

Electronic Publishing

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From an original document by Claire Warwick

This document is part of a collection of presentations with a focus on Electronic Publishing. For full details of this and the rest of the collection see the cover sheet at: <http://humbox.ac.uk/3078/>

Overview of the module

- Aims to consider the full spectrum of EP
- It's not just about building websites
- Nor is it just about big commercial publishing
- Looking at products, development, and ways of making money
- Other issues like Open Access / Paywalls, sustainability, metadata, user engagement

Objectives

- To enable you to demonstrate an understanding of a wide range of issues concerning EP.
- Extends beyond this module material.
- This is an MA module and so we expect MA level engagement.

What is an electronic publication?

What is an electronic publication?

- Not just digitised books
 - May contain multimedia
 - May include large amounts of data
- E-books and e-Journals
- Institutional repositories
- Reference publishing
- Blogs, wikis, podcasts
- News feeds and newspapers
- Official and community publishing

Types of Electronic publishing

- Commercial
 - Business/academic publishing especially
- Non-commercial ‘academic’ models
 - academic text archives
 - Libraries and archives
- Personal publishing and social networking
- But what is a publisher?
 - When we can all publish on the web

Historical development

- c1970 reprint publishers diversify into microfilm
- Opportunities seen as CD-ROM develops
- Large amount of data
- Easier to use than microfilm
- Fast access to data

CD-ROM as a medium

- Attractive to publishers
 - a definable product
 - data can be ‘recycled’
- But also problems
 - release must be finite
 - costly if mistakes are made
 - costly to produce

CD-ROM as a medium

- Attractive to libraries
 - small, easy to store
 - popular with many users
 - robust
- Attractive to individuals
 - plug and play
 - relatively cheap
 - one off cost

CD-ROM as a medium

- Problems with CDs
 - archiving
 - interfaces differed
 - early networks very slow
 - users needed training
 - expense of kit and CDs
 - Life expectancy?

The Web

- Intensively commercialised in mid 1990s
- Become an online marketplace
- A major opportunity
 - new formats like e-journals
 - Online newspapers
 - Large scale reference
- Multiple sites

Web 2.0

- Major change in publishing models
- The web as a collaborative medium
- Not top down- commercial publishing model
 - user to user communication
 - Does this marginalise or enhance commercial models?

The web as a medium

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of the web as a publishing mechanism (compared to print)?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of print as a publishing mechanism (compared to the web)?

Advantages of the web

- Solves problems of CDs
 - archiving
 - interfaces
- Currency of information
 - easily updated
 - attractive medium for time-critical info
- Visual interface user friendly
 - online searching no longer for specialist intermediaries

The Web - problems

- Perception of medium- trust
- Training and support still necessary
- Intermediaries are still useful
- High costs of subscription
 - no back issues if subscription lapses
- Access and speed
 - Still far from 'world wide' web
- Reading on screen a problem
- People like books and paper

Do we really need publishers?

- Why should we pay for academic information?
 - Harnad's e-archives (SOTON)
 - Pioneer of Open Access & Self-Archiving
- Corporate intranets
- Blogs and web 2.0
- Freely available material
- Libraries/gateways for QA
- Institutional repositories

The value of electronic publishers

- Quality assurance
 - applies to readers and authors
 - *imprimatur* is still meaningful - Trusted brands
 - Prestige still important
- Collection of information
 - choice of what to publish and how
- Maintenance and support
- Marketing and publicity

Problems for web publishers

- How to price web products?
 - Value or content?
- Assumption of free content
 - Problem for online newspapers
 - How to make a profit?
- Buying vs licensing
 - attention of readership
 - only info user wants

Problems for web publishers

- Packaging information
 - selling ways of thinking about content
- Expectation of currency can be a burden
- Maintenance and support