Editorial

As a new Editor-in-Chief of *Information Services & Use* (ISU) I would like to introduce myself to our readers. My name is Johan van Halm and I work as a consultant for the information industry in its widest sense since the end of the seventies. One of my other areas of interest is digital libraries, library automation or more general the introduction of ICT in libraries and information services. Currently I'm the Chairman of EUSIDIC, the European Association of Information Services, and you will see in future issues more about EUSIDIC, its members and its conferences. Please, don't hesitate to contact me with remarks, contributions or ideas regarding the content of ISU.[1]

In this first issue of 2002 we have a report about the Bielefeld Conference 2002. The 6th Bielefeld conference, this year organized by the Library of the University Bielefeld jointly with the British Council and Ticer, was the farewell conference of Dr. Karl-Wilhelm Neubauer who is resigning later this year. Dr. Neubauer, a true innovator, wrote technological history in a traditional German library landscape. Respected and honoured abroad, but too advanced for many of his German colleagues. This year's theme was: High quality information for everyone and what it costs. An excellent programme with papers centered around knowledge management, funding electronic resources from the point of view of governments or its agencies and the strategies developed by a scientific publisher (Elsevier Science), an aggregator (ISI) and a library resources service organization and its strategy for Europe (OCLC PICA). Other topics have included IT for the public at large, e-learning, a snapshot from Slovakia about resources available to the academic world and the general public, search engines and digital library solutions (Endeavor Information Systems). In this report we have selected a number of presentations of the Bielefeld Conference 2002 for a more extensive coverage.

Regarding articles we have an article about Viral Communication – a positive application of the, otherwise, hazardous virus plague. I quote from Prof. Dr. Welker's, director of the Institute of Information Management, article: "In business, obviously the call for cost reduction in marketing communication makes it necessary to consider viral strategies – which is a new interpretation of the good old word-of-mouth-paradigm. Intelligent utilisation of modern digital technology provided, diverse industries will put concepts of Viral Marketing into practice also in Europe – at comparatively low costs." The so-called 'idea virus' may find its position in the marketing programmes of our information vendors.

An overview of digital libraries and their database concept comes from Carole Preston and Binshan Lim, both of the Louisiana State University in Shreveport in their article "Database Technology in Digital Libraries".

This issue is concluded with a short report of the Online Information 2001, which confirms the trend to own content and to use new business models by the information providers, and book reviews. We would like to extend the coverage of reviews of books, web sites, databases, etc. Again contributions and suggestions are welcome.

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A forthcoming issue will contain a report about EUSIDIC's Spring Meeting with as theme e-Content: Divide or Rule, and a report about the European Library Automation Group (ELAG) meeting in Rome in addition to our regular articles.

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