



# The Australian Library Journal

Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association

**Reaching higher - looking out**  
Christine Mackenzie

**Pay equity for the library profession:  
an employer's perspective**  
Dagmar Schmidmaier

**Avoiding the crunch at crunch time**  
Julie Sloan

**Are librarians the ultimate knowledge managers?**  
Stuart Ferguson, Philip Hider and Anne Lloyd

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## *The Australian Library Journal*

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# Getting on with it

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2007 was an eventful year for ALIA and *ALJ* played its part in celebrating 70 years of relative cohesion. We published a very special edition covering the September Library History Forum at the State Library of NSW, but we also carried papers on the increasingly digital days ahead. Now our 70th anniversary is behind us and *ALJ* will continue with what it says on the back cover: supporting the Association's Objects by documenting progress in research and professional practice and stimulating discussion on issues relevant to libraries and librarianship.

What are these issues? Some are perennial and include refining service delivery to suit contemporary consumer preferences, securing funding, fostering training and education, replacing ageing retirees, and continuing to articulate professional standards – to name a few. But to this writer at this time the most pressing issues relate to technology and require constructive engagement if we are to keep faith with our forebears.

Some things are clear: the globalisation of information services; the tsunami of digitisation<sup>1</sup>; greater use<sup>2</sup> and even greater commercialisation of the Web<sup>3</sup>; the ubiquity of mobile phones (global dial tone)<sup>4</sup> and their transformation into very personal Internet-capable computers; further, stunning, reductions in the prices of computers, storage and displays.

Technology has, once again, changed the way we live. 35 years ago, when the first online information retrieval systems were being developed, the task they addressed was finding information – any information likely to help with decision making. Today there's a flood of information, including torrents of unsubstantiated opinion, and on the Web in particular, risky reliance on relevance as assessed by search engine companies keen to please their advertisers. We've 'progressed' from difficulty in finding reliable information to difficulty in finding reliable information.

In library world we're aware of the irony, and cautious about the value of user generated content in the stateless and wait-less Web domain, but I think we now understand that the future for the Web, whilst of paramount importance to libraries, is not the same as the future for libraries.

The ease of use of facilities such as online shopping for books and recordings, and the equal ease and stimulation provided by social networking sites has put pressure on cultural institutions to foster similar approaches. Their resources are immense. By virtue of their role, they have 'data on an epic scale' . . . However much of it remains in physical form. It will be continuing digitization programmes that bring it to the epic stage from a Web viewpoint.<sup>5</sup>

It may be stating the obvious, but most libraries still manage physical collections, and while these are being gradually digitised, more work remains to be done than has been completed. Our users are generating content as well. At present they're mostly sharing it with each other in what is being labelled 'social networking', but *Wikipedia*<sup>6</sup> and *LibraryThing*<sup>7</sup> and other sites demonstrate that content of permanent value is also being created.

In a recent OCLC international study of trends in Internet activity<sup>8</sup>, interviews with U.S. library directors were summarised as follows:

The experts had many unique perspectives and ideas about the roles of social networks and libraries. Yet most also see a frontier that is quickly and, likely permanently, changing the landscape of the Web. There is not a unified vision of the future. What is coming into focus is that librarians are just beginning to experiment with networked communities to reach their users. All agree that we have learning to do and we should get started and get active. It is where our users are living.

We're getting started and getting active here, too. The lead article in this issue is a timely, down-to-earth, practical primer for exploring Web 2.0 capabilities in partnership with library users. Christine Mackenzie's team at Yarra Plenty Regional Library in Victoria have rolled up their sleeves, and they're into it.

*ALJ* is also our journal of record. Dagmar Schmidmaier, former State Librarian and CEO at the State Library of NSW, writes about the 2002 landmark pay equity case which resulted in greater recognition and higher remuneration for library workers, especially women. This is a story best told from a distance, now that we have seen the substantial flow-on effects from the NSW decision.

Julie Sloan, workforce planner, provides us with a short piece on . . . well . . . workforce planning. It's an edited transcript of a presentation delivered in August this year, but it makes its points effectively: we need better than anecdotal data for sustainable workforce development; and accountability for workforce planning must rest with senior management.

We also carry a carefully researched, thoughtfully argued, fully refereed paper on overlapping skills between librarians and knowledge managers. Written by Stuart Ferguson, Philip Hider and Anne Lloyd from Charles Sturt University

the paper draws attention to the implications for educational institutions, professional development programs, and suggests that ALIA's core professional attributes might benefit from revision.

Gary Gorman and his industrious flotilla of reviewers have produced more items than we have space to reproduce, so, for the most part, I have been able to select on the basis of complementarity with the subjects of the main articles.

Finally: a suggestion for your equal edification and enjoyment. If you want to feel good about our preparedness for the next 70 years, about our ability to mix practice with theory and to plan for our customers, collections and computer systems, and most of all about the calibre of our colleagues, read *Libraries in the twenty-first century: charting new directions in information services*. It's just out, edited by Stuart Ferguson from Charles Sturt University (ISBN 9781876938437), and its 20 essays are the perfect launch pad for wherever we travel next. Invigorating!

Ian McCallum  
January 2008

#### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Pace, Andrew K. Writing 2007 to memory. In: *American Libraries*, December 2007, p30. Google is estimated to be scanning 10 million books a year, or 27,000 books per day. See also 'Google to host Terabytes of Open-Source Science Data' <http://blog.wired.com/wiredscience/2008/01/google-to-provi.html> Accessed 19 January 2007.
- <sup>2</sup> 'In 2001, 35% of Australian dwellings had access to the Internet . . . In 2006, 63% of dwellings had access to the Internet. Australian Bureau of Statistics. *Patterns of internet access in Australia, 2006*. Catalogue no.8146.0.55.001, November 2007.
- <sup>3</sup> Australia's top ten sites, in descending order, are Google Australia, Yahoo, Windows Live, Google, Facebook, YouTube, Myspace, Ebay, Wikipedia and NineMSN. Source: [www.alexa.com](http://www.alexa.com) Accessed 11 January 2008.
- <sup>4</sup> According to a recent article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* 'In just a decade, we'll have gone from half the world never having made a telephone call to half the world owning a phone': <http://www.smh.com.au/news/technology/ten-things-that-will-change-your-future/2007/12/31/1198949747758.html?page=fullpage> Accessed 18 January 2008
- <sup>5</sup> Middleton, Michael and Julie Lee. *Cultural institutions and Web 2.0*. Smart Internet Technology CRC, November 2007, p.31 <http://eprints.qut.edu.au/archive/00010808/> Accessed 18 January 2008.
- <sup>6</sup> <http://www.wikipedia.org>
- <sup>7</sup> <http://www.librarything.com/>
- <sup>8</sup> OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc. *Sharing, privacy and trust in our networked world*. Dublin, Ohio, 2007. ISBN 1-55653-370-5 Section 6, p.30 <http://www.oclc.org/reports/sharing/default.htm> Accessed 18 January 2008

# Reaching higher – looking out

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## Christine Mackenzie

**The paper describes the introduction of Web 2.0 techniques and tools at the Yarra Plenty public library in Victoria, beginning with library staff. The author argues that as libraries move from Web 1.0 type delivery systems to the social networking world of Library 2.0 librarians need to deploy and make accessible these radically different systems, social interactions and library places. Whilst formats have changed, and will continue to change, delivery systems have changed and will continue to change, skill sets and competencies have changed and will continue to change, the users, the citizens who fund and value library services, still need to have their social, cultural and recreational needs met in both the virtual and physical domains in which libraries operate.**

*Originally presented as a conference paper at 'Elevations - the Networking Library' held at Aarhus, Denmark in June 2007. <http://www.aakb.dk/sw111840.asp>*

## Introduction

In setting the context I have used Michael Stephens' (the librarian's blogger) three essential duties of librarians:

- Learn to learn
- Adapt to change
- Scan the horizon

These are three things that we at Yarra Plenty Regional Library are spending a great deal of energy doing and it also fits with the theme of this conference, elevations and taking libraries to new levels.

## Yarra Plenty Regional Library

Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) is a regional library service, north east of Melbourne, providing library services for three local governments: Banyule, Whittlesea and Nillumbik. Our region is quite a mixture; we've got lots of green space; as well as industry; leafy established suburbs as well as mushrooming new housing estates.

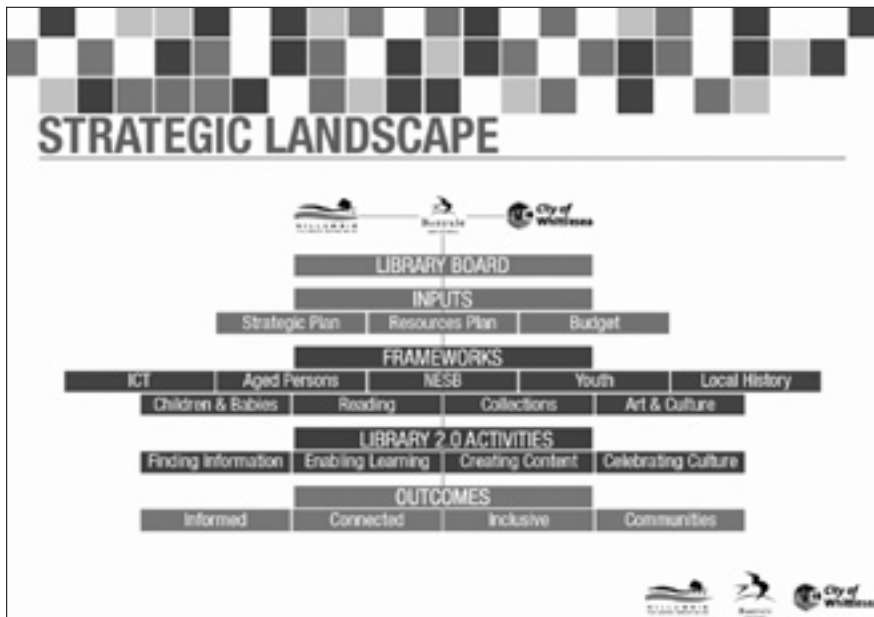
**Table 1. Our vital statistics**

Population served	306,000
Collection	560,000 items
Circulation	3.7 m pa
Visitors	1.6 m pa
Membership	170,000
Staff	160 (88 eft)
Libraries	8 + 2 mobiles
Budget 06/07	\$9.5 m
Area	983 sq km
Ethnicity	Whittlesea – 54% population NESB

Regional libraries in Victoria are incorporated under a section of the Victorian Local Government Act, and operate as an independent legal entity with an annual audit by the Auditor General. Our organisation is a partnership between the three participating councils. We provide all our own support services, from IT through to payroll and accounts. It makes us nimble, but it also means we lack the expertise and depth of knowledge that larger organisations enjoy.

We think we are a progressive library service – early adopters of the Internet, ebooks, cataloguing websites, online reference and we have many more public access pcs per capita than other public libraries in Victoria.

We’ve spent a lot of time over the past year developing frameworks for our services:





We provide services for three local governments. We are governed by a Library Board, which comprises two councillors from each of the three councils. The Library Board sets our strategic direction and has developed a rolling four-year Strategic Plan. We also have a four-year resources plan, which outlines our financial planning and the annual budget. We have worked on a number of frameworks, which are five-year plans that look at each of the service delivery areas and describe where we are currently at, where we would like to be and how we are going to get there. This provides a road map for our staff and, because they have been developed in consultation with key stakeholders and the community, they provide us with a reality check and a mandate for change.

The frameworks all highlight the four main activities that we have badged as Library 2.0 activities – i.e. finding information, enabling learning, creating content and celebrating culture. Through these activities we achieve our strategic plan goals of informed, connected, inclusive communities.

## Learn to learn

So, to Michael Stephens' first duty – *learn to learn*

We want to change the way that people think about public libraries, and we are starting where it counts most - with library staff. We have done this by implementing a staff development program that is familiarising and enthusing staff and making them feel confident with Web 2.0 technologies. The program has a number of components:

- 1 A road show
- 2 23 Things online learning program
- 3 Library Worker 2.0 staff development program 2007
- 4 Unconference

### 1. Road show

We were looking to see how we could make our regular meetings of the wider management team a bit more interesting, and one of the managers thought it would be a good idea for each of the members of the team to present a new technology and explain how it might impact on our library. Out of this evolved the road show to which we invited all staff, highlighting things like podcasts, music creation, digital stories, downloadable audio books and Google tools. We did one – and it was so enthusiastically received we ended up doing three. Some of the feedback included comments like “now I know how to talk to my children” and “now I feel more confident when people come into the library asking about these things.”

## 2. 23 Things

Then we came across the Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County (PLCMC) program, *23 Things*, and we thought it sounded like a great way to engage our staff with some of the new Web 2.0 technologies. The PLCMC *23 Things* program steps staff through various Web 2.0 applications including blogging, RSS news feeds, tagging, wikis, podcasting and video and image hosting sites. The first Thing is to listen to a podcast on the 7½ habits of effective learning, based on Stephen Covey's 7 habits of highly effective people, and in case you are wondering - the ½ is to play. The second Thing is to set up a learning blog that the participants use as a learning journal to chart their progress. The program then goes through a number of different Things; most have a podcast, a presentation or a video to accompany them. There is also a learning blog that guides people through. Each activity takes around 40 minutes or however long people want to engage. The main message is that this isn't about training people, it's about encouraging learning.

PLCMC generously licensed their program under Creative Commons, allowing libraries all around the world to access the learning modules. It has received wide recognition and was featured in a *Wired.com* article (Hanly 2007). Helene Blowers, who developed the program, has been very supportive of us, and I think this really demonstrates the power of strategic innovation and participation. It has been like a great big snowball – more than 35 library services around the world have joined in the fun.

## 3. Library Worker 2.0 staff development program 2007

As a result of the *23 Things* program and its success, we have developed our training plan, Library Worker 2.0, basing it on the themes that I mentioned earlier, and that we think sum up Library 2.0: finding information, enabling learning, creating content, celebrating culture and leading the organisation.

Each of the themes constitutes a learning module which people have voluntarily signed up for. The program is open to all levels of staff. Just as an example, the creating content module is for those who are interested in Web 2.0 technologies and how we can use them and engage the community in social networking.

By the end of the program the participants will have expertise in creating blogs, wikis and other tools and the skills and confidence to engage in social networking. They will participate in workshops on wikis and blogs, local history with an "e", and will have completed the *23 Things* program. Some of the

projects they might take on are contributing to library wikis/ blogs or creating a digital story that could be used by the library (for example, local history.) We've had a good take up of the program with over 60 people signing up.

#### 4. Unconference

Building on our success with the Library 2.0 learning program we hosted a library unconference – which was a wonderful success. The broad themes of the Melbourne uncon were based on Library 2.0:

- Embracing change
- Empowering users
- Unblocking information

The concept of the unconference comes from Open Source technology, and is based on the principles that:

- ✓ Whoever comes are the right people
- ✓ Whenever it starts is the right time
- ✓ Whatever happens is the only thing that could happen
- ✓ When it's over, it's over.

This was a deconstructed conference - there was no set program; and no formal lectures or PowerPoint presentations, rather a range of discussions and interactive tutorials, with participants free to move from one session to another at will. We had a facilitator to help unconferecers develop their own agenda for the day, in an environment which encouraged relaxed participation. The agenda setting process took just 12 minutes.

Sessions included wikis, mashups in the OPAC, a tour of Second Life, does Web 2.0 = Library 2.0?, literary blogging, tagging, library education and recruitment and skilling staff in Web 2.0 capabilities. The main outcomes from the day were an increased understanding and knowledge about the new technologies and how they might be applied in libraries. We invited colleagues from all library sectors and feedback from one of the 100 participants sums up the day:

Web 2.0 became "real" for me that day. The unconference gave me the opportunity to see first-hand ways which Web 2.0 can be used for promoting our library service and up- skilling staff. It was also good to be part of the energy and vitality coming from this gathering.

The most useful takeaway was the session on the "23 Things" and how to implement this type of training with library staff. Thanks to the Yarra Plenty Team. The session on workforce planning and whether professional courses provide the

right skill sets for our sector, was a close second. . . . Format: Flexible, friendly and energising. No time to fall asleep or be bored by another PowerPoint presentation!

The benefits to the community resulting from this program are already being realised. Yarra Plenty Regional Library staff now know much more than they did just months ago! We had 90 staff sign up for the three month program and 50 completed the course within the specified time. It has had a great impact on staff, who now know they can learn new things – and that can be fun; and it has even impacted on those who didn't sign up because everyone is talking about it and even if people haven't done the course, they have been exposed to the technologies.

