

NEW MODELS FOR WORLD WIDE WEB PUBLISHING

In the past two years the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Library and Center for Knowledge Management has sought projects that offer an opportunity to experiment with web publishing. The projects reported here came unexpectedly through the development of a Tobacco Control Archive, created to document tobacco control policies and the anti-smoking movement in California. Succeeding events placed the library at the center of a lawsuit leading to two new roles: one as a pioneer in World Wide Web publishing and another at the center of a major public health policy debate.

BROWN AND WILLIAMSON DOCUMENTS

Early in its creation the UCSF Tobacco Control Archives received two anonymous boxes from 'Mr. Butts' containing papers and records from the Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation. The papers described scientific research, marketing, and corporate policy from 1960's - 1980's including reports on the effects of nicotine. When the Library, with support from university counsel, made the information public the tobacco company initiated legal action seeking return of the material. Four months later the California Superior Court ruled for the University. Since this was the first significant disclosure from inside a tobacco company the staff anticipated a large demand to view the material. Publishing the material electronically was the solution to manage a high level of interest with a very small archives staff. Staff scanned, indexed, and published 8,000 pages on the internet. At midnight on June 30, 1995 the Brown and Williamson documents were released as scanned graphical images on the World Wide Web through Galen II, the digital library for UCSF. (<http://www.library.ucsf.edu/tobacco>) A CD ROM version was available for sale within a few months.

The following conclusions emerge from this project:

PUBLIC POLICY: The first release of the large set of documents by UCSF Library created a climate for the continued release of 'secret' records from tobacco companies and contributed to the proposed regulations to limit cigarette sales.

ECONOMIC: During the first year over 500,000 pages were viewed from 44,000 unique hosts with growing use the past few months. Access to the material was immediate within minutes of its release on the web at midnight. Despite free use on the web individuals are willing to pay for content on a CD ROM. Thus, the secondary CD ROM product subsidizes free web distribution.

ACCESS: Libraries have a primary responsibility to preserve contemporary source material. While archivists debate the advisability of accepting material of uncertain provenance the decision for UCSF to publish the material was obvious. In the midst of a heated electronic discussion one archivist clearly stated the library's position: "archivists should avoid political advocacy as a profession, but we cannot shun the responsibility to promote the public's right to know."

CIGARETTE PAPERS ONLINE

The Brown and Williamson documents led to a collaborative project with the University of California Press. Using the Brown and Williamson documents as their source three UCSF faculty, along with two others, wrote a book analyzing the Brown and Williamson documents. Viewing this as an extension of the tobacco archive the library negotiated with the Press for access to the electronic publishing files. While technically there were few challenges, negotiations between the Press, the Library and the authors took almost six months. Released in July 1996 the internet version (<http://www.library.ucsf.edu/tobacco/cigpapers/>) offers direct linkages to the Brown and Williamson documents referenced in the book and allows searching on each word in the text. The paper copy of the book was published in April 1996 and is a best seller for an academic press. In this model there are charges for both the paper and electronic editions.

Although experience with The Cigarette Papers Online is limited to a few months two aspects are worth noting.

ECONOMIC: In negotiating the business model for online products discussions were based upon those in the paper world. Rights to The Cigarette Papers are covered through royalties to the authors and UC Press and sold on as a subscription. Unfortunately, the demand for the paper is not yet evident for the online version. The Library is

investigating the reasons for this difference. These negotiations also required that librarians look at economic issues differently when functioning as a publisher than as a librarian.

SOCIAL: We know very little about how individuals use information in electronic format and what they are willing to pay for on the internet.

These projects were significant ventures for the UCSF Library and Center for Knowledge Management. They offered a unique testbed to learn more about web publishing models, they demonstrated the value of information in a democratic society, and they suggested possible new roles for libraries in the digital world.

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