

A guide to Docutek, Inc.'s ERes software: A way to manage electronic reserves.

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Electronic reserves is a critical academic library service which is still in its infancy stages in South African academic libraries but which is used by most, if not all, academic libraries internationally. If South African academic libraries want to compete globally, it is essential that they move away from the manual system and embrace the newer technologies available which will enable them to provide a better and more efficient reserve system. This book contains nine papers written by professionals who have firsthand experience of the Docutek ERes software package. This book is a practical hands-on guide to the use and performance of the Docutek ERes software package. Although all the authors are from universities in the USA, the book is a useful guide on how to convert from a manual system, what support is needed, and how best to implement the new system and interface it with other software used by the library service.

Interestingly enough, the founder of the Docutek Information Systems Company in 1994 was a physics professor, Dr Philip R Kesten. The idea stemmed from requests by his physics students needing to connect with other class members outside of class. Based on discussions with his students, he created a software package, Phys_Chat. This program became so popular with students and faculty alike that Dr. Kesten was asked if there were other uses for the software. The manual reserve system limited students to place and time, and Dr Kesten, with the help of Slaven Zivkovic, a computer science graduate, developed an electronic reserve repository. It is very lucky for the library world that instead of selling this product directly to university faculty Dr Kesten chose to share the product with the library world. The Santa Clara University library was the first to use the ERes system. To date, this package is used by more than 400 library systems around the world.

Win Shih in his paper entitled *ERes: How an instructional technology department is only as effective as its resources* examines the technical issues affecting the operation of the system. This paper provides useful guidelines to the Systems librarian who will be instrumental in implementing the software package. It answers questions such as: How powerful does my ERes server need to be?, How much hard drive space do I need?, and Can I share my ERes server with other applications? It also provides the reader with guidelines in selecting scanners and scanning software, and integrating ERes with your library's online public access catalogue and other electronic library resources. Important to note is the fact that implementing a new system is not merely a technical matter, but also involves changes in workflow, organizational structure, staff skills and the way patrons access resources.

The next two papers: *Migrating to a new reserve system: Implementing Docutek's ERes system* by Madeleine Bombeld and Daniel M. Pfohl, and *Penfield Library Electronic Reserves Initiative: A primer for Electronic Reserves Service* by Andrew Urbanek investigates the changes in workflow, establishing procedures for placing materials on reserve, and provides the reader with useful documents such as the contract between the library and faculty of Penfield Library, and the Copyright Form.

The paper *Embracing fair use: One University's epic journey into copyright policy* by Sandra L. Hudock and Gayle L. Abrahamson, briefly discusses how Colorado State University-Pueblo revised their reserves policy to accommodate electronic reserves. Because this was such a time-consuming exercise for this University, other institutions should take heed!

The next two papers consider the complementary relationship between ERes, library databases and courseware. *Electronic reserves, library databases and courseware: A complementary relationship* by Steven J. Bell and Michael J Krasulski, and *A consideration of Docutek's electronic reserve system in a University's courseware environment* by Donna H Ziegenfuss and James M McCloskey emphasizes the mutually beneficial relationship between faculty and librarians in connecting students with high-quality information.

To provide a balance, the final paper *Docutek's ERes electronic reserves software: An evaluation* covers the shortcomings in the system. The paper outlines the shortcomings and suggests improvements. It must be noted though that the author considers the ERes system as one which works exceedingly well. In 2004 Docutek announced an upgrade to ERes and with Version 5, includes more than 50 of the most requested features by Docutek users.

For academic librarians considering moving from their manual reserves system to an electronic reserves system, this book is easy to read and informative.

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