

# Australian Library Journal

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## The Australian Library Journal

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# Digital days

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You may have noticed the recent release of the ALIA Internet filtering in public libraries survey report 2007 ([www.alia.org.au/advocacy/internet.access/](http://www.alia.org.au/advocacy/internet.access/)). The survey was conducted in April–May of this year. 104 out of an estimated 548 public library services responded with 39% using filtering software on some or all of their public access Internet computers. Filtering is of course the selective exclusion of certain types of material deemed undesirable by self-appointed arbiters of taste, including ‘concerned parents’ who expect libraries to mind their children. Filtered content included what the filterers – usually local government authorities encouraged by the federal government – considered to be pornography, violence, hate, but, possibly for good measure, some less sinister sites such as gambling, instant messaging, Mp3 music downloads, auction and commercial sites were also excluded. And here’s the rub: where should the line be drawn?

ALIA’s not in any doubt: ALIA recommends that to provide a professionally acceptable and useful service, Internet filtering software would need to be developed in close cooperation with public librarians, with features maximising local control and adaptability to networks (Survey report p.2).

In other words, care is needed and judgement is called for. It is indeed unfortunate that conflicting global ideologies result in the erosion of human rights in the name of protecting them. Naturally, in an election year there is a strong temptation for political parties to outdo themselves in saving us from ourselves, and in such a climate filtering might come to resemble censorship.

ALIA’s Statement on free access to information asserts that “Freedom can be protected in a democratic society only if its citizens have unrestricted access to information and ideas.” ([www.alia.org.au/policies/free.access.html](http://www.alia.org.au/policies/free.access.html)) We may need to stand up and be counted on this one.

From hiding things to finding things: after several years of behind the scenes work Electronic Resources Australia ([era.nla.gov.au](http://era.nla.gov.au)) has come into being as a framework for national site licensing for nine databases covering news and business, general reference and health information. This breakthrough initiative backed by the National Library means that any Australian library deciding to opt-in to the consortium arrangements will pay the subscription prices offered by participating vendors (EBSCO, World Book, Oxford University Press, ProQuest and Thomson Gale) for the electronic resources on the ERA Product List. Concessional rates will allow smaller libraries to provide free public access to quality information. Judging by the

take-up rate, pricing for school and special libraries is particularly attractive. This is a remarkable development, a milestone in service delivery and resource sharing, and a major contribution to cohesion between all Australian libraries. Our President, Roxanne Missingham, Chairs the ERA Interim Executive Committee, and Erica Ryan at the National Library is the Executive Officer (02 6262 1549).

When governments spend our money on advertising telling us how well our money is being spent, and businesses chase our money telling us about products and services we don't need, how do we decide on the quality of the messages? Where do we go for trustworthy information? What if we're not living in the country of our birth? Is the Internet with its associated communication technologies the answer? In this issue our authors tackle all these topics and more. Add to this another swag of book reviews from Professor Gary Gorman and his active team of reviewers – including a blockbuster review by Colin Steele of *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland* – and that's *ALJ* Vol.56 No.2.

We open with an edited transcript of a recent speech by Courtney Gibson, the ABC's Head of Arts, Entertainment and Comedy. Her subject is accommodating the digital age – and that's our subject as well. Libraries have long been widely considered reliable sources of information and quality entertainment: so has the ABC. Both are for the most part publicly funded and enjoy the public's trust. Some other organisations, such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Bureau of Meteorology are also assumed to put the public interest first and provide high quality information regardless of the consequences, but precious few share these characteristics. Not surprising then that issues confronting the ABC in the digital age resonate with those faced by libraries.

Next we deal with the Internet. Peter Dobrovits, now retired from UNSW, challenges us with some down to earth comments on the realities of Internet searching, and reminds us that there's life in the old book yet.

In a jointly written paper, Marijana Bogdanovic from City of Greater Dandenong Libraries and Graeme Johanson from Monash University's Faculty of Information Technology assess the *My Language Portal* in improving access to online multicultural resources in an ethnically diverse community. It worked, but more work needs to be done.

To round out this issue's digital offering we include Kate Davis' assessment of the National Library's Instant Messaging trial. It's a pleasure to publish such a substantial piece from a promising young librarian. We welcome further contributions from Kate and her contemporaries.

Next issue, more on our 70th Anniversary. In the meantime, don't forget to register for the Forum on Australian Library History 2007 at: [http://www.atmitchell.com/events/forum\\_au\\_lib\\_hist\\_2007.pdf](http://www.atmitchell.com/events/forum_au_lib_hist_2007.pdf) and watch out for (the late) Jean Whyte and David Jones' major new work *Uniting a profession: the Australian Institute of Librarians 1937–1949*, soon to be published by ALIA.

Finally, you may notice some fine tuning on the layout of the Journal. If you have any comments, I'd be pleased to receive them.

Ian McCallum

14 July 2007



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**ALIA 70th  
Anniversary  
logo**

# The ABC's digital future

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## Courtney Gibson

**The digital age means radical change for public broadcasters like the ABC – as well as for libraries, and many of the issues are similar: service delivery through multiple channels; protection of a trusted 'brand'; copyright and digital rights management; and better exploitation of stored content. The author argues that traditional business models and governing structures need to be re-drawn to support closer connections to audiences and more live TV delivered across multiple channels.**

*Manuscript received May 2007.*

*This article is an edited version of a speech given at the National Library's Innovative Ideas Forum held in Canberra on 19 April 2007. Further information at: <http://www.nla.gov.au/initiatives/meetings/liif07prog.html>*

## Being the public broadcaster in the digital age

I'm speaking to you as the Head of Arts, Entertainment and Comedy at ABC TV, but I'm something of a fellow traveller, having served as the librarian's assistant at the Workers' Education Association in Sydney twenty-something years ago.

I was at that time pre-occupied by some of the exact same issues we face now in the digital age in the media.

I'm talking about storage, accessibility, navigability, and of course ... late delivery!

And because I work at the national broadcaster, ropey old trolleys from the dawn of time seem to have followed me straight from the WEA library in 1985 to where I am at the ABC today.

Just as libraries have changed radically in the past two decades – the way they work, the way they store stuff, the way people use them and the way people think about them – the same can be said for television and all kinds of audio/video content.

Today I'm going to talk about some current industry concerns and also some new and recent projects that illustrate how we create and distribute content in the digital environment.

When I think about what the Australian Broadcasting Corporation means today, and what it means to be an Australian public broadcaster in 2007, a couple of key ideas and truisms stand out for me:

- Firstly, we have many platforms on which to speak to our audiences, both local and global, and users of all those platforms can speak to one another.
- Secondly, we are a credible and much-loved brand and, no matter exactly what we mean to people, I hope we **still** mean something to everyone.

Some of you will know the ABC is starting to grapple with ways to create new revenue streams in the digital space. This is a very sensitive area, not least because what makes our brand so credible is its incorruptibility. If you are watching or listening to ABC content via the radio, online or on TV, you are not paying to do so, above and beyond your taxes, and you are not subject to advertising.

Right now there are two main ways to make revenue in the digital space: either users pay to view the content, to download individual programs or subscribe to packages of programming – or advertisers pay for their brands to sit alongside the content.

Is there a third way? We shall see, but certainly it's one of the issues we face now – in order to do more with less – to support the creation of more Australian content, for delivery to more platforms – we must create new revenue streams, or else start to decline into something less than the comprehensive broadcaster we are today.

When considering advertising online, for instance, I can't help but remember something from the very first UK edition of *Wired* magazine, from April 1994, in which Douglas Adams wrote:

Lots of people are not in the business you think they're in. ... Television companies are not in the business of delivering television programmes to their audiences, they're in the business of delivering audiences to their advertisers. (This is why the BBC has such a schizophrenic time – it's actually in a different business from all its competitors).

It's true – compared to our commercial brethren, we might be in the **same game** – but we are in a **different business**. They are there to service advertisers. We exist to service audiences and users.

When considering 'user pays' approaches, I wonder: what might people actually pay for? They already pay for *Chaser* DVDs – might they also pay for *Chaser* downloads? Maybe. Might they pay to download *Lateline*? I don't know. Would they pay to download *Parliamentary Question Time*? That may well be a rhetorical question. Even here in Canberra.

And anyway – should people be paying? There's the argument that runs: 'we've already paid for this with our tax dollars; should we be paying again – it's the same content, just a different distribution system'.

And in principle this argument stacks up – but the real-politik of the situation cannot be ignored. We have two publicly-funded broadcasters in Australia, one which takes ads – which is the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) – and one which doesn't – the ABC. If we're **not** going to have ads online (and the Federal Opposition has announced that a future Labor government would **not** allow it anyway; no word yet from the Coalition Government on this) but if we're not going to have ads online, then to maintain the quantity and quality of our output, we need to raise funds some other way and we come back to some kind of user-pays model for downloading programs and other content. To me, user-pays is the lesser evil for a public broadcaster, with the potential for the least fall-out, bearing in mind Douglas Adams very relevant musings of 13 years ago.

There are central and quite philosophical questions that need to be asked: What does it mean to be a public broadcaster in the digital age?

Does it mean no ads? Well, the Countdown site (<http://www.countdown.com.au>) has ads – ads for soft drinks, a finance magazine and moisturiser, among other things. Pepsi, *The Australian Stock Report* and Oil of Olay to be precise. Which is weird, because when you look at the wrinkles on those Countdown old timers, alongside those Oil of Olay labels, you want to say: 'Guys, it's just not working ... no amount of Oil of Olay can help you now – Just keep reading the *Stock Report* and drinking the cola.' And supermarkets and shopping centres run clips of ABC shows with ads alongside the content. Our content is on trains and planes, again with ads alongside our content. We licence material from various operators – BigPond and Yahoo for instance – they take news, *At the Movies*, sport, and run ads all around it.

Does being a public broadcaster in the digital age still mean **free content**? Well, users have been paying for ABC content via mobile subscriptions with third parties such as 3, Virgin, Optus, Vodafone and Telstra for the past three and more years. The carrier pays us a licence fee and they charge via subscription or pay-per-view. This generates revenue to us and to the rights holders in the material, such as comedy producers and record companies.

So we've already been sticking our toes in the water with ads and with subscription services, but only in limited ways.

## Legal, copyright and commercial issues

Beyond the philosophical issues, there is a field of legal landmines and copyright cluster bombs the ABC has to traverse as it addresses issues such as:

Who owns the content?

What value does it have?

Who might pay for what?

And how can we remodel the windows of release for content and then re-draw the business models that have governed traditional production and distribution structures.

When we licence something from an independent producer we are now looking for more runs on more platforms – digital channels, online, mobile, video podcasts. As one big-end-of-town producer told me, 'Hey, everything's for sale – it just costs'. And this is fair enough: if we want extra rights they **should** cost. But back to that question of: how do we pay for them? And the concomitant need to seek out new revenue streams so we might pay more without cutting back on our activities.

Getting back to the question of what it means to be a public broadcaster in the digital age, on the one hand – as our Managing Director Mark Scott has said – the times suit the ABC. We have multiple platforms, a brand money – at least for the moment – can't buy, we have super loyal audiences and we are performing a much-needed role in Australia's broader media landscape.

But what we have to worry about now is whether the times might suit commercial broadcasters as much as they suit us: They can all get into bed now with the changes to the cross-media ownership laws – we're not the only multi-platform, many-headed beast in town – and it's much more straightforward for the commercial entities, because they are in a pure numbers business. How many people are watching dictates how much they charge advertisers which dictates their bottom line. And that's that. Except now they can construct clever cross-platform packages for advertisers to generate even more revenue.

So everyone knows where they stand: The content creators and providers know what's expected of them – numbers. Big ones. And the users know they will either pay for the content, or have ads alongside or in front of the content they see. And if the networks decide to pay producers more in order to exploit more rights, then they just work out ways to charge the advertisers or users more.

But where does the ABC stand? The truth is we don't know yet – but we are certainly at a major fork in the road.

## Adapting to the digital age

The ABC's not the only organisation or brand that needs to ask what it is going to become as the digital age unfurls. All organisations need to ask themselves these questions. As do all individuals and communities.

I attended *Picnic*, a crossmedia conference in Amsterdam late in 2006, which was kicked off with a keynote by Gary Carter, the Chief Creative Officer of FMX, Fremantle Media's crossmedia arm.

He had been asked to speak to what was largely a room full of telco guys, and to address two main questions: 'What's the next big thing going to be? And how can we monetise the web?' Gary said these weren't the right questions: He said the questions are: 'How are we going to use these new platforms? And when we've been using them for a while, what kind of individuals and societies will we become?'

He talked about the transit of various media from public commodities to personal ones. Radio started as something you went out to see in terms of the original soap operas, then it migrated to the lounge room where the family could engage with it, then the transistor radio came along and it was your own. Telephones did the same thing – there were public phones, then they moved to the home, usually located in a hall or some central thoroughfare, then we got extension cords and migrated the handset round the house, then they went cordless, then mobile. TV – same thing – newsreels we saw at the cinema, then we crowded electrical store windows, then they became more commonplace in people's lounge rooms, then people got second sets for the bedroom, now we watch TV on laptops, portable devices such as mobiles – all these media have travelled the same path, from public to domestic to private to mobile.

## Continuous partial attention

Former Microsoft Vice President and multimedia pioneer Linda Stone followed Gary at *Picnic* with an address about something she put a name to ten years ago: 'continuous partial attention'.

For almost two decades, continuous partial attention has been a way of life to cope and keep up with responsibilities and relationships. We've stretched our attention bandwidth to upper limits. We keep the top level item in focus and scan the periphery in case something more important emerges. Continuous partial attention is motivated by a desire not to miss opportunities. We want to ensure our place as a live node on the network, we feel alive when we're connected. To be busy and to be connected is to be alive.

We've been working to maximize opportunities and contacts in our life. So much social networking, so little time. Speed, agility, and connectivity at top of mind and marketers humming that tune for two decades now.

Now we're over-stimulated, over-wound, unfulfilled.

So between raising questions about what kind of people we will become once we've been using digital technologies over time, and the idea of 'continuous partial attention', this conference had kicked off in a fascinating, mind-expanding way, striking out laterally and putting the issues to hand in a philosophical, sociological and ethical framework.

But sure enough, by the end of afternoon tea, the telcos had regained control and gone back to asking 'Yeah, but ... right, but ... whatever, but ... how can we make money out of this thing?'

That's by way of explaining where these discussions always come back to. And there's nothing less creatively enervating than being at afternoon tea with a bunch of telco guys all saying 'Where's the money?' over scungy muffins and overboiled coffee.

But what Linda Stone said – being connected and busy makes us feel alive – comes back to me now and then. I was away with my kids on holiday last week. No Web, no email, just a crap telly with poor reception and a mobile, and I was quite drunk with excitement about the idea of turning on my computer as soon as I got home. I could taste that delicious anticipation. Why wasn't I just there enjoying the escape and being in that moment? And when I think about the events in my life which have had the most impact on me I think of the births of my children, the death of my mother and getting a home broadband connection ... and I actually think getting a broadband connection has had a bigger impact on me and wrought more change in me and my life than any of these other things and I know that will sound weird and appalling, but I don't think we can underestimate the way access to these technologies has changed our lives and maybe also changed the very nature of who we are, as individuals and communities.

## Managing the future

Rather than hearing about the depth of the changes in us – the users – what we tend to hear about is the speed of change in the technology. So alongside the 'How can we monetise the Web?' question, another refrain that discussions about digital media always come back to is a headline that reads something like 'Shock horror: the speed of technological change is now faster than ever'.

And it's true, broadcasters have got to adapt to their audience's desire and ability to engage with participatory media, but as futurist Tom Coates paraphrased these 'shock horror' announcements:

Shock revelation! A new set of technologies has started to displace older technologies and will continue to do so at a fairly slow rate over the next ten to thirty years!

And it may well be that in the five years we've had i-pods and ten years we've had blogging and mobiles and in the fifteen years we've been building the Web, that **widespread, mainstream uptake** has only happened relatively recently. But it's still been a fairly incremental technology change that anyone involved in the media could have seen coming from over the hill and far away, especially if you consider Gary Carter's handy rear-vision guide to the movement of the platforms.

Most futurists acknowledge that broadcast is probably still going to be one of the most dominant forms of content distribution in ten or twenty years time.

It's just obviously not the only one anymore.

On his blog at [www.plasticbag.org](http://www.plasticbag.org), Tom Coates has likened the way media organisations use the rhetoric of incredibly rapid technology change, to someone screaming that they're being pursued by a snail and yet they cannot get away! "The snail! The snail!", they cry. "How can we possibly escape?" The problem being that the snail's been moving closer for the last twenty years and they just weren't paying attention.'

Coates says: 'We don't **need** people standing up and panicking and shouting the bloody obvious. We need people to watch the industries that could have an impact on them, take them seriously, don't freak out, and observe what's moving in their direction and then just do the basic work to be ready for it. The only way that snails catch you up is if you're too self-absorbed to see them coming.'

## YouTube

News International took the gastronomic approach to the snail, which is to say... it ate it ... when Murdoch paid US\$580m for My Space in 2005, and made it His Space.

Interestingly, while there was a fear that users would take one step sideways away from the space when he moved in, that hasn't happened, not yet anyway.

Another media megabrand, Viacom, has called in **the lawyers** to deal with the snail, suing YouTube for a billion dollars for copyright violation. So now, if you upload clips from any Viacom shows – the *Daily Show* for instance has been a popular upload – if you upload the *Daily Show* or *Col-bear* or any *Comedy Central* show to YouTube you get an email from YouTube stating you are infringing the copyright of Viacom by attempting to load the clip and that if you do so again your account will be suspended and your YouTube access denied.

So hardball is being played and the YouTube smackdown is in full swing.

In this context, the ABC needs to figure out its position. Right now we are trying to get our content out on as many platforms as possible. Users upload ABC content such as *The Chaser* to YouTube and BitTorrent and other content sharing platforms. And right now it's free to stream or download on our digital platforms so we're in the midst of what the *Chaser's* own Surprise Spruiker might call 'multiplatform madness'.

The fact that we have no desire to restrict the uploading of ABC TV material to sites such as YouTube didn't stop a 15 year old high school student in Perth creating for himself a very interesting media project as part of his school studies.

In early March he set up three channels on YouTube onto which he has been uploading ABC material. He also wrote to YouTube asserting ownership of all ABC material, and asked YouTube to take down any ABC material uploaded by any other users, hoping that anyone who wanted to see, say *Chaser* clips, would come to his own YouTube channel.

And YouTube responded by doing just that – for about six weeks, any time anyone uploaded Chaser material to YouTube they got a message from YouTube that read:

Dear Member:

This is to notify you that we have removed or disabled access to the following material as a result of a third-party notification by Australian Broadcasting Corporation claiming that this material is infringing:

NAME OF CLIP

Please Note: Repeat incidents of copyright infringement will result in the deletion of your account and all videos uploaded to that account.

There were over 200 separate ABC clips pulled as a result.

Now I don't know what this media project started out as – this kid said he loves the ABC and just wanted to start a channel, and, hey – who doesn't – so we'll just leave it there. But his project has arguably now become about the efficacy of copyright checks on YouTube, and also raised questions for the ABC.

It's all very well for me to say – we want our stuff out there on as many platforms as possible and see YouTube as a great distributor of our material and a fantastic marketing tool, but what happens when YouTube start charging users to access material? They say that's their plan. How will we feel then? Will they pay us and our co-producers for that? If they don't will we feel less magnanimous about our content going everywhere? And how does it square with our existing copyright controls? Where do we draw the line? Are we saying it's okay for the kids to upload clips onto YouTube but not okay for the big end of town to lift our material and put it on their platforms?

The ABC will not be taking any legal action against this guy and if he doesn't get ten out of ten for that project, *The Chaser* and the ABC will be very disappointed.

## Joost and digital TV

In terms of getting our material out onto other platforms, a really interesting development we hope to be part of is *Joost TV* (<http://www.joost.com/>), probably the hottest thing on the Web from the two guys who created *Kazaa* and *Skype*. It is, effectively, TV on the Internet, and it is focusing first on the early adopter

demographic of young males. Guys from Telstra have said to us: 'Hey ABC, you guys are dead, man – Joost is coming and it's going to leave you in the shade.' To which I reply 'No it's not, we want to be on Joost.' Joost is just TV on the Internet – Warners, mtv, Viacom, Endemol – they're all doing deals with Joost. We don't see it as a threat – we see it as an opportunity. If a 14 year old guy in Helsinki or a 16 year old girl in Idaho sees Chris Lilley or the *Chaser* on Joost they'll probably search Google for them and wind up on abc.net.au to see what else we do. 'Joost is great for us', I tell them, 'now stop making proclamations about our early demise, and fix our broadband speeds, you creeps!'

Wise men might say 'Only fools rush in' but I would like to propose instead that he who hesitates is doomed. And the problem is we're operating in a media environment where you've got the double whammy of the rapid change rhetoric, and at the same time there is the residual fear of another dot.bomb – there is this prevailing view that says 'There's no point jumping in and blowing your dough because by the time you're there the market will want something different'.

So we're suffering a bit of paralysis in this country, I think.

I've heard lately from people in the UK that interactive TV has stopped innovating, people have red button fatigue and interactive TV is all but 'over'. This is infuriating, given that in Australia we have red buttons on our remotes that have been doing virtually sweet FA when tuned in to the ABC – and only marginally more on Foxtel and Austar – how annoying to hear apparently the party's over ... and we're still in the bottle shop working out what kind of beer to buy.

We all know the Australian marketplace has been unusually retarded in adopting digital TV. It's partly because of tardy legislation and it's partly because the offerings on digital TV have remained pretty lean. We all know it's strong and idiosyncratic content that drives the uptake of any technology. Digital TV in Australia needs to be so much more than electronic program guides and time-shifting. Now that video podcasting is here, and here to stay, time-shifting, which seemed so exciting a year or two ago, starts to look a bit ho-hum.

Given all this, there are some key issues ABC TV needs to train its attention on.

## Listening to our audiences

Media professionals – the commissioning editors, the programmers – have been completely freaked out by the democratisation afforded by the Web: you can imagine, it's pretty confronting for people who've built their careers being the tastemakers and prioritisers, deciding **what** matters, and **when** and **how** it gets put out there. Now it's users who decide what's on top of the Google board for instance, or on current TV, and as a result, I think, media professionals have lost their bottle.

What we have to do is get over ourselves, and really listen to our audiences and watch what they're doing. And more than that, we need to imagine what they'll want next and how they'll want to access it. We need rapid response. And we need to encourage and enable rapid response from users in terms of providing the tools for participation and interaction. And we need to take a Who Dares Wins attitude to all this or nothing will happen. People say: 'No one knows what the future will bring' – you can hear this from really smart people in powerful positions in the industry from whom who we might hope for some vision. There's this adjunct to everything they say like a mantra: 'No one knows what the future will bring', well, come on, listen, think, decide, and then bring the thing.

