Welcome to the February 2005 issue of Multimedia Information & Technology. Click on the headings in the sidebar, or the links on this page, or scroll through the pages. Images used in this issue are by courtesy of ITN for British Pathe, the University of Queensland, Film Education, *bfi*, Team Video, Moviemail and Telabria.

The British Pathe website is now in its third year of operation. Paul McConkey and Tony Blake explore the development of the project.

The cover of this issue (left) carries an image of Brigitte Bardot from the British Pathe website. Go to
www.britishpathe.com
www.itnarchive.com
www.itnstills.com

Collaboration between the British Library and Building Zones, aiming to create a futuristic wireless environment, is reported in the News pages, which also contains items on Alice in Wonderland, the Seattle conference and other topics.
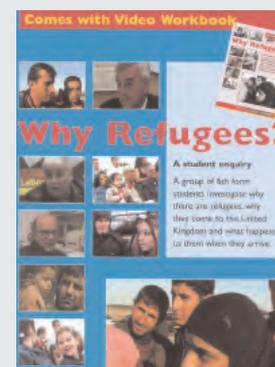
Kent County Library Service has invested substantial resources and expertise in a wireless communication system linking all their library branches (right). MmIT takes an in-depth look at the technology, with Jim Baker of Telabria.

The University of Queensland Library's award-winning Cyberschool development, taking resources to schools across Eastern Australia, is the featured article.

New releases from the *bfi*, Film Education, Moviemail and Team Video include Shark Tale (left) and Why Refugees? (below) as well as Lemony Snicket, some Shakespeare, and King Arthur. Maureen Brown's final list of videos from the BNFVC is on page 40.

Elsewhere, Ken Cheetham takes a sharp look at Fotoware's contribution to organising digital image collections: reviews include Tony Thompson on some new dvds, a shocker from Olwen Terris, and reviews of the latest Facet publications. Technology covers Softlink, the Wedge, new projectors, camcorders and electronic boards.

News February 15th 2005

Page Turner
Seattle
xrefer
Alice
The Wireless Office

A Page-Turning Winner

THE BRITISH LIBRARY'S Turning the Pages (TTP) system, which enables users to digitally turn the pages of priceless literary treasures, has recently won two top prizes. At the International Information Industry Awards, The Best User Experience award went to the system in the face of stiff competition from Google, Nature and the National Archives.

Turning the Pages uses animation to allow users to "turn" the pages of priceless manuscripts and books in a realistic way. This brings viewers closer than ever before to precious items.

The TTP electronic facsimile system allows users to zoom in on high-quality, digitised images, read notes or listen to music and commentary on each page.
Even the reflection of light on gold leaf as a page is turned can be realistically represented.

Three-dimensional animation mimics the action of turning each page, which can be done using a mouse or by scrolling through. Users can magnify the images and read, or listen to, notes explaining the beauty and significance of each page.

Twelve TTP electronic facsimiles have been created so far, including the Lindisfarne Gospels (top) Leonardo da Vinci's notebook, the Sforza Hours, Sultan Baybars' Qur'an and the Diamond Sutra, the world's oldest dated printed book.

The technology is now being used at the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda near Washington, to showcase Elizabeth Blackwell's 17th century Herbal and Vesalius's Humani Corporis Fabrica, a 16th century work considered to be the first truly modern anatomical guide.

The website has also won the Innovative category in Yahoo! UK and Ireland's Top 10 Finds of the Year competition. In May of last year, Turning The Pages featured as Pick of the Day on Yahoo! UK & Ireland, ensuring entry into the competition for the best site for 2004, also run by Yahoo! Turning the Pages came second in this contest.

The site was beaten by www.weebls-stuff.com. This remarkable site is totally different from Turning the Pages, being inhabited by a pair of characters called Weebl and Bob, and featuring dancing badgers and a creature cross-bred from a fish and a loaf of bread.

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Is There no End to It?

IN A COLUMN DOMINATED by the British Library, we continue with the news of a new website telling the story of Alice in Wonderland.

The original manuscript of Alice's Adventures Underground was given to the real Alice – Alice Liddell – by Lewis Carroll as a Christmas present in 1864. It now forms the basis of a new website shedding light on the real and fictitious Alices used by Carroll in the creation of his stories.

The British Library, the Museum of Oxford and the South East Museums and Archives Council have together created a multimedia journey through the story, with interactive activities including the creation of slide shows based on the characters in the real story.

The site is at www.aliceinoxford.net/play.htm

For further information and images please contact: Colin Beesley, at the British Library Press Office. Telephone: 020 7412 7114 or email:
colin.beesley@bl.uk

School Libraries in View

WITH ISSUE NO 20 (Winter 2004-5) School Libraries in View (SLiV) has gone online. The latest issue can be viewed at www.cilip.org.uk/sliv

From 2005, one issue per annum will be published in hard copy, and one issue will be online. Issue no 21 (Summer 2005) will appear in hard copy in early summer.

Further details are available from: Lloyd Evans, Editor SLiV
email lloyd@evans1435.freeserve.co.uk or Lloyd_Evans@flintshire.gov.uk

Shatter Some Stereotypes at Seattle

THE CONFERENCE SHATTERING STEREOTYPES will be held from Wednesday April 27th until Friday, April 29th 2005 in Seattle, Washington. It will explore Seattle Public Library's cutting edge architecture, state-of-the-art materials sorting and handling system, high-tech reference model and more.

In addition, delegates can learn about best practices in public libraries around the world from leading European library directors, including the 2004 winner of the prestigious
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Access to Learning Award.

Sponsored by the Public Libraries International Network and The Seattle Public Library, a post-conference event on branches will also take place, on Saturday April 30th.
Contact Seattle City Librarian Deborah L. Jacobs, Deborah.Jacobs@spl.org
and find out more about Seattle Public Library at www.spl.org

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New From xrefer for 2005

SAGE, H.W. WILSON, CONTINUUM AND MACQUARIE have brought new content to xrefer's online reference service for 2005. The four leading reference publishers will contribute key titles to its xreferplus Ready-Reference service. The company, which now has over 45 publishing partners, will incorporate a number of major titles in their services.

xrefer will add new titles in a broad range of subjects including history, literature, medicine, technology and more.

xreferplus offers completely customisable reference solutions for corporate, academic and public libraries. It features full-text, aggregated content from hundreds of reference books, and over 2 million entries covering such subjects as medicine, art, technology, bilingual titles and more.

By combining content from multiple publishers with unique cross-referencing technology, xreferplus delivers authoritative answers fast, wherever and whenever library users need them. Free, 30-day trials are available at www.xrefer.com/free trial.

Irish School Success

ST. VINCENT'S SECONDARY SCHOOL for girls, in Dundalk, Ireland has won the Softlink Library Automation Award for 2004 – a full Softlink library management system.

The school was selected for the award on the basis of their need for a new automated system, the availability of computers, and the benefits that the software would bring to the learning environment. The school's awareness of software installation programmes was also a factor. St Vincent's library will act as a demonstration site for the whole of Ireland.

Public Platform for the British Library

A NEW ONLINE LEARNING PACKAGE, showcasing the British Library's services for UK public librarians, went live in December and will be made available to all English library authorities over the next few months. The package is a virtual tour of the BL, and is designed to show public librarians what the British Library has to offer to public library users. See it at www.bl.uk/training_package/introduction.html.

A combination of video, images, text and web links helps users navigate the range of the British Library's services. Taking about three hours to complete, the tour has been designed so that it can be finished in stages.

A simple downloadable workbook has also been created to help users work through the tour.

Future plans include developing the tour for use as a quick reference tool, and for library staff in other sectors.

We Need Your Email Address

Members and subscribers who have not yet registered for access to the electronic version of MmIT, or who have changed their email addresses since first registering, are invited to contact the managing editor by email at lyndon.pugh@virgin.net

The Wireless Office – From the BL and Building Zones

THE JOURNAL HAS PREVIOUSLY covered various aspects of the growth of wireless technology, most recently in vol 30 no3, when offices without walls were featured. Campusmesh in this issue also looks at the library applications.

Meanwhile, the British Library, working with Building Zones, have created the first fully integrated wireless working environment.

They are billing the location as Central London's largest WiFi hotspot, and are inviting interested visitors to call in at the Library's St Pancras site to sample what is advertised as the ultimate workplace of the future.

> possibilities for highly productive work zones, by integrating public space, furniture and technology to create an inspiring work experience

A special interactive installation has been available for use by the public since January 17th.

The setup demonstrates the integration of the latest in practical furniture design and wireless technology. It will run until March 11th.

Until now, public hotspots have simply grafted wireless technology onto existing furniture combinations. These are not always ideal in terms of ergonomics or ease of use.

In order to overcome as many of the disadvantages as possible, 10 furniture designers have been commissioned to provide innovative solutions to the requirements of what they quaintly term "nomadic" working.

They were required to take into account the needs of WiFi users in public spaces, and in particular the need for:

    An integral power supply in order to minimise trailing electrical cables
    A secure storage space for bags, equipment and documents
    Good ergonomics, embracing comfort, lighting and safety

The installation features furniture from leading designers, such as Vitra, Kinnarps, Hands of Wycombe, Colebrook Bosson Saunders, Orangebox, Boss/Haworth, Bene, Ahrend and KI.

It will also incorporate key technologies from Philips, Plantronics, Skype (to be reviewed in the next issue of MmIT) and Toshiba.

All of the furniture on display is available for use by the Library's WiFi users, and it is of course specifically designed to accommodate and complement the wide range of wireless products and services which will shape UK business in the future.

Visitors will also get the chance to sample future WiFi hotspot services. These will primarily be new voice services where users can make phone calls from laptops, PDA or (imminently) mobile phones, using a piece of software called a softphone.

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Softphones allow communications to be seamlessly integrated with other technology. Obviating the need to use voicemail, users will be able to connect to the wireless hotspot via a phone icon on a laptop.

It is predicted that softphones will support a range of applications, including video conferencing and instant messaging – both of which will improve collaboration between geographically separated participants.

While the furniture installation is on display, users will be encouraged to provide feedback on everything, including security, storage, comfort and cost. This extensive public consultation will help inform future plans, should the Library choose to install a permanent public working environment within the WiFi hotspot space.

John de Lucy, the Library's Head of Estates and Facilities said:

Since our WiFi service was launched last year, the British Library has become one of the busiest public hotspots in the UK. With this exhibition, we show the possibilities for highly productive work zones, by integrating public space, furniture and technology to create an inspiring work experience. We aim to demonstrate innovative environments from which visitors can take away ideas and apply them to their own organisations.

The Library is a popular location for mobile workers, and its strategic location, between the three major transportation hubs of Kings Cross, Euston Station and the soon to be opened Eurostar terminal, is a huge factor in attracting these users, who need to be able to access email and the Internet

Said Philip Ross, Chairman of Building Zones:

This is the recognised vision of wirelessly-enabled work environments, rather than locations such as cafés.
In the near future, wireless technology will change building design, urban planning and how people work, and the launch of The British Library project is a major success story for this technology

> This is the recognised vision of wirelessly enabled work environments, rather than locations such as cafés.
> In the near future, wireless technology will change building design, urban planning and how people work

For further information, contact Ben Sanderson at the British Library Press Office.
Telephone: 01937 546126. Email: ben.sanderson@bl.uk

The St Pancras building is open to the general public at the following times:
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 09.30 to 18.00
Tuesday 09.30 to 20.00
Saturday 09.30 to 17.00
Sunday & English public holidays 11.00 to 17.00

Audrey Hepburn in Japan

Making an Online Archive

Paul McConkey and Tony Baker, Cambridge Imaging Systems

British Pathe have been creating newsreel films since the earliest days of motion pictures. Many readers of a certain, more distinguished, age will remember these films. They were usually shown before the main feature at many cinemas across the land.

The newsreel activities gradually came to an end with television news replacing newsreel films as the public's source of moving visual reportage.

