



AUTHORS GUILD/AAP/GOOGLE SETTLEMENT GIVES AUTHORS, PUBLISHERS “UNPRECEDENTED... CONTROL” ON THEIR COPYRIGHTS

– In first public interview, Michael Healy looks into digital publishing future –

DANVERS, Mass., June 18, 2009 – In his first public interview, the man expected to become the executive director of the Book Rights Registry (BRR) says that, “the involvement of Google in [the publishing] marketplace, and others, is going to be part of the transformational character of [the industry over] the next few years.”

A month ago, the publishing trade media reported that Michael Healy, who is currently executive director of the non-profit Book Industry Study Group (BISG), had begun working with the Authors Guild and Association of American Publishers – plaintiffs in a landmark 2005 copyright infringement class action lawsuit against search engine giant Google – on the establishment of the BRR as called for in a proposed settlement for that landmark case.

Healy has now spoken for the first time about his involvement in an exclusive interview at the offices of Copyright Clearance Center that will be released online today at www.copyright.com and as part of CCC’s “Beyond the Book” podcast series at www.beyondthebook.com.

A self-described “standards geek,” Healy cited his twenty years’ experience as a “digital publishing pioneer” in positions at SilverPlatter, Nielsen, Chadwyck-Healey and most recently, the BISG, where he became executive director in 2006.

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Healy pointed with enthusiasm to terms of the settlement that will result in “turning every public library in this country into a world-class research facility. You have to see the revolutionary character of that,” said the professionally-trained librarian.

The proposed settlement gives Google rights to the online display and re-use of books that are determined to be out-of-print or otherwise not commercially available. Non-US publishers and authors have expressed concerns, Healy said, about the methods used to decide “whether a book is commercially available, [which] affects how the book will be displayed.” While the resources for that determination are fairly obvious for U.S. works, he said, the sources to be used vary from country to country. “I have to say I think there has been a really productive partnership with rightsholders overseas about those issues,” Healy said.

Healy also cited the benefits of participating in the settlement for US authors and publishers. “The Book Rights Registry introduces into the environment an unprecedented degree of control to authors, publishers and other rightsholders on how their copyrights are exploited and distributed in this new digital world,” he explained.

In 2009, book readers have shifted their expectations about content delivery from the traditional print forms to cell phones and e-book readers, Healy said, “and they want [the content] priced in a different way too.” He added, “The consumer, the reader, is changing, and I suspect the successful publishers tomorrow will be those who recognize the extent to which the landscape for the consumer is being transformed.”

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