

# CIT Infobits - January 2006

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## INVOLVING STUDENTS IN ONLINE COURSE DESIGN

Setting up an online course with a lot of materials to be uploaded can be a daunting task, especially for instructors who have limited time and/or technical expertise. In "Viewed from the Other Side: Student Involvement in Online Course Design" (*ALT Online Newsletter*, issue 3, January 2006), Stuart Hepplestone and Helen Rodger describe how Student E-learning Assistants are used at Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) to support faculty, "freeing them [the faculty] to concentrate on the appropriateness and quality of online materials, rather than concern themselves with the technology." The authors explain how students were recruited and trained. The article also includes a list of activities that instructors requested be assigned to the student assistants. The complete article is available online at [http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk/e\\_article000512935.cfm?x=b11,0,w](http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk/e_article000512935.cfm?x=b11,0,w).

*ALT Online Newsletter* [ISSN 1748-3603] is published quarterly and is available at no cost both on the Web and via email subscription. The Web version is available at <http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk/>.

The Association for Learning Technology (ALT) is a professional and scholarly association located in the UK which seeks to bring together all those with an interest in the use of learning technology. For more information about the ALT, contact: ALT Administration, Gypsy Lane, Headington, Oxford OX3 0BP UK; email: [alt@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:alt@brookes.ac.uk); tel: +44 (0)1865 484125; fax: +44 (0)1865 484165; Web: <http://www.alt.ac.uk/>.

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## PULLING ONLINE COURSE MATERIALS TO DETER ABSENTEEISM

After putting course materials on the Web as a convenience for their students, some professors are seeing increased absenteeism in their classes. According to a January 23, 2006, *LA Times* article ("More Undergrads Playing Hooky When Class Notes Go Online" by Stuart Silverstein), "[t]o deter no-shows, they are reverting to lower-tech tactics such as giving more pop quizzes or slashing online offerings."

One instructor at California State University Long Beach reported that before putting extensive lecture notes online, 60 to 70 percent of her students attended an undergraduate class she taught. When she taught the course again, posting the course materials online, the result was that only about a third of her students came to the lectures. She won't be putting lecture notes online for future classes.

While the decision to take course materials off the Web may put more students back in lecture halls, it may also place more hardships on non-traditional students whose work and family obligations prevent them from attending every class lecture.

The *Times* article is available from various newspapers that use Tribune Newspaper Network wire services, including the *Chicago Tribune*:

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-0601230142jan23.1.6644364.story>. (Registration may be required to access the article; registration is free.)

It's not a U.S. phenomenon. Last year an article in the *Sidney Morning Herald* ("Empty Lecture Halls in the Online Campus" by Andrew Stevenson, February 26, 2005) reported similar results in Australia. The article is available online at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/National/Empty-lecture-halls-in-the-online-campus/2005/02/25/1109180113568.html>.

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## PERCEPTIONS OF LIBRARIES AS INFORMATION RESOURCES

Two recent publications address the issue of how users perceive the role of libraries in meeting their information needs.

*Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources: A Report to the OCLC Membership*

Published by OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc.  
Dublin, OH, 2005

<http://www.oclc.org/reports/2005perceptions.htm>

The paper reports on a survey conducted of people in the US, Canada, UK, and Australia to study the "perceptions and preferences of information consumers; users' relationship with and use of libraries, including usage of and familiarity with electronic information resources; awareness of libraries and resources offered; the 'Library' brand and its ubiquity and universality; trust of libraries and their resources; and people's perceptions of the library's purpose/mission."

The survey found: "Information consumers trust information they get from libraries, and they trust the information they get from search engines. The survey revealed that they trust them almost equally. While all U.S. age groups surveyed indicated trust across both sources, young people in the United States ages 14 to 24 show the greatest level of trust for information received via search engines. How much of this trust could be attributed to greater familiarity and frequent use of Web-based electronic resources? Most U.S. youth are not familiar with library electronic resources, but are very familiar with search engines, e-mail and chat. As more content becomes directly accessible via search engines, familiarity with more and different types of digital content is likely to increase. Will trust continue to increase too?"

OCLC Online Computer Library Center is a "nonprofit, membership, computer library service and research organization dedicated to the public purposes of furthering access to the world's information and reducing information costs. More than 50,540 libraries in 84 countries and territories around the world use OCLC services to locate, acquire, catalog, lend and preserve library materials." For more information, go to <http://www.oclc.org/>.