Tom Loosemore from the BBC has created a list of 15 Web principles – you can find them on his blog at [tomski.com](http://tomski.com). At Number 4 he recommends a strategy; he says 'Fall forward, fast: make many small bets, iterate wildly, back successes, kill failures, fast.'

And at number 9 in his 15 Web principles he says 'Remember your granny won't ever use *Second Life*, but she may come online soon, and with very different needs from early-adopters'.

## The ABC must go back to live TV

Live TV is like Latin – a language we all used to know and learn, now in the space of a generation all but forgotten. Everything on TV used to be live. It's why so much doesn't exist from the very early days – post-produced programs were played out from a tape, but live shows were just relayed out there as they happened, and rarely was a tape run across it in the TV control room. No one had domestic recording equipment, so it all just came and went. Now only sport and news is live on ABC TV – which is deeply depressing.

But with the digital age comes the rise again of live TV – *Big Brother* has used live TV very cannily. They've turned the brand into a must-be-at, multi-media event: you have to watch the show live to see who's been evicted. And that's while you're on the website looking back at that housemate's time in the house, while you're texting your friends about it, as it's all happening. And you have to watch it live in order to play a meaningful role in the dissection of the show the next day online, or at work, or in the school playground.

Until *Big Brother* had this effect pundits imagined that people would use one platform at a time and that what each platform should do then is drive users from one to the other, in a linear pattern – what I will call the serial killer model, where you go from one to the next to the next.

But in fact, what we saw from *Big Brother* was the rise of the mass murderer – the vast number of users who sit across several platforms at the same time. And *Big Brother* responded by tailoring their output accordingly, making it work for both of those markets – the serial killers enjoy it and don't feel they're missing out on anything, but the mass murderers get an enhanced experience.

So stand by, I hope, for more live TV on your ABC.

## The ABC needs to better manage content

The ABC is creating a hell of a lot of content across a hell of a lot of media and platforms. And it's critical now that we create the infrastructures that organise and name all that content.

It goes beyond generating metadata so that people can find our stuff on the Internet: it's about building a foundation of knowledge, information and reference. It will also be vitally important come the time we comprehensively embrace user-generated content. After all, archive isn't what it used to be – dusty, disused material filed away forever in a box somewhere – archive is a living thing, as useful and, hopefully, as findable now, as it was when it was first published.

Copyright and digital rights management are burning issues

As I've said, the traditional business models and governing structures need to be re-approached and re-drawn, and this needs to be done in ways which are fair and which make sense in their application twenty years from now. I would draw your attention to Platform Papers Number 12, by Richard Harris of the Australian Screen Directors' Association, published by Currency House. It's called 'Film in the Age of Digital Distribution; the Challenge for Australian Content'.

In it Richard makes the point that with more platforms to manage and fill there will be the need to generate more content and less money will be there to invest in that content. And he reminds us that in November 2006 James Packer (formerly) from the Nine Network warned that Australian content will be the first casualty of any change to broadcasting's status quo, i.e. you open up this industry and smash our oligopoly, stand by for us to challenge the quotas for Australian content.

And when we are looking at new business models that are relevant in the era of digital production and distribution it's like *Playschool* – it's all about the windows. What gets screened? – on what platform? – in what sequence? – and when?

At ABC TV we are starting to muck around with this stuff – our jtv comedy *Spy Shop* will premiere on mobile before it's on TV. It still freaks the programmers and publicists out a bit, and it has to happen as part of a very carefully planned marketing strategy. I don't know whether we'll premiere the first episode of Chris

Lilley's new show *Summer Heights High* online ahead of its TV screening – you don't want to risk lessening the numbers viewing on TV. And by the way, anyone who thinks viewing figures aren't important at public broadcasters is deluded – and the ABC's always between a rock and a hard place on this. We can't have our viewing figures drop to the point where our paymasters in Canberra can accuse us of irrelevance, because a bums-on-seats mentality does prevail. And of course, when we achieve great success with shows like *The Chaser*, we're seen as being too commercial, as though being popular by necessity means being 'commercial' – this argument is bogus – it just means we have the kind of audience figures that commercial broadcasters would kill for.

## UK Creative Archive Licence Group

The Creative Archive Licence Group is a shared licence scheme involving the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Channel 4, the British Film Institute (BFI), the Open University, Teachers' TV, Comic Relief, the British Library, the National Theatre, among others – a critical mass of organisations working to shape and drive policy to create a single gateway to allow people access to an archive with a single set of clearance forms and rights-related protocols.

Lord Puttnam – the film-maker David Puttnam – who is Chair of the group, has said:

The Creative Archive Licensing Group exists to ensure public access to public archives is optimised in the digital age. We all pay for the upkeep of the material in the archives so we should all be able to access them. If we are unable to access most, if not all, the riches locked up in these treasure troves, then it naturally begs the question: "why are we paying for them to be preserved in the first place?"

Puttnam posits that it's obscurity, not piracy, that poses the greatest threat to creatives in the audio-visual field. And he says the objective of universal access won't be achieved overnight, or in a few years, but feels it ought to be achievable in a couple of decades at most.

So what are we to make of this at the ABC? The archive is one of our great resources – could we and should we make loads of it available? Almost like a lending library? It needn't compromise the copyright holders – just because one person lends a book from the library doesn't mean others don't buy it from the bookshop or from Amazon. And it certainly doesn't stop others from optioning the book, where the real money is to be made. Surely the same could apply here, with a revenue stream to the underlying rights holders driven by the frequency of downloads? But how would this altruistic approach play alongside our need to maintain existing revenue streams, of which archive sales is one.

## Long form: questioning the rise of the short attention span

For ten or more years we've been told we live in the age of the aquarium, with the attention spans of goldfish.

But recent surveys have found that people who read newspapers online actually give them deeper and longer attention than people who read the print version.

I don't believe this is a society suffering from short attention spans – this is a society that's grown up being babysat by home video and DVD.

If younger people have these horrifically short attention spans, why are they able to immerse themselves in games and watch longform DVDs for hours and hours and hours on end?

My seven year old daughter can watch *The Sound of Music* from beginning to end without once taking her thumb out of her mouth to draw breath. When I was a child we saw it in Panavision at the movies and it had an intermission, allowing us a respite from that barrage of yodelling and nuns and Nazism and bracing alpine air. I don't think it's short attention spans that are the problem – it may be that there is an endless sea of choice and lots of refreshingly experimental and imaginative user-generated content that's throwing temptation our way and creating a fashion for small but perfectly formed clips.

But we still feast as well as snack.

Chris Anderson, editor-in-chief of *Wired* magazine ([www.wired.com/](http://www.wired.com/)), predicts demand will shift to **shorter content** for entertainment and convenience – to be watched in moments snatched between other things – and **longer content** for substance and satisfaction. But he believes the arbitrary middle will not hold.

This sounds right to me – we program ABC TV on Wednesday nights hoping people come over at 8pm for *The New Inventors* and sit there until Margaret and David send them off to bed at half past ten (with apologies to Tony Jones at *Lateline*). All the channels are doing this now – they're thinking in terms of the whole night. The commercials put ads in the middles of shows and leave the tops and tails ad-free so you seamlessly move from one show to the next – you are warned what's coming next in the second-to-last segment of each show by a red strip across the program – and the credits of one show go split-screen with the opening titles of the next. So even with endless interruptions, they're trying to create the illusion of flow – hoping several shows pulled together can be experienced as an intense and singular longform experience.

And if we think of the ultimate in immersive media, today people die playing online games for so long and without taking nourishment, that they suffer organ failure and their systems collapse.

So why do we believe this rhetoric that we had longer attention spans in the past? No one ever died playing *Monopoly*, or even *Twister*.

All I'm saying is – don't believe the hype about short attention spans and go tailoring your projects exclusively for people you imagine have no time, focus, or who you imagine don't want longform media experiences.

And with that, I shall wrap up this longform media experience and thank you all very much for listening.

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Prior to joining the ABC in 2003 Courtney spent three years as Deputy Commissioning Editor of Documentary at SBS Independent and before that spent ten years as a writer-producer on a variety of news, talks, entertainment and comedy programming; in Australia on pay TV shows such as *The Hub* and *Mouthing Off* and in the UK on shows such as Channel Four's *The Big Breakfast* and *The Girlie Show*. In the UK Courtney worked for TV independents such as World of Wonder, Kudos, Planet 24 and Rapido.

# Surfing the Net: the myth and the reality

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## Peter Dobrovits

**The widespread use of the Internet gave rise to the view that all knowledge is to be found there and that books and libraries are becoming redundant. A few probes aimed at exploring its depths found that while its speed and subject coverage are without equal, the 'Net' is not the universal tool it is made out to be. The author then makes a case for extreme care in abandoning books and libraries and warns of the turbulence inherent in every technology changeover.**

*Manuscript received May 2007*

### The myth

When the Internet became a reality and its use spread all over the world, the generally accepted prediction regarding the future of books was ominous, to say the least. The future for the book, so the prediction announced, was dismal, and book collections as well as collectors were speedily relegated to the scrapheap of the future. Why bother with such a cumbersome and frankly medieval concept as the book, when there is this new and easily available source of information that contains everything one wishes to know, an instrument of such power and depth as the world has never seen before?

And it must be admitted, even by the most entrenched opponent of the Internet, that it is a brilliant tool. It spread all over the world almost like a pandemic, penetrating with such a force and with such rapidity that even those who conceived the idea were taken aback by it. By now it is almost unheard of not being able to communicate using e-mail, not to mention the fact that if anybody wishes to find a piece of information, the powerful search engines present the inquirer with a superabundance of information in seconds.

A logical by-product of the predicted demise of the book was the expected death of everything connected with the preservation of the book-form, not the least being the library.

When you come to think of it, libraries are even older than the book. One has only to think of cuneiform tablets, rolls of papyri and manuscript vellum tomes, all housed

in large and cumbersome edifices, maintained by often very dedicated people and their use only made possible by the use of extensive and often complex indexes and catalogues. And frankly, this has not changed much through the centuries. Catalogues and indexes are just as cumbersome and difficult to consult - requiring all kinds of basic knowledge, as they have ever been.

Then the Internet came to the rescue. Suddenly all the onerous tasks needed previously became unnecessary, because now anybody could tap a few words into a search engine and expect reasonable results.

The quantity and variety of 'hits' is quite remarkable. As an exploratory exercise the author entered a few everyday topics into the Google simple search engine on 4th May 2007. The results were quite spectacular: in a matter of seconds thousands of entires containing the particular search word or phrase came into view, highlighting the phrase, or word, within the text or the title. By searching through the offered 'sites', one is then required to make a choice from among the offers, the choice being the responsibility of the user: rarely is there an indication of relevance, as there cannot be, since nobody apart from the user can decide which of the items is actually of use.

A simple search was conducted on the following everyday topics:

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Possible Hits</b>
Currency converters	1,050,000
Irritable bowel	902
Australian silky terrier	661,000
Alphabet history	6,250,000
Australian libraries	11,500,000
Weather forecasting	1,490,000
Saving water	23,600,000

The first observation one has to make is this: there certainly is no subject or topic for which some answer cannot be found on the Internet. The subject coverage of this universal file is quite astounding and the size of it monumental. There has never been such a massive concentration of information in one place, for no library, research centre, or whatever, is capable of storing and then organising and displaying such a great mass of data.

Relevance, of course, is another matter. Occasionally there is some indication that the offering that contains the search word is a blatantly commercial site, the purpose of which is to get to your purse. Sometimes this is so cleverly disguised that one only comes to the money part towards the end when the site usually declares itself by

saying something like 'from hereon it costs money and this is how you can get to it' or some words to that effect.

The incredibly large number of possible 'hits' at first seems impressive. On closer examination, however, it turns out that the basic criterion for selecting a particular site is based on the search words alone, with scant regard for the 'sequence' of words – if it is a multi-word search – as long as the words appear 'somewhere' in the text.

Here is an example:

The simple search for a book: Stokes, R. *The function of bibliography*, resulted in showing as possible hits all entries that contained the words Stokes, function, and bibliography in a variety of combinations. It is small wonder, then, that this particular query showed 372,000 possible hits. How many of these were actually relevant, is a matter for decision.

## Information and knowledge

The general view of the Internet as the best source of all information needs close examination. Before this can be undertaken, however, one must find the meaning of the concept of 'information' as against 'knowledge'. The two are by no means synonymous, even though the *Concise Oxford dictionary* tends to explain the two as being almost one.

Under the heading *information*, this is what it has to say: 'informing, telling; thing told, knowledge, items of knowledge, news'. Under the heading *knowledge*, this is what we find: 'knowing, familiarity gained by experience; person's range of information'.

The *Macquarie dictionary*, 2nd ed. has this to say under the heading *information*: '1. knowledge communicated or received concerning some fact or circumstance, news. 2. knowledge on various subjects, however acquired. 3. the act of informing. 4. the state of being informed. Under the heading *knowledge* we find the following: 1. acquaintance with facts, truths, or principles, as from study or investigation; general erudition. 2. familiarity or conversance, as with a particular subject, branch of learning, etc. 3. acquaintance; familiarity gained by sight, experience, or report. 4. the fact or state of knowing; perception; clear and certain mental apprehension ... 8. the sum of what is known'.

Perhaps a small example could clarify the issue and make the difference between the two concepts slightly more clear. Let's assume that there is a chef of a kitchen of a large hotel. One must assume that to achieve this status he/she must have a considerable amount of knowledge of cooking at his/her fingertips. If that cook decides to create something new, he/she will consult a cookbook for the information that will tell him/her how to prepare that particular item. It will not tell him/her how

to prepare anything else: it will not teach him/her how to cook! Various sites on the Internet are no less confused about the meaning of the two terms, but to pursue the investigation in this direction seems almost as futile as the search for the *perpetuum mobile*.

It has been tried, however.

John Locke in his *Essay concerning human understanding* posits the idea that there are three types of knowledge: intuitive, demonstrative and sensitive, all based on the integration of ideas, but enlightening as this may be, it does not clarify the issue.

Kate Ehrlich and Debra Cash (1994, p7.) have this to say:

It is dangerous to blur the concepts of 'information' and 'knowledge'. Information must be put into context in order to be useful ... information retrieval must be recognized as part of a larger enterprise of building up knowledge to 'solve problems' not merely 'answer questions'.

One of the disconcerting aspects of the easily available information on the Internet is the common belief that it represents the sum of all knowledge worth acquiring and if a search results in zero hits, then the search is not worth pursuing. Yet as far as the author is aware, full text monographs are not generally available on the Internet.

Another problem was highlighted by A. Ramachandran (2007, p.14). It concerned the large amount of medical information available on the Internet, when patients, having diagnosed their own illnesses, try to dictate what the treatment should be; in some cases, having experienced some symptoms, real or imaginary, then attempting to find the cause from the Internet.

There seems to be a hidden bias in a belief which declares that knowledge/information contained in books of some vintage has little value. As a result of such thinking older volumes in some libraries may be retired and made less accessible or, in some cases, discarded or destroyed. The arrogance displayed by such a philosophy is contrary to every aspect of serious research, because it seems to try to dictate what is relevant and what is not, a decision that is the domain of the researcher and the researcher alone.

## The reality

The absence of the full text of books on the Internet is particularly worrying. As an exercise the author searched for four books and found none. There was a plethora of entries about them, even the books themselves as listed in various bibliographies. At times an entry announcing the availability by purchase of one or other of the monographs crops up, but usually that is the closest a searcher will come to the item.

The books the author searched for were as follows (that they are still regarded as valuable research material is manifested by the number of potential 'hits' on the database):

R.B. McKerrow – *An introduction to bibliography* (over 1 million hits)

E.D. Johnson – *History of libraries in the Western world* (653 hits)

F. Stokes – *The function of bibliography* (372,000 hits)

S. Jennett – *The making of books* (23,900 hits)

The message seems to be, that while the Internet provides **many pieces of information** on very many topics, it does not provide text as contained in books. It is a very efficient tool for the retrieval of periodical articles, papers given at conferences and the like, but the by now often despised and neglected library, with its "obsolete" books still has a role to play in the information retrieval field as well as in the field of acquiring knowledge.

It is, of course, foolish to expect one library, organisation, whatever, to provide every piece of information at all times. Globalisation means just that: a global approach to information/knowledge. Information/knowledge management must also be regarded as a global activity and territorial possessiveness must give way to cooperation in the fullest meaning of the term. The dispersion of this activity is the basis of its eventual success, just as the dispersion of all Internet contributions became a success because it was globalised in the fullest meaning of the term.

Some might be of the opinion that a recommendation to globalise must be equated with abolition of everything which is not automated. They are wrong. By all means, let us discard, pulp, sell off those books, periodicals, etc that are truly superfluous or useless. Such a move will gladden the heart of administrators, who until now were required to find ever increasing amounts of money to house and service the collections. Of course, the danger in such measure is the temptation to go overboard and chuck the lot. One must beware, however, not to throw out the baby with the bathwater. Many useful books have been prematurely discarded as being outdated and superfluous.

Under the influence of the 'profit motive', items not pulling their weight were relegated to limbo or hellfire, because it could not be demonstrated that they were of any use to anyone.

The author is of the opinion that this approach to 'collection downsizing' is very dangerous. In the first instance the decision to 'downsize' is being taken in many cases not because of the lack of value of an item, or its potential use, but because of other, economic reasons. An added, much more problematic aspect of such action

is that those who decide on the 'downsizing' decide on the present and potential future value of an item, without having any idea how essential that item may be now or in the future. Librarians, information technologists, etc. cannot possibly know the importance or otherwise of anything, because in the final instance the users of information/knowledge are the arbiters of the value of any item. Most decisions – and one can't put it more brutally than this – to get rid of an item, very seldom, if ever, consider the presence or absence of that item within a reasonable reach. The word 'reasonable' is used here to mean within a period of a user's expectations. Globalisation thus must have certain limitations because the philosophy which limits the availability of an item, previously used, with the motto 'it is available somewhere in the world' is abrogating that aspect of any information system which used to be called 'service'!

One aspect of the Internet which is being advanced repeatedly is its all embracing subject coverage and the speed with which it responds to all queries. That this compliment ignores the dark side of the picture must be obvious to all Internet users: the very speed prevents the system from evaluating what is more or less dumped into the lap of the user.

The other side – equally sinister in my view – is that most users will not use the Internet for serious research, preferring human help if it is available. Librarians know this: since the information explosion in printed form they have been used as intermediaries between the users and sources of knowledge. This situation has not changed with the advent of the Internet: the frightening abundance of responses to any query could – and often does – intimidate the novice, and even the experienced.

## Conclusion

In the final analysis what is to be done? Is the Internet a bonus or a burden?

One has to be practical and sensible. It would be the height of stupidity to ignore all the excellent features provided by automation. Rather one must adopt it for the right reason and admit that it is not the **only** tool available to solve a problem. Even when a time comes that all books and their contents are digitised and accessible on the Internet, there will still be items that slip through the net. This is a feature of all radical changes, whether it is the change in writing (as in the German change from Gothic to the Latin script) or music recording (from shellac to vinyl and then to CD). There always is a body that **never** reaches the advanced stage of development and would disappear forever but for the vigilance of the few.

Let us beware of the arrogance of the NEW and admit that there just may be a few OLDIES that are worth rescuing.

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# Improving access to online multilingual resources by adopting the My Language Portal in the City of Greater Dandenong Libraries

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Marijana Bogdanovic and  
Graeme Johanson

**This paper reports on the implementation of 'My Language Portal' in the City of Greater Dandenong Libraries (CGDL), Melbourne, Victoria, through the development of a 'My Language Portal Project Plan' in 2006. It discusses how the aims of the designers of My Language Portal (MLP) are fulfilled in the exceptional, changing demographics of Dandenong. It provides a rationale for the adoption of MLP, by evaluating census and library statistics, and through local assessment of usability features. Wide consultation led to the creation of a user guide in the form of a fact sheet for users of CGD Libraries, and collaborations with IT and marketing staff are strongly recommended to facilitate smooth implementation. MLP offers a powerful online multilingual resource that bridges the inevitable gap in collections caused by an inability to immediately provide in-house appropriate resources for recently-arrived and diverse migrant communities. Analysis of service provision in Dandenong highlights the need for extra resources, for improved information literacy training, and marketing, and for increasing the number of public access terminals.**

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*This is a refereed article*

## Introduction

This report investigates practical considerations involved when a decision was made to encourage My Language Portal ([www.mylanguage.gov.au](http://www.mylanguage.gov.au)) usage among patrons of the City of Greater Dandenong Libraries: [www.greaterdandenong.com/index.asp?Section=7&ID=1456&Title=Library](http://www.greaterdandenong.com/index.asp?Section=7&ID=1456&Title=Library)

The main aim was to improve information literacy and enable patrons to meet their personal and community needs through resources offered online.

The project aimed to answer the following questions:

Who are CGDL's users?

How well do the Libraries relate to users' needs?

Will the changing community profile affect service provision in future?

In what ways will improved accessibility to MLP online multilingual resources complement all CGDL services?

The approach taken in this study involved an analysis of the technology (MLP), a study of the potential user population, and wide consultation with the staff of CDGL about their expectations of the impact of the technology. In short, process design, information management and relationship management were brought together in this project (Rowse-Jones 2006).

## What is My Language Portal?

My Language Portal is a joint project of seven state and territory libraries with the aim of creating a national multicultural portal which provides access to over six million information links, mostly for multilingual communities. MLP provides access to search engines, web directories and websites in more than 60 languages. It was inspired about five years ago by the need for access to multilingual information, the fact that libraries are main gateways to it, and that information and communications technologies are growing in importance for emerging online and offline communities (My Language Consortium [MLC], 2006). MLP is a valuable tool for increasing information literacy levels, and enhancing social and personal networks. It provides many useful links for libraries through a number of gateways providing information on user community profiles, selected bookshops and suppliers, support services and language collections.

We describe briefly some features of MLP. One of the MLP arms is a link titled 'For Libraries' that provides access to guidelines, articles, reports and research on various aspects of multicultural library service provision, as well as a Multicultural Events Calendar, publications, activities and services of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (MLC, 2006). Another link through MLP, 'How To', is a guide from the State Library of Victoria on how to install fonts in many languages, as well as the State Library of Victoria's list of font types (MLC, 2006).

The guide indicates which language will work with which version of Windows, and provides information on appropriate keyboard layouts. Another MLP arm, titled

'Training,' maintains access to fact sheets 'Six Steps to Using Internet Explorer' on Internet basics in English, and 22 other languages which are provided by Vicnet. These are all printable. (MLC, 2006). In most languages MLP provides links to the Google search engine in a corresponding language, the Immigration Department website, Centrelink, and Wikipedia.

In 2006 MLP was a finalist for the Stockholm Challenge Award, among 1,100 participants from all over the world. Stockholm Challenge is a global networking program which recognizes innovative information and communication technology projects which significantly improve living conditions and enhance economic growth (Stockholm Challenge, 2006).