Almost all of the films and many of the rushes were collected, so British Pathe eventually amassed an archive of over 3000 hours of newsreel film shot between the start of the 20th Century and about 1970.

Since this news gathering effort was stopped, film and television producers of all genres have increasingly used the archive as a historical resource.

The material is now managed by ITN Archives, and the entire collection is available online at www.britishpathe.com.

The creation of the online archive was a two-year effort which followed almost another two years of discussion, planning and fund-raising. A technical solution also had to be found, and a team of people were gathered together to transfer aging 35mm film prints to a digital archive.

British Pathe investigated many possibilities, eventually choosing the Imagen archive management system from Cambridge Imaging Systems.

Cambridge Imaging developed a still image archive system in 1991, for the MOD.

Since then they have been involved in large scale asset management systems for museums, the BBC, British Telecom and the RAF, amongst others.

Managing Director Paul McConkey describes below how the online archive was created.

**The Last Ever Pathe Newsreel –
Salvador Dali in Paris 1970**

The technical development began with transferring the original 35mm film to a more appropriate medium for automation and easy handling. The earlier film was based on nitrate stock, which is extremely flammable therefore hazardous (see Reviews, MmIT vol 30 no 2),

The solution was telecine transfers to Sony DigiBeta tape. Modern 35mm stock has a much better resolution than the Sony medium, but the older film did not suffer any noticeable losses and became far easier to handle.

When the film transfer was completed, descriptions and other relevant data were added to each clip.

Significantly, the tape time codes for each clip were recorded. This allowed many of the succeeding steps to be completely automated.

By this stage, the usability of the archive had been greatly improved. All 90000 clips could be easily copied from DigiBeta masters to VHS show reels, or to professional quality video sub-masters.

As the descriptions had been completely revised to embrace a modern perspective, searches became much more relevant.

DigiBeta is a digital tape format, so the telecine transfer effectively digitised the film. But Cambridge Imaging needed to create a digital archive stored and accessed online. The choice of digital video format for this was the subject of many hours of research and discussion.

At the time, the only sensible format was MPEG-2. Based upon its use for digital TV broadcasting and DVD, this would provide longevity. It also offered the best compromise between quality and compression.

Having chosen MPEG-2, archive quality depended on the bit rate. Production quality bit rates and 4:2:2 encoding would have been too expensive, because of the cost of storage.

It is always possible, in any event, to go back to the DigiBeta tapes and encode really high bit rate video, or to the film itself if that is not good enough.

Sample clips from the early 1900s through to the late 60s were encoded, and, through trial and error, a bit rate of 5Mbit/s was selected. This was the lowest which could be used without seeing noticeable artefacts.

At this rate, the project would have ended up with over 10TB of video files, and for cost reasons could not go any higher. Advances in technology probably mean that a rate of 8Mbit/s could now be achieved while still reducing the cost of storage by more than half.

When the team saw the earliest footage, they observed an apparent slight vibration of the video images.

Moore and Hurst 1966 World Cup

This was caused by the shrinkage of the nitrate stock, causing the image to jump about in the projector gate.

Fortunately MPEG-2's motion compensation algorithms rectified this, and the end result was clips which were as good as the original film.

Internet formats must be amenable to quick downloading over dial-up connections, to support browsing. Most of the format options met two out of three requirements, but in the end, it was a choice between MPEG-1, QuickTime 5, or Windows Media 7.

MPEG-1 had the advantage that just about every computer had a suitable player, but the quality at low bit rates was not acceptable.

QuickTime 5 was outdated – after waiting for QuickTime 6 for months there was still no guarantee that it would be available in time. Windows Media 7 gave better results than the other two at the target bit rates of 128Kbit/s and 512Kbit/s, and of course was available on every Windows PC.

JPEG was chosen for the stills format, on the grounds that any computer which could not display JPEGs would have problems browsing the Internet in any case.

For browsing video, it is usually much quicker to get an impression of the content of a clip by scanning a screen full of thumbnails than by playing the whole clip.

Thumbnails can be captured at scene changes, but for technical reasons it is preferable to use a fixed interval. This helps the user to judge the length of the clips or scenes.

Constructing the archive was influenced by the fact that only one operator was to be used – the system had to be as efficient and as automated as possible. All of the server software was controlled across the network, so the operator could manage the system from a single workstation.

The system was based on two video players, encoding two tapes simultaneously. It is important to reduce the amount of keying and repetitive jobs to an absolute minimum.

Automated workflow is a key element in the design of a large-scale archive ingest system, where, If video tape time codes are available in a computer readable form, it is better to import them than re-enter them. The time codes for the tapes were entered into the database when the descriptions were updated, eliminating rekeying before the start of an encoding run.

Marilyn Monroe
in Korea 1954

The MPEG-2 videos were then created and stored. The transcoders automatically picked up the new files and created the browse video assets and the stills.

The transcoders were able to convert MPEG-2 video into Windows Media video at about three times real time. In other words, it took three minutes to convert one minute of MPEG-2 video.

With current processors, this conversion is now faster than real time. As Cambridge Imaging Systems were creating two different versions of browse video from each MPEG-2 asset, three transcoders were used to service the output from the two encoder systems. With the transcoders running around the clock, they caught up with the encoders overnight.

In this way, a single operator produced an average of 12 hours of completed footage per day. The system is also scalable to suit the type of video assets which are required.

The Imagen archive management system was used to select tapes. After loading, the encoding queue was started and the system could be left to create and distribute all of the digital video assets.

The ingest, management and storage servers were based at British Pathe's office in Camden. There was a fast leased line connection to the Internet, with web servers and database servers at an Internet data centre. As the tapes were encoded the Imagen system automatically uploaded metadata and assets to the website.

The Imagen archive system stored the metadata and digital assets online. The database could be searched and video could be accessed immediately.

The next step was to update the public archive on the Internet. As the tapes were encoded the Imagen system automatically uploaded metadata and assets to the website.

The British Pathe website was publicly launched in late November 2002, with about half of the 90000 video clips encoded and uploaded to the site. Professional researchers had been using the site for a couple of months prior to this, and their experience indicated the need for some changes to the website interface.

It also became clear that there was a danger that the level of use had been underestimated, so to provide for this unanticipated load, and also to give the system some redundancy, the server capacity was increased.

Even so, the system reached saturation point in a few hours, and for many users the website slowed to a crawl. In the first week, 1.2 million pages were accessed by over 60 thousand individual users per day.

Gradually, the torrent of users died away to a more manageable level. After about two months a pattern was established, with about 50 thousand visits to the website every month.

In the time since the launch, a series of site upgrades have been implemented. Once the initial encoding was completed, in April 2003, an automated routine was created to run through the entire archive and capture new still images at one-second intervals, as well as new thumbnails. The stills were full-frame, full-resolution images.

1920s Flapper

The website was also modified so that users could browse the archive using thumbnails at any interval which suited them. The online stills archive, which was launched with over 12 million stills, is one of the largest in the world.

Version 3 soon followed, incorporating QuickTime 6 via a transcoder. A new automated task generated QuickTime 6 assets from the original MPEG-2. This format allows metadata to be embedded into the video stream, and has been created at a higher bit rate to provide better playback quality than VHS. There are now over 90 thousand clips available in Windows Media 7 or QuickTime 6 formats, with over 12 million thumbnails and still frames.

A crucial decision to store all of the high resolution MPEG-2 assets online was taken early in the process. This used custom built network-attached storage (NAS) servers. This meant that batch reprocessing of the entire archive was possible with almost no operator involvement. The stills and QuickTime assets were created in this way and, apart from an occasional check on progress, the reprocessing was continuous.

Updating the Windows Media 9 is now being considered. This will improve the quality of the video, and allow metadata to be embedded in the video files.

Providing an option which allows paying users to edit sections of different clips, and then request them in a video format and bit rate of their own choosing, with automatic order processing and delivery by email, is also being considered.

Creating a digital version of the British Pathe archive was an exciting project involving a large team of people. It has been the largest Internet based system developed by Cambridge Imaging.

Mick Jagger at Hull

The key to creating the digital assets successfully was to make the whole system as automated as possible. Network based software, and the re-use of metadata wherever possible, were also helpful factors.

The flexibility of having the MPEG-2 assets online at all times assisted re-processing, and made it possible to add more and more features, which give the end-users the results they wanted.

While 10 terabytes does not seem much now, having that amount of data easily accessible over a Gigabit network made the project easier on many occasions.

The British Pathe and ITN archives can be found at the following addresses:
www.itnarchive.com
www.britishpathe.com
www.cambridgeimaging.co.uk

Campushmesh Links Kent

Jim Baker of Telabria

Kent-based wireless network provider, Telabria, was set up by Jim Baker over a year ago, and has already won two awards for its innovative and flexible approach to delivering practical and cost-efficient systems for the public sector and enterprise markets. CampusMesh, which was launched in July this year, was conceived to:

- Provide a cost-effective, secure wireless mesh network between buildings over a wide area
- Deliver high-speed WiFi Internet access

The product's key benefits are its

- Portability
- Quick and easy installation
- Low cost of deployment

In a traditional wireless installation, each 802.11 access point (to which wireless clients such as laptops and PDA connect to get network access) must be connected to an Ethernet network via cable. CampusMesh uses dedicated 54Mbps 802.11a radios to form a backbone to which access points connect wirelessly, thus removing the need for the Ethernet cables.

 Using Telabria's state-of-the-art wireless mSystem mesh radio technology, an access point – or mNode – can be installed anywhere Ethernet and Internet coverage is required. This is particularly attractive for organisations which are expanding or evolving.

Network connectivity can be quickly provided for new or temporary buildings, by simply adding a new mNode, with minimal disruption and cost. And, unlike point-to-point or point-tto-multipoint networks, data transmission can pass through neighbouring nodes when there are physical obstructions such as other buildings, water towers or trees, which make direct connection impossible.

CampusMesh is also the only multi-radio product currently on the market which conforms to European and UK power emission regulations, operating in both the licence-free 2.4GHz and 5GHz spectrums.

CampusMesh's features make it ideal for libraries and other public sector locations. For Kent County Council, Telabria adapted CampusMesh for two libraries: Allington, near Maidstone, and Sandwich. CampusMesh was chosen by the county council for its flexibility: it could be tailored to their requirements, while fitting within existing network infrastructures.

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The bespoke system offers visitors free filtered Internet connection and access to the Putting Learners First education portal, allowing local students to access class work and reference resources off campus.

This education portal is also particularly innovative because:

- Students can work on school assignments remotely
- They can use material out of school hours and in a safe environment
- Students can also connect to the portal through any home Internet link. Indeed, CampusMesh has helped strengthen the link between schools and libraries.

The initiative to deploy CampusMesh is part of the Council's Connecting Kent programme which aims to bring the advantages of broadband technology to every citizen in Kent.

Sandwich Library was also chosen by The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to feature in their £60,000 pilot project, which is being run in partnership with the Department of Trade & Industry (DTI) and The Countryside Agency.

The project was set up to help rural communities take advantage of the benefits of broadband Internet services.

Kent has a powerful vision to unlock the potential of mobile computing and extend learning out of the classroom and into the home, library, gallery, or even museum. Telabria is helping Kent turn this vision into reality.

Telabria Campushmesh Indoor Ethernet & WIFI Coverage

Outdoor mNode

Indoor mNode

Libraries can also benefit from the ease of setting up a computer network. CampusMesh enables printers and desktop computers to be connected to the wireless local area network (WLAN) in the library, without the need for traditional fixed-wire network cabling.

At the same time, it can still provide public wireless Internet and portal access anywhere on site for visitors who have access to a PDA, tablet or WiFi-equipped laptop.

There are additional features which also benefit the customer. Using the CampusMesh network, ITC managers can provide security and traffic monitoring by deploying IP video cameras across any given area, all without cables. This will be significantly cheaper than installing CCTV.

