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1997 SLA Conference Report: Computer Science Literature Roundtable

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1997 SLA CONFERENCE REPORT Computer Science Literature Roundtable Reported By James W. Leonard

Once again, over 40 Library and publishing people gathered on Wednesday afternoon for an open discussion on the literature of Computer Science.

Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) Digital Library:

The discussion began with Mark Mandelbaum of the ACM announcing Web access to ACM's publications: The ACM Digital Library (<http://www.acm.org/dl/>). There will be free access to full text during the months of July through September. The ACM wishes to become a one-stop shopping location, which will publish for other societies as well. Added value for each journal as it goes electronic will include a search engine and current awareness profiling (e-mail notification for newly published articles).

Copyright:

The ACM will copyright the archival version of the article, called the Reference Article, but authors are free to post enhanced copies on their own web sites. The Reference Article may have links to enhancements, depending on the judgment of the editor. It was suggested that the index to the author's home page would be the ultimate in citation indexing, and this approach would produce what was termed as the "fuzzy document."

ACM Articles are to be Short:

The ACM is working to make articles short and readable because they have been told by members that articles are not being read due to lack of time. One librarian pointed out that she was being asked by users to pick out the good bits of information for them, and she felt that this process will be easier to do when more is on the Web.

ACM Special Interest Group (SIG) Conference Proceedings:

The ACM is working to publish all conference proceedings as separate items, with none as issues of SIG bulletins. A librarian from UCLA let us know that they will no longer be cataloging ACM SIG conference proceedings.

ACM Back Run Archive:

The ACM is planning to scan and archive the back runs of their publications, but they point out that this is costly. Currently, the format being used is PDF, but in the long term, they expect to go to SGML/HTML format.

ACM Collected Algorithms:

It was mentioned that electronic access to the Collected Algorithms of the ACM is available through the web site <http://netlib.org>.

ACM Criterion for an Article to be New:

A judgment call for an editor is how much new material must be in an article for it to be considered a new article. Currently, this is when more than 25% has been changed or if the change is a significant aspect of the article.

ACM Strategic Directions:

Carol Hutchins, NYU Courant Institute, encouraged the ACM to continue to publish articles on strategic directions as was done in the December 1996 issue of *Computing Surveys*. This is especially important because Annual Reviews Incorporated no longer produces a volume on computer science.

Print Availability:

A representative from *Mathematical Reviews* pointed out that printed versions of publications will continue to be needed, especially by people in third world countries. However, Mark Mandelbaum suggested that third world countries are leapfrogging current technology to become well connected. He also said that most ACM members seem to be willing to give up print, while librarians are less willing. It was noted that 35% of reviewers for *Mathematical Reviews* are not well enough connected to have e-mail. The new model for ACM is "Distribute Then Print". One possibility being considered by ACM is to produce printed versions of publications only at the end of each year for library archives.

Past Electronic Issue Availability:

A concern was expressed: if an institution stops electronic subscription, will access continue to be granted to those years for which it was a paid subscriber? The ACM says yes. Jim Ashling of INSPEC pointed out that continuing access to owned print issues costs the publisher nothing but maintaining access to electronic issues is an expense to the publisher, and the cost must be passed on to current subscribers. Publishers may ultimately think in terms of selling electronic editions rather than leasing them.

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) IEL: CD-ROM image system:

It was asked when will there be a network version of the IEEE IEL collection of images of articles and standards on CD-ROM. According to IEEE representatives, the timetable calls for an upgrade to a Web Browser interface in Fall 1997, and then a network product in first quarter 1998, starting with a distributed index. It is intended to cover all IEEE publications, including those of the IEEE Computer Society. Librarians are requested to aid in product improvement by reporting gaps to the IEL Trace Service. A needed article will then be sent to the user and also added to the image collection.

Conference Titles:

A title authority file is being developed for IEEE IEL to cope with the problem of handling the variations in titles of conference proceedings.

Usage of Electronic Journals:

Publishers were encouraged to collect usage statistics and send them to subscribing libraries for use in justifying subscription renewals. It was suggested that a form for usage statistics be proposed and discussed on PAMNET. One expected problem is that each library requires a different format and level of detail. It was also suggested that the Association of American Publishers might be the organization to consider the issue of standardizing usage statistics.

Librarian Advisory Groups:

ACM, IEEE, and the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) mentioned that they have contact with representatives from the library field. It was suggested that those representatives be listed on the PAM Web site and that they be encouraged to report on the advice that they are giving to publishers. Joanne Good, Chair of PAM, pointed out that one of PAM's goals is to have advisory liaisons for each publisher in the field.

The PAM Listserv:

It was pointed out by one of the publishers' representatives that the PAM Listserv is monitored by them and is thus a good place to discuss library/publisher issues.

Thanks:

Our thanks go to all who attended, including representatives from the following publishers: Academic Press, ACM, IEEE, INSPEC, ISI, Springer Verlag, and Wiley. Also, thanks go to

Virginia Baldwin, Eastern Illinois University, for her contributions to these notes. Hope to see you all next year!

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