Digital Library Technology '98 - Transforming Library Services – Digital Information Strategies, Systems and Solutions for the Library of the Future[1]

Have you wondered what the role of libraries and librarians will be in the 21st century when the whole world is networked? Are you concerned about whether libraries will continue to exist and if so what the role of the librarian will be? The Digital Library Technology Conference held in Sydney in June this year partially addressed these concerns, but, more importantly, confirmed that the libraries which are developing and successful, are part of the information industry and are not wedded to maintaining a traditional library service The most important message was that libraries must focus on the developments in information technology and match these to the information needs of their clients, delivering quality service, which will make their organisations successful and competitive.

Overall three themes emerged:

- we are not all equally well prepared for the digital present let alone the digital future, in fact many organizations are not networked or able to access the Internet;
- a strong partnership with our IT colleagues is essential in order to deliver any services to our clients; and
- it will take a lot of work, skill development and assessment to ensure that libraries are able to make the transition to effective information service in the 21st century.

Tony Barry introduced the conference, describing the evolution from print to electronic media in terms of

[1] This is an edited version of a report Roxanne Missingham posted to the FLIN discussion list on 29 June 1998

opportunities for libraries He mentioned initiatives in building digital libraries developed mostly by the researchers we seek to serve

Wendy Pang then opened the 2 days of discussion by describing the evolution of the ABARE/Department of Primary Industries and Energy Library from a traditional library to one serving clients directly at their desktops utilising desktop databases and e-journal access, self checkout and interactive services The four areas Wendy identified as still requiring library intervention were cataloguing, journal routing and loan, interlibrary loans and the co-ordination of purchasing A key to the success of the library was the link with IT, a strong relationship with the technologist and knowledge of client needs.

Lyn Bosanquet, GEAC, addressed the issue of library system acquisition She pleaded for libraries to make library system vendors their partners rather than expecting to buy 'off the shelf' The paper gave a general overview of system acquisition issues, rather than providing a checklist of selection criteria or a project management guide

Margaret Hyland was one of the highlights of the conference She spoke convincingly and enthusiastically of the need to redefine the catalogue to provide pathways to knowledge, both printed and electronic Seamless, efficient access to information emerged as the theme She stressed the essential role of quality records of electronic information for location and retrieval

Peter Keenan, Australian Business Limited librarian, provided a detailed paper outlining how to assess whether material should be purchased in electronic or print forms He provided a case study of ABL legal subscriptions.

Roxanne Missinghan spoke on evaluating and delivering Internet journals and resources, including the actual criteria which should be considered in evaluation, the mechanisms for delivery, metadata and Information Portals.

Gayle Davies was another highlight of the conference. The New South Wales DPP is one of 20 ABN customers still receiving cards as they do not have an automated system. The technological environment within the organisation requires major change and is a significant limiting factor for any attempt to move to digital library initiatives. Gayle argued that the skills and knowledge of librarians are essential for all information projects. She called on librarians to actively promote rather than apologise for their skills. In conclusion she argued that librarians need confidence in the skills they already have and need to be flexible to develop new skills in order to move ahead.

One commentator recently argued that because libraries have progressively accessed and implemented online initiatives over the past 25 years, without sudden change, the services and skills of digital librarians have not been well recognised [2] At times we have all been challenged by those who claim either that libraries are anachronistic unchanging organisations, out of touch with new technology or that they are irrelevant in a networked world. This conference provided much food for thought and demonstrated that libraries have been changing steadily and have been successfully implementing new virtual connections for our clients where this is technically possible, and thereby challenging the boundaries of traditional information services

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Information Online and On Disc 99

Information Online and On Disc 99, the Ninth Australasian Conference and Exhibition, will be held at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre from 19-21 January 1999.

Keynote speakers will include:

Marydee Ojala, Editor of DATABASE: the Magazine of Electronic Research and Resources. Ms Ojala will

give her views on how information retrieval will be replaced with knowledge creation in the 21st century. "Information professionals – those who understand the relationship of data to knowledge, of quality information, of data structure, and of human thought patterns – will be solving problems, not answering questions."

Lynne Brindley, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and University Librarian, University of Leeds. Lynne Brindley will take part in the 'Digital Libraries Forum' to talk about the creation of a hybrid library. She will provide an assessment of the first two phases of the JISC Electronic Libraries Program and the major projects funded under phase three of the program, including digital preservation work, a range of distributed resource discovery projects and integrative hybrid library projects

Anne Lipow, founder and Director of Library Solutions Institute and Press (US). Anne Lipow's keynote address will look at why circulation and the use of reference services decline as Internet use goes up "Unless reference librarians reorganise their work to be available to the remote user, not only will they become extinct, but the wealth of print resources stored by libraries for use in libraries, will go unused, thus threatening the very role of the library itself."