"Changing a Cultural Icon: The Academic Library as a Virtual Destination"

By Jerry D. Campbell

*EDUCAUSE Review*, vol. 41, no. 1 (January/February 2006): 16–31

<http://www.educause.edu/apps/er/erm06/erm0610.asp>

"In recent years, studies have revealed that our information-seeking behaviors and habits are changing. Utilizing the increasingly ubiquitous Internet and powered by ever-improving search engines, the World Wide Web rapidly became the largest and easiest-to-use storehouse of information in the world. Indeed, the success of the Web as the world's main source of information has been astonishing. The change was not slow and measured, as some changes are: it swept through the world in a scant decade. Almost one billion people, 15 percent of the world's population, currently use the Internet."

During this change, Campbell contends that academic libraries have "continued to operate more or less as usual." By continuing to do so, libraries may find themselves more on the margins of information sources. To avoid this marginalization, Campbell calls for colleges and universities to determine what role academic libraries should perform in the coming years.

*EDUCAUSE Review* [ISSN 1527-6619], a bimonthly print magazine that explores developments in information technology and education, is published by EDUCAUSE (<http://www.educause.edu/>). Articles from current and back issues of *EDUCAUSE Review* are available on the Web at <http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/>.

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## JOURNAL OF ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING RE-LAUNCHED

The University of Michigan Library Scholarly Publishing Office re-launched the *Journal of Electronic Publishing* with the February 2006 issue. The journal had ceased publication since 2003 when a transfer from University of Michigan Press to the Columbia University Press was proposed but never completed. Articles from the current issue include:

- "What Are the Alternatives to Peer Review? Quality Control in Scholarly Publishing On The Web"
- "Intensive Disciplinarity in Electronic Services for Research and Education: Building Systems Responsive to Intellectual Tradition and Scholarly Culture"
- "Writing Electronically: The Effects of Computers on Traditional Writing"
- "Fourteen Lessons: Initiating and Editing an Online Professional Refereed Journal"

The current and back issues are currently available online at <http://www.press.umich.edu/jep/>. Eventually, the journal issues will be located at <http://journalofelectronicpublishing.org/>.

The *Journal of Electronic Publishing* [ISSN 1080-2711] is published by the University of Michigan Library: Scholarly Publishing Office, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1104 USA; email: [lib.spo@umich.edu](mailto:lib.spo@umich.edu); Web: <http://spo.umdl.umich.edu/>.

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## RECOMMENDED READING

"Recommended Reading" lists items that have been recommended to me or that *Infobits* readers have found particularly interesting and/or useful, including books, articles, and websites published by Infobits subscribers. Send your recommendations to [kotlas@email.unc.edu](mailto:kotlas@email.unc.edu) for possible inclusion in this column.

*The Accidental Techie: Supporting, Managing, and Maximizing Your Nonprofit's Technology*

by Sue Bennett, with contributors: Tom Battin, Eugene Chan, Mary Lester, Jonathan Stein, Cristina Chan, Tessie Guillermo, Miriam Engelberg

Publisher: CompassPoint, 2005

ISBN: 0940069490

Written by techies in the non-profit sector for their peers, the book includes:

- ready-to-use templates, worksheets, and sample policies
- fundraising for technology from a funder's perspective
- resources on topics such as funding, discussion groups, application service providers, website development, and donor management software
- glossary of technical terms

More information and table of contents available at

<http://compasspointbookstore.org/ViewProduct.asp?ModelNumber=200006>.

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## INFOBITS SUBSCRIBERS -- WHERE WERE WE IN 2005?

Each January issue of *Infobits* includes an annual subscriber tally listing the countries represented by our subscribers. As of the end of December 2005, there were 7,229 subscribers. Here are some brief statistics about our current subscribers.

The majority of the subscribers we could identify by country are in the United States (3,476) and other English-speaking countries: Canada (444), Australia (266), and the United Kingdom (169).

Each of the following countries has between eleven and forty-one subscribers: Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, and Sweden.

Each of the following countries has 10 or fewer subscribers: Argentina, Austria, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mauritius, Micronesia, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Yugoslavia.

In addition to subscribers whom we can positively identify by a geographic location, the following sites don't have a geographic designation: 1,670 subscribers from commercial (.com) sites, 182 subscribers from .org sites, and 611 subscribers from .net sites.

Many thanks to all the subscribers for your support in 2005!

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