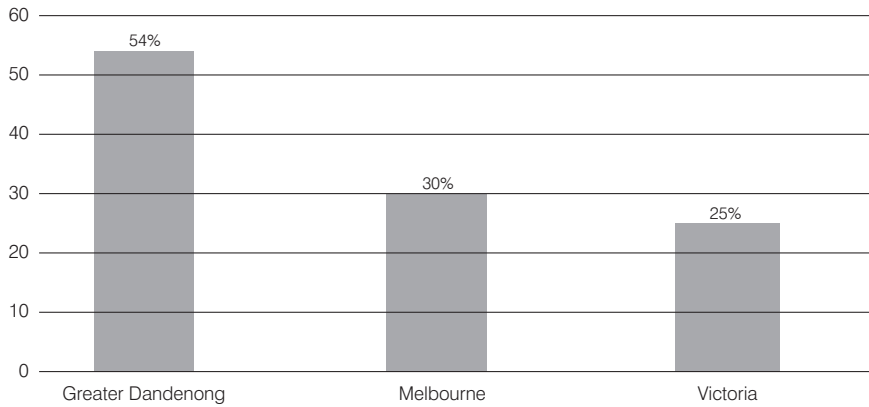
## **City of Greater Dandenong Libraries (2006)**

The City of Greater Dandenong Libraries (CGDL) provides service to 127,230 residents across an area of 129 square kilometres with high population density. The Library has two branches, technical services, and one mobile library which covers 12 service points. According to the Annual Survey of Public Library Services in Victoria 2004–05 (Local Government Victoria [LGV], 2006), there are 65 employed staff, including 14.5 qualified librarians, 5.8 qualified library technicians, 1 qualified IT staff member, and 46.5 other staff. CGDL have 95,760 registered borrowers, a very high representation which accounts for 75% of the total population. Turnover of library stock is very high (9.6 items per borrower), with a total number of loans of 1,377,899 per annum. There are 30 PCs available in the libraries, with 62,285 hours of booked usage. (LGV, 2006, pp. 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 20, 36).

## **Languages**

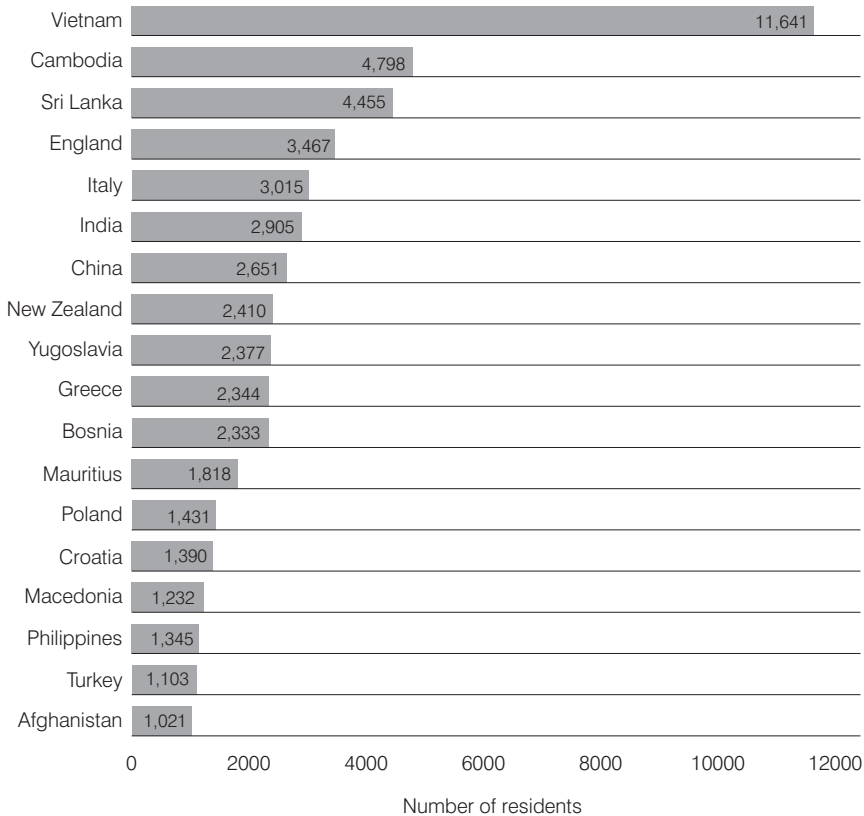
According to the 2001 census, CGD is the most culturally and linguistically diverse community in Victoria. Library users come from many multicultural backgrounds, including a high percentage of newly arrived migrants with low English proficiency levels, who rely heavily on library resources and services. 55% of residents speak a language other than English at home, compared to 27% in metropolitan Melbourne. CGD has the highest proportion of overseas-born residents in Victoria (Figure 1): 54% of residents in CGD were born overseas, compared to 30% in metropolitan Melbourne (Manolis 2005 p. 19).

**Figure 1. Percentage of the CGD population born overseas 2001**  
 (Source: CGD, 2004a, p.1)



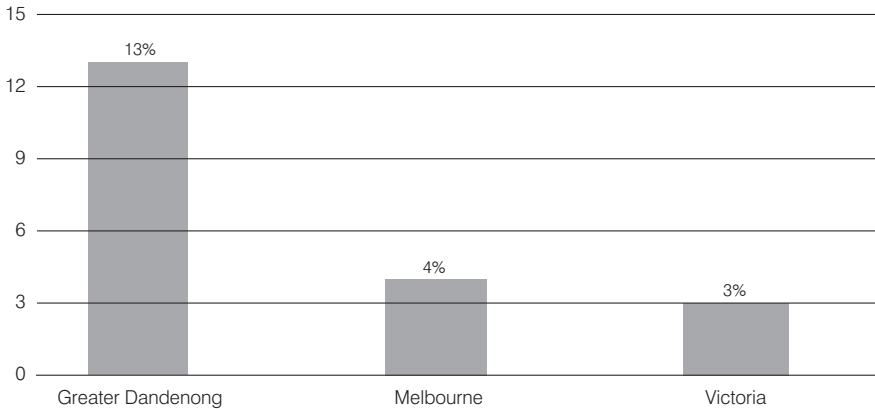
The multicultural community of the CGD shares more than 110 overseas birthplaces (Figure 2), indicating a very complex cultural identity (CGD, 2004a, p.1).

**Figure 2. Birthplaces of people in the CGD 2005** (Source: CGD, 2005b, p.5)



The CGD has a high percentage of residents with limited English fluency – 13%, compared with 5% in metropolitan Melbourne – four times higher than for the State as a whole (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Percent of the population with limited fluency in spoken English 2001**  
 (Source: CGD, 2004b, p.2)



Recent migration trends show development of a complex multicultural environment. For example, migration from Italy has declined, migration from Vietnam has peaked and declined, migration from Bosnia has steadily increased and migration from Afghanistan has sharply increased since the late 1980s. During 2005–06 2,000 new migrants settled in Greater Dandenong, comprising the largest grouping of newly arrived migrants in Victoria in this period. About 50% came to Australia under a refugee or other humanitarian program, and nearly all of those who came under humanitarian arrangements spoke no English.

According to the Australian Population and Household Census 2001, there are more than 100 spoken languages in CGD (Table 1).

**Table 1. Percent of the population of the CGD who speak languages other than English** (Source: CGD, 2004a, p.2)

Language	Persons	Percent	Language	Persons	Percent
English	59,233	45.6	Bengali	86	0.07
Vietnamese	13,197	10.2	Tigrinya	84	0.06
Khmer	5,119	3.9	Telugu	84	0.06
Cantonese	4,996	3.8	Oromo	84	0.06
Greek	4,756	3.7	Afrikaans	80	0.06
Italian	4,356	3.4	Slovene	75	0.06
Serbian	3,226	2.5	Malayalam	74	0.06
Spanish	2,703	2.1	Hokkien	62	0.05
Arabic	2,527	1.9	Japanese	52	0.04
Mandarin	2,417	1.9	Tongan	49	0.04
Turkish	1,947	1.5	Tetum	45	0.03
Bosnian	1,752	1.3	Malay	40	0.03
Sinhalese	1,750	1.3	Amharic	36	0.03
Albanian	1,686	1.3	Fijian	36	0.03
Polish	1,681	1.3	Nepali	34	0.03
French	1,451	1.1	Latvian	33	0.03
Croatian	1,425	1.1	Estonian	30	0.02
Persian	1,103	0.8	Finnish	30	0.02
Tamil	1,099	0.8	Kurdish	26	0.02
Hungarian	923	0.7	Iranic	25	0.02
Filipino	908	0.7	Indo-Aryan	25	0.02
Samoan	887	0.7	Gujarati	22	0.02
Romanian	870	0.7	Auslan	19	0.01
Hindi	717	0.6	Bisaya	18	0.01
Russian	670	0.5	Lithuanian	16	0.01
German	614	0.5	Bulgarian	16	0.01
Chinese, other	575	0.44	Marathi	16	0.01
Hakka	575	0.44	Sindhi	16	0.01
Macedonian	538	0.41	Wu	16	0.012
Teochew	484	0.37	Danish	15	0.011
Netherlandic	416	0.32	Sign Languages	15	0.011
Maltese	397	0.31	Yoruba	12	0.009

Maori (Cook Island)	336	0.26	Swedish	11	0.009
Portuguese	279	0.21	Konka ni	10	0.008
Urdu	266	0.2	Cebuano	10	0.008
Lao	257	0.2	Irish	9	0.007
Armenian	246	0.19	Hebrew	9	0.007
Pidgins & Creoles	239	0.18	Catalan	7	0.005
Punjabi	217	0.17	Aromunian	7	0.005
Pashto	205	0.16	Tok Pisin	7	0.005
Ukrainian	187	0.14	Mauritian Creole	6	0.004
Indonesian	177	0.14	Welsh	4	0.003
Somali	164	0.13	Norwegian	3	0.003
Thai	156	0.12	Hmong	3	0.003
Burmese	136	0.1	Ilokano	3	0.003
Assyrian	127	0.1	Central Aboriginal	3	0.003
Timorese	125	0.1	Cape York Aboriginal	3	0.003
Czech	121	0.09	Akan	3	0.003
Maori (New Zealand)	101	0.08	Niue	3	0.003
Korean	99	0.08	Papuan Languages	3	0.003
Kannada	95	0.07	Sign Languages	3	0.003
Slovak	91	0.07			

The MLP offers a variety of links in more than 60 languages. These are listed in Table 2. Of these, 54 are present in the CGD population, as described in Table 1. The top 20 languages spoken, or 88% of the languages spoken in the CGD, are covered by the MLP.

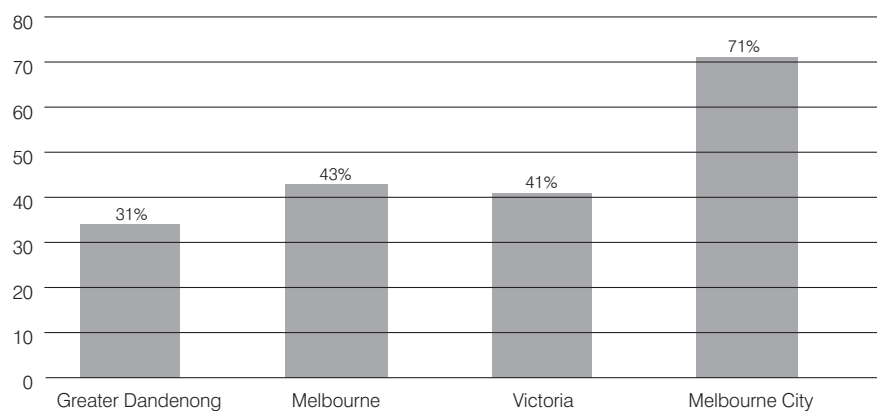
**Table 2. The Languages covered by MLP** (Source: My Language Corporation, 2006)

Afrikaans	Albanian	Amharic	Arabic	Armenian
Azeri	Basque	Belarusian	Bosnian	Breton
Bulgarian	Catalan	Chinese (simplified)	Chinese traditional)	Croatian
Czech	Danish	Dinka	Dutch	English
Estonian	Farsi	Filipino	Finnish	French
Gaelic	Galician	German	Greek	Gujarati
Hebrew	Hindi	Hungarian	Icelandic	Indonesian
Irish	Italian	Japanese	Kannada	Kazakh
Khmer	Korean	Latvian	Lithuanian	Macedonian
Malay	Marathi	Mon	Myanmar	Norwegian
Nuer	Occitian	Pashto	Polish	Portugese
Romanian	Russian	Serbian	Slovak	Slovenian
Somali	Spanish	Swahili	Swedish	Tamil
Tatar	Thai	Turkish	Ukrainian	Vietnamese
Welsh				

## Income, education and home Internet use

Residents of CGD have lower average weekly incomes than metropolitan Melbourne, \$295 compared to \$404 (CGD, 2004c, p.1). Residents in CGD have limited Internet access compared to metropolitan residents.

**Figure 4. Weekly Internet Use in 2001** (Source: CGD, 2004d, p.1)



About 30% of CGD residents were using the Internet on a weekly basis (Figure 4), in contrast to 43% of the metropolitan area as a whole (CGD, 2004d, p.1). People with higher levels of formal education used the Internet more in the CGD in 2005 – 48% of regular internet users in the CGD had completed year 12, in contrast to only 13% of users who had completed year 10 or less (Table 3).

**Table 3. Education and Internet use in the CGD** (Source: CGD, 2004d, p.1)

<b>Age</b>	<b>Year 10 or less</b>	<b>Year 12</b>
20–29	18	62
30–59	15	42
60+	3	14
Overall	13	48

According to the 2001 Census, the most regular Internet and computer usage is recorded among younger, more educated and Australian-born residents. Overall this statistical data indicates that the CGD includes many minority language groups, creating obstacles to access to mainstream information in English. Library users in this region are likely to rely heavily for literacy services and multilingual resources on their public library. New arrivals often have low levels of literacy.

## **Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) collections**

Prior to the availability of the MLP, CGDL had a range of resources and services intended to meet the needs of the multicultural and multilingual community.

Because 55% of CGD residents speak a language other than English at home, with a high percentage of library users who are recent migrants, CGDL has used CALD collections in a number of languages. Currently, it holds 29,792 items in 19 languages other than English, as well as an ESL collection of 1,700 items. Major languages that have more than 1,000 speakers include Vietnamese, Chinese, Khmer, Greek, Italian, Serbian, Spanish, Arabic, Turkish, Bosnian, Sinhalese, Albanian, Polish, French, Croatian, Persian (including Farsi and Dari) and Tamil. It has been a challenging task for the CGD Libraries to finance materials in so many different languages.

Since 1999 new collections have been created to accommodate demographic changes. If there are 300–1,000 speakers of a language, then basic reference publications and one or two periodicals are purchased; if there are above 1,000 speakers, purchases for the general collections are considered. According to

Victorian public library statistics 2004–2005 (Local Government Victoria [LGV], 2006, p. 25), the CGDL invested 25% of the annual collection budget in the development of CALD collections – a higher percentage than any other Victorian library. The figures are presented in Tables 4 and 5.

**Table 4. LOTE resources in the CGDL collection** (Source: LGV, p. 30)

<b>Adult fiction books in collection</b>	<b>Adult non-fiction books in collection</b>	<b>LOTE books in collection</b>	<b>Total print material in collection</b>
23,906	48, 470	26,274	155,836

LOTE newspaper and serials resources are significant – they represent more than 50% of the newspaper and serials collection in English (LGV, pp. 32, 33).

According to Victorian public library statistics for 2004–05, the CGDL expenditure for LOTE materials is significantly higher than in any other public library in Victoria, comprising 19.2% of total material expenditure, ahead of the second highest – Moreland with 17.8%.

**Table 5. Expenditure on LOTE items in the CGDL collections**

(Source: LGV, pp. 22, 24, 25)

	<b>LOTE expenditure – printed material</b>	<b>Expenditure on newspaper &amp; serials in LOTE</b>	<b>Total all material expenditure</b>	<b>LOTE materials as percentage of total collection expenditure</b>
CGDL	\$64, 838	\$35,402	\$600,000	19.2%
Moreland	\$93,998	\$64,850	\$894,669	17.8%

These figures – which exclude the costs of LOTE cataloguing – indicate that exploration of the option of introducing online resources systematically would certainly improve access to non-English materials, and might produce some savings in financial and staff resources. Thus CGDL determined to review its Culturally and Linguistically Diverse policies, and to investigate the usefulness of the MLP with its multilingual potential and technological support provided by the State Library of Victoria and its partners.

## Related centralised services

Since 1992 English Language and Literature Access (ELLA) has provided services which now complement the MLP offerings (State Library of Victoria, 2005, p. 12).

ELLA includes:

- assistance to Job And Career Link (JACL) users and guidance and referral in job-search
- short Microsoft Word and Internet courses for library members free of charge
- computer literacy courses for various community groups
- free assessment and referral for all ELLA students
- general help in computer literacy to all public users (CGD, 2001).
- JACL offers in addition:
  - assessment and help in preparation for job search
  - guidance in preparation of curriculum vitae, covering letters and linking to job-search databases (CGD, 2001).

## Development of My Language Portal Project Plan and supporting materials

In response to the demographic analysis of users of CGDL, to the evaluation of its multilingual collections, and to management concerns about ongoing improvement of services to its communities, a Project Plan for an MLP Project was developed.

### *Steps in the development of the Project Plan*

At first research investigated the potential of the MLP in the context of users and their needs. The appropriateness of available links was tested in relevant languages.

Secondly, a series of meetings and iterative consultations and interviews with library stakeholders was conducted on several levels (Library Board of Victoria (2001, p. 50), and in the sequence indicated in Table 6.

Table 6. Meetings, consultations and interviews with library stakeholders

<b>Stakeholder group</b>	<b>Issues raised, discussed and acted on.</b>
Management	The need for development of a Project Plan was discussed in light of a perceived need for improved access to multilingual online resources, viz. MLP, as outlined in the CALD communities plan of the CGD. Management initiative.
ELLA counsellors	<p>Discussion allowed for the description of a general profile of ELLA clients and their immediate language and literacy needs (average education levels of migrant users, their literacy skills, cultural backgrounds). An understanding of core users was elicited.</p> <p>A suggested strategy was:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creation of user guides for all levels of users. Topics covered were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appropriate choice of content</li> <li>• short textual instructions in simple language</li> <li>• large font</li> <li>• textually and visually self-explanatory messages.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Development of a fact sheet which focused on communicating basic instructions for MLP access and aimed at increasing usability for all community levels.</li> </ol>
IT personnel	<p>The need for individual fonts through MLP was laid out, and technical requirements for their installation were discussed.</p> <p>The feasibility of installing visually attractive and easily recognizable MLP link icons on the CGDL website was discussed. In addition, the possibility of installing MLP link icons on all CGDL computer desktops was mooted.</p>
Marketing librarian	<p>There was extended discussion of the rules and regulations of the CGD marketing team regarding content, templates, procedures, cost-effectiveness and format issues.</p> <p>The need to relate to target audiences with simple, easy-to-use, step-by-step formats was emphasised.</p> <p>The choice of an appropriate format was agreed on (for the CGD the most effective one was an A4 double-sided fact sheet).</p> <p>Distribution options were debated and agreed on (part of the ELLA Internet training classes, prominent displays within the web zone area, announcements, and media releases).</p>

As a result of consultations and interviews, and ELLA advice about relevant content, it was then decided that a general online layout be adopted. This needed to conform to Council specifications. Certain valuable links would be mentioned on the fact sheet. Visual and textual features were incorporated in the general CGDL design, using Microsoft Word.

An evaluation sheet was designed and distributed to computer users in the library who were attending Internet instruction classes (both English speaking and non-English speaking), as well as to some Internet users who were using the computers independently. They were quizzed on whether the content of the training sessions was clear, whether the trainer held their attention, and which parts of the training were most useful.

The fact sheet will be modified in future in response to user reactions. Its usability and comprehensiveness were tested in CGDL in Dandenong, during an Internet class, both by English and non-English speaking students and it was modified according to comments. Feedback from student users and other stakeholders was also examined, and small corrections made for the final version submitted to the marketing department of CGD.

The fifth step was a presentation on the MLP to all Library staff. During this presentation, staff were informed about multicultural and multilingual values involved in the adoption of MLP, how this tool would be used to enhance the CGDL environment and its visual features were highlighted. Some of them are included here in Figures 5 – 7.

Figure 5. My Language Home Page (Source: MLC, 2006)



There was a good deal of interest in the relevance of MLP to library users and Library staff. Further links were discussed, as follows:

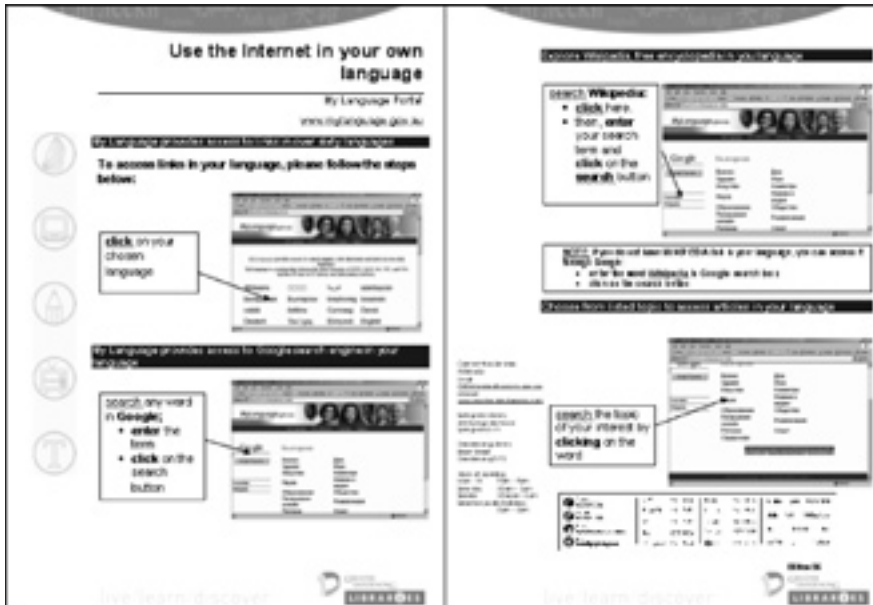
- the link 'For Libraries' was seen as valuable for library professionals, listing information on Australian and international articles, collections, reports and guidelines for multicultural library services
- further link to the 'Tool Box', which offers information on diverse cultural resources, community profiles, a multicultural events calendar, and CALD bookshops and suppliers
- the link titled 'Training' provides ready-to-print internet training materials in 23 languages, including English
- the 'Support' link that offers technical advice regarding individual languages, their operating systems and font requirements, as well as information on fonts and keyboard layout installation and language support for East Asian and complex script-based languages.