We have four blogs on our Website, a general library one, as well as for local history, genealogy and reading ([www.yprl.vic.gov.au](http://www.yprl.vic.gov.au)). We are about to launch a wiki to encourage people to contribute to local history and local literature sites. We've built the framework, and now we need to work with the community to create the content – we have discussed this with some of the local historical societies and they are keen to be part of it.

Staff now have the confidence to run classes in blogging and contribute to our library blogs, and they are coming up with great new ideas on how to use these new tools: we've got Eltham library on Flickr, and a video of the unconference on YouTube.

This program has brought the staff to a new level of skill and willingness to learn and adapt to change.

The Library 2.0 team sees our role as leaders and managers to show our staff that they can be lifelong learners and that learning can be fun. We are also confident that our staff can learn new skills and participate in the online world – whatever their age. One of the *23 Things* participants is in her mid 60's! We are engaging staff in learning and giving them the confidence then to pass on their skills to members of the community through classes and individual assistance. And through our ongoing program this year which is building on those skills, we are creating a learning organisation.

By implementing the *23 Things* program, and inviting colleagues from other library services to participate, we have created a learning community and some very proud people! And the movement continues to grow, with the program now rolling out right across Victoria's 45 library services in a collaborative project sponsored by the State Library of Victoria and Viclink.

This is some of the feedback we've received from those who have completed the program:

Not only have I learned about the web etc etc I have also learned about myself - I AM tenacious, I AM capable of learning new tricks, I AM still able to be surprised & thrilled to discover new things.

I thought of what Wiki I would create for our library and came up with the idea of a "LIBRARY TECHNICIAN'S WIKI" In this we could discuss the roles and ideas of other Technicians. In the past we have had to wait until a Library Technician's Conference comes around, which is every two years, to share our skills and achievements. WIKI-LT HERE WE COME!!

So what did I think of the modules just completed? Well there certainly was a lot to examine and has helped me to appreciate the current range of applications out there for library staff to be knowledgeable about (although I don't doubt that there is much more). It reminds me of something said at an information session beginning my library diploma: this is not a profession you can retire into.

Learning 2.0 has brought a new perspective to many of my peers. I think that in the context of YPRL it is a breath of fresh air, and I feel that more endeavours would be gladly welcomed. To some Learning 2.0 opens up a world that was previously uncharted. It is a challenge that plunges the uncertain into the world of the net. To many 'surfers' it offers new waves to ride, and depths to uncover. While for some endearingly labelled 'techno geeks' it serves as a confirmation of the skills they already possess, and serves to illustrate how the world of libraries and the world wide web do, and will continue to interrelate. Learning 2.0 will not only help each of us in our YPRL endeavours but also in other facets of our lives, for me it will infiltrate my approach to research and also communication while on the road. However for everyone the emphasis is on something different and Learning 2.0 certainly allows for individuality and creativity!

Another way of looking at what has been achieved is what we called the *\*megastar methodology\** – each time a staff member completes one of the Things, they get a star beside their name on a spreadsheet that was set up to track participants' progress. Each new thing for each person = one star. So far we have 1,400 stars, which is how many learning units our organisation has grown by!

## Adapt to change

Michael Stephens' second duty is *adapt to change*. We are enthusiastic about the future for public libraries, we are changing from being service providers into a much more interesting and valuable role, contributing to the creation of social networks, whether that is physical or virtual.

We want to become what Michael Stephens calls the transparent library. He outlines the tenets of a transparent library (Casey & Stephens 2007):

- The talking library has no secrets and gathers as much input as it can
- The transparent library both listens and talks
- The transparent library is connected, breeding the expectation for open conversation
- The transparent library establishes ways for our users to talk to us and among themselves with tools like blogs and wikis, community open houses, outreach events and surveys.

We need to hear our users and staff when they ask for change and new services, and we need to hear them when they tell us what we are doing isn't working.

Some of the enablers we are using to move ourselves along this new continuum are RFID; and our collection development and procurement of library materials. We need to use the Web 1.0 technologies to transform ourselves into the Web 2.0 space.

## **RFID**

Our major project this year is implementing RFID and moving to self-service. This will fundamentally change the way we offer library services as we will have 100% self-service checkout and we anticipate significant savings in time and effort with check-in. We have just started tagging our collection and expect it to be fully implemented by the end of the year. This means a different way of working for staff, which will no longer be behind the circulation desk, but out alongside the patrons. We are also amalgamating our reference desks into a service area and one of our libraries has already gone wireless, with the reference librarian equipped with a tablet loaded up with Unicorn, the LMS, untethered from the desk and roving the library.

## **Collection strategy**

Another area that our library service is adapting to change is the collection. Library collections are at the very heart of a public library and are a core service. A Victorian-based library census and survey found that collections are the primary purpose for people using a library – '93% of respondents use a library to borrow books.' (Libraries Building Communities Library User Census and Survey Project, June 2006)

The results of this survey are confirmed by the 2005 international OCLC (Online Computer Library Centre, Inc.) study *Perceptions of libraries and information resources* which found that the library brand continued to be 'books.'

The State Library of Victoria works in collaboration with the public library network to deliver a series of state-wide network projects. Currently these projects are related to Collections & Access, Workforce Planning, Local History and Community Development.

The *Strategic Asset Audit of Victorian Public Libraries* (JL Management Services 2006) was part of the Collections & Access project, which engaged a consultant to assess the state of the collections of all public libraries in Victoria and determine recommendations for future renewal and maintenance strategies. Each of the 45 public library services in Victoria submitted detailed information regarding their collections, thus enabling a series of statistical analyses to be undertaken. The *Audit* has highlighted the need for action if this valuable state-wide asset is not to further deteriorate and become irrelevant. This project for Victoria is pertinent in the light of the recent experiences of the UK public library system where extensive studies have shown that where collections have been allowed to deteriorate, there was a corresponding and significant decline in the use of public libraries.

At Yarra Plenty we recently developed a five-year strategic asset plan for the collection using this report. The most useful insight we gained from the *Audit* was the mismatch between supply and demand – or current collection mix compared to circulation of particular items. It indicates the areas of YPRL's collections that are over and under-invested. According to this measure the collection has much more non-fiction than is being used by the community; and less fiction, junior material including picture books, children's fiction, CDs and DVDs.

Maintaining the current collection mix will continue to misrepresent the community's collective preferences and impede collection performance. Identifying collection gaps in the traditional sense is a highly subjective process – selection decisions have sometimes focused more on what communities should be borrowing rather than what they want to borrow and indeed do borrow. (JL Management Services 2006)

We have started the work on reshaping the collection to better match demand, and this has been supplemented by floating the collection, which means items stay where they are returned, with the added benefit of significantly reducing manual handling.

Moving to supplier aided selection and shelf ready library materials, YPRL commenced outsourcing the acquisitions and technical services components of collection management in July 2005 as a result of a series of processes undertaken in 2004 to redefine the library service's direction. We work in a partnership with our library suppliers rather than in a contractual model. It is a mutually dependant relationship.

The state-wide audit's findings have confirmed the value of Yarra Plenty's decision to move to this process. The state-wide average cost to procure a new item from selection to shelf was found to be \$11.28. YPRL's costs are below the state average at \$7.06. The differential between the state-wide average and YPRL's average multiplied by the number of items acquired shows a saving of \$290,600 per annum – very close to the projected savings of \$300,000 from a cost benefit analysis done to support the introduction of outsourcing.

A review of 'materials in process' times indicated that Yarra Plenty is only one of three library services to achieve a Key Performance Indicator of 1–5 days from supplier to shelf. The majority of library services indicated supplier to shelf times of between 21 to 60 days.

The savings achieved by the outsourcing of technical services have been reinvested in the library service to create an Outreach Department. It comprises a Manager, a Reading Coordinator, Local History Librarian, Aged Services Librarian, and a Media and Marketing Coordinator.

The Outreach Department is our main plank in extending our services and for getting where we want to be as a transparent library. The Outreach Department has been responsible for developing most of our five-year frameworks, and that process has involved stakeholder workshops and consultation with users. We are forging strong links with other agencies, community groups and member councils so that we can develop programs and services that make an impact on people's lives.

## Scan the horizon

What are the major changes that are going to impact on us as public libraries and how can we create our own future rather than simply react to external forces?

*The Horizon Report* is a collaboration between The New Media Consortium and the Educause Learning Initiative in the US. It 'seeks to identify and describe emerging technologies likely to have a large impact on teaching, learning, or creative expression within higher education' (p. 3). While the report has an



academic education slant, I think that the trends they identify are also much the same as those that will impact on us in public libraries.

1. *The environment of higher education is changing rapidly – Costs are rising, budgets are shrinking and the demand for new services is growing. Student enrolments are declining. ...higher education faces competition from the for-profit education sector and an increasing demand by students for instant access and interactive experiences.*

Sound familiar? I know in Australia we can just substitute public libraries for higher education and the sentiments are the same. How many of your students come in and borrow books for school assignments? Once our bread and butter, now they can cut and paste online to their heart's content! One of the services we offer is YourTutor.com which offers homework help online from qualified tutors. It has been well received, the average time online for help is just over 18 minutes, and about half the students are accessing it from home and half from libraries. Competition for learning, for reading, recreation, finding information is coming from many areas.

2. *Increasing globalization is changing the way we work, collaborate and communicate.*

At Yarra Plenty we recently participated in a SirsiDynix webinar – three of us sat at my desk in Melbourne, spoke into the computer and connected live with 80 people from Australia, the US, Europe and Asia. And the presentation very soon after was available for download from the SirsiDynix website or as a podcast through iTunes. It highlights two trends: time shifting, where people can do things when they want to; and also the possibilities for global collaboration, something that is dear to the hearts of all librarians. I think our profession is particularly good at collaborating in a global environment and certainly the most enriching experience I have had professionally is being part of the Bertelsmann Network.

3. *Information literacy increasingly should not be considered a given. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the information literacy skills of new students are not improving; while the skills of critical thinking, research and evaluation are increasingly needed to make sense of the world of user created content and instant access to information of varying quality.*

Near enough is certainly good enough for most students – indeed most people. Working out our role in this space is ongoing – we work with our local schools, in particular promoting our online databases as authoritative sources of information. Making these visible is another challenge – at least now we have federated searching and portal solutions that make these resources easier to use.

Some very telling conclusions are drawn from the state-wide audit of collections I referred to earlier. This found that full text retrievals from the combined online databases subscribed to by all Victorian public libraries amounted to just under 140,000 items, or the equivalent of 2.6% of the population retrieving 1 item per annum. YPRL's penetration is the highest in the state; however that is still only 9%. The *Audit* states (p. 110) that 'any objective analysis would conclude that Gulliver is underperforming and does not appear to represent value-for-money.'

One of the ways we are promoting and making these resources more visible is through another network based project, Library Link Victoria. This project is designed to make Victoria's resources both physical and online much more easily accessible through one portal. It is early days yet, and we are waiting to see whether we can make an impact on Google behaviours!

4. *The notions of collective intelligence and mass amateurization are pushing the boundaries of scholarship.*

Websites such as Wikipedia have caused the very notion of what an expert is to be reconsidered and indeed Library Thing may render us all obsolete!

Talking of amateurs, you may know there are 12 million items catalogued on Library Thing. That's a lot of frustrated cataloguers out there! And that it provides the sort of readers' advisory service that we with our LMSs and our fiction catalogued with no subject headings can only dream about. You may know that Danbury Library in Connecticut is using the Library Thing tags in their catalogue. If you do a catalogue search, go into the item record, there's a tag cloud at the end of the record, click on a link and it takes you to similarly tagged items. And I am very interested in the new movement to open source library management systems, and you may be familiar with systems such as Koha, which is a full-featured open-source LMS. Developed initially in New Zealand it is maintained by a team of software providers and library technology staff from around the globe.

This is related to the work that some libraries are doing with mashups, using freely available social networking tools, refining them and making them transparent for end users. An example is using a tool such as Yahoo Pipes to capture newsfeeds, which have been qualified by user need, saving them as an RSS feed and rendering them into an LMS interface. Connectors such as Google CSE provide further searches across feed sources.

5. *Students views of what is and what is not technology are increasingly different from those of faculty (read old people).*

Mobile phones are very different tools for a millennial and a baby boomer. Most of my peers just want a phone they can see the numbers on – whereas for your average kid it's where they store their music, movies and photos, keep in touch with their friends by text and voice and provide access to the internet.

## Technologies to watch

*The Horizon Report* highlights the technologies to watch which will have a significant effect on college and university campuses (and public libraries too I think) within the next five years. These are user created content, social networking, mobile phones, virtual worlds and gaming. I'd like to talk about some of these now:

### User created content

56 million blogs, 20 million visits a month to YouTube – it's certainly a phenomenon. Libraries are realising that we can be collaborators and facilitators to help people create their own content and to build community content. To do this we need our staff to understand this fundamental shift, and to have the skills to be able to make it happen. At Yarra Plenty we are attempting to harness this trend with our community wiki that has just been set up. We want to capture local history, and local culture including writers, musicians and artists. We've still got quite a way to go, but the possibilities are entrancing.

### Virtual worlds

Virtual worlds can be used to create very effective learning spaces ... the social aspects of virtual worlds are also useful for educational purposes ... the virtual worlds offer an opportunity for people to interact in a way that conveys a sense of presence lacking in other media.

These spaces can be huge in terms of the number of people that use them and they are growing in popularity because they combine many of the elements that make Web 2.0 really exciting: social networking; the ability to share rich media seamlessly, the ability to connect with friends, a feeling of presence, and a connection to the community. There is an increasing presence of libraries in Second Life and a group of Australian librarians are represented. The Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County has a teen library sponsored by SirsiDynix and the Alliance Library System in Illinois has started a library which they say quickly turned from Library 2.0 to Library 3D. It is staffed with volunteers and holds regular programs as well as providing an information service and books. They are also providing training for librarians.

## Gaming

*The Horizon Report's* last trend is massively multiplayer educational gaming. The term 'serious games' has been coined to describe games that have an educational purpose and non-entertainment goals. Educators are finding strong potential for teaching and learning with these games.

We have already had a taste of these multiplayer games – Runescape, which has the equivalent effect of children ingesting a bottle of red cordial. Runescape is a medieval massively multiplayer online role playing adventure game (MMORPG) that works on several different levels. Young people from all around the world conquer monsters, quests, learn medieval skills and get tricked out of large sums of treasure and weapons. They can even be lured into the deep dark forest and killed. If you want to know more, ask any adolescent boy (some girls do play, but not for long). At any one time 150,000 people can be playing Runescape. Each world can only hold two thousand and if a world is full then it gets very crowded.

Some libraries ban Runescape. We wanted to work with the kids, but with Runescape came certain problems, amongst them conflict, noise and truancy. The staff noticed that some of the young people liked to play Runescape all day, and were seeing addictive behaviours. They were forgetting to go to the toilet, forgetting to eat, interfering with the other kids and not sharing. Staff worried about them and the problems were discussed during several staff meetings.

To find a solution, Eltham library invited eight boys to a 'Focus Group' (or 'fish and chip afternoon') in the school holidays. The staff were interested in finding out what they wanted to do and to give them ownership of a project to be held for six sessions on Tuesdays after school from 4-5pm. How could the boys continue to use the game and help other users as well?

The boys came up with the following ideas:

- To make a web-page about how to play Runescape, called 'Crystalscape', including occupational health and safety tips
- To make a guidelines poster for a code of conduct in the library
- Conduct a session on communication and conflict resolution
- Develop an 'expert for the day' system. The expert is one of the boys, volunteering to help new game users
- Have a session on the importance of physical activity, stretching and taking time out.

The project was run in partnership with Nillumbik Shire, the Salvation Army and the Youth and Family Team from Nillumbik Community Health Service; through ownership the boys have developed skills, tested their abilities and created a useful resource for other users in the library. Some of these kids were on the outer socially and the project has given them the opportunity to belong to a group.

Yarra Plenty is now planning to host a one-day conference on gaming, based on the American Library Association's Gaming, Learning and Libraries symposium, later in the year, to explore how gaming fits into the digital learning landscape.

## Third Place Library

I would like to conclude by describing a project that we are working on that really encapsulates what I have been talking about and also illustrates the themes of the conference – strategic innovation, co-creation, democracy and participation.