Customers of Telabria can also rest assured that data security is a very high priority. Every precaution is taken to ensure measures are in place to prevent attacks on the infrastructure. All traffic passing over the mSystem network can be AES 128-bit encrypted, and each certificate-based node must authenticate itself on the network. Additionally, network users requiring anything more that basic services must be authenticated.

mSystem also supports Virtual Private Network (VPN) connections for clients wishing to access other networks remotely.
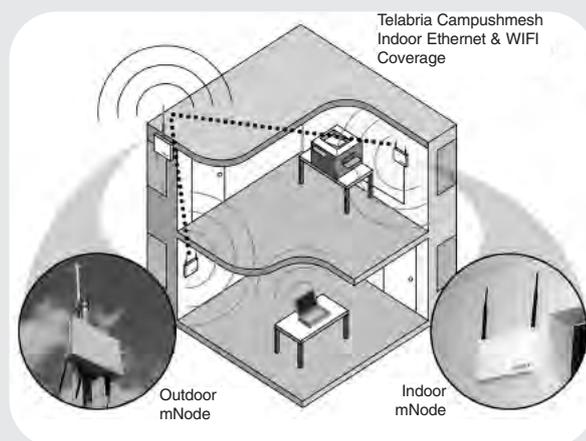
Installing CampusMesh is simpler and quicker than installing traditional fixed-wire networks. Telabria, who are experts in radio frequency planning, carry out a detailed site survey. The findings determine the optimal placement of access points, and wireless network coverage is planned to accommodate any physical obstacles which may hinder the radio signal in a given area. For effective network meshing, it is important that multiple access points can talk to one another without channel interference.

As they do not require fixed Ethernet network to operate, CampusMesh nodes can be placed anywhere there is power. Once plugged in, the system automatically configures itself and the access point(s) join the mesh seamlessly.

Following initial installation, Telabria also offers customers a range of service agreements, including a remote site monitoring service which can analyse the health and performance of each of the access points, often enabling some problems to be picked up before they arise.

Campushmesh at Work

After commissioning, Telabria continues to meet the very highest service standards, by regularly soliciting customer feedback in order to ensure the delivery of the best solutions for the public sector, industry and businesses.

The impact of Campushmesh has been considerable. In the Allington and Sandwich libraries it is now successfully delivering wireless broadband Internet, and a tailored intranet, for local users. Other libraries across Kent are keen to install the system as it becomes increasingly important to offer a range of additional and innovative services for a technologically demanding public.

Already, the product is being considered for other public sector locations, and is currently being trialled in one Kent school. Again, CampusMesh has been tailored to meet the specific requirements of the school, providing wireless Internet coverage indoors and outdoors, and network connectivity. Their system has been designed to link with the facility at Allington Library.

CampusMesh is sufficiently flexible to operate on a small or large scale. For example, a local authority can install the system in one library or across the whole of its buildings and services, incorporating a specific portal which covers its leisure, education and welfare facilities.

CampusMesh is constantly evolving. Responding to customer demands, the firm is developing a fully mobile, battery-operated outdoor mNode access point, and is also looking at ways to lessen radio frequency channel interference between access points.

Telabria is also researching the innovative uses of wireless technology such as Voice-Over-Broadband, videoconferencing and devices which merge cellular communications with WiFi. Delivery technologies such as 802.16 WiMAX will play a critical role in Telabria's road map to high-speed, mobile wireless access.

Contact:
jim@telabria.com

Cyberschool Reaches all the Parts Down Under

Teacher Librarian Mirva Harrison, and students of Indooroopilly State High School using the UQL Cyberschool website

The UQL Cyberschool, launched in 1998 as an initiative of the University Librarian, is a community outreach programme established and run by the University of Queensland Library (www.library.uq.edu.au) which is based in Brisbane, Australia.

Finding appropriate and reliable information for effective teaching and learning can be challenging.

In the past, most high school libraries have had limited funds available for the purchase of research resources for students.

The state of Queensland covers an area of about 1,722,000 square kilometres, or 662,000 square miles, so for geographically dispersed and isolated students and schools, access and resource issues are compounded.

In order to address these needs, the University of Queensland Cybrary's UQL Cyberschool programme was established to offer:

- A website linked to a searchable database of authoritative e-resources for the key learning areas of the Queensland high school curriculum; access to the University of Queensland Cybrary's online catalogue and its Virtual Reference Collection; e-resource evaluative tools
- Advice, support and solutions to technical problems encountered in using online electronic resources
- Training in the use of relevant online information resources for teachers, teacher-librarians and students
- Tours of the UQ Cybrary for secondary school students, and an introduction to the University of Queensland and its school programmes
- Negotiated discounted purchase prices for school access to quality online information resources, e-journals and online databases

As well as providing schools with a cost-effective gateway to electronic information resources, the UQL Cyberschool also provides access to the UQL online catalogue and other information-finding tools. University initiatives of direct use to to schools and school students are also accessible.

In this way the Cyberschool works to to bridge the gap between high school and university. It also provides students, particularly those disadvantaged by distance, with the opportunity to develop university research skills, achieve information literacy and acquire lifelong learning skills.

Work commenced in 1998, as an initiative conceived in partnership with an international database publisher, the Information Access Company (IAC), now known as Thomson Gale.

The first step was a trial of IAC's Expanded Academic ASAP Int'l Ed database by three Brisbane schools. This database comprised 1900 full text journals. The trial was an overwhelming success, and led to UQL and IAC offering subscribing Queensland high schools discounted access to the database from February 1999.

In tandem with the trial, The University of Queensland Library developed the UQL Cyberschool website to provide schools with a gateway to databases, and access to the Library's online catalogue and other information-finding tools. Since then, trials of other electronic databases providing indices to journals and newspapers, as well as full text articles and online encyclopedias, have been negotiated.

Teachers and students are also offered training in searching the University of Queensland Library catalogue and the Internet.

Resources have now grown to provide all Queensland secondary schools with access to electronic versions of newspapers, scholarly journals and magazines in all subject areas, and more than 40 online databases.

Free trials allow schools to make informed decisions before purchase, and more than 170 schools have bought over 390 subscriptions to approximately 34 different databases through the UQL Cyberschool consortia.

In various subject areas, school students can also access online gateways developed for University of Queensland students. One of these gateways is the Virtual Reference Collection, providing links to government legislation, statistics, dictionaries and encyclopedias, atlases, information about educational institutions, and business and employment directories.

Other available subject-related gateways include AVEL (Australian Virtual Engineering Library), AGRIGATE (Agriculture Information Gateway) and WebLaw (Online Australian legal information).

What Clients Say

I have just completed a series of lessons with students on how to establish the "authenticity" of websites and I have found the information on the Cyberschool home-page invaluable for this task (*Teacher Librarian, Queensland Independent School*)

The Team l-r: Liz Blumson (Cyberschool Coordinator), Warren Ham (Webmaster), Deborah Turnbull (Manager Information Skills and Community Outreach), Janine Schmidt (University of Queensland Librarian).

The UQL Cyberschool team has also developed a searchable database of Internet sites relating to each of the key learning areas in the Queensland secondary school curriculum.

Additional sites, validated for their authority and quality for appropriate age levels, are identified and selected using Queensland syllabus documents.

All Secondary School libraries throughout the state of Queensland, not just in high-density population areas, are supported through the UQL Cyberschool. Team members have visited areas as far north as Cairns, west to Mount Isa and many areas in between, to bring online resources to distant schools. Local schools in Brisbane and its environs are similarly supported.

A sense of partnership is also developing, through the continuing liaison between teachers, teacher-librarians and Cyberschool staff who provide advice, assess needs, identify new educational directions, develop new skills, run workshops, present papers, run a discussion list, publish a newsletter and obtain feedback on services and support associated with the use of online electronic resources.

Free updating sessions for teachers and teacher-librarians are provided on a regular basis and address challenges associated with information technology and learning. Previous sessions have covered issues such as:

- Integration of electronic online electronic resources into teaching and learning
- Information Skills at the University of Queensland
- Information Literacy Planning
- Advanced Information Retrieval using online electronic resources
- Full text electronic databases
- Plagiarism

Cyberschool's Services

720000 hits on the website

Over 170 subscribing schools

Online discussion lists

Newsletter

Professional development seminars

Online information guides

Liaison and collaboration

Access to UQL catalogues

School tours of UQ Library

Presentations and workshops

Database trials

What Clients Say II

high levels of professional and personal service . . . Accessibility of resources . . . is a key issue which has been met. School personnel are being assisted in the skilling of staff and students . . . will have a beneficial effect on the quality of learning and confidence of the overall population of schools using the service (*Director of Resources, Brisbane Independent School*)

The technical set up was originally kept as simple as possible, so that librarians with minimal web and HTML writing skills could maintain the web pages. Technical help is also provided by the library's IT section, who are involved in a number of cross-boundary collaborative projects with library staff.

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Tightwad and Lustgirdle: *see* Read, J: Cataloguing Without Tears

It is always good to see a publisher commission a book on cataloguing, especially so when it is a new publisher with several other titles on library and information science on its list. This text addresses practical management and technical issues, which many other authors on cataloguing have either tended to ignore or underplay.

I welcomed the section covering how long it takes to catalogue a document – and, by implication – how much does it cost? However much cataloguers resent these questions, managers frequently ask them.

Similarly, addressing such issues as "How to convince your boss that cataloguing is important", and indexing a document when the cataloguer knows nothing about the subject, or does not read the language it is written in, is valuable.

It is helpful to have examples of documents coded with XML and catalogued using the Dublin Core Metadata Set, and I agreed with Jane Read's premise that every catalogue record created is a trade-off between the time spent cataloguing and the potential value to the user.

The author assumes the cataloguer is working with AACR2 and encoding to MARC standards. She eschews the word "book" in favour of the wider term "document".

This is admirable, but too often her background in rare book cataloguing shows through, and as a result the sections on media and special materials are so perfunctory, and so vague, as to be of little use.

Her eight lines on map cataloguing begin "You need to include the scale of the map" which, as a statement of the cataloguing obvious, must take the biscuit, but only slightly ahead of her dictum on serial cataloguing:

It is vitally important . . . to include information on which volumes and/or issues the library holds.

Her section on Moving Pictures gets the emphasis wrong, in that she stresses the description of the equipment used to project or play the image. If the physical format of the item in hand (for example 16mm film) is properly applied, the equipment which is required to project that film should become obvious.

The book's title is a big mistake. Cataloguing Without Tears should have been given the blue pencil. Having been brought up to believe that very few things of value are achieved without effort, I find the title clichéd, and it serves at the outset to trivialise the professional skills which cataloguing and indexing demand, at a time when it has never been more important to assert them.

Reading further into the book, my fears were confirmed. The style of the writing is silly. (I cannot think of a better word).

It is self-satisfied, forcibly jolly, and rife with exclamation marks when none are needed (hear, hear. ed):

. . . of course, finding this information may be difficult or impossible!

Worse still are the names which the author creates to enliven the narrative. The series editor really should have told her that names like Tony Tightwad (a county librarian), Cynthia Lustgirdle (an author) and Much Gossip (a public library) are not funny and they are not clever.

Just in case we are not diverted enough, stereotyped cartoons with unfunny captions add to the hilarity.

The author seems to believe that most of us find cataloguing to be inherently dull, and so she will spice it up with jokes and cartoons. On this assumption, the instructional text does not stand a chance, which is a shame, because there are the makings of a good practical account striving to get out.

The book is intended as a "handy" and authoritative guide to the principles of cataloguing for librarians and information managers who have limited cataloguing experience, and need to catalogue materials in any format.