Peter Lyman, Professor, School of Information Management & Systems, University of California, Berkeley. Peter Lyman will participate in the 'Digital Libraries Forum' and will explore the nature of digital libraries as social institutions, and suggest an agenda for action for librarians and information science "Can cyberspace evoke a sense of place, one capable of supporting a sense of intellectual community?"

Neil McLean, University Librarian, Macquarie University. Neil McLean will take delegates into the future where new business models in information distribution and alternatives to information supply by libraries emerge

Over the three days of *Information Online and On Disc 99* delegates can attend a number of different conference streams including: globalisation and electronic communities; search engines; standards; strategic alliances; knowledge management; document

[2] Crawford, W "The dangers of the digital library" *Electronic Library* 16 (1) 1998 pp 28-30.

delivery; future trends; consortia; disk technology; education; social and cultural impacts; academic libraries; and subject focus sessions on business/ competitive intelligence, business, gateways/ interfaces.

An Internet Lounge will be open from 8.00am to 6.00pm each day, featuring celebrity surfers at midday and Hints & Tips sessions including: rtf to html; Cookies and Shopping Carts; Finding People; Managing Bookmarks; Graphics and Metadata.

In addition, the *Information Online and On Disc 99 Exhibition* will comprise more than 100 companies showing the latest in technology and other products to assist information professionals. A new feature in 1999 is The Millennium Web Challenge – Building Sustainable Web-based Services. This special, by invitation only, section of the exhibition, will showcase projects addressing this challenge, including resource creations, description, discovery and archiving; user interface and support issues; underlying tools and architectures

On Friday 22 January the following satellite events will be held:

- **EMBASE** – a full day seminar on this database of pharmacology and clinical medicine;
- **International Business Information** – Pre-Millennium business searching. This seminar puts international business information retrieval into perspective, stressing the practical aspects of accessing worldwide business information;
- **Internet Clinic** – Hear experts from libraries and information services speak on: getting the most out of your browser; selecting of search engines; the best reference sites for your subject; the use of alternative reference sources; keeping track of Internet trends; and
- **Power Searching Using Web Search Engines** – a half day seminar exploring advanced techniques for getting the most out of Web search engines

For further information contact Wael Foda,
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Website: www.csu.edu.au/special/online

8th Asia Pacific Specials, Health and Law Librarians' Conference

Strait to the Future
http://www.alia.org.au/conferences/strait

Monthly planning meetings continue to be held with the Conference organiser, MURES. Contact is also being maintained with the Conference Convenors of the Australian Society of Indexers, who have planned their conference to follow on from the Specials Conference.

The preferred keynote speakers have been identified after consideration of the abstracts received, and formal invitations are being sent to them. The Speakers Program sub-committee has also been exploring the options for providing innovative sessions, in conjunction with professional facilitators, utilising open space technology. These sessions will provide delegates with the opportunity to be actively involved in developing the themes and issues for discussion

The brochures for Trade Exhibitors have been produced and are being made available. If there is any organisation that members feel may wish to be involved in the Conference as an exhibitor, please contact Merrilyn Evans, Family Law Court, 03 62321779.

LBC Information Services' UK Conference Scholarship 1998[3]

Congratulations to **Ruth Bird**, Law Librarian at the University of Melbourne, who has received the LBC Information Services' UK Conference Scholarship for 1998. Ruth attended the AALL/BIALL/CALL Joint Study Institute in Cambridge and the Annual BIALL Conference and Exhibition in Portsmouth during September.

The Joint Study Institute, which was held for the first time this year, was originally mooted in 1995 when representatives of the American Association of Law

3 Much of this information is taken from the following article: Hart D R 'Joint study institute' *The Law Librarian* 29 (1) Mar 1988 pp 47-48

Libraries (AALL), the British and Irish Association of Law Libraries, and the Canadian Association of Law Libraries (CALL) met at the CALL conference and discussed the potential for closer contacts between the three associations.

