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Information Outlook, April 2007

Special Libraries Association

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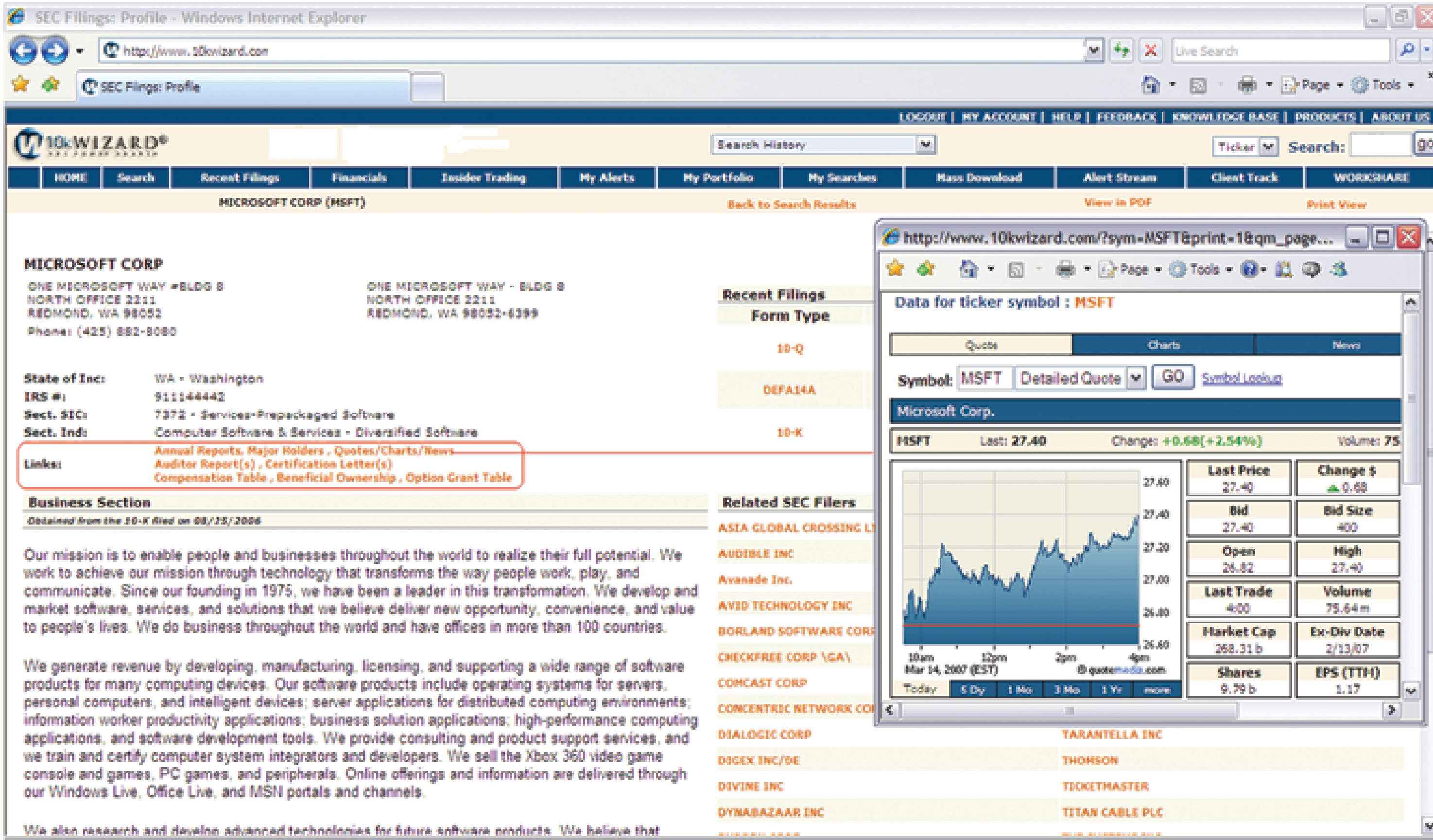

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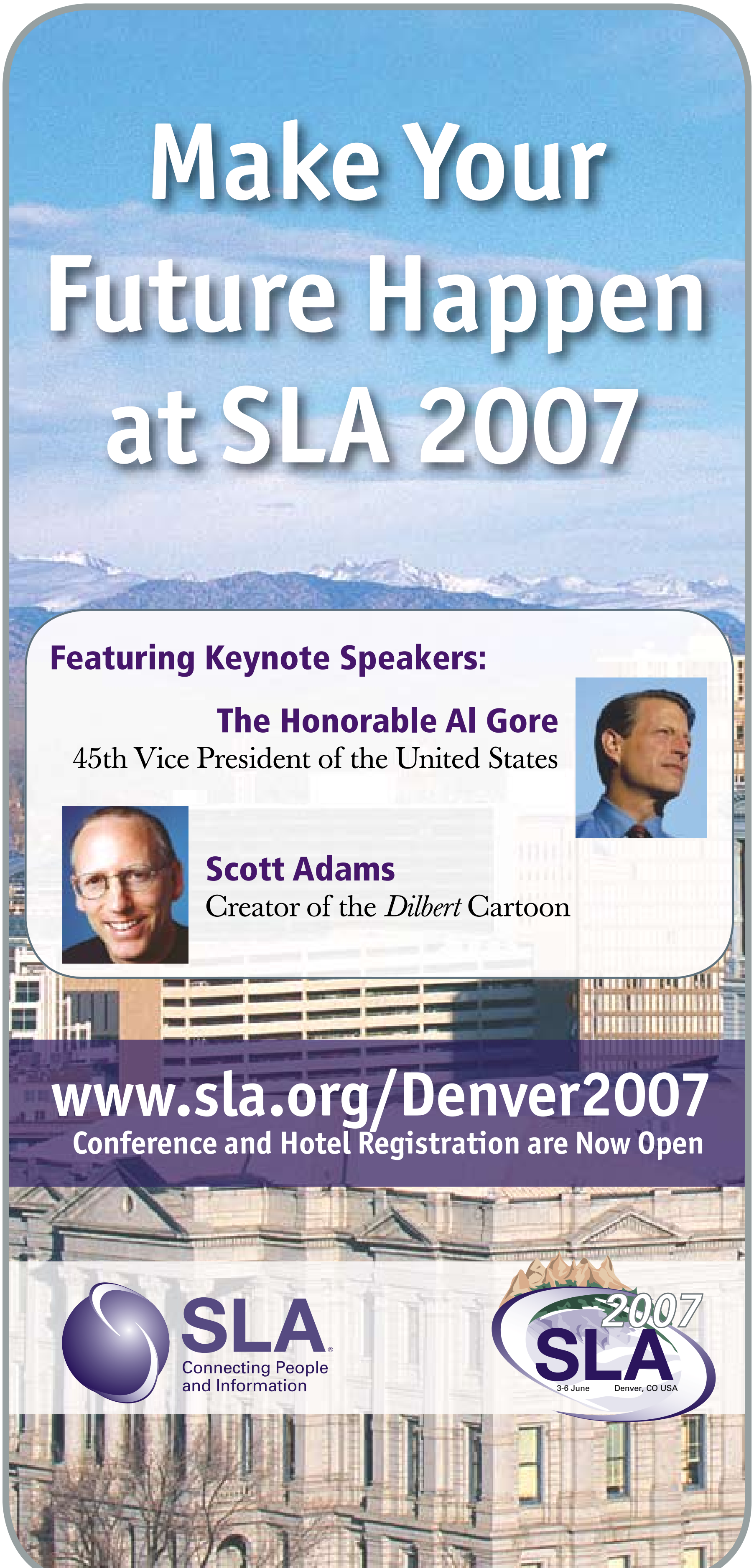
Focus: Quality Management



information outlook

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SLA
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SLA Annual Conference in Denver Offers New Programs, Top Speakers

Hot-topic seminars will get you up to speed on wikis, RSS feeds, and other ways to get and distribute information.

BY JANICE R. LACHANCE, SLA CEO

The 2007 Annual Conference and INFO EXPO in Denver are only two months away. This premier industry event provides information and library professionals with valuable, up-to-the-minute information on issues, practices, and products important to you.

For those of you who are new to the Association or may have been a member for some time but have never attended one of our conferences, I strongly encourage you to do so. Not only is it an exciting and enjoyable way to meet and network with many of your colleagues from around the globe, it is an outstanding way to enhance your professional growth and development.

This year's conference is shaping up as one of the best for members interested in continuing education and certificate programs. For the first time at an Annual Conference, Click U Live! is offering three classes that count toward the Competitive Intelligence Certificates Program. The certificates program, which was announced in November, consists of three levels of curriculum from which information professionals may choose classes depending upon their function inside their respective organizations.

The CI program is excellent for experienced CI professionals, as well as for information science and library professionals who want to enhance their knowledge of CI for their current position or would like to transition to a full-time CI position in another organization. One SLA member who had been unemployed for about five months reported being hired for a new position after taking the course.

A Conference First

Also, for the first time at this year's conference, members will be able to take the Certified Content Rights Manager (CCRM) course developed by the Software and Information Industry Association with significant input from SLA members. The course, which is appropriate for all information professionals who purchase and manage copyrighted content, is offered to SLA members at a discounted price. Those who have taken the course already say they are impressed with it. The CCRM course is designed to explain the intricacies of developing a content rights management plan, understanding content licensing and copyright law, and disseminating content properly throughout organizations of all sizes.

Continuing education will again play an important role in this year's Annual Conference. Members can choose from a wide selection of Click U Live! courses on Saturday, June 2, and Sunday, June 3. These courses run the gamut from "How to Set Up a Research Trends Analysis Program" to "Planning Promotion and Launch Campaigns" and from "The Effect of Paid R&D Information Tools on Research Success" to "Podcasting 101: Leveraging Podcasting in Your Special Library." In addition to these programs, the Divisions also will be offering courses related to their areas of focus and expertise. Even though these courses may be of particular interest to Division members with highly technical interests, the sessions often have broad appeal to other members as well.