One of our member councils is involved in a major redevelopment of an existing shopping centre and aquatic centre. Part of the brief is to create a community space that will be flexible, and that can be different things to different people. The Greensborough "third place library" is a concept that is bringing together the local council, the regional library, a Living and Learning Centre, a local church, a volunteer association and a neighbourhood house. Third Places are public spaces that are important features for democracy, civic engagement and establishing feelings of a sense of place. We are working through what this might look like, what sort of governance it will have and how the existing partners and infrastructure might fit. The key opportunity identified for the Third Place is connecting the community – providing connections to people, information, resources, events and programs. We are looking for a space that is an identifiable community "heart"; providing flexible spaces will also enable the delivery of programs that will evolve and adapt as community needs and aspirations change. There is an opportunity to attract and engage a diverse range of individuals and groups from the local and regional area. It is an opportunity to take advantage of local community knowledge and expertise and listen to the needs of the community. It will be interesting to see what we end up with! By the way, this whole notion was inspired by Helsinki's Library 10, which really attracted some attention when Maija Berndtson visited Melbourne last year.

## Conclusion

The raison d'être for communities having libraries hasn't changed. Libraries still select, acquire, describe and make accessible to the communities who fund them, the information, culture and heritage of the community regardless of class, income or educational status.

However the challenges involved in this mission in 2007 and onwards, as identified by this conference theme, are significantly different.

My paper suggests that as we move from Web 1.0 type delivery systems (static html with hyperlinks) to the social networking world of Library 2.0 we need to deploy and make accessible these radically different systems, social interactions and library places – just as we moved from card catalogues to OPACs. Formats have changed, and will continue to change, delivery systems have changed and will continue to change, skill sets and competencies have changed and will continue to change – but the user, the citizens who fund and value library services still need to have their social, culture and recreational needs met in both the virtual and physical domains in which libraries operate.

I believe that libraries and librarians must:

- leverage library 1.0 systems and processes to facilitate staff movement into new delivery platforms e.g. use RFID for user managed stock control – move staff into valued-added task (from returns to mashups)
- facilitate and assure staff skills and competencies by programs such as *23 Things*
- use social networking tools to not only engage users in the “new ways of doing” – but also to collaborate with our colleagues regarding what works and what doesn't
- understand and deliver the virtual whilst ensuring the physical space continues to be available and relevant for the public.

In my paper I have used as my framework Michael Stephens' three key elements of Library 2.0: Learning to learn, Adapting to change and Scanning the horizon. Libraries will continue to grow and prosper as long as we continue to work in partnership with other community agencies, educational institutions, library suppliers and vendors, and of course our communities. The Web 2.0 technologies are providing opportunities at least equal to that of the first wave of internet and World Wide Web. And sometimes we may need to step right outside our ideas of what libraries are and listen to what people want. When we reach higher and look out we can glimpse the many opportunities.

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# Pay equity for the library profession: an employer's perspective

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Dagmar Schmidmaier

**Pay equity, as a concept and outcome, is significant for libraries and librarians because it demonstrates the value of the library and information profession, and the significance of the work undertaken by librarians and allied professionals. The State Library's involvement in the NSW Pay Equity Case and precursor investigations into the worth of the library and information science profession contributed to public recognition of the professional stature of librarians. The case also highlighted the role and significance of libraries. The leadership role of the NSW Government in advancing progressive industrial relations was confirmed by the case and its outcomes.**

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## Introduction

This article outlines the role of an employer, the State Library of New South Wales (SLNSW) in the 2002 NSW Pay Equity Case, the Pay Equity Inquiry and related matters.

The success of the NSW librarians' pay equity case relied on many factors – from historical issues to strategic intent. Thorough planning and a willingness to build a coalition from a range of interests and positions also influenced the outcome. Additionally, the willingness and interest of most parties to test and resolve an issue led to NSW librarians having a significant impact on the status of their profession including industrial recognition of its status.

The NSW public sector library workers pay equity case led to a substantial salary increase for librarians and related professions and additional funding for the most significant employer, the SLNSW. Public and industrial recognition of the profession's status is the most valuable aspect of the case, from an SLNSW perspective, as it cements the Library's reputation as a sought after employer in the Australian information and cultural industries.



## An employer perspective on pay equity

The pay equity case outcome gave the SLNSW a significant edge, by enhancing its ability to attract a wide field of applicants for vacancies because of its recently realised capacity to pay professional salaries for professional skills. The organisation gained flexibility through local recognition of the diverse professional requirements of twenty first century libraries and librarianship. The outcome also acknowledged and elevated the specific and unique role of the librarian.

Additionally, the pay equity case strategically positioned the profession and research libraries in Australia in the employment market place, and progressed focused workforce management planning. Demographic data is one of the few long range planning tools available to managers, however, workforce data has broader applicability across the Australian library sector.

The Council of Australian State Libraries (now National and State Libraries Australasia) collaborated on the collection of workplace data during the establishment of the SLNSW pay equity methodology, which proved a useful exercise for all involved. Collaborations through this coalition have strengthened individual members' positions by creating opportunities for sharing service and funding models. (Irvine 2003)

## Industrial background

The industrial relations background to the pay equity case has been outlined by other commentators. Philippa Hall's article (Hall, 1999) provides a detailed reflection on the pay equity inquiry and its implications; Anna Chapman (Chapman 2004, p. 546) also outlines the 'state of play' and provides historical background as does Phil Teece's extensive commentary in *Incite* and elsewhere. The Australian centralised wage fixing system has generally speaking produced better outcomes for female workers compared with many other countries, even though the Australian labour market is generally characterised by significant gender segregation. (NSW Pay Equity Taskforce 1996, p. 5)

In 1919 the basic female wage was established as 54% of the male wage. In 1943, the female rate was lifted to 75% of the male rate. In 1969, the first federal equal pay case introduced the concept of equal pay, to be progressively phased in. Notwithstanding, equal pay was not provided where the work in question was *essentially or usually* performed by women. In the 1972 review of this principle, the equal pay for work of equal value principle applied. The application of the principle was somewhat skewed in that it did not address the impact

of the highly gender segmented Australian labour market. The introduction of legislation in 1973 supporting equal pay in NSW also failed to address the wages gap between traditionally male and female jobs. (NSW Pay Equity Taskforce 1996, p. 3).

Subsequent industrial developments such as the adoption in Australia of the Structural Efficiency Principle in 1988 following the National Wage Case allowed for examination of the relativities between workers under a particular award, amongst other features.

At the state level the introduction of the *NSW Industrial Relations Act* (1996) had as one of its objects the redressing of inequitable pay and employment. The then Attorney General and Minister for Industrial Relations, the Hon. Mr J.W. Shaw QC MP indicated in introducing the legislation in late 1995 that 'equal remuneration and other conditions for men and women doing work of equal or comparable value' was a minimum objective of the legislation and that the government intends 'making submissions in the pay equity test cases and other areas relating to equality of opportunity.' (NSW LC Hansard, 23 Nov1995, p. p3844 and p. 3846)

## Occupational segregation

Generally in Australia female professionals tend to be concentrated in different occupations and industries than men and in areas where their role is undervalued both in terms of skills used and in actual remuneration. (NSW Pay Equity Taskforce 1996, p. 37)

## Early involvement in testing the issue

In 1995–6 the State Library was invited to submit 20 job evaluation 'peg' positions to an equity project identified by the NSW Office of the Director for Equal Opportunity in Public Employment (ODEOPE). This project compared the responsibilities and salaries of NSW government employed geologists, a male dominated profession; to librarians, a female dominated profession. This was a follow up study to a 1991 project that tested job evaluation methodologies across the public service as part of the Structural Efficiency Principle framework. The initial study indicated that there were some discrepancies in job evaluation outcomes for library and related occupations.

One of Labor's 1995 election promises was that the NSW Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) would hold an inquiry into pay equity. In 1996 the NSW Government launched the state's first Pay Equity Statement, in response to

concerns about adverse outcomes for women in the enterprise bargaining process. Interestingly, in 1958, NSW was the first industrial jurisdiction in Australia to acknowledge the principle of equal pay. (Chapman 2004, p. 546). However, a basis for putting the principle of pay equity into practice in NSW took nearly forty years to emerge, and a lot of hard work by a broad spectrum of interested parties.

The Pay Equity Taskforce was established and conducted research and consultation. An issues paper *A woman's worth: pay equity and the undervaluation of women's skills in NSW* was released in 1996 by the Taskforce with a call for submissions on the topic. A wide range of individuals and organisations made submissions to the Taskforce including lobby groups, government agencies, individuals and the SLNSW, one of the major employers of librarians and library paraprofessionals.

In 1997, the NSW Government released *Pay Equity and the Undervaluation of Women's Skills in NSW* under the auspices of the NSW Pay Equity Taskforce in response to the submissions received to the *A woman's worth* issues paper.

The Ministerial Reference by the then Attorney General and Minister for Industrial Relations the Hon. Mr. J.W. Shaw establishing the Pay Equity Inquiry towards the end of 1997 was highly significant for advocates of pay equity in Australia.

The Pay Equity Inquiry was a review conducted by the NSW Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) in 1998. It examined the undervaluation of women's work in New South Wales through case studies. The earlier study by ODEOPE was followed up by the Inquiry.

The Inquiry, headed by the Honorable Justice L. C. Glynn of the NSW Industrial Commission, sought and received evidence from employer associations and trade unions, from professional associations, from individuals including the NSW State Librarian, from academics and from lobby groups.

Copious information about the role of librarians; the nature of the modern library and information industry, especially in relation to the SLNSW, and historical background on industry changes, particularly those pertaining to NSW, was presented as evidence. (Library Council of NSW 1998, p. 28)

The inquiry heard that librarians, including those at the State Library were largely female and highly qualified; engaged in a work environment with low staff turnover; and employed under industrial instruments that tended to maintenance of the status quo. Librarians also tended to be trade union members. (NSW Pay Equity Inquiry 1998, vol.1, p. 391–2)

In historical evidence given to the Inquiry, the history of award movements for librarians and related professions was examined and award and job evaluation

information was extensively analysed. Other evidence focused on sociological and industrial studies of the library profession, including specific evidence about employment at the SLNSW (Encel, Bullard and Cass 1972).

The history of the State Library was a key factor in explaining the undervaluation of female librarians. The dominance of men in senior library positions (locally and generally in Australia until the mid 1980s) and the under-recognition of the professional nature of the work contributed to the inequality in remuneration faced by women. Additionally, the employing body at the time, the now defunct Public Service Board, was found by the Inquiry to have made access to senior positions and recognition of qualifications difficult for women employed at the State Library (NSW Pay Equity Inquiry 1998, vol. 1, p. 402–426).

The Inquiry recommended that the Equal Remuneration Principle be established and that the value of Librarian work be reviewed.

## Equal Remuneration Principle

The Principle, handed down in 2000, was a variation to the Wage Fixing Principles established in the *State Wage Case 1999*, and allows the IRC to review awards and adjust wage rates or other conditions of employment 'on the basis that the work, skill and responsibility required or the conditions under which the work is performed have been undervalued on a gender basis.' It requires parties to show evidence of this undervaluing based on gender in order to change wages or conditions.

The Equal Remuneration Principle provides for consideration on a gender-neutral basis of the value of the work. Actual work performed, skill, responsibilities and conditions of work are important factors in determining appropriate salaries. Labour market attraction or retention rates or productivity factors are excluded. The principle adopted permits appropriate comparisons to be drawn but does not require them; it does, however, require appropriate attention to be given to award relativities – both internal and external. The principle which the Commission has adopted is modeled on the existing Work Value principle.

Other general factors considered by the IRC when considering equal remuneration claims can include:

1. the state of the economy of New South Wales
2. the likely effect of its decision on the industry/employers affected and
3. the likely effect of its decision on employment
4. scope for phasing in of any increases.

## Employer involvement in the Pay Equity Case 2000

The State Library, in concert with the Public Employment Office, presented evidence and a methodology that provided proof of the extent of the undervaluation of librarians and, to a lesser extent, library technicians, when compared with other public sector professions and related classifications.

Additional extensive evidence presented by the employer included analysis of job evaluation outcomes and comparisons with other professional and paraprofessional occupations from the public sector and the academic environment. Witness statements from senior library professionals and extensive workforce data extant in 2000, such as qualification levels and length of time at specific grades were also presented as evidence.

Data about salaries, classifications, age profiles, length of time in a position was also gathered from the other State and Territory libraries.

As usual for this type of inquiry in the NSW jurisdiction, site visits preceded the case. The site visit delegation included the industrial relations commissioners, who would hear the case before the commission and their schedule included the SLNSW, a sample of TAFE colleges and selected government department libraries.

## The outcome of the case

The principal outcomes of the Crown Librarians, Library Technicians and Archivists Interim Award were:

- the historical undervaluation of the professions on a gender basis was recognised;
- all occupational groups were covered under the one award across the NSW public sector, with librarians and archivists paid under the one scale, and library technicians and library assistants paid under an overlapping scale, with librarians and archivists having a separate classification structure;
- the work value of librarians, library technicians and archivists was recognised as significantly increasing over the past decade or so; this increase in work value had not been taken into account in fixing these groups' wages;
- that librarians and archivists fit comfortably into the group of occupations historically regarded as the 'public service professions', including legal officers, engineers, teachers, scientific officers, psychologists and

professional officers. *'We also consider that librarians and archivists may also be properly considered as professions in the more general sense'*

- moreover, the new award contains classification descriptors, potentially limiting doubt or controversy in relation to the role of job evaluation in either entrenching or masking undervaluation.

In summary, the interim award provided for:

- salary increases of 1% to 26% depending on the 'step' or grade in the classification
- retention of separate classifications within the one award
- qualifications recognised by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) as the appropriate qualifications for appointment to Librarian and Library Technician positions together with the employers' capacity to recognise other qualifications and experience equivalent to ALIA recognised qualifications
- In addition, the creation of a modified grade structure for Librarians and Archivists.

The implications of the case and its outcomes for the State Library offered opportunities and challenges for the Library in meeting its long-term service delivery goals. These included testing and *confirmation* of librarianship's equivalency to other professions – highly significant in light of the Library's ongoing role as a major public and reference library and for its professional leadership role in the sector.

Secondly, the award structure accommodates creation and grading of positions based on depth of specialist knowledge. This has the allied benefit of creating career paths for staff that lead to specialist and/or supervisory positions, and accounts for and deals with the propensity for State Library staff to enjoy lengthy and significant careers within the one institution.

The Library has considerable ability to attract high quality applicants from within the industry because of its status. Access to enhanced remuneration further increased the Library's ability to attract high quality applicants, especially those from outside the library sector.

Additionally, the Library benefited from the confirmation of the right to consider applicants based on the full range of qualifications and experience and to allocate to them the full range of work for which they are trained. This has enhanced the Library's ability to secure staff with new and emerging skills and represents opportunities for further streamlining as pressure to achieve efficiencies grows.

Many parties took a keen interest in the case. Senior public servants, the library profession locally and internationally and others were vitally interested in the management of the employer's case and its outcome from both the public policy and library and information profession perspectives. During and after the case, many inquiries were received by the Library from around Australia and overseas, seeking information on methodologies deployed as well as other related topics.

## Supporting factors

Key supporting factors included:

### 1. Vocational basis of awards/agreements in the NSW public sector

The vocationally based awards in the NSW public sector made identifying and establishing appropriate professional and paraprofessional comparators relatively easy for the union and the employer. Comparisons were also drawn where possible with other state libraries and the university sector. Internal relativities were also examined.

### 2. Access to historical information

The historical basis of these awards including the industrial instruments that covered librarians, library technicians and archivists were not too difficult to trace through the instruments themselves, archival material, personal accounts and the literature of the profession. This historical understanding was enabled by professional relationships and the State Library's leadership role in the profession.

### 3. Community relations

The State Library of New South Wales and libraries in general are well-respected organisations, and enjoy widespread community support.

## The outcome for the State Library

The Library is continuing to review the workforce planning opportunities that the pay equity decision presented, including ongoing review of the Library's structure to obtain effectiveness and efficiency dividends.

The NSW Pay Equity Case ensured that librarians in NSW were recognised professionally and paid appropriately. However, it is important that librarians not become complacent. We will need to continue to develop and plan strategic alliances and resolve to be creative to ensure future recognition of

the profession. Ongoing effort is required by all who contribute to, and are interested in the future of librarianship and libraries to ensure appropriate representation is achieved in the next round.

The State Library actively participated in the strategic processes and managed the government relations that led to the pay equity case and its outcomes. In particular a long-range view of the government's pay equity strategies was taken by the State Librarian. When opportunities were presented the State Library was strategically poised to be an active, well informed and prepared participant.

