

**CONTENTS:**

[Editorial](#)

[Up and Coming Meetings](#)

[Previous Meetings](#)

[Wired Libraries](#)

[E-book borrowing system called most extensive in nation](#)

[Swets Blackwell delivers single integrated platform with SwetsWise online content](#)

[Subscriptions: Dispute centres on \\$50 million in subscription fees](#)

[Subscriptions: Bad deal cheats library of \\$140,000](#)

[Management Support of Corporate/Special Libraries - Survey Results](#)

[Libraries' latest winning chapter](#)

[Keeping up with readers Libraries challenged by rapid growth](#)

[Log On For Free At The Library](#)

[ONLINE User News - SAOUG - INTYDSE Nuus Publication Details](#)

**EDITORIAL**

Well, pen has been put to paper at last, or rather finger to keys and this newsletter which has been in embryonic form since last June has finally made it off my desktop! To all of you who have queried its non-appearance asking whether it has ceased publication - thank you for showing concern and I apologise for the delay!

This is the first edition of our new electronic newsletter which hopefully means the end of "envelope stuffing" for the committee and faster delivery time to you!

Abstracts have been received and papers are being selected for what we hope will be a stimulating conference for you in June this year. Our choice of venue is rather unusual but we plan to whisk you right away from your normal office lives into a relaxing rural surrounding which will offer lots of variety and interest to you all - especially for our overseas speakers and visitors who will have a chance to visits Ngwenya Glass, the Rhino and Elephant Park and many more local interest spots. The emphasis is on "casual" for dress and we hope you will all enjoy yourselves in the bush.

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**UP AND COMING MEETINGS!**

*SAOUG Conference*

3-5th June 2003

Misty Hills Conference Centre

Muldersdrift

*And keep these dates in mind although nothing final has been organised:*

2nd week of August (13-14th)

November 5-6th or 12-13th

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## PREVIOUS MEETINGS

**Prof Nick Binedell**

### **Strategy in the Information Era: Building Institutional Capabilities**

Date: 13 February 2003

Time: 07:30 for 08:00

Venue: Saint George Hotel, 58 Old Pretoria-Kempton Park Road, Rietveldam

Professor Binedell is always a motivational, rousing and energetic speaker and this meeting was no exception. My notes on his talk follow:

What makes institutions work? They must be based on Trust, friendship and common commitment.

Capability/craft - Are we good at what we do, do we communicate with each other?

When something becomes a routine- we stop thinking about it i.e. driving on auto pilot - it is when we are not paying attention that organisations fail.

Chose where you are going.

Are we changing fast enough to keep up with technology?

There are enormous changes going on around us-some predictable, some not. i.e. Sept 11, Internet .coms, collapse of Japans economy.

By using our capacity to imagine the future we can enrich the lives of leaders by providing information. SA is a doing, practical nation. Some think, some do, some do both - very few.

How do leaders make what they want to happen, happen. Leadership is about imagination. How bold are you willing to be? Management is about coping. Rate of change in SA will accelerate.

Optimists & Pessimists

Our national character is in an upbeat mood at the moment. The resources of a country are secondary to the imagination of the people. The country we have come from no longer exists - we are now in a new world where we need more vision than memory.

Change - are you leading it or just following along? SA is a frontier society. Adventurous, breaking new ground. Dangerous, risk, conflict, fights.

We have a pioneering spirit and we can cope with this but we need a sense of purpose and commitment.

New citizenship, leadership is about being right for the time you are in.

There is a drought of knowledge in SA. Leaders need new ideas and should be getting them from us. What's your vision of the future? What is the dynamism of our time?

Do we create or hinder change? Change is the capital that will make or break us.

What are we going to do with the time we have.

Our job is to lead, get the job done, to deliver.

Look at your team - which is stronger, the memory or the vision?

What is your point of view of the future - what plans do you have about globalisation, speed, knowledge, insight etc You have got to get out there and be speaking to people. We don't want an inside out view of the world - we need an outside-in view - learn to know how your users think. Don't get stuck in routines - throw away what doesn't work Ask yourself "does this thing create value?" if not chuck it out!  
Don't try to keep doing everything, it is counter productive, you will end up doing more and more but being less and less effective.

Do something new - get into the frontier. Ask yourself:  
What's next, what are the unmet needs?  
What am I doing that people really want us to do but other people can't do - what is our distinctiveness as a service provider? Don't get lost in the woods.  
What are you good at doing that others can't do? What is your strategy?

