

Your voice

The demise of the web designer?

In response to Ivan Trundle's column 'The demise of the web designer' in the October issue [p8], while it is a good thing that the overblown nature of early web design has passed (for the time being), I do not hope to see a future where all websites have the same 'look and feel'. Why? Because it has the potential to be very boring.

The situation is a bit of a conundrum. Do we have to abandon creativity for the sake of knowing how every site works? Or do we maintain the spirit of discovery that was part of the early web?

It is hard to know what we would have to give up in design to achieve common navigation. Certainly, it is impossible to achieve where search engines are concerned. Who wants to think of the intellectual property lawsuits if people started copying new navigational methods from the search engines? After all, that is why search engines keep their technology secret.

Big bandwidth is on its way back. Cable has arrived in the United States and designers there have embraced Shockwave with little regard for the modems around the rest of

the world. The plug-in fad has begun again, only instead of there being hundreds of plug-ins, this time there is only one and a lot more people have it.

Library sites have already achieved similarity in 'look and feel'. Text, (sometimes) excessive navigation options, and a limited amount of colour. I am just waiting for a site to break the mould.

Fiona Bradley, Dundas NSW

To publish or not to publish...

I too am pleased to read that the non-production of the proceedings of the ALIA2000 conference is being reconsidered (*inCite* October 2000). It is becoming all too frequent that conference proceedings are either not available, or the preliminary papers or perhaps even the Powerpoint version of them, is available at some website or other.

How are our students going to learn about the thoughtful pearls of wisdom delivered by conference speakers if their papers continue to appear in such an 'informal' fashion, or not at all?

One might consider that such papers, once delivered, will appear in the scholarly literature. Well, it seems that it is

only we in academia who still need to publish. And when we do, we must head for the refereed literature in order to score valuable research points from our university masters. These masters are now insisting that our own conference papers appear in refereed conference proceedings: a normal occurrence in some disciplines, but not so common in our own. I recall when chair of the ALIA Publishing Committee that this issue was considered 'too hard', mainly because it was becoming increasingly difficult to encourage ALIA's divisions to publish their conference papers in the first place.

So please try and do this. They are read, you know.

*Kerry Smith,
Curtin University WA*

Write letters

The writing of letters to the editor is one of the first bastions of democracy. The public library is another.

I have been writing letters to Australian journals in support of public libraries since 1974.

Librarians are good with words. Let's use them!

*Arthur Mortimer,
Largs Bay SA*

Your voice

Your letters on any issue of relevance to the library and information sector are welcomed.

All letters should be addressed to the *inCite* editor and may be e-mailed to incite@alia.org.au, or faxed to 02 6282 2249, or posted to: Your voice, ALIA, PO Box E441, Kingston ACT 2604. Please include your name and postal address with your letter or e-mail.

Letters will be accepted for publication until the 18th of the month.

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