It is extremely expensive at £55 for the hardback and £39 the paperback. If a novice cataloguer has this money to spend I would firmly recommend that they invest in AACR2 (2002 revision and 2004 Update). This is just as handy, more authoritative, better written and not the slightest bit funny. 1/5
★

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When to Judge a Book by its Cover

MICHAEL GORMAN'S 4TH EDITION of the Concise AACR2 tests the adage that a book should not be judged by its cover. It would not be wrong to think that this cover design is an indication of the editorial approach to content. It is minimalist, clear and elegant, and tells the potential reader no more and no less than is necessary.

The Concise AACR2 has been in print for nearly 25 years, the 4th edition having been published to take account of the AACR2 2002 Revision and the 2004 Update. I suspect that cataloguers, or those who are called upon to catalogue only occasionally, will have a copy of an earlier edition, or be aware that such a text is available if they need it.

The book is intended to convey the basic principles of the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules 2nd edition without many of that comprehensive work's rules for more specialised materials. These rules are rewritten, simplified, and usually supplied with new examples.

To assist reference between the two texts, should it be necessary to consult the fuller version, there is a table which relates the rules in the concise text to the explanation in the full text.

The Concise AACR2 has a broad reader remit, and claims that it is intended "for cataloguing students, cataloguers in a number of different situations, and other librarians."

It allows persons working in small libraries to do standard cataloguing without the need to learn all the detail of structure and content found in the full text.

Students who are studying cataloguing, but who will not become cataloguers, will find this book a good introduction to national standards, as will cataloguers working with non-English language documents.

It appears that the editors believe that audiovisual and electronic resources were among the more rarefied and complex documents which the concise edition chose not to deal with in full.

This is a pity, as I find it difficult to imagine a library of any size that does not have in its collection a video, a microfilm, a CD-ROM or other electronic database. The rules in this edition for describing such materials are not very helpful. The cataloguer working in a library which contains a lot of multimedia items would be advised to pay the extra £20 or so and buy the full text.

For example, Rule OA Sources of Information advises that, when describing Motion Pictures and Video Recordings, the main source of information is "the item itself". I think some cataloguers might reasonably interpret this to be the container or carrier, such as the title on the video sleeve for example.

What the rule actually means is the information given on the title frames. And if the right equipment to play the video is not to hand, or the title frames on the film are missing or damaged, what can be done? Admittedly these problems are more likely to be encountered in specialist libraries and archives, but my criticism that sound, image and electronic resources are not given sufficient space is, I think, valid. As an indication of the monograph-based thinking which still pervades, one index entry reads

DVDs see Optical Discs; Videodiscs extent.

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I believe that, in 2004, DVD has replaced the videodisc in the market and in the terminology. The concise edition is based on the idea that a main entry is made for each item described, but it now concedes that, with the computer's ability to reproduce multiple entry points quickly and cheaply, the notion of a main entry is greatly weakened.

Trying to anticipate how the user might search for an item, and providing entries under all reasonable access points, is perhaps a better use of intellectual resources than a cataloguer spending valuable time under a wet towel wondering whether they have in front of them a document where it is correct to

> enter a subordinate body (other than a body created or controlled by a government, see rule 55) as a subheading of a higher body if: the name of the subordinate body includes the whole name of the higher body.

Many libraries no longer distinguish between main and added entries, and Rule 21A notes that in such circumstances cataloguers should

> treat all access points as equal and use rules 23-20 to tell you which and how many access points to make.

But not withstanding my criticism of the rules chosen for the Concise edition being weighted towards the monograph, the Concise AACR2 is an essential textbook for cataloguers.

> A high quality working tool of value in all kinds of libraries and many countries embodies the essence of AACR in their most up-to-date form, with benefits for national standards and international harmonisation

The book reproduces the Foreword to the 1981 edition by Peter R. Lewis, who was at the time the Director General, Bibliographic Services, British Library. He wrote

> It is a high quality working tool of practical value in all kinds of libraries and in many countries, and it embodies the essence of the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules in their most up-to-date form, with all the benefits that signifies in the wide world of national standards, and international harmonisation.

Four editions and over twenty years later this still holds true. 5/5
★★★★★

Essential Classification for the Novice

THE PURPOSE OF BROUGHTON'S BOOK (Essential classification, Facet 2004) is to lead the novice classifier through the basics of subject cataloguing, with an emphasis on practical analysis and classification. No previous knowledge or experience of classification is assumed.

Essential Classification begins by outlining the first principles of classification, an example of finding peas in a supermarket serving to illustrate the points. A chapter on scientific classification and taxonomies follows.

In my experience, the author, a Lecturer in Library and Information Studies at the School of Library, Archive and Information Studies, University College, London is one of the few writers on classification who actually knows what taxonomies are, and distinguishes them clearly from any other structured set of terms.

Within this chapter is an interesting section on folk classification. Broughton reminds us that the classifications in the Western world are derived from Greek philosophy and science, but this is not necessarily true of other cultures where folk taxonomies tend to emphasise function rather than form, so cutting across scientific division: grouping animals, for example, as climbers, burrowers and flyers.

Other chapters include content analysis, controlled indexing languages and word-based approaches to retrieval. Each chapter includes a summary and a set of exercises with answers.

A good half of the book is devoted to the main classification schemes likely to be used in UK libraries: Library of Congress Subject Headings; the Library of Congress Classification; the Dewey Decimal Classification; the Universal Decimal Classification.

the author is one of the few writers on classification who actually knows what taxonomies are

Each section gives a short history of the development of the scheme and offers good advice on practical application, again with a summary and exercises.

The most interesting chapter for me was the detailed account of the development of faceted classification. The author recognises that in the 21st century very few libraries use these schemes, but argues persuasively that faceted classification is probably the most important development in classification theory of the last hundred years.

Broughton rightly reminds the reader that the identification of precise relationships between classes, the use of synthetic notations and the consistent application of citation order are all to be found in the revisions of non-faceted classifications more widely used today.

This chapter covers the work of Ranganathan and Henry Bliss, and shows how this pioneering work on faceted classification, in time, stimulated the UK Classification Research Group. They established a substantial body of theory through the published works of Brian Vickery, Eric Coates, Douglas Foskett, Jack Mills, Derek Austin and others.

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The final chapter, which is entitled Managing Classification, is less rewarding, and I would welcome an expansion of this section in any future edition or revision.

For example, the paragraph on the cost of classification lacks detail.
Certainly, downloading published records is generally thought to be cheaper than providing original cataloguing.

But what if there are no records available to download? This is true of film archives, or large mixed-media collections.

More analysis on the cost and implications of lowering classification standards, or not providing them at all, would have been welcome.

The glossary, which concludes the book, is excellent.

This is a book which treats its subject and its potential readership seriously. The author pays proper regard both to the history and development of classification theory, and the practicalities of application.

I would strongly recommended it to any librarian, novice or experienced, who is required to classify, or simply has an interest in how classification schemes came to be. 4/5
★★★★

Olwen Terris
Former Chief Cataloguer
National Film and Television Archive

No Cilip/Neilsen Reference Awards but Some Worthy Material

It is unfortunate that in 2004 there were no CILIP/Neilsen Reference Awards. This was a shame, for the awards played a significant role in the development of high quality electronic and print media.

While the CILIP Marketing Department concentrated its efforts for 2004 on recruiting new members, it is to be hoped that at some point in the future they will be able to join together with the special interest groups involved in the awards, and reinstate what is a prestigious event in the information services calendar.

However, high-quality publications are still appearing, and this review looks at three CD publications which would have been considered medium-to-strong contenders in the awards, had there been any.

SIBELIUS INSTRUMENTS, from Sibelius Software, is the first to be reviewed in this issue of MmIT. Essentially, it is a specialised encyclopedia of musical instruments, complete with text, pictures and sounds.

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It is also more than that, for included in the accompanying well written and illustrated Guide are sets of lesson plans for use in teaching.

Sibelius Instruments claims to have been developed to

help you explore the sounds, characteristics and playing techniques of Western musical instruments from the 18th century to the present day, and how to write for these instruments. Sibelius Instruments is also an interactive guide to the orchestras, bands and ensembles in which these instruments play.

Despite its catholic approach, Sibelius Instruments works well. It can be utilised at a basic level, and the user can explore, easily and interactively, each individual instrument within each group.

A carefully chosen sound sequence is attached for each instrument, and this is long enough for the recognition and understanding of the techniques used. Many screens show the notation as well as the sound.

For more musically-aware users, the introductory screen for each group of instruments has not only clickable pictures of the instrument, but also an index to concise sections on writing for that group of instruments, with many sound sequences illustrating the particular technique being discussed. There are also recommended listening lists within the Orchestra section.

Navigation around the disc is simple. As well as being able to click on graphics and text headings, a navigation bar at the bottom of the screen changes to reflect the particular section of the work in use at the time, and makes the exploration of the site effective and easy.

The third section of the disc contains a number of quizzes, which can be set at different levels. These are not only good fun and educational, but salutary.

Loading is straightforward, although it is necessary to key in the serial number of the disc and download Quicktime Player 6 as part of the process, even if Quicktime is already installed. There is also an uninstall button. Curiously, the process placed a Quicktime icon on the desktop, but not a Sibelius Instruments icon – I had to do that manually, although the Guide suggests it should be automatic. There is no print facility incorporated in the programme, but this can be done by taking screen shots from the programme.

The price initially seems a little high at £105, but thinking about the work which had to be done to produce this disc and the preparation of the sound sequences, it is, perhaps, not unreasonable.

The work was created by Michael Avery, who also wrote the guide, and a fine job he made of them both. This is an excellent disc, which will appeal at many levels, from the musically uninitiated to the serious musician. It certainly should have a place in all school and higher education libraries, and is worthy of consideration by the public library sector as well.

There are other musical CD-ROMs in the same series from Sibelius Software, whose website is at www.sibelius.com. 5/5
★★★★★

A Medieval Vision

THIS IS THE THIRD AND FINAL DISC in the series The Visual Culture of Wales (see image above), part of the "most comprehensive survey of the visual culture of Wales ever undertaken."

The first disc came in the top three of the Cilip Neilsen Awards for 2001, the second won in 2002. At the time I said that "this is the most mature multimedia CD-ROM publication I have encountered", and I wondered how disc three would fare, especially as funding was particularly difficult to raise.

However, Medieval Vision does not disappoint, and maintains the standard achieved in this series.

Content is accessed from the disc itself, and not copied onto the hard disc, but this does not hinder the user in any way. There is an icon for Windows users and two for Mac users, and these open the disc.

The disc begins with yet another beautiful opening sequence – who says CD-ROMs cannot be as beautiful as books? The now-familiar opening screen explaining how to navigate the disc appears, and the icons at the bottom are still a little small, but perfectly adequate and user-friendly.

A pleasing sound track of specially recorded medieval music accompanies the initial screens throughout.

Visual Journeys through the period consist of attractive screens containing multiple pictures and text, and each picture can be enlarged up to full screen. The journeys go through a series of themes on the topics of Practice, Patronage and Ideas.

Sound clips, often quotations, are included with a number of screens, and a description of the lip appears as the mouse hovers over the relevant icon.

Moving the pointer over the opening screen of The Time Gallery brings up panels which lead into different sections of the gallery. Each section proceeds as a multiple image slide show with sound commentaries. Themes include The Raglan Frieze and The Celtic Revival, and there are multiple storylines within each.

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Much of the commissioned photography was by Charles and Patricia Aithie, and the photographs and images, with St. Pabo's Anglesey shown above, total over 1000.

They are all of the highest quality, both photographically and in terms of reproduction on full screen. The Ardagh Chalice is a good example.

The disc also contains the full text of the original book by Peter Lord, and here each image on the page can be enlarged. Galleries of images arranged by date and place can be entered by clicking the appropriate spot on a map of Wales, and a Glossary and Bibliography are also to be found.

Useful icons can be used to print or save the screen as a file, and the disc comes with very flexible conditions of use. The production team is to be congratulated for the thought and imagination which has gone into the overall design and content of this series.

It is difficult to see how these discs could have been improved. The Visual History of Wales remains, in my experience, the best produced and most beautiful electronic publication currently available, and yet, sadly, it has attracted little attention outside Wales.