When building change - look at the structure, are the systems and duties aligned with the future or with the past? Look at the culture, the "gees". To succeed you must have a passion for what you do. Great careers happen when people love what they do.

Librarians have the dignity of knowing that they have helped people to get the job done.

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## **WIRED LIBRARIES**

The Internet was supposed to kill the library star (such as it was) but the effect has been quite the opposite, reports Steven Freiss in The Christian Science Monitor (7/25/02). Far from rendering them obsolete, as some had predicted, the Internet -- as well as inexpensive access to DVDs and CDs -- is driving traffic to libraries. As a result, library construction -- and public support for it -- is up: "Last year, \$686 million was spent on library construction -- the second-highest dollar total ever spent, and a 15 percent increase over a decade ago." That's according to the American Library Association (ALA), which also reports the construction of 80 new libraries last year, not to mention high-wired renovations of 132 existing ones.

A total of 1.7 billion items were checked out of America's 122,000 libraries in 1999 (last time the number was reported), up 21 percent since 1990. Public support is meanwhile on the upswing, as "voters in 23 states passed referendums supporting libraries in 2001." The renovations sometimes "include construction of amphitheatres and rooms for community meetings, making the library the centre of civic activity, especially in rural areas where it is often the only public building open every day. Library branches are also popping up in unexpected locations, such as the one on the second floor of a shopping mall in the border town of San Ysidro, California." Each morning, people reportedly form a line at the door before the Reno, Nevada library opens -- just to use the computers.

The only downside, apparently, is a librarian shortage. An estimated 58 percent of all librarians are over age 45 and likely will retire sometime over the next two decades. The problem is, "students graduating with degrees in the library sciences are often snapped up by corporations, who pay more than the public sector." Even though some municipalities are having no trouble gaining public support for building funds, librarian salaries must be squeezed out of "the same tight budgets that pay for police, fire and other services." Hard to imagine how that problem won't be solved (c'mon corporate America, pony up!). As Maurice Freedman, the ALA's president puts it: "The allocation of serious money says Americans all over this nation believe their libraries have a future."

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## **E-BOOK BORROWING SYSTEM CALLED MOST EXTENSIVE IN NATION**

*By Paul Singer  
Associated Press Newswires  
8 January 2003*

CLEVELAND (AP) - A consortium of north-east Ohio libraries is starting what experts say could be the most ambitious service in the nation allowing people to "borrow" electronic versions of popular books over the Internet.

Libraries across the nation are experimenting with various approaches to lending e-books, but Cleveland's program will offer more types of titles and distribute them to more people.

"I'm not aware of any other library in the country that is doing this to this degree," said Lynda Murray, director of government relations for the Ohio Library Council.

With the e-book concept still in its formative stage, libraries are seen as the next market where e-books can be tested for consumers, said Neil DeYoung, a spokesman for the publishing division of Scholastic Inc. Library borrowing will allow readers to experiment with e-books instead of buying them from a publisher or an online bookstore, he said.

"You can try it out and play with it and then give it back, and we can test the viability of the model," DeYoung said.

Most libraries have added digital content to collections, and some have begun lending programs that allow patrons to "check out" electronic books. Some libraries have purchased e-book readers - akin to small laptop computers - with books already loaded that patrons can check out and return. Most libraries have limited e-book lending to reference and academic titles. But the Cleveland project- a \$50,000 joint effort of the Cleveland Public Library and 30 other northern Ohio libraries that are members of the Clevenet consortium - will include a host of popular book titles, such as Michael Crichton's "Prey," the new top-selling thriller from publisher HarperCollins.

While other library exchange programs have been limited to reading e-books on a desktop computer or hand-held device, the Cleveland system will allow anyone with a library card to download text from libraries' Web sites. In some cases, patrons can transfer the books later from one format to another, such as from a home computer to a hand-held computer. Like a paper book, once an e-book is checked out by a patron, the library's copy locks, and no other visitor can borrow it. Unlike a paper book, the e-book automatically expires in the borrower's computer at the end of the lending period, and unlocks in the library's collection.