Members who regularly attend the Annual Conference will tell you the "Hot Topics" seminars are usually some of the most anticipated and well-attended events at the conference. Issues of particular immediacy and importance to the profession are discussed in a lively format that is both entertaining and informative. Some of the high-profile subjects discussed in the past have included copyright issues in the digital age and the use and impact of RSS feeds and wikis. And you can be sure this year's seminars also are likely to be standing-room-only events.

And speaking of high profile and hot topics, SLA is honored this year to have former U.S. Vice President Al Gore as our keynote speaker. Vice President Gore, whose film *An Inconvenient Truth* about global warming recently won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature, will address conference participants on Sunday, June 3, during the LexisNexis-sponsored Opening General Session. During his time in public life, Vice President Gore has consistently championed the collection and use of reliable information and data to address cutting edge issues concerning the environment and technology development. Without question, his appearance will be a highlight of the conference and his address should be very thought provoking.

Wherever your professional interests may lie, you are going to find something to engage your mind and excite your curiosity at the Annual Conference. Many people, both volunteers and your professional staff, are involved in developing the conference program. And every single one of them shares the desire to make the conference as valuable and worthwhile to you as they can. I hope you will make every effort to join us in Denver. **SLA**

Info File

Writing for Information Outlook
Information Outlook welcomes queries from authors about articles of interest to information professionals. For writer's guidelines and a current editorial calendar, see www.sla.org/content/Shop/Information/writingforio/index.cfm or write to editor@sla.org. Please allow six to eight weeks for acceptance.

Letters to the Editor
Comments on articles or opinions on any topic of interest to information professionals may be submitted as letters to the editor. They should be sent to editor@sla.org, with a subject line of "Letter to Editor." All letters should include the following: writer's name, SLA volunteer title (if applicable), city and state, and phone number. (We won't publish the phone number; but we may wish to call for verification.) Letters may be edited for brevity or clarity—or to conform to the publication's style. Letter writers will have an opportunity to approve extensive editing prior to publication.

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To update your address or other account information, to join SLA, or to renew your membership, go to www.sla.org/content/membership/index.cfm and select the appropriate item from the menu in the left column.

SLA Board Candidates Announced; New Terms Begin in January 2008

Updates on the information professional and SLA.

The 2008 SLA Nominating Committee has selected candidates for the Board of Directors. Under bylaw revisions, the term will begin in January.

Candidates will speak at the annual conference in Denver, Colorado. Biographies will appear in the July issue of *Information Outlook*. Elections will be held in mid-September.

The candidates are:

For President-elect:
- Lynn Berard, principal librarian, science libraries, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh
- Gloria Zamora, manager, government relations, Sandia National Laboratories, Santa Fe, New Mexico

For Division Cabinet Chair-elect:
- Tom Rink, Training Division Resource Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Police Department
- David Shumaker, clinical associate professor, library and information science, Catholic University, Washington, D.C.

For Chapter Cabinet Chair-elect:
- Susan Fifer-Canby, vice president, library and information service, National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C.
- Lisl Zach, assistant professor, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge

For Director (two to be elected):
- Deborah Hunt, senior information specialist, Exploratorium, San Francisco
- R. James King, chief librarian, Ruth H. Hooker Research Library, Naval Research Laboratory, Washington, D.C.
- Martha McPhail, University Library, San Diego State University
- Ty Webb, president, InfoWebb, Aurora, Colorado

For more information about SLA's governance practices and leadership, see www.sla.org/content/SLA/governance/bodsection/index.cfm. **SLA**

SLA, SIIA Set Alliance On Copyright Education

SLA and the Software and Information Industry Association are offering SLA members a new professional development course at a discounted rate. The Certified Content Rights Manager course and certification were developed especially for information professionals and librarians.

The course, presented by Adam Ayer from LicenseLogic LLC, is appropriate for professionals who purchase and manage copyrighted content and are responsible for ensuring it is used appropriately throughout their organizations.

The program is designed to explain the ins-and-outs of developing a content rights management plan, copyright law, content licensing, and disseminating content throughout organizations of all sizes. Those com-

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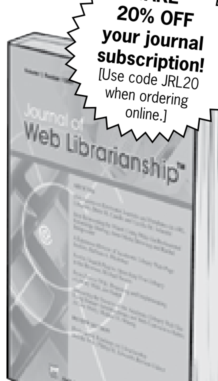

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—Karen G. Schneider, Acting Associate Director of Libraries for Technology & Research, Florida State University

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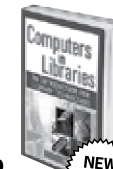
A Selection of Contents from the Charter Issue:

- The International Dunhuang Project (Sarah Beasley and Candice Kail)
- Web Access to Electronic Journals and Databases in ARL Libraries (Dana M. Caudle and Cecilia M. Schmitz)
- Stop Reinventing the Wheel: Using Wikis for Professional Knowledge Sharing (Anne-Marie Deitering and Rachel Bridgewater)
- A Literature Review of Academic Library Web Page Studies (Barbara A. Blummer)
- Firefox Search Plug-ins: Searching Your Library in the Browser (Michael Sauers)
- From Zero to Wiki: Proposing and Implementing a Library Wiki (Jon Haupt)
- Measuring the Success of the Academic Library Website Using Banner Advertisements and Web Conversion Rates: A Case Study (Michael Whang)
- *more!*

Volume 1, No. 1—Spring 2007.
Volume 2, No. 1—Spring 2008. Quarterly (4 issues per volume).
Sku: J502. Subscription rates before discount (per volume):
Individuals: $30/ Institutions/Libraries: $60

Computers in Libraries

An Introduction for Library Technicians



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Katie Wilson, MLS (Grad. Dip. Librarianship)

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The New Challenges for Research Libraries

Edited by Sul H. Lee

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2005. 151 pp. with Index.
(Published simultaneously as the Journal of Library Administration, Vol. 42, No. 2.)

Portals and Libraries

Edited by Sarah C. Michalak, MLS

"PROVIDES DETAILED BACKGROUND on a variety of portal projects and offers frank observations on their successes and failures."
—Carla J. Stoffle, Dean, University of Arizona Libraries and the Center for Creative Photography

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PAD07

pleting the course, which includes a certification exam, will have a deeper understanding of management and employee needs regarding the proper and improper uses of copyrighted content.

SLA members will receive a discount of $100 off the price ($395 for SLA members; $495 for non-members).

The course will be presented in the following U.S. cities:

- Sunday, March 25—Scottsdale, Arizona, at the Information Today Buying and Selling eContent conference
- Wednesday, April 18—San Francisco, California
- Tuesday, May 15—Boston, Massachusetts
- Tuesday, May 22—Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Sunday, June 3—Denver, Colorado, at the SLA 2007 Annual Conference
- Tuesday, June 26—Washington, D.C.

More classes will be scheduled throughout 2007 and beyond.

To register, see https://ssl29.securedata.net/licenselogic/register.asp?ID=207. The syllabus is at www.licenselogic.com/ccrm_syllabus.pdf. **SLA**

IEEE Education Stipend Goes to Donna Beck

Donna Beck is the winner of the 2007 IEEE Continuing Education Stipend, administered by the SLA Engineering Division.

Beck is engineering librarian at the Engineering and Science Library of Carnegie Mellon University. She is also the student relations chair for SLA Pittsburgh Chapter.

Beck will be honored at the division business meeting and luncheon, beginning at 11 a.m. June 5 during the SLA Annual Conference in Denver.

The IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) Continuing Education Stipend is given to the SLA Engineering Division member who submits the best essay on how the applicant will benefit professionally from a continuing education course. The $1,000 stipend covers expenses incurred while attending any CE course offered at the SLA conference, and may be applied to travel, food, and one night's accommodation. **SLA**

Call for Nominations In Australia, New Zealand

Nominations are open for the Information Professional of the Year Award for SLA's Australia and New Zealand Chapter.

Thomson Scientific and Dialog will continue to sponsor the award, which is open to all information professionals in the two countries.

A special panel of SLA Australia and New Zealand Chapter board members and regional Thomson Scientific and Dialog management will select the winner, who will be announced at the SLA Annual Conference in Denver.

The recipient will receive a prize of AUD $2,000.

Nominations should be e-mailed to Marie McKenzie, past president of the chapter, at mckenzieinfo@aapt.net.au, who also will answer questions about the award. The deadline for submitting nominations is May 11. Individuals may nominate themselves or others. **SLA**

Wiley Journals Online At New York Public Library

The New York Public Library's Science, Industry and Business Library and publisher John Wiley & Sons, Inc., now provide library users broad, public online access to more than 300 peer-reviewed journals. Until now, these publications have been available principally only through academic or corporate collections.

For the first time at each of the library's four research facilities, users will be able to electronically access the full-text of journal articles online via Wiley InterScience (www.interscience.wiley.com), Wiley's online publishing platform, as soon as they are published. Journals featured in this program span the sciences with titles such as *Advanced Engineering Materials, American Journal of Physical Anthropology, Cancer, Flavor and Fragrance, Journal of Field Robotics,* and *International Journal of Imaging Systems and Technology*.

The aims of this pilot project are to learn about how high-level journal content is used and by whom in a public library setting, and how a major public research library can effectively provide access to this type of content for its users. This is Wiley's first license for journal content with a major public library in North America. The library previously subscribed to 68 journal titles on Wiley InterScience; the trial pilot provides access to an additional 239 titles. A full alphabetical list of the titles included in the pilot can be found at www.nypl.org/research/sibl/docs/wileyjournals.pdf. **SLA**

Civil Rights Documents Available at Web Site

The U.S. Government Printing Office, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and the Thurgood Marshall Law Library at the University of Maryland School of Law have launched public a Web site of authentic civil rights historical publications.

The Thurgood Marshall library, which is a GPO Federal Depository Library, has been scanning hundreds of historical civil rights publications to make the digital collection possible. The documents are accessible at: www.law.umaryland.edu/marshall/usccr/index.asp. **SLA**

Even if Your Boss Didn't Spell It Out, Writing Is Part of Your Job Description

These Web sites will give you a brush up, a refresher course, and some advice on how to improve your writing.