Outcomes of the pay equity case were well supported by State Library staff and management – a real 'win win' situation, due to the well managed consultative process. The case was personally and professionally gratifying for the State Librarian as a senior professional and leader in the profession, because of the public recognition of librarians and libraries that was evident in the case's outcome and the judgment.

As a profession it is important to learn from this case and continue to be creative and develop new models of partnership and ways of working together. The issue of pay equity truly illustrates the importance of strategic communication and coalition building within the profession and beyond.

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Dagmar has made a wide-ranging leadership contribution to the library and information profession and has worked in the public and private sector and as an academic. She would like to acknowledge the significant contribution Anne Doherty, senior policy officer, State Library of NSW made in the preparation of this paper.

# Avoiding the crunch at crunch time

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## Julie Sloan

**Library and Information Services (LIS) providers are vulnerable in the current war for talent. They need to work collaboratively to develop accurate workforce data so they can retain and recruit the right people. In South Australia, the issue has a level of urgency above other States as the demographic is skewed to older workers. Organisations need to develop smart workforce strategies to retain and recruit employees. They should be cautious about any quick fix approach. Sustainable workforce development is not achievable by making decisions on anecdotal data. Libraries need to make sure their data on workforce demand and supply is accurate and robust. It is critical that accountability for workforce planning is readily accepted by senior leadership.**

*This paper is an edited version of a presentation delivered at the Public Libraries Australia Biennial Conference in Adelaide in August 2007: [http://www.pla.org.au/Conf2007/conferences\\_papers.html](http://www.pla.org.au/Conf2007/conferences_papers.html)*

## Introduction

Australian business operates within a dynamic and complex economic, legislative and industrial environment. Businesses face a raft of challenges arising from globalisation and the shift in Australia's population demographics. Not only do they need to accommodate an increasingly diverse and mobile workforce, they also need to plan for the effects of ageing. It has become critical for businesses to implement rigorous workforce planning processes so they can access accurate workforce intelligence which is essential for demand and supply forecasting.

But these issues are not exclusive to business. Libraries and other information services providers throughout the country also face 'crunch time' – when the number of people exiting the labour market is greater than the number entering it.

Crunch time in the Australian labour market is conservatively considered to be at 2016 – or slightly earlier in South Australia due to the older age demographics of the State – but employers are strongly advised to have workforce planning initiatives in place by 2009 as initial impacts will be felt as early as 2010.

But the good news is that many libraries and information providers are well on the way to developing accurate workforce data. While there's a good foundation, this sector is still vulnerable in the current and projected competitive labour market. It is vulnerable to being lost under the umbrella of workforce development strategies established for other stronger and more visible workforces such as local government, education and peak professional bodies.

There is a critical need to be collectively ready for crunch time and to take responsibility for sector workforce development. Libraries need to understand and remember the differences between workforce demand and supply – the workforce we have/haven't got, and workforce development strategies – what we need to do to retain and recruit the required workforce.

## The South Australian situation

In South Australia around 340,000 jobs are expected to be created within eight years – 91 per cent caused by retirements. Approximately 360 of these job openings will be for librarians – 0.1 per cent.

How will employers compete in the war for talent? Currently there are 870 librarians in South Australia; taking into account retirement indicators, labour market projections for job openings for librarians in South Australia are indicated in Table 1.

**Table 1. Job openings for librarians in South Australia**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Job Openings</b>
2008 – 2009	60
2009 – 2010	70
2010 – 2011	60
2011 – 2012	60
2012 – 2013	50

Working collectively we need to know – not anecdotally, but quantified – how these numbers equate nationally. Where will these jobs be in South Australia? What are the capabilities required to undertake these jobs? What is the current and projected supply source – by location, region, nationally? What are the alternative supply sources? What opportunities and barriers are there around job design and re-design to ensure a better match between demand and available supply?

Libraries and information service providers as a profession are well ahead in regard to macro workforce planning data, but the sector must move

collaboratively – and with urgency – to gather and manage the impact of micro workforce planning issues such as:

- impact on retention of increasing work demands and changing role of LIS workforce
- working life intentions of current workforce and potential to extend transition to retirement to retain required skills
- impact of ageism, work related fatigue and bullying on retention of the current workforce and attraction of required workforce
- demand for job redesign – accuracy/relevance of job title, responsibilities, training and accreditation
- community understanding of and impact on role and responsibilities of LIS workers
- opportunities and barriers to sector-led change.

Strategic workforce development needs to be managed at all levels – professional associations, peak bodies, regional organisations and in the current workforce. It needs to be undertaken with other stakeholders, including those not traditionally associated with the LIS professions including:

- young people
- disengaged workforce (indigenous, newly settled migrant/refugee population, women with school age or older children and people with disabilities)
- second and third career workforce – such as people who have always had an interest in LIS as an employment option, but who have not until later in life had the opportunity to pursue it
- pre-retirees
- LIS alumni
- volunteer workforce – more than 35 per cent of the volunteer workforce is interested in securing paid work for six to ten hours per week. The research also indicates high qualification profiles in some of the volunteer workforce – indicating they may have all or some of the skills and capabilities required to work in the LIS sector and may be a major supply source.

The answers to successful workforce development are with the current and future workforce. Make sure the signposts put up about the LIS profession are accurate, relevant and noticed by the right people.

## The pressure points for the LIS workforce

My research – benchmarked against other relevant data – has identified other trends in the workplace that are causing concern. This data includes LIS workers.

In the last 12 months, research from five Julie Sloan Management (JSM) client groups representing more than 2000 workers indicates that between 7 per cent and 17 per cent had *experienced* workplace bullying in the last six months, and between 13 per cent and 25 per cent had *witnessed* workplace bullying in the last six months. This is supported by SA Government workforce data, which indicates 22 per cent experienced and 37 per cent witnessed bullying in the last 12 months; for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees 31 per cent had experienced bullying and 51 per cent had witnessed bullying.

Close to 20 per cent of employees participating in workforce planning projects have reported work-related fatigue. This fatigue is reported as being directly related to lack of resources to engage additional staff (even relief staff) and caused by overload – increasing service demands without additional staff or funds to undertake the work.

It is not just older workers who are reporting fatigue directly related to lack of labour supply to assist with overload and taking leave. Workers as young as 25 who have been 'fast tracked' into middle management positions are also regularly reporting work-related fatigue with many indicating this is one of the key reasons they are not interested in remaining with their employers – more so than the usual Gen Y arguments currently being pushed.

Five per cent of workers participating in workforce planning projects have reported they have personally experienced ageism at work. Sixteen per cent reported witnessing ageism at work and 30 per cent of these people are middle and senior managers.

Comments include:

My younger colleagues are constantly saying 'when you fall off the perch we will be waiting to take your chair'.

My department manager is younger than most of the workers in our workgroup and often making jokes about age and our whole division being defined as the 'seniors corner'...because we are all located together because of our specialist technical skills ... it gets to you after a while.

Is ageism being driven by Gen Y? How does this impact retention and recruitment of skilled workers? The question is: how relevant is workplace bullying, work-related fatigue and ageism to retention and recruitment of the LIS

labour supply? I think it is important to recognise the growing 'culture' around ageism in the work force. It needs to be stopped and regulated/legislated consistent with other equal employment opportunity (EEO) issues.

As libraries begin to manage their projected labour supply gaps they need to remember workforce planning is not just about headcount. Sustainable workforce development is not achievable by making decisions on anecdotal data. Libraries need to make sure their foundation data on workforce demand and supply is accurate.

Workforce engagement (including contractors and if relevant, unpaid workforce including volunteers) is an essential element and libraries need to understand the difference between critical job groups (actual labour market shortage) and hard to fill job groups (skills available, but not enough people interested in working in these jobs).

Libraries should establish supply templates relevant to the sector and incorporate critical time frames and demand projections. Supply templates should be straightforward and include who you have, who you need, when you need them, where you need them, and risk assessment if you cannot attract them. Target supply and engage the disengaged workforce.

Think job re-design – the current and projected labour market creates wonderful opportunities for job re-design. Simply ask the questions – is LIS still relevant to the community as a job title? What does it mean? Can it be called something different to attract a new diversity of potential employees? Can the job be split to better match the labour supply i.e. components requiring training and accreditation, components requiring different attributes and capabilities – will this broaden our supply source?

Review the job to match available supply rather than diverting energy into the highly competitive job market.

There may be opportunities for regional workforce planning including:

- collaboration with a diverse range of regional industries
- shared workforces
- mobile workforces for critical job groups
- career pathways
- working arrangements
- shared training
- actual and supported flexibility
- reward and recognition
- mapping and monitoring.

In conclusion, workforce planning is a strategic task. If it is to be effective, responsibility for its conduct must be assumed at the most senior organisational levels.

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**Julie Sloan** is a leading workforce planning practitioner. In 1998 she established a specialist workforce planning consultancy, Julie Sloan Management Pty Ltd (JSM) which helps organisations design and implement strategic workforce planning solutions based on relevant and accurate workforce intelligence to enable them to better manage the impact of skills shortages, current and projected global and national workforce demographics and a tightening labour market.

Julie predicted a decade ago the significant demand for skills, knowledge, tools and techniques in workforce planning. She believes few recognise the challenges ahead in attracting and retaining the required workforce. Julie has refined JSM's methodology and tools over 30 years' experience in human resources and senior management in public and private sectors in Australia and overseas. She has worked in the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, in the International Atomic Energy Agency and at the International Council on Social Welfare.

# Are librarians the ultimate knowledge managers? A study of knowledge, skills, practice and mindset

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Stuart Ferguson, Philip Hider  
and Anne Lloyd

This paper seeks to establish the state of knowledge of Knowledge Management (KM) among Library and Information Services (LIS) professionals, the extent to which they find positions in the KM sector, the extent to which they practise identifiable KM processes in their work and the adequacy of educational preparation and professional development opportunities. It draws on research begun in 2005, which included a survey of advertisements for KM positions, a survey of KM courses in Australia; and an online questionnaire for LIS and KM practitioners and educators. The literature review highlights knowledge, skills and attributes associated with KM, and notes some overlap with those required for the LIS profession. The job analysis suggests that there may be some overlap between LIS and KM practice and between what are perceived to be LIS and KM core competencies, but that the two are quite distinct. Findings from the survey of KM courses suggest only a limited amount of overlap between what are considered by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) to be core LIS professional attributes and the curricula of the KM courses offered by Australian universities. The survey of practitioners did not reveal significant differences of perception between the LIS and KM groups, but noted that the two were not mutually exclusive. Significant comments from survey respondents are reported. Conclusions are mainly concerned with education and professional development, and are aimed primarily at educators and the professional association.

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## Introduction

In a 2003 issue of this journal, Cathie Koina asked whether librarians are really 'the ultimate knowledge managers' and pointed out that what librarians have done for many years is information management (IM), which, contrary to what many librarians believe, is not the same as knowledge management (2003, p.270). The project reported here starts out with a similar question and is prompted by the continuing interest in KM within the LIS community, not simply in terms of its application to the profession's own management practice, but also with an eye to opportunities for LIS professionals in the KM domain. LIS professionals are well placed to take on the role of knowledge managers, the argument goes, because they have been managing knowledge from time immemorial (Butler 2000, p.40; Corral 1999; Townley 2001, p.53). With a view to addressing the issue of whether library and information professionals do indeed have the credentials to lead knowledge initiatives (or 'interventions', as the KM literature puts it) in their organisations, this project attempts to establish the state of knowledge of KM among LIS professionals, the extent to which they are finding positions in the KM sector, the extent to which they practise identifiable KM processes in their work and the adequacy of educational preparation and/or professional development opportunities.

The view that LIS professionals have been taking on a greater KM role or even migrating into the KM domain has been largely anecdotal, although research by Ling-Ling Lai (2005) demonstrated that 18.5 percent of all KM job postings asked for an advanced degree in library/information science. Whether these represent a new job market for LIS professionals or LIS-related jobs that have been re-badged as KM positions is unclear; however, our study may help throw some light on the transferability of LIS skills into the KM environment. It is also unclear whether LIS managers are following what are now reasonably well-established KM practices within their own organisations, let alone demonstrating an awareness of the contribution LIS professionals have to make in the KM domain (Ferguson 2004).

The project described here attempts to address questions such as:

- What is the state of knowledge of KM among LIS professionals?
- To what extent are LIS professionals finding positions in the KM sector?
- To what extent are they practising identifiable KM processes in their work as LIS professionals?
- Are they receiving adequate educational preparation and/or professional development opportunities for the practice of KM?

The study aims to establish the state of understanding of KM among LIS practitioners, especially those employed as knowledge managers in the business and government sectors, to identify common perceptions and understanding of KM objectives and practices amongst KM practitioners and LIS educators and to describe common elements in KM and LIS practice that might be used as a framework for teaching KM in the LIS field. The project was conducted as part of a Community of Scholars at Charles Sturt University (CSU), a scheme that provided small grants to facilitate the development of collaborative research groups. This part, 'Knowledge and Information in Organisational Contexts', was conducted by the authors of this paper, three from CSU and one a Knowledge Services Manager at CSIRO.

## Literature review

A significant, if diminishing body of literature questions whether KM exists as a distinct and identifiable discipline. The most vocal and most frequently cited critic is Tom Wilson, who, in 'The Nonsense of "Knowledge Management"' (2002), argued that much of what is passed off as KM is in fact information management re-labelled. More recently, Wilson was unrepentant, backing up his argument with the observation that the vast majority of journal articles published in 2003 and 2004 with 'knowledge management' in the title were, in fact, about the development of organisational information systems (2005, p.155). At the other extreme, a recent well-referenced Australian KM text manages to avoid any mention of information management or information management systems (Debowski 2006).

According to Standards Australia (2005, p.2), KM is:

A trans-disciplinary approach to improving organisational outcomes and learning, through maximising the use of knowledge. It involves the design, implementation and review of social and technological activities and processes to improve the creating, sharing, and applying or using of knowledge.

Knowledge management is concerned with innovation and sharing behaviours, managing complexity and ambiguity through knowledge networks and connections, exploring smart processes, and deploying people-centric technologies.

While there is undoubtedly overlap with information management, especially among the thirty-four KM 'enablers' discussed in the Standard, there is much to differentiate KM from information management, most clearly in the focus on the *social* sources of information and knowledge in organisations, and their role in

knowledge generation. Much of KM overlaps with strategic management and human resource management, as Debowski's text demonstrates. The inaugural issue of the *Journal of Information & Knowledge Management* (2002) makes the following distinction:

While information management deals with documented knowledge, knowledge management takes a holistic approach and looks at tacit or undocumented knowledge that can only exist in the minds of people in the form of skills and competencies. ... Most of the traditional techniques and technology used to capture and process documented knowledge or information are not suitable for tacit knowledge management. Technology tools such as collaboration tools, discussion forums, ask the experts and so on can be used to facilitate tacit knowledge management by improving communication and interaction between knowledge workers (Hawamdeh 2002, p. iii).

There is a considerable body of literature that addresses the relevance of the LIS profession's skills base to KM activities (Broadbent 1998; Church 1998; Corral 1999; Loughridge 1999; McGown 2000; Shanhong 2000; Abell 2001; Ajiferuke 2003; Koina 2003; Pantry & Griffiths 2003; Rowley 2003; Ferguson 2004; Henczel 2004; Sinotte 2004; Koenig 2005; Martin, Hazeri & Sarrafzadeh 2006). A 2004 IFLA collection opens with the challenging claim that KM is one of those concepts that librarians take time to assimilate, only to reflect ultimately 'on why other communities try to colonise our domains' (Hobohm 2004, p.7). LIS interest in KM is also reflected in monograph publications such as the practical text by Sylvia Webb (1998) and the edited collection by Kanti T. Srikantaiah and Michael Koenig (2001). Content analysis of the literature that explicitly addresses opportunities for LIS professionals in KM (Rooi & Snyman 2006) suggests five broad roles for librarians in KM: facilitating an environment conducive to knowledge sharing; managing the corporate memory; transfer of IM and related skills to a new context, linked to business processes and core operations; development of corporate information literacy; and finally, management of information in a digital/electronic environment.

