SHOULD ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING BE IN GODORT’S FUTURE?

A Discussion Paper on the possibility of GODORT publishing an electronic occasional paper series

prepared by

a working group of the GODORT Publications Committee

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To be discussed at ALA Midwinter, 3-5:30, Friday, Jan. 18, Hotel Monteleone Queen Anne BR, New Orleans,

Introduction

60% of current GPO documents are published in some electronic format. This tidal wave of non-print docs raises questions about access, about archiving and about the digital divide.

As a national voice for depository librarians, should GODORT play an active role in this still evolving electronic environment?

If GODORT does begin to publish electronically, we are really talking about online or web publishing. Given that most GODORT members have full-time jobs, it is not realistic to expect volunteers to have the constant supply of disposable time necessary
to burn CD-Roms, create DVDs or scan docs for microfiche, not to mention the cost of equipment, material and postage.

As we consider the possibility of electronic publishing, the GODORT Publications Committee thought it might be helpful to list some initial pros, cons and questions on a specific topic – GODORT publishing an occasional paper series. We hope this paper will generate discussion and ultimately, a decision. Background information is included for pros and con of electronic publishing in general, and also a bibliography.

PROS: SHOULD GODORT PUBLISH AN ELECTRONIC OCCASIONAL PAPER SERIES? (in random order)

Could encourage GODORT members to publish in a way that supports their careers, supports the general knowledge about government information, and encourage future revenue-producing projects.

Could provide an electronic “home” for fugitive documents, grey literature and disappearing documents.

Could raise the public profiles of GODORT in the specific and government documents in general.

Could provide a forum for GODORT editorials, letters, etc.

Could generate a positive revenue stream through reprints/permissions.

Could encourage publication of current information and “hot” topics.

Could publish quick responses to issues about government information.

Could provide an electronic archive of GODORT publications and documents from Task Forces and Committees.

Could update print publications for which GODORT has copyright and make them available online.
Could republish significant documents from State Government information organizations (with permission).

CONS: SHOULD GODORT PUBLISH AN ELECTRONIC OCCASIONAL PAPER SERIES? (in random order)

Would require a significant commitment of personnel, time and money.
Could require organizational changes, more than just a sub-group of the Publications Committee.
Would require a commitment to migrate as new technologies emerge.
Time/effort to create/update business plan.
Time/effort to prepare a master source file.
Possible need to purchase outside expertise.
Significant amount of electronic/server space would be needed for current, future and archived publications.

QUESTIONS:
Does the GODORT Publications Committee, (even possibly augmented with additional GODORT members interested in this project), have the time to take on a new, long-term commitment such as electronic publishing, or should a new group be formed within GODORT?
How much server space would we need (current/future) and where would the server be housed?
In what format/s would we publish? Individual documents? An e-zine? Text
versions? PDF versions? HTML versions? Combination of above?

How do we make clear written guidelines for the Publications Committee, and the

_Dttp_ editor and editorial board in accepting manuscripts for appropriate publication? What would be the differences between them and publication of a book manuscript? For example, appropriate for an electronic occasional paper series would be articles that are too long or having too many graphics for publication in _Dttp_. They may need frequent updating, immediate publication, and archiving. They may be a core of a future publication for revenue for GODORT. They may be reprints of copyright transferred materials or U.S. docs useful to GODORT membership electronically.

Would a possible e-zine be available by subscription? Financial implications?

Would GODORT become a PURL provider?

Is Internet access universal enough?

Is email access universal enough?

Would GODORT also publish print versions of docs? Some? All?

Would advertisers transfer to electronic version?

Will readers adjust to reading docs online?

Any legal implications? Copyright implications?

**PROCESS:**

How do we proceed?

Organization of a working group? Working within GODORT and getting approval.

Guidelines need to be created for editorial policy, and other aspects mentioned above.

