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Building Digital Libraries Through Collaboration Within and Between Nations

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One measure of success for digital library development is a robust collection that fulfills the DL's purpose. This goal is best met when the DL is conceptualized as a collaboration among numerous partners whose contributions from distributed sites are coordinated to form a single DL organization. A digital library of this type provides users with richer resources, exposes content to a wider audience, and promotes the diffusion of DLs, particularly in developing countries. This panel discusses different models of collaboration that are used to build digital libraries that combine national resources and that are international in scope.

The Key Points of Discussion

Speakers are involved in many aspects of building collaborations and will discuss:

- Developing a model for international collaboration that can be extended to many projects as demonstrated by The Global Memory Net, an NSF funded International Digital Library Project.
- Organizing distributed information centers across international borders for improving access to information from scientific organizations in developing countries as demonstrated by the UNESCO-IOC-IODE-ODINAFRICA project.
- Encouraging the diffusion of digital libraries in Latin America through the use of train the trainer sessions for universities interested in joining the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations.
- Identifying communication channels that can be used to help build a robust collaborative international digital library.

About the Projects

The Global Memory Net (GMNet) is an NSF funded International Digital Library Project with the goal of developing a model for international digital library collaboration. It is extended from the Chinese Memory Net. Although "memory" is applicable to all type of memories in all subject areas, GMNet focuses on collaborative work in several countries to build a digital library of cultural, historical, archival, and heritage resources using the latest cutting-edge content-based image retrieval techniques. It is a multimedia project with emphases on images and videos. More information is available at <http://memorynet.org/>

UNESCO-IOC-IODE-ODINAFRICA: In this scientific program, UNESCO-IOC supports and stimulates the establishment of a network of national data and information centers that form a part of the national marine and oceanographic science centers in Africa. The VUB University Library contributes expertise in the form of consultancy, study materials, and training workshops. More information is available from <http://www.odinafrica.net/>

The Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD) and the Latin American ETD Projects Course : This highly successful program funded through UNESCO provides interested universities with intensive and focused training that allows them to implement and maintain a digital library for theses and dissertations. The program stimulates the formation of collaborative networks among Latin American universities and provides the "know how" for these universities to join the international community of NDLTD members. The training focuses on the multidisciplinary nature of an ETD project, which

requires the active participation of the Graduate Programs, the ICT group, and the library, as well as the graduate students. This presentation addresses some characteristics that the training that all parts involved must receive in order to start a project in a developing nation. It is based on the fact that in developing nations infrastructure, training and access to information are not equivalent to those in the first world.

Growing the Network: The network of NDLTD members has grown steadily since the organization was first formed in 1996. This work builds on research that studied the importance of communication channels in the organizational decision to adopt DLs and examines how relationships in other organizations can encourage collaborative activities that lead to an increase in network members.

About the Panelists

Professor Chen, the lead on The Global Memory Net, is an author and editor of 35 books and more than 150 articles in the areas of information technology and management. She has received numerous major national and international awards, and is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences. She has served as a member of both President Clinton's and President Bush's Presidential Information Technology Advisory Committee (PITAC) from 1998-2002. Currently, Chen's involvement in a 30-month major International Digital Library Project, Chinese Memory Net, supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF) that has been extended to Global Memory Net. She is also the co-PI with Dr. Raj Reddy of CMU of the major China-U.S. Million Book Digital Library Project supported by NSF and the Chinese Ministry of Education. She is a member of the advisory board of the DELOS (European Network of Excellence in Digital Libraries).

Paul Nieuwenhuysen, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium, is also a lead scholar in the VLIR-International University Cooperation development project with Sokoine University for Agriculture in Morogoro, Tanzania, Africa. Professor Nieuwenhuysen is the author

or co-author of more than 100 publications, including more than 30 refereed papers in international scientific/technical journals. He is a board member of the section Scientific Documentary Information of the Flemish Library, Archive and Documentation Society and is also a board member of the inter-university post graduate study program in Information and Library Science, organized by the University of Antwerp. He is an editorial board member of several journals and series including LIBRES.

Ana Pavani, NDLTD and the Latin American ETD Projects Course, is based in the Systems and Automation of the Electrical Engineering Department of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio). Professor Pavani manages a laboratory whose objective is the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Culture and Education. She teaches the Latin American ETD Projects Course sponsored by UNESCO-Uruguay and has participated in the creation of the Brazilian Electronic Theses Consortium.

Suzie Allard a board member of NDLTD, conducts research to study the diffusion of digital libraries and the factors that may influence the adoption decision including communication that may enhance collaboration. Her articles on digital libraries have appeared in several national and international journals, and the one entitled "Digital Libraries and Organizations for International Collaboration and Knowledge Creation" was named the top article for 2002 by *The Electronic Library*.

SELECTED REFERENCES

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