



## welcome

Welcome to the fifth issue of our newsletter. In this issue everything is new and future! Intrallect has grown which has resulted in a few changes. We would welcome feedback on the newsletter so please get in touch. If you know people who would like to receive the newsletter they can sign up at <http://www.intrallect.com/news/newsletter.htm> where this and previous issues can also be found.



**Martin Morrey presenting at our "Future Visions" event**

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contact us:  
t: +44 870 234 3933  
f: +44 1506 670 922  
e: [enquiries@intrallect.com](mailto:enquiries@intrallect.com)

## new people, new office, new intraLibrary

The last few months have seen some big changes at Intrallect. The company has expanded and as a result we have moved to new premises. We can now all be in the office at the same time if we want! See p4 to learn about our new

staff and office.

Also, the latest version of intraLibrary, v2.8 has been released and the article below outlines the new features.

## new intraLibrary

Intrallect has released the latest version of intraLibrary that allows users to view thumbnail images of content within the learning object repository. The new release means that users will be able to quickly preview images to determine which are most suitable for their use, reducing the time taken to search.

"We are constantly refining intraLibrary in terms of the way it works and how it can help users and contributors get the most out of their learning objects" said Sarah Currier, Product Manager for intraLibrary. "Many educators have large collections of images that they wish to use in teaching: now they can search and preview these easily in intraLibrary".

Another key feature of intraLibrary is the ability of users to comment on and give

a "star rating" to objects created by others. Now users can search for objects based on average star ratings – they will be able to select those learning objects that have been highly rated by their peers – helping them to find and use high quality learning objects suitable for their needs.

Improvements for repository managers include an easy web interface for managing metadata application profiles and vocabularies, and support for different languages.

These enhancements continue to fuel the growth that Intrallect is seeing with intraLibrary, particularly in the schools sector, where intraLibrary is becoming increasingly central to the organisation, sharing and reuse of learning objects.

The screenshot shows the 'Advanced Search' interface of intraLibrary. The search results section displays four objects found, each with a thumbnail image and metadata. The objects are:

- Why is Bran good for you?**: A document with an average rating of (no ratings) and a technical format of application/msword. Size of object: 24 kb.
- Brandenburg Gate by night**: A photo with an average rating of (no ratings) and a technical format of image/jpeg. Size of object: 603 kb.
- How is Brandy made?**: A document with an average rating of (no ratings) and a technical format of application/pdf. Size of object: 7 kb.
- Brandenburg Gate by night - detail**: A photo with an average rating of (no ratings) and a technical format of image/jpeg. Size of object: 618 kb.

**intraLibrary v2.8 is capable of showing image thumbnails**

# Looking back on future visions

The "Future Visions" day followed the User Day, and presenters were asked to take a look into the medium-term future to speculate on how their service and e-learning in general would change over that time to reflect the needs of their audiences and the technological advances that were with us now. As one of the presenters commented, quoting William Gibson (in Neuromancer) - "the future is already here, it's just not evenly distributed".

Intrallect was delighted to welcome over 50 delegates to hear Anne Eastgate of BBC Jam, Chris Pegler of the Open University and Colin Milligan of Strathclyde University, as well as our own Martin Morrey, speak about how they saw the future from the perspective of their own organisations and personal interests in e-learning.

A feature of the venue was an electronic voting system, and speakers were encouraged to include questions within their presentations to gauge the audiences view's on various topics, to both fuel the debate and get feedback on key issues.

## Martin Morrey - Intrallect

Martin Morrey, Intrallect's Product Director was first up to ask the question "Repositories - where are they going and why?"

Martin asked three questions relating to managing content, sharing content and re-using content. Was each important, happening now, and would it be happening by 2010? It was immediately clear that the audience saw a huge mismatch between the desirability of each characteristic and the current position - and only around half thought that much progress would be made in the next three years. See the table below for the responses to each question.

## Anne Eastgate - BBC

Anne talked about the scope and range of the BBC Jam project (this talk was given before the BBC Trust suspended the BBC Jam service). The £150m project is designed to deliver free online interactive learning resources for use in school and the home. It is aimed at the 5-16 age group in the UK, and content is designed to support key areas of the school curriculum for learners of all



Anne Eastgate, BBC

abilities.

A range of interesting and varied multimedia content was demonstrated. Anne asked just one question of the audience, relating to whether by 2010 teachers would be supported in schools by the right infrastructure to allow them to fully participate in "their space". Less than a quarter of the delegates thought this would be the case. More work is evidently needed in this area.

## Chris Pegler - The Open University

Chris focused her presentation on the question of what will we want next from new learning activities. She started by asking how many of the delegates had actually ever been an e-learner on a formal course. Perhaps surprisingly, less than half of the delegates had actually participated in e-learning from a user's perspective.

