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Digital Libraries: New Initiatives with World-Wide Implications

Berry, John W.

Abstract

We are witnessing an explosion of digital information, some of it in unstructured repositories, some in still primitive digital libraries. This trend is certain to accelerate as the National Information Infrastructure (NII) and Global Information Infrastructure (GII) become a reality. Put another way, the Internet of today may evolve into what researchers at the University of

Illinois are calling the Interspace, "where relatively seamless interlinked information spaces will encode the knowledge of a specific community or subject domain by integrating text, data, objects, images as well as sound in one flexible cohesive, scalable and economically feasible system".

Exploiting Internet as an Enabler for Transforming Library Services

Reid, Edna O.F.

Abstract

In a world of increasing technological development, global competitiveness and unrelenting change, many organizations are responding to the turbulent environment by rethinking their mission and continuing to assess the impact of technology on their organization and the way they conduct operations. Major technological changes in hardware, software and networks have now reached a threshold of cost and ease of use that is having widespread organizational impact. In spite of these advancements, questions still remain regarding the major impact of information technology (IT) on the library's operational processes, the impact of Internet on libraries and on how this impacts on libraries being designed for the 21st century. This study suggests that Internet is having a tremendous impact on libraries and can provide a network-based tool for analyzing the transitional requirements of managing networked and electronic library services. In order to accomplish this objective, a manager needs to do a number of things. First, he/she must assess the library's current stage of IT applications. Next, he/she should analyze the organization's use of Internet services and outline a strategic plan for exploiting Internet with the goal of using it as a prototype for work design, electronic integration, and responding to changing requirements. Each of these issues is considered in this study.

The Library of the Future: Public Libraries and the Internet

Batt, Chris

Abstract

This article considers the possible potential for service development offered by the Internet to public libraries. It describes the traditional models of network access and their lack of relevance to public libraries and describes current research being undertaken by public libraries to assess the value of the Internet to their services. Finally, it presents a range of new service paradigms and suggests that public libraries will become even more central to people's lives than they are today.

EDUCATE: A Networked User Education Project in Europe

Fjällbrant, Nancy

Abstract

This article describes the EDUCATE (End-user Courses in Information Access through Communication Technology) project for end-user training in information access. EDUCATE is a CEC Libraries Programme Project which involves six members: Limerick University, Ireland (coordinator); and the Ecole Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées, France; Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden; Imperial College and Plymouth University, UK: and the University of Barcelona, Spain. The aim of the EDUCATE project is to produce a new type of model self-paced user education course in the selection and use of information tools. EDUCATE courses have been produced within two subject areas: physics and electrical and electronic engineering. The EDUCATE project started in February 1994 and will run for a period of three years. The paper starts by describing the need for courses in Information Retrieval and Handling in the age of the information superhighways. It continues with a presentation of the course design. The goals for the EDUCATE project are given, together with a short description of the media developed. The use of networks in connection with EDUCATE is then discussed, followed by a presentation of tools and interfaces used. The paper concludes with a description of the potential uses of the programme.

Access versus Ownership: How Real an Alternative Is It?

Line, Maurice B.

Abstract

The assumption that access is to be preferred to ownership as a matter of policy needs to be questioned. Browsing and serendipity are lost in the access model. Access is better for periodicals than for monographs on te criteria of speed of supply, reliability and ease of use, but for both is generally inferior to on-the-spot access. If cost were the only criterion, the current relative costs of access and ownership, which favor access, may change substantially as and when access becomes electronic. Alternative forms of control and publication of research material have advantages and disadvantages. Ownership has limits: it can never approach comprehensiveness. Ownership of and exposure to a wide range of current material should be combined with access to older material. A strong case could be made for larger acquisition funds in view of the coming emphasis on self-directed learning.

Sources for African Language Materials from the Countries of Anglophone Africa

Kagan, Alfred

Abstract

There is a general lack of information on how to acquire materials in African languages outside the countries of origin. However, there are some very well established mechanisms in collecting this material. In this paper the author notes the standard current reference sources,

blanket and approval plan dealers, bookshops and publishers, printed and online library catalogues, and two microform collections. With sufficient time, energy and a reasonable hard currency budget, it is quite possible to develop an African language collection appropriate to local needs.