

Research news and notes from the National Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Education Digital Library (NSDL) Program [[Back Issues](#)]



September 2004, Issue #59

NEWS

Pathways to NSDL Resources

Sept. 2004--The NSF is currently in negotiations with projects scheduled for funding in the 2004 NSDL Pathways track to assume a stewardship role for the educational content and/or the services needed by broad communities of learners. This NSF-NSDL Pathways strategy seeks to provide focused views into the Library to fulfill the NSDL promise of "One Library, Many Portals." Pathways projects aggregate the efforts of existing resource providers that fall within the needs of the targeted community. Responsibilities include: maintaining criteria and mechanisms to identify, select, annotate, and generate metadata for high-quality and relevant digital content as it continues to become available; providing all item-level metadata to the NSDL core metadata repository; sustaining the currency of the aggregated educational resources, either by acquiring/linking, or deaccessioning; active archiving that preserves the usability of digital content as the underlying information technology systems evolve; and anticipating and providing value-added services that may be specific to targeted learning communities.

Pathways track projects began coordinating their collective work with NSDL core integration efforts at a two-day meeting held in Boulder, CO in mid-August. The meeting goals were simple: where are the points of collaboration, and what work needs to be undertaken together? Core Integration and Pathways PIs and staff met in parallel sessions to develop a common agenda around two key issues identified as being critical to connecting the operational needs of the library with ongoing technical and social development: identity management, and; outreach/communications/marketing.

Identity management discussions focused on determining what information about users needs to be shared across projects in order to facilitate a single login for all NSDL portals, how to share this information, and what restrictions on sharing need to be accommodated.

Presentations and discussions around outreach, communications, and marketing activities resulted in agreement to begin work on a joint press release introducing Pathways projects along with a distribution system for that information, developing an integrated outreach, communications and marketing plan, a quality statement, and a branding strategy for portals and resources.

As with these two key areas of identity management and outreach/communications/marketing, Pathways may serve as focal points for all NSDL projects to collaborate on a range of other issues common to the NSDL community, including ongoing development and adoption of basic standards for interoperability, reusability, reliability, and stability of resources and services.

NSF will formally announce the grantees for the Pathways, Services, and Targeted Research tracks later this fall. Subsequently, the NSDL Annual Meeting will provide opportunities for information sharing, discussion, and community planning as we welcome these new projects and begin to integrate them with existing NSDL efforts.

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NSDL Annual Meeting November 14-17, 2004, Chicago, IL

Sept. 2004--This dynamic event is traditionally sparked by lively formal and informal exchanges over a

three-day period. Details can be found at the NSDL Annual Meeting Web site: <http://nsdl.comm.nsd.org>. Highlights include an orientation session for New Projects and New People to be held on Sunday, November 14 from 3:00-5:30 p.m. General sessions will start at 8:30 a.m. on the morning of Monday, November 15 and will end by 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday the 17th. A final schedule of sessions should be available on the Web site by mid-September.

There is no fee for the conference, however if you decide to join us please complete the registration form available at <http://nsdl.comm.nsd.org/registration/form>. Also, we request that you help us meet our quota for guest rooms at the conference hotel by staying at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place: <http://nsdl.comm.nsd.org/registration/> Be sure to register and submit poster descriptions for the NSDL Annual Meeting at <http://nsdl.comm.nsd.org>: Designing Strategies for Success.
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Answers to Metadata Questions

Sept. 2004--"Understanding Metadata," an introduction to metadata that includes an overview of leading metadata contenders and examples of practical applications, was distributed last month in hardcopy to all National Information Standards Organization (NISO) members. The publication covers a range of fundamentals, from a definition of metadata and descriptions of the types of metadata, to practical advice on creating metadata and future directions. This publication is a revision and expansion of "Metadata Made Easier: A Guide for Libraries" published by NISO Press in 2001.

"Understanding Metadata" is now available as a free download from the NISO website (<http://www.niso.org>).

"Metadata can describe resources at any level of aggregation," noted Pat Harris, Executive Director of NISO. "It can describe a collection, a single resource, or a component part of a larger resources, such as a photo in an article. Metadata is key to ensuring that resources will survive and continue to be accessible into the future."

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Upcoming Conference Dates

Sept. 2004--ACST 2004: The IASTED International Conference on Advances in Computer Science and Technology

<http://www.iasted.org/conferences/2004/vi/acst.htm>

Special Session on Experimental Digital Library Systems

Digital Libraries are playing a key role in building an effective and growing information infrastructure. A number of researchers are working in the area of Digital Libraries and are building systems to see their feasibility in terms of scalability, performance, usability, ease of discovery and publications, handling of copyright issues, etc. The focus of this session would be to discuss issues and lessons learned in building Digital Libraries systems. The objective of this session is to bring researchers in the area of Digital Libraries who are building systems so as to share their experiences, problems they are facing, and approaches they are taking to address them.

Technology + Leadership + Learning Conference

<http://www.nsba.org/t+l/>

October 27-29, 2004, Denver, CO

Educause 2004 "The Premiere IT Event in Higher Education"

<http://www.educause.edu/conference/annual/2004/>

October 19-22, 2004, Denver, CO

NSF-NSDL National Visiting Committee member Diana G. Oblinger, Vice President of Educause, will address the conference in a talk entitled "Educating the Net Generation."