Figure 6. My Language Internet Training Fact Sheet (Source: MLC, 2006)



After the presentation, Library staff were kept informed about the development, production and future distribution of the fact sheet:

Figure 7: My Language Portal Fact Sheet (Source: CGD, 2006)



The final step was to agree on specific performance measures to be created by professional staff for future revision. These will include questionnaires in different languages. Final copies of the Project Plan and the MLP fact sheet were approved by management and the marketing department.

## Sustainability

As a result of this study, it is clear that CGDL will need to address further issues to improve usage of the MLP. Implementation of new services often reveals a need for related initiatives and extra support. With this in mind, unresolved issues include:

**Information literacy:** The majority of CGDL users do not have sufficient information literacy skills to be able to use this portal independently. An ongoing information literacy program has been organized through the ELLA service and has been very popular.

**Training:** this is provided to both staff and library users through the ELLA service. Staff need to be more aware of the MLP and how to use it. Online instruction is offered through a step-by-step fact sheet linked to the CGDL website, which aims to encourage people to use this resource more extensively. More PCs are needed.

**Marketing and design:** A key component is a visually-appealing MLP link icon on the CGDL website. Continuing distribution and improvement of the MLP fact sheet is essential, in popular languages. MLP information needs to be available

whenever a user needs it. Creation of displays, posters and signage internally is required, as well as external dissemination of publicity. Production of bookmarks, brochures, newsletter and other printed materials will promote the MLP. Resources must be dedicated to organising and announcing sessions with local communities to promote usage. Maximise the partnership with local council to promote the MLP and e-resources. A plan must be made to promote resources with local multicultural organizations, and their leaders, through library visits and demonstrations for groups of users. More PCs are needed.

## Conclusions

This article has reported on the integration of the My Language Portal into existing multicultural services at the libraries of the City of Greater Dandenong. There was commitment from management and staff, and goodwill on the part of affiliates, to plan the implementation of the new resource with little disruption, to the mutual advantage of all, and for the more targeted language use of public library resources. Plans were carefully thought out, proposals were well understood, and decision-making was fully participatory as the program progressed. The innovation was adopted smoothly. Without careful monitoring of the composition of a changing urban population, such as in the CGD, there can be little understanding of information or literacy needs of communities. A dynamic library service must retain the full support of its multicultural community of users and the commitment of funding authorities to enhance important community resources, programs and services.

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# AskNow Instant Messaging: innovation in virtual reference

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Kate Davis

**In late 2006, the National Library of Australia implemented a trial Instant Messaging service that ran in parallel with the AskNow chat reference service for a six month period. The trial was a resounding success, proving both a demand for an IM service and the suitability of the medium for reference service provision in a collaborative environment. The trial also allowed the collection of a significant body of data on user expectations, librarian experience and the nature of enquiries. This article begins by introducing the concept of IM and discusses the impetus for its use as a channel for reference service provision. It presents and analyses data collected from user surveys, session transcripts, usage statistics, staff surveys and other staff feedback mechanisms, and explores the issues arising from the data analysis. The article concludes by discussing the IM system architecture that the NLA is currently developing, which will allow the Library to move forward with an ongoing IM service.**

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## Introduction

National and State Libraries Australasia's (NSLA) AskNow virtual reference service has been in operation for over four years. It has proved to be a successful service and continues to receive an average of 2000 enquiries each month. In implementing AskNow, the NSLA cooperative was on the cutting edge of innovation in virtual reference service provision. For the past four years, the service has operated using the *24/7 Ref* proprietary chat reference software, and more recently, OCLC's *QuestionPoint*.

In 2006, Pascal Lupien published an article in *Online* that positioned Instant Messaging (IM) as a viable alternative to proprietary chat reference products. This article catalysed discussion amongst the AskNow Service Team about the future of virtual reference (VR) service provision. At the same time, a number of university libraries in the United States began to trial IM reference services, and to publish

articles detailing the results of these trials. No large scale collaborative service had trialled IM at that stage.

In November 2006, the National Library of Australia (NLA) recognised an opportunity to launch a trial IM service which would coincide with the redevelopment of the AskNow website. A pilot proposal was written by NLA AskNow staff and approved by senior management. It was proposed that the trial would be staffed and managed by NLA staff. The trial commenced on 16 November and continues at the time of writing.

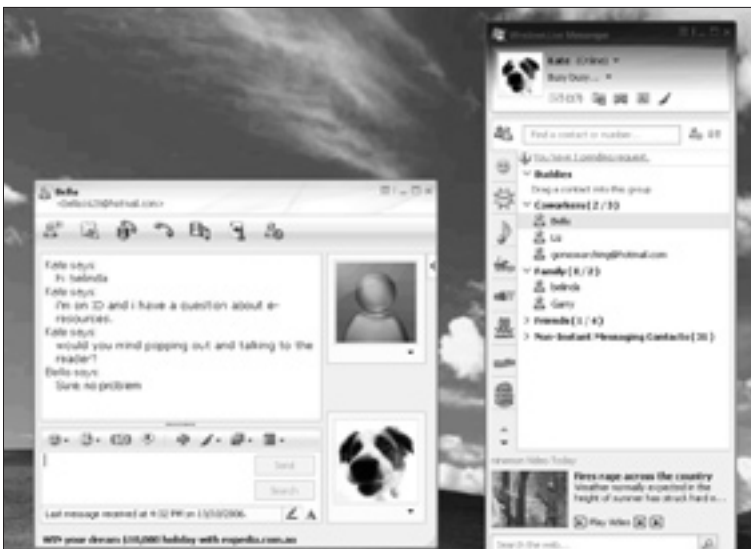
What follows is an analysis of the key findings from the first phases of the trial and the issues encountered. The analysis is based on a significant body of data collected during the trial.

## What is Instant Messaging?

Instant Messaging is a form of online, real time communication. It allows users to see whether their contacts are online, and to send them a typed message. It is similar to email as a communication tool, but, unlike traditional email, is instantaneous. Messages sent via IM appear immediately on the recipient's computer screen. In this way, IM is a truly synchronous (that is, real time) form of communication.

This interaction is facilitated by software called an IM client. This software can generally be downloaded free from the Web and provides a simple interface where you can see messages and lists of contacts. Traditional IM clients operate on a user's own PC (that is, on the desktop) and users of IM typically keep their IM client running in the background as they undertake other tasks (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Windows Live Messenger IM client (MSN network)



Popular clients in Australia include Windows Live Messenger (formerly MSN Messenger), Yahoo! Messenger and Google Talk. These individual clients generally don't interoperate, so that someone using Windows Live Messenger, for example, cannot chat to someone using Google Talk. However, there are third-party clients (also known as aggregator or multi-network clients) that allow you to log in to accounts on many different networks simultaneously.

Beside the ability to send typed messages backward and forwards, IM also allows the user to:

- transfer files to people they are IMing with
- set up a profile, including a photo, so that people they are IMing with can access information about them
- add people to their contact or buddy list, so that they need only double click on a person's name to start chatting
- post a status message, for example 'just gone to get a coffee, be right back'
- operate in stealth mode – that is, appear offline, when they really are online. This means that the user can see who is online without their buddies knowing they are online
- block people – if the user no longer wants to communicate with someone, they can permanently block them so that the blocked contact can no longer see when the user is online, or send them any messages
- send links by copying and pasting or typing a URL into the IM client
- keep a log (or archive) of their conversations
- send emoticons to convey feelings and non-verbal cues.

Some IM clients offer advanced functionality including:

- screen sharing, which allows the user to show the person they are IMing with the screen they are currently working on
- the ability to talk to contacts – some clients use the Voice-over-Internet Protocol (VoIP) to enable users to talk to their contacts using a microphone (just like the telephone – but free!)
- video conference capabilities, supported by web cam
- 'conference calling' or chat rooms, which facilitate a conversation between multiple IM users simultaneously.

## Why should libraries offer an IM reference service?

IM enables libraries to provide a responsive, streamlined service that meets users 'where they are', both technologically and geographically. Research indicates that IM is the communication tool of choice for an increasing number of people. An American survey estimated that 75% of teenagers who have access to the Internet use IM, as do 47% of all adults with access to the Internet (Fox and Madden, 2006, p. 3). No longer the exclusive domain of techno-savvy Gen Nexters, usage of IM is increasing and spreading into all sectors of society. In an article published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in August 2006, business people are described as increasingly embracing this 'presence technology' to remain in touch with colleagues and clients.

By using IM to deliver reference services, libraries can meet their users on their own ground. Rather than asking (or expecting) patrons to come to us, we are able to meet them at their point-of-need. And, the point of need is not geographically restricted to a computer. While traditional chat services that employ proprietary, web based chat reference software can only be accessed from a computer with an Internet connection, IM clients can be used on hand-held devices like PDAs and next generation mobile phones.

IM clients typically have intuitive interfaces and are easy to use, which means the need for staff training is dramatically diminished. Yet many IM clients also offer capabilities that could facilitate innovation in reference service delivery. IM is a flexible and ever-evolving medium, with mainstream, freely available IM clients providing facilities for screen sharing, video calling and VoIP capabilities. These features have the potential to deliver the information literacy benefits attributed to existing proprietary chat services.

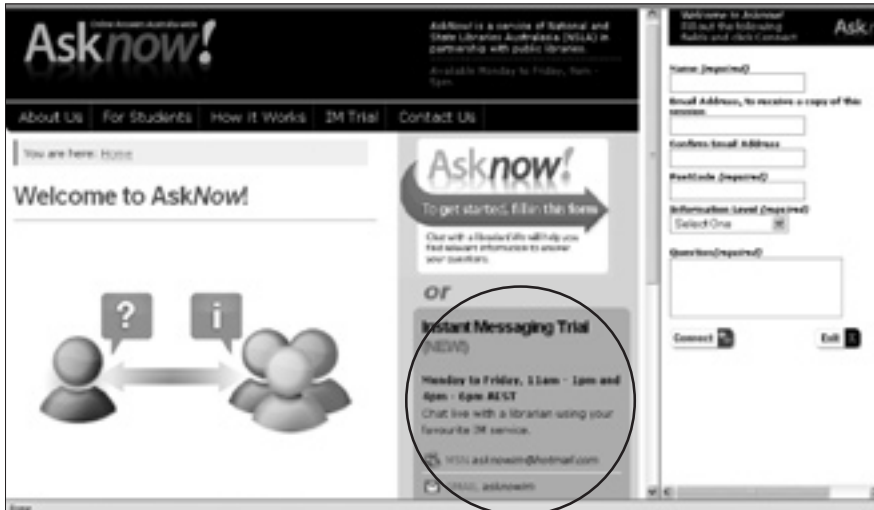
## How does the AskNow IM service work?

NLA staff placed a list of 'screen names' on the AskNow website ([www.asknow.gov.au](http://www.asknow.gov.au)), so that patrons could add us to their contact or buddy list. We wanted to support all of the popular protocols, and to allow this, we provided users with a screen name for each of the major IM clients/networks. We set up accounts with the major IM providers:

- Hotmail/MSN
- Yahoo!
- Google Talk
- ICQ
- AIM

Setting up these accounts was a simple process that involved registering with each of the providers. We chose the screen name *asknowim* for our service, and were able to secure this common screen name on all the networks we wanted to use (Figure 2).

Figure 2. AskNow website, with IM screen names highlighted

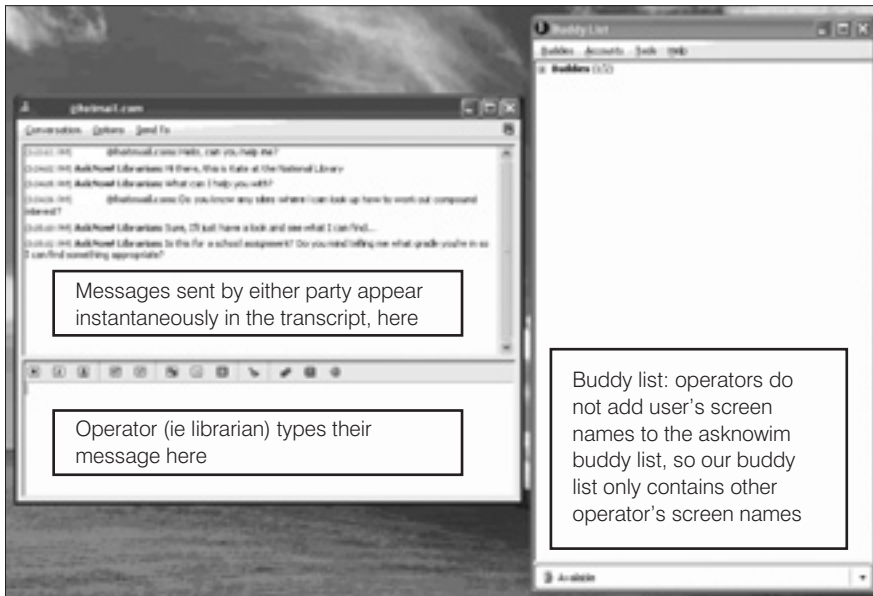


When a patron adds one of the AskNow screen names to their buddy list, an authorisation request appears on the librarian's screen. After we authorise the user, they are able to see when a librarian is online, and can then double click on our screen name to send the librarian a message. And that's it! The reference transaction is underway.

On the librarian side, we use the *Gaim* aggregator IM client, which allows multiple IM accounts across multiple networks to be monitored simultaneously, in a seamless, integrated manner. As a free, open-source product, *Gaim* also has the potential to be modified, should administrative or operational requirements not be met by the existing functionality. *Gaim* has recently been renamed *Pidgin*, however we continue to use the most recent beta version of *Gaim* at this stage.

When a user initiates an IM session by sending the librarian a message, a window pops up on the librarian's screen (see Figure 3). Subsequent new sessions also appear automatically, either in tabs in the existing window, or as separate windows, depending on the settings the librarian has selected. The librarian simply types the reply and presses the 'enter' key on the keyboard to send the message. The exchange is instantaneous, with new messages appearing immediately in the transcript window.

Figure 3. Operator view of IM transaction



Only one librarian can monitor a single screen name at a time – a problem that is common to all IM clients and networks and which is the most substantial barrier to effective IM service provision. This has two adverse implications. Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, only one librarian can man the service at a time, which is a particular problem for a large scale service like AskNow, because the volume of concurrent enquiries could conceivably reach the point where multiple librarians are needed to meet the demand (indeed, this proved to be the case in the later stages of the trial). Secondly, shift changeover can be challenging, as logging in using the same screen name at a second location effectively closes the first librarian's session. As such, the librarian who is scheduled to take over at the start of a new shift must confer with the first librarian to ensure they have finished all active enquiries, before they can log in.

We used instructions provided by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (available at <http://www.lib.unc.edu/reference/eref/gaim/>) to set up an environment variable on all operator PCs, which causes *Gaim* to take all its settings and log all transcripts to a central location on a shared drive. Operators manually recorded statistics for each shift on the project wiki space, which we also used to store and collaborate on documentation and to communicate about service issues.

## Aims of the trial

The trial, which commenced in late November 2006, aimed to:

- demonstrate a demand for an IM service
- gather data about potential users
- establish if an IM service would be feasible and sustainable in terms of resourcing
- establish whether available open source software could provide the functionality necessary in offering such a service
- develop a service model and operational plan, which could include recommendations about the type of enquiries the service would deal with (e.g. only ready reference questions), as well as any limitations on the service (e.g. should it be offered for the same hours as the existing AskNow service, or on more restricted hours).

There were also a number of secondary aims for the trial, including:

- tracking the impressions of librarians operating the IM service, in order to gauge training and documentation needs
- testing the reporting and logging capabilities of the selected software to ensure our administrative requirements could be met
- determining what further information might be necessary to implement a live service. This could inform further investigation such as surveys and benchmarking with other libraries.

## The service model and phases of the trial

The trial was initially scheduled to run for a month. It was extended and at the time of writing, the trial is in its fourth phase. A number of factors contributed to the decision to continue the trial beyond its planned end date, including:

a desire to collect more data, in the form of user survey responses, usage statistics, session transcripts, and operator impressions

a clear demand for the service on the part of users, leading to a desire by the project team to build on the momentum achieved thus far

a desire to test the concept of embedded IM, in the form of the meebo me widget.

It was initially proposed that the trial would be staffed three hours a day, by one operator at a time (due to the software limitations outlined above). During the pilot, NLA staff varied the service hours, in order to test different opening hours, and later to accommodate resourcing issues. Initially, the trial was staffed and administrated

by the NLA, however, during phase two of the trial, the State Library of Victoria (SLV) commenced staffing the service alongside the National Library. Phase four – the partner phase – has seen the State Libraries of Tasmania and Queensland, as well as the National Library of New Zealand, also staff the service.

The following timeline (Figure 4) illustrates the various phases of the trial and the aspects of the service model that were tested during each phase.

**Figure 4. Phases of the trial**

<b>Jan 2007</b>	<b>Dec 2006</b>	<b>Nov 2006</b>
<b>Phase One</b>		
<b>16 November 2006 to 26 January 2007</b>		
<b>Service hours:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1pm to 3pm and 4pm to 5pm (16 November to 24 November)</li> <li>• 1pm to 6pm (27 November 2006 to 26 January 2007).</li> </ul>		
<b>Tested:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service hours</li> <li>• Use of the wiki for project management, recording of statistics, and as a space for operators to record their impressions.</li> <li>• Staffing the service from offsite using meebo</li> </ul>		
<b>Usage:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 277 enquiries recorded.</li> </ul>		
<b>Feb 2007</b>		
<b>Phase Two</b>		
<b>29 January 2007 to 2 March 2007</b>		
<b>Service hours:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1pm to 6pm</li> </ul>		
<b>Tested:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLV's involvement in the trial enabled the testing of procedural documentation for set up</li> <li>• level of support required to set up IM at partner sites</li> <li>• procedural documentation for operators.</li> </ul>		
<b>Usage:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 205 enquiries recorded.</li> </ul>		

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**April 2007**

**March 2007**

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**Phase Three**

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**5 March 2007 to 27 April**

**Service hours:**

- 11am to 1pm and 3pm to 6pm (5 March to 9 March)
- 11am to 1pm (12 March to 27 April).

**Usage:**

- 260 enquiries recorded.
- 

**May 2007**

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**Phase Four: Partner Phase**

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**30 April 2007 to 30 June 2007**

**Service hours:**

- 11am to 1pm and 4pm to 6pm (30 April to 1 June)
- 11am to 1pm (4 June to 29 June)
- Each partner library contributes two hours per week
- NLA provides between 4 and 12 rostered hours each week.

**Partners involved:**

- National Library of New Zealand
- State Library of Tasmania
- State Library of Queensland
- State Library of Victoria
- State Library of Western Australia

**Usage:**

- 441 enquiries have been recorded to 30 May, however Phase Four is underway at the time of writing.
- 

## Evaluation and review methods

As the first large-scale, collaborative IM service in the world, the AskNow Instant Messaging trial provided a unique opportunity to capture data relating to IM service provision. A number of methods were selected to capture data, in order to inform

decision-making for an ongoing service. Due to the innovative nature of the service, it was highly desirable to capture both qualitative and quantitative data about both users' and operators' perceptions of the medium and its effectiveness for the provision of virtual reference.

Several data gathering methods were used, including:

- usage statistics
- a user survey (pushed to the user via a scripted message at the end of every session)
- in depth transcript analysis
- staff surveys and focus groups
- an operator impressions wiki space
- a costing exercise.

For the transcript analysis, the transcripts for every session conducted by NLA staff between the commencement of the trial and the end of March 2007 were analysed (617 in total). Likewise, all user survey responses for the same period were considered in the evaluation (87 in total).

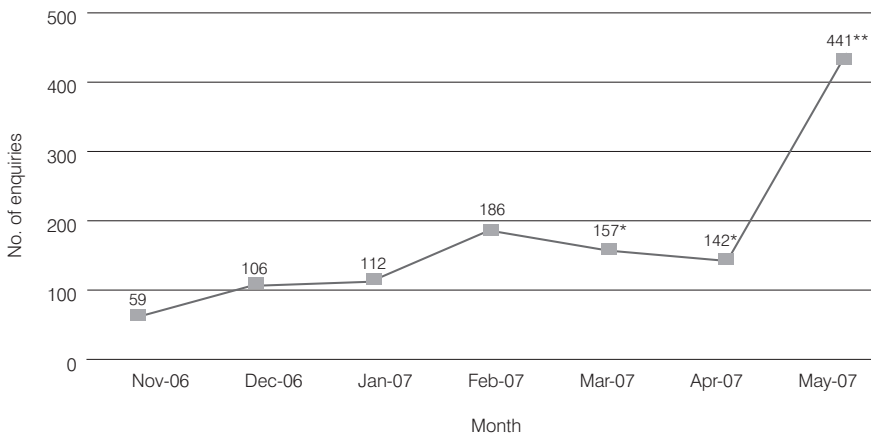
## Usage of the service

During the trial, statistics were kept manually by operators and recorded on the project wiki space. We recorded statistics for both the number of enquiries received, as well as the number of users we authorised to contact us. Usage of the service increased steadily throughout the trial, with more than 1200 enquiries received by the end of May 2007 (Figure 5). Initially, the number of concurrent enquiries received was manageable by one librarian. By May, however, the number of concurrent enquiries received, particularly in the late afternoon, became too many for one librarian to manage alone.

It was anticipated that repeat usage of the IM service would be high, given that IM is a 'presence technology', allowing users to see when the librarian is logged in, without needing to navigate to the AskNow website. In fact, this proved to be the case, with more than 40% of users using the service more than once. Out of a sample of 500 transcripts of sessions that took place between November 2006 and March 2007:

- 16.3% of users used the service twice
- 19% of users used the service between three and five times
- 4.5% of users used the service between 11 and 15 times.

Figure 5: Usage of IM by month



\* Service hours were decreased to two hours per day in March and April, which accounts for the apparent decline in usage

\*\* Service hours were increased to four hours per day in May

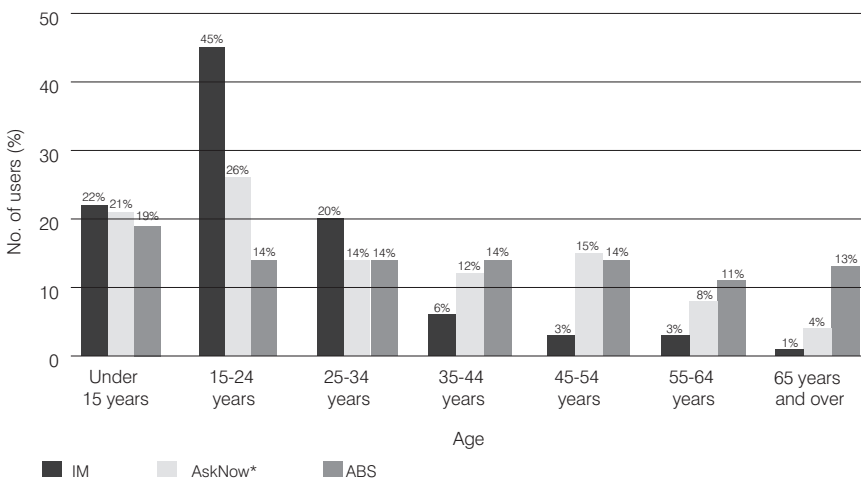
## Users of the service

43% of users who responded to the survey had not previously used AskNow. This is perhaps indicative that the IM service is attracting new users. Indeed, this trend has been reported anecdotally by other services that have begun to offer IM. In an email to the Dig\_Ref e-list on 17 May 2007, Sarah Houghton-Jan said that in the last six years, she has tracked virtual reference usage trends for two US county public library systems, and has noticed a steady decline in usage. However, she indicated that upon launching IM a 'few years into that decline ... [usage increased] dramatically and consistently. In surveys we did of users, it did not appear that it was that [sic] the traditional virtual reference users moving over to IM, but rather totally new users accessing our services through IM.' It appears that IM may have appeal for a new market and might therefore offer us an opportunity to reach new user groups.

