Digital Trends
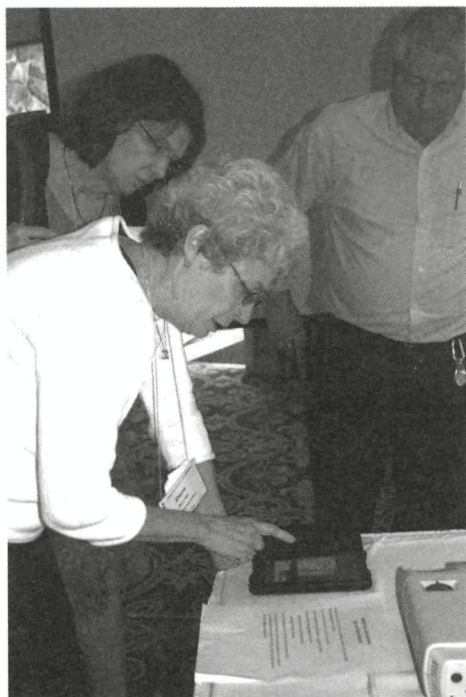## Stephen Ingle, David Ream and Jan Wright
with Matt McInnis video

When the iPad came out in 2010, _Steve Ingle_ became worried. Business slowed down (fortunately, only temporarily), but it was enough of a wake-up call for Steve to start taking seriously the digital transition and its potential impact on indexes and the indexing profession. With the book-like tablet computer, there was a new player in the publishing world. He decided the time had come to learn as much about the digital transformation in publishing as he could.

Steve decided to attend a number of publishing-industry conferences and trade shows, including Digital Book 2010, Book Expo America, O'Reilly Tools of Change, Publishing Business Conference & Expo, and Digital Book World. The general impression that he took away from these events was that the publishing world is in flux. There is insecurity about the future, but also excitement about the possibilities. Larger, traditional publishers, especially, are worried about the future. A lot of the innovation seems to be coming from smaller publishing companies who can move quickly and are less saddled with legacy infrastructure. Print sales are expected to continue their decline in 2012. The publishing industry's forecast is that 15% of fiction sales are coming from digital purchases. Niinety-five percent of non-fiction is still text but we are seeing an exponential growth in digital devices. Steve believes we are very close to the tipping point on the continuum from print to digital; once we reach that precipice, things will happen very quickly. Unfortunately, we don't know exactly when this will happen, since a variety of factors are involved (file formats, platform technology, user adoption, cost factors and monetization, integration of new workflows, and layout issues with non-fiction genres).

Steve's Survival Tips for Indexers

1. Learn about and understand the new digital workflow and adapt to it.
2. Educate publishers on the value of a good e-book index. Search is not equal to an index. Take an active approach, not a passive approach. Extend the conversation into e-books and the need for indexes.

The changes are being manifest in the publishing industry where Production Editors are renamed to Content Managers. Their goal now is to have one content ("single source") but in various outputs: web, print, e-pub. Publishers' workflow changes will affect indexers. Instead of converting print books to e-formats, they are producing generic, digital content first. Publishers will need people, including indexers, with the requisite technical skills to enable them to realize the full potential of their digital publications. **David Ream** spoke about e-book sales noting that power buyers account for 70% of the digital content that is sold.

I was intrigued with the discussions about what this group had learned at O'Reilly Tools of Change and other conferences/events. I will definitely put TOC on my bucket list.

Monetization and Discovery

With fewer brick and mortar bookstores to shop, discoverability of books has become a concern for marketing. **Jan Wright** talked about Barbara Genco, a librarian, who studied the persona of an e-book reader. She came up with the profile of a 40-year-old woman with two children. To read more about this, go to: _www.toccon.com/toc2012/public/schedule/detail/24625_. This woman visits the library to "taste" an author to see who she is interested in before purchasing digital books online. Libraries become the source of "discovery" for books since the bookstores have closed. The problem is that there will be no improvement in the adoption of indexing in digital books unless there is money to be made.

