s users are outside the US), and they just want an answer. Google regards itself as a switchboard that

connects users and content owners; its business is not to create or own content. It strives to provide answers; to Google, there is nothing worse than no answer. The switchboard function is monetized with advertising, which makes Google part of the value chain.

In Google’s product philosophy, the user experience is key and paramount. The purity of Google searches must be distinguished from commercial applications (i.e. ads). Publisher partnerships are enabled with successful products, and content relationships are non-exclusive. New enhancements to Google are launched quickly and refined later after finding out what users want.

If we make invisible information visible, will users accept it? All text searchable and freely viewable makes all users happy. Other models include some free to view and the rest pay-per-view (PPV), abstracts free and full text PPV, no abstracts with full text accessible through PPV or by subscription, and no text searchable or viewable, which is invisible information. In some search result pages, clicking on a result takes the user to indexed content and other products that were developed for other models. The FCF (first click free) model, in which registration is required to view the entire site, has had some success.

Google Scholar was developed as a single place to find scholarly material. It covers all

research areas, with results presented in relevance order. Since most researchers just want answers, searches should be easy and just work; entitled users can be passed through to a landing page which contains links to purchase. Landing pages should give the user an abstract, but publishers can surround the abstract with lots of information based on what the user clicked on.

From the user perspective, content is a product. Most users do not have a lot of brand awareness, and some of them are of the “If I don’t like it, can I return it?” mindset. Trusting the provider is very important to them; quality metadata is not initially important. Most content is purchased when there is a strong personal need, and most users expect information to be free. Fee-based content creates a barrier. Content requiring registration and purchase should be offered with a free incentive first. Unnecessary complexity drives users away.

People are searching for everything! The “long tail” effect is clear evidence of this. Google is catering to this trend by integrating book results in Web search and presenting results in relevance order. Books get into Web searches from publishers (licenses) and libraries (public domain works). Google is connecting Web users to books and offering them limited browsing capability, with “buy this book” links to encourage purchases. Only 20% of any book is viewable each month, and some portions of a book are hidden at all times. In the Google Print project, users will be able to view the bibliographic information and three static snippets.

We need to walk in the user’s shoes. Entitled users must be passed through to the content they have purchased with the fewest barriers, and this process must be ruthlessly streamlined. Paying users must be given something of value to establish trust. Buying must be made easy.

Search engines are a conduit passing information to users. Innovation is core to success, and it must be constant. Search engine developers should focus on what they do best and collaborate with others to complement their goals. There is no perfect product, so Google has chosen the path of quick launching, getting feedback, and then tweaking the product. We all have the same goal: helping users to find the best answer.



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