It was agreed that the Joint Study Institutes (JSIs) would be held biennially, with the venue rotating between the three Associations. The topics for the programme of each JSI would be drawn from policy, research, substance or practice of law librarianship in the host country."[4] "One of the early working documents defined the purpose of the JSI as *to provide a focus through an educational event for members of the three associations to meet in one country and for the guests to learn about the law and legal information provision in the host country.* This provided the rationale for the programme which progresses from surveys of legal systems and law in the British Isles to some of the current issues in law librarianship."[5] The 1998 programme includes:

- **Professor Brian Cheffins** (University of Cambridge) will deliver the keynote address on the fragmentation and renewal of the common law tradition;
- **Professor Hector MacQueen** (University of Edinburgh) will consider Scots law on the threshold of a new century;
- **Gerard Hogan** (Trinity College, Dublin) will examine the ways in which Irish law has been affected by membership of the European Communities;
- Constitutional issues affecting the United Kingdom, including devolution, the Northern Ireland peace process, and reform of the House of Lords, will be the subject of the paper **by Professor Sir David Williams** (University of Cambridge);
- **Professor Robert Lee** (University of Wales, Cardiff) will raise the challenges facing legal education in Britain and Ireland;
- **Peter Clinch** (University of Wales, Cardiff) and **Shona McTavish** (University of Northumbria at Newcastle) will survey the state of academic law libraries and law firm libraries respectively;
- **Neil Cameron** (Legal Technology Consulting) will consider the implications of legal publishing on the Internet;

- **Sarah Thomas** (Butterworths) will focus upon legal publishing in a world-wide context;
- A panel comprising **Allan Gomersall** (British Library), **Barbara Tearle** (University of Oxford), **David Wills** (University of Cambridge) and **Jules Winterton** (Institute of Advanced Legal Studies) will lead a discussion on the way forward for national legal collections; and
- **Suzan Hebditch** (CALL), **Jim Heller** (AALL), **Loyita Worley** (BIALL) and other spokespersons, including Ruth Bird representing the ALLG, will review the potential for further international co-operation between law library associations.

Web Site: http://www.dundee.ac.uk/lawlibrary/jsi/

The Court Library Standards Project

The Australian Institute of Judicial Administration (AIJA) recently published a booklet entitled *Australian Court Libraries Guideline for Appellate Courts*.[6] The publication is the result of the work of a working group of court librarians convened by Wendy Ryan, Librarian of the Supreme Court of Western Australia.

The terms of reference for the project were as follows:[7]

This project is intended to establish and publish standards for Australian court libraries. By 'standards' we have in mind the ordinary meaning of the term that is, an approved model or something taken by consent as a basis of comparison (Macquarie Dictionary, 2nd ed p.1704). The development of these standards is not predicated on the basis of any assumption as to the adequacy or otherwise of the current collections held by any court libraries, and is intended to:

- Establish and publish Australian court library standards for each of the following categories:
  - Appellate courts;
  - Federal court and tribunal networks;
  - Intermediate courts;

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[4] Id at 47
[5] Ibid.
[6] *Australian Court Libraries Guidelines for Appellate Courts* Carlton South, Vic. AIJA 1998 (ISBN 1875527214)
[7] Id at pp 8-10

- Lower courts;
- Specialist courts and tribunals
- Encourage judges, court administrators and court librarians to plan together to ensure that court libraries in Australia meet the needs of the courts now and in the future
- Obtain official recognition of the standards
- Publish and disseminate the standards
- Encourage and support the implementation of the standards
- Review the standards regularly.

The draft appellate court guidelines cover the following areas:

Governance

Examines the line of command, reporting structures, planning, the role of the court librarian, delegations and the library's relationship with other libraries and the profession of librarianship

Budget

Suggests that the budget be linked to the strategic plan and be prepared by the Court Librarian Revenue raised from library initiatives must be returned to the library services.

Personnel

Outlines the desired qualifications for Court Librarians. Suggests branch libraries in capital cities be staffed by professionally qualified librarians Outlines staffing structures and levels, suggesting classification levels be at least the same as public service professional classification levels

Physical plant and facilities

Examines issues relating to environment, offices/workrooms, furniture and equipment, shelving, aisle clearance, conference areas, photocopies and electrical outlets for computer use, security, rare and fragile material, stack storage and signage

Information/reader services

Considers the formulation and communication of policies, hours of access, induction programmes, current awareness services, availability of trained staff and the provision of training to library users.

Technical services

Focuses on acquisitions and cataloguing Suggests the use of written collection development policies from which the Court Librarian can acquire materials. Suggests that the chamber collection policy provide for remote access to electronic data such as compact discs

Collection

Outlines minimum collection standards for the following categories of material – Australasian primary, secondary and reference materials; other common law jurisdictions (England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada and United States) and other countries/international In relation to format of material, "there should be a hard copy version of any title or particular volume required for Court use or by 3 or more readers on site in any one day on a regular basis."[8] In relation to duplication, "series and titles cited in 50 per cent of all lists of authorities should be duplicated in sufficient copies to allow 1 copy for each Judge on an appellate bench."[9]

While this publication focuses on appellate courts, that is the High Court, Courts of Appeal and state Supreme Courts, some work has been done on standards for Federal Court libraries and, to a lesser extent, intermediate courts Standards for specialist courts and tribunals have also been contemplated

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[8] Id at p 28
[9] Ibid