The age profile of IM users differs from that of AskNow (Figure 6). Like AskNow, however, the IM age profile also over-represents the under 24 age group when compared to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) population statistics. 67% of user survey respondents were under the age of 24 years (compared to 46% of AskNow user survey respondents in the same period). Operator experience indicated that there were significantly more enquiries from upper secondary and tertiary students on IM than on AskNow, an observation that is supported by the age profile data. In the survey period, 26% of AskNow users were aged 14–24 years, while for IM, 45% of users fell in this age bracket. IM also had slightly more users in the 24–34 years age bracket than AskNow, but interestingly, had significantly less users aged over

35 years than AskNow (13% for IM; 39% for AskNow). This is arguably attributable in part to the time of day the IM service operates as compared to AskNow: while AskNow operates all day, IM operated predominantly in the afternoons during this period, which is the time when students are typically doing their homework. It would be interesting to see what would happen to this comparative age profile if both services operated for the same hours each day – it is likely that the distribution of age would become more alike.

**Figure 6: Age profile of IM and AskNow users** (Source: IM user survey data and AskNow user survey data, November 2006 to March 2007; ABS cat no. 3101.0)

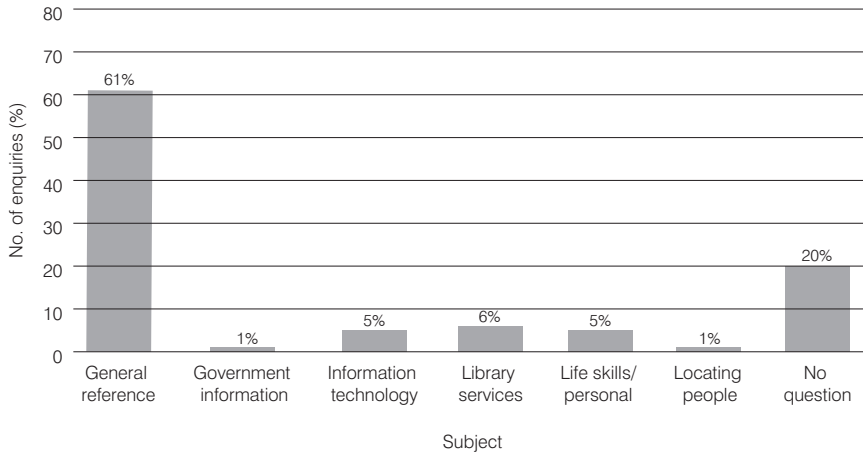


## Nature of enquiries

Transcript analysis enabled the broad categorisation of enquiries (Figure 7) as follows:

- 61% general reference, for example
  - *can u please help me find info on education in australia prior to 1914*
  - *could you please find me some information on: the contribution of religion to society and culture*
- 20% categorised as 'no question', of which
  - 34% were instances where the user disappeared before asking a question
  - 26% were 'just chatting'
  - 16% were inappropriate enquiries

- 10% were instances where an initial message from the user was not responded to by the librarian
- 4% were enquiries about the service
- 4% were initiated out of service hours
- 6% related to library services, for example
  - *is there any alternative option to access internet inside the library, excluding wireless*
  - *does the Mobile Library bus bring books out to [my suburb] that I reserve on the internet?*
- 5% information technology related, incorporating both requests for information on IT topics and helpdesk style requests. For example,
  - *i can't get itunes to work. can u help me get all my music files into itunes?*
  - *is there any way you can download a video from youtube or to get it on a power point slide show?*
- 5% personal or 'life skills', for example
  - *i am an aussie and im in the us my ticket to go back 2 australia got canceled and now im stuck here*
  - *hello, i'm going for a library tech. job interview, just want to ask 4 some advice*
- 1% related to locating people, incorporating requests for contact information for people and organisations, for example
  - *i'm wondering how i can find my biological mother*
  - *i am in tasmania. can you please find me the coke representative and hartz representative here?*
- 1% related to government information, for example
  - *i need to find the australian federal gov policy on nuclear power.*

**Figure 7. Subject of enquiries** (Source: transcript data November 2006 to March 2007)

Interestingly, during the trial, operators expressed concern that IT and 'life skills' related questions were more prevalent in IM sessions than in AskNow sessions.

Many of the 'reference' questions are more lifestyle ones or how do I (IT technical).

Today I felt like I needed to morph into an IT guru. Spent the entire shift trying to help a user move her music files into iTunes, which involved coaching her through FINDING the files on her computer. Very challenging! But we got there! I also had a guy who wanted to build a role-playing game (computer game) in Java, but he didn't know how to code Java, and wanted me to find him a site that would tell him how to do the coding, and how to build the game.

The data from transcript analysis indicated that a surprisingly low proportion of enquiries were in fact related to these subject areas (10% in total for both life skills and IT enquiries). Comparatively, Kortz, Morris and Greene (2006) report that 15–20% of enquiries received by their 'traditional' VR services could be categorised as personal and recreational queries (Kortz, Morris and Green, 2006, p. 14).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the subject or topic areas of questions received via IM are similar to those received on AskNow.

I think IM is just as effective as the web-based AskNow. The questions and client group are about the same.

It has not been possible to compare subject areas for AskNow and IM at this stage, as the subject categories used in the 2006 AskNow Evaluation report are different

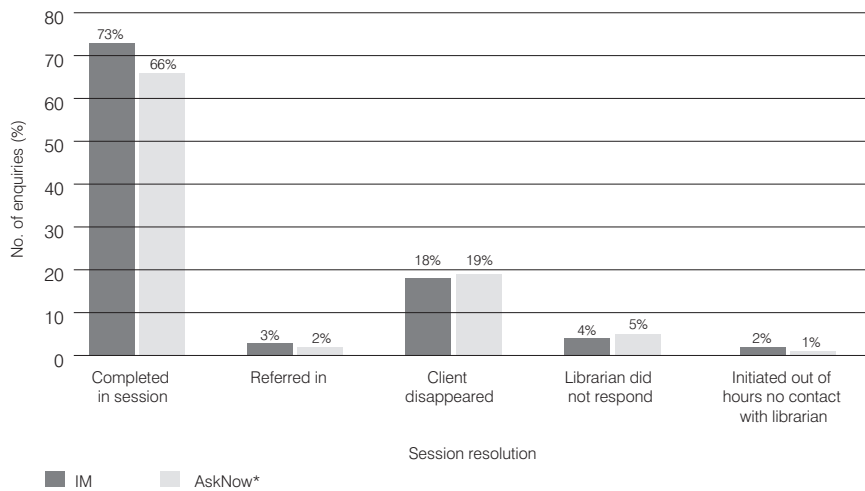
from those used for the IM transcript analysis. It would be useful, however, to undertake this kind of comparison in the future.

## Resolution of sessions

73% of enquiries were completed in the IM session (compared to 66% of AskNow enquiries in 2005, as reported in the 2006 AskNow Evaluation report), with 3% being referred to an email service for follow up (Figure 8). Of the 18% of enquiries where the user disappeared, a large proportion had been answered either completely or partially before the user disappeared. That 73% of enquiries were completed in session, with a further proportion being answered in full or part before the user disappeared, suggests that the type of enquiries received are well suited to the medium.

The Evaluation report is an internal unpublished document. However, a paper on the evaluation was presented at Information Online 2007, and notes can be accessed on the Information Online website: <http://www.information-online.com.au/docs/Presentations/perry.pdf>

**Figure 8. Session resolution** (Source: transcript data November 2006 to March 2007 and AskNow Evaluation report 2006)

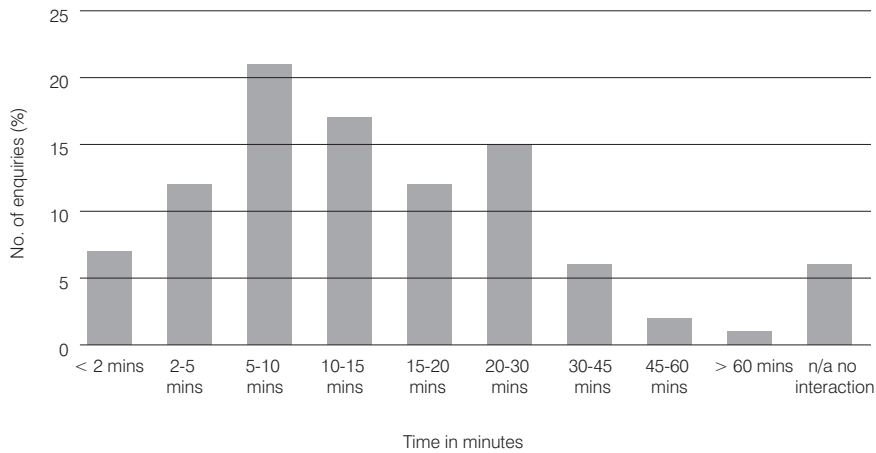


\* AskNow data is from 2005, as reported in the 2006 Evaluation report. Data was not categorised in the same way as IM data, but has been retrospectively put into the same categories as used for the IM transcript analysis to allow comparison.

## Length of sessions

Length of session data was collected according to how long interaction between the librarian and user continued (Figure 9). 40% of transactions were ended in 10 minutes or less, with a further 17% ending in 15 minutes or less.

**Figure 9. Length of transactions** (Source: transcript data November 2006 to March 2007)



Prior to the trial, it was anticipated that as an instantaneous, truly synchronous form of communication, IM could potentially reduce the amount of time spent interacting with users, as compared to the existing AskNow service. In practice, a number of factors combined to cause session times to be greater than expected.

These factors included:

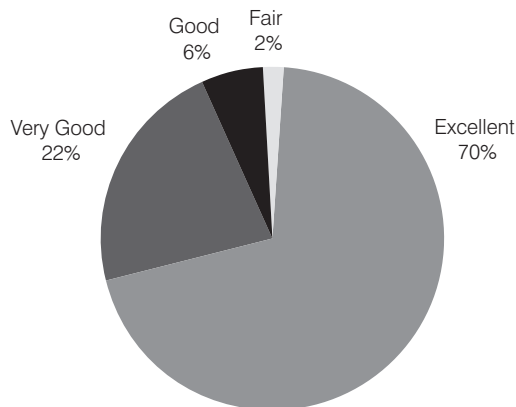
- operators assisting multiple users simultaneously, resulting in slower notification of search results
- multitasking on the part of users means they can sometimes be slow to respond
- users generally have IM running while doing other things; they are more inclined to wait while the librarian hones the search strategy or explains concepts, as opposed to being content to end the session after being provided with one link or search strategy
- IM promotes dialogue with users in a way that proprietary chat reference products do not, making the reference interview more interactive and allowing the librarian to clarify the query throughout the transaction – increased dialogue results in increased session times

- the synchronicity of IM means it is markedly easier to guide the user through search processes, and as a result, sessions can be longer due to an increase in textual instruction.

## User satisfaction with the service

Users have been very satisfied with the level of service they have received when using IM (Figure 10). Of users who responded to the user survey, 91% rated the service as very good or excellent, with a further 6% rating the service as good. No user rated the service as poor. Additionally, 100% of surveyed users said they would use the service again.

**Figure 10. How would you rate our IM service?** (Source: IM user survey data, November 2006 to March 2007)



Comments from users supported these statistics, indicating a high level of satisfaction with the service:

You have very high quality librarians, well the one tht helped me was very helpful and obliging to help me out. It put my mind at ease for my assignment research to know tht someone was there to help me out and the info they managed to obtain was extremely useful. A very good service.

I am housebound with health problems and this is a great way I still have access to resources to assist with researching the many aspects that are associated when engaged in Family History.

This service is fantastic!!

Comments from users indicate that they are also very pleased to be able to make use of an IM service, and valued the ability to use their IM client of choice to access the service:

I preferred IM 'cause it was a lot more convenient than opening the website as I have windows msgger open most of the time and its easy to click on asknow as a contact.. very good and a lot easier to access the info

... it is easier to talk to a librarian saves you opening a window every time you have a question and wait to get connected.

Thanks, great to see this kind of open and easy innovation... it hits the mark perfectly.

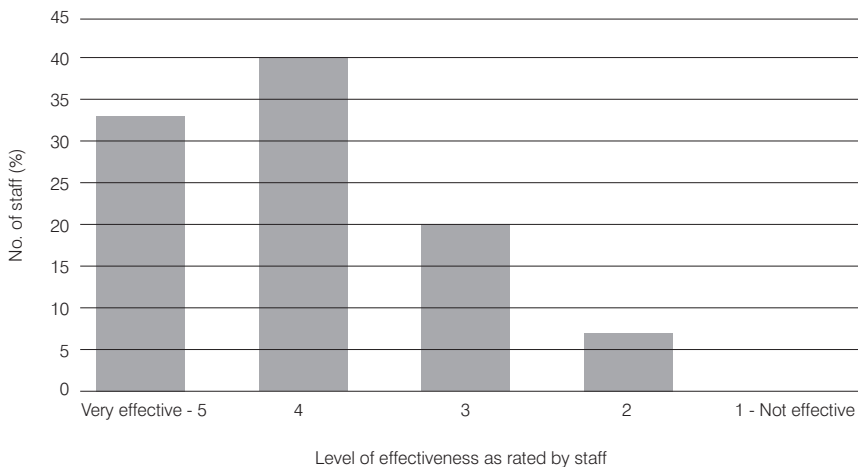
Additionally, a large proportion of surveyed users (71%) indicated that they preferred IM to the AskNow web form, with no user preferring the web form.

## Staff perceptions

IM staff have generally been very pleased with both IM as a medium for virtual reference and the opportunity to innovate in service provision (Figure 11). On a scale of one to five (with five being very effective, and one being not effective), 93% of surveyed staff indicated that they thought IM was quite effective, effective or very effective (rating 3, 4 or 5) as a medium for virtual reference.

**Figure 11. Effectiveness of IM as a medium for virtual reference**

(Source: staff experience survey data)



Of those staff who rated the medium as quite effective or better, comments indicated that any concerns they had with the effectiveness of IM revolved around inadequacies with the software, particularly in relation to the ability to have multiple operators logged in simultaneously, rather than any endemic problems with the medium itself.

Having more than one operator is crucial – too many clients at once is truly scary, exhausting and demanding on one's professionalism ie. giving clients the best service possible.

The comments made by a small number of operators who rated the effectiveness of IM on the lower end of the scale indicated that their perceptions were likely to have been influenced by having experienced a disproportionate number of inappropriate enquiries.

Staff found that IM compared very favourably with the software used for AskNow, OCLC's *QuestionPoint*. Traditional VR software does not offer the true synchronicity that IM does, and conversational flow is often impeded by the time lag that occurs due to the server refresh that pushes text into the transcript. Experienced AskNow operators valued that IM enabled them to readily engage the user in a true conversation, albeit in written form.

As a medium for virtual reference I think it is better than chat reference or email – more immediate and synchronous

From the operator point of view I found it more effective than traditional virtual reference because it was quicker, more responsive and informal – I felt like I was really connecting with most of the clients I dealt with, without the barriers of traditional VR mediums (timelag, pushing pages and trying to cobrowse, which I generally find confusing and frustrating for both operator and client).

Speed and ease of interaction were seen by operators as primary benefits of the IM service. They indicated that IM facilitated easy dialogue that ultimately had a significant positive impact on their ability to engage the user in a reference interview. Comments in the staff experience survey and on the operator impressions wiki page indicated that staff enjoyed the ease with which they were able to clarify the user's information need, to check if they were on track with the resources and strategies they sent to users, and to clarify if they had adequately answered the question. Librarians found the process of conducting a reference interview to be easier with IM than with AskNow.

I think it's effective because the reference interview is easier. It felt more like a real 'chat'.

reference interview is easier and immediate responses help keep flow of real conversation.

the instantaneous nature of the medium means I was having real conversations with clients and could try to gauge how they were progressing and if the information I was sending was helping.

Arguably, the fact that IM facilitates an easier, more interactive reference interview could lead to improved service quality. It would be useful to conduct quality analysis of both IM and AskNow transcripts and to compare the results, in order to ascertain whether the increased ease of interaction offered by IM has a significant impact on service quality.

## Wiki for project management

A wiki space was set up on the NLA wiki server to act as a central location for all planning, development and management activities and to store and collaborate on documentation. The IM wiki is a space for:

- storing and accessing procedural documentation
- recording statistics
- publishing and collaborating on the roster (in the early part of the trial)
- storing and accessing scripted messages for copying and pasting into IM sessions
- collaborating on service model issues
- recording impressions, asking questions, collectively solving problems
- compiling background reading lists
- tracking articles on the trial that have been written for publication.

The wiki has proven to be a great success, largely because it facilitates collaboration and communication. Indeed, it has been one of the biggest successes of the trial. The most useful aspect of the wiki has undoubtedly been the operator impressions page, where operators recorded their frustrations and successes throughout the trial.

I found the wiki really useful as a kind of support tool – when I was having trouble with something, it was comforting to know other people were too.

The wiki was very useful for operators, esp. impressions and documentation

By contributing their impressions to the wiki, operators provided support for each other: they validated each others' concerns, shared their own strategies for managing particular situations, and started discussion that lead to the development of scripts and other strategies for dealing with particular situations.

In the collaborative environment in which AskNow operates, the ability to initiate discussion in an easy to use online space cannot be valued too highly.

## IM system architecture

During the trial, it became evident that, while IM as a medium is suitable for virtual reference service provision, additional functionality is required to allow for a truly responsive service, and to meet administrative requirements. The following functions have been identified as being necessary in a future IM software solution:

- ability to have multiple librarians logged in and monitoring the same screen names simultaneously
- queuing or automatic routing of users
- automated statistics logging functionality
- automated workflow for referring enquiries for follow-up
- better transcript archiving, including easier access to transcripts.

The ability to have multiple librarians logged on and to have queuing and/or routing of users are essential. As the level of traffic on the IM service has increased, it has become evident that it is not possible to run the service with a single librarian.

Development of an ongoing service is contingent upon the availability of software that can support multiple librarians and queuing or routing of users.

We have developed a multi-faceted model for an IM system architecture, which has been informed by discussion with a US exploratory group and a number of US academic libraries. The model comprises:

- a Jabber IM server
- a routing component that is permanently connected to the chat endpoints that are distributed to users (for example, asknowim@hotmail.com) and which automatically routes incoming enquiries to librarians according to a set of algorithms
- a dashboard for shift management, which is linked to the routing component, and which will incorporate an overflow queue
- a web-based IM client for librarian use (likely to be meebo)
- a browser-based, anonymous entry point for patrons, which will be embedded in the AskNow home page, and in other appropriate locations (likely to be the meebo me widget)
- an administration module for transcript archiving and report generation.

Specifications for the system have been written and the system itself is currently under development. Most of the components require little or no programming, as they already exist as end user products (including the Jabber server, librarian IM client, and web-based anonymous entry point). The routing component, however, will be built in-house at the NLA.

## Conclusion

The case for an ongoing IM service is perhaps made best by the comments an astute operator provided in the staff experience survey:

I think IM is definitely the way forward for online reference ... the positive aspects of IM are that it's relatively easy and cheap to set up, it's flexible, so we can respond to changes in technology and user habits, and it really is in the users' space – providing the kind of easy, seamless online experience users expect from the web. ... I think traditional VR software ... is obsolete – in the Web 2.0 (and whatever post-Web 2.0 will look like) environment I can't imagine users being willing to access a website, navigate to a web form, submit the web form and wait for an operator.

The trial clearly demonstrated a demand for an IM service: between November 2006, when the trial commenced, and the end of May 2007, more than 1200 enquiries were recorded, and 100% of surveyed users said they would use the service again. Moreover, the percentage of enquiries completed in session indicates that the type of enquiries received have been appropriate for the medium. The majority of operators found the medium to be suitable for virtual reference service provision, citing speed and interaction as the key benefits that IM offers over proprietary chat reference products. However, some additional functionality would improve the IM experience for both operators and users.

The IM trial proved the concept of IM reference service provision as feasible and allowed us to test service models, software and sustainability issues. The next challenge will be to investigate a sustainable service model for an ongoing service. However, the implementation of an ongoing service is contingent upon the development of a suitable IM system architecture. While currently available software may be adequate to facilitate smaller scale services, the level of demand for the Australia-wide AskNow service is too high to proceed with an ongoing service without some additional functionality. We will continue to explore options for an ongoing Instant Messaging service in the coming months.

Further information

Email [info@nla.gov.au](mailto:info@nla.gov.au)

<http://www.asknow.gov.au>

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Her professional and research interests include: digital service delivery, specifically virtual reference service provision; the value of information literacy instruction in improving library users' ability to locate, access, analyse and synthesise information, particularly in the online environment; and the changing demographic of the library and information workforce.

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# Book reviews

## Whither reference? Who goes where?

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**Anderson, Byron, and Webb, Paul T, eds *New directions in reference*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Information Press, 2006. 161p US\$19.95 soft cover ISBN 0789030896 (also published as *The reference librarian*, vol 45, no 93)**

*New directions in reference* is another of the Haworth 'double whammies' in that it is co-published simultaneously as *The reference librarian* No. 93 for 2006. The US price is \$19.95, yet it retails in Australia for \$52.95 - is this a reasonable conversion rate or value for money in terms of the content?

Firms like Haworth Press largely make their profits from the North American library sector, which is arguably a static, unquestioning market in terms of library serial subscriptions. This also ensures that most contributions to Haworth Press are wholly American focused.

The reference focus in *New directions in reference* is relevant in this context. Byron Anderson, Head of Reference, Northern Illinois University Libraries (NIUL), and Paul Webb, the NIUL Social Sciences and Humanities Librarian, assemble most of their contributors from that institution, or institutions nearby in Illinois.

I was struck when attending the annual Charleston Conference in November 2005 how rigid the divisions remain in many American libraries – the 'I am a Serials Librarian, I am an Acquisitions Librarian, and I am a Reference Librarian' syndrome. Librarians who think like this are rarely looking at their library or the information environment holistically.

