The consolidated UKZN Libraries website is now online with effect from 1 August. During the past six months, the Library Webpage Team has been busy ‘deconstructing’ the webpages of the 5 campus libraries and re-engineering a new website which offers a more unified approach to the delivery of information and library services. The website aims to provide a single point of access to library resources and to provide subject support to students across all campuses. These aims were realised with the co-operation and collaboration of subject librarians and other library staff members. The website now provides a single online presence which is well-positioned to host the new electronic services which are in the pipeline.

Initially it was envisaged that the new library system - Sirsi iLink – would provide the front-end for UKZN Libraries online. However, once the system was installed, it became apparent that although some of the electronic resources could be delivered using the iLink design, it was preferable to create a library identity separate from the library system. The University Content Management System (CMS) was reviewed and seen to provide a workable solution to creating a new website quickly and efficiently.

Liaison between the Library Webpage Team and the UKZN webmasters mapped out a design for the website. Consideration of user requirements guided much of the layout and style. The creation of a customized navigation bar at the top of the webpage expanded the scope of the University template to accommodate, in a visible fashion, the many information sources and services available at UKZN libraries. This also meant the left-hand sidebar was free to be utilized exclusively for subject support content - a practical and intuitive arrangement which allows easy navigation. An opportunity for subject librarians to communicate and collaborate with one another was facilitated by a workshop held early in July at the Westville Main Library. This event proved to be productive and librarians focused not only on the subject content of the website, but were also able to develop and expand inter-library relationships. The website is a "work in progress".

The success and popularity of the website is already evident with almost 21 000 hits recorded at the site during the first two weeks! Obviously, the library is a necessary online tool for many, and it is well worth taking a look at http://library.ukzn.ac.za if you haven’t done so already. Posters were displayed in all libraries and some nifty bookmarks displaying the website URL were handed out to students and library users on 1 August when the site went live.

Phase Two is still to follow and will see content on the website enhanced to provide more specifically for research needs. Improved access and searching of library e-journals and databases is also on the cards. Your suggestions and comment can be emailed to the libwebteam@ukzn.ac.za

Avenal Finlayson (HC); Sagren Moodley (M); Roshini Pather (E)
Digitization and access – where to from here?

UKZN Librarians were recently privileged to attend a lecture entitled “Preservation and Access: Development of Digital Libraries in South Africa” presented by Dr Dale Peters, director of the DISA (Digital Imaging South Africa) project.

Dale’s presentation had the effect of jolting us librarians out of our complacent comfort zones and forcing us not only to examine the future of our libraries but to question our places in them as well.

For me, the highlight and most interesting aspect of the workshop was the discussion on the preservation of our digital heritage. It is critical to protect our indigenous knowledge systems that are still, in the 21st century, being appropriated by other richer countries if given half a chance. This digital preservation of our heritage has been the focus of digitization in South Africa thus far. A good example of this is DISA’s own project, “South African Freedom Struggles 1954-1990” (http://disa.nu.ac.za/).

Digitization facilitates access and raises many issues. One of these is the issue of ownership of important documents. It has become clear that libraries no longer need to own this critical information but should be able to provide users with access to it. Furthermore, users looking for information online are no longer satisfied with a description or an abstract, but are demanding actual online access to deep resources, for example, the entire journal article or thesis.

The happy conclusion is that librarians definitely have a place in the future of information gathering and dissemination. In fact their roles are becoming even more critical with users needing guidance in dealing with the plethora of information now available online. Moreover, as whole collections cannot be digitized, when crucial decisions are made as to which information should be saved for posterity and which not – librarians’ decisions will be critical. Perhaps a way forward would be to digitize a collection around a specific subject that will actively support teaching and learning.

We all found the workshop absorbing and fascinating and felt so energized that we decided to find a small project to digitize to test the waters and our skills. Watch this space!

Margaret Bass (P)

SmartPort

Users of the iLink catalogue may have noticed a URL link next to records for new and In Process books. This is because records are now downloaded from WorldCat (the world’s largest network of libraries) to assist in the creation of database records and cataloguing of new books. The URL does not provide access to full text but information about the contents of the book or author information. The amount of and nature of information varies from publication to publication.

Library budget 2007

The library budget has been finalized and departments have been notified about their book allocations. The closing date for the submission of orders is 31 October 2007. Notices have been sent to all schools informing them of their allocations and the deadline.
LibQual+

UKZN libraries will be the 7th South African university library to make use of this software developed by the Association of Research Libraries to ‘solicit, understand and act upon users’ opinions of the library service”. This survey will be distributed across the University shortly.