BY CAROLYN J. SOSNOWSKI, MLIS

While I was conducting an inventory of my job responsibilities, I thought about how much writing and editing I do. Obviously, there's this column. But what about all the e-mails, summaries, content for Web pages, and publications that our information centers and organizations produce? Very often, your first, and perhaps only, impression, is the written word. Visit and bookmark these sites, and make those writing and editing tasks a bit easier.

Wisdom from the Grammar Goddess

www.llrx.com/cgi-bin/llrx.cgi?function=browsecol2&id=23

Sometimes, we forget the rules. And sometimes, we realize we never really knew them at all. Diane Sandford, a law librarian, highlights common grammatical mistakes in this now-defunct (but timeless) column on LLRX.com. There are so many ways to use commas incorrectly; Sandford shows us what's right. Need a lesson on indefinite pronouns? It's in here. I especially enjoyed the column on pet peeves. In that issue, she talks about overused phrases, commonly misused words, and the "verbing of nouns," a popular trend. If you're looking for a more extensive exploration of punctuation (and who isn't?), read and chuckle at *Eats, Shoots & Leaves* by Lynne Truss.

Writing for the Web

www.useit.com/papers/webwriting

The reports listed here are a collection of columns from Jakob Nielsen's AlertBox and links to other studies by the Nielsen Norman Group. This research will inform your Web design and usability testing by explaining how people "read" Web pages and how you should write them. Learn how to write effective newsletters, press releases, and e-mails, and use eyetracking study results to help you position page content for maximum effect. Don't forget to subscribe to the AlertBox newsletter to keep up with the newest information.

Blog Writing

Welcome to My Blog: www.cio.com/archive/060106/blogging.html

11 Tips for Managing a Good Blog Entry: http://vincentmaher.com/mit/?p=174

The first site listed here is an article from CIO.com that gives some broad tips about writing a blog. The author's main points: blog for a reason (not just because you can), know your audience (it may be different from what you are used to), and be sure you can make the time commitment based on your content. The 11 tips blog entry from Vincent Maher focuses mostly on content considerations—the audience (there seems to be a theme here), readability and formatting, structure, linking, tracking similar posts. Take all of these suggestions and dive in. Start offline to get the feel of the process and work out the kinks, then do a soft launch to get some feedback.

Technical Editors' Eyrie: Editing Tips, Techniques, and Checklists

www.jeanweber.com/howto/index.htm

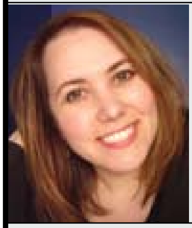
Writing e-mails is one thing. Creating larger documents—research analysis, user guides, technical materials—is another. Once the research and writing is done, how do you prepare the publication for public viewing? These guidelines offer a multitude of tips on proofreading, substantive editing, and formatting. Use the checklists to ensure that all parts of your documents, such as tables of contents and indexes, are properly composed and formatted. In editing, as in writing, the audience is the focus.

On Not Writing

Procrastination: www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/procrastination.html

Overcoming Procrastination: www.stevepavlina.com/articles/overcoming-procrastination.htm

I couldn't end a column on writing without mentioning the spell of procrastination. We all have examples of what we've accomplished while avoiding other tasks. Writing, very often, is one of those tasks. Why and how do we procrastinate? (One short answer: Fear.) The Writing Center at UNC-Chapel Hill explains our beliefs and behaviors and offers ways to get writing despite ourselves. Steve Pavlina, on his Web site devoted to personal development, describes ways to beat inertia through thought strategies, a system of rewards, and the breaking-down of projects to help keep us from getting overwhelmed. **SLA**



CAROLYN J. SOSNOWSKI, MLIS, is SLA's information specialist. She has 10 years of experience in libraries, including more than three years in SLA's Information Center. She can be reached at csosnowski@sla.org.

Quality Management An Ongoing Practice in a Portuguese Government Library

BY PAULA OCHÔA AND LEONOR GASPAR PINTO

One of the main questions that guides research in quality management is "Why are some experiences successful and others are failures?" or to put it a different way, "Why do quality initiatives obtain different performance levels?" Various organizational research lines emphasize different factors: leadership, change management, involvement of all staff, communication process, motivation, and satisfaction.

The presence of the customer is always described as important, and this trend has been accompanied by a multidisciplinary view and a wide body of academic and manager-focused research on customer satisfaction (namely SERVQUAL). There is less published material on customer delight through service excellence (Berman, 2005): "Delight is a construct related to but separated from satisfaction as it is based on different things (in the same way that dissatisfaction is related to but distinct from satisfaction). While customer satisfaction is generally based on exceeding one's expectations, customer delight requires that customer receive a positive surprise that is beyond their expectations

Kano (1984) developed a satisfier and customer delight model that explains the key differences between concepts: "One cannot merely satisfy customers through meeting their basic and performance needs. Must-be requirements consist of the basic criteria of a good or service that results in extreme customer dissatisfaction if not fulfilled. Since a customer expects and even demands a positive experience on must-be requirements, consumers take these requirements for granted. As a result, while severe customer dissatisfaction occurs if a must-be requirement is not fulfilled, the fulfilling of a must-be requirement does not result in consumer satisfaction." (Berman, 2005)

There are seven necessary organizational changes to better deliver delight:

- Being aware of the need for organizational change to establish delight objectives.
- Linking customer delight to bo tom-line benefits.
- Looking at world-class customer satisfaction criteria.
- Listening to the customer to ascertain what's important.
- Empowering employees to go "the extra mile."
- Making measurement of customer delight and loyalty a priority.
- Linking focus customer research to benchmark studies.

HOW ABOUT YOUR CUSTOMERS?

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But what are libraries doing in this field?

Libraries were once one of the major players in the information industry and until recently, they did not feel the pressure of market forces and did not depend on the successful selling of their services (Cook and Thompson, 2000). Users of library services, confronted with wider choice, are becoming more and more demanding and the relationships between users and library services will depend largely upon the way libraries redefine themselves to meet these challenges (Hernon and Altman, 1996). What counts is the value of the offer perceived by users. This value must be understood by librarians based on the difference between the expected and perceived value and quality of their services.

Better library performance depends on numerous external and internal factors, such as the status of the library, the degree of library management autonomy in decision-making; the professional level of managers and employees, the internal quality of work life and employee loyalty (Weingand, 1997; IFLA, 1996; Jordan, 1998). According to Fialkoff (1998), *libraries need marketing knowledge* to develop new services or make changes of the existing ones to satisfy their users better and to improve their organizational status and image to different stakeholders.

Information scientists have long been interested in: library surveys (1948, Royal Society Scientific Information Conference), how people used information in relation to their work (Paisley, 1960),user needs and user behavior (Line, 1967; Bates, 1979; Darvin, 1983), and user information-seeking behavior (Wilson,1979,1981; Ellis, 1987; Kuhlthau, 1991).We have assisted in small scale studies and others that addressed methodological issues, theoretical frameworks of models of information behavior and, more recently, integrated approaches to information seeking and retrieval research. Issues like the use of libraries' collections, catalogues, and electronic resources are disseminated between LIS professionals around the world. Information gathering and information seeking, passive attention and passive research are new terms that describe new advances in academic and workplace environments.

Libraries were once one of the major players in the information industry and until recently, they did not feel the pressure of market forces and did not depend on the successful selling of their services

Wilson's information behavior models (1981, 1996) developed the concept of information needs related to the role of information in a user's everyday life and work, introducing information behavior in the context of an individual's environment, social role, and psychological, affective, and cognitive needs. As mentioned by Harris and Dewdney (1994) people tend to seek information that is easily accessible, preferably from interpersonal sources such as friends, relatives, or co-workers rather than from institutions or organizations.

An increasing number of researchers have begun, since 1996, giving attention to context-focused research (Pettigrew, 1999).

The need to recognize new knowledge, assimilate it, and apply it in libraries policies and strategies requires a new ability, referred as *absorptive capacity* (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990). *Absorptive capacity* can have an important role in innovation, library performance outcomes and in intra-organizational learning (Ochôa, 2004a; Ochôa, 2004b). Methodologies to listen to user needs have *potential absorptive capacity*, which includes knowledge acquisition and assimilation in library procedures, products, and services. It is necessary to study this issue in addition to prior research done. According to Durrance and Fisher (2005), the emerging question is, What difference do libraries and librarians make? or, in other words, What difference do libraries make in meeting customer needs?

Research

The rapid pace of change that we all experience demands an unparalleled learning response from organizations. Major economics, social, and technological pressures from around the world have forced the European Union (EU) to claim Lisbon Strategy (2000) with a new emphasis on knowledge. Thus, to transform Europe in "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustaining economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion," training and learning have become the expression of purposes until 2010.

In Portugal, INCITE, the Portuguese Association for Information Management, has developed a conceptual and methodological line of investigation (2005-2007) for formulating hypothesis and theories on customers' needs through a different outlook about strategic dimensions of users' roles, perceptions, and satisfaction in governmental libraries.