*New directions in reference* exemplifies this limited perspective at a time when the library reference environment is currently facing dramatically changing information-seeking activities by library users. A 2006 study, *Researchers and discovery services*, published by the UK Research Information Network ([www.rin.ac.uk/researchers-discovery-services](http://www.rin.ac.uk/researchers-discovery-services)) reveals that most users seek 'a wide range of search and discovery tools, despite the fact they have been largely self-taught in the use of these tools. Most researchers felt they required little or no training in this area'!

A December 2005 OCLC report (<http://www.oclc.org/reports/perceptionscollege.htm>) noted that '72% of college students ranked search engines as their first choice for finding information and that only 2% use library websites as a starting point for information searching'. These user changes are not addressed in depth in *New directions in reference*, for example in the article on the US Government Printing

Office, where Kathy Hathaway writes, 'rumor has it we are in an electronic revolution', citing a 2003 Illinois government report! There is only one index reference to Google, while Wikipedia does not appear at all.

While the Haworth blurb states, 'Librarians work in an environment of constant change created by new technology, budget restraints, inflationary costs, and rising user expectations', these big issues are diluted through the non-linked articles and the mix of libraries covered, which include public and academic and urban and rural. Thus those interested in music reference will probably not be particularly interested in the article on 'PDA Experience in Medical Libraries', nor the US Government Printing Office.

Australian libraries will find more relevant material, free of charge on the Net, of more import to their current 'reference' challenges than in *New directions in reference*.

**Colin Steele**

Australian National University

## Keeping teens reading

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**Anderson, Sheila B ed, *Serving young teens and 'tweens. Professional guides for young adult librarians*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2007. 160p US\$58.40 soft cover ISBN 1591582598 (available from DA Information Services)**

**H**ow do we keep our children using libraries? Ages 11-14 ('tweens and young teens) are when many young people stop reading. Anderson draws together content from teen experts and practitioners to help librarians keep children reading.

Sheila Anderson edits and provides the first chapter, giving an overview of 'tweens and young teens. It includes their developmental stages, demographics, considerations in serving them and a comprehensive list of further professional sources, all intended to help us to know with whom we are dealing.

Brenda Hager's contribution focuses on information needs. She explores the issues of identifying those needs, including the maturity level of the adolescent asking and the impact of technology on non-fiction, before giving detailed recommendations for appropriate resources. These resources cover the areas of adolescence, religion, interpersonal relations, jobs and volunteering, succeeding, personal style, hobbies and interests, health and grooming and true stories. She also suggests electronic materials, including chat rooms, e-lists, databases, tutorial services, software and websites that will help younger enquirers with their information needs.

Deborah Taylor covers fiction. She briefly overviews why 'tweens and teens read and how librarians can read cues from youth development to match readers and books. She recommends a wide range of titles in the categories of social development, intellectual capital and decision-making, focus and self-direction, adventure and curiosity, sexuality and relationships, self-regulation and self-definition, changing formats and changing boundaries.

Robyn Lupa discusses programming, its history and the need to understand young adolescents as a starting point. She covers the process from initial planning through promotion, outreach, tying into the library's collection and partnerships. A great section with sample programmes is included with brief descriptions of what is involved. She also explores teen advisory groups and outlines the resources that libraries will need to hold such programmes.

Kristine Mahood enthusiastically explores booktalking, why it is fun and accessible to all 'tweens and young teens. She goes into detail on matching reading interests, covering how books appeal by story, character, setting or language. She also offers sage advice for librarians in dealing with the hard work of booktalking, how to use special effects and how to set the stage. She concludes with over a dozen sample booktalk programmes, covering a range of topics and with relevant library tie-in information.

*Serving young teens and 'tweens* is a great resource for locating materials. It will help librarians to understand this age group and develop appropriate collections for them. It can also assist with promotional and programming ideas and the booktalk samples are treasures. It is well worth it for children's/young adult librarians to have it on their shelf as a handy resource.

**Michelle McLean**

Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation

## DIY information commons

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**Beagle, Donald R** *The information commons handbook*. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2006. 247p + CD-ROM US\$125.00 soft cover ISBN 1555705626 (available from DA Information Services)

'Information commons' is a phrase being heard more frequently, especially with regard to academic libraries. In a library context, it usually refers to a digital space where people can gather, using technology to collaborate. At the 2007 Online

Conference in Sydney two papers were presented on the topic, indicating growth of interest in the concept. To help librarians interested in creating a successful space, Beagle explores the planning, design, management and assessment of such spaces and the reasons behind them.

With contributions from Donald Bailey and Barbara Tierney, Beagle organises his exploration into the transformation power of information commons, how to design and build one and how to bring it to fruition. The accompanying CD-ROM contains two success stories of information commons, including the University of the Sunshine Coast.

'How the information commons can transform knowledge and information' investigates the theory behind them. This includes their physical, virtual and cultural aspects, how they evolved from idea to reality and how they relate to information literacy and learning commons. It explores research into student learning, early implementation in community colleges and innovations which are enabling information commons and information literacy to merge and become learning commons.

'Designing and building the information commons' shows how to discover needs through surveys and focus groups, how to use scenario building and projecting and how to involve all stakeholders in the planning process. It introduces the strategic planning of such a space and then moves into tactical planning of the commons, whether straight or phased into a learning commons.

'Making vision reality' covers the implementation, including how to progress it from launch, assessing its success and policy creation. It also includes a special chapter on what to consider with information commons in public libraries. It covers role setting, service definition, demographics, the implementation team, budget and project calendar, marketing, analysis of the opened space, ideas for problem solving and ethnographics.

With content well supported by illustrations, tables and comprehensive references and with strong support in the form of the foreword by Stephen Abram of SirsiDynix, it aims to be the premier, one-stop source for the 'how-to' on information commons. In this it succeeds. The theoretical and practical information presented along with the information commons examples throughout the book and comprehensive case studies on the CD-ROM make it an ideal manual for starting an information commons, regardless of library type or location.

**Michelle McLean**

Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation

## Get IT right

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**Bolan, Kimberly, and Cullin, Robert** *Technology made simple: an improvement guide for small and medium libraries*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2007. 213p US\$40.00 (US\$36.00 ALA members) soft cover ISBN 13:9780838909201

Libraries constantly struggle to keep their technology current. It is more difficult for small and medium-sized libraries, with more limited resources and a lack of technology expertise. Bolan and Cullin have produced this primer, to help every librarian, with little or no technical expertise, to maintain effective technology services. *Technology made simple* is a manual for how to keep IT up-to-date in small to medium-sized public libraries. The authors take librarians through each part of the process of improving technology for users.

'Why do IT' covers the role of libraries in the world of technology, the needs of staff and patrons and the impact of technology. 'Assess IT' examines what assessment is, teamwork as part of that process, identifying stakeholders, making an inventory of current IT equipment, statistics, getting input, findings and timelines. 'Know IT' is about building knowledge of IT in your library. This includes the must-haves of networks, peripherals, Internet connection, library resources, software, to the desirable technology such as wireless, self-check, technology management, games and more. Guidelines are presented for selecting new technology and keeping current with changes.

'Plan IT' covers the essentials of planning, reviewing the library's mission statement, needs analysis, creating a plan, writing it, bringing it all together and living with the results. 'Staff IT' includes evaluating existing staff resources and finding the right person for the job, whether by hiring or bringing in external expertise or volunteers. 'Pay for IT' includes planning for IT in the library's annual budget, analysing what is spent, finding further funding, purchasing and the possibilities of partnerships and consortia. 'Implement IT' brings the IT plan to fruition, following it up with support, maintenance and troubleshooting, marketing and more on partnerships. 'Teach IT' explains what is needed in terms of staff training and training for the public. 'Regulate IT' ensures that libraries have workable technology and are prepared for contingencies with appropriate policies and procedures and disaster planning. 'Evaluate IT' ensures that the right IT has been implemented and covers what to evaluate, the tools and methods to use and where to go from there.

Practical library examples are interspersed throughout the chapters, with further supporting material in the form of appendices containing sample worksheets for every stage of the IT process outlined, further resources, library contact details, job descriptions and publication samples.

For those with little understanding of technology, this book is a great resource, not only as a manual for how to do it, but also for giving librarians the knowledge to enable them to work with external providers. It should be on the shelf of every small to medium-sized public library and in the hands of librarians who need to know more about IT and what is involved in getting it into public libraries in a timely manner.

**Michelle McLean**

Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation

## University libraries vs the Internet

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**Breivik, Patricia S, and Gee, E Gordon *Higher education in the internet age: libraries creating a strategic edge*. ACE/Praeger series on higher education. Westport, CT: American Council on Education/Praeger, 2006. 322p A\$75.00 hard cover ISBN 027598140 (available from DA Information Services)**

*Higher education in the internet age* is publicised as a fully updated and revised edition of Patricia Breivik and Gordon Gee's 1989 book, *Information literacy: revolution in the library*. The main text is supplemented by a series of 'key issue statements' and 'vignettes highlighting best practices'.

Breivik retired in June 2005 as Dean of the University Library, San José State University, while Gordon Gee is Chancellor of Vanderbilt University. They 'provide no easy answers for there are none' in a solid, sensible overview of the university library and its campus settings. They emphasise 'the transformational role that libraries can play in enhancing the learning of students', reflecting the focus of the first edition.

The perspective, as is usual with American library publications, is almost totally American – examples of best practice from the rest of the world are largely ignored. Some issues covered, such as library leadership and the emergence of CIOs (Chief Information Officers) are universal topics, but others, such as community outreach and fundraising issues, are particular to the American environment.

Breivik and Gee point out that the library often tends to be seen in its traditional role of providing books, journals or interlibrary loans. Thus on the first page of Chapter 1 they state, 'most faculty members are happy if the library provides the journals they want (preferably now in an electronic format)'.

At the Australian National University the most interest in recent decades shown in the Library was arguably when it had to make major serial cancellations in the 1980s and 1990's. Once the Australian dollar revived and a number of Big Deal subscription packages were acquired, coupled with delivering content to the

desktop, most academics had other concerns than the library. Even though the serial packages meant that much material was little used, serial subscriptions annually continued to rise well beyond the CPI, and monograph purchasing was dramatically affected, most academics were 'happy with the library'. One of the problems with changing scholarly communication models is the general lack of involvement by the academic community in the buying back of the research which they have often given away to publishers.

In an era when, perhaps optimistically, the library has moved from being 'the heart of the university' to the 'virtual soul of the university', the role and nature of the library has changed from one in which the physical storage and cataloguing of material was pre-eminent to one in which physical library buildings are less relevant for many researchers. For MP3-generation students, libraries are often one-stop information commons facilities and social hubs with course material increasingly available electronically.

Breivik and Gee examine the challenges for libraries in the Internet era, although, given the pace of change, their examples and thus extrapolations are a little dated. The references to institutional repositories focus on MIT's D-Space and a relatively short summary on issues, such as peer review, within that context.

The current emphasis on the role of the library and information providers on campus in relation to e-research cyber-infrastructure came a little late for the cut-off date of the Breivik and Gee manuscript, which seems to be early 2005. The authors do not resile from using much earlier examples where they feel that the case histories and references are more than relevant. In the case of rapidly changing technologies, however, trends such as 'how the network is rewriting the library', to use the words of Lorcan Dempsey, are not specifically picked up.

In this digital reconstruction of libraries, the nature and use of staff employed within structures also changes. Breivik and Gee highlight a current shortage of librarians and ponder the qualifications of the librarian. The answer may be to cast a wider net. Jim Neal, University Librarian at Columbia University, has invented the phrase 'feral professionals' to describe the different skill base required in libraries (see <http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6304405.html>).

Breivik and Gee make a strong case that the library should be made a full partner in the institution's missions of teaching, research and service. One wonders, however, how many vice chancellors or provosts will ever get around to reading this book - or even parts of it: one suspects very few.

*Higher education in the internet age* is probably, therefore, going to be more read by aspiring librarians than administrators. An Australian vice chancellor once said, 'Librarians are mice who aspire to be rats'. Reading Breivik and Gee will not turn

librarians into rats but, in the digital era, the need for a clear understanding of the role of library and information providers within campus strategic frameworks is more crucial than ever. Digital librarians will definitely need to be more feral than mouse-like!

**Colin Steele**

Australian National University

## **Library performance: economy, efficiency, effectiveness, access**

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**Brophy, Peter *Measuring library performance: principles and techniques*. London: Facet Publishing, 2006. 242p £39.95 hard cover ISBN 1856045935 (available from James Bennett Pty Ltd)**

Since the 1960s, the focus of techniques designed to measure library performance has moved from the measurement of inputs or 'How good is the service?' to the measurement of outcomes or 'How much good does the service do?' (Orr, 1973). *Measuring library performance: principles and techniques* examines current thinking and research in this area, highlighting user satisfaction and impact studies and also looks at service management processes, economic impact and inputs.

Beginning with the basic question of why a particular library exists in the first place and what is the purpose of the service, Peter Brophy goes on to determine exactly what should be measured in terms of the '3Es'. The 'Es' stand for Economy or the total cost of the service, Efficiency or output per unit input, and Effectiveness or whether the right product is being delivered. With the current explosion in the value of electronic information, Brophy proposes that a fourth 'E' for Equity of access be added.

The contents of the book are logically arranged and well-indexed. In addition to dealing with user satisfaction and the impact of the service on users, the chapters of this book give a comprehensive coverage of library infrastructure, collection development, staffing, benchmarking, standards and economic impact. A final chapter, The Balanced Scorecard, examines the work of Kaplan and Norton (1996), who emphasised the idea that assessments of organisational performance should focus on more than the 'bottom line' and should take into account indicators such as loyal customers and skilled employees. Each chapter includes internationally-based examples across different library services and concludes with a list of relevant resources, mainly online, and a list of references, mainly print. In addition, over 50 pages of appendices give pro formas and instructions on methods of data collection, data analysis and the reporting and presentation of results.

Effective performance measurement is vital to library management – otherwise managers cannot make decisions to guide future development, nor can they monitor and evaluate the effects of decisions which are made. Thus the wrong activities may be given priority and incorrect assumptions made about performance, which can result in the service losing the support of both its clients and its funding provider. *Measuring library performance* highlights current issues and initiatives, assisting library managers to align the mission of the library within the overall strategic direction of the library's parent organisation, thereby ensuring its continued value. All library planners, managers and students of librarianship would find this book a valuable addition to their library.

**Helen Dunford**

TAFE Tasmania

## Words at work

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**Broughton, Vanda *Essential thesaurus construction*. London: Facet Publishing, 2006. 296p £29.05 soft cover ISBN 185604565X (available from James Bennett Library Services)**

If you want to know the 'what', 'why' and 'how' of information retrieval thesauri, this is the book for you. *Essential thesaurus construction* lives up to its name. It's a good reference for anyone interested in controlled vocabularies for any purpose.

The first quarter of the book discusses the origin and development of thesauri and their uses for describing and retrieving information about both text and nontext materials. Although focused on thesauri, it also covers similar tools for subject access and retrieval, such as classification schemes, taxonomies, subject heading lists, concept maps, topic maps and ontologies. This section concludes with a summary of types of thesauri, ranging from general and broadly-based thesauri to special subject vocabularies. Some online guides and directories are identified.

Most of the book is devoted to monolingual thesaurus building. The approach is very practical, covering vocabulary collection, selection of terms, form of entry, vocabulary analysis, thesaural relationships, thesaurus structure, compound subjects and creation of thesaurus records. The discussion of facet analysis will interest anyone who has grappled with this technique. These chapters are liberally illustrated with examples from a multidisciplinary model thesaurus and include learning exercises for the reader. The final chapter, on managing and maintaining thesauri, includes useful notes on desirable features of thesaurus software, lists free software, and

recommends online resources where commercial thesaurus packages are listed and evaluated.

This is an excellent textbook – indeed, it developed from course materials used by the author in teaching cataloguing and classification at the School of Library, Archive and Information Studies at University College London, and from her research into faceted classification and its applications. Every chapter ends in a summary of the main points covered. The many examples and diagrams illustrate concepts and practical considerations. There are numerous print and website citations included as chapter endnotes, and the bibliography covers the major print sources in the field. There is a comprehensive glossary and a thorough index.

I have only two quibbles. The first is that although the planned revision of the ANSI-NISO Z39.19 thesaurus standard is acknowledged, the bibliography cites the old 1993 print edition rather than the new edition published in July 2005, whereas the November 2005 edition of the British standard (BS 8723–1: 2005) **is** cited. The second is that Mike Middleton’s very useful website (<http://www.imresources.fit.qut.edu.au/vocab/>) on controlled vocabularies is not directly referenced.

I recommend this book to anyone working with or wishing to learn about thesauri or taxonomies. The general introduction to thesauri and the investigation of general principles are helpful for the beginner and lead naturally to the author’s practical comments on thesaurus construction. Those more experienced in thesaurus construction will find this a useful addition to the bookshelf and a practical aid in planning and completing thesaurus projects.

**Sherrey Quinn**

Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd

## People places

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**Buschman, John E, and Leckie, Gloria J *The library as place: history, community and culture*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 260p £28.99 soft cover ISBN 1591583829 (available from DA Information Services)**

This collection of papers discusses a number of aspects of the spatial functions of libraries, mainly historical but also some modern uses as communities and cultures change. Real libraries are not merely buildings whose physical features may lead to an obsession with architecture and layouts, important though these may be. They are dedicated enclosed spaces where individual and social activities are provided, utilised and encouraged. Contrary to cartoon stereotyping of ‘shush’,

libraries are places for people to interact, as well as for individuals to search and study. These 14 original papers by 24 North American authors include an excellent editorial introductory essay; three studies of the past (military libraries, Athenaeums, and Vancouver's Carnegie library); four community contributions (Greensboro Negro Library, use by non-heterosexual patrons, private women's realms, and reconceptualising space and services at Seattle); three on research libraries (places for the scholar, undergraduates seeking information, and subject classifications); and three on cultural aspects (library myths, architecture, and 'Buffy'). The topics of the papers range from the past to the future.

In one interesting paper, on LGBQ users ('Locating the library as place among lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer patrons'), Paulette Rothbauer reports that although libraries provide access for their needs, it tends to be limited to whatever is published and purchased. 'Safe and private space' was rare, in contrast with gay and lesbian and feminist bookshops which 'expressed a show of solidarity'. This indicates tension between various community cultures, one calling for open equality and another for safe enclosure. As with other particular minority demands, this is a serious challenge for the librarian who seeks balance with limited resources. Another example of special needs calling for communal separation rather than integration is provided in 'The fruit and root of the community: the Greensboro Carnegie Negro Library, 1904–1964' by Hersberger, Sua and Murray. It was a space where one culture could meet and interact with a sense of ownership, yet it remained apart from the wider community.

'Going to hell: placing the library in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*' by Adriana Estill, presents an example of a virtual world employing a non-virtual feature familiar to TV audiences. As with all subcultures, the physical communal space is conceptually taken over: 'Slowly but surely the library becomes "owned" by the Scooby Gang and they no longer perceive it as a public place'. This is an historical feature of libraries, and apparently one which seems set to continue as the physical refuses to give way to the virtual. The respondents to Antell and Engel's survey ('Stimulating space, serendipitous space: library as place in the life of the scholar') help to explain why: remote electronic access is convenient – but physical libraries allow better browsing, are more comprehensive and permanent, and the atmosphere is conducive to scholarship.

**Edward Reid-Smith**

Charles Sturt University

## Mangling information management

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**Choksy, Carol E B *Domesticating information: managing documents inside the organisation*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007. 227p price not reported soft cover ISBN 13: 9780810851900 (available from James Bennett Pty Ltd)**

The author of this book is President-elect of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA). It is probably not surprising, therefore, that the objective of the book appears to be to define and justify records management as a distinct profession. In doing so the book relies to a great extent on differentiation with the work of archivists and librarians, which in itself could be a useful approach, so long as the purpose of those two occupations is understood and clearly explained. Unfortunately, this does not appear to be the case, and the extent of misunderstanding or misrepresentation is significant enough to obscure any other message.

For instance, librarians and archivists are represented as being concerned only with information as an element of culture. In contrast, records managers study information 'as a tool to perform work'. It is not until the very end of the book that special librarians are mentioned, and then they are dismissed as only handling 'a tiny subset of information'. The author states:

We must stop following the archivists and librarians. Why we have followed the utterances of a few archivists as if they were our gurus and worshipped at the altar of library science is unclear. They do not manage business information; they manage cultural information.

But it is doubtful whether many archivists or librarians reading this book would reach this stage, as, for example, asserting that the records continuum is a term invented to rename records management, muddling the Dewey Decimal Classification with Ranganathan's Colon Classification, or confusing cataloguing and classification will deter all but the most dogged of readers.

The aim of the author is to 'apply critical thinking to records management and to place records management within the academy' and also to provide a useful book for records managers and information technology managers. Unfortunately, this book is liable to prove more of a hindrance to furthering the cause of records management in organisations, particularly in its comments relating to ISO 15489. This international standard for records management has been the key driver in raising the status and visibility of the discipline. Choksy, however, attributes the source of the definition of 'records' in the standard to the archival and museum community, not records managers (no acknowledgement is made of the actual

process of developing the standard, in which the international records management community, including ARMA, were key players). If the definition of records is flawed, then this calls into question the validity of the standard itself. Pity the poor information manager who is attempting to use ISO 15489 to provide justification for implementing records management – we can only hope that their information technology managers do not read this book.

**Gillian Oliver**

Archives New Zealand

## Recordkeeping – US style

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**Cox, Richard J** *Ethics, accountability, and recordkeeping in a dangerous world. Principles and practice in records management and archives.* London: Facet Publishing, 2006. 298p price not reported hard cover ISBN 185604596X (available from James Bennett Pty Ltd)

This book is the first in a new series of recordkeeping texts, *Principles and practice in records management and archives*, edited by Geoffrey Yeo. The author of this volume, Richard Cox, is Professor of Archival Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. The book consists of a collection of essays, earlier versions of which have been published as journal articles between 2000 and 2005. Despite this, the reader gets very little sense of disjointedness – the topics lead quite seamlessly from one to the other. All chapters have been updated. For example, the chapter on presidential libraries originally appeared in 2002, but in its current form includes a concluding section, which brings the discussion right up-to-date by mentioning the current controversy over the proposed new Bush presidential library.

The format of the book has resulted in some repetition. For instance, the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA) and the Society of American Archivists codes of ethics are discussed in two essays. Unfortunately, the index refers to only one of those discussions. The index includes some authors cited, but not all of them. It would have been useful to mention the criteria for inclusion.

The real strength of the book for me was the discussion of the nature of the occupations involved in recordkeeping – those of records managers and archivists. Particularly intriguing for any researcher of occupational culture is the comment that practitioners of these two occupations ‘perhaps even dress differently’!