The point was made that recent developments in learning (including e-learning) had created courses that were more engaging, interesting - entertaining even - but we were in danger of failing to maximise the opportunity. Chris' presentation went on to look at what these limiting factors were. She used the metaphor of a hot-air balloon, inflated and ready to go, but

	Important?	Happening Now?	Happening by 2010?
<b>Managing Content</b>			
<b>Sharing Content</b>			
<b>Re-using Content</b>			

Yes No

The audience's responses to various questions posed by Martin Morrey

## Looking back on future visions (cont.)

being held on the ground by ropes – what were the ropes and how could they be cut or untied to release the balloon allowing it to reach its potential.

The “limiting factors” were identified as centring on our interaction with technology, and whether lecturers and students were in control of the technology, or the technology was controlling them.



**Chris Pegler, Open University**

New technology also opened up endless possibilities – so many possibilities that no one would be able to take advantage of them all, so choices had to be made. It was revealing that when asked if they found it easy to make choices, only around a quarter of the delegates admitted to finding it easy to make choices. If this is the case, what chance does an undergraduate have when faced with a myriad of options and opportunities?

### **Colin Milligan – Strathclyde University**

Colin looked at Individuality and Personalisation, specifically, how will learning become more individual? Colin kicked off by asking if personalisation and individualisation are important topics in education now. Around 55% of the delegates thought so, but Colin then raised the point made by the Nesta FutureLab in 2006 that if you asked six people what personalised learning

means you will get six different answers. Clearly, the definition of “personalised” is as important as whether it is being achieved.

He then took a look at “Web 2.0”, and how the concepts behind it – loosely defined as they are at the moment, and possibly it being “all things to all men” – would affect individual’s learning options. The next question asked of the delegates related to their impression of whether current systems support Personalisation and Individualisation. Only 10% of the audience thought this to be the case.

The presentation then explored where we are heading in terms of Personalisation and Individualisation, and proposed that in a personalised learning environment the learner is in control, and can drive their learning programme to create learning opportunities. Delegates were given an opportunity to state whether they saw this as a practical way forward in a formal educational environment – the audience was almost split down the middle on this question, with a slight bias in agreement of the proposition. Finally the question of whether



**Colin Milligan, Strathclyde University**

educational systems could actually evolve to make Personalisation and Individualisation a reality saw only 30% believing that it could.

These are only very brief summaries of the presentations and the delegate feedback to some of the thought-provoking questions asked by the presenters. For copies of the individual presentations please go to [http://www.intrallect.com/news/user\\_day\\_2007/index.htm](http://www.intrallect.com/news/user_day_2007/index.htm).

Photos by Steve Owst



**The “Future Visions” Venue:  
The Scottish Headquarters of the British Medical Association**

## new people

Since the last issue of our newsletter we have had several new staff join, effectively doubling in size:

### **Sarah Currier – Product Manager**

Sarah Currier is an internationally known expert on e-learning content and interoperability, who has enjoyed a long association with the Intrallect team on various projects. In her new role she continues her involvement with learning technology standards with JISC-CETIS, IMS and the Dublin Core Educational Community, which she currently co-chairs.

### **Allan Dewar – Developer**

A born and bred South African who came to Scotland 3 years ago to travel and see the world but never made it any further. Interests include good food, South

African politics, rugby and looking for a cheap flat to buy in Edinburgh.

### **Brian Casey - Business Development**

Brian has joined Intrallect to focus on developing sales of intraLibrary by expanding the company's relationship with its network of business partners. He has over 10 years business development and marketing experience in the software sector both in the UK and on an international basis.

### **Graham Wright - Marketing**

Brings over 20 years experience in business-to-business marketing in a range of business sectors, and will focus on developing Intrallect's market presence. Interests include coaching his eldest son's school football team, although as a Barnsley fan he obviously

knows little about the game.

### **Elaine Robertson - Administrator**

Elaine brings some much-needed administrative support to Intrallect and has developed new procedures and put new systems in place to ensure the "smooth running" of the office. Originally from Shotts (North Lanarkshire), Elaine has lived in Linlithgow for 15 years.

### **Graham Clark - Systems Administrator**

Graham has joined Intrallect as System Administrator to provide support to the team and further develop our IT infrastructure. He has over 5 years experience of working with technologies in the areas of research, education and learning object repositories. His interests include learning Swedish, snowboarding and music.

## new office



**One of the rooms in the new offices in Linlithgow**

In October 2006 Intrallect made the long-awaited move into new offices. Our previous address had been standing-room only for quite a while – so it was a relief to be able to spread out a little and work in more pleasant surroundings – and with natural light! The new offices occupy the top floor of Regent House in

the centre of the historic town of Linlithgow. The only downside is we are too close to Tesco, and the temptation to regularly buy cakes is, for some, too strong to resist.

Our phone number remains the same (0870 234 3933) but our new address

## events

### **4-6 September 2007 ALT-C Nottingham**

As always we will be exhibiting at ALT-C this year. Please come and visit our stand for a chat and demos of the latest version of intraLibrary.

### **28-30 Nov 2007 Online Educa Berlin**

We will also be returning to Online Educa Berlin this year. This is the showcase event in the e-Learning calendar and should not be missed.h

and fax number are as follows:

Intrallect Limited,  
2nd Floor Regent House,  
Blackness Road,  
Linlithgow,  
EH49 7HU

Fax: 01506 670 922