Plan – call for manuscript submissions for a prototype example to be presented at ALA Annual 2002.
EDITORIAL POLICIES ISSUES

Style guides (CSS, Chicago Manual and other)
Citation issues
Fee-based or not?
Disclaimers -- when, what are where?
Disclosure statement(s)
Privacy considerations for manuscripts
Manuscript submission rules
Review process
Construction of Editorial Board
Criteria for acceptance
Foreign translation and other subsidiary rights matters
Republication, permissions
Interface with print publishers
Frequency of and routes for updating
DRM systems
Indexing and thesauri construction
Abstracting services
Publicity and marketing policies
Formats
Data, graphic, GIS, etc. IP issues
Staffing

Input of volunteers

Scope of materials which will be considered

Archiving

Mission statement or outline of intent of this endeavor

Description of interface with various groups within GODORT (formal or informal channels?, IFLA, and other law and corporate lib groups, if pertinent

Funding

Evaluation of electronic series (shall this be formalized, i.e GODORT will begin this and review it in, for example, two years)

EDITORIAL POLICIES BACKGROUND INFORMATION

BIBLIOGRAPHY:


This article discusses a research project which identifies the advantages and disadvantages of e-journals based on a sample of business school faculty. Could be of interest to the committee for general discussion.
Ariadne. (Digital Library Initiatives.) http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/


Technical and about the actual business, but has some interesting points.


Short discussion of a project similar to GODORT's project, maybe talk with them about the issues.


This upbeat article on web publishing by librarians shows the need and some of the disadvantages. It covers how such resources facilitate communication, cooperation, community service and freedom of speech.


The Copyright Clearance Center Inc. this week provides technology that allows publishers to use their own web sites to grant instant permission for reprints of their copyrighted material and receive compensation.


*Digital Library Information and Resources*. Ben Gross. Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. [http://www.canis.uiuc.edu/~bgross/dl/](http://www.canis.uiuc.edu/~bgross/dl/)


California's California Digital Library formed an E-Book Task Force in August 2000 to evaluate academic libraries' experiences with electronic books, etc. Some of the issues stated here may be of concern to the committee.


Very general but supports reproduction of products in a digital/Internet format.


Presents a definition of electronic publishing and considers the difference between electronic documents and printed documents. It talks about the importance of electronic publishing and the role of electronic publishing in libraries and future trends.


Discusses concerns involved in electronic publishing. "Interactivity is the watchword. Web visitors want a different experience from print, so efforts abound to create on-line communities, chat rooms and forums. News organizations like ours must be clear whether these interactive features are news or entertainment. Should editorial or business-side staff be in charge? In the rush to post breaking news on the Web, do print standards of accuracy and careful fact-checking apply?"

http://www.press.umich.edu/jep/


Since this project is about reproduction of electronic publishing, this article brings up issues and concerns from which the project could benefit.


Report of an IEE questionnaire: 34 percent of readers read most of each issue of the *Electronics and Communication Engineering Journal*, while 64 percent skim or read parts of it. Twelve percent of readers are students, 16 percent are retired, 54 percent are employed by companies, and less than 10 percent are in an academic or research organization. If the numbers translated to other electronic publications it shows a very good reason for online publishing.


Presents advice for writers on online publishing. Has some interesting points, a general piece with ideas for distribution.


This article brings up issues of marketing electronically published items. Could be of interest to the committee considering the project.


Interesting assessment of a study carried out in 1997-1999 by NCLIS, FDLP, and GPO.


Reports that Open E-Book Forum, the international nonprofit trade organization for electronic publishing, announced initiatives in the e-publishing market. It looks at standards and their importance in e-publishing. This is not a key topic but might have some interest in the future.


Reports the quality of online scholarly books and journals in Quebec City, Canada. Comparison on the quality of electronic and traditional books; Problems in electronic scholarly book publishing; Recommendations: 1. New approaches to scholarly publication be encouraged, based on non-profit, electronic publication and distribution. 2. An electronic publishing best practices services be established so that institutions develop formal e-publishing guidelines in cases of tenure, promotion and salary, and 3. Methodologies be designed to deal with preservation. Details available at [http://web.mala.bc.ca/hsstc/Final/Credibility.htm](http://web.mala.bc.ca/hsstc/Final/Credibility.htm)


    Supports doing e-publishing.


**Intellectual property issues:**


    Talks about the importance of copyright issues in republishing on the Internet and the establishment of a center to help.

About copyright issues including suggestions for librarians on how to deal with copyright issues in electronic publishing.


Summary of discussion of the ethics of intellectual property in relation to "novel information technologies" including e-publishing. Helps with copyright issues.


Discusses the issue of copyright in electronic publishing in the US.

**Technical Information that may be of Interest:**


Discusses the features of Clickability Interactivity Reports for online publishing and the management of Web content using this tool. May be of interest to the person in charge of the project.


Discusses format for e-publishing.
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