One of the most comprehensive and influential analyses of KM skills and attributes to be undertaken in the LIS sector, the TPFL study in the UK, found, among other things, 'significant overlap between recognized management competencies and those required for successful knowledge practitioners' and drew attention to those skills and attributes 'most often associated with change and project management', the 'ability to influence attitudes, to work in complex organisations, cross boundaries, and navigate political waters' and 'team-building skills, consensus development, and community understanding' (Abell 2000, p.35). A set of 'sample job descriptions' published a few years

ago by Standards Australia includes key 'knowledge-enabling' tasks such as knowledge strategies, knowledge auditing, 'information literacy' training programs, facilitation of group dynamics and coaching programs for improved communication skills, designing systems and procedures, and managing changes in organisational behaviour (Bishop 2002, p.12). Jennifer Rowley sees management of knowledge repositories as one of the three main roles of the knowledge manager and suggests that the processes involved in this 'have traditionally been at the heart of librarianship' (2003, p.438). More recently, in a discussion of the contribution of librarians to KM, Ainslie Dewe of Auckland University of Technology highlighted their role in the fostering of information literacy skills, defining IL as the '[a]bility to identify, access, evaluate, organise and communicate information and knowledge' and seen as a 'Core capability for the knowledge society' (2005).

It is also worth drawing attention to the skills and attributes implicit in Standards Australia's KM Standard (2005). One of the two major parts of the Standard is the list of 'enablers' – the 'tools, techniques and activities' that support KM interventions through the Mapping, Building and 'Operationalising' development phases outlined in the main section of the Standard. Almost half of the thirty-four enablers listed are drawn from the field of management, which supports Abell's findings, with most of the others coming from the fields of either information systems and technologies or IM. The latter includes content management, document management, environmental scanning, information auditing, leveraging information repositories, and taxonomies and thesauri, some of which are familiar to the LIS profession.

In the educational field, the Department of Information Science at Loughborough University conducted surveys of job advertisements and of employers and recruitment agencies, and identified areas of experience and skills required, including relevant industrial experience, interpersonal skills, highly developed oral/written communication skills, project management skills, team work, change management and analytical skills (Morris 2004, p.120). Edith Cowan University's School of Computer and Information Science went through a similar process of market research and consultation, and concluded there was strong support for what it called 'Knowledge Computing', such as Internet Technologies, Groupware and Workflow; KM Foundations, such as Knowledge Taxonomies; and management orientated subjects, such as Organisational Behaviour and Change Management. (Brogan, Hingston & Wilson 2001). Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, undertook an international survey of university-level KM courses offered by universities in Australia, Canada, Singapore, the UK and the USA, and found that the emphasis in course content

varied, depending on the discipline of the institution offering the program, with computing departments offering a technology orientation, departments of business studies offering greater focus on topics such as intellectual capital, measurement and business cases and schools of information studies emphasising knowledge repositories and development and management of content (Chaudhry & Higgins 2004, pp.131, 133).

Are LIS professionals in a position to grasp the opportunities in KM? The TPFL study found little evidence of involvement of information professionals in KM implementation at a strategic level, that they 'lacked business understanding, breadth of required experience, and the needed mindset' and that they 'were more concerned with external information and to some extent the management of records and documents' (Rehman & Chaudhry 2005). Angela Abell, who promotes the idea that LIS professionals have a future in the KM sector also cautioned that they needed 'To further develop within the library and information profession an understanding of ... KM concepts and strategies ... the skills and competencies needed for KM and the context in which they are applied ... opportunities for personal and professional development within knowledge environments' (2000, p. 40).

According to Karen Bishop 'Information professionals have the "core" information management skills required to manage knowledge once it becomes "explicit" (i.e. to identify, catalogue and maximise the visibility and availability of the products in which knowledge is stored)'. She suggests that 'the great challenge' is to manage the 'tacit' (2002, p.13). Charlotte Breen et al., however, claim that LIS professionals do have the required knowledge and skills, based on surveys they conducted in Britain and Ireland (2002, p.127). Despite their optimistic conclusions, there was a suggestion when Breen et al. were writing that the KM domain was not yet ready for the LIS professional. There is no evidence in the literature that the situation has changed significantly. Indeed, several barriers to LIS involvement in KM are noted, such as concern with external information resources rather than internal organisational knowledge assets; lack of business knowledge; content ignorance; image problem; name problem; lack of visibility; personality issues; and lack of the required management skills (Ferguson, Sarrafzadeh & Hazeri 2007).

## Research design

The project described here set out to establish the state of knowledge of KM among LIS professionals, the extent to which they are finding positions in the KM sector, the extent to which they practise identifiable KM processes in

their work and the adequacy of educational preparation and/or professional development opportunities. With a view to developing a framework for teaching KM in the LIS field, it was also intended to identify common perceptions and understanding of KM objectives and practices amongst those working and teaching in the KM and LIS fields.

The research design adopted included the following components:

- a survey of advertisements for KM positions to establish the criteria that have been used for employment in these positions
- a survey of KM courses in Australia
- an online questionnaire for LIS and KM practitioners and educators, designed to establish perceptions of both groups and to identify practices within the KM field.

The survey of KM advertisements was intended to identify the range of skills, attributes and educational qualifications being sought for KM positions and to compare these with the skills and attributes required in the LIS sector, as documented by the ALIA. It attempted to identify all KM positions advertised in Australia throughout 2005 that used the word 'knowledge' in the position title. The use of the keyword was largely a pragmatic decision, based on the need to delimit the survey. It would have been instructive to include advertisements for librarians, particularly special librarians, but this would have entailed a much larger sample and would also have meant further widening the search to include other KM positions that did not have 'knowledge' in the job title, such as 'Content Manager', and possibly, because of the close links between KM and organisational objectives, positions such as Strategic Manager. The content of the advertisements was then analysed with respect to the attributes – knowledge, skills and attitudes – required, or desired, for each position. Each identifiable attribute, such as project management skills, was counted so that *groups* of attributes (say, IT skills or attributes appearing on ALIA's list of core LIS areas of professional knowledge) could be identified and represented as a percentage of the total number of attributes identified.

The survey of Australian KM courses was intended to establish the knowledge, skills and attributes with which KM students might be expected to graduate from an Australian university and to compare them with the nineteen core knowledge and skill attributes set out on the ALIA website (2003) as required for LIS professionals. It examined each of these attributes and attempted to identify those subjects or combinations of subjects that appeared to cover the attribute reasonably well. For the sake of the comparison, coverage was ascribed in dichotomous terms – either reasonably well covered or not. Before this

comparison was made, however, the extent to which KM courses in Australia overlap with each other was examined. In contrast to LIS courses, which in Australia are strongly influenced by ALIA, KM courses have considerable opportunity to be defined according to local interpretations and expertise. Should they differ markedly then little could be learned from the comparison between KM and LIS curricula.

The study described here used the abstracts of core subjects listed on course web pages or, in other words, summary data, which it was hoped would be representative enough to allow a reasonable approximation to be made. It was assumed that there should be some *subject equivalency* across courses, if the course content were to overlap significantly, particularly if subject equivalency is defined in terms of approximation, as distinct from a perfect match. In this analysis, a subject was regarded as equivalent if it was considered that a student would be deemed eligible for recognition of prior learning had he or she passed it. To allow for variety in course structures, the core subject equivalency amongst the courses being compared was 'collapsed', with broader and narrower subjects grouped together into *subject areas*. A measure of 'overlap' was obtained by calculating a subject area's level of overlap with those in the other courses and dividing by the number of courses. Thus, for instance, if a core subject area was considered equivalent to 0.4 of the core of the other four courses then the 'overlap' would be 10% (0.4/4).

For the questionnaire survey, an online instrument was established and participation was invited on one particularly active Australian KM list and four ALIA lists, considered active and covering relevant areas of interest, such as information literacy and special libraries. Participants were asked for personal information such as qualifications, length of experience in information work, job title, type of organisation in which they worked, time spent in current job and main functions of their current position. All were asked to outline what they saw as the main roles and functions of a knowledge manager, estimate the percentage of their current work that represented KM, outline what they understood by the term 'knowledge management' and outline KM projects or developments that a library they knew had implemented or in which the library had participated. Those participants who worked in KM and had previously worked as a librarian or information manager, were also asked to answer the following additional questions: how what they did as a knowledge manager differs from what they did as a librarian/information manager, differences, in general terms, between the practices of knowledge managers and the practices of librarians, and ways in which education for library and information management might better prepare people to work in the KM environment. Copies of the online instrument are available from the authors on request.

Preliminary findings of the survey of job advertisements and findings of the survey of educational programs have been reported elsewhere (Ferguson et al. 2006; Ferguson & Hider 2006) and are summarised here.

## Survey of job advertisements

The survey of job advertisements was conducted throughout 2005. Sources searched were [www.mycareer.com.au](http://www.mycareer.com.au), which lists jobs placed in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age* (Melbourne); [www.careerone.com.au](http://www.careerone.com.au), which lists jobs placed in Australian newspapers; [www.oneumbrella.com.au](http://www.oneumbrella.com.au); [www.zenman.com.au](http://www.zenman.com.au); *Canberra Times*; Google; and [www.alia.org.au/employment/vacancies](http://www.alia.org.au/employment/vacancies). The survey identified seventy-five positions with the word 'knowledge' in the position title, of which thirty-six were in the commercial sector, eighteen in the legal sector (all commercial), ten in government, seven in LIS-type environments, one in the not-for-profit sector and three that were difficult to identify (but were probably in the commercial sector). The position titles for the seven 'LIS-type' jobs were: 'Knowledge Manager', 'Librarian - KM Project', 'Knowledge Manager' (in a law firm), 'Knowledge Professional (System Librarian)', 'Knowledge Professional', 'Librarian/ Knowledge Manager' and 'Senior Project Officer (Library & Knowledge Management)'. Some of these indicate re-badging of positions in the LIS sector, as distinct from the appearance of a new job market for LIS professionals (Ferguson et al. 2006). Not all of these seven positions were open to all LIS professionals, however, with three requiring extra skills and experience.

The attributes – knowledge, skills and attitudes – required, or desired, for each of the seventy-five positions were identified and put in one of three categories: (1) appearing on ALIA's list of core LIS areas of knowledge, skills or attributes (2003), such as knowledge of online databases, or (2) appearing on ALIA's webpage as one of the 'generic' attributes that LIS professionals share with other professionals, such as project management or interpersonal skills, or (3) mentioned on neither: for instance, work process analysis. The degree of association between 'ALIA' and 'non-ALIA' attributes in the advertisements was found to be low, with the seven LIS-related jobs largely demonstrating few attributes outside those mentioned in the ALIA lists and the remaining sixty-eight positions requiring many 'non-ALIA' attributes but few attributes from ALIA's list of core LIS knowledge areas, skills and attributes.

The analysis of the sixty-eight non-LIS positions indicated that over half (50.6%) of the attributes required or preferred were not mentioned on either ALIA listing, 40.7% were included in ALIA's list of generic qualities, such as good



communication and project management skills, and only 8.7% corresponding to ALIA's list of core LIS professional attributes.

The last category included attributes that are clearly associated with the LIS environment, such as a qualification in KM or IM, customer focus/client service, knowledge of management, IM experience, design of information solutions and experience of online databases and information acquisition and storage.

Of those attributes covered by ALIA's list of generic skills, the majority fall into the information systems and technology (IS&T) and management categories – expressed as percentages of the total number of required or preferred attributes, the figures were 28.7% for management, 9.1% for IS&T and 2.9% for other attributes. Featuring strongly in the management skills were interpersonal and communication skills, project management, teamwork and self-management. Other management attributes included understanding of organisational issues and culture, budget management and report writing. The IS&T attributes included 'IT applications' and various specific applications such as online publishing, web development, intranet development and information and electronic data management systems. The 'other' category included attributes such as research, initiative, analytical skills and, what ALIA describes as, 'business acumen'.

The reasonably high figure for ALIA's generic skills suggests that LIS professionals may be quite well prepared for the KM environment. It is worth bearing in mind, however, that over half the attributes identified in the job advertisements do not appear in either of ALIA's listings. ALIA might do well to note that, as a percentage of total attributes, 12.7% were management attributes that are not listed explicitly by ALIA, including high-level management attributes such as leadership, executive/strategic level experience, human resource coordination, training, advocacy and change management (although these are attributes that belong to many library managers). Similarly, in the IS&T category, there are attributes (10.2%) that would probably be considered too high level for most LIS professionals, including programming, relational DBMS, content management, technical architectures, specific, sometimes named, non-LIS information systems, and specific collaborative tools, not necessarily known to many LIS professionals.

Amongst the other non-ALIA attributes were:

- business and financial expertise (11.6%), including high levels of business analysis and, linked to that, experience of workflow design
- industry-specific attributes (5.5%), including legal skills (3.6%)

- a KM track record (3.6%)
- non-IM qualifications (2.9%), although there appears to be less emphasis on formal educational qualifications than in the LIS field
- consultancy in KM or IM (2.2%)
- 'other' attributes (1.8%) such as adult education, technical communications, documentation and taxonomies.

Amongst those attributes not covered by ALIA's lists, along with some attributes considered generic, two particular strands emerge: a significant proportion of attributes could be considered to belong to either the Information and Communications Technology domain or Business and Finance. Only a minority of attributes were *not* associated with a particular domain (outside of KM) and so might be considered for inclusion in the ALIA list, such as 'understanding how knowledge sharing works.' A large number of advertisements sought either ICT or business skills, but some wanted both, so it is not totally clear whether these jobs represent one or two separate strands. Further investigation may prove fruitful.

## Survey of knowledge management courses

The previous section suggests that there may be some overlap between LIS and KM practice and between what are perceived to be LIS and KM core competencies, but that the two are quite distinct. One might reasonably expect the same to apply to the content of KM and LIS. It is nonetheless worth analysing the extent to which KM and LIS educational programs differ, since a substantial overlap might suggest that their respective curricula be re-examined with a view to establishing a common core.

First, the extent to which KM courses overlap with each other was examined. Comparisons were made using the core subject equivalency amongst five masters courses at University of Technology, Sydney, and the universities of Canberra, Central Queensland, Melbourne and South Australia. Grouping broader and narrower subjects into subject areas produced a 46.7% overlap (1.87 / 4), which was taken to be a reasonable level of overlap, given that courses at different universities are never likely to be totally equivalent in terms of subject. From the subjects featured in these masters courses, several KM subject types were identified: organisation and management; technological applications; information organisation and retrieval; business (especially e-business); and sociology of knowledge and learning. These categories are fairly similar to the five broad areas identified by Abdus Chaudhry and Susan Higgins in their international survey of courses (2004).

The next part of the study was a comparison between the nineteen core knowledge and skill attributes listed by ALIA (2003) and the content of the five KM courses mentioned above plus the graduate/postgraduate diploma course at Murdoch University, which offered a qualification at graduate diploma or masters level. The ALIA attributes should be covered in any LIS course offering a first professional qualification, whether a graduate diploma or masters. As outlined above, coverage of the ALIA attributes was ascribed in dichotomous terms – either reasonably well covered or not. Findings suggested only a limited amount of overlap between what are considered by ALIA to be the core LIS professional attributes and the curricula of the KM courses offered by Australian universities. One KM course, the one offered by Central Queensland, appeared to have very little in common with the LIS field. It may be significant that this course and the two others offered by universities with no 'LIS school' (Melbourne and Murdoch) were the three least accommodating of ALIA's attributes – those courses at universities with LIS schools may share subjects with the LIS courses or the courses may be connected in other ways (e.g., common staff). Even amongst the most 'LIS-friendly' courses, however, two covered only a minority of ALIA's attributes and only one covered a (slim) majority, in contrast to the 'LIS' course at Curtin University, which was used as a 'control' and covered a significantly higher number of ALIA's attributes – fourteen out of nineteen (Ferguson & Hider 2006).

## Questionnaire survey

Thirty-four online surveys were completed, twenty-three by people working in LIS positions and eleven in non-LIS positions. Given that the survey was identified on five lists, selected on the basis of their active membership and relevance, this is considered a poor response rate (although the rate could not be calculated accurately), which limits the value of the findings. Of the LIS professionals, seven worked in government departments or agencies, three in the commercial sector, seven in academic libraries and six in other environments (not for profit, research and public libraries). Of the non-LIS respondents, seven worked in government departments or agencies, three in the commercial sector and one indicated 'other' (legal environment). It is perhaps worth commenting that, amongst the group identified as non-librarians, six out of eleven had an LIS education (although the relatively high proportion may reflect the lists on which the survey was publicised, most of which were LIS related).

The LIS professionals described the functions of their current positions in largely 'traditional' terms, such as library management (7); general library work (7); information/client services (12); research (4) and information literacy instruction

(2). Other functions included records management (3); data and document control management; web site; intranet, content management (4); and KM initiatives (2). The functions listed by non-librarians were more disparate: information organisation (metadata; corporate thesaurus); KM facilitation (3); collection of legal precedents (2); management of information systems and technology (3); education and training (3); management of research team (2); facilitation of communities of practice; project management; and development of knowledge strategies (2). Others sounded like typical LIS functions: current awareness; management of information resources; and management of information provision.