Staffing news

Nthabiseng Mosala-Bryant has been appointed the Library information Systems Manager for the UKZN libraries. Nthabiseng was part of the subject librarian unit on the Pietermaritzburg campus until her new appointment on 1 August. She will be based on the Pietermaritzburg campus.

World Library and Information Congress

The annual conference of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) is being held in Durban this year from 19th – 23rd August and will take place at the ICC. The theme is “Libraries for the future: progress, development and partnerships”. Many librarians from the University are involved in sessions and the planning of activities and the libraries are included in the programme of library visits.

DITCHE (Developing Information Technology Capacity in Higher Education) annual conference – some highlights

The DITCHE conference 2007, held in Port Elizabeth in July, focused on the latest technological developments within the South African libraries in the tertiary education sector, the Integrated Library Research Consortium and IT training in libraries. UKZN libraries were well represented in terms of presentation of papers and attendance.

- New technologies and their impact on library activities

Hennie Rautenbach of Sabinet spoke on Internet fun tools that could be used in library services. New tools mentioned were Tags and Tag clouds, Wikipedia, Facebook, Google eEarth and Flickr – an Image website. This use of Internet technologies is recognized as the second phase of Internet development and is referred to as Internet 2 or Web 2.0. David de la Croes of the UCT Library spoke about the use of cell phones as a library tool. Libraries need to take on board new technologies where appropriate and the cell phone revolution has largely been ignored by libraries. He saw a useful role for cell phone technologies for some library tasks such as renewal notices. He considered the financial cost of using cell phones which in some cases he felt could be paid for by students. He stated that if libraries fail to use technologies that students are familiar with, they run the risk of losing a great opportunity to access potential users of the library.

Nellie Somers from the Killie Campbell collections spoke on intellectual property rights issues applied to digitization of bibliographic materials; legislation regarding ownership of digital content and fair use of digital content that is hosted on the Killie Campbell website.

Irene Vermaak from Rhodes University spoke on steps taken to manage the Rhodes – e-research repository. Librarians had to identify articles by Rhodes University scholars for inclusion in the portal. Developing the e-thesis collection required copyright permission for open access. The repository provides statistics on abstract views,
document downloads and usage statistics by country. The presentation outlined the launch of the portal, workflows and strategies for content filling of the portal and promotion of the repository on campus. The project is owned by the University with the librarians playing a major role in the development of the content. The portal has received positive responses from academic staff and has attracted attention from researchers worldwide and led to networking opportunities.

- **New systems implementation**

The University of KwaZulu-Natal library delivered a paper on the implementation of SIRSI which is now a year old at UKZN. The presentation discussed migration to SIRSI in three KZN higher education institutions: the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban University of Technology and Ethekweni Municipality libraries. Issues raised included the lack of staff consultations prior to installation; the pitfalls of the ‘training the trainer’ system; management of the project which was problematic because the project was planned and determined by suppliers; the project had to deal with time constraints before implementation at some of the institutions.

Duncan Greaves and Geoff Hoy of TENET(Tertiary Education Network) provided information on the ITIL Infrastructure Library management program to be implemented by TENET. It is a framework of proven best practices for IT service management within libraries. DITCHE has selected the ITIL program as the focus for the next three years, the object of which is to disseminate formalised, certification-track training in ITIL to the higher education library community. The outcome of this training will be organized management of library IT activities.

- **Integrated Library Research Consortium**

One session involved a discussion on the Integrated Library Research Consortium, an initiative which aims to provide resources and infrastructure to support emerging researchers at three major South African universities. This pilot project will provide research support for the universities of Witwatersrand, KwaZulu-Natal and Cape Town and will be directed primarily at post graduate students at these universities. The TDNet software developed in Israel will provide for e-journal management and superior searching capabilities for database searching. More on this in the next newsletter.

- **In a lighter vein....**

Talks were given on how a library system might look if it were run by the IT department and on how an IT department might look if run by librarians. These talks were in a lighter vein and showed typical IT responses to library problems. IT staff responses to a library problem would be to log the library problem and then find or develop the correct software to solve the problem. The library delegates suggested that librarian’s response to IT problems would be to logically catalogue and classify the IT problems and provide a more humane and orderly operation of IT departments as opposed to the seemingly frenzied chaos found at IT departments!

Surendran Moodley (P)