Digital Libraries and Universal Access in the 21st Century: Realities and Potential for US-China Collaboration

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Abstract*:*

"Global Digital Library and Universal Information Access" was a keynote delivered by the speaker at *the First China-U.S. Conference on Global Information Access: Challenges and Opportunities*, held at the National Library of China, Beijing, China, August 21-23, 1996. Since then, digital libraries have flourished to make the "global digital library" a partial reality. This paper intends to update what has happened in the last 9 years with specific references to two of the major international projects which she has been heavily involved. She hopes to show how activities like these can truly provide enormous opportunities for US-China collaboration in light of China's content-rich information environment.

The two projects are:

1. *The Million Book Digital Library Project* for universal access. Currently over a dozen top-rated Chinese academic institutions are involved with heavy investment from both the US partners as well as the Ministry of Education of China.

2. *Chinese Memory Net* (*CMNet*) supported by the US National Science Foundation/ International Digital Library Projects since 2000. *CMNet* has been expanded to *Global Memory Net (GMNet)* which has great potential for more substantive collaboration.