One stream of research in organizational studies that has focused on both the internal service functioning of organizations and the relationship of that functioning to customer satisfaction has come to be "linkage research" (Wiley, 1996). In this line of thinking and research, the frequent interaction between customers and employees is used as a basis for the hypothesis that what employees experience in their work is correlated with the experiences they provide for customers, and that it is these customer experiences that can translate into customer satisfaction (Oliver, 1997;

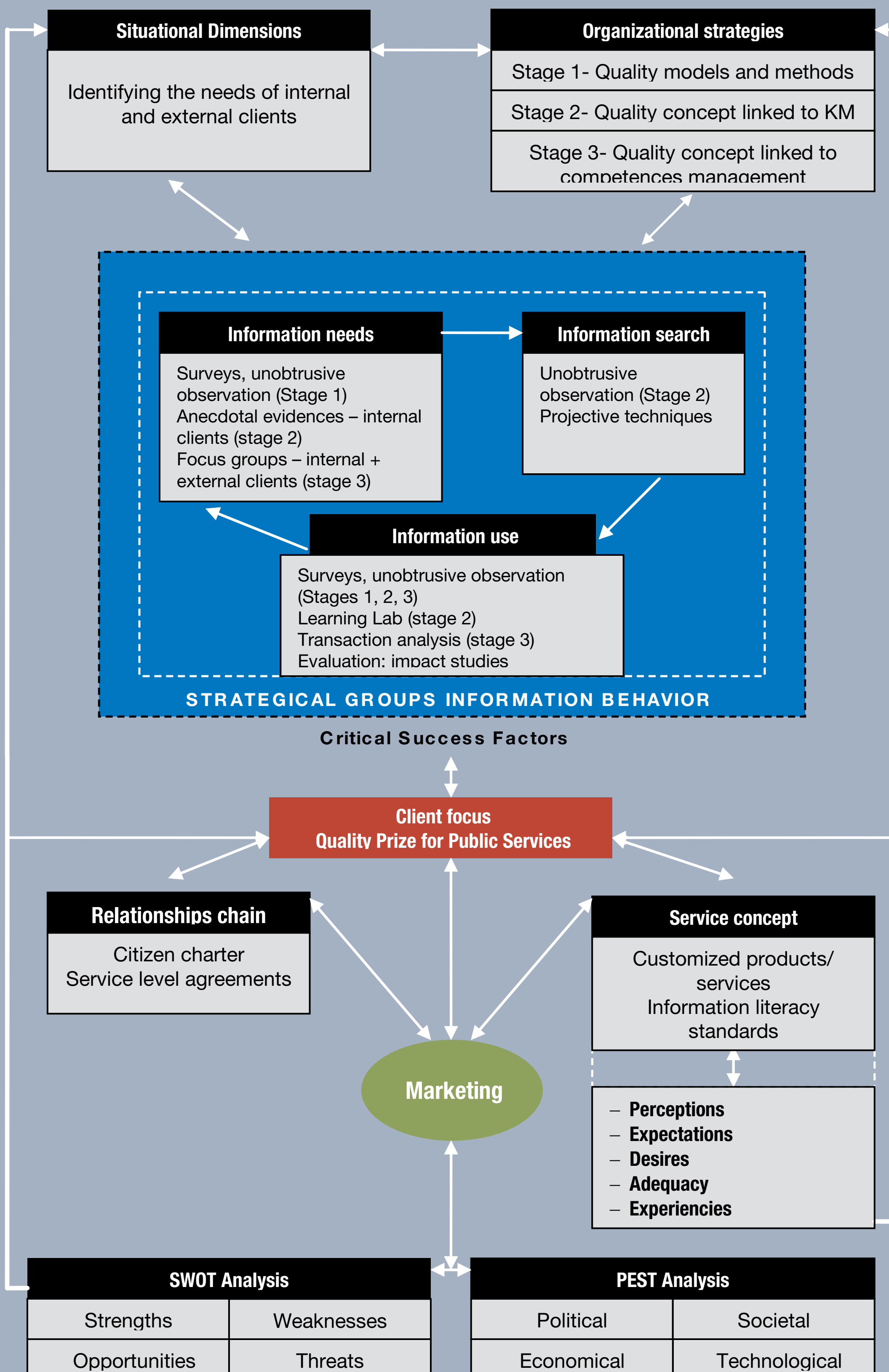

Figure 1. The Needs-driven organizational strategies model of the information unit of the Ministry of Education (Portugal) (1996-2006)

Schneider *et., al.*, 2005). This theme has been investigated in a number of studies of diverse service organizations, but, until now, it remained unexplored in governmental libraries. Early writings on quality in libraries emphasized the role of customer satisfaction and began to examine this link more closely (Pinto and Ochôa, 1999).

In the current attempt to understand the strategic dimension of service focus on customer demands in governmental libraries, this study parallels recent work on quality research in which researchers have distinguished, not only between generic dimensions and activities to listen to customers, but also between organizational strategies and organizational learning. Our hypothesis is that libraries that emphasize the importance of service quality will be especially likely to take the necessary steps to create a new internal behavior (organizational climate) that will drive them into a new culture and interest in customer needs.

Special attention was devoted to study customer satisfaction as the principal criterion for measuring the quality of user service process. As defined by A. Lakos (1998), a "culture of assessment is the attitudinal and institutional changes that have to occur in order for library staff to be able to work in an environment where decisions are based on facts, research, and analysis, and services are planned and delivered in order to maximize positive outcomes and impacts for library clients. Culture of assessment is an integral part of the process of change and the creation of a customer-centered culture." (p.278)

Several case study researches used a narrative approach. The value of narrative methodologies is increasing in organization studies (Rhodes and Brown, 2005): "Organizational story and storytelling research has produced a rich body of knowledge unavailable through other methods of analysis." (Stutts and Baker, 1999, p.213) According to Rhodes and Brown (2005), the history of narrative in organization research is relatively brief: The earliest explicit uses of narrative approaches to inform methodology in management and organization theory date from the 1970s. As the research focus on organizational culture and symbolism grew (1980 and 1990), so did the use of narrative to explore the meaning of organizational experience.

The rapid pace of change that we all experience demands an unparalleled learning response from organizations.

Complementing the idea that people in organizations are storytellers and that their stories constituted valid empirical materials for research, a related methodological position soon began to be articulated. Today, narrative research is multi-faceted and is used in several studies, providing a methodological position through which to engage not with a presumed neutral "real world" but with the complex nuances of the "lived" world.

In particular, we are interested in examining customer needs studies as a form of narrative. Our goal is to provide theorists and practitioners with an additional interpretative lens. "Among its appeals as an approach for studying strategy, narratives emphasize the simultaneous presence of multiple, interlinked realities, and are thus well positioned for capturing the diversity and complexity present in strategic discourse." (Barry and Elmes, 1997, p. 3)

A narrative view of customer focused library strategy may stress how language is used to construct meaning (Weick, 1995) and may explore ways in which different library stakeholders create a discourse of orientation (whether about becoming, being, or having been) to understand and influence one another's actions. Donald Polkinghorne (1988) explains: "Narrative is a form of 'meaning making'... Narrative recognizes the meaningfulness of individual experiences by noting how they function as part of the whole. Its particular, subject matter is human actions and events that affect human beings, which it configures into wholes according to the roles these actions and events play in bringing about a conclusion...The narrative scheme serves as a lens through which the apparently independent and disconnected elements of existence are seen as related parts of a whole." (p.36)

A narrative approach assumes that strategy telling fundamentally *influences strategic choice and action.* (Barry and Elmes, 1997).

Another key contribution of this methodology is the attention it focuses *on temporal issues in organizations*: "Rather than viewing organizations as static, homogeneous, and consistent entities, narrative approaches demonstrate the processual characteristics of organizations and can render both the paradoxes and complex causal relationships inherent in organizational change open to analysis" and by listening to, documenting, analyzing, and reporting the different stories that people tell about their organizations, narrative researchers brought the subjective experience of people in organizations within the focus of research. (Rhodes and Brown, 2005)

In examining how quality approaches affect LIS professional competencies and user informational behavior, our approach is linked to strategic outcomes. Thus, the perspective taken in this study is one of strategic management and aims to: a) develop a model to characterize the available empirical research on user studies and quality management; b) evaluate the existing research methods through a case study; and c) suggest some specific directions for future research from a strategic management perspective (Altshuld and Witkin, 2000).

Consistent with evidence-based theory, it reports the findings of the case study on the Information Unity of the Ministry of Education and, especially, its model—*Needs driven organizational strategies (1996-2006)*—which suggests a useful starting point to identify and classify the dominant perspectives in the study of customer needs in Portugal.

Pilot Study

The information unit of the Ministry of Education has developed a quality program since 1996 based on an original model of client-centered strategy (Figure 1). During the last 10 years, it has been developing and implementing quality models and methods (European Foundation for Quality Management's excellence model, and Common Assessment framework, the self-evaluation framework recommended for European Public Administration Services). This information unit was the first Portuguese public service to develop a quality program and the first one to implement CAF. It is a best practice recognized in Portugal and in Europe. In 2003 and 2004, it represented Portugal in quality European events.

In 1997, the information unit established its needs driven organizational strategies (1996-2006) model, a framework for monitoring and evaluating user behavior in Information seeking and information use, using a mixed approach of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. It should be noted that this paper does not intend to present the model in detail, but only discuss the main topics and related findings.

The first stage was developed through a market opportunity analysis (SWOT and PEST) and a new service concept based on just-in-time service. SWOT analysis, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, was originally developed by Ansoff (1987) and, according to Turner (2002), there are two primary methods of filling in a grid: the first is to work the four headings one at a time. The second is to allow issues to be generated and then discuss where on the grid they should be placed. The first method tends to work better when people are not familiar with the tool; the second approach is better within a group with previous experience.

PEST is an external analysis about four headings: political; economic; social and technological issues. The discussion of these factors is important to analyze the impact on the library and its strategy.

This particular focus was conducted through a study of the information needs of five user segments: students, teachers, governmental decision-makers, educational professionals, and citizens interested in educational policies and pedagogical methods.

It was considered that information needs arise out of a specific task that is associated with work roles played by each user. Intervening factors such as age, specialization, geographical location, frequency, degrees of urgency, type of information sources used, perceived quality (technical and functional), relevance of information, complexity of information seeking processes, and the results obtained were studied in their effect on their information requirements.

Each user was confronted with a list of information sources (formal and informal) and asked, How do you solve your information needs? and, What kind of library service do you need/expect to satisfy your information needs? The method used was a personal interview, based on narrative interview techniques (Denzin, 1988) with the main emphasis on personal experiences in the library. Every year, a new study is carried out to obtain new costumers perspectives.

A key finding of the first study was that users want personal attention and need and use library services that guarantee quality in their different channels of contact with people (reference service, distance services, library loans, and library facilities). Its first effect on library services was the creation of a new role for librarians: the user ombudsman. This role has two main functions: to listen to the voice of users about their perceptions of services, information value, and needs and, secondly, to develop relationship marketing (Gummeson, 1987; Czepiel, 1990) by creating opportunities to analyze what services dimensions must be publicized and which "truth moments" are well managed. It was the first Portuguese experience in this area (1997) and intended to be a best practice in the LIS sector.

