Research Seminar: Digital Content Delivery

Presented by:
Dr. Mark R. Nelson
Digital Content Strategist, National Association of College Stores & ECAR Research Fellow, EDUCAUSE

ECAR Symposium
December 7-9, 2005
Session Introduction

- What is digital content delivery?
- What trends are emerging in the usage of digital content delivery?
- What does digital content delivery mean for the college campus?
- Discussion
What is Digital Content Delivery?

- Digital content delivery is a subset of a larger discussion on digital content management.

- Digitized vs. “Born Digital” Content
  - Digitized: linear, mostly non-interactive content, like traditional print, that happens to be in an electronic format
  - Born Digital: non-linear, interactive content designed with electronic delivery in mind from point of conception
The Future of Digital Content

(Source: Chris Tabor, Queens University, Canada)
Digital Content Delivery
Issues and Advantages

- **Issues**
  - Technical: adapts to consumer requirements
  - Economic: fair reimbursement of content producers
  - IM & trust: can consumer trust provider is authentic
  - Legal: preservation of copyright vs. fair use
  - Social: Information literacy, equality of access and use, privacy

- **Advantages:**
  - Currency of content and edition control
  - Flexibility and content control for faculty
  - Reduced supply chain, inventory and operating costs
  - New ways of reaching customers and ability to address customer media format preferences
Three Trends to Count on …

- An increasing demand for **CHOICE**

- Faster development of **NEW and EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES**

- Increased **CONVERGENCE** among existing technologies and knowledge
The Demand for CHOICE

- Course materials will be available in many formats.
- Interactive course materials will change the way learning occurs.
- Consumers want service to be faster, more ubiquitous and available when and where they need it.
Satisfying the Demand for Choice
Examples across the digital spectrum

Changes in Course Materials
- Custom Publishing
- Assessment-based Tools
- Learning Objects

Course Materials in Practice
- The Hamlet Variorum
- Intelligent Exams
- The Merlot Project
Satisfying the Demand for Choice
Print-on-Demand (POD)

- Two approaches to POD
  - “Vanity Press” or self-publishing
  - “Instant Production” of course materials

- Some Key Advantages
  - May decrease many operational costs (e.g., inventory, shipping, and even time)
  - Can serve as a “bridge” technology between traditional print and completely electronic materials
  - Can increase copyright compliance
  - Provides options and flexibility for students and faculty

- The University of Queensland Example
NEW and EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

In looking at new and emerging technologies, we must consider the adoption curve.

New and emerging technologies also require a willingness to forego the past when the time comes.
E-books will eventually work as well as print.

Need to resolve “barriers” to adoption.
- Mostly technical issues e.g., user interface & portability
- Current usage follows “reference” patterns
- Low adoption rates, even by tech-savvy students

New and emerging technologies could make e-books more acceptable to consumers.
- Hardware: E-ink and e-paper, OLEM & fabric-based displays, directed audio
- Software: digital rights management standards

MBS Textbook Exchange Pilot Program
Increased CONVERGENCE

- Computing and network technology will be more ubiquitous, faster, smarter, wireless and connect everything.
- Successful organizations will leverage existing and new relationships to mutual benefit.
- There will be emphasis on integrating knowledge and processes as much as technology.
Increased Convergence
Four Eras of Computing

Each era has had a profound effect on how organizations use information technology.
Increased Convergence
Advances in Digital Libraries

- Libraries are at the cutting edge of digital rights management and access to electronic materials.
  - As of 2002, over 75% of college libraries offered digitally delivered content solutions to their patrons.
  - Libraries may have vast resources in digital format (e.g., journals, books, and learning objects).

- Libraries increasingly use new systems specifically designed to manage digital content
  - e.g., digital-asset management systems and digital repositories

- Libraries are actively working together towards development of standards and integration of digital content with course management tools
Increased Convergence
Requires forging new relationships

- Increased digital content requires improved communication between faculty, students, librarians, bookstore staff, the IT unit and other stakeholders.
- How can we better leverage best practices and existing knowledge within and between our institutions?
- Are there ways to provide custom publishing through joint effort to mutual benefit?
Questions to Ask …

1. How do we satisfy an increasing demand for choice?
2. Which new or emerging technologies are the ones to watch and why?
3. How can we leverage convergence among existing technologies and knowledge to our advantage?
Other Questions?

What other questions or ideas do you have?

What are your institutions doing now prepare for greater degrees of digital content delivery in the future?

Contact
Mark R. Nelson, Ph.D., MBA
Digital Content Strategist
National Association of College Stores
& ECAR Fellow, EDUCAUSE
drmnelson@gmail.com

It's QUESTION TIME!!