We watched a video of Matt McInnis, CEO from Inkling (_www.inkling.com/_) showing what their interactive textbook can do. It is a completely interactive authoring experience,

Kevin Broccoli
CEO, BIM Publishing Services

Demonstrating the iPad
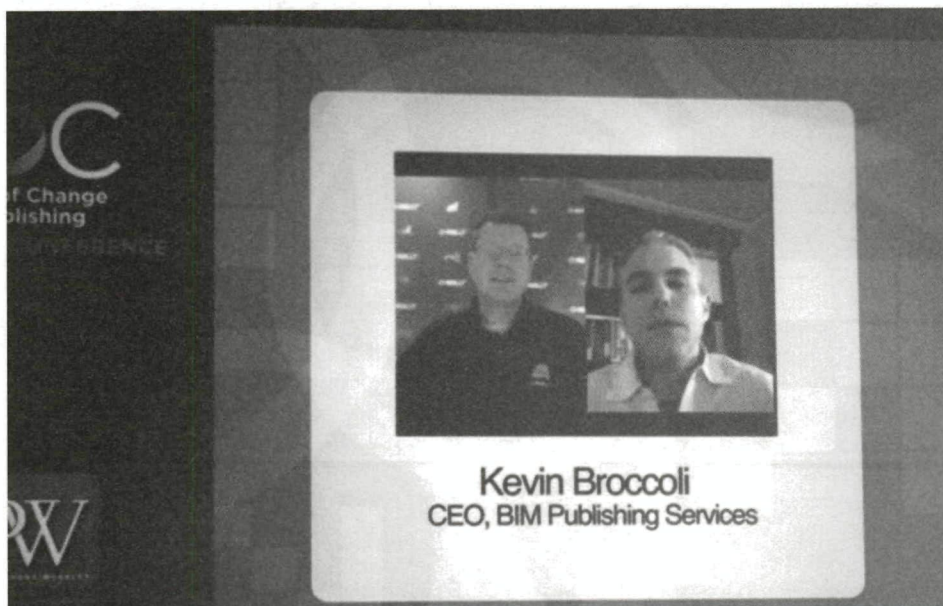
Hands-on learning experience with the iPad

not just reading but music, or 3-D graphics that can be manipulated. The company started out with an app for iPad but now has debuted a platform for the web browser using HTML5. The illustration shows how easy it is to search while reading.

This past year people received gift cards to purchase e-readers instead of receiving holiday book gifts. Romance readers are a very hungry market. There are monthly subscriptions to download as many books as you can read.

There are those working to create uber indexes /merged indexes as a way to promote book sales based on knowing the content: as a means of discovery of content through the index. Publishers could sell related materials based on reviews of full indexes in e-books. I liken this to Amazon's suggestions for related books purchased by others who bought a book you are looking at.

MegaIndex is a collection of all indexes for the O'Reilly books. The index mashup could help discovery of books and promote indexes but the index content must make sense in these mashups.

Consumers are focused with their device and purchasing their book with little awareness of the publisher or publisher brand loyalty. Kobo Writing Life has come out with its self-publishing services, adding another component to the already changing publisher based industry.

The ASI Board gave the group a budget to pursue a strategy of integrating indexes into e-pubs. They have created a working group charter and maintain a group through LinkedIn to discuss what is happening and any collaboration they have been able to create. They are especially interested in getting some kind of standard that all vested parties agree to. This involves the publishers, the e-reader device developers and indexers. The International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF) voted to include the Digital Trends Task Force (DTTF) into their working group. This has become an international, global effort. Barnes and Nobles is part of the IDPF/ePub group. They have a very vested interest in this. Apple has a representative in the working group. The main player that is not in the group is Amazon. They have yet to get them to join the effort. Amazon is selling at the lowest cost to the reader with no concern with what is coming in from the publishers. Until readers demand indexes that are easy to navigate, publishers will push out books with either poor excuses for indexes or provide none.

They are working to see where digital indexes will be in five years. Will XML be used? Indexes for e-books can be better, need to be better. An e-pub can include sound and video. It is the equivalent of a portable

Jan Wright

website. At present, we have a co-mingling of formats for e-readers. When you purchase an e-book, they send it in four formats.

They encouraged all present to mention the need for indexes in the e-pub books. Go online and increase awareness about better ways to get e-book indexes.

— *Cherry Delaney* ●