It is a model for all electronic publishers.

It is also difficult to see how this disc would not, once again, have stood an excellent chance of winning the Reference Awards for 2004, had there been one and had it been submitted.

I recommend that all academic and major public libraries should purchase this series in the certainty that it will educate in the best possible way, and hopefully inspire others to produce discs of the same high standard. 5/5
★★★★★

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D-Rom: an Interactive CD-ROM

DRUGSCOPE IS A REGISTERED CHARITY which claims to be the "UK's leading independent centre of expertise on drugs".

The CD contains D-ROM, an interactive multimedia drug encyclopedia aimed at KS 3&4 students, and those out of school and belonging to youth clubs and other groups.
The disc also contains a number of .pdf articles and weblinks to various organisations.

The cover has well written, easy-to-follow instructions for using D-ROM from the disc itself or for copying it to a hard drive. However, it is necessary to follow these instructions exactly, or the hard disc version will not work properly.

Basically, the procedure involves copying and pasting the contents to the hard drive, rather than loading the content in the usual way. Uninstalling the disc can only be achieved by manually deleting the D-ROM folder, and there has to be a better way of installing and uninstalling than this.

Copying the content to the hard drive only gives access to D-ROM itself, and not to the .pdf articles or the weblinks, which still have to be viewed from the disc.

The disc has a musical accompaniment, but that hardly describes the rather awful, nondescript background soundtrack, which, to be fair, may have been taken from non-copyright music which was appropriate for a publishing charity to use.

Even so, in this respect the best button on the screen is the Mute Loudspeaker, which I think could probably be operated very early on in D-ROM.

Nor is the disc particularly interactive, apart from the game which is provided in one of the sections.

Now to the good points, and there are many. The screens are attractive and well designed, and much thought has been given to making the disc as user-friendly as it could possibly be.

After the title, the opening screen uses obvious headings and drop down menus to lead to the desired subject. The main headings on this screen – Learn and Lookup – take the user to the relevant parts of the encyclopedia.

Ask opens a set of commonly asked questions arranged by category, with answers. Play brings up a game in which Toby and Lucy attempt to avoid drugs. Search offers a word search facility at several levels, while History keeps a record of where the user has been, making it easy for steps to be retraced.

It does take a few moments to realise how to use each subject screen, but it quickly becomes apparent that clicking the highlighted panels produces more information. It would have been helpful if the panels had visible headings, rather than appearing as the mouse arrow passed over them, but some of the target users might prefer it this way, and perhaps this is where the interactivity comes in.

With white script on a black background, the initial text which comes up for each entry in the encyclopedia is somewhat small and difficult to read, but can be enlarged and reduced as required. The use of a better colour combination would have been beneficial, but linking to associated screens is easy.

While telling it as it is, the actual tone of the text is neutral. It accepts that people use drugs, and presents both sides of drug taking. The downside is clearly portrayed, and D-ROM indicates some steps which can be taken to alleviate the negative affects. Bearing in mind Drugscope's target audience, I feel the level is right.

Also in the programme, but not available if it is copied to the hard disc, are six .pdf sections of drug education resources. These include a set of School Projects, magazines and articles about drugs, and guidance for schools. They are intended for a different target audience and are probably best kept separate.

There are also four web links to DfES, Drugscope, The Brit Trust, who provided funding for the disc, and Talk to Frank. This last is an opportunity, as it suggests, to talk about drugs issues.

Apart from my initial constructive criticisms, this is a well designed and useful disc. It should be available in all schools and other locations frequented by young people, who will, as I did, learn from it.

It will also provide a resource for those who have to educate the target audience, and who might sometimes have differing attitudes to drugs, and come from a different generation. It should provide the necessary basis for informed discussion on the subject.

Overall, this was an impressive publication, with some minor design problems which can be corrected in the second edition. 4/5
★★★★

Dr Anthony Hugh Thompson, Chair, Electronic Publications Panel, CILIP/Neilsen Reference Awards
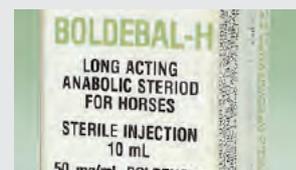
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Digital Asset Management With Fotostation Pro 5.1

Ken Cheetham, Learning Resources Advisor, UWIC

A number of these reviews, over the last year or so, have dealt with image gathering and digitising. I have not really looked at storage yet, as most IT support units would be able to advise on the range and suitability of the different storage media available.

Before digital, storage for me meant a collection of negative files, with each sheet of film annotated with details of when and where the shots were taken, sometimes who or what, and occasionally for whom.

Figure 1: The Browser Window

I still have all those source materials, and they are cross-indexed, in a very simple way, to the packets of prints which came back from the laboratory with them. It is of course all too easy to mislay a print once removed from its packet, and for it to end up in the wrong place.

Just in case anyone is wondering, I have not yet embarked on the task of creating digital versions of all my earlier work, and I think sometimes that I might just dump it instead.

That, however, is not an option for an archivist, a slide librarian or a media manager in a commercial design studio. All of these people will undoubtedly at some time need to digitise their media stock, as it will almost certainly be required in a digital form for future use.

Meanwhile, new media will be gathered, and almost inevitably this will be in digital format also.

Seen overall, this total stock of digitised material will not just contain still photographs, but may also encompass individual designs, samples of textures, 3D models, animated sequences, audio and even video clips and text.

These will all be valuable assets and will need careful management if they are to serve their purpose. I suggest that to this end a Digital Asset Management system, or DAM as they are known, must be acquired.

I have, over a number of years, investigated various media library packages, including digital, only to conclude, with colleagues from the University library and other media specialists, that they were unwieldy, difficult to learn and to use, and not after all real value for money, and this last was almost always a valid consideration.

I was, therefore, particularly interested to hear of a relatively new DAM system, and to be invited to review a newly released version of the software.
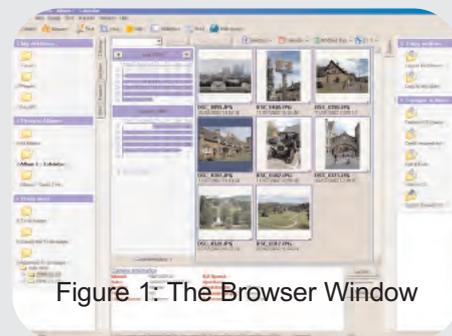
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I should say first, that this package is not intended for those casual users who wish to keep their happy snaps at their fingertips; it is seen at its best, perhaps, where media is centrally stored on a server, enabling all the digital files in the database to be shared across an intranet.

FotoStation Pro allows for the acquisition of new media files, as well as searching new and existing stock. It allows colour correction and enhancement of images and is PhotoShop-compatible in writing IPTC (International Press and Telecommunications Council) text.
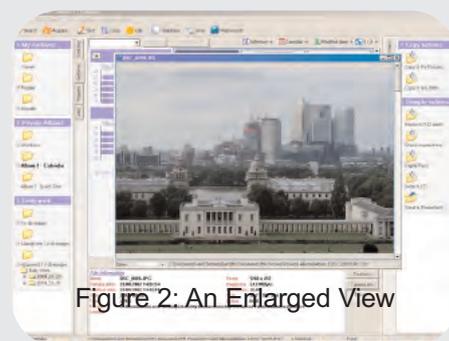

Figure 2: An Enlarged View

This is used, for example, in creating standard references for international abbreviations, or data fields for describing images. It is a powerful organiser, able to sort files by attributes, similarity of images or textual content.

It can create and organise custom views and archives, and permits dragging and dropping files to make custom arrangements, or even to place them into external packages such as PowerPoint, with automatic cropping features for resizing. Files selected in the Image View window can be seen as a slide show at the click of a radio button.

FotoStation also facilitates the organisation of media files into projects, so that material of different types from different sources can be collected and shared across a network. All of these and other search functions are helped by the clear and tidy front window.

FotoStation's browser window is made up of three columns. Via its tabs, the left hand panel allows the selection of Desktop, Archives, Projects and Jobs – the File sources – while the right panel shows sets of Actions. The central panel is Image View, and, beneath it, a separate section shows three buttons for Text info, Camera info and File info.

Figure 2 shows that the Archive tab in the left side column is active and that Album 1 – Calendar is highlighted. Double clicking on a picture in the collection opens it as an enlarged view in a separate window, not an unusual aspect to anyone even slightly familiar with an image-editing package. Familiarity is a useful feature of this package: its learning curve is not too steep.

File information can be seen in the section under the Image View panel. Name, camera date, date modified, file size, type, full path to location on the server, pixel dimensions and more are all listed. Double clicking on the image will enlarge it, and a hand appears indicating the option of moving the image around in the frame, allowing closer inspection of different areas. The Actions in the right hand column are configurable, so new procedures can be created for specific purposes, or default actions can be amended.

Actions allow the automation of time-consuming operations, such as batch processing; it may be necessary to resize a large number of photographs from a number of different folders, or sources, for inclusion into a project such as a PowerPoint presentation. This will be easier and less time consuming with the Action facility.

The process of acquiring and selecting all the images needed for conversion in the Image View panel, and carrying out the conversion, is simple. It is even possible to do this as part of the Acquire process, and so speeding it up further. The sequence is:

Acquire - Create New Job/Add to Existing - Select Source - Select File Types - Select Destination

The destination can be Send Files to an Action. Checking the Jobs tab in the left hand panel shows the collection of images resized as commanded. The original files have remained in their source folders, unchanged in any way.

These brief details have, I hope, shown how useful and how sympathetic FotoStation can be to the media specialists who wish to manage their own collections. Users in media libraries and large design houses will have different priorities and needs.

Foremost of these may well be search features, and FotoStation excels in this area. A simple text entry in the search box will give quick results. Advanced searches can be conducted by file attributes such as file date, size, colour K/Grayscale etc) file type (image, audio, PDF for example).

There are other useful features. Raw format files imported from a digital camera can be transferred directly into an archive, and converted, using the Action facility, to an industry-standard format such as EPS, JPEG or TIFF.

Figure 3: Search by Date

File captions can be created by customising the text editor to include any required fields, with the layout and available fields tailored according to the file type. Text templates can be created or imported, including IPTC templates from external files. The text editor can also make use of the auto-complete and spell-checking capabilities of Microsoft Word.

Files can be sorted by a number of attributes, usually by file name, modified date and camera date. However, more than 70 options are available from the drop-down menu, using the radio button to the left of the search button.

There are a number of supplied print templates, but users can also create their own. The number of images, rows and columns is variable according to need, and a logo can be added.

Offline storage is available, as FotoStation will index the contents of a CD or enable the archiving of the contents of any type of removable media. The offline archive is fully searchable, and the application prompts the retrieval of the correct media when the original file is required.

From the foregoing, it will be clear that FotoStation PRO 5.1 has an eminently customisable interface, and that this is another of its great strengths. Everything can be managed in an individual way to suit the environment in which it is used, and it has excellent search tools.

A colleague from the University's library observed that compliance with the necessary standards for resource-sharing is crucial, and this is incorporated in the software. In some applications, such as medical services, this implies multi-user access to large electronic databases, for example of patient records, and appropriate mapping of data fields.

She also added that the application developers are obviously used to considering huge quantities of images from the news and publishing industries they also serve, so FotoStation looks to be a robust system, able to support multiple users.

