Remarks to the meeting of the Assoc. of American Publishers, May 4, 1981

Frank Greenagel, Arete Publishing Co.

"Similarly, the first attempts to make print products available
through a new technology are imitative and essentially irrelevant-
and certainly not the artistic or even technological success that
Gutenberg's Bible was."

"When one speaks of the electronic media,... what, in fact, is
one speaking of?.... some sort of database that can be
manipulated by computer and distributed electronically."

"...if a publisher holds back too long - until, say, he is
certain that the payback is only a year or two away - he runs
the real risk of letting someone else into his business."

objectives for entering electronic publishing --
    "to maintain our market share of an information market, not
     just of publishing revenues."
    "the new technologies represent a strategy for entering a
     market. Look at what Lexis has done to West Publishing."
    "In addition to preservation of market share and market
     entry strategies, one might also consider as a possible
     objective diversification- in which case you would consider
     electronic media against the same criteris you might apply
     if you were seeking to invest in an amusement park, a
     funeral parlor, or commodity futures."
    "Finally, of course, you may look to the new technologies
     as a source of a greater return through exploitation of
     an asset you have already invested in."

"It is generally understood by most thoughtful observers that
smart terminals - the personal computer - are unlikely to attract
a truly mass audience in this century."

"For those of you supplying the professional user with an on-line
database, the more specialized the database, the less likely it
is that time will bring a major change in the profile of the user."

"I do see great changes in the extent, profile and use patterns
of students, in and out of school.... but I expect this is the
first place where publishers will lose significant market share
to the producers of electronic hardware who have decided to
create their own software as well."

a fourth grade teacher reports- "...Sesame Street had brought
about an enormous change in the way one must approach teaching
on an elementary school level. She wan not complaining, just
stating a fact that the game aspect, the frequent reinforcement,
the breaking of things up into smaller, digestible packages, was
essential if one wanted to hold their attention."

"It is not that we do not today have the time, will not take the time, or have less of a background - I would say rather that most of us have been conditioned to expect that information or learning or whatever will come to us in neat little packages. I anticipate that the content of the electronic media, for the general consumer at least, must be packaged psychologically rather than according tothe inner logic of the material itself."

"... no matter how motivated the user, he or she will become tired after reading relatively few screens of printed text. We would be wrong to conclude that this means the future for this medium is limited - rather that more attention must be given to how it is "packaged." (space invaders as a positive example)

"...visualization. An audience raised on Sesame Street and inexpensive four-color newsmagazines has come to expect that information be visually attractive as well.... 'Don't just tell me about it - show me. Show me the difference between Art Nouveau and Art Deco; show me the difference between a mammoth and a mastodon; show me how the basic thrusts and forces keep the Cathedral of Notre Dame from falling apart.' And then, when we begin to apply the sophisticated computer graphics to everyday use, that user says 'simulate for me what would happen to Notre Dame if I jsut removed this little flying buttress.'"

"The OCLC research found that people reading an article on their TV expected that a noise of some sort should also come from the set; they have been conditioned to expect sound as well as video, and were somewhat disconcerted by the silence - 'sensory deprivation,' the professionals call it."

"At the ALA in June we will demonstrate what sound and moving pictures will add to our encyclopedia; one will be able to hear the difference between baroque and rococo musicc or see in time -lapse photography the growth of a cell culture."

from Paul Doebler study - "The essential idea of a database is one place where all of the relevant information is organized for easy access and retrieval for all of the possible uses; this implies more thorough coverage of a field than any but the most encyclopedic books...."

"In my opinion, the potential market does not yet (except perhaps in rare cases) warrant creation of new products expressly for distribution by any of the new technologies. Unless the basics of the product - text, illustrations, organizations already exist - and probably are in machine-readable form requiring little adaptation, the market is not yet large enough to cover the costs."