Steven Potash, CEO of OverDrive, the company that will manage access to Clevenet's e-book database, said the collection will be available in March with about 1,000 titles. The libraries can add titles as they would with paper books, through purchase agreements with the publishers, he said. The e-book lending system uses a series of secure codes to ensure the book is available to only one reader at a time for a limited time, Potash said.

Stuart Applebaum, a spokesman for Random House Inc., said security of copyrighted information is publishers' biggest concern before licensing e-books.

"We simply do not participate if the security cannot be assured," Applebaum said.

Random House has published about 1,000 electronic titles.

"We are optimistic that it is a format that will continue to grow in interest and popularity," he said.

Ohio allows residents to get a library card at any facility in the state, so they will be able to borrow e-books from Cleveland libraries no matter where they live, Sari Feldman, deputy director of the Cleveland Public Library.

"We've been wanting to do this for a long time," she said.

Bob Carterette Jr., head of automation services for the Cleveland library, said the system should save the library money in the long run because e-books cost nothing to store or maintain and do not require contact with staff members.

"We don't have to shelve it. We don't have to worry about people tearing out the pages or spilling their orange juice on it," Carterette said. "It becomes a patron self-service library."

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## **SWETS BLACKWELL DELIVERS SINGLE INTEGRATED PLATFORM WITH SWETSWISE ONLINE CONTENT**

*Lisse, the Netherlands*

*Swets*

*15 October 2002*

Blackwell, the leading global subscription and information services company, today unveiled a major new addition to SwetsWise&REG; ([www.swetswise.com](http://www.swetswise.com)), its web-based service launched in 2001 as an e-procurement solution for journals, magazines and other periodical literature. With the arrival of SwetsWise online content the service is brought up to its full complement, making it the only product on the market to offer users a single platform for both web-based management of subscriptions and access to electronic journals.

SwetsWise online content is the premier tool for managing electronic information needs. The service offers users a single point of access to content from the world's leading publishers, boasting over 12 million searchable references and links to full-text articles available from such prestigious publishers as Elsevier Science, Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, OECD, Blackwell Publishing, John Wiley, MIT Press and Springer-Verlag.

"Since launching in July 2001, we have been working tirelessly to deliver a service that will break the mold. SwetsWise online content was designed to make accessing and managing electronic content easier than ever," said Arjen Oudheusden, Swets Blackwell's Marketing Director. "Together with the e-procurement capabilities of SwetsWise subscriptions, the service will provide our customers with a full online information management solution - with a link between purchasing, administration and provision of access to content."

SwetsWise online content replaces SwetsnetNavigator, the e-journal gateway service that first appeared in 1997, and contains all the functionality of its precursor and more. Customers will enjoy such features as pay-per-view, rights management and the industry's most advanced statistic reporting, as well as a revamped interface that

provides a more user-friendly and intuitive environment.

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## **SUBSCRIPTION NIGHTMARE! DIVINE IN TALKS ON LIBRARIES: DISPUTE CENTRES ON \$50 MILLION IN SUBSCRIPTION FEES**

*By Robert Manor and Rob Kaiser, Tribune staff reporters  
Chicago Tribune  
18 January 2003*

Chicago-based Divine Inc. is in negotiations with a handful of publishers and a Dutch competitor to resolve a problem that threatens to interrupt the flow of periodicals to thousands of libraries across the nation.

A Divine subsidiary, RoweCom, collected at least \$50 million from as many as 4,000 libraries for subscriptions last year, but failed to pay the publishers. The money was used to pay RoweCom's operating costs and debts, Divine executives have said.

Now, negotiators for the magazine publishers, Divine, and Swets Blackwell, a Dutch firm that arranges periodical subscriptions, are trying to allocate among themselves the cost of the subscriptions, said Alan J. Hess, vice president of sales and marketing for Swets Blackwell in the United States.

"Our strategy is to structure this so that a portion of the money would be put forward by the RoweCom side," Hess said. "Swets Blackwell would put together some of the money. And concessions, discounts, by the publishers would cover part of the cost."

Swets Blackwell also would take over RoweCom's business and acquire its assets. The arrangement would keep the journals flowing to public, university and corporate libraries. Many of the periodicals deal with technical or medical matters and are essential to doctors, academics and scientists, librarians say.

"We are not looking to assume any of the liability of the organisation," Hess said. He also said his firm, the world's largest subscription aggregator, is insisting that the library's financial claims be settled if the deal is to go through. A Divine spokeswoman declined to comment. But a person familiar with the matter said Divine would pay \$20 million, under one version of the arrangement, and agree to a lien on future earnings, should Divine become profitable.

