ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS

Plenary Session 1

Connecting collections with workflows

Carole Goble
The University of Manchester, School of Computer Science

Workflows are an increasingly popular mechanism for scientists to interconnect scientific databases, analytical tools and, of course, digital collections available to them through the web. Workflows are not only a clear and repeatable expression of the process of connecting computational resources (not forgetting to include the scientist in the loop!) but they also represent the 'in silico experiment' that the scientist is running. The myGrid project (http://www.mygrid.org.uk) has developed a platform for running workflows across resources in the Life Sciences, and these include publication collections such as PubMed. Discovery Net has pioneered the use of workflows for text mining collections. Experiences show that, as part of the experimental workflow, inclusion of publication collections is crucial. However, there are real problems such as licensing, computational access to relevant content and programmatic interfaces to collections, which suggest that the collection community has not quite caught up with the needs of a new generation of e-Scientists.

Journal futures: researcher behaviour at early internet maturity

Adrian Mulligan
Elsevier Ltd

Have the fundamentals of scholarly communication changed in the internet environment? In possibly the largest-scale study ever conducted, Elsevier (in partnership with NOP and the CIBER group) examined the motivations, influences and attitudes of over 6,000 researchers. Broadly, our findings, which are globally based, produced some surprising results. Technological advances have delivered a number of exciting opportunities, and the responses by scholars give a good idea of reaction as the web matures from 'child' to 'teenager'. And, in an environment where peer review is seemingly under constant attack, we assess the researchers' commitment to it.

Economic evolution of the scientific publication market

Alexis Walckiers
ECARES - Université Libre de Bruxelles

Authors have opposing views on whether prices of journals reflect their production costs or their value to the users. Some, e.g. Tenopir and King (2000), argue that price increases are caused by a reduction in circulation (and thus reflect costs), while others, e.g. McCabe (2002, 2004), claim that the reduction in circulation is caused by price increases (and prices reflect the value to the users). We have investigated this subject and conclude that the positive link between citation counts and prices of journals is indicative of 'value-based pricing'. I discuss some consequences this finding has on the dissemination of research and on the contracts for electronic publications.

Plenary Session 2

What will become of us?: looking into the crystal ball of serials work
Rick Anderson
University of Nevada, Reno
Is it possible to predict the future of serials work? Not with perfect accuracy, of course – but to do so imperfectly is both possible and imperative. We need to be looking ahead and asking questions like these: What are the implications of the Open Access movement for serials staff? Will the information economy of the future be driven by problems of scarcity or problems of abundance, and what does each scenario mean for the library? The areas in which we work are especially volatile, and both we and those we serve will benefit greatly if we learn how to anticipate and prepare for change, rather than simply reacting to it after it happens.

From support to mission critical: United Nations Libraries in transition
Linda Stoddart
United Nations
The greatest challenge for United Nations libraries is the realignment of their services towards operational priorities. The inward focus of traditional technical library work in the UN, required in an un-networked world, has now shifted to a model of service that constantly works outward on making connections for its users: connections between documents and functions, connections between people and documents, and connections between people and people. As for many other institutional libraries, UN libraries' client groups are faced simultaneously with an overwhelming amount of information to manage, and a rapidly changing work environment that continuously introduces new and isolating technologies, new networks and new colleagues.

UN libraries have developed, through their training programmes, in-depth experience in building the capacity of their client groups in information retrieval techniques. They are now being transformed to build on this experience through developing user support and training tools that make practical sense of the numerous information sources and services available to UN audiences. UN libraries will have a presence across the organisation; both in the form of 'live' knowledge coaches and teams that help people find and organise information in their offices and at their workstations, and in the network of behind-the-scenes library workers who prepare targeted information resources to support the work of the United Nations. Libraries without walls are already making UN information professionals more visible.

This transformation of traditional libraries required the constant involvement of staff at all levels, a sustained dialogue, and a learning programme to introduce staff to new concepts, skills and expertise. This presentation will look at some of the lessons learned in this process and how the introduction of a change process can mobilise and revitalise staff, ensuring their involvement in making concrete contributions to the core work of the United Nations during its current years of crisis.