This survey activity has been carried out in annual cycles since the beginning of the project.

In addition, the connections between the service concept and the marketing strategy have been systematized through an integration of services and products customized through the identification of information needs and information literacy levels to improve them and manage perceptions of information needs by the development of learning labs as a key strategic service. A literature review shows the great diversity of approaches focusing on learning styles and information literacy. Thus, for example, information literacy has been treated as an outcome and a process of libraries with missions related to education goals (school libraries, academic libraries, public libraries).

Governmental libraries are less involved in this dynamic. Consistent with this view, the library studied regarded information literacy as a process

> Today, narrative research is multi-faceted and is used in several studies, providing a methodological position through which to engage not with a presumed neutral "real world" but with the complex nuances of the "lived" world.

that flows between explicit information needs and non-explicit information behavior. Among the studies emphasizing the link between information literacy and relationship marketing, the contribution of the *Observatory on the Information-Documentation Profession* (Op-ID) should be mentioned. In fact, a recent study on self-image and external image of Portuguese information professionals' skills shows that users long for good relations with librarians. (Pinto and Ochôa, 2006)

Another method used was unobtrusive observation to obtain more information about staff and users' information search. "As opposed to the obtrusive method of evaluation, the unobtrusive approach is, as the name indicates, a method by which the subjects are not aware they are being evaluated. The most common methodology is to set up a battery of test questions, with known answers, and then put them to librarians." (Katz, 1987, p.203) Participant and non-participant observation have been used to study the information needs of various groups of people. Usually the observation element is triangulated with survey data. (Cooper, Lewis and Urquhart, 2004)

These observations were made by LIS students who wanted to explore information needs and inter-related methods. This was especially useful to obtain information about librarians' personal methods to understand needs during reference interviews.

Based on 60 costumer experiences, the information unit has extended its strategies and established a Citizen Charter with seven agreements based on service quality:

- Reliability
- Competence
- Responsiveness
- Access
- Credibility of information
- Communication focused on information needs and information alerts
- Understanding costumer ways of consuming information.

Through focus group interviews, content analysis, and in-house and online surveys, the charter is monitored each year so the provision of better services can be achieved.

In 1998, the information unit started evaluating performance using some indicators, once more with special focus on costumer opinions. In the same year, it was awarded with the *Quality Prize for Public Services*, being the first Portuguese library to get such honor in governmental services. Two main reasons were at the top of the jury decision: the high level of satisfaction of users and the high level of satisfaction, motivation, and professional competence of library staff.

Knowledge Management

The second stage began with a special attention on customized products and services. The information unit identified through focus group interviews and unobtrusive observation several ways of using library services. The new dimensions were related to need of staff support when questions were seen as complex. Further, other studies have attempted to identify key dimensions of feedback to users and feedback to staff, creating three new quality attributes: core service, supporting service, and user encounters (their perceptions, expectations, desires, and experiences). All of these were related to information literacy standards and a more effective way of providing information adapted to known and unknown information requests. The existence of an ethical policy was considered a critical success factor and an Ethics Information Charter was therefore developed.

The quality concept was now linked to another aspect of management: knowledge. Based on the ideas proposed by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) and Leonard-Barton (1998), creativity to listen to costumer needs was encouraged, as well as other enablers like continuous experimentation, information-porous boundaries, and cognitive diversity, trust and commitment. Without a common goal, it would be impossible to judge the value of information or the importance of new knowledge.

Participation in the movement of organizational improvement must be active. An attitude of continuous reflection is needed to enhance the role of relationships, networks, and interactions between organizations and clients. In this context, the competitive environment of the Information Society made imperative the creation of an Observatory on Quality of Knowledge and Information Services (OQIKS) based on a knowledge partnership between the information unit of the Ministry of Education and another Portuguese central public administration, the Institute for Innovation in Vocational Training (2002).

OQIKS can be viewed as a means for fostering an educational and vocational training professional community in knowledge management dynamics. Its particular form reflected the values, interests, and strategic approaches of two different organizational cultures through formal and informal contacts. It combined observation with action and was specifically focused on support, guidance and encouragement of reflexive management, working collaboratively with the actors involved (Ochôa and Pinto, 2004).

During the 2002-2003 period, OQKIS developed a number of actions to provide knowledge and skills for inter-professional work. Simulation of collaborative skills and reflection upon inter-professional experience on quality management formed the basis of a learning process between librarians and a team of administrative professionals of a quality awarded school, both grouped as a project team during a period of 14 months (September 2002-November 2003). Because of this approach, two "learning-labs" were created: the first lasted for six months and was focused on the development of a *Manual of Procedures for School Administrative Professionals*; the second, as a natural extension of first one, lasted for eight months and was focused on the construction of an *Organizational Skills Manual for School Administrative Professionals*.

OQIKS followed an action-research methodology and, therefore, in the librarians (the research team members) were also participants in the learning-lab actions they were researching. They tried to work collaboratively with practitioners in the following stages:

- **At the planning stage—**by providing "state of the art" information and conceptual models (tacit-explicit knowledge). The group was in charged with managing the "learning-labs," which is educationally useful in an inter-professional collaboration project. There were different levels of information access and skills, both across and within the two professional groups. Therefore, it is a valuable learning experience to be alert to the potential importance of information skills in practice and to have considered possible solutions to information access problems.
- **At the implementation stage—**by analyzing, documenting, and supporting reflection and dialogue (explicit-transmitted knowledge). The timing and the nature of facilitators' interventions needed to be in accord with the group activity. Facilitator intervention must be carefully tailored to the needs of the group. In our case, the group needed help with processes management to separate routines conceptual framework and professional interactions, with particular focus on tasks and effectiveness.
- **At the evaluation stage—**by enabling partners to learn from partnership experiences and best practices, stimulating and enhancing value for services (transmitted-transformed knowledge).
- **At prospective scenarios—**by developing librarian market value and developing knowledge communities of practices and interests.

This research demonstrated that innovative working relationships between librarians and other professional groups resulted from librarians' facilitator roles and their intentional use of team leadership to develop management skills. Using the extensive research on adult development, adult learning, career development, and staff development, OQIKS focused on processes that account for the development of objectives and activities, mentoring, and peer-coaching programs and their impact on practices and learning about information needs (Ochôa and Pinto, 2004).

Competences Management

A context of trust and commitment can be achieved by establishing particular values and attitudes towards costumer needs that guide actions and relations between library and users. Figure 1 shows some aspects that can help improve a quality concept in a shared context for the creation and transfer of knowledge through a staff competence policy. The competence concept has been used since the 1960s. In Europe, competence and skills are considered a priority to sustain individual competitiveness in the labor market. Le Boterf (1995) has a competence dynamic model that is a key reference to LIS professionals in Portugal (Pinto and Ochôa, 2005).

ECIA (European Council of Information Associations) published in 1999 the *Euroguide LIS: the guide to competencies for European professionals in library and information services*, with a revised edition five years later. As a member of ECIA and a partner in the *Euroguide LIS* project, INCITE published both Portuguese versions in 2001 and 2005, respectively. This guide describes and maps in detail all competences that may be required for an information professional. It is now a national model to manage staff in governmental libraries. In this sense, the information unit of the Ministry of Education, since 2003, is investing in the development of a model of Competences Charter, once more to enhance its services.

Having identified the domains of the concepts of library services, the information unit turned to their distinction from the *distinctive competences* strategically relevant to users and the entire value chain. Thus, it is possible to highlight the capabilities leading to the concept of user satisfaction and delight. Their strategic competences derives from exploitation of sets of skills that users value and exploitation of new combinations of relevant core competences (Phahalad and Hamel 1990). That is defined as an organization's collective learning, particularly in how to coordinate diverse skills and integrate multiple technological currents.

These competences include different aspects. They include knowledge that can be transmitted and shared by several people within the library. They also embody learning skills, thus requiring social interaction with costumers to become a continuous loop to convert tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. One of these competences is the capacity of evaluating and investigating dimensions of service performance, cost-benefit analysis, and user outcomes—and further identifying potential measures for new assessment programs.

In this stage, the online service quality attributes were systematically and extensively studied. The questions posed to costumers included:

- What is high quality online service?
- What are the key-dimensions of online service quality?
- What actions can be taken to deliver high quality online services?

Computer and Internet usage information (transaction logs) were also considered. Key questions are:

- Which electronic information services do users use?
- How do users use electronic information services?
- What are electronic information services used for?
- What influences the use of electronic information services?
- Are there variations in electronic information services use between different user groups (academics, students etc.) and disciplines?
- What influences electronic information services use over time?

The key is to uncover among various potentially predictive service quality attributes in the particular dimensions that are most crucial in enhancing the perceived level of service quality and to assess the degree to which they are associated.

In September 2004, INCITE was invited to carry on a critical evaluation of the case of the information unit of the Ministry of Education, which was considered a best practice in the Portuguese LIS field.

In this context, two facts were emphasized: in 1998, the unit was awarded the Portuguese Quality Prize for Public Services for its innovative quality program based on the EFQM model; and, in 2004, the unit represented Portugal in several European quality events, namely the 3QC in Rotterdam, as a best practice for citizen charter and client focus. These facts confirmed the value of longitudinal studies that concern costumer-centered evaluations and strategies. The evidence from that evaluation identified the need for other studies in the field and its model set a base line for emerging themes for valuable evidence in LIS services.

Lessons Learned

Work in the area of user needs carried out by the information unit has obtained special information over the last decade. Much of this work is involved with user studies issues such as:

- Surveys
- Focus group
- Interviews
- Unobtrusive studies
- Satisfaction and delight studies

The choices of methods are viewed as complementary to each other. The survey obtained detailed information from user targets about their opinions on their information needs and ways of consuming information services and products. The analysis of user comments supported user requirements and were treated as priorities to focus the unit's action plans. Focus groups expressed user scenarios and preferences and gave several ideas about the relationship between expectations and moments of truth in delivering services. Unobtrusive studies provided information and reactions about staff performance when trying to answer information needs. All these methods provided a broad spectrum of information literacy skills and represent successful interactions with users.