Heavy users, especially, will be challenged to find such an uncomplicated and effective Digital Asset Management application. Along with my colleagues, I was pleased to see so many features one would be looking for, and I recommend the application. FotoStation PRO 5.1 is available at a RRP of £450 excluding VAT. Contact: FotoWare Ltd., 16 Midland Court, Oakham Rutland LE15 6RA
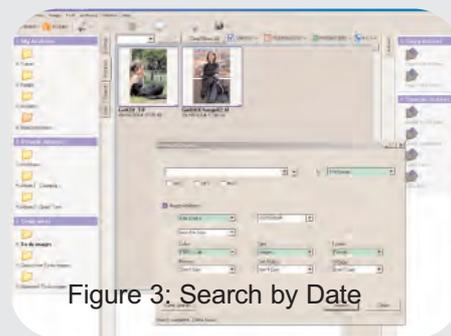
Film & Video

bfi BNFVC Film Education MovieMail
Team Video

JACQUES TATI'S MON ONCLE is the first release in this issue. A multi-award-winning feature, Mon Oncle is a satire dissecting the modern world. In it, Monsieur Hulot goes to Paris and Tati develops a sharp comparison of Hulot's old-fashioned lifestyle and the high-tech modern life of his relatives, the Arpels.

The outcome of the family's determination to find a wife and a job for Hulot form the basis of a "masterpiece of design and symmetry and of technically brilliant gags". The ending is true to Tati's vision of the modern world as a place full of confusion, but also of charm and humanity.

Mon Oncle was filmed between September 1956 and February 1957, and used three locations: in Paris, the old suburb of Saint-Maur where Hulot's ramshackle house was created in the main square; in Nice where the Arpel's house was a set in the Victorine studios; and in Creteil, just outside Paris, for the wasteland between the two main locations.

The film was shot in two versions – Mon Oncle and My Uncle, and the main dialogue of the latter was dubbed into English. The new release on DVD and VHS contains the French version with English subtitles. DVD extras include the:

Original trailer and trailers from Mon Oncle and Playtime
Optional subtitles for the hearing-impaired
Notes and director's biography by film historian Philip Kemp

LES VACANCES DE M. HULOT is set in a sleepy French coastal resort which is seasonally disrupted by fun-loving holidaymakers. At the centre of the chaos is the unforgettable character of the eccentric Hulot. His long-legged, bouncy gait, body leaning forward at a gravity-defying angle, the long-stemmed, jutting pipe and the too-short trousers – all mark him out. bfi's video of this film is their best-seller, with this release the first on DVD in the UK.

The film was shot during the summer of 1952, in the small Breton resort of Saint-Marc-sur-mer – chosen for its unspoilt and unmodernised charm.

Tati mainly cast non-professionals, with other actors from the music hall. He also attached much significance to the sound, saying "it remains for me to 're-shoot' each scene, this time not for the images but for the sound." DVD extras include:

Interview with film maker Richard Lester
Original trailer and trailers from Mon Oncle and Playtime
Optional subtitles for viewers with hearing impairment
Notes and director's biography by film historian Philip Kemp

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JOUR DE FÊTE is yet another of Jacques Tati's award-winning features, this time a dazzling blend of satire and slapstick, which provided early evidence of his talent. It is an exposé of the modern obsession with speed and efficiency, set amidst the rural surroundings of a tiny French village.

Tati plays the postman, François – a buffoon who tries to introduce rural France to the benefits of the efficiencies brought by the US postal system.

For this DVD version, the film has been restored to its original delicate colour. It was first released in black and white, but was also shot in Thomsoncolor, which was a then untested process. In 1946, Tati had already made a short film on the same subject, and this was to some extent recycled, with almost all the gags repeated the following year in Jour de fête.

Nevertheless, Tati revealed his "endless inventiveness and created an affectionate, gently mocking tribute to a vanishing way of life". Jour de fête aroused little interest amongst French distributors until after its London première in March 1949. It went on to win a prize for the "best scenario" at the Venice Film Festival, and in 1950 followed this with the "Grand Prix du cinema français". DVD extras include:

> Original trailers for Les Vacances de M. Hulot, Mon Oncle and Playtime
> Original trailer and trailers from Mon Oncle and Playtime
> Optional subtitles for viewers with hearing impairment
> Notes and director's biography by film historian Philip Kemp

Further information on the *bfi* videos are available from Jill Reading at the *bfi*, on 020 7957 4759, by email to: jill.reading@bfi.org.uk or by going to www.bfi.org.uk

PABST'S TWO VERSIONS OF THE THREEPENNY OPERA have been released by *bfi* Video. It was common practice at the time to release films in different language versions using the same sets but different casts. Few versions of this practice survive, and the twin films of The Threepenny Opera are an extant example.

Released on DVD, Disc 1 contains the German version and Disc 2 contains the French version called L'Opéra de Quat'sous. The story of Mackie "The Knife" is well known, as are Brecht's social satire and Weill's music.
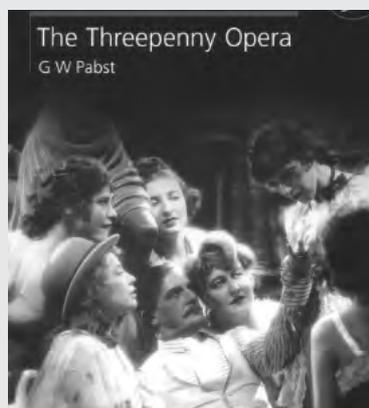
The production was controversial, with both Brecht and Weill suing the production company over their alleged distortion of their 1928 Berlin stage success. Brecht's action failed, but Weill successfully won damages.

The studio sets were said to be the most elaborate created in Germany at that time, and although some of the play's most biting satire is missing, there is a strong political stance. The French version is lighter in tone.

The male and female leads also contrast sharply, with the French Mackie (Albert Préjean) lacking the menace of Rudolph Foster in the German version. The female leads also differ in style and interpretation. Later devotees of James Bond will recognise Lotte Lenya's earlier role before she starred as Rosa Kleb in From Russia With Love.

There are notes by Philip Kemp and a biography of G. W. Pabst, and both versions have English subtitles for £19.99. The release date was early December.

FILM EDUCATION HAS DISTRIBUTED A POSTER detailing a variety of activities, and an interactive educational cd-rom based on the hit children's film Shark Tale(below right). The production offers an interesting and lively teaching aid for Key Stage 2, targeting studies in Literacy, ICT, Music, Art and Design and Science.

The story is one of an underwater world ruled by sharks . . . and Oscar, a "fast-talking little fish and famous 'Sharkslayer'". The voices are those of Will Smith, Jack Black, Robert de Niro and Renee Zellweger.

The cd-rom contains study material and clip activities which use the themes and issues from the film as a basis for further study in the key learning areas of

> Science
> Art and Design
> Music

The material is designed for children aged between seven and 11 years old, and has a number of very useful features:

Active Storyboard allows pupils to deconstruct and recreate a scene from the film, using aspects of film language.
Music Editor is a feature which creates background music derived from the film soundtrack and can be used to accompany pupils' own poems.
By using the Colour Palette facility, pictures can be created through experimenting with colours from the film.
Food Chain provides an interactive food chain which helps pupils investigate real sea creatures.

There are links between the material and the English and Scottish curricula, and the presentation itself is full of fun.

LEMONY SNICKET'S SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS, (right) starring Jim Carrey, Meryl Streep and Jude Law, is based on a series of best-selling books of the same name. It is accompanied by a wallchart which supports a wide range of activities and exercises.

The books document the misfortunes of the Baudelaire children, and the worksheets include

> The Brave Baudelaires
> Great Grammar and Perfect Punctuation
> Ingenious Inventions
> Diabolic Disguises
> Money Madness

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE (below left) is available with a study guide. This particular version is a period adaptation starring Joseph Fiennes, Jeremy Irons, Al Pacino and John Sessions.

Released on December 13th, the age range is from GCSE to A Level. The study guide considers the play's key characters, the relationships and the crucial dramatic element in the bond scene set in the Duke's palace.

The guide is designed to encourage students to develop their own view of the play and its characters, and then consider their conclusions in the light of director Michael Radford's version on the DVD.

There are a number of activities to test knowledge and critical skills, as well as develop ideas about the use of language and the conventions of presenting Shakespeare on stage and screen. Key characters, settings and scenes are analysed, and there are some group activities.

KING ARTHUR (right) is Film Education's award-winning CD-ROM for schools. It has won the BAFTA Children's Award – the British Academy Children's Film and Television Awards in association with the LEGO company. The competition was fierce, with entries from both the BBC and Channel 4. Over 16,000 History, English and Media Studies teachers received a free CD-ROM for evaluation, and the feedback from this exercise was excellent.

The King Arthur CD-ROM is rich in topics for the study of a number of several curriculum areas at GCSE and A Level. Overall, the presentation invites students to analyse documents and images from a variety of sources in order to answer the question "Was there a real King Arthur?"

For students of History, The King Arthur project encourages students to apply the skills they have developed to the analysis of primary and secondary historical sources.

The English curriculum benefits from a number of the features on the CD-ROM, including interactive activities which allow students to examine medieval and Celtic literature.

The CD also offers the opportunity to compare literary representation from different periods, as well as comparing fiction and non-fiction texts.

The production also has something to offer Media Studies Students, including

    Aspects of film language
    Issues of narrative
    Representation
    The commercial marketing of films

The project received support from historical consultant John Mathews. The film was distributed by Buena Vista International (BVI), who provided access to exclusive materials and resources. The InteractiveMedia Department of Picture Production Company (PPC) also developed a skilful interpretation of the educational brief, resulting in engrossing interactive educational tasks.

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THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW is a production which is available on CD-Rom, and also VHS/DVD Video. It is a release of the natural disaster film, which explores the catastrophic consequences of global climate change.

Aimed at Media and Film Studies students, the age range is GCSE and A Level.

MOVIEMAIL FILM FIRST list some interesting new releases in their October/November 2004 catalogue. The Return (see section title image) won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival, and is an excellent example of current Russian cinema output.

The plot is deceptively simple: the return of a father to his family after an absence of 12 years is the impetus for an examination of some of the key themes which are prevalent in Russian cinema:

> Father-son relationships
> The behaviour and character of the father as a metaphor for the old USSR
> A study of masculinity and the rites of passage

As the story develops, the father interacts with his two sons – one willingly, the other a reluctant participator – and the father-sons relationships are examined as one son rebels against the stern patriarch. The role of the mother in this is minimal, as she appears only in the opening scenes.

Although there are a few loose ends left at the end of the film, the production is effective, especially in creating the air of "unanswered mystery" and the insecurity of the protagonists in a "potentially sinister situation."

OSAMA (left) is the story of a young Afghan girl whose father died in the Kabul war, her uncle in the Russian war. To help the family when the Taliban close the hospital where her mother works, Osama is disguised as a boy so that she can earn some money.

The story is that of her struggle to maintain the pretence, while battling with her fear and fatalism. Some scenes can also be viewed as symbolic of Afghanistan's present situation.

This is the first film to be made in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban.

To order the two films above, or to obtain copies of MovieMail's catalogue, ring **0870 264 9000** or go to www.moviemail-online.co.org

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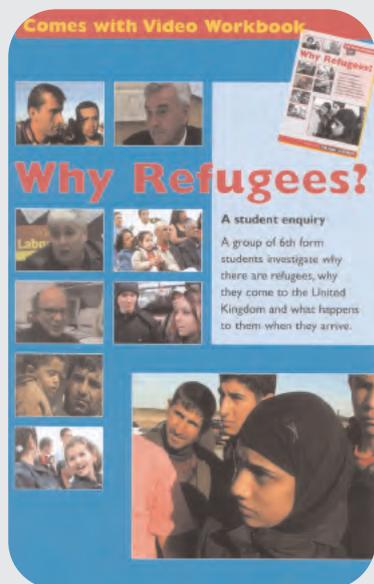
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TEAM VIDEO's latest production is Why Refugees? This video is an investigation of the refugee question in the UK, and takes the form of an enquiry pursued by 6th form students. The issues they explore are:

Why are there refugees?
Why do they come to the UK?
What happens to them when they arrive?

The video pack is based on interviews with politicians, lobby organisations, lawyers, journalists, historians and some refugees themselves.

The answers to the questions posed by the students provide a wide range of stimulating views which address the key issues clearly.