Plenary Session 3

The Medical Journals Backfiles Digitisation Project and open access
Robert Kiley
Wellcome Trust
This presentation will look at the Wellcome/JISC/NLM Medical Journals Backfiles Digitisation Project, highlighting - through a live demonstration - a number of value-added features, such as context-sensitive linking to related data sources, and web-enabled references and citations. As one of the drivers of this project was to make access to historical research freely available, this presentation will also discuss the Trust's open access policy and highlight what steps the Trust is now taking to ensure that the published outputs of the research it funds are made freely available to all, via the web.

Archiving scholarly material
Gordon Tibbitts
Blackwell Publishing
We need large digital archives to preserve scholarly content for generations to come and we need them now. Deciding who should do the archiving (e.g. librarians and archivists), what to archive, where in the scholarly community archiving should be undertaken, and how to do it successfully, is starting to come into focus. A brief review of the scholarly digital archiving efforts underway reveals some commonality of intent. This can be contrasted with a clear need for decisions regarding the scope of what should be digitally archived and ultimately for how archives in their many forms might be best constructed. While exploring how we might archive digital material we then can turn our attention to critical success factors to consider in adopting any archiving solution. These factors include their governance (community), economic stability, technical soundness, their community acceptability, and ease of use. Several current solutions are examined within this framework.

Digital archiving at the National Library of The Netherlands
Erik Oltmans
Koninklijke Bibliotheek, National Library of The Netherlands
Electronic journals have come to dominate the field of academic literature, and it is of great importance to the international scientific community that this electronic intellectual output is preserved well and that it remains accessible in perpetuity. The traditional principles for the archiving of printed academic literature no longer suffice in the digital world. These are based on national frontiers: each national deposit library preserves its own national academic heritage. Regarding electronic publications, however, the geographical criterion is not very useful and the geographical provenance of material is irrelevant, since electronic data can exist independently of a geographic location. Most current journals of multinational publishers no longer have a fatherland that can be easily identified. New ways of co-operation in the field of universal bibliographic control together with a structured worldwide long-term digital archiving of electronic publications and its metadata will emerge. In this presentation I will discuss the policy and ambitions of the National Library of The Netherlands (KB) regarding digital archiving of electronic publications.

Plenary Session 4

The transition to electronic-only format: costs and considerations
Roger C Schonfeld
Ithaka
As we move swiftly away from the print format for scholarly journals, a number of questions arise at the intersection of library and publisher business models. Many publishers have no viable path to an electronic-only environment; why is this so and how can libraries help them? Many models have called for a gradual transition away from print; should we be planning for the possibility of a more dramatic tipping-point and, if so, how? Cancellation of print format frequently occurs as tactical retreats in the face of budgetary pressures; how might a more strategic approach permit libraries to realise additional savings and also manage the disappearance of local ownership of content more effectively? This session will explore these and several related policy issues based on detailed economic studies of publishers and academic libraries in the US.

Research assessment and UK publication patterns
Jonathan Adams
Evidence Ltd
UK universities are assessed for their research performance on a cyclical basis through the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). The fifth RAE was in 2001 and the next is in 2008. The RAE covers about 50,000 staff and over 100 institutions. The key criterion for this assessment is research output, particularly journal articles, and each researcher submits four publications. Evidence Ltd has extensively analysed the RAE data, and validated the 2001 database for the RAE Manager. This paper reviews the outcomes of those analyses, what they tell us about subject and institutional patterns of journal use and how they are changing, and illustrates some of the associations between research quality and bibliometrics. Examples of journal-level analyses at subject level and across top research institutions will be given.

Plenary Session 5

'The Endangered Database Species': are the traditional commercial indexing/abstracting and full-text databases dead?
Péter Jacsó
University of Hawaii, Department of Information and Computer Science
The large-scale digitization of the huge archives of scholarly journal publishers has brought drastic changes in the ecosystem of the commercial bibliographic databases. Open access to hundreds of millions of indexing records, tens of millions of abstracts, and millions of full-text documents has already changed the biome. All the indexing databases are critically endangered and will become extinct. Many of the abstracting databases belong to the endangered or threatened league, and some commercial full-text databases are at the vulnerable stage. Beyond the intrinsic inability and/or unwillingness of adaptation of most traditional databases, the pace of speciation and extinction also depends on the evolution of the database aggregators, the main hosts of the endangered species.