The information unit translated these results into new services. A conceptual framework created for assessing user needs (Figure. 1) identified five distinct areas:

- Market opportunity analysis
- A new service concept
- The user ombudsman
- Relationship marketing
- A Citizen Charter

These initiatives were used in the continuous improvement of services, based on knowledge management and competencies management to develop new context-sensitive instruments to identify ways of analyzing users' information needs. This strategy aggregates some indicators that can be used in service models and benchmarking. It also identified a set of activities: providing what is perceived by users as quality information transaction and increased access to information to more people. Each service is focused on the set of information needs of each user segment and marketing relationship is established accordingly with their expectations and perceptions. This allows to understand the impacts of services and to reformulate what is wrong. Each librarian acts as a facilitator of information needs.

The present study provides several issues for future research. It provides empirical evidence that incorporates multiple levels of analysis and examines individual-level as well as organizational-level variables. Grounded in an evidence-based approach, the model presented can provide a new insight for empirical work.

Moreover, the usefulness of the presented model for marketing strategies must be highlighted. While customer-centered focus is a natural process of any marketing approach, we understand the different stages mentioned as the

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set of LIS policies and decisions that can have impact in internal and external factors and be consistent with the literature focused on customer needs (e.g. Berman (2005); Berry (1995); Dalrymple et. al. (1999); Dietz, J.; Pugh, S.D. ; Wiley, J.W. (2004); Donovan, P.; Samler, T. (1994); Johnson, J. (1996), among others).

Particular combinations of organizational mechanisms may be the subject of more investigations in the future. We suggest researchers investigate information needs further by better understanding the role and contribution of quality methods and tools. There is an emergent network of relationships between governmental libraries and quality outputs. We assume that, as this case matures, other libraries will pursue their quality journeys and become more affected by successful performance in their strategy. We predict that client-centered issues will create and sustain survival of a great number of small libraries. We also predict that the frequency and satisfaction of clients will become the portrait of a viable professional service.

Studying this journey to quality offers new longitudinal insights for both researchers and practitioners, who should benefit from more customer-centered research designs. Information professionals should continue to study customers' needs in various fields of management (quality, competencies, knowledge) in anticipation of new environments, services, and user expectations. **SLA**

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Growing Businesses in a Colorado Garden

BY FORREST GLENN SPENCER

Twelve-miles south of downtown Denver is the incorporated municipality of Littleton. This is a rich land for those who have resided there. It has been the home for Native Americans, Spaniards, and French. Its economy has been based upon farming, water, gold, and hunting.

It wasn't until the middle of the 19th century that the Americans began their permanent settlement of the region. And it was an engineer from New Hampshire named Richard Little who constructed an irrigation system, which led to the growth of farms and ranches and, eventually, to the birth of Littleton was born, incorporated in 1890 with a population of 245. Littleton was a farming community until World War II, when it transformed into a small manufacturing-base and a suburb of Denver.

Like any other town, Littleton has experienced economic cycles from prosperity to hardship and then back toward prosperity. SLA member Christine Hamilton-Pennell works to maintain a prosperous business environment in Littleton, but the task is not traditional regional development. In 1987, Littleton's Business/Industry Affairs Department pioneered an entrepreneurial alternative to the traditional economic development practice of recruiting industries to the town. Developed in conjunction with the Center for the New West, the program,

Christine Hamilton-Pennell

Joined SLA: 1987

Job: Economic Intelligence Specialist, City of Littleton Business/Industry Affairs

Experience: 31 years

Education: MLIS, UCLA; MAR, Iliff School of Theology; BA, Westmont College

First job: Director of technical and circulation services, Rio Hondo Community College, Whittier, California

Biggest challenge: Incorporating new technology and changes in information tools into my work.

Website: www.hpwatermedia.com

Hamilton-Pennell, left, meets with a Littleton business owner.

which remains in practice today, is called "economic gardening."

"Economic gardening focuses on creating a nurturing environment for local entrepreneurs rather than trying to recruit or 'hunt' businesses from outside," said Economic Intelligence Specialist Hamilton-Pennell. "The majority of jobs are created by existing businesses, and the majority of them are small. I help small and growing businesses become more competitive by providing them with timely, reliable, and actionable information."

Most the businesses Hamilton-Pennell interacts with are small, usually with fewer than 10 employees. The most pressing need for them is marketing, so Hamilton-Pennell's duties include conducting research to identify industry and market trends, profiling competitors, identifying customer demographics, and creating marketing or prospect lists. "I also research individual companies," Hamilton-Pennell added, "identify potential local-to-international markets, search for trade names and trademarks, identify financing sources, and introduce business owners to each other so they can pursue possible partnerships or cross-marketing opportunities."

The program was pioneered by her director, Chris Gibbons. Since 1990, the community has added more than 20,000 new jobs and tripled sales tax revenues without giving any incentives or tax breaks to businesses. Hamilton-Pennell's position has been around for 20 years, as long as the program. Everyone who has held the position has been a librarian. "My supervisor stole the first EIS from the city's public library when he saw her using a Dialog database and realized that it was an incredibly powerful tool for businesses that wanted to grow and become more competitive," Hamilton-Pennell said.

Small Businesses

The population of Littleton is approximately 41,000, with 1,800 businesses and non-profit organizations. Only about 50 have 50 employees or more. A quarter of the businesses are home-based. Most of the firms Hamilton-Pennell and her department work with are small with ten employees or less. The job rate has been steadily growing: in 1990, there were over 14,000 jobs; and today, there are over 35,000. That's a 37 percent, outpacing the population growth of 23 percent.

In addition to her research responsibilities, Hamilton-Pennell speaks about economic gardening throughout the country to groups of economic and community developers. She said that her greatest privilege was being the keynote speaker at the Louisiana conference of the American Planning Association, a month after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, on using economic gardening to rebuild communities. Locally, Hamilton-Pennell gives presentations to business groups on working smarter and competing with big-box retailers. "I came to the economic development world late in my career, but I have found my passion," Hamilton-Pennell said. "I love working with entrepreneurs because they're the ones who make things happen. My definition of an entrepreneur is 'someone who perceives an opportunity and creates and grows an organization to pursue it.' This includes social entrepreneurs. Most entrepreneurs have informational needs but don't have the time or expertise to satisfy them. That's where I come in." This spring she'll travel to Michigan, Minneapolis, Vancouver, and Montana, and speak to groups about Littleton's program. The groups she usually addresses range from city councils and mayors to any group of economic and community professionals, nationally and internationally.

Before joining the City of Littleton, Hamilton-Pennell operated an information consulting business, Mosaic Knowledge Works, for almost five years. She still runs it in her spare time. "In that business I have mostly focused on developing online content—courses, tutorials, research guides, and topical guides to Web sites," Hamilton-Pennell said. "Colleague Robin Neidorf and I recently completed an online tutorial on scholarly publishing for the libraries of the University of Colorado, *Publish, Not Perish*, that is accessible at www.publishnotperish.org. I also prepared the literature reviews for seven statewide studies on the impact of school library media centers on student achievement with colleagues Keith Lance and Marcia Rodney."

As an independent professional, she produced a newsletter for the Central Colorado Library System, *Midnight at the Internet Café*. Every issue focused on a different topic and reviewed the best of the Web. Prior to that, Hamilton-Pennell was the director of the Professional Resource Center at the Colorado Department of Education for 11 years, and had worked in community college, university, and medical libraries.

Starting a Library

At one point, she was hired by a private, for-profit business college to set up a

Downtown Littleton, Colorado

Hamilton-Pennell, left, in an economic gardening meeting.

library so they could achieve accreditation. It began with an empty room, but within six months, she was able to achieve the library's goals. Hamilton-Pennell also served as the executive director of the Colorado Library Association for two and a half years, and has been an adjunct instructor for the library and information services program at the University of Denver.

One of the things she feels most proud of was the formation of the Colorado Library Marketing Council in 1992. "My colleague Dorothy Norbie and I perceived a need in the library community to accurately communicate our value to the organizations we served," said Hamilton-Pennell. "We created seminars, workshops, and ultimately an online course to assist librarians in researching their customers' needs and creating marketing campaigns that addressed those specific needs. Our local Rocky Mountain SLA chapter was very much involved and supportive of these efforts, including two chapter presidents, Wanda McDavid and Mark Estes, who served with me as co-chairs of the council. My focus has always been on connecting people with the information they need to be successful, whether that's where to find the latest education research or locate the nearest homeless shelter."

Hamilton-Pennell's undergraduate degree is in psychology. She received her MLIS from UCLA in 1975. "Obviously, the library world has changed radically since that time," she said. "OCLC was a nascent system, and microfiche was the technology of the day. Nevertheless, the principles of organization and access to information that I learned have served me well throughout my career."

When Hamilton-Pennell came out of library school, the then 24 year old hired on as director of technical services department. She had a staff of about 10, all older. "Some my mother's age," Hamilton-Pennell recalled, "and that was quite a challenge when I first started out. That was a tough one." Her mother was a librarian, briefly, and so was her grandmother. Neither of them spent very long in the field, but it made a strong impression upon Hamilton-Pennell.

"After I got my psychology degree I realized I didn't have a passion for it," she began, "much more of a generalist – that I had a broad interest in a wide-variety of things, and to go anywhere in psychology you needed a PhD. I worked for three years at the Rio Hondo Community College in East Los Angeles—Whittier—and I decided I wanted to do some community service so I joined Mennonite Voluntary Service.

"I'm not a Mennonite; I was an Episcopalian at the time, but that's how I ended up coming to Denver in 1978—running a neighborhood social service agency called the Broadway Assistance Center. My job was to meet with street people and low-income individuals, and help them find shelter and food, community resources, and so forth. It's really an extension of being a librarian: whether I am helping someone find educational resources or the closest homeless shelter. It's about connecting people with information they need to be successful. It was a much more immediate thing."

Hamilton-Pennell contemplated becoming a minister—even attending a Methodist seminary—but she decided to become a preacher of entrepreneurship. "I've always had a desire to make a difference. That's always motivated me."