Amongst the group identified as LIS professionals, the following were identified as the main roles and functions of a knowledge manager (in descending order of frequency):

- Fostering of knowledge sharing culture and practices (7), including use of communities of practice – a form of advocacy role
- Information management (7), including content management; information and records management (3); information retrieval; analysis and critique of information sources; information auditing
- Education and training (6)
- Information systems and technology management (6), including information systems support; provision of infrastructure; harnessing of new technologies to enable knowledge sharing; intranet and website management (3)
- Provision of information services (4), including the collection, organisation, analysis & dissemination of business information
- Management of an organisation's 'intellectual capital' (2)
- Research support (2), including the provision of a research evidence base for decision making
- Knowledge mapping
- Creation of 'knowledge plan'.

One referred specifically to a coordination role: 'Coordination of systems, people, processes, information and technology'. The educational role was also highlighted:

In the present environment, the primary role is educator. All levels of organizations have to be taught that they are knowledge workers, with all that this entails. This education should (theoretically!) make easier the secondary function of the knowledge manager, vis the coordinating.

Amongst those respondents identified as being non-librarians, the following were seen as the main roles and functions of knowledge managers (again in descending order of frequency):

- Aligning of knowledge strategies to organisational/business strategy (5)
- Information/knowledge advocacy/leveraging (4), including fostering of knowledge sharing culture and practices
- Coordination of different sections of an organisation to meet knowledge based objectives (2)
- Education and training (2)
- Knowledge mapping (2), including analysis of information flows and the development of 'solutions' to information flow problems
- Change management
- Leadership
- Design of intuitive enabling technologies and processes.

As one might expect, there was greater emphasis on strategic issues amongst respondents in this group and very little conflation of KM and library and information management.

In terms of the proportions of their work time spent on what respondents considered to be KM, the LIS professionals considered themselves to be less engaged in KM work than did the other respondents, with a mean of 40.1%, as opposed to 66.7%. This difference was shown to be statistically significant using the Mann-Whitney test, with  $p=0.0455$  (two-tailed). (This test was preferred to the t-test due to the nonparametric distribution of values for the librarians, and the differences between the variances.)

The LIS group saw the following components of their current work as representative of KM: provision of information; development of communities of practice; promotion of IT solutions; promotion of knowledge sharing across departments; and management of information resources. Three mentioned support for curriculum but one added, 'I would not class this as knowledge management per se.' Four of the non-librarians mentioned promotion of knowledge sharing across departments; content creation; content management; IM; and research.

Asked to outline what they understand by the term 'knowledge management', six of the LIS professionals appeared to conflate KM and IM: for instance, 'Providing information services to build business capability' and 'management of all knowledge vital to the running of the organisation – internal papers, documents, reports, and external information acquired by the organisation' (all examples of 'explicit knowledge'). Eight appeared to see KM in wider

terms than those generally applied to IM, in its inclusion of 'tacit' or 'implicit' knowledge: for example, 'KM is the planning, development and implementation of strategies, processes and systems to support the securing of, and value-adding to, an organisation's knowledge assets – "corporate memory" i.e. staff's knowledge, experience & relationships; IP; i.e. internal databases and records, external knowledge-based products'. One person objected to the term 'knowledge management', however, suggesting that information is what is 'managed'. Components of KM identified by the LIS group included knowledge sharing, information analysis, multi-disciplinary, technology, maintenance of networks, and education and training. It is worth noting especially the reference to analysis:

I see knowledge management as involving more analysis and interpretation. Libraries acquire information in response to articulated or perceived needs, then organize and disseminate that information. Knowledge managers would also take a step further and evaluate and re-interpret the information. Libraries tend to concentrate on external information (although we are moving into research repositories which changes that environment somewhat). Knowledge managers focus equally on external and also internal information (i.e. specific skills or corporate [knowledge] or knowledge in the minds of employees, etc.)

Three of the non-librarians also seemed to see KM and IM as one and the same: for instance, 'Organising information & data so that it is easily accessible by others who can benefit from content – evaluating information to highlight trends and lessons learnt'. Six, however, used terms like expertise and tacit knowledge to emphasise the *human* aspect of KM: for example, 'harvesting by a range of KM techniques the tacit knowledge and expertise of staff'. One response was particularly all-encompassing:

Helping an organisation to access the right knowledge at the right time for improved decision making and problem solving; Connecting people together to share and learn from their own insights and experiences; Managing the creation, capture, storage, sharing and application of information in a context that adds meaning and business purpose and helping an organisation, through collaboration and narrative, to understand what that information is telling them.

A question about KM projects or developments that a library known to respondents has implemented, or in which the library participated, drew the following suggestions:

- IT projects (8) such as web site redevelopment; intranet (re)development; portal development; wikis; blogs; digital libraries; inclusion of RSS feeds in pathfinders; conversion of digital product to open source format for client use at desktop

- Fostering of knowledge sharing (6): for instance, update sessions (on completion of a project or after attendance at a major staff development conference); focus groups; communities of practice; current awareness strategies; and experts' databases.
- Information audit (3)
- Education and training (2)
- Development of e-resources (2) such as research repositories and digital theses programs
- Knowledge related staffing (2) – including a network of 'information gatekeepers' (an informal group who liaised with an executive team as required) and designated knowledge development staff.

Others included information needs analysis, information literacy programs, content/records management system, national catalogue system and Rodski surveys. One of the LIS professionals commented that he/she 'found the most difficult thing to be convincing the majority of people that they have knowledge and that they can share it'. One of the non-librarians added 'All KM projects I have been involved with have been initiated outside the library/information centre environment'. The following cautionary note is also worth recording:

In the kind of libraries I've worked in (law firm), you can 'implement KM projects' as far as they fit within your area. You can try to convince other areas they need to work with you on it, but then you also have to convince them and your bosses that it has enough benefit to justify taking you away from your everyday work. So, you improve systems and methods within the library area, and you work with lawyers to see what they use and how, then try to revise how the library provides information to better fit with need. BUT the kind of really big picture stuff (implementing document management systems, etc.) isn't done by the library.

Those LIS professionals who clarified their 'knowledge management' work, defined it in terms of the following: information resource management (3); management and provision of online resources (2) ; facilitation of communications between groups and individuals; records management; building business capability; providing access to information; building communities of practice; communicating with clients; and developing knowledge assets. Asked to differentiate between their previous experience as a librarian or information manager and their experience as a knowledge manager, respondents noted the following differences: knowledge managers work more at a strategic level (3); KM is an 'extension' of librarianship (2); knowledge managers engage more in process management (2); librarians deal more with physical resources whereas knowledge managers work with online resources

(2) ; knowledge managers work across organisations more than librarians; KM uses more terminology; knowledge managers work with the content of information resources rather than just the resources themselves; knowledge managers integrate access with ethical and effective use; knowledge managers participate in knowledge creation.

Six of the nineteen respondents who addressed this question, however, considered there to be no significant difference between the two activities. These were typical comments: 'I don't see a huge difference in the roles. I see KM as an extension of aspects of my librarian role. I am in a position to create connections, information resources and information sharing are key to my work, therefore I use KM principles and practices to enhance my professional skills' and 'As a corporate librarian in a previous job I coordinated records management/archiving as well as managing the library. We talked about the gathering of tacit knowledge although we didn't make great inroads there. KM is really a more integrated approach to information management'. The common view that librarians are good at sharing knowledge was replicated here: 'whereas library staff have as their central premise the dissemination of information, other staff may be more "territorial", reluctant to share or to embrace new tools or strategies'.

Asked to distinguish in general terms between general library and KM practice, respondents differentiated between the two as set out in the two lists below. It can be seen that the responses from both groups overlap to a large extent.

## LIS respondents

- Knowledge managers are more business-oriented (4)
- Knowledge managers work across organisations more than librarians (4)
- Knowledge managers engage more in process management (2)
- Librarians work with more limited resources and time
- Knowledge managers are more project-based
- Knowledge managers are more IT-oriented
- Knowledge managers facilitate knowledge sharing
- Knowledge managers analyse knowledge more
- Knowledge managers deal with unpublished knowledge more
- Knowledge managers work on the 'bigger picture'



## Non-LIS respondents

- Knowledge managers map people to content (2)
- Knowledge managers analyse knowledge more
- Knowledge managers work on the 'bigger picture'
- Knowledge managers work more at a strategic level
- Knowledge managers work across organisations more than librarians
- Knowledge managers deal with internal resources more

Five respondents considered there were no significant difference between the two practices.

Asked about ways in which education for library and information management might better prepare people to work in the KM environment, the two groups gave similar responses and they have been amalgamated here, with emphases particular to one group indicated:

- Management studies (10), such as organisational behaviour, strategic planning, business management; change management; innovation; IT costs/benefits and marketing skills
- Principles of KM (7), including the knowledge management lifecycle (as set out in the Australian Standard), building and sustaining knowledge capabilities and development of communities of practice
- Practical component (4), including case studies of knowledge audits and work-based projects
- Research and research skills (3 respondents, all LIS)
- Higher levels of technological expertise (3 respondents, all LIS), including intranets, learning technologies and other IT tools to assist in the management of knowledge assets
- User orientation (2) – one respondent referred to, 'Problem solving for the client's need, not for the solution'

Other responses included narrative management, collaboration processes/ technologies, facilitation and social research skills (interviewing, focus groups, surveys etc.), IM (specifically, relationships between library and records management), knowledge of resources, problem solving and interpersonal skills, content knowledge, copyright limitations, different models of clearinghouses, and teaching.

On the issue of a practical component, one respondent referred to the need for practical, accessible and implementable skills: 'I did a course on KM and it focussed on meta-data – I left with NO idea where to start, how to audit, what

are alternative systems for arranging the info, and where to go next'. Another respondent made the following comment about his or her LIS education:

I did a couple of units on KM in my library course, but to be honest I really didn't find anything in the course particularly enlightening. The kind of strategic stuff that would be useful in hindsight would probably have bored me at the time. Until you see the need for it, the conceptual stuff really just seems to be common sense and thus hard to be interested in.

One respondent was 'unsure about the usefulness of operating in a KM environment and whether very many people in the workplace actually understand what this means. Gaining some clarity on the functions and processes of knowledge management might be a good place to start when educating library and information management workers.' Another said, 'First teach the teachers. The better training people have in instruction of the aspects of knowledge management, the better they should be able to teach "ordinary" people.' One saw the LIS and KM professions as distinct but believed one could learn from the other in 'ways of seeing, conceptualising, utilising systems, etc.' Another was dismissive of the whole question of KM education: 'Really! It's called experience'. Finally, one person made the point that 'The current training for library & information work does not take into account the interface between information professionals and their clients to the extent required to function effectively as either [information professional or knowledge manager].'

Under 'further comments on the function of KM and/or knowledge managers', some of the LIS respondents were positive about the role of their profession in KM, with one claiming 'demand for researchers with library and KM skills'. Some used this part of the survey to add cautionary comments:

I think [KM] will die a slow death or reinvent itself into something else.  
To me it seems like librarians looking for more inventive directions.

KM practices are an important aspect of libraries in large organisations, but the literature does the field a disservice by being so obsessed with its own importance. KM provides some valuable tools and reminders of the importance of knowledge sharing, but it is not the second coming.

My great worry about KM is that librarians and other traditional information managers can be overruled by IT staff who understand the technology but not the human at the other end of the screen. I know it's happened in one large Australian company, which I won't name here. The result: a hi-tech "solution" that doesn't get used because end-users are not comfortable with it or aren't sufficiently trained to use it.

Finally, among the responses from the non-LIS group, one person provided the following reflection:

KM is still largely misunderstood as a discipline and suffers from the fearless self-promotion of individual theorists. Building pragmatically focussed knowledge professionals that can also deliver value to an organisation in document management, information management and the tools/technologies that enable these processes is a strong step forward in raising the value profile of KM.

## Conclusion

Are librarians the ultimate knowledge managers? On balance, the research reported here suggests that they are not, although, in fairness to the profession, the same might be said for the other business and information-related professions that populate the KM domain. The survey of job advertisements suggests that there may be only limited scope to expand ALIA's list of core LIS competencies and redefine the profession's relationship with KM with a view to repositioning LIS more favourably in the KM job market. There is a 'strand' of KM that is already fairly well defined in terms of LIS attributes and the profession may wish to further cultivate this strand, or at least ensure that LIS professionals are aware of the opportunities it offers them (Ferguson et al. 2006). It is worth noting, however, that experience of other IM applications, such as records management and electronic document management, are sought more commonly for KM positions than LIS attributes, which may reflect the fact that LIS professionals focus largely on external, published sources of information, which are generally not regarded as being as valuable as internal knowledge assets. It is also worth highlighting the high-level management skills required by many employers for KM positions – skills that are not explicitly identified in ALIA's professionals attributes and which educators would do well to note.

The survey of educational programs seems to suggest that a future unification of KM and LIS courses is not likely, although it is worth noting that the KM stream of the UTS program, which does attempt to combine KM and LIS education, was the course that exhibited greatest overlap with the ALIA attributes. It could be suggested that there are separate KM and LIS courses for good reason since the graduates of these courses are entering two distinct, if related, professions. Although ideally it might be desirable to develop a program that prepares graduates for either a KM or LIS career, LIS educators are familiar with the problems of squeezing sufficient coverage of LIS knowledge and skills into its postgraduate courses, and perhaps fitting in what appears a distinct discipline would sacrifice depth of learning to breadth to an unacceptable degree.

The survey of practitioners did not demonstrate a large gulf between LIS professionals and non-LIS KM professionals in terms of their understanding of the field, with both making similar, though different, distinctions between their respective areas of practice, although it should be added that the number of KM respondents with LIS backgrounds suggests the two groups were not mutually exclusive. It is also worth noting again the possible limitations of the study, given the small response to the questionnaire survey – thirty-four respondents, with participation invited on five lists. The small sample size makes it difficult to draw any definitive conclusions. Perhaps the apparently low response rate can be put down to the fact that many LIS professionals simply don't draw a hard and fast distinction between their role and that of the knowledge manager. The most significant difference between LIS and non-LIS respondents lay in the substantial number of LIS respondents who defined KM in largely traditional LIS terms, although there was some conflation of KM and IM among both groups.

Given the way in which KM has been developed as an integrated and holistic approach to the management of corporate knowledge and information assets, it is not surprising that knowledge managers use many IM tools, techniques and technologies, some of which are in common currency in the LIS profession. There are therefore some opportunities in the KM sector for people with an LIS background, but more significant are the areas in which LIS professionals are seen as not being highly proficient. In terms of educational preparation, the need for high-level management skills was emphasised again. There are implications for educational institutions, ALIA and professional development programs, and also for the ALIA core attributes, which perhaps need to be revisited.

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# Book reviews

## Supply side perspectives

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***Out Front with Stephen Abram: A Guide for Information Leaders*, comp. by Judith A. Siess and Jonathan Lorig. Chicago: American Library Association. 2007. 203 pp. US\$40.00 (US\$36.00 ALA members) soft cover ISBN 13: 9780838909324**

Stephen Abram, Vice-President of Innovation at Sirsi-Dynix, is a dynamic and much-in-demand speaker and prolific writer. He is well respected in library circles for his perception of the issues and challenges facing libraries and for his ability to motivate library staff in any sector. This title is the first collection of his published articles.

The articles included here address library staff in all library sectors and are focused around four key themes: Advocacy – the articles here examine the value of libraries and how to explain it to the public; Technology – looks at everything from PDAs to Google; Communities and Generations - talks about the library's clientele and how it is changing and the differences between the generations, with particular emphasis on the millenials; Future - investigates the current state of librarianship and outlines where Abrams believes it is going. All themes include information relevant to the specific sectors of librarianship, with the content being generally transferable from one sector to another.

The articles vary in length, from a couple of pages to 17 pages, so it is easy to read and absorb in many sittings. As the collection consists of selected articles, the theme is what relates them, so there is no need to read every article or to read them in order. However, Abram's words are worth considering, and he writes well so I would recommend reading the whole book. The articles are also well supplemented by a comprehensive bibliography of his other published works and a recommended reading list.

These articles are not just theoretical overviews of each topic; they incorporate great information taken from research, studies and Abram's own experiences, as well as those of others. He presents a considerable amount of practical information on how libraries can deal with issues covered by these articles, and there is much here that can be applied in Australian information organisations.



Abram is encouraging, cajoling, challenging and easy to read. I highly recommend this book and his other works to anyone who is interested in libraries now and in the future.

