

Notes From *The Library*

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<http://library.ust.hk/>

Collaborative Digital Reference Service (CDRS)

The HKUST Library is now a member of CDRS, an international network of libraries that provides professional reference services to researchers anywhere at any time. This network is coordinated by the Library of Congress and consists of 60 members in 18 countries. This includes a variety of libraries, consortia, museums and expert services including: National Library of Canada, Ask ERIC, National Gallery of Art, Harvard University, Yale University, and Los Angeles Metropolitan Cooperative Library System.

HKUST plays an important role as one of only two libraries in the Asia-Pacific region, the other being the National Library of Australia. Queries are submitted through a member library consortium, and then directed to the appropriate member library based on profiles of collection strength, hours, patron groups, staff strengths, and specialties. Recently, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada had a query on recycled food containers, which was assigned to our Library through the network. While serving at the Reference Counter, our librarians located several useful web sites, searched for important journal articles from *Compendex* and *ProQuest* and referred the printed sources to the patron across the Pacific Ocean. Ultimately, end users will be able to submit questions directly through a public web interface and search the growing Q&A database.

Through this network, not only can a remote user tap into a reservoir of expertise, but information professionals can share and leverage reference experiences and skills globally, and document collective knowledge for reference access worldwide.

SPOTLIGHT: Journal Usage Survey

In the last issue of *Notes from the Library*, we mentioned that the Library would send out a questionnaire to survey the journal use and access preferences of our faculty. We are delighted to report that close to 30% (33% from the Schools of Science and Engineering, 20% from the Schools of Business and Humanities) of our faculty took the time to respond to our survey and provided us with succinct comments on their needs. The information collected will help us immensely in planning and enhancing e-journals access in the future. Some of our findings may be of particular interest to you:

- 74% considered it important to link full-text articles with index and abstract databases, while only 2% felt this feature is unimportant. Based on this preference, the Library has implemented Ovid's OpenLinks so that users can enjoy direct linkage from *INSPEC* and *BIOSIS* to science and engineering full-text journals.
- 78% preferred the e-journal over the print version. Given that this is the desire of the majority of our users, the Library will choose the e-version over the print if the subscription costs for both are the same. We acknowledge that 22% of our users prefer the print version. However, given the budget constraints, we can only opt for the format which appeals to the majority of our users.
- 43% felt that a surcharge of 10% is acceptable for providing both print and e-journal formats while 13% felt that even a surcharge of 30% is still reasonable. This concurs with one of the comments submitted that it would be difficult to comment on the price of a journal if it is crucial in one's field.
- In terms of ways to obtain extra funding to acquire expensive e-journal packages such as *Science Direct* or *Ideal*, 90% said it would be preferable/acceptable to have individual departments/schools request funding from the University Administration while 70% felt that it would be preferable/acceptable to have the school or division contribute extra funding to pay for the additional electronic access.

We invite you to take a look at <http://library.ust.hk/info/survey/survey.html> A copy of the survey results will be forwarded to the deans of each school, department heads, and library coordinators. With 90% of you feeling strongly that individual departments/schools should request extra funding from the University, it is important to raise these issues with your department head/dean so that they can be discussed broadly at departmental and school board meetings. Concerted efforts to articulate your urgent needs may convince the Administration to find the money for these e-journals.

董陽孜作品展 - Calligraphy Works by Grace Y. T. Tong



水墨書法家董陽孜女士的十七件大幅作品將于二月十三日至三月十八日在圖書館畫廊展出。董女士突破字形的障礙，為書法藝術開創了新頁。她的書法是名符其實的「字畫」。著名建築師漢寶德說董陽孜在「有意無意的把筆與墨的韻味都用上了，」她的書法已「進入化境。」

INTERNET: Usability & Accessibility

Making a web site is easy. Making one that works well is hard. Designers and authors need to keep in mind two overlapping concepts: usability and accessibility.

Usability is a measure of how easy it is to use a product - in this case a web site. Do the features available function? Can visitors find their way around, and how quickly can they find what they are looking for? What happens if something goes wrong?

Several things can quickly improve usability. If you use icons for navigation, make sure they are consistent, and that their appearance reflects their function. If your target audience is multilingual, consider having multilingual pages. Include a search engine, and examine its logs to see what people are looking for, and make it easier to find. Consider a site map or other alternative view of your web site's contents. Use informative error messages - a "404 not found" discourages return visits.

Don't rely on Flash, Java, or Javascript for primary navigation options. A few months ago I visited a site which had a large flash animation as its home page - but their coding did not work on my computer. Pretty front door, but no way in.

Include a title for each page. Many forget this, and their sites are indexed as "untitled page" in most web search engines.

Accessibility is more basic. Can visitors access the site and its features? Does it work in different browsers? The most fundamental thing you can do to improve accessibility is to check your pages for valid HTML and CSS coding (<http://validator.w3.org/>).

Think about your potential users. Some people are color blind, so your page colors may make the text unreadable. A local newspaper recently used the "Bobby" tool (<http://www.cast.org/bobby/>) to check all the University home pages in HK for accessibility compliance. None passed.