Hamilton-Pennell was born and raised in the San Fernando Valley of Southern California. She has been married for more than 25 years. Her husband, Robert, is an artist and teaches art to 700 kids in the public schools, kindergarten through fifth grade. They have two sons, 16 and 21. One son is in high school; the other is an independent computer specialist.

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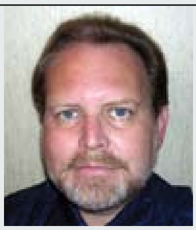

"Remember that you are in charge of your career. You are the one who can make things happen. Be bold and stretch more than you think you can."

SLA Connection

Besides SLA, which she joined in 1987, Hamilton-Pennell is a member of AIIP, SCIP, the International Economic Development Council, and several Colorado business organizations. She served as the long-range planning chair for the Education Division and has served as a director and long-range planning chair for the Rocky Mountain Chapter, where she now is the chair for professional development. Recently, she completed a survey of the membership to determine their professional development and training needs and interests.

"I knew about SLA when I was in library school," she said. "I attended some events in Southern California, and I thought about becoming a special librarian. My first job while I was in school was in a hospital library. Colleagues and the network is the strength of SLA."

For the past several months, she and other members of her chapter have been preparing for 2007 SLA annual conference in Denver. "We have an incredibly active committee who is working on this event for local arrangements," Hamilton-Pennell said. "We have a conference wiki online. My piece of the wiki is 'Shopping.' I profiled all of the independent shops in Denver. We're very excited about the conference. There will be a great deal of support from our chapter. What we say all the time: We're small but we're mighty." (The chapter's conference wiki is at http://lib.colostate.edu/publicwiki/index.php?title=Special_Libraries_Association.

It's not surprising to learn that Hamilton-Pennell also has been a teacher. "Whenever I teach a class, I touch upon locus of control. You focus upon what you can change in your life and not the forces beyond your control, and in fact you are in charge of your own career."

Hamilton-Pennell stresses that info pros need to be focused on their value to their clients—what benefits can be offered to them and how one can build products and services to meet their needs—and focus on the features of the service. For example, she says, "In our economic gardening program, we talk about focusing on our client's lawn, not the features of our grass seed.

"Too many librarians get caught up in talking about what they have to offer, not how their services address the questions that keep people awake at night. I find my younger colleagues to be very helpful in understanding some of the new information environments that otherwise can be very baffling to me. I urge every new and seasoned information professional to read Kim Dority's new book, *Rethinking Information Work*."

Above all else, she advises people to follow their passion. "We attract what we think about and visualize," she added. "Remember that you are in charge of your career. You are the one who can make things happen. Be bold and stretch more than you think you can, whether that's calling up the company president to interview her or him about their greatest challenges, making a presentation about useful resources to a group of employees, or writing an article for the local business newspaper about blogging as a marketing tool. Develop strong networks wherever you go—that will be your richest resource in your career. I have no idea what our profession will look like in 10 years, except that it will involve connecting people to information in some meaningful way." **SLA**

2007 Information Outlook Editorial Calendar

You're the expert, share what you know.

We're always looking for new authors for Information Outlook. That's one way we get new ideas, learn new ways of doing things.

The editorial calendar below shows major topics we want to cover for each issue in 2006.

Please note: The editorial calendar is only a starting point. We need more articles on more topics than we've listed below.

If you want to write on a topic that isn't on the calendar, or on a topic that isn't listed for a particular issue, we want to hear from you. For example, articles on topics like marketing, searching, and technology will be welcome throughout the year. We want to hear all of your ideas for articles.

Also, our descriptions of the topics may not fit your approach. If you have a different idea for a topic, let us know.

Issue	Cover Article	Copy Due
May	• SLA 2007 Denver Preview • Career Development — Possible topics: Professional development, gaining expertise in content areas, résumé writing, interview tactics	March 16, 2007
June	Legal Issues — Possible topics: Copyright, licensing, file sharing, contract negotiations.	April 20, 2007
July	Management — Possible topics: Planning, budgeting, supervising a staff, purchasing	May 18, 2007
August	Conference Papers Showcase	June 22, 2007
September	Copyright — Possible topics: Global considerations, permissions, new laws and regulations	July 20, 2007
October	Web 2.0 — Possible topics: Next generation Web sites, social networking, XML, RSS, podcasting	Aug. 24, 2007
November	Knowledge Management — Possible topics: KM systems, indexing information, low-budget KM	Sept. 21, 2007
December	Special Issue: Leadership	Oct. 19, 2007

Knowledge Management Lacks Full Integration Into Law Firm Structure

SURVEY SHOWS THAT, WHILE FIRMS VIEW KM AS IMPORTANT, IT'S A CHALLENGE TO IMPLEMENT INITIATIVES.

BY GRETTA RUSANOW

Knowledge differentiates a law firm from its competitors. Knowledge management is about leveraging that differentiating asset so that a law firm leads, and breaks away from, its competitors.

Knowledge management is the leveraging of your firm's collective wisdom by creating systems and processes to support and facilitate the identification, capture, dissemination and use of your firm's knowledge to meet your business objectives. It's about recognizing that practicing law is a knowledge-based profession—and managing your knowledge is key to managing your business. In essence, knowledge management is about working smarter.

Some 71 of the world's leading law firms participated in a comprehensive survey of law firm knowledge management conducted by ALM Research and Curve Consulting. The survey covered a range of topics relating to knowledge management, including scope, culture, organization, technology, measuring value, and relationship with client service delivery. The survey was also the first to collect comprehensive data relating to the size of the knowledge management organization and staff compensation, knowledge management budget and spending, and technology products used by law firms as part of their knowledge management systems.

The average firm responding had 611 total full-time equivalent lawyers, including 193 partners, and 787 full-time-equivalent support staff, a mean revenue between $200 million and $299.9 million, and an average of 9.3 offices.

It's clear from the survey results that law firms have embraced knowledge management as a critical function. However, the knowledge management organization is typically isolated and faces challenges in engaging the firm in the broad scope of what knowledge management is—and can bring to this knowledge-based business.

Scope

Law firms have broadened the scope of knowledge they manage, though the emphasis is still on knowledge relating to the practice of law, rather than the business of law. Law firms have broadened the scope of knowledge they manage to include both explicit and tacit knowledge. There is a strong emphasis on managing knowledge of the firm as it relates to the *practice* of law. There is, however, little emphasis on managing the firm's financial information, market position, prospective client information, and competitor information—suggesting a lack of focus on managing knowledge relating to the *business of law*.

The leading knowledge management initiatives implemented so far are precedents/forms, legal research tools and systems, a best practice document repository; and practice group meetings. Roughly half of the firms have also implemented know-how files, skills and expertise locators, clause libraries, professional development programs, client relationship management systems and third-party contact databases.

When it comes to collaborating with

other functions, knowledge management initiatives are underway typically with business development/marketing, and learning and development. There is little focus on working with human resources and finance on knowledge management initiatives.

Knowledge Management organization to work effectively across the firm.

The head of knowledge management is most likely to be a director or chief knowledge officer, reporting to either the executive director/COO or the managing partner.

Law firms have broadened the scope of knowledge they manage, though the emphasis is still on knowledge relating to the practice of law, rather than the business of law.

Approach

There is not enough alignment of knowledge management with the firm's business objectives. Two-thirds of firms take a hybrid approach to knowledge management—where a central knowledge management function sets the direction for knowledge management and provides the infrastructure for practice-area knowledge management. Initiatives are typically launched by a combination of practice groups and the central knowledge management function, with some differences across the regions.

Just 61 percent of firms have a formal knowledge management strategy, suggesting that knowledge management may not be adequately aligned with the firm's business objectives. Also, 75 percent of respondents report they develop a project plan before implementing a knowledge management initiative, though only 62 percent of respondents develop a business case to go with it, suggesting that many firms may not be adequately engaging management and the partnership in understanding how the knowledge management initiative will bring value to the firm.

Organization

Dedicated knowledge management staff numbers have grown, though there is work to be done in positioning the

A little over half of the heads of knowledge management are responsible for leading the KM organization, despite 87 percent of firms taking a hybrid or centralized approach to knowledge management. This suggests that while the heads of knowledge management are charged with the responsibility to lead implementation of knowledge management initiatives across a firm, it may be a challenge to do so.

All firms have dedicated knowledge management organizations, though their size differs significantly across the regions.

A heavy dependence on informal, collaborative relationships with other functions in the firm suggests it is a challenge for knowledge management organizations to engage the firm and implement initiatives that touch on other areas of the firm. This is supported by the finding that 62 percent of responding firms wish to improve their relationship with other functions. More than half the firms do not have a knowledge management committee—suggesting it may be a challenge to engage the broader firm in knowledge management.

Culture

Firms say they have a knowledge management culture, though not enough is done to reward lawyers for contributing to knowledge management, or to demonstrate the value of knowledge management to management.

An overwhelming number of law firms (84 percent) describe having a culture that supports knowledge management. Despite this, a number of indicators suggest that law firms face several challenges in developing a culture that supports knowledge management. In particular, there appear to be gaps in wide user understanding of the broad scope of knowledge management and in management engagement:

- The time-based billing model is the greatest cultural barrier to knowledge management.
- ROI is measured by just 13 percent of responding firms.
- Knowledge management is included as a criterion in performance evaluation more than in compensation review, suggesting a gap in recognizing the value of contributing to knowledge management.
- Despite being more likely than not to expect everyone at the firm to contribute to knowledge management, firms are unlikely to give fee relief or

Just 61 percent of firms have a formal knowledge management strategy, suggesting that knowledge management may not be adequately aligned with the firm's business objectives.

billable hour credit to lawyers for contributing to knowledge management.

• Knowledge management is included as a criterion in planning, but not in reporting, suggesting a gap in accountability.

Technology

Law firms have the technology tools to implement state-of-the-art knowledge management systems. The challenge lies in how best to leverage those tools. The typical components of the law firm knowledge management system are the document management system, intranet, databases, e-mail, and online research services. More than half also include a client relationship management system, enterprise information portal, and extranets.

