The digital age raises new challenges for institutions that have traditionally been involved in the stewardship of the cultural record. One is the stewardship of items that were born digital, those the museum world distinguishes as digital accessions. Another is the creation and stewardship of digital images of two- and three-dimensional artifacts, including texts, in the collections of these institutions. Such images exist for many purposes – for preservation and dissemination as well as for new and innovative kinds of exploration and exploitation. The description, control and use of both classes of images consume scarce resources and require new kinds of expertise.

Four of the articles in this issue address these challenges. In our special section Digital Desires: What Are Museums Up To? section editor Layna White and contributors Shyam Oberoi and Sally Hubbard examine the role and management of digital objects in art museums. In her introduction Layna explains how museums use images, while Shyam and Sally discuss the problems of implementing institution-wide digital asset management systems (DAMS) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Getty Research Institute, respectively.

In contrast universities are the principal focus of the fourth article, a report on Clifford Lynch’s plenary session talk at the ASIS&T 2007 Annual Meeting in Milwaukee. He believes that in addressing their current problems cultural institutions must focus on their responsibilities for cultural stewardship, not on salvaging the means by which these responsibilities have been fulfilled for the last century, which may now be untenable or superseded.

Closer to home some of these same issues are reflected in the President’s Page. ASIS&T also must struggle with the balance between the paper and the electronic worlds and with the economics of scholarly publishing. President Nancy Roderer brings us up-to-date on the current highest priority of the Board of Directors and the staff, the re-compete of the contract to publish the Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology. The new contract, when it has been negotiated, will most likely incorporate all ASIS&T publications and will have to deal with the many issues related to electronic publication that have arisen over the last decade.

Another aspect of scholarly publishing is also addressed by Elise Langdon-Neuner, editor of The Write Stuff (the journal of the European Medical Writers Association) and a member of the editorial board of European Science Editing (the journal of the European Association of Science Editors). In “Let Them Speak English” she reviews the current environment surrounding publication in English for non-native speakers. She also considers the cost to the broader intellectual community of forcing scholars to write in a language that is not their own and the possibilities for making the content of publications originally published in other languages more widely available in English.

Our two final items are less closely related to the above themes or to each other, but each makes its own contribution. First, Andrew Sears and his colleagues report on a National Science Foundation workshop from 2006 aimed at setting a research agenda for human-centered computing. The paper summarizes the workshop’s suggested research areas and also its observations on interdisciplinary research in the field. Finally, this issue’s information architecture (IA) columnist, Mark Nolan, discusses the potential for exploiting the exploratory search model in IA.