The author acknowledges that he is writing from a North American perspective and hopes ‘that individuals in other nations will be able to relate to the cases and situations ... described ...’ However, rather than simply name-check leading

international (including Australian) theoreticians and commentators in the introduction it would have resulted in a much more intellectually satisfying exploration of ethics and accountability to discuss their published work.

Because of this, the book cannot be considered comprehensive in its coverage; a judicious subtitle would have made this apparent. However, the book is an extremely worthwhile addition to the literature discussing ethics and accountability for recordkeeping, and will be of particular value for insight into the current political and social environment in the United States.

**Gillian Oliver**

Archives New Zealand

## Saved by the index

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**Crews, Kenneth D *Copyright law for librarians and educators: creative strategies and practical solutions*. 2nd ed. Chicago: American Library Association, 2006. 141p US\$45.00 (US\$40.50 ALA members) soft cover ISBN 083890906X**

Crews' book is basically a discussion of the copyright law and strategies for developing policies and oversights to avoid litigation. The book tries to be a special work for a special audience, but rehashes what is copyright, what is the law, and who owns what. That shows just how really complicated all this is. Crews discusses what is not copyrightable and foreign (non-US) works that may have been in the public domain but are now restored in accordance with trade and WTO agreements. Crews discusses who owns what, i.e., the creator, the business, transfers and sharing rights and the possible problems with these. He gives such advice as 'be sure to check with the copyright owner before investing time and energy to make a derivative work'.

I like the organisation of the book, with sections on the Reach of Copyright, Rights of Ownership, Fair Use, Education and Libraries, and Special Features. Crews brings out certain points that might be overlooked: for example, lending recordings of musical works for direct or indirect commercial advantage is forbidden, while lending of movies or film is not. Crews does not say a great deal on music – see the updated Music Library Association website (<http://www/lib.jmu.edu/org/mla/>). I find it curious that in Chapter 10 the author lists a short bibliography of guidelines published between 1979 and 1998, and then warns against using them. Later, he advises, 'Basing a decision on the four factors in the statute [Fair Use], rather than on guidelines, can have real advantages'. However, copyright is different for different media and expressions, and that can vary when dealing with Fair Use assumptions

or arguments. Crews provides many references to case law, USC Title 17 (the copyright statute) and offers his own 'guidelines': Checklist for Fair Use, Checklist for the TEACH Act, and Model Letter for Permission Requests.

I do not feel this work, as a specialised guide, really helps librarians and educators in learning what they may do, or how they may do it, or under what circumstances. To say it another way, a special book for a specialist should tell us quickly what we could do, when and how, not what to avoid or be a treatise on copyright. It does have an excellent index and a survey of the copyright literature in a large bibliography.

**Paul Jackson**

Trescott Research

## Reference value revisited

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**Diamond, Tom, and Sanders, Mark, eds *Reference assessment and evaluation*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press, 2005. 200p price not reported soft cover ISBN 13: 978078903194 5; ISBN 0 7890 3194 9 (also published as *Public Services Quarterly* vol 2, nos 2/3)**

Reference librarians are feeling the pinch and are increasingly anxious to find scenarios to justify their existence. Does the impact of technology reduce reliance on reference librarians? Should reference work be more one-to-one? What about adding value, such as with chat reference (horrible term – is there an alternative?)? Much of the research in these areas is emerging from US university libraries, and this collection offers some good examples of the sort of work that is being done. This varied selection of articles offers some worthwhile suggestions and useful literature searches, but lacks an overall unifying principle.

There are articles describing the efforts of university librarians to improve tuition in reference sources to students – one institution offers a drop-in research consultation programme for undergraduates which sounds wonderful, while another describes a well-received professional tuition session in reference resources for faculty. Some aspects of the dynamics of reference desk interactions are explored: peer assessment between institutions to aid in salary grading (a smart idea); how to merge the reference desks of a university library and a public library (not much call for that as yet); and, should you be daft enough to try this, how to prepare student assistants to staff the reference desk when you are unable to pay for professionals.

Two articles look at how to evaluate the effectiveness of chat reference services using a combination of statistics and user surveys. As a result of an evaluation, one

library refers to the clearer awareness gained of the issues facing remote users. Another refers to a disenchantment with chat services because of 'the wait for the chat session that never arises'.

Of particular interest is the final article, which discusses the relationship between changes in technology and reference desk statistics. In general reference desk use in US libraries, at least in academia, is falling off, though the article hesitates to point the finger at electronic competition. Indeed, there is a glimmer of light with a speculative suggestion that a small recent rise in reference enquiries is related to users beginning to realise the limitations of the Internet. We have to keep reminding users what we can do for them, (and at the least make sure students do not staff the reference desk unsupported).

In sum, although there are some useful ideas in this American collection, most of the articles are of very limited application elsewhere. But as an illustration of the direction in which research in reference assessment is heading, it would be of use to students and professionals with a consuming interest in the subject.

**John MacRitchie**

Manly Library

## **Programme for outcomes**

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**Dresang, Eliza T; Gross, Melissa; and Holt, Leslie E *Dynamic youth services through outcome-based planning and evaluation*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2006. 192p US\$42.00 (ALA members US\$37.80) soft cover ISBN 0838909183**

This very readable title addresses public librarians on the subject of efficiently conducting programmes within the workplace: these programmes can range from professional development of staff to children's programmes. The philosophy espoused is that many programmes are conducted on the basis of precedence, vague expectation, tradition and enthusiasm, but that the outcomes from such programmes often do not justify the time, effort and cost involved. Evaluation is often conducted along inexact lines and is perfunctory. The authors assert that the programme, whether large or small, should begin with outcomes – what would the library expect to get from the programme? These outcomes do not have to be quantitative, though there may be an element of measurement (e.g., increased loan rate, increased membership, etc.), and qualitative assessment can be just as valuable (e.g., observed changes in attitude, increased interest in professional

study, etc.). The authors contend that the whole programme begins with developing an outcomes statement, and from this the programme is structured, and evaluation is a small step from there.

There are three parts to this book. The first offers an explanation of the approach to this kind of planning and outlines a model which has been successfully used. The second section describes getting started with outcome-based planning and evaluation, and the third section details techniques which can be used in gathering information, determining outcomes, developing programmes and conducting evaluations. This last section is wholly based on experience at Florida State University and St Louis Public Library using the CATE model – originally this referred to **C**hildren's **A**ccess to and use of **T**echnology **E**valuation but it has become more generalist in application to a variety of programs.

There are full appendices containing sample data collection documents and a summary report of Project CATE. There is a detailed reference list containing paper-based and electronic references and an index.

The strength of this title lies in the detailed methodology it offers to assist practitioners who are serious about achieving the most productive outcomes for programming initiatives and in re-examining existing programmes. There is food for thought for organisations not using outcomes-based planning: the potential, developing outcomes, recognising the achievement of outcomes and measuring outcomes. There is an excellent section on conducting a programme evaluation. Despite this, there would be some difficulties in applying this approach: staff would need some training and preparation to apply the method and it is suggested that the estimated cost would be 10 per cent of the cost of the programme or project. It is a different way of thinking about programming, and in the beginning staff may be slow to adopt the methodology. The authors recognise this but claim that preparation becomes easier and less time consuming over time as the technique becomes more familiar. Though the method can be applied to small or large programmes, administrators may be reluctant to invest in the necessary staff time to develop the methodological expertise to plan programmes in this way.

Even if this method is not adopted in its entirety, the value of this book is its perspective on achieving the most productive programmes for public libraries. Schools have been using outcomes-based programming for years, and libraries could adopt some of the same principles if they are serious about the true productivity of their programmes.

**Heather Fisher**

New England Girls' School

## Preservation purler

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**Forde, Helen** *Preserving archives. Principles and practice in records management and archives [series]*. London: Facet Publishing, 2007. 320p £39.95 hard cover ISBN 1856045773 (available from James Bennett Pty Ltd)

This is an introduction to the preservation of archives, and a very practical reference work. The author is the former Head of Preservation Services at the UK Public Records Office (now The National Archives). The book is based on lectures given to postgraduate archival studies students at University College London, and the author suggests that the content would be just as relevant for librarians and museum curators faced with preservation issues.

The 14 chapters cover all aspects of preservation, focusing mainly on paper records. Included are chapters on the characteristics of archive materials (including parchment), archive buildings, managing storage, disaster planning, moving, exhibiting and handling records, pest control and the use of surrogates. There is just one chapter on digital preservation, but it does provide a clear and concise introduction to the topic. The final chapter addresses the development of policies and strategies and implementing a preservation programme in the light of competing pressures. Appendices include coverage of tools, equipment and conservation materials. All chapters include mini case studies and examples to illustrate points made in the text. Most of these are from UK organisations.

This book is highly recommended as a reference for anyone tasked with the preservation of physical materials. It is comprehensive in its coverage and yet highly readable – the clarity of writing is such that it could be used as a resource by both trained archivists and non-specialists, including volunteers.

**Gillian Oliver**

Archives New Zealand

## Information burden lightened

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**Fourie, Ina** *How LIS professionals can use alerting services*. Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2006. 178p price not reported soft cover ISBN 184334128X

With technologies, society and information changing so quickly in this information age, it is even more important that librarians keep up to date. Fourie examines the background of alerting services, their uses, availability and related issues of those

services available to information professionals, especially those who do not have access to academic sources, to help them stay current.

It is useful to know where these services began before using them to stay current. Fourie takes us on a brief journey of their development, from current awareness services (CAS) to alerting services, environmental scanning services and selective dissemination of information (SDI). She looks at the connections between them, why we offer them, how they are being redefined and the expectations that arise.

With reference to the ever-changing environment in which we are working, Fourie dedicates a chapter to having a dynamic service, which uses benchmarking to stay ahead of the competition, both from within the LIS sector and from other sectors. She explores what is important to us, looks at a different perspective on our environment and at the different sectors within it.

The Internet, with the range of information available, is making it both more difficult and easier to keep current. The range of alerting services has grown dramatically with the Internet. Fourie helps work through the morass of information services by examining the range available, including specialist alerting services, table of contents services, book announcements and online bookshops, electronic newsletters and discussion lists, SDI, blogs, automated tracking tools, websites, newsfeeds and RSS.

To further help us to make the best use of such services, she also includes a chapter covering studies on information-seeking behaviour. Although not much research has been done on the behaviour of information professionals, there is something to take away from the more general research, and steps for LIS professionals to take until that more focused research is done.

As for the dark side of alerting services, Fourie provides strategies for dealing with information overload, lack of time and lack of opportunities. The book concludes with how to creatively use information to survive and progress. Ideas include exploring creativity, examining your professional satisfaction, learning from mentors and heroes, sharing and reading outside the profession.

This is a great title for the information professional who struggles to keep current. It gives a wide range of resources to tap into and strategies to undertake to do so and to avoid being overrun with the sheer quantity of information available to LIS professionals. I recommend it to anyone who is seeking to progress their professional development, or who is struggling with the amount of information they need to keep up with.

**Michelle McLean**

Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation

## Tour de force: publication *and* review. Landmark library history covers 1500 years

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**Hoare, Peter, gen ed** *The Cambridge history of libraries in Britain and Ireland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 3 vols. A\$899 hard cover ISBN 13: 9780521858083 (Vol 1: to 1640, ed E Leedham-Green and T Webber, 688p; Vol 2: 1640-1850, ed G Mandelbrote and KA Manley, 575p; Vol 3: 1850-2000, ed A Black and P Hoare, 737p)

*The Cambridge history of libraries in Britain and Ireland* is a monumental achievement. It declares itself to be 'the first detailed scholarly history of libraries in Britain and Ireland', covering libraries of all types (institutional and private), and their user communities. The three volumes are supplemented by extensive bibliographies and indexes.

The publication comes at a particularly appropriate time in history, as libraries and the provision of information are facing a transformational era comparable to the invention of the printing press in the 15th century. David Lewis writes in his 2007 article, 'A model for academic libraries 2005 to 2025' (<https://idea.iupui.edu/dspace/bitstream/1805/665/1/A+Model+Academic+Libraries+2005+to+2025.doc>):

It is easy to understand why at the end of the age of print, academic libraries, and indeed all libraries, are dazed and confused. The technology upon which we have built our missions over the past half millennium is being usurped. Print, as developed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the 19<sup>th</sup> century industrialization of print, made libraries what they are today. Or, to be more precise, what they were in 1993 when the Web era began... What is required is for academic libraries to find and articulate their roles in the current and future information ecology. If we cannot or will not do this, our campuses will invest in other priorities and the library will slowly, but surely, atrophy and become a little used museum of the book.

Library histories such as *The Cambridge History* are not simply for libraries and librarians. Kenneth Carpenter, then Assistant Director for Research Resources in the Harvard University Library, said in his 1995 Library of Congress lecture, 'Readers and libraries':

The function of the library historian is not to celebrate libraries, either as arsenals of democracy, the people's university, or the heart of the university. Lamentation for a form of library that is passing is also not the aim of a history of libraries. Understanding their function within the book world and within the larger society must be our goal.

Peter Hoare and his editorial colleagues superbly meet that challenge. If we are not quite sure where libraries are going in the 21st century, at least we now have a solid historical base from which to make prospective judgements.

Hoare reflects,

Libraries pervade the culture of all literate societies. Their history illuminates that culture and many of its facets – the spread of literacy, the growth of scholarship, changes in educational practices – as well as reflecting changing social and political philosophies and practices. As a result, they have often developed in ways which could not have been foreseen by their founders.

How did it all begin? Professor Robin Alston writes on his website (<http://www.r-alston.co.uk/contents.htm>):

When the Cambridge University Press responded warmly to my suggestion that there ought to be a Cambridge History of libraries in Britain and Ireland, I laboured for two years to make the (Library History) Database a really useful tool for library historians for the period up to 1850. There will a multi-volume history of libraries in Britain and Ireland, under the general editorship of Peter Hoare, who I invited to become Editor many years ago.

Alston goes on to lament that 'users of LHD may be puzzled to note that this contribution to library history has not been mentioned by any contributor in Volumes I and II, which deal with the period to 1850'. Whatever the academic debate on conception, readers should be grateful to Alston for establishing the bibliographic base camp and Hoare and his fellow climbers for ensuring we reached this library summit. Hoare was University Librarian at the University of Nottingham, 1978–93, and succeeded WA Munford as the third chair of the UK Library History Group in 1977.

Hoare notes in an article written for *CILIP Update* (Jan/Feb 2007) that his

approach has been to use scholarly experts (in a variety of fields, to avoid too much of an inward-looking survey) – so we have architects and antiquaries, bibliographers and book-trade historians, clerics and classicists, scientists and social historians – as well as librarians, of course. We have tried above all to remember that libraries exist only in context: They exist to be used, and in that use they can best be judged.

Hoare and his nearly 100 contributors did not set out to produce 'an exhaustive history of individual libraries ... rather, a general history charting the various trends and patterns of development'. Hoare ponders,

so what are the right dates to divide up a continuous history covering 1500 years? Does the invention of printing around 1450 mark a greater division than the foundation of the British Museum in 1752, or the Public Libraries Act of 1850? ... Even the fundamental question, what is a library? Is there one definition that can apply both to the Middle Ages and to the Information Age?

The earlier periods of library history are arguably easier, in one sense, to cover, as historical perspectives have been established but, on the other hand, historical

evidence is more elusive. The essays in Volume 3, particularly as they close in to the year 2000, understandably often tend more towards chronological overviews rather than analytical perspectives.

Volume 1, edited by Elisabeth Leedham-Green and Teresa Webber, begins in the 5th century, and documents 'developments through the medieval period, especially monastic expansion and the foundation of the universities, and the major changes in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries due to the invention of printing and the Reformation'. The 25 essays, by leading historians and bibliographers of the period, reflect the shift from a largely ecclesiastically-focused book world to one with a much wider spectrum. This first volume is arguably the most authoritative of the three impressive volumes because of its evidential historical focus.

The editors note that 'the history of libraries in the medieval and early modern periods is the history of shifting collections of books of varied size and function, which differ in significant ways from modern expectations of a library'. The most obvious difference in this context of a modern library was physical, as exemplified in the article on the medieval library by Richard Gameson. The evolution of libraries as an identified area was introduced in England only in the 14th century, and then often only as part of a larger whole.

The editors stress that medieval collections of books were 'characterised by a surprising degree of fluidity'. Little-used volumes were often removed or disposed of, a trend increasingly evidenced by many libraries in the 21st century, where the disposal and dispersal of books from public and university libraries has increased, particularly where there are digital alternatives. Libraries always have a sense of continuity, even if the technologies around them change!

In the second half of the 16th century private libraries, such as those built up by John Dee and Andrew Perne, as Julian Roberts illustrates in his chapter, often outstripped those of institutions. Private buyers benefited through the acquisition of material from the dissolution of the monasteries and the dispersal of libraries as evidenced above.

While the development of institutional libraries was slow, without doubt the establishment of the Bodleian Library in 1602, as too briefly noted in Kristian Jensen's chapter on universities and colleges, was clearly a seminal development. Others, however, such as David McKitterick in his excellent chapter on the organisation of knowledge, reaffirm the Bodleian's groundbreaking activities in bibliothecal practices.

Volume 2, edited by Giles Mandelbrote and Keith Manley, covers, in 31 essays, the period 1640–1850, from the Civil War through to the new developments in circulating and subscription libraries and the 1850 Public Libraries Act. It is subtitled 'From Cloister to Hearth', with the focus of libraries moving from the ecclesiastical and

academic arenas to learned societies and 'public library environs', including the establishment of the British Museum Library in 1753 and the developments leading to the expansion of the public library system, highlighted in Volume 3.

Mandelbrote and Manley state: 'the eighteenth century saw many advances in library services, with a widening of access, a growth in collections and the development of new models of library provision – not to mention some spectacular examples of library architecture' which John Newman and M.H. Port document in their chapters. The main role of university libraries and thus their buildings, until the beginning of the 19th century, was, however, largely custodial, as Peter Freshwater notes in his chapter, 'Books and Universities'.

By the early 19th century two key themes were emerging: 'libraries for the people', such as penny-circulating libraries, school and parish libraries and Mechanics Institutes, and 'libraries for the more privileged', such as subscription libraries, as documented by James Raven, and gentlemen's clubs. At the same time, the 19th century saw a significant rise in private libraries as book collecting became more fashionable and affordable for the rich. Bibliomania erupted in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, as Arnold Hunt illustrates in his fascinating chapter, 'Private Libraries in the Age of Bibliomania'.

British influences clearly affected many library developments overseas. The impact on Australian practice was profound. Emeritus Professor Wallace Kirsop flies the necessarily small Australian flag in Volume 2 with his chapter, 'Libraries for an Imperial Power', focusing on the developments in libraries and reading in the first half of the 19th century.

Volume 3, edited by Alistair Black and Peter Hoare, takes the story, in 50 essays, from 1850 to 2000, documenting the dramatic growth of public, academic and specialist libraries in the modern world – 'Libraries become an industry rather than a localised phenomenon, and librarianship has developed from a scholarly craft to a scientific profession'.

The modern library effectively takes form in this period, but with it comes a problem for the editors. The sheer range and size of libraries and their operations to be covered are major problems in terms of trying to sift through so much evidence and activities and provide an analytical perspective. A main feature of the period covered in Volume 3 is the growing involvement of 'the state', represented by governments and local councils. The spread of public libraries transformed access to books, leisure reading and information. Subscription libraries such as that run by Boots Booklover's Library, as pointed out by Simon Eliot, finally closed in 1966, being unable to compete with television and public libraries.

Erica Wagner in *The Times* (2 December 2006), however, praises the remaining subscription libraries, such as The London Library, founded in 1841, which is covered by Alan Bell's 'pendant' in Volume 3. Wagner contrasts their low subscription costs to those of gyms – we are prepared to pay more for the body than for the mind in most cases!

The nine essay section, *Enlightening the Masses: The Public Library as Concept and Reality*, illustrates the variety of roles of the public library. Many metropolitan public libraries were surrogate university libraries and educational centres for the working and middle classes up to the second half of the 20th century.

Whither public libraries now? The role of the public library at the present in the UK is attracting significant debate. A December 2006 public libraries round table, organised by the Smith Institute in London (<http://www.newstatesman.com/pdf/publiclibraries.htm>), focused on future directions for public libraries within a model for 21st century learning, information and culture. Views were understandably mixed as to future directions.

Helen Rumbelow, writing in *The Times* (26 October 2006), stirred controversy with an article on the public library, stating:

Judge from the scene I witnessed at the Idea Store – and the statistics back this up – books are decreasingly the draw. This flagship centre (they don't call it a library for fear of putting people off) has escalators delivering people from the street straight into the brightly coloured halls. I stopped by the toy-filled play area, went up in the groovy lift to peruse the massage and dance classes, and had a cup of tea with a fantastic view of London through jewel-hued glass. The place looks great and it is thriving, except for those poor neglected shelves... If the Government decides to compete with £1-an-hour internet cafés, fine. If it wants to provide shelter on a rainy day, somewhere for those at a loose end to sit and read the newspapers, good. The book stock could then be centralised and if you wanted one you could order over the counter or online, to be picked up or delivered to your home in 24 hours, just like at the best independent bookshops. Don't think of it as the end of libraries, just the start of millions of personal ones. The library is dead, long live the library.

In a February 2007 interview in Melbourne, British author Terry Pratchett told me, in contrast to Rumbelow, that he regretted the current trend for public libraries to become places 'to distribute movies and posters' as a result of 'vague social aspirations'. He believes that the trend to fewer books in libraries is undesirable. 'Libraries provide what is not available anywhere else' – namely, 'a quiet place or a sanctuary' which are 'hard to find in modern society'. This would be another example of historical library déjà vu as libraries return to a form of monastic quiet!

The British Library, under Lynne Brindley, has dynamically, if at times controversially, pointed the way for a national library to refocus in a digital era. John Hopson's chapter on the British Library, which effectively concludes with Brindley's accession in 2000, reflects the problems in juxtaposing analysis and chronological developments.

A specific focus, such as the chapter on the National Library of Ireland, makes some sections in Volume 3 easier to address than wider briefs, such as those required in the five essays on higher education and libraries, or the four essays on Automation Past, Electronic Futures: The Digital Revolution.

Libraries for higher education in the UK, while never having the funds of their American university counterparts, often led in areas such as computer innovation and bibliographic databases, aided by governmental pump priming. Major figures such as Fred Ratcliffe, Bernard Naylor and the late Ian Mowat succinctly cover the major trends up to the end of the twentieth century for Higher Education libraries.

As research and its published data grew more specialised, so disciplines such as medicine, law or business accumulated library specialisations, which are reflected in specific chapters. Essays become detailed to reflect the expertise of the contributors and the topic, but it does lead to more of an eclectic mix than a comprehensive synthesis. Thus articles such as Evelyn Kerslake's 'Feminization of librarianship: the writings of Margaret Reed' and 'Lawyers and their libraries' by Guy Holbion, are juxtaposed with more generic pieces.