Besides RoweCom, the talks include three large publishing houses--Reed Elsevier, John Wiley and Blackwell. The latter firm is not related to Swets Blackwell.

Talks in the community of Lisse, in the Netherlands, continued after the parties lifted a Friday deadline to reach an agreement. Lisse is the international headquarters of Swets Blackwell. Librarians are hoping for a resolution.

"I think there will be some sharing of the pain" between the publishers and Divine, said Duane Webster, executive director of the Association of Research Libraries.

Don Ralbovsky, a spokesman for the National Institutes of Health, said a library in the institute's clinical centre in Bethesda, Md., had a \$4 million contract with RoweCom.

"We have informed our researchers of the problem," Ralbovsky said. "We hope there will

not be any interruption of journal service."

RoweCom's corporate parent, Divine, has obvious reasons to agree to a deal. The company faces a potentially huge legal liability.

The Divine subsidiary has already been sued by the New York attorney general's office for having accepted \$1.3 million from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Lawyers are asking for a \$50 million judgement against the company. Small and underfunded publishers might go out of business if they lose subscribers, Hess said. Larger publishers fear that some subscribers may never return.

Hess also said that aggregators, like his employer, would suffer if libraries become gunshy of ordering subscriptions. He said that one library demanded that its money be placed in an escrow account, and if the practice spreads, it would complicate the aggregators' business.

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### **BAD DEAL CHEATS LIBRARY OF \$140,000 MAGAZINE SUPPLIER BILKED MILLIONS LIBRARIES ACROSS CONTINENT AFFECTED**

*By Kerry Gillespie  
Toronto Star  
18 January 2003*

The City of Toronto is out \$140,000 after a U.S. company paid to supply magazine subscriptions to thousands of libraries reneged on its agreements. The city's library system paid the subscription service \$573,000 for copies of popular magazines, including National Geographic, Maclean's, Business Week and Boating World. But the company didn't pass all the money on to the publishers. Compared with libraries elsewhere that did business with RoweCom, a subsidiary of Chicago-based Divine Inc., the city got off lightly. Losses across North America are thought to be about \$50 million (U.S.).

Staff at the Toronto Public Library got calls from American librarians warning of financial problems Dec. 18 - two days before the company sent a news release explaining it had used the subscription money to pay operating costs and debt. Staff immediately stopped payment on all cheques, thereby recouping \$192,000, communications director Suzanna Birchwood said yesterday. The library bought additional subscriptions to 4,000 missing magazines so library users will still have their favourites, and it's taking steps to get the money back, Birchwood said.

The State University of Buffalo lost \$800,000, and the New York attorney general's office has filed suit against RoweCom. The subscription service, one of North America's largest, does business with thousands of public and academic libraries. Toronto certainly isn't the only Canadian library affected, Don Butcher, executive director of the Canadian Library Association, said from Ottawa. "The stories that I've heard are shocking, some devastating, particularly (for) some of the smaller public libraries."

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### **MANAGEMENT SUPPORT OF CORPORATE/SPECIAL LIBRARIES - SURVEY**

## **RESULTS**

*By Jill Strand  
jill.strand@target.com*

Jill Strand conducted a survey via email on the Business Librarians to be included in her MLIS thesis. Here are her questions and summaries of the results.

### **QUESTIONS:**

I'd like to get an idea about what kind of support corporate information centres currently receive from upper management and what they are doing to market their services. Any information you can share with me about your library/information centre by answering the questions below would be greatly appreciated.

#### *A Few Details*

- Name & title of library director:
- The name of your library or information centre:
- Company/Organisation name:
- Who does the library director report to (that person's title) and how frequently?

#### *Recent Changes*

- Has the size of your library budget, space, print or electronic sources, serials or staff increased or decreased recently?
- How has the downturn in the economy affected your information centre or your job?

#### *Marketing Efforts*

- How does your library or information centre market its services? Examples: newsletter, website, new resource updates, training workshops or outreach.
- How does your library or information centre demonstrate the value of its services to upper management (or those responsible for budget and other key decisions?)