For more information, see Jakob Nielsen's excellent site <http://www.useit.com/>, the W3C's validation services at <http://validator.w3.org/>, the Web Accessibility Initiative at <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>, and the book "Designing Web Usability" (OPEN RESERVE TK5105.888 .N56 2000).

2001 PNC Conference Successful

The 2001 PNC (Pacific Neighbourhood Consortium) Conference held at City University from January 15 to 20, was co-hosted by HKUST Library, City University, Academia Sinica and the California Digital Library. It was enthusiastically attended by over 300 delegates from as far as Russia and the Republic of Georgia. There were more than sixty inspiring sessions ranging from developing appropriate electronic means to share specialist information to raising the social awareness of citizens to preserve historical buildings in Hong Kong.

Our Library also held a successful pre-conference workshop on "Designing online tutorials with WebCT". The instructors gave an overview of our "Information Literacy Tutorial" targeted for first year students (<http://library.ust.hk/serv/skills/infoliteracy.html>), and shared with the participants many behind-the-scenes issues in the planning and executing of the project. Participants were guided through a series of hands-on exercises from homepage design to content building. By the end of the workshop, most of the participants were able to gain a working knowledge of this courseware. The responses from the participants were overwhelmingly positive!

MEDIA: Circulating CD-ROM & VCD - Growing & Expanding

The circulating collection of CD-ROMs and VCDs has been growing for quite a while, and the time has come to expose it to the light of day. Shelved with the audio-CD's, it's an easy collection to overlook. They differ from the CD-ROM databases in that you can take them out of the library to use.

Thousands of relics and examples of Chinese art: high art, decorative art, and folk art are available on interactive CD-ROMs such as the ten volume 中國民間美術 series (Media Resources NK1068.C537...).

More and more Hong Kong government bodies release information on CD-ROM. If you are interested in the civil engineering aspects of the Tsing Ma Lantau link, you can view the *Ting Kau Bridge* and *Approach Viaduct* VCD (Media Resources TG113.H85 T56 1998). UGC-funded projects are also available like 教育中的形態傳意 = *Body Language and Non-Verbal Communication in Education* (Media Resources LB1033.5 .J43 1999).

Scholarly societies regularly issue CD-ROMs. For the past nine years, the American Astrophysics Society has published *Astrophysics on disc* (Media Resources QB460 .A886), with tabular data from several journals, and publications of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific.

CD-ROMs these days are often published like books, as individual works. Some notable recent acquisitions of this sort include *Emerging Economies of Southeast Asia* (Media Resources HC441 .L44 1997) and 客家人文 = *The Cultural Phenomenon of Hakkas* (Media Resources DS731.H3 K45 1999).

The Library recently acquired a large collection in the Chinese performing arts. This VCD series, 新中國舞台影視藝術精品選系列光盤, includes many classics of Chinese film and opera. The 1000+ titles in this collection all share the same basic call number (Media Resources PN2874 .X56 1999), with individual films, plays, or operas separated by volume number.

OUR WEB: Information Literacy Tutorial (ILT) - Second Phase

The first phase of the ILT (Modules 1-3) (<http://library.ust.hk/serv/skills/infoliteracy.html>) was released last September and has achieved great success. New first year undergraduates were the target audience of the tutorial and over 1,600 of them have attempted the tutorial. Another 130 people also tried it out. 80% of those who filled

out the evaluation commented that they would recommend the tutorial to others.

The second phase of the ILT (Modules 4-6) will be rolled out in mid-February. It covers techniques on searching for periodical articles and web resources, and evaluating and citing information sources.

Module 4 shows students how to search journal and newspaper databases effectively. It tries to answer common questions like "I got over 1,000 articles! What should I do?" or "What's wrong? The search found nothing."

With over 1 billion freely available web pages out there, the ability to find the gems among the pebbles becomes a survival skill when surfing the Web. Module 5 will equip you with this skill by introducing some of the best search tools on the Internet.

How do you know if a piece of information (a web page, an article, etc.) is trustworthy? What is the proper way to cite sources you've used so that you can avoid plagiarism? These issues will be addressed in Module 6.

The ILT will not just stop here. It will be constantly reviewed and updated to incorporate new technologies and the latest developments in information literacy. Your feedback will be valuable to its further improvement.

IEL - Good News!

At long last, the Library has upgraded *IEL* from a standalone CD-ROM database to a web-based one - *IEEE Xplore*. This new product supports up to 15 simultaneous log-ins, provides campus-wide access and maintains more frequent updates and has a much more elegant search interface. You can access *IEEE Xplore* through the Library Web Server (<http://library.ust.hk/>) under Library Collections and enjoy.

CONSER Training

To extend our participation in the international library community, HKUST Library has accepted an invitation to join the Cooperative Online Serials Program (CONSER) under the Program for Cooperative Cataloging of the Library of Congress (U.S.). Currently, we are the only Asian member.

Through this Program we will share our quality bibliographic records for journals and serial publications with other libraries around the world, and contribute to the discussion and promulgation of standards related to the cataloging of serials. At the beginning of December 2000, HKUST catalogers underwent a one-week training for the Program.

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