**Michelle McLean**

Casey Cardinia Library Corporation

## Find out and succeed

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***The Entrepreneur's Information Sourcebook: Charting the Path to Small Business Success*, by Susan C. Awe. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 245 pp. US\$35.00 soft cover ISBN 1591582423 (available from DA Information Services)**

Hundreds of thousands of new small businesses start up each year throughout the world, and, while some go on to grow and thrive, others are doomed to fail and close their doors. The one factor above all others contributing to such different outcomes is the ability of the entrepreneurs to gain access to information and to use what they find in the service of their business. Suddenly, with the availability of Susan Awe's book, this task has been much simplified. *The Entrepreneur's Information Sourcebook* brings together the print and Internet resources which will guide the aspiring entrepreneur through the process of deciding what type of business to open, where it should be located, whether to buy a franchise, how to raise capital, how to market, how to work with government agencies, how to analyse the competition and when to get professional assistance.

The growing popularity of e-business and home-based business ensures that these business types are well represented in all resource lists, particularly in the legal field. The chapters are organised by functional area in such a way as to facilitate the planning of any type of small business from start-up through business planning to managing the new business and finally exit strategies and moving on. This allows the prospective entrepreneur to examine a variety of sources before deciding which is right for the particular purpose. When resources are relevant to more than one task, they are listed in more than one chapter to facilitate finding information.

The book is meticulously indexed, and finding specific topics as quickly as possible is made easier by the bullet point list of chapter highlights and brief introductory summary which introduce each chapter. After examining each bullet point in greater detail, the chapters conclude with a comprehensively annotated

list of print references and further reading and another list of online resources. Although biased towards North American resources, the annotations give enough detail about the author and contents of each entry to enable the reader to locate similar sites based in Australia and New Zealand and to assess their relevance, thereby avoiding time wasting or expensive searches for irrelevant resources. The concluding glossary provides assistance with the interpretation of commonly used business terms and acronyms.

Establishing a successful small business is not a simple task, and as a tool which makes information gathering more efficient, this book will be a welcome addition to the resources of teachers and students of small business management courses as well as independent entrepreneurs.

**Helen Dunford**

TAFE Tasmania

## **Morals and machines**

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***Cybersins and Digital Good Deeds: A Book about Technology and Ethics*, by Mary Ann Bell, Bobby Ezell and James L. Van Roekel. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Information Press, 2007. 187 pp. US\$22.95 soft cover ISBN 13: 9780789029546**

*Cybersins and digital good deeds* is a very short, popular encyclopaedia defining prominent examples of information and communications technology (ICT) and some human ethical implications of its uptake. Bell, Ezell and Van Roekel have written entries that range from a paragraph to a couple of pages, supplemented with brief bibliographies and enlivened with occasional black-and-white illustrations. Items have been written at somewhere between basic and intermediate levels, although they incline towards the former. The authors hope to 'demystify some of the terms often heard in threatening tones but perhaps not understood by the layperson'. They target 'high school and academic libraries, public libraries' and those general readers seeking more information about 'good and bad behaviour involving technology'. They also nominate the selection criteria of 'historical importance, present relevance, and the likelihood of future impact'.

The book does present many key phenomena using concise and effective laypersons' terms. Within the format of a 'short guide' or contemporary reference source, its primary focus is, however, on describing the potential or documented human ethical implications of the pervasive global adoption of ICT. Some of the issues are quite serious.

*Cybersins* has been written from a North American perspective. This is demonstrated by references to 'cell phones' and entries about implications of the PROTECT Act (under 'typosquatting') and the Patriot Act that followed the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. Nonetheless, most issues have an obviously international scope. Some are ostensibly ethically neutral, being simple factual explanations of current technological phenomena – for example, encryption, file swapping, firewall, podcasting, RFID and spam. The neutrality of technology *per se* is asserted by the authors in their introduction and legitimately contrasted with 'the means by which new devices and methods are used' and the resultant value or threat. Even so, given that this is 'a book about technology and ethics', the reader may be predisposed to apply the lens of ethical scrutiny to all of these elements. The potential is certainly there.

The prevalence of technology and 'technospeak' in our cultures, lifestyles and language is sobering. Most of it has only emerged within the last 25 years. More significant than the language are the complex socio-economic ramifications of ICT. These continue to influence (and be shaped by) interpersonal dynamics in most of their forms. The sheer proliferation, convenience and benefits of technology can arguably dilute any inclination towards ethical reflection on its implications. However, as the authors have shown in this compilation – 'cyberbullying', 'disinhibition', 'hoaxes', 'identity theft' and 'keystroke logging' being just a select sample - the interplay between technology and people includes destructive social outcomes, the scale of which are potentially globalised instantly via the Web. Human psychology ('computer addiction'), esteem and social needs ('creating an identity in a chat room'), interpersonal dynamics ('absent presence'), aggression ('viruses and virus protection'), sexuality ('Internet pornography') and fraud ('phishing') are juxtaposed with instant communications ('technology and knowledge management'), education ('distance learning content sharing'), social change ('online protests'), visionary philanthropy (the '\$100.00 MIT laptop') and international commerce ('eBay'). One cannot legitimately adopt the stance of doomsayer or Luddite without also acknowledging the concurrent and multifaceted benefits of analogous applications.

This type of book is an important introductory-level contribution to ongoing debates about the human and ethical implications correlated with the use of technology. It is also an informative 'ready reference' for readers pursuing quick access to topical definitions. That it is a concise compilation may not appease 'purists' seeking far more rigorous explorations of demonstrated and potential ethical issues. There is certainly scope to deal far more closely with such implications than *Cybersins* permits. The spectrum of human consequences

flowing from new technology surely warrants serious attention in both popular and scholarly forums. However, these authors had different aspirations and have arguably achieved their purposes. The modern engagement with myriad technologies has definitely surpassed a 'dalliance' – these are entrenched behaviours and *modus operandi*. As the information and communication revolutions are extrapolated beyond the present moment, so too should be the ongoing appraisal of their impacts on our human family.

**Michael Cullen**

The University of Notre Dame Australia

## Local author impresses again

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***Managing Information Services: A Transformational Approach*. 2nd ed, by Jo Bryson. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006. 346 pp. £28.00. soft cover ISBN 13: 9780754646341**

This second edition of well-known and highly-regarded author Jo Bryson's (formerly from the NT, now with the WA Government) management handbook and textbook written to cover information services, librarianship, records management and information and communications technology, is very impressive. Bryson has achieved an excellent synthesis of current future-focused management thinking. She presents succinct summaries for a broad range of topics which are the foundations of management and leadership.

The 31 chapters are grouped under seven themes. These are: Managing in a Dynamic Environment; Planning and Managing for Transformation; Creating the Right Corporate Environment; Transforming the Corporate Environment; Managing Yourself and Others; Governance and Accountability; and Positioning to Excel in Service Delivery. Each chapter can be read as a stand-alone introduction to an individual topic such as financial management, conflict management or outsourcing. Throughout the whole book, there is a unifying focus on transforming organisations to reposition them for the future. Bryson is clear about the strategic influences which are affecting information services. One is that information and communication technologies (ICTs) are both drivers and enablers of change. Another idea is that a 'single point of contact philosophy' will lead to convergence of libraries with other cultural institutions.

There are many buzz words and phrases which must be understood for each topic, and these are clearly and succinctly explained. An example is the chapter on strategic planning, where there is an explanation of the place of scenario planning. This chapter not only explains the processes, but makes their value clear. Bryson also emphasises the human side. She shows an understanding of possible negative views and an appreciation of the importance of communicating to staff the value of the process and involving them in it. This awareness of the importance of the human aspects of management is evident throughout the book.

This is an excellent textbook. It provides a clear conceptual overview of each topic which can be supplemented by further reading. The liberal use of headings and subheadings makes it easy to navigate. There is also an index to complement the book's logical and transparent structure. It is highly recommended as an introduction to management and leadership for its intended audience of those in the information services area and is of value for the wider services sector.

**Julia Leong**

University of New England

## Technology explained

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***Library Technology Companion: A Basic Guide for Library Staff. 2nd ed, by John J. Burke. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2006. 239 pp. US\$59.95 239p soft cover ISBN 1555705502 (available from DA Information Services)***

Only a brave author sets out to write a guide for library staff on library technology, given the rapid changes in IT in libraries.

The book has 17 chapters presented in five parts, covering:

- library technology basics (history; how to find information about library technology, how to evaluate and buy it, and implementation issues)
- technology tools for libraries (computers, networks, software, storage devices, databases and electronic resources, search tools)
- how libraries use technology (for example, adaptive/assistive technologies; web sites and services; technologies for sharing information, teaching, and learning)

- building and maintaining the technology environment in libraries (for example security, troubleshooting, infrastructure, and ergonomics)
- library technology planning, and the future.

The content is descriptive – it tells the reader what the technology is and does, and how it is used in libraries. This is a textbook, with questions for review and selected sources of further information (with brief annotations) listed at the end of each chapter. It is illustrated occasionally with screenshots and diagrams. There is also a useful 22 page glossary of library technology terms, and an index.

Inevitably a book on this topic dates quickly – this one, published early in 2006, has content that is now at least two years old. For example, information on current preoccupations such as blogs, wikis and RSS is there, but is covered only sparsely. Most citations are from 2005 and 2004, and the book is augmented by a website listing updated resources and a blog on library technology topics (<http://techcompanion.blogspot.com/>).

Naturally the book has a North American focus. Australian readers will note the absence from the glossary and index of familiar terms such as ‘broadband’, ‘memory stick’ and ‘application service provider’. The description of what is described as the most common way to purchase technology (Request for Proposal and lowest bid) does not cover other methods used here in Australia (such as ‘panel’ purchasing, or tendering and the ‘value for money’ concept). Where the author writes about specific library organisations and library publications those listed are mostly North American. However, he has included some international directories and sources of information about libraries in countries other than the United States. Indeed, Chapter 2, on library technology information sources, covering types of sources, Internet sites, dictionaries and glossaries, how-to guides, product review sources, electronic discussion groups, email newsletters, and periodicals is one of the most useful sections of the book.

John Burke has compiled a useful guide – for now. It is basic, as the title states, but it is wide-ranging and would serve as a good teaching tool, as a practical introduction to the topic for library workers, and as a source of suggestions on where to look next for information about a piece of unfamiliar technology.

**Sherrey Quinn**

Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd

## EBL in action

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***Evidence-based Librarianship: Case Studies and Active Learning Exercises*, ed. by Elizabeth Connor. Chandos Information Professional Series. Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2007. 170 pp. £39.95 soft cover ISBN 1843342995**

'The main purpose of this book is to make evidence-based practice more accessible to entry-level, mid-career and experienced librarians alike.' So writes editor Elizabeth Connor in the preface. She explains that EBL, as it is often referred to, has relevance to practitioners and researchers, and points out that it can be a library's best defence against harmful decisions imposed from outside.

The preface is followed by an introduction by Jonathan Eldredge, and this is probably the most valuable part of the book. He traces EBL's development from its beginnings among health sciences librarians working within the evidence-based medicine movement in the early 1990s. A structured process combining rigorous research with a 'pragmatic perspective', it is still evolving and is the focus of much international interest. The method involves defining the question, searching for answers, appraising the evidence, and translating the results into a decision.

The eight chapters that follow demonstrate EBL in action, often with emphasis on different parts of the process and with a recognition that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' formula. Most of the chapters end with exercises designed by Elizabeth Connor, intended to stimulate critical thinking about the case under investigation. They are suitable for use by groups or individuals in either workplace or study settings.

My favourite chapter is 'What, So What, Now What', by Carla Brooks *et al.* Its snappy title perhaps over-simplifies EBL, and the authors frankly state that they did not set out to conform to the method but later realised that their study fitted the description. They found that library users at the University of Michigan-Dearborn were mostly satisfied with the library's resources, that faculty members provide impetus for students to use the library, that the website is a good tool for teaching about the library, and that research education classes are worthwhile. Future data collection will be designed to enable the library to identify and respond to changing needs. In 'Action Research in Information Literacy: A Case Study at the University of Parma', Monica Vezzosi describes research into students' information seeking and gathering, leading to improvements in information literacy (and lessened dependence on the ubiquitous Google).

Readers will find the chapters of varying interest, depending on their own situations and priorities. This is hardly a riveting book but, for anyone wishing to extend their understanding of EBL, it is worth a look.

**Barbara Frame**

Dunedin Public Libraries

## **Managing your own career: lifelong employability**

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***Rethinking Information Work: A Career Guide for Librarians and Other Information Professionals*, by G. Kim Dority. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 222 pp. US\$38.00 soft cover ISBN: 159158180X (available from DA Information Services)**

Those of us working in the education and training sectors have embraced the concept of lifelong learning. We are aware that the employees of tomorrow who are training today will, within a few years, be working at jobs which do not currently exist. In *Rethinking Information Work* Kim Dority has extended this concept to include lifelong employability for information workers. Ranging far beyond traditional librarianship, Dority introduces the reader to the broad range of options available and explains how the information workers of today can work towards the career they want in the future. Career competencies which she sees as essential to this outcome include a focus on solutions rather than obstacles, a willingness to look for opportunities, the ability to anticipate, to take risks, to reinvent ourselves and of course a commitment to continuous lifelong learning.

The contents are arranged to lead the reader logically through the process of finding out who you are and what you really want to do with your life. An assortment of self-assessment tools is discussed and their uses explained. The author goes on to explore careers available in the traditional library setting and in non-traditional settings including cultural institutions, media, business, the arts, journalism and research. The independent path of consultancies, freelance contract work and research is also covered. The reader is guided through the creation of a professional portfolio which is much more than a resumé, establishing a career, developing that career, thriving on change and positioning yourself to take charge of your own career.

Each chapter concludes with a list of relevant print and online resources which, although heavily biased towards North American publications and sites, still provide much that is useful and relevant throughout the world. Appendices on special interest groups and employment resources are similarly biased



but contain enough information for competent searchers to discover similar resources in Australia and New Zealand. The author has set up a companion website at <http://www.rethinkinginformationwork.com>, which updates and expands on the ideas found in the book. In addition a monthly column provides a forum to investigate specific topics in greater depth and information about workshops and training sessions.

As well as providing a valuable resource for library and information studies students and their teachers, this book is a rich source of information for anyone contemplating a career move or wanting to change jobs within their organisation. The self-assessment tools also allow the reader to evaluate their satisfaction with their current job and explore possibilities which they may not have previously considered.

**Helen Dunford**

TAFE Tasmania

## What's the library worth?

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***Measuring Your Library's Value: How to Do a Cost-Benefit Analysis for Your Public Library*, by Donald S. Elliott et al. Chicago: American Library Association, 2006. 181 pp. US\$55.00 (US\$49.50 ALA members) soft cover ISBN 13: 9780838909232**

Libraries are increasingly vulnerable institutions in the 21st century, and many public libraries are particular targets for financial administrators looking to 'save' money for allocation to more 'important' projects. Although this timely publication is American, the problem is worldwide, and cost-benefit analysis (CBA) is a tool which may be considered internationally. The basic problem is that libraries appear not to make a profit, and their philosophy of free access to information precludes more than a token attempt at income generation. Administrators and the public have little instinctive appreciation of non-tangible and delayed benefits, and a basic problem is whether quality and value can be measured. This book is the result of a 10-year project in developing and testing a methodology for quantifying the benefits which large and medium-sized libraries can use, both for improving their services and for demonstrating to community stakeholders that they do indeed add wealth to society.

Econometrics is a technique which is being used by the educational sector in Australia and elsewhere, a similar area where the concept of value is invisible. As the authors say,

The primary objective of your CBA study is to document that your library is a good investment of public funds. In simplest terms, you want your cost-benefit analysis to demonstrate that the value of benefits the community receives from library services is greater than the cost of providing those services.

This desirable result can, of course, only be achieved if your library truly is adding value, so that CBA may be a diagnostic tool as well as evidence of achievement. Following an introduction to CBA and reasons why libraries may decide on its appropriateness in particular cases, the authors detail the methods of identifying and sampling library users and preparing the survey instruments. Following from these are chapters on measuring library costs, and the return to taxpayer and donor investments. Importantly, a chapter deals with communicating the findings.

This book is well illustrated with examples, and the appendices contain information on how to conduct the CBA as well as the actual questions embedded in the web-based and telephone instruments used in their study. These are provided for both households and business; the former is somewhat daunting and asks for sensitive details such as income, which the latter does not. Another interesting point is that business respondents are promised a free gift as a token of appreciation, whereas household respondents are apparently satisfied by the assurance that their responses will help the library to serve the community well. Modifications will have to be made for Australian and New Zealand libraries, but the ultimate value of CBA is likely to be much more than the cost of buying the book. This publication is definitely a recommended investment, with the warning that valid statistical research is expensive.

