

PRESS RELEASE



California Digital Library

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October 4, 2001
Oakland, CA

CALIFORNIA DIGITAL LIBRARY AND BERKELEY ELECTRONIC PRESS ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP FOR SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES

The California Digital Library and Berkeley Electronic Press today (Thursday, Oct. 4) announced a partnership to advance innovations in scholarly communication.

Through the partnership, the California Digital Library (CDL) will make a suite of electronic publishing tools from the Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress) available to University of California researchers. The tools enable rapid and low-cost creation, management and online publication of electronic journals, discussion papers series and other electronic forms of scholarship.

The partnership is an important development for the library's eScholarship program supporting scholar-led innovations in online dissemination of research from the University of California and beyond.

The eScholarship program (escholarship.cdlib.org) is actively supporting new electronic publications and services for tobacco control research, environmental science, international and area studies, and dermatology research, among others. The newly forged partnership will extend new capabilities to those and additional fields.

The bepress technology will allow, for example, multiple "eprint" repositories in the social sciences to be created and integrated, thus supporting the emergence of a primary source of information for students and researchers in either a specific or a broad-based academic discipline.

New models in scholarly communication

The California Digital Library and The Berkeley Electronic Press have similar motivations and visions for improving scholarly communication. Creative use of technology to quickly, efficiently, and cheaply distribute research results is chief among them. Access to research will be enhanced by rapid dissemination, by nearly unlimited additional materials such as images, animations and original datasets, and by automating much of the editing and peer review process.

A practical example of this shared vision is eNvironment, a new online peer-reviewed journal in development for support by the CDL and enabled by bepress software. Overseen by a multidisciplinary editorial board from UCLA, eNviroment will provide cutting-edge research,

supported by integrated multimedia files, executable files and similar materials, on environmental topics.

Creating alternatives to traditional publishing that overcome its inefficiencies is another part of the shared vision. Researchers often wait many months to have their work published, with delays at every stage. Among the major sources of frustration are long lag times during peer-review, revisions, and the wait for articles until an entire issue of a journal is filled.

The Berkeley Electronic Press system reduces such bottlenecks and their costs, while providing online tools for quality control and peer review that are appropriate for various forms and stages of scholarship.

The California Digital Library established its eScholarship program to support scholars ready to address these issues and experiment with alternatives. "CDL is committed to the concept of scholar-led innovations in the communication of research," says Catherine Candee, director of CDL's Scholarly Communication Initiatives.

"Providing bepress editorial tools to our faculty partners and hosting their content online is a great way to further this aim," she says. "Now, a research institute at UCLA or a lab at UC Berkeley can use an eScholarship hosted eprint server or electronic journal to release their work. There is no reason these new publications could not be extended to other members of their disciplines, fostering broad-based change."

The Berkeley Electronic Press system is a comprehensive and easy-to-use tool for scholarly publishing. University of California researchers interested in establishing a new electronic journal, preprint (i.e., non-refereed) series or other form of scholarly communication will be able to customize their product's presentation, policies and functionality.

For example, some researchers may wish to use The Authors & Reviewers' Bank, a component that allows editors to track scholars' contributions as writers and referees. Others might wish to employ the bepress journal family concept, whereby multiple unique journals concentrating on a single subject area share editorial boards and peer evaluation mechanisms.

Like many of the features within the bepress system, these elements are modular; as a result, each journal or preprint series will have its own unique look and feel.

"We have created a range of tools that are ideally suited for this type of partnership," says Robert Cooter, co-CEO of The Berkeley Electronic Press. "The primary goal of our company is to place the publishing power in the hands of the individual researcher. Our relationship with the California Digital Library ensures that cutting-edge research will be more readily available, with lower barriers of access. We are quite pleased to have the insight of CDL and its member communities to help shape our future efforts."

About The California Digital Library

The CDL, which partners with the 10 UC campuses in a continuing commitment to apply innovative technology to managing scholarly information, opened to the public in January 1999.

As a digital “co-library,” complementing and partnering with the physical libraries of the UC system, the CDL uses technology to efficiently share materials held by UC, to provide greater and easier access to digital content, and to join with researchers in developing new tools and innovations for scholarly communication.

About The Berkeley Electronic Press

Three University of California, Berkeley, professors founded the Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress) in 1999. As scholarly authors and editors themselves, they realized that scholarly publication was plagued by difficulties. Characterized by slow time to market, typesetting gaffes, an inequitable revenue split between contributor and publisher, and exorbitant subscription rates, the scholarly journal system was broken. bepress develops Internet-based software to address these problems. In addition to licensing these tools, bepress publishes its own slate of electronic journals.

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Editors: For additional information on the CDL please contact John Ober, CDL director for education & strategic innovation, (510) 987-04254; or John.Ober@ucop.edu. Additional information about the California Digital Library may be found at the CDL web site, <http://www.cdlib.org> .

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