### **SUMMARY OF RESULTS:**

Overall I received from a wide range of corporate libraries across the country, including a few in Fortune 500 firms. Industries represented included technology & software, agribusiness, chemical, law, energy, medical products, advertising and travel. (A majority of the respondents asked that their names or the names of their company not be used.) There were some common themes in terms of staff size, budget and marketing efforts while the department and title of the person the library reported to varied greatly.

#### *Staff size*

The library size in term of staff ranged from solo libraries to staffs as large as 12. At least half of those on staff had an MLS. The average total staff size was five.

#### *Budget*

The majority of library budgets had remained static with a few noting increases as they purchased more electronic resources or hired additional staff to keep up with workloads. One Fortune 500 firm had received approval to add more staff but had to wait due to a company-wide hiring freeze. As one director commented, "lean & mean" was the rule of the day for most information centres in the current economy.

#### *Collection*

A majority of the libraries said that their print collections had decreased while their electronic collections had increased. This was due in part to a greater demand for electronic resources and a decrease in square footage for some libraries. One library director noted that it can "send the wrong message" to have a large print collection given the focus on Internet and electronic resources.

#### *Upper management*

Information centres fell into a wide variety of departments including Science & Technology, Marketing, Public Affairs and Administrative Services. The titles of whom library directors reported to ranged from vice president of strategic planning and global marketing to director of corporate technology services and firm administrator. Generally, the information managers felt that they had strong support from upper management with no one stating specifically that they did not. One noted that their presence at Operations & Management meetings helped to ensure that the information centre's needs and goals were always on upper management's radar.

#### *Demonstrating value*

At a minimum, most information managers met with upper management on a monthly basis with some meeting weekly. A majority had set goals and objectives to achieve each year and needed to show a ROI (return on investment.)

A few charged back their services, personal subscriptions and the cost of specific resource materials to departments. Most maintained detailed usage statistics on time spent for research and did some kind of cost/benefit analysis that was reported to upper management on a regular basis. One firm even designed their own database in Microsoft Access to track the amount of time, cost and resources used to answer client questions as well as the department making the information request.

#### *Marketing efforts*

There was a lot of overlap in this area with some interesting ideas. Dedicated intranet pages or websites, newsletters, current awareness alerts, new resources updates and training workshops were common strategies. Several hosted open house events and had regularly published articles in the company newsletter in addition to their own information centre newsletter. One had their training sessions listed with the company's other courses offerings where employees could register online. Another offered "@ your desk" training while one even featured daily treats and a popcorn wagon. "The challenge is to do these things in new, fresh, attention-getting ways," noted one information manager.

Overall, most of the corporate libraries I heard from seemed to be doing well despite the current economy. However, I know that there are those that have disappeared altogether due to downsizing and budget cuts within their companies. In the Twin Cities, (where I work) these include corporate libraries at Arthur Anderson, ING ReliaStar, American Express and NRG Energy, all within the last two years. It would seem that today's information professionals have learned to adapt and grow as needed.

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## **LIBRARIES' LATEST WINNING CHAPTER**

*Newsquest Media Group Newspapers*  
17 January 2003

STOCKTON Borough Council's library service has won a place on the shortlist for a national award. The service will battle it out with representatives from three other local

authorities for the title of Management Team of the Year in the 2002 Awards for Excellence, run by the Local Government Chronicle magazine.

The award, which is sponsored by BT, recognises managers who have been able to demonstrate that little bit extra. Councillor Bob Gibson, leader of the council, said: "This is wonderful news and I would like to congratulate the team and all the library staff for this richly-deserved recognition for their hard work."

The library service has already achieved national recognition, winning Beacon Status for the authority under the theme of libraries as a community resource. Also last year, the service gained the Charter Mark status for a second time for the quality of its service.

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## **KEEPING UP WITH READERS LIBRARIES CHALLENGED BY RAPID GROWTH**

*By Doug Nurse  
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution  
16 January 2003*

Stephanie Washington of Centerville typifies the challenge the Gwinnett Public Library System faces. She's young, 26. She has a 4-year-old son. She's educated, having attended Clayton College & State University. She's technologically savvy. She moved to Gwinnett about 18 months ago. A devoted bibliophile, she visits the library several times a month.

