INFORMATION PACKAGING

E D I T O R I A L

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Thinking inside the box.

Academic librarians have a deep respect for the entity we call information. We value the ideas that the creators set forth, and we acknowledge the significance of the "container" of that information, be it physical or electronic. As any cataloguer about hardback vs. paperback vs. digital versions of a novel – let alone illustration variations, abridgements, revisions, and so forth. The new FRBR guidelines codify those relationships, and provide an intellectual concept map of the development and manifestation of ideas and information.

Furthermore, academic librarians gleefully delve into those containers. We love to ferret out factoids, compare entries, extract relevant charts, and choose signature art examples. We produce bibliographies about whole documents (including web sites) as well as items within them, such as Book Lover Quotes. We create web portals that link the user to pre-selected sources.

Nevertheless, academic librarians tend not to deconstruct those containers, or disembowel ideas from their documental entities. We store and retrieve, but we do not change the information as it is presented. We tend not to be anthologists. We tend not to create information.

That mentality has been shifting. Academic librarians *have* produced publications: library histories, research studies, information literacy tutorials, and the like. With the advent of electronic publications, producing and *packaging* information has become more common. Digital formats facilitate repurposing the same information, morphing an outline into a PowerPoint presentation or hyperlinked webpage, as needed. As long as the information sources is credited ("anchoring" it) and intellectual property rights are observed, academic librarians are seeing advantages of combining and synthesizing ideas/information *per se* as a value-added service for their users. We are thinking in and across boxes.

The articles in this issue look at electronic information packaging. Both were inspired by recent library conferences. The SLA conference in Baltimore featured several sessions on RSS feeds, blogs, and wikis. Karen Huffman's presentation on National Geographic Society's ventures into library broadcasts was fascinating – and the source of the following article. ALA's annual conference highlighted library digital efforts and techno-marketing. Of special interest was the research librarians' meeting, which focused on ejournal concerns. Follow-up to a technical services meeting at ALA led to Susan Karplus's analysis of learning management systems use by academic librarians. The dynamic duo Bober and Wade offer related websites. The reviews also pack a lot of information too, thanks to our faithful contributors.

The next two theme issues for *Education Libraries*? The new world of information organization (November 15 deadline) AND outreach (March 15 deadline). Plan ahead.