**Edward Reid-Smith**

Charles Sturt University

## **Library procedures for the performing arts**

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***A Manual for the Performance Library*, by Russ Girsberger. Music Library Association (MLA) Basic Manual Series, 6. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006. 171 pp. price not reported soft cover ISBN 10: 0810858711 (available from James Bennett Pty Ltd)**

At first glance I thought this book was about 'high performance' libraries. However, it is about music libraries, and specifically 'performance libraries', which are repositories and distribution centres

for music scores and parts used by performing musicians and ensembles. Such libraries support many types of musical groups, including symphony orchestras, opera companies, ballet companies, wind ensembles and bands, choruses, chamber ensembles, and jazz and popular music combos.

So, 'performance librarians manage music collections and distribute the music scores and parts used by individuals and ensembles in performance.' They work closely with performers, conductors and administrators.

This book is written to assist librarians, volunteers and students in operating a performance library. Chapter 1 sets out the background – education and training, qualifications, and job responsibilities. Next come chapters dealing in turn with acquisitions, cataloguing, processing, part preparation (preparing music for a performing ensemble), distribution of music to performance participants, and other duties and challenges such as audition lists, concert programmes and preservation. The author's approach is practical, and advice is presented in a straightforward, readable manner.

The end matter (appendix, glossary, and bibliography) comprises a quarter of the book. Helpful information in the appendix includes: examples of cataloguing forms, performance records and music sign-out sheets; lists of musical forms and subject categories (that is, brief controlled vocabularies) and useful library supplies and equipment. The 19 page bibliography lists standard works, reference tools and further reading. Its chapter-by-chapter arrangement, with references categorised according to type of information, makes it very easy to identify works on a specific topic or function. A good, detailed index is provided.

This book has a methodical approach, logical arrangement and is well-illustrated with examples and diagrams. It sets out clear, practical guidance for the operation of a performance library. I highly recommend it to music librarians, and as an example of a clear, well-presented manual.

**Sherrey Quinn**

Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd

## Academic library leadership

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***Making a Difference: Leadership and Academic Libraries*, edited by Peter Heron and Nancy Rossiter. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2007. 300p £25.99 soft cover ISBN 1591582911 (available from James Bennett Pty Ltd)**

*Making a difference: leadership and academic libraries* explores a range of issues and topics on library leadership in universities and is aimed at library managers and academic librarians. The book is divided into eight chapters, each by a different author and covering various aspects of leadership in libraries, including team effectiveness, effective and ineffective leadership modelling theories and assessing leadership skills.

Chapter 8 describes the views of leadership from eight respected library directors from academic libraries, including Steven Bell (Philadelphia University) and Rush G. Miller (Pittsburgh University). Each library director was asked the same four questions about how management keeps in touch with the pulse of the institution and techniques to remain focused on important matters. Comparing the answers from different directors is interesting and thought provoking, and, despite the different responses, there are certain recurring issues such as strategic planning, communication among libraries, management of staff, library involvement in university life through committees and meetings, and creating 'departmental liaisons'.

Chapter 11 describes Gen-Xers (born 1965 to 1979) and Millennials (born 1980 to 1999) and discusses generational perceptions of leadership attributes. This is a field of interest to many, judging by recent papers on the topic (including one presented by Kate Davis at the ALIA New Librarian's Symposium in December 2006 on 'Millennials as managers'). The problems with ineffective leadership are discussed by Donald Riggs in Chapter 13, where he lists attributes of vision, planning, courage, fund raising and agenda setting as elements of effective leadership.

Aimed as a companion book to *The next library leadership*, overall this is an excellent reference book for library managers and managers of the future. It is full of interesting information, discussions, data from surveys, along with helpful charts and self-assessment exercises on leadership. References to recent literature are useful, especially the review of available literature on library information studies in Chapter 6 by Peter Heron.

I would recommend this book when managers are seeking particular information on topics of leadership and when preparing for job interviews at senior level. In addition this volume is helpful for library managers when planning and setting short- and long-range goals. Overall this is a practical addition to the field of leadership in libraries.

**Kay Neville**

TAFE NSW

## **Persistent book chalks up another 60 years**

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***Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia, 1946–2005*, ed. by Craig Munro and Robin Sheahan-Bright. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2006. 433 pp. A\$45.00 soft cover ISBN 0702235733**

This final volume brings the story of our book industry to the present time (the first, edited by Kirsop and Webby, covered up to 1890; the second, edited by Lyons and Arnold, dealt with 1891–1945), and a wide-ranging volume it is too: it charts the movement to replace an essentially colonial system with a national industry.

The book is presented in 12 chapters, grouped into the three major areas of 'The Rise of Publishing', 'Book Business', and 'Reaching Readers'. The chapters themselves broadly cover topics such as 'Sixties Larrikins', 'The Retail Book Trade' and 'Readers and Reading', and each consists of an introductory essay followed by several case studies. The case studies are papers mainly by single authors illustrating the themes of the chapters. There are 69 in all, offering a feast for both avid cover-to-cover readers and picky choosers; however, such diversity means that there is no linear reading, but rather that themes are attacked from various directions. Certainly this leaves gaps in coverage (for example, few DIY publishers other than major independent publishers are mentioned, and grey literature must await special treatment), but there can be little serious criticism of such a book which leaves the reader wanting more!

To help fill the gaps there is a useful 17-page section of Further Reading (which includes 24 theses on the book trade), and a comprehensive index which is a particularly handy tool for locating those single mentions of a name or subject. There is a section of photographs (chiefly of people but including logos and book covers), which have some interest in themselves but which are not directly linked to the text. Of greater value is a page noting the location of 43 archival collections in university archives and various libraries — but nothing

for the national and state archives, where records of government printing and publishing are likely to be outside the period covered.

Inevitably, the papers generally deal with historical aspects of the book industry, but Richard Walsh's Chapter 5 ('Bookfutures') has introduced the topic of electronic publishing which is expanded by three case studies ('Content Streaming' by Simone Murray, 'Publishers On-Line' by Anne Galligan and 'Copyright and Electronic Text' by Leanne Wiseman). Papers in other chapters deal either with individual works (e.g., Paul Eggert on 'Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang*'), or wider phenomena (e.g., Alan Bundy on 'Public Libraries — Books, Bytes, Buildings, Brains'). This work, together with its two companion volumes, is likely to remain a source of information and pleasure for many years to come. For libraries and others expecting heavy use, there is a hardback edition – either is good value!

**Edward Reid-Smith**

Charles Sturt University

## **Managing your own career: employability plus**

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***Mid-Career Success Guide: Planning for the Second Half of Your Working Life*, by Sally J. Power. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2006. 200 pp. US\$68.50 hard cover ISBN 13: 9780275988012 (available from DA Information Services)**

The working landscape is very different from what it was in the past. Job insecurity and career changes are commonplace. So what can be done in the middle of one's working life to ensure enjoyment of the second half? Power, a researcher in management and career development, presents this guide with strategies to deal with job stress and insecurity and to give the reader a positive direction for the working future.

Power introduces her Employability Plus model, which is how individuals will achieve this outcome. She prefaces her model with an overview of how the employment landscape has changed, including the dynamics, economics and trends of employment in past years and how they have affected today's working environment. She then explores her model's four success strategies.

'Articulating a personalised work focus' aims at helping the individual to ascertain specific interests, find employers that have enjoyable work and identify the skills, knowledge and experience needed to do the job well. 'Learning about the near future of your work in the multiple-employer environment' is about

conducting research on where the work of particular interest is going in future years, the aim being to match the development of skills with the future of the work. 'Taking action to shape your career' is about taking steps to bring the first two strategies to fruition. This involves targeted networking, skill and knowledge development and personal management. 'Managing your career cycle' is about adjusting work priorities and directions in line with other life priorities – a cycle of continuing adjustment. Power concludes with 'Changing the deal' – how individuals can change the situation in which they find themselves in order to make the most of it for the future. The appendices include career development resources (the most important being the library and reference staff) and recommended reading.

Although aimed at white-collar workers in general, there is much for library staff to take away from this. Whilst I am not anticipating a job change, this book has helped me to focus on my interests and how to develop myself professionally for future opportunities. For anyone who is assessing where they are in their career, or is helping others who are, this is a very informative and useful tool to help determine what one wants in a career and then help take the steps needed to get there.

**Michelle McLean**

Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation

## Tips for managing change

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***Change Management in Information Services*. 2nd ed, by Lyndon Pugh. Guildford: Ashgate Publishing, 2007. 230 pp. £55.00 hard cover ISBN 9780754646655**

Any doubts about the need for another book on change management were quickly dispelled as I savoured this excellent work. Pugh presents thoughtful arguments for an organisation-wide change approach. The text is enlivened by realism, pertinent examples and several case studies. Pugh is able to present the range of topics relevant to change management succinctly, clearly and with depth. Beware, though, the conscience pricks for those whose adherence to good practice is rhetorical rather than substantial.

Growth in the use of technologies such as Web 2.0 and Library 2.0 is seen by Pugh as positive, as these create the potential for dynamic change in information services through increased diversity and personalisation. Dealing with the unpredictable environment requires appropriate organisational forms. Pugh builds a case for flexible organisations with devolved team-based

management. Unlike a number of authors who refer briefly to the characteristics of bureaucracy, dismiss it and move on to alternatives, Pugh recognises the reality of the tenacity of bureaucracies and offers a thorough and balanced discussion. He argues that the use of projects will not build long-term organisational capacity for proactive change management.

As the author works through different topics, he presents useful summaries of change theories, change models, leadership models, change psychology and skills appropriate for dealing with people in change. He advocates a type of leadership that is a mixture of conventional, transactional, transformational, visionary and charismatic approaches. There is a commendable grappling with what may facilitate successful development of change-ready organisations. Placing change management at the heart of organisational strategy is one key provided.

Pugh argues that core processes should be established for renewal and learning. The implementation stage of change management is identified as a common point of failure. The crucial lesson is that the objective at this stage 'is not to sell the solution, but to sell the problem while offering staff a partnership in creating the answer'. The contribution of teams is discussed in an excellent chapter. Pugh's description of 'unempowered teams' as an oxymoron goes to the heart of the issue. An extensive bibliography and an index are provided.

Each chapter offers a brief and sound overview of substantial topics. These are woven together with well-reasoned arguments in favour of imbuing the organisation with approaches which will enhance flexibility and change resilience. The characteristics of such organisations are clearly specified. This is an excellent book which should be widely read by leaders and students of information services.

**Julia Leong**

University of New England

## **Effective finding**

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***Making Search Work: Implementing Web, Intranet and Enterprise Search.***

**By Martin White. London: Facet Publishing, 2007. 172 pp. £39.95 hard cover ISBN 1856046028 (available from James Bennett Pty Ltd)**

*Making Search Work* covers a range of issues and topics on selecting and optimising commercial search software and assisting managers to understand and implement content management solutions. Most commercial and



government websites contain a search button, yet how this actually works to retrieve information is a mystery to most people. The effectiveness of the search capabilities depends on a number of factors that are often not understood by the decision-makers in the organisation. Challenges include security, usability and scalability. The book is aimed at knowledge managers, website owners, search managers, information specialists and everyone interested in 'search' as a discipline. The volume is written by Martin White, an information scientist with over 30 years' experience. White is an expert on techniques for managing information and is currently Managing Director of Intranet Focus, a company that specialises in selection of content management and intranet strategy development, in addition to academic roles as Visiting Professor at the University of Sheffield.

White has covered topics such as optimising search performance, search usability and selecting a search engine. He has explained how 'search' works by revising concepts like indexing, taxonomy management, text mining, ranking and relevance to assist managers in decision-making. The book is divided into two sections, the first focusing on themes such as selecting a search engine, search performance and usability. The second section includes desktop searches, enterprise searches, and outlines a simple programme to implement an effective web search. The 10-step programme to implement intranet search considers technical options, benefits to employees, through to writing a project plan, testing software, selecting a vendor and installing and testing usability to optimise performance. The appendix lists nearly 40 search vendors from around the world, including well-known companies like Google and IBM. The volume includes a short glossary of terms – some familiar ('algorithms', 'metadata') along with the unfamiliar such as 'lemmatization'. In addition, there is a subject index and a company index.

White has written a current and concise book that uses simple terminology to explain difficult concepts in such a way that the layperson or manager lacking specialised IT knowledge can readily understand. This book explores the issues concerning searching on desktop, website and on an enterprise basis, and the concerns that can arise such as exposing confidential documents during routine in-house searches. Organisations need easy-to-use search engines that retrieve the relevant information from within their companies to prevent employees recreating or 'regenerating' documents that already exist, in addition to allowing them to make informed decisions. Employees require effective search techniques, yet these are useless if the information has been poorly managed or lacks indexing or metadata.

Overall this is a practical addition to the new discipline of 'search'. I would recommend this book when managers are making decisions on selecting search engines and seeking information on techniques to maximise effective information retrieval in companies using search buttons. This book is well laid out and easy to read and provides useful, non-technical information to assist information managers in selecting an appropriate search software vendor that will meet the needs of the organisation.

**Kay Neville**

TAFE New South Wales

## Where we came from

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***Uniting a Profession: The Australian Institute of Librarians, 1937–1949*, by Jean P Whyte and David J Jones. Canberra: Australian Library and Information Association, 2007. 279pp. \$42.50 soft cover ISBN 978086045658**

Launched on 27 September 2007, this new publication from the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) traces the quite sensational history of the formation of our national association. Celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2007, ALIA was first established as the Australian Institute of Librarians.

Professor Jean Primrose Whyte, 1923–2003, was arguably one of Australia's most forceful and committed library educators. For many years she toiled on a history of the association, collecting papers, making notes and sketching chapter outlines, stopping only when her body could no longer carry her spirit. Fortunately, Dr David Jones was persuaded to carry on from where Jean left off, and he has done a magnificent job of completing what Jean began. Jean's executor, Dr Brian McMullin, is also acknowledged for his assistance and dedication to the book's production.

It is a riveting read. Anyone who thought librarians were meek and mild will be amazed at the stories of robust debate, sectoral and state-based competition and personal rivalries. It covers many dramatic events which reveal the characters and commitment of true library leaders – like John Metcalf.

Most of the themes that run through the book, such as the status of librarians, professional education, resource sharing and cooperation, remain as core issues today. The insights from both authors help us understand how the profession's approaches to these topics have evolved from our underlying

values of equity of access, support for clients and a fixation on improving service delivery.

The insights of both authors are remarkable – particularly as both have also contributed to the debates in the association for many years.

The book covers the period 1937–1949, to the formation of the Library Association of Australia. It contains a comprehensive index and marvellous appendices, including short biographies of the major characters (over 120), information about office bearers and statistics.

The passion, the disagreements and the sense of commitment from those involved leap off the pages. The fluctuating views of each state, of sectors and individuals provide a rich landscape for the development of the professional association. Outrageous competition and self interest are well, but fairly, painted. A ‘bodice ripper’ indeed. I encourage everyone to read this volume, whether library professional or layperson.

On a final note, ALIA encourages anyone (or any groups of individuals) with an interest in preparing the next volume in this history to contact the Executive Director!

**Roxanne Missingham**

Parliamentary Library  
Parliament of Australia

## Guidelines for authors

*The Australian Library Journal* welcomes contributions documenting developments in research and professional practice as well as more general articles on issues relevant to librarians and libraries.

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

Preferred length is 3000–5000 words, and the preferred format for submission is an MS Word attachment to an email sent to the Editor at:

ian.mccallum@alianet.alia.org.au

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

All submissions will be acknowledged, and when accepted will be the subject of a formal shared agreement on copyright with ALIA.

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.

Reference style should follow the *ALJ*'s current practice.

Contributions are equally welcome from established and beginning authors.

Forthcoming ALIA publication

# *Uniting a profession*

The Australian  
Institute of  
Librarians  
1937-1949

ALIA is proud to announce the publication of this fascinating history by two of Australia's most eminent librarians, Jean P Whyte and David J Jones. More than a corporate biography, it meticulously chronicles the development, events and successes of an Institute that began modestly but led to an association which, 70 years on, has international stature.

The work also reveals the stories behind librarians and libraries during critical years of progress and development in Australia.

The ALIA website will provide purchasing details when the book is released later this year. ISBN 978-0-86804-565-8