In short, Washington fits several of the demographic elements that are stretching the library system. More people who read require more books and more libraries. "It's a good problem to have," said JoAnn Pinder, director of the Gwinnett County Public Library System. "We're struggling, but we're struggling fairly well, or people wouldn't come back." According to the census, Gwinnett County's population grew 67 percent from 1990 to 2000, to 588,000, and was estimated to be 621,000 in 2002. At least a third of the residents have college degrees, and 88 percent graduated from high school. About 36 percent are under 18. These are traditionally heavy users of libraries. Those demographic trends are expected to continue unabated for a while.

Pinder predicted the county, which has 11 branches, will have 20 branches by 2020. It could use five or six of them right now, she said. The county has built two branches in the last five years, One is scheduled to open in Suwanee next year. But the recent intense competition between Dacula and Grayson illustrates the pressure for more facilities. The two cities, both growing at warp speed, leaned on County Commissioner John Dunn to select them as the site of the next branch. After hearing from the library board last week, Dunn decided to back the board's recommendation and support Dacula.

The Dacula branch should open in 2005. Grayson's branch is being designed, although it won't open before 2006. County officials also anticipate branches for the Hamilton Mill and Sugarloaf areas. Each branch costs \$5 million to \$6 million to build and \$1 million a year to operate.

Gwinnett County Administrator Charlotte Nash said the county is dedicated to the library system, but it has to compete with other needs.

"You have to balance one thing against another," she said. "It's a matter of priorities how those things play out. We have to fund public safety and the courts, and transportation and parks. But libraries are important from an education standpoint and

an economic standpoint. I can't imagine not having access to books. That's the very heart of being a civilised people."

The county pledged \$19 million from the 2001 1 percent sales tax revenue for libraries, which Nash said illustrated the county's commitment to a top-notch library system. The county library budget has grown from \$10.1 million in 1997 to \$15.2 million for 2003.

But the stress shows in the number of books. Although Gwinnett County was named library of the year in 2000 by the Library Journal and the publisher Gale Group, it is among the bottom in the state in terms of books per capita.

The standard adopted by the Georgia Public Library Association calls for libraries to have two books or magazines per resident. Gwinnett has 1.22, trailing the Ocmulgee Regional Library System at 3.99, Atlanta-Fulton at 2.96 and Cobb at 1.39.

Gwinnett County has about 690,000 books, compared with Ocmulgee's 247,500, Atlanta's 2.25 million and Cobb's 828,000.

Pinder said the Gwinnett County Public Library staff has decided to be a popular library rather than a research library, which typically has a broader collection. That means a focus on buying books people will read rather than warehousing unread books on the shelves.

"We need to have the right books," Pinder said. "We don't have the shelf space to just keep books around. I'd rather have one book that gets checked out than two that don't."

She said Gwinnett's books tend to be checked out seven times a year. David Singleton of the Georgia Public Library System said the state average is two to three times a year.

Technology also is helping the Gwinnett library system keep up with demand, Pinder said. Computers enable patrons to check out books the way some supermarkets scan groceries. Computers also enable people to put holds on books they want, and half of all notices to patrons come through the Internet now, she said. And library users can renew books over the Internet.

Stephanie Washington, the ideal patron, loves the Gwinnett system. "I think Gwinnett County has a good library," she said. "It's better than DeKalb's or Clayton County's. It's more efficient, and it has more variety."

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## **LOG ON FOR FREE AT THE LIBRARY**

*Evening Herald*  
13 January 2003

More than 300 computers are now available free of charge to library users across Devon, thanks to the completion of a £1.3 million investment programme.

The county's 56 libraries have benefited from 306 computers funded through the New Opportunities Fund People's Network, which is backed by the National Lottery.

Now, visitors to the libraries can surf the internet, access emails or take advantage of a variety of software for up to half an hour each day, free of charge.

If they wish to stay on the computer for longer, it will cost £1.50 per 30 minutes.

The lottery fund has also paid for the Devon Library Service to train staff with sufficient computer skills to help and guide users of the new resources.

Devon County Council's executive chairman for lifelong learning, Councillor Saxon Spence, said it was an exciting development for the county.

"Our society is becoming more and more computer based," he said.

"But a significant number of homes in the county still do not have access to a computer.

"Now people can have free use of a computer at their local library to surf the internet, send and receive emails and study using online courses."

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The editor invites readers to submit articles, comments and news items for publication in this newsletter.

The Southern African Online User Group assumes no responsibility for the statements advanced by contributors to this newsletter. Editorial views do not necessarily represent official positions of the Southern African Online User Group.

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