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PROJECT PROFILE

BOOKMARKS

Seeking an Educational Commons: The Promise of Open Source Development

Sept. 2004--http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue9_8/hepburn/

Author Gary Hepburn explains that schools are hindered by cost and flexibility problems as they try to obtain resources such as software and textbooks. Open source development processes are producing products that can address many of these problems and, as importantly, provide a better alignment with core educational values. Indeed, open source products potentially encourage the development of an educational commons.--First Monday, Vol. 9, Number 8, Aug. 2004

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Design Method

Sept. 2004--<http://web.cornell.edu/redesign/blog>

Cornell University's new web site at <http://cornell.edu/> was assembled by a dedicated team of web developers and content specialists in a few short months. "We've got the university's front door in place on the Internet," said Cornell President Jeffrey Lehman. The "Cornell.edu Redesign Blog" is a lively work-in-progress exchange among developers and stakeholders tracing the history of this complex collaborative venture. The blog will continue to promote discussion and feedback in the ongoing process of maintaining and advancing Cornell's web presence.

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Software Not Responsible for User Behavior: Ninth Circuit Upholds Peer-to-Peer Ruling

Sept. 2004--http://www.eff.org/IP/P2P/MGM_v_Grokster20040819_mgm_v_grokster_decision.pdf

In a ruling similar to the Supreme Court's landmark decision in the 1984 Betamax case, a three-judge panel of California's Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled last week that distributors of the popular peer-to-peer (P2P) software Grokster and Morpheus cannot be held liable for the infringing activities of their users. As in the Betamax ruling, the Ninth Circuit acknowledged that P2P networks have significant non-infringing uses. The court's decision was unanimous, and upholds a lower court's April 2003 decision in the case, titled MGM v. Grokster. In the lower court ruling, Judge Stephen V. Wilson dismissed copyright infringement claims brought in 2001 by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) against Streamcast, makers of Morpheus, and Grokster, Inc. The RIAA/MPAA filed suit in 2001, alleging that the file-sharing software served as little more than tools for piracy. They sought to shut the services down as they did pioneering peer-to-peer music service Napster. The library community has been a staunch supporter of P2P technology.

"The introduction of new technology is always disruptive of old markets, and particularly to those copyright owners whose works are sold through well-established distribution mechanisms," wrote Judge Sidney R. Thomas, on behalf of the Ninth Circuit. "Yet, history has shown that time and market forces often provide equilibrium in balancing interests." Specifically, the court acknowledged that, even if more than 90 percent of downloads over those networks were illegal, as the plaintiffs claimed in their suit, the number of legal uses was still significant enough to merit protection. "As the court recognized today, the entertainment industry has been fighting new technologies for a century, only to learn again and again that these new technologies create new markets and opportunities," said Fred von Lohmann, senior intellectual property attorney for the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), who defended the suit. "There is no reason to think that file sharing will be any different." Still, the fight over the future of P2P is far from over. Lawyers for the plaintiffs indicated that they may appeal the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. Also, while the networks

may for now no longer be targets, individual suits, such as the many filed by the recording industry over the past year, are unaffected. --Library Journal Academic News Wire: August 24, 2004
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Cornell to Launch One-year Test of Legal Music Downloading

Sept. 2004--<http://www.news.cornell.edu/releases/July04/NapsterTrial.ws.html>

This fall, Cornell University will conduct a one-year experiment in legal downloading of music. A campuswide site license for the Napster online music service will provide students with streaming and downloading access to the company's library of more than 750,000 songs. The service also will give students access to interactive, commercial-free radio stations, six decades of Billboard 's chart information and an online magazine. In addition, there will be programs to support legal music downloading through computer platforms that are not compatible with the Napster service.

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HELP SPREAD THE WORD--SPEAK UP DAY FOR STUDENTS

Sept. 2004--NetDay announces Speak Up Day for Students 2004. The surveys will be available for student input?October 11 ? 29??this year. NetDay once again invites your participation?in?this landmark event for students. Step one in the success of Speak Up Day is making sure that all schools know that this?opportunity exists for their students to participate.?Leveraging collective networks, will reach the greatest number of schools.?More information is available at http://www.netday.org/speakup_forstudents.htm

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FIND YOUR HOME FROM SPACE ON THE TERRASERVER!

Sept. 2004--Everyone can view all of the current, digital satellite imagery and aerial photography imagery for free down to 8 meters of detail at <http://www.terraserver.com/>. TerraServer.com focuses on constantly expanding global imagery with the goal of bringing complete coverage of the earth?s surface, so that every search results in an image to view allowing everyone to see their world from overhead. TerraServer started as a joint research project between TerraServer.com, Microsoft, the USGS and Compaq.

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INSPIRATION

Information for the Common Good

Sept. 2004--<http://www.mercurynews.com/mld/mercurynews/business/9370514.htm> Brewster Kahle, founder of the Internet Archive, promotes and organizes information for the common good. He wants to digitize and store the world's 100 million books, 2 or 3 million audio recordings, and millions more software programs, TV shows and videos, and he's making what has been digitalized so far freely accessible at <http://www.archive.org>. He's also built an "Internet Bookmobile," a van that drives around the country downloading public-domain books from the archive via a satellite Net link, and he's even taken the Bookmobile to places like Uganda, Egypt and India, printing out books for children at \$1 a piece. His latest offering: 15,000 music concerts and 300 feature films. Kahle has recently asked Google to furnish him with a copy of its database, (with a six-month delay so Google's competitiveness doesn't suffer). Google has not yet decided what to do about Kahle's request. (San Jose Mercury News 11 Aug 2004)--ShelfLife, No. 170 (August 19 2004)

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