The pack is made up of eleven units accompanied by a workbook containing activity sheets which are designed for photocopying. Each of the units can stand alone if teachers wish to explore only one issue among the number covered, but it is recommended that Unit 1 – The Refugees' Story – is viewed and worked through first.

There are a series of Extension Activities, which can be used to develop a range of issues which recur throughout the presentation, and at the back of the workbook a Directory of Research Resources includes useful contact addresses and websites which will provide support during research. Why Refugees? is relevant to a number of curriculum areas including

Citizenship
Religious Education and Moral Studies
English

All three areas together contribute to an improved understanding of underlying issues, such as social education topics on human rights, the key moral issues of sanctuary, inclusion and tolerance, and the role of the media.

This last assesses the functions of the media in reporting refugee and asylum issues, analysing bias, distortion and the influence of the press on refugees themselves, the general public, and politicians.

In some issues, experts such as Maeve Sherlock, the Chief Executive of the Refugee Council, and Susie Symes of the Museum of Immigration and Diversity are used to provide explanations – for example on the history of refugees arriving in the UK .

Students also interview Peter Hitchen and ask him about the standpoint he takes in his articles for the Mail on Sunday, while other journalists explain why the popular press can display editorial hostility. Most of the students involved are studying for A levels.

Why Refugees? can be obtained from Team Video at 102 Canalot Studios, 222 Kensal Road, London W1O 5BN

Film and Video From the BNFVC by Maureen Brown

Adhiambo – Born in the Evening [Denmark/UK/Germany]
The Royal Anthropological Institute, Video Sales, 50 Fitzroy Street, London, W1T 5BT. Tel 020 7387 0455; Fax 020 7388 8817; email: film@therai.org.uk
Purchase only £20 + £1.5 p&p + VAT. Filmmakers and anthropologists Ruth J Prince and Paul Wenzel Geissler. VHS, 68 mins. In the language of the Luo in western Kenya, Adhiambo means "the one born in the evening". The film follows NyaSeme, a married mother and grandmother in her late 30s, during the last month of her pregnancy and through the first weeks of her newborn daughter's life. The first part of the film focuses on everyday life in NyaSeme's home, as well as on the work of the anthropologists, who themselves are expecting a child. The second part follows the various small illnesses through which the child goes, as NyaSeme employs the herbal resources of the bush surrounding the home as well as those from the government dispensary. Simultaneously, the anthropologists' son falls ill and receives various forms of medical treatment. The film is a personal account of a woman's life, motherhood, children and the maintenance of bodily health in rural western Kenya, as well as an insight into the nature of ethnographic fieldwork.

Animal Tragic
LUX Distribution, 18 Shacklewell Lane, London, E8 2EZ. Tel 020 7503 3980; Fax 020 7503 1606; email: info@lux.org.uk
Hire only. Filmmaker: Tim MacMillan. VHS, 7 mins. An unsettling take on the natural history of our contemporary urban environment, recreating three reported incidents where humans and "friendly" animals interact badly – a postman kills a dog, a dog attacks a child, a horse kills a cyclist.

The Big Stuff: David Grist Balloon Modelling, Vol 9
Magick Enterprises, 82 Broad Street, Sheffield, S2 5TG. Tel 0114 276 0482; Fax 0114 272 6420; email: sales@magick2go.uk. Purchase only. VHS, 98 mins. David Grist demonstrates several large balloon models, including a large bi-plane, a racing car, a vintage car and a motorcycle.

Beating the Bullies
Truevision, 49a Oxford Road South, London, W4 3DD. Tel 020 8742 7852; Fax 020 8742 7853; email: jules@truevisiontv.com
Purchase only. VHS or DVD, 40 mins. Shown on BBC1 in their One Life series in October 2003, this film, made by a team behind Eyes of a Child and Kids Behind Bars, enters the lives of a group of eight year olds struggling with friendship, isolation and bullying. It tells the moving and uplifting story of the children of Heatherbrook Primary School as they try to keep peace in their own playground. Audience: private viewing or educational use.

Bee-keeping for Beginners and Old Hands with John Furzey
Countryside Audio and Visual, PO Box 7206, Tadley, Basingstoke, RG26 5YR. Tel 01256 850142; Fax 01256 851591; email: info@countryside-video.co.uk
For purchase only £21.95 inc p&p. VHS, 90 mins. John Furzey started working on the commercial bee farm of A W Gale of Marlborough in 1949. In 1967 John moved to work at Clapper Hill Bee Farm, Ramsdell, with the late David Rowse and since 1991 he has continued at Clapper Hill on his own. With a lifetime of experience, John shares his knowledge with viewers and passes on very practical, informative and educational material to help beginners and old hands alike.

Crime and Deviance: Key Issues in Sociology
Halovine, 28 Alisa Road, Twickenham, TW1 1QW. Tel 020 8892 2445; Fax 020 8744 9929; email: mail@halovine.com
Purchase only £41.13 inc VAT.
VHS, 42 mins. Focuses on some of the main approaches and developments in the sociology of crime and anti-social behaviour, from Durkheim through sub-cultural theories to New Right Realism, and sets them in their historical contexts. There is also a section on social control and situational theories of crime prevention. Audience: sociology students and teachers.

Globalisation – the Haves and Have Nots [UK/USA/Australia]
Uniview Worldwide, 103 Banks Road, West Kirby, Wirral, CH48 0RB. Tel 0151 625 3453; Fax 0151 625 3707;
email: sales@uniview.co.uk
Purchase only £19.99 + VAT. Produced by Journeyman Pictures in association with Films for Humanities & Science and ABC Australia. VHS, 40 mins. Focusing on the World Trade Organisation's 1999 meeting in Seattle, USA, this documentary examines the development of the post-World War II IMF and the WTO's current emphasis on free rather than fair trade.

HIV/AIDS and Livelihoods: Experiences in Mainstreaming from Malawi [Netherlands]
Oxfam Publishing, BEBC Distribution, PO Box 1496, Parkstone, Poole, BH12 3YD. Tel 01202 712933; Fax 01202 712930; email: Oxfam@bebc.co.uk Purchase only. £11.89 inc VAT, stock code: 56390. Produced by Oxfam International. VHS, approx 25 mins. This video introduces some of the realities and complexities of the work of "mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in development programmes". In 2000, the Joint Oxfam Programme in Malawi took a strategic decision to increase its understanding of HIV/AIDS and of the impact of the pandemic at a programme and policy level. As a result, the Shire Highlands Sustainable Livelihoods Programme set out to ensure that the most vulnerable in communities are not left out of development processes. The video captures some of the interventions devised in this programme in Malawi. Audience: those working in the field of devel-

opment, especially agriculture, particularly international and national NGOs and government departments.

Hunting in the Borders
Countryside Audio and Visual, as above. Purchase only VHS £26 inc p&p or DVD £20 inc p&p. VHS, 90 mins. Follows a number of fox hunts in the Borders region of England and Scotland. In order of appearance they are: The College Valley and North Northumberland; The Percy Foxhounds; The Newcastle Beagles; The Morpeth Hunt; and The Border Hunt.

An Introduction to Pyrography with Lionel Broome
Mirade Studios, The Shrublands, Bell Lane, Fosdyke, PE20 2BS. Tel 0800 970 6159; email: siv@miradestudios.co.uk
Purchase only £14.99. VHS, 58 mins. Lincolnshire pyrographer Lionel Broome, who has over ten years experience in the craft, covers the basics of how to transfer subject matter to a wood blank, using the tools and doing test burns. The two students featured in the video had never tackled pyrography before, and the purpose of the production is to show how simple it is for anyone to start making pyrographic works.

The Millennium Ribble Link
VideoActive, Mill House Studios, Higher Wych, Malpas, SY14 7JR. Tel 01948 780564; Fax 01948 780566;
email: enquiries@videoactive.co.uk
Purchase only VHS £14.99 or DVD £21.99. 75 mins. Tells the story of the Millennium Ribble Link – a new canal linking the Leeds/Liverpool and Lancaster canals – including early designs, a walk along the proposed route in 1999 before construction started, and a detailed chronological record of the entire construction process from November 2000 through to the official opening by the Rt. Hon Margaret Beckitt MP in September 2002.

Old Enough to Know Better
Pilton Video, 30 Ferry Road Avenue, Edinburgh, EH4 4BA. Tel 0131 343 1151; Fax 0131 343 2820; email: info@piltonvideo.org
Purchase only. DVD, 10 mins or 29 mins. Documentary made with and by a diverse group of anti-war movement teenagers in Edinburgh. Over 20 young people were given DV camcorders to document their experience of the unprecedented events of March 2003, when thousands of pupils organised mass school walkouts and took to the streets to protest. The video documents the politicisation of young people on a scale not seen for 30 years or more in the UK and shows how, outraged by the politicians' false rhetoric and refusal to listen to the people, they decide to take matters into their own hands.

Personal Safety at Home and on the Road: Sixth Sense series
The Suzy Lamplugh Trust, PO Box 17818, London, SW14 8WW. Tel 020 8876 0305; Fax 020 8876 0891;
email: info@suzylamplugh.org
Purchase only £15 + p&p, product code: V17. VHS, approx 35 mins. Outlines the simple steps everyone can take to make themselves safer. Topics covered include: safety in the home; dealing with nuisance telephone calls; safety in the car – parking, driving, car maintenance and preparation; using a personal safety alarm.

Quick Cards in Encaustic Art
Arts Encaustic, Trem ar Dâf, Glogue, Pembrokeshire, SA36 0ED. Tel 01239 831401; Fax 01239 831767;
email: info@encasutic.com
Purchase only £14.90 inc VAT, code: 539200. VHS, 59 mins. Instructional video showing how to make greetings cards using a hot iron and wax block encaustic art colours. Michael Bossom explains the whole process, from how to melt the wax on the iron to mounting.

Thai Hilltribe Embroideries: Surviving Traditions
Ends of the Earth, PO Box 31, Hampton, TW12 2NW. Tel 020 8707 0523; Fax 020 8707 4931;
email: janet@endsoftheearth.co.uk
Purchase only £14.9, code: EOE009. Produced by Janet Willoughby. VHS, 53 mins. Shows in detail the embroideries of the six hill tribes of Northern Thailand and the costumes they adorn. Includes: a Karen blouse with seed emboidery, Yao trousers with horizontal/vertical stitch, a Lisu hat with stitched braids, a Lahu dress with patchwork panels, an Akha jacket with couched applique, Blue Hmong batik and applique and White Hmong reverse applique. Filmed in the villages of this beautiful mountain area.

Third World Debt – Drop it!
Jubilee Debt Campaign, The Grayston Centre, 28 Charles Square, London, N1 6HT. Tel 020 7324 4722; Fax 020 7324 4723;
email: info@jubileeebedtcampaign.org.uk
Purchase only £10. VHS, 15 mins. Part of the Citizenship curriculum, and aimed at young people, this is an educational video which explores the debt crisis, shows its impact on real people and makes the connections between personal debts in the UK and international debt. It aims to inspire action, and is accompanied by National Curriculum-linked lesson plans, games, quizzes and workshops that expand on the theme of debt. The video and support materials build on successful events at Birmingham's Young People's Parliament where local teenagers had to work out where to spend their country's annual budget, hampered by debt repayments of up to 15% of their GDP, natural disasters and unfair international trade rules.

What Can I Do?; The HIV/AIDs Ministry and Messages of Gideon Byamugisha
Strategies for Hope, c/o TALC, PO Box 49, St Albans, AL1 5TX. Tel 01727 853869; Fax 01727 846852; email: sfh@stratshope.org
Purchase only. VHS, 49 mins. A documentary on the life, works and experiences of Rev. Canon Gideon Byamugisha, an ordained minister in the Anglican Church and Canon of St Paul's Cathedral in Kampala, Uganda, and a protagonist in the fight against HIV/AIDs. Accompanied by a 48-page facilitator's guide. Audience: pastors, lay church leaders and religious sisters, theological seminaries, Bible schools, church congregations, church hospitals and health centres, NGOs and community-based organisations.