The role and nature of the library has changed from one in which the physical storage and cataloguing of material was pre-eminent, the earlier custodial focus, to one in which physical library buildings are less relevant for many researchers, and they have become one-stop information shops and social hubs for students. A reader at the Bodleian in the 18th or 19th century would not have found too much different, except in scale, if transported to libraries for most of the 20th century. To walk into current university libraries, with their learning commons, cybercafés and digital repositories, with no books in sight, would, however, be a different experience!

Rice University's March 2007 De Lange Emerging Libraries Conference - 'How Knowledge Will Be Accessed, Discovered and Disseminated in the Age of Digital Information' rather ominously stated in its preamble:

The traditional concept of a library has been rendered obsolescent by the unprecedented confluence of the Internet, changes in scholarly publication models, increasing alliances between the humanities and the sciences, and the rise of large-scale digital library projects. The old ways of organizing and preserving knowledge to transmit our cultural and intellectual heritage have converged with the most advanced technologies of science and engineering and research methodologies. Such rapid and

overwhelming changes to a millennia-old tradition pose significant challenges not only to university research libraries but to every citizen. If the traditional library is undergoing a profound metamorphosis, it is not clear what new model will take its place.

More information has been produced in the last several years than in the entire previous history of humanity, and most of this has been in digital format. Libraries are not storage places any more; they are less and less a place. The critical issues now include: How can that information be efficiently accessed and used? How do we extract knowledge from such an abundance of often poorly organized information? How might these enormous digital resources affect our concept of identity, our privacy and the way we conduct business in the new century? Insight from many disciplines and perspectives is requisite to begin to understand this phenomenon to identify ways to help chart a future course

These sentiments infuse, particularly in an historical context, *The Cambridge History*. The UK journal *Library History* notes on its website:

Throughout history, libraries have been the repositories of knowledge of all kinds. Without libraries, we would know nothing of former ages nor the thoughts of our ancestors. In the age of computers and the Internet, a new concept has arrived in the form of the 'virtual' library: technology may have developed, but the idea of a library as a source for knowledge still survives.

*The Cambridge History* superbly documents the creation, distribution and organisation of knowledge over 1500 years. Liz Chapman and Frank Webster, in the final chapter of Volume 3, reaffirm that 'while the neo-liberal ascendancy seems set to swing the balance far away from the foundations of service on which libraries have operated for many years ... the basic duties of librarians, to provide a range of information, remains the same'.

Libraries themselves, however, must adapt and change in the Web 2.0 and future digital environments to ensure adequate knowledge frameworks. Whatever else, free and informed access to information, in order to make considered decisions in the 21st century, is more essential than ever.

**Colin Steele**

Australian National University

## Archives primer

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**Ramos, Marisol, and Ortega, Alma C** *Building a successful archival programme: a practical approach*. Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2006. 184p price not reported soft cover ISBN 184334162X

The authors of this accessible and easy-to-read introduction to basic archival practices note that their intention was to write a very practical book for individuals with little or no experience of archives but who find themselves responsible for an archival collection. From the introduction it transpires this was prompted by the authors finding themselves in just that position. And to a very large extent they have succeeded by producing a hands-on, practical introduction with around 100 pages of discussion followed by numerous appendices providing sample templates, a detailed glossary and further references.

Coverage starts at the broad level – strategic plans, budgeting, fund raising and promotion, acquisition, access and preservation policies. It then becomes more detailed, looking at appraisal, arrangement and description, dealing with donors, basic preservation requirements and approaches to access and security. The emphasis is on traditional, paper-based archives, although acknowledgement is made of the challenges digital materials provide, and a number of relevant on-line links are provided (including one to the National Library of Australia's PADI website) as a suggested starting place to broaden the reader's understanding of the issues associated, in particular, with digital preservation. The size of the book limits opportunities for detailed discussion but at the same time does mean that it is very accessible to busy professionals (although the index is a little sparse).

The appendices are generally very useful, and, while there is a strong American bias to the examples, this does not really limit their usefulness to those outside the US. The recommended further reading is virtually all American and all print-based, although some of the in-chapter references are to URLs.

Overall, this is a useful little book. It is aimed at beginners managing a small archive and will prove its worth in that situation. It is practice-based and acknowledges that it makes no attempt to deal with philosophy or background on the role of archives more broadly. While it covers issues such as ethical considerations, it does so in a couple of hundred words. Thus for those wishing something more than straight practical advice, and for students in particular, a more thought-provoking and stimulating volume such as a recent Australian publication, *Archives: recordkeeping in society*, would be more appropriate.

**Bob Pymm**

Charles Sturt University

## Book with website for self-guided learning about information

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**Riedling, Ann M** *Learning to learn: a guide to becoming information literate in the 21st century*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2006. 148p US\$29.95 soft cover ISBN 1555705561

*Learning to learn* is written as a guide to independent learning and is suitable for a broad range of learners from upper secondary to university entry and TAFE. It is particularly useful for adult learners returning to study who need to catch up on developments in technology over recent years.

The book is arranged so that each concept builds on those that have come before. Chapter 1 explains information literacy and its importance in our increasingly sophisticated information society. It goes on to examine four problem solving models – the Big 6 skills, the ISP (Information Search Process), the I-Search and the FLIP-IT models. The reader is guided through all the steps of the research process – defining the topic, developing a search plan, using the library and the Internet to find material and evaluating information to gauge its usefulness. The final chapters introduce the student to the ethical dimensions of research, including plagiarism, copyright, citing sources, and finally give guidelines for organising and presenting research information.

This practical and easy-to-understand book motivates students to take charge of their own learning, and the 'Learning to Learn' Quick Guides can be printed from the website and kept handy as students work through their research. Problem solving models and exercises occur throughout the book, and each chapter concludes with a reference list and 'weblibliography' giving links to additional relevant sites. These sites have been well selected, and the author has been careful not to overload the students with too much additional information. From an Australian perspective the emphasis on American sites will be seen as a disadvantage, although not a major one, as the sites have been well selected. The expanded glossary at the end of the book is particularly helpful

The companion website makes *Learning to learn* a useful tool for teachers of information literacy. It is accessed using the username and password supplied in the book, replicates the content of the book in a format which facilitates the printing of worksheets and quick guides for use in the classroom. It also provides hyperlinks to the contents of the weblibliographies which removes the need to type Internet addresses. A CD containing additional information for teachers is supposed to be available. However, its usefulness cannot be assessed, as the publishers have

refused to supply a copy for review. Planning lessons around the contents of the book and the website would probably be the best strategy if electing to use the book in class.

**Helen Dunford**

TAFE Tasmania

## **Comprehensive, useful marketing text**

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**Rowley, Jennifer *Information marketing*. 2nd ed. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006. 244p £50.00 hard cover ISBN 0754644138**

Jennifer Rowley has made many accessible and significant contributions to our thinking about information and information services. *Information marketing* is no exception. This second edition fully incorporates and addresses the challenges of the blended information environment. Rowley skilfully synthesises marketing concepts, and the information product and services context, in a manner which will be relevant to students and practitioners from information organisations of all kinds. Her text contains challenges and ideas for those who have been involved in marketing, as well as practical hints and tips for those seeking to become acquainted with what is required. It also contains regular reflective prompts which will appeal, at least, to the educators among us.

Rowley claims that marketing is everybody's business, not just the province of marketing staff. Each one of us is responsible in some way for bringing together people's 'needs for information and knowledge ... through matching these against appropriate information resources and services'.

Building on this foundation, she takes us, in Chapters 1 and 2, through important basics such as the nature of marketing, marketing mix, marketing orientation and the idea of information as product. Chapter 3 is devoted to customers and to understanding how they seek to benefit from information products and services. Rowley emphasises the importance of understanding that people are interested in benefits, solutions and value, rather than the products themselves, and explores the process of consumer decision-making. Chapter 4 focuses on the information products and services that require marketing and introduces a model of product that helps to explain why clients might prefer one product over another. An overview of the product lifecycle is also included.

Chapter 5 shifts attention to relationship building, emphasising the importance of securing customer loyalty and the way in which peoples' experience of information

services influences the character of the relationship built. Loyalty needs to be managed, and a number of factors should be taken into account when working to retain loyalty. Chapter 6 explores branding and corporate identity, the advantages and disadvantages of brands, as well as what might be involved in creating them. Marketing communications and the communications mix are the theme of Chapter 7, where Rowley also suggests approaches to the use of important elements such as sponsorship, exhibitions, advertising and the physical environment. Remaining chapters treat price, pricing decisions and policy, market research, as well as strategy and planning.

The whole book incorporates a thorough review of critical contemporary thinking about marketing in relation to information and its services. The text crosses the spectrum of concepts from the nature of the product and customers, to the need for strategic marketing plans and new technologies to aid the busy manager. References and further reading are included in each chapter. Some are appended by case studies, and most are enlivened by figures.

This second edition would be invaluable as a text as well as a refresher and motivator for the busy professional. For those who have already benefited from the first edition, this new edition would be an essential update. It should be of interest to everyone interested in connecting people with information.

**Christine Bruce**

Queensland University of Technology

## **Cataloguing alive and well all over the place**

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**Sun, Dajin D, and Carter, Ruth C, eds *Education for library cataloging: international perspectives*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Information Press, 2006. 491p US\$49.95 soft cover ISBN 0789031132 (also published as *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 2, 3/4)**

This book fascinates. Not only does it address how and why – or if – cataloguing is taught outside North America, it also touches on the process of learning and how libraries operate in different countries.

Anyone who has participated in a cataloguing listserv or worked as a cataloguer may have noticed prophecies of doom for the future of the profession. Yet there are accounts by students and instructors of the rise in popularity of cataloguing and of oversubscribed courses. Universities, however, are not solely responsible for the teaching of cataloguing. Gillian Hallam, one of the Australian contributors, quotes

Janet Swan Hill: 'catalogers and cataloging managers must realize that a library school education is insufficient to everyone's needs, not just catalogers'.

The volume consists of 22 accounts of how cataloguing is both taught and learned, either at a formal level when a library degree is undertaken, or as continuing education for professionals. The book is set out in geographic order. Many of the articles outline the formal process to qualify as a cataloguing librarian, and then also describe where cataloguers are employed.

Australia has two contributions. Hallam's article examines a reflective learning cataloguing module at Queensland University of Technology. She examines how successful the module is for teaching and learning cataloguing. Ross Harvey and Susan Reynolds contribute the other Australian article, an examination of library education, plus a survey. They outline what cataloguing is taught in Australia, and at what level.

Cataloguing within Australia follows the Anglo-American tradition of classification. Some other articles intrigued because their approach differed. Despite globalisation, and despite a perceived pervasiveness of the Internet, there are some countries where computerisation is not an everyday concept. For example, some of the libraries in Nigeria are still on manual systems. Japan does not yet have a fully developed LIS profession; there is an oversupply of graduates from LIS schools – but an LIS qualification is not necessary to work as a librarian in Japan.

Slovenia has an in-depth coverage of cataloguing and classification. In addition to learning about Dewey Decimal Classification and Library of Congress Classification and Subject Headings, students are taught Universal Decimal Classification and General Slovene Subject Headings. LIS educators in Slovenia, however, lack textbooks written in the language of instruction, so the teachers must write the texts to teach their courses.

This book is comprehensive and explains how cataloguing is taught and practised in other countries. In particular it engages the reader with both the occasional non-Anglo-American approach to cataloguing, and some innovative approaches to teaching cataloguing. One contributor wondered what would happen to cataloguing when all the old cataloguers die. This volume, in part, addresses that question.

**Doreen Sullivan**

DA Information Services

## Book with CD for fostering information literacy

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**Tallman, Julie I, and Joyce, Marilyn Z** *Making the writing and research connection with the I-search process: a how-to-do-it manual*. 2nd. ed. *How-to-do-it manuals for librarians*, 143. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2006. 167p + CD-ROM A\$55.00 soft cover ISBN 1555705340 (available from DA Information Services)

A useful resource for teachers and librarians in schools, colleges and universities, this book explains processes and strategies which could extend and enhance programmes designed to develop students' research and information literacy skills. This new edition includes a CD-ROM with material for downloading, updating to acknowledge current resources and more discussion of reading strategies. The 'I-search' process is wholly compatible with the framework commonly used in Australian schools under the headings 'Defining, Locating, Selecting/Analysing, Organising/Synthesising, Creating/Presenting, Evaluating'.

Though experienced teachers and librarians usually work through a preliminary discussion, wide reading and brainstorming stage before embarking on a narrowly-focused research process, most manuals pay scant attention to this phase. Tallman and Joyce discuss the importance of motivating and empowering students for the pre-search phase and provide a good flow chart, activities and pre-note-taking sheets (Chapters 1–2). Chapters 3–6 not only explain and exemplify the usual sequence, from defining to evaluating, but also integrate applications of Bloom's Taxonomy to identify higher level thinking skills and Kulthau's reflective learning logs to help students' metacognitive capacity (Chapters 4–6). Peer editing and authentic assessment are also discussed in Part 1 (Chapters 1–6).

Part 2 (Chapters 7–9) focuses on managing information literacy programmes, including collaborative planning across the curriculum with teaching and library staff. Chapter 9 has useful reminders of those strategies for reading across the curriculum which were implemented widely and well in Australia in the 1980s but seem to have fallen away since then. Part 3 consists of an annotated bibliography (pp. 155–161) and the CD-ROM's contents: three sample research-based papers, two sample collaborative planning worksheets and one student assessment form.

The book's format is clear, with plenty of white space to ensure that the charts, tables and diagrams are easy to follow. Points in text boxes in the wide left hand margins are helpful in sustaining readers' attention and highlighting the main ideas. The table of contents and index are comprehensive and well set out. Experienced teachers and librarians will find a good synthesis of current thinking on developing

critical information literacy skills in this book/CD package, while librarians new to the role could use it as a starting point provided that they adapt American practices and terminology to suit their own institutional, system-level and national educational requirements.

**Lyn Linning**

Brisbane

## **Practical guide to customer service training**

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**Todaro, Julie, and Smith, Mark L *Training library staff and volunteers to provide extraordinary customer service*. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2006. 160p US\$65.00 soft cover ISBN 155570560X (available from DA Information Services)**

The authors' intention is to explore the content and methods of library client service training and to offer a guide to introduce a new client service approach. This is achieved quite well, with a good balance between discussion and practical tools. The content covered is broad and places customer service training in context. Ten factors underlying good client service are identified in the first chapter. They are: environment; ergonomics; customer time use; customer profile data; the 'human condition'; body language and proxemics; staff and volunteer parameters; client feedback; positive communication; and practice (continuous learning). Two chapters are dedicated to assessing client needs and responding to feedback.

Material presented is relevant to all libraries, and this is successful as an approach through the bulk of the book. Occasionally, where each type is addressed specifically, the information tends to be introductory and hence of most interest to students rather than practising librarians. The book will be most valuable for those seeking an introduction to this field, but there is information of use to the more experienced practitioner. The profile of typical learners is interesting, and there is thorough attention paid to volunteers, as well as library staff, which will be helpful to those working in libraries with volunteers. At times good detail is offered, such as the ground rules on distributing data obtained from clients where we are reminded to strip negative personal comments from information made generally available to staff.

Continuous learning is espoused, and different learning approaches are discussed. Attention is given to writing scenarios on how to handle specific situations and using scripts to standardise service. One chapter is devoted to planning staff development days. One third of the book is dedicated to resource tools, and these are practical and supplement the prior contents well. Topics in the resources are: useful books and websites; reasonable expectations of adult behaviour; tables of

factors important to success (building style, privacy, furniture, colours, decorations, noise, lighting, signage, and instructions) which are helpful in assessing your library; assessment tools for how well the library is dealing with changing client service demands; substantial information on using focus groups; client service response forms; client service incident feedback; and a reference list. There is also an index.

The writing style is consistently clear and easy to read. There are plenty of headings, subheadings, and bullet point lists where appropriate, making it quick to scan. This is a good introduction, setting client service training in context, and offering a base to take action without being overwhelmed by detail or complexity.

**Julia Leong**

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## **Recordkeeping – not record keeping**

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**Tough, Alister, and Moss, Michael, eds *Record keeping in a hybrid environment: managing the creation, use, preservation and disposal of unpublished information objects in context*. Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2006. 275p price not reported soft cover ISBN 1843341425**

The authors of the 10 chapters that make up this book are all linked to the University of Glasgow in some way, either as academics or practitioners. The academics are from the Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute, the practitioners from Glasgow University Archive Services. The target audience for the book is mid-career practitioners, and the aim is to provide an introduction to recent developments in theory and practice.

The book provides an intriguing view of those recent developments (acknowledged to come mostly from Australia and Canada) through British eyes – intriguing, because Britain has not been quick to accept or adopt Australian recordkeeping theory, and this is evident in the references to both the lifecycle and continuum theoretical models throughout the book.

The first and final chapters provide high-level discussion of theoretical perspectives, but it was not clear to me to what extent the Australian recordkeeping continuum model was accepted by the authors of these chapters, who also edited the book. Consequently, I am not sure how a newcomer to this theory would perceive its applicability to the challenge of managing records in a digital environment. It is disconcerting that 'recordkeeping' is written as two words (hyphenated if used adjectivally) throughout the book, which in itself seems to imply some rejection of this Australian conceptualisation of records management and archival practice. The

introduction offers an explanation for the lack of engagement of British academics with new theoretical developments – i.e., the quantity and age of archives in Britain has focused attention on the need to teach palaeography and diplomatics. In this light it was particularly interesting to read Claire Johnson and Moira Rankin's chapter, which provides insight into the realities and aspirations of recordkeeping education in Britain.

Despite reservations about theoretical perspectives, the book does have something to offer Australian readers. An example of this is Frank Rankin's interesting and thoughtful discussion about the implementation issues for electronic document and records management systems. Seamus Ross's chapter takes an international stance and provides a very useful synthesis of current research on digital preservation. The case studies of appraisal practice and description are very clearly written and should provide much insight for those faced with similar issues, particularly in the university environment.

The book would have benefited from more careful technical editing. For instance, there is a full bibliography at the end of the book, bringing together the references from all chapters. However, when attempting to track down a reference from the bibliography it became clear that none of the citations for journal articles included any pagination.

In summary, although this book is not without some problems, much of it will be of interest to practitioners, particularly anyone working in the higher education sector.

**Gillian Oliver**

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## **Newspaper papers need editing**

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**Walravens, Hartmut, ed *International newspaper librarianship for the 21st century*. IFLA publications, 118. Munich: K.G. Saur, 2006. 298p price not reported hard cover ISBN 359821846X**

The Preface states that this publication has two main focuses: regional activities and current work in preservation and digitisation. The papers were given at meetings in 2003–2005 of IFLA's Newspaper Section at Berlin, Buenos Aires, Canberra, Cape Town, Oslo and Shanghai. Unfortunately papers were 'included as presented, with only minor technical editing'. The result is tedious, sometimes conversational prose, some not meriting publication. Where PowerPoint presentations were used, the text is often schematic, and in some cases we have images rather than text. A few articles are in French or Spanish but with a full English translation. Worse still is the

use of 9-point typeface which is surely unacceptable in a work of nearly 300 pages. Perhaps the work is not expected to be read? This is a pity, since there is indeed much information here that offers a picture of a discipline currently undergoing significant changes in digitisation and preservation. Papers are often directed to specialists, and the publication is made far from attractive to a general audience. IFLA likewise shows little flair in its printing and design activities.

While the editor attempts to pinpoint briefly the importance of newspapers for scholarly and cultural purposes, the reviewer looked in vain for evidence that these specialist practitioners might be concerned at, or aware of, the newspaper problems highlighted by Nicholson Baker's writings, at The British Library and several major US libraries. The University of London conference on newspapers (2001) learned 'for the first time that collections of original newspapers in major research libraries were being managed by policies of deaccessioning and destruction'. (See *Do We Want to Keep Our Newspapers?* Ed. by David McKitterick. Office for Humanities Communication Publications, 15. London: Office for Humanities Communication, King's College, 2002.) Has IFLA addressed this issue already and decided not to mention it in the present publication?

Papers vary greatly in content, length and quality. Discussions on how best to preserve newspaper clippings offer practical assistance; others dealing with national preservation and digitisation policies obviously aim at different readerships. The reviewer was irritated to find banal offerings side-by-side with more considerable articles.

The initial mistake was to decide to publish so much that is either of doubtful quality or of fugitive interest. An introductory article from outside the library profession (e.g. by an historian or researcher) could have given the work greater substance by providing a framework which is now lacking. It is disappointing that the efforts put into this uneven publication fail to have the desired impact.

**R. L. Cope**

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Most articles are peer reviewed. These include substantial pieces and articles whose authors request review.

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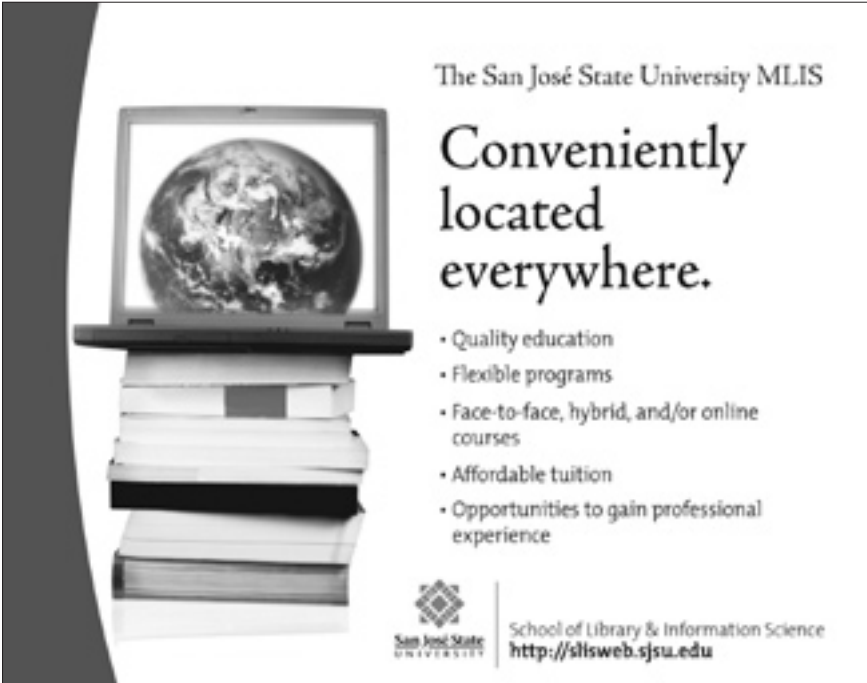
Articles should be accompanied by an abstract of up to 150 words, plus brief biographical details of the author(s).

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The Commonwealth's *Style manual for authors, editors and printers*, sixth edition 2002 (ISBN 0 7016 3648 3) should be used where choices need to be made.

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