Wild Flowers in Watercolour
Teaching Art, The Society for All Artists, PO Box 50, Newark, NG23 5GY. Tel 0800 980 1123; Fax 01949 844051;
email: info@saa.co.uk Purchase only £17.99, members price £15.99. VHS, 60 mins. Artist Wendy Tait explains how to start painting wild flowers using watercolours. Introducing techniques such as negative painting, she shows the beginner how to paint daisies, dandelions and bluebells.

Items on the list are available direct from producers. The *bfi* National Library is at
www.bfi.org.uk/nationallibrary/

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Promethean Launches New Product Range

PROMETHEAN AV DISTRIBUTION has launched a new range of interactive boards, designed to provide a product which combines the quality and innovation of the Promethean brand with easily accessible interactive technologies.

The new product set, the Promethean PRESENTA range, has been available since before Christmas. The launch forms part of Promethean AV's new partner strategy following the rebranding of the Promethean Technologies Group's channel arm from TDS AV Distribution in November 2004.

The PRESENTA range includes the PRESENTA board and the PRESENTA pad. This latter is a wireless A5 graphics tablet designed for use either as a portable alternative to the interactive whiteboard, or as a complementary product for use in large group situations.

The two items of hardware come complete with Promethean's Px interactive software, and also with an upgrade path to Promethean ACTIVstudio or to ACTIVprimary software for users in the education sector who require more extensive curriculum based resources.

The range also includes PRESENTA prep, a plug-in A6 graphics tablet, which enables users to prepare flipchart material using interactive software on a PC.

Commenting on the launch of the new range, Promethean AV Distribution managing director, Steve Dracup, said: "As a Group, we identified a clear gap in the market for interactive solutions which give users in the mainstream corporate sector an effective way of presenting that is innovative, simple, and fun to use. Meanwhile, for the education market, the PRESENTA range represents a compelling, simple to use proposition backed by the strength of the Promethean brand."

Please visit www.prometheanworld.com/distribution or call 01254 676921

Mitsubishi's Latest Ultra-light Projector

MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC'S Visual Information Systems Division, a leading manufacturer of display products, has introduced its latest economical, fully featured projector, the SE2U, to its fully comprehensive range.

The ultra-portable SE2U weighs just 2.9kg, and boasts 1500 ANSI Lumens of brightness. This makes it suitable for most office, meeting or classroom applications. It also features a 2000:1 contrast ratio, which ensures that clear images are produced, with brighter whites and increased colour detail. In addition, a lamp life of 2500 hours (in eco-mode) makes this a cost-effective projector, for small businesses and the education sector.

Input connections include: one 15pin DSub socket for PC and Component video signals; one s-video input; one composite video input; one stereo mini-jack for audio signals; one RS232C connection for control of the projector from a PC.

The SE2U can also display video signals from VCRs or DVD players, enabling users to make versatile multimedia presentations. As with all Mitsubishi business models, the SE2U comes with a comprehensive three-year loan replacement warranty.

Single Search for National Health

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR HEALTH website now offers a single search environment which integrates all the information resources of 500 NHS library services across England. Live since January, the single search environment is one of the first services of the National Library for Health.

It is an NHS-wide initiative which is designed to achieve the goal of an integrated English health library. The single search environment is powered by FDI's ZPORTAL solution, which integrates NHS resources alongside published data and delivers the resource search engine.

The search engine provides an easy-to-use interface for new or experienced library users, offering them a choice of standard (keyword) or advanced searching (using Boolean terms).

Behind the scenes, the software searches across a variety of resources including websites, grey literature, physical resources and full text journals, making information retrieval quicker for time-poor clinicians or librarians. A new clinical answering service (the Primary Care Question Answering Service) is currently being trialled as part of the initiative.

It is hoped that the new features will attract new users to the online environment, and will also offer additional benefits to staff who currently use other NHS library services. The website is at www.library.nhs.uk/

New From Canon

CANON RECENTLY LAUNCHED a new flagship product for their LiDE range of scanners. The film-capable CanoScan LiDE 500F has a film adaptor unit, infrared Film Automatic Retouching and Enhancement technology for excellent quality 35mm enlargement. Available from next month, it will cost £129 including vat. Go to www.canon.co.uk

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Wireless Projector Technology From NEC

NEC HAVE ANNOUNCED THE launch of their first two advanced projectors to offer high speed 54 Mb wireless LAN connectivity. The new LT245 and LT265 projectors are three times faster than previous models and combine wireless technology with superior functionality, high brightness levels and a very lightweight portable design.

Both of the projectors feature simple transition between presentations at the touch of a button, and without the restriction of wires the LT245 and LT265 allow a more creative and dynamic display.

The LT245 and LT265 allow multiple presenters to connect into a wireless network and toggle between a variety of computer sources with ease. This removes the time and hassle that it takes to change the projector set-up in between presentations, allowing for smoother and less stilted delivery where more than one presentation is being given.

Both projectors are IEEE802.11g compatible and support 54Mbps WLAN technology.
This allows dynamic content streaming, giving users the ability to create and deliver a more lively presentation, with the inclusion of display animations and moving and dynamic media.
XGA images can be transferred in just one second.

The exceptional wireless capability of the new LT projectors allows greater interaction between the presenter and those in the audience. The presentation is not only broadcast to the projector, but users can also share files and interact with other wireless PCs in the vicinity.

Each individual is able to watch from the comfort of his or her laptop. Simeon Joseph, Product Manager for NEC's Business Equipment Division, commented:

> Wireless technology is an amazing resource for any presenter, no matter what the application. The LT245 and LT265 offer greater flexibility without any compromise on quality or functionality. Their lightweight and compact design makes them ideal for those needing to give presentations on the road or out of the usual meeting room environment.

The extensive functionality of the projectors also ensures outstanding quality no matter what the environment or what surface they are projecting onto. Auto keystone, Wall colour correction and 3D reform, which provide horizontal, vertical and diagonal keystone correction for perfect square images, make these models the perfect portable presentation devices.

NEC's geometric correction software will overcome obstacles in even the most difficult presentation environment, projecting onto curved and uneven surfaces. For further information go to www.nec.co.uk

New Inkjet Printer

CANON HAVE ALSO ANNOUNCED the launch of their ultra-stylish, compact Inkjet Printer, the PIXMA iP90 mobile photo and document printer. With capability to print a 4" x 6" borderless photo print in just 51 seconds, and 16 ppm A4 mono printing, the 4800 x 1200 dpi, 2 picolitre droplet size iP90 is designed to offer the best available high performance mobile solution for photo and document printing for the demanding creative user.

A PictBridge port allows direct connection and photo printing with any compliant digital camera or digital video camera, without the need for a PC.

Print performance is complemented with the sleek designer styling that has become synonymous with the PIXMA, sub-brand. At just 52mm thick, weighing only 1.8 kg and with a surface area less than the A4 sheets it can print, the iP90 is considerably smaller than competing models.

Canon's patented FINE (Full-photolithography Inkjet Nozzle Engineering) technology produces industry-leading photo quality printing, with print speeds comparable to many desktop printers, and of course offering true portability. The iP90 is compatible with Win98/Me/2000/XP and Mac OS X v10.2.1 or later. Find out more at www.canon.co.uk

Here Comes the Wedge

A REVOLUTIONARY NEW INVENTION in optics, which will lead to the production of energy efficient, low cost, high performance, large flat screens for information displays, educational displays and ultimately home cinema/TV, could soon be on the way.

CamFPD – a small Cambridge-based start-up company – have received an investment of £150,000 from NESTA (the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts) to help them develop a prototype of their Wedge® technology.

Applying well-known principles in a new way, the Wedge® concept will be the first technology to break the compromise between unit cost, unit size and shape which has been an immutable part of the displays industry until now. To date, displays have either been thin and expensive, or bulky and affordable.

The Wedge® technology allows an image from a normal digital video projector to be shown on a large flat, or slightly curved, panel of plastic or glass, by projection from the edge of the panel rather than from the front.

At about 2 cm thick, the resulting display screen is far thinner than a conventional television and will cost far less than comparable liquid crystal or plasma screens. Nor does the technology suffer from the ergonomic shortcomings of front projection systems which need to be able to project light to the screen without obstruction.

The display panel can be made of glass or plastic, either of which is readily and fully recyclable. This is in contrast to the components found in other large display technologies. Power consumption is also better, being about one third of a similar size LCD display, and an even smaller fraction of that used by a plasma screen.

Softlink Launches Oliver for Schools

SOFTLINK EUROPE HAS ANNOUNCED the launch of Oliver, the latest addition to its library management systems product range. Oliver will complement Softlink's existing products, Alice and Liberty3, which are still available and will continue to be improved and supported for many years to come.

Oliver has many unique characteristics, and can be purchased both as an upgrade from Alice and as a replacement for non-Softlink library management systems which are currently used in schools.

The product is aimed at people who are looking for a system with the following characteristics:

- A thin client solution, which imposes minimum demands on IT staff, does not overload the network, has no client software to roll out and allows browser access to all management and OPAC functions
- Installation within the school, operating over the existing network but also, if desired, with secure access from absolutely anywhere, using almost any type of computer (including MAC and Linux), and operation via an ASP arrangement
- A multi-site system, providing access to library information for students in remote school buildings or partner schools and other sites, all from one single system, with no complicated WAN software
- The capacity to allow other sites, or partner schools, to retain their own identity, manage their own collections, have the option to report on their own collections, or establish personal graphic screens for OPAC, while enjoying the benefits of one central library database
- Full-text library search facilities integrated with the school web site
- The inclusion of reading lists and course and lesson notes on web or intranet pages with links to a VLE

Softlink has designed Oliver to be extremely attractive to Librarians, to IT Managers and to Head Teachers. The system includes comprehensive software for acquisitions, budgeting, cataloguing, stocktake, archiving, circulation, borrower file, serials, interlibrary loan and system administration facilities. All its screens and forms are customisable by the user.

Oliver allows users to search any of the 1800 libraries in the world which are Z39.50 compliant. Softlink has also established a database of 8 million titles, updated on a weekly basis, which can be used for retrospective and current cataloguing.

Softlink would be pleased to visit schools and to discuss current and future library needs, as well as answer any other pertinent questions.
Contact: oliver@softlink.co.uk or add@softlink.co.uk or telephone 01993 883401.

Canon's Easy to Operate Camcorders

CANON HAVE ANNOUNCED THE LAUNCH of a new range of 800K pixel digital video cameras: the MV800 series. For buyers looking for simplicity and quality, the MV850i, MV830i, MV830 and MV800 combine Canon's easiest-ever operation with uncompromising build quality and precision optics.

Despite their tiny size (only 51mm thick and weighing just 430g), the digital video cameras feature a 2.4" colour LCD screen, and are powered with the same DIGIC-DV processor used to drive Canon's high end digital video cameras. Shooting and playback is very easy. Most key controls sit right beneath the fingertips for intuitive, single-handed operation. The ergonomic oval design includes flush switches and recessed buttons. Canon expects the MV800 range to be made available from late February, and further information can be obtained from: Hayley Buery:
hayley_buery@cuk.canon.co.uk tel 01737 220 378
or from Alexis Besson: alexis_besson@cuk.canon.co.uk tel 01737 220 520

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About Multimedia Information & Technology

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Please contact the managing editor by telephone, fax or email (details below) with any editorial, advertising or subscription enquiries.

Notes for Contributors

MmIT welcomes contributions on the broad spread of interests encompassed by the use, management and development of multimedia resources in information services of all types, and in related areas of education, technology and business. Editorial copy from commercial sources will be considered purely on merit, and the managing editor will be very happy to discuss potential articles with contributors.

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Series and insert rates are available on application. Please contact the managing editor in the first instance.

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