Technology systems storing financial, business and staff information, such as business intelligence systems, financial/practice management systems, and human resources information systems are typically not included in the law firm knowledge management system. This is consistent with the finding that information relating to the business of law is rarely included in the scope of knowledge managed.

Taxonomies have been implemented by less than two-thirds of firms, with significant differences across regions. Firms face many challenges associated with ensuring that the taxonomy meets the present and future needs of a diverse user base.

Clients

The top objective of knowledge management is improved client service delivery, both as an outcome of better knowledge management, and through giving clients access to the firm's knowledge management know-how.

Clients expect firms to be active in knowledge management. Clients are focused primarily on the outcome of a firm's approach to knowledge management as it relates to client service delivery, rather than on directly accessing a firm's knowledge management systems and processes—with the exception of firms in Australia and New Zealand.

Improving the quality of client service is the main objective. Other top objectives include leveraging expertise, gaining a competitive advantage, and improving the speed of client service delivery. These results suggest that firms see knowledge management as a market differentiator and intrinsic to its delivery of client service.

Despite the above findings, only 61 percent of responding firms promote their knowledge management efforts to clients.

With the exception of U.S. firms, the responding firms generally do not offer access to their native systems, instead favoring client-specific solutions. More than 70 percent of responding firms stated that they generate no revenue from developing client-specific knowledge management solutions. **SLA**

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At Second Life, Info Pros Will Find Much To See, Do, Learn, Play With, Try Out

This virtual world has a large and growing community of librarians. Even if your first life is just fine, you should give Second Life a try.

BY STEPHEN ABRAM

Second Life: *definition* – "Second Life is an open-ended virtual world created by San Francisco-based Linden Lab. It is similar to There, another such world created around the same time, in that one of its primary focuses is socialization, but the similarity ends there. The brain child of former RealNetworks CTO Philip Rosedale, Second Life gives its users (referred to as residents) tools to shape its world." (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Life)

Avatars: *definition* – "A graphical representation of a real person in cyberspace."

Please, none of the already stale jokes that you like your first life just fine. Not only is it an old joke (the Internet has given humor a half-life of about 20 minutes), but it implies folks are putting up barriers and missing the learning moment.

We're challenged in the present by the Web, intranets, 2.0 technologies, and more every day! Now you're talking virtual worlds? What does this have to do with special library work? Lots! I've written about Web 3.0 once before in this column and pointed to the OpenCroquet project at MIT. It's worth look at www.opencroquet.org/index.php/Main_Page. This is what the world might look like if we follow the MS Windows route through Vista and beyond.

That's only one evolutionary scenario. Another scenario is that we'll follow the gaming metaphor and build virtual worlds that mirror our real world—reducing the friction between human and machine. No one can tell you what's going to happen, but we can guess at what might happen. Science fiction often seems to become reality.

Either way, we'd be wise to keep our eyes open and be aware. Change seems to happen so quickly lately.

More than 1.2 million people have created avatars in Second Life: 1,525,670 unique people have logged in at least once and of that number, 252,284 people have logged in more than 30 days after their account creation date.

Other Worlds

Anyway, I have been intrigued with virtual reality environments like Second Life (www.secondlife.com) and Active Worlds (www.activeworlds.com/) and There.com (www.there.com) for quite a while (weeks really in Internet time!). I know I'm not alone.

You've likely heard the numbers. The most conservative estimates, as of January 2007, put Second Life as a pretty large virtual ecology. More than 1.2 million people have created avatars in Second Life: 1,525,670 unique people have logged in at least once and of that number, 252,284 people have logged in more than 30 days after their account creation date. The conservative *monthly* growth rate is about 23 percent. That will 23% growth will mean 3 million in a year's time, a healthy number, but not hyperbolic growth. It can be managed and we can see the effects and react—unlike other Web-based changes we've lived through.

We're in a new world where experimentation and exciting pilots are multiplying like Tribbles (non-Trekkies will just have to look this up!). Cool! Rad! Sweet! Hot! Cats Pajamas! Whatever your age, this is so engaging and interesting to an information profession that thrives on interesting.

I am writing this article after returning from the SLA Leadership Summit in Reno. There are now more 400 librarians in Second Life working on virtual library services on more than nine "islands." Info Island, the central library island with its multi-story tower, attracts 4,000 visitors a day. Cybrary City, where the Australian Libraries building is located, has 1,000 visits per day. There are EduIslands, too. I know there are a few special librarians in Second Life. One SLA member, Jill Hurst-Wahl, has even demonstrated SL on television, proving once again that SLA has some of the coolest members.

Libraries, of course, are not the only ones here. Dell Computer runs press conferences in Second Life. Indeed at least one press conference was only held in Second Life. Reuters has an island there. Even the venerable ALA Washington Office staff and their Chicago-based information maven, Jenny Levine, The Shifted Librarian, can be found there. Many of the familiar names of leading librarians can be found underneath their Second Life

It's harder to get Second Life in the abstract—much as it was difficult to explain what the Web and Internet were going to be in the early days.

avatar identities. Libraries and librarians from around the world, including folks in Canada, Australia, and Europe are there.

Several people have asked me if Second Life libraries are much of a development. One said they just didn't get it. I know it's not age, because I'm getting up there and I get it. I didn't have a great answer at the time but it gave me the impetus to write this column. It's about the experience. It's about learning by doing.

It's harder to get Second Life in the abstract—much as it was difficult to explain what the Web and Internet were going to be in the early days. Remember 1994 when someone tried to explain the Web, gopher, Archie, html, etc. to us? I didn't find it easy to get it right away. I had to play with the technology a while to finally get it, mostly.

In a posting on the blog of the SLA Blogging Section, Jill tells us that SL has its own group of special librarians, "a meeting place for special librarians offering services in Second Life. There is also a special librarian's office in Cybrary City (location coordinates 57, 152, 25). For more information on the group and the office, contact Rosmairta Kilara in Second Life (avatar's name). In her real life, Rosmairta Rowan is a special librarian and patent searcher. Special Librarians of Second Life is not associated with SLA or another library association. As often happens in Second Life, groups are formed by people of like interests coming together no matter their real world affiliations."

See http://sla-divisions.typepad.com/itbloggingsection/2007/01/special_librari.html.

And in a tip of the hat to what's normally a very hidebound bureaucratic environment, the government of Sweden plans to open a real embassy on Second Life. No passports are available, but you can get info on how to get one, etc. See www.thelocal.se/6219/20070126.

Why is Second Life Library 2.0 Important?

I always have my antennae up to sense trends in the information and library worlds. So when I see people flocking to environments and events like Second Life, I sense that something significant is afoot. Can you do everything a library does, including books, in Second Life? So far, and this is an incomplete A-Z list, we haven't hit a boundary that says you can't do anything in Second Life that you can do in a real physical/virtual library. These are the following things that are already there, in Library 2.0:

a. A science center
b. A health information island
c. A medical library
d. The ability to search databases like PubMed
e. Art galleries and museums
f. An engineering library
g. Book talks
h. Authors as visitors and as events
i. Publishers
j. A "mystery castle"
k. A science fiction and fantasy collection
l. Classes on information literacy and library research skills
m. A huge theater
n. Training and education spaces
o. A walk-in book
p. Games
q. TechSoup
r. Educational courses
s. OCLC database trials
t. Politicians and debates

This screenshot shows Squid Cagney (a.k.a. Stephen Abram) taking a tour of Second Life Library 2.0 with BlueWings Hayek (Kelly Czarnecki, Teen Librarian at ImaginOn Library Loft of the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County). Says Stephen, "It's great to have hair again in my Second Life."

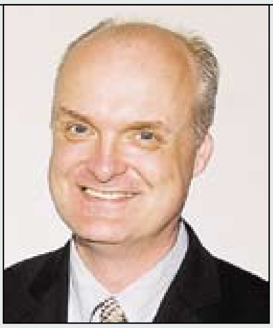
u. Programming parties
v. Wine and Cheese parties (yep—virtual food)
w. Artists discussions, with books and art
x. Chats with fellow patrons, locally and globally
y. Other people to share information with

And even . . .

z. Books and magazines!

Sounds like a library to me!

STEPHEN ABRAM, MLS, is vice president, innovation, for SirsiDynix, chief strategist for the SirsiDynix Institute, and the president-elect of SLA. He is an SLA Fellow, the past president of the Ontario Library Association, and the past president of the Canadian Library Association. In June 2003, he was awarded SLA's John Cotton Dana Award. This column contains his personal perspectives and does not necessarily represent the opinions or positions of SirsiDynix. His blog is Stephen's Lighthouse, http://stephensligthouse.sirsidynix.com. You may contact him at stephen.abram@sirsidynix.com.



Where do I find more?

- **Second Life** (started in 2003 by Linden Labs)— www.secondlife.com
- **Teen Second Life**—http://teen.secondlife.com
- **Info Island Blog**—http://infoisland.org
- **Eye4You Alliance Blog**—http://eye4youalliance.youthtech.info
- **M2-Metaverse Messenger** (the Second Life newspaper)— www.metaversemessenger.com/
- **Second Life Library Flickr Group** (screenshots)—http://del.icio.us/secondlifelibrary
- **Second Life Library Del.icio.us links** (find articles and sites)—http://flickr.com/groups/secondlifelibrary
- **Second Life Library in MySpace**—www.myspace.com/infoisland
- **Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County**—http://plcmc.org/
- **Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County Teens**—http://plcmc.org/teens/secondlife.asp
- **Alliance Library System**—http://alliancelibrarysystem.com/

You can see articles, see screenshots, and get ideas and commentary in the above links. You can even sign up for free, build or borrow an avatar, and get into Second Life. Learn by playing! Recent *School Library Journal* and *Computers in Libraries* issues have cover stories on Second Life. Give it a try. It might not be right for you but you'll have an informed opinion very quickly.

SirsiDynix is so intrigued by Second Life that we've taken to sponsoring a few of the islands including the Alliance Library Systems Library 2.0 and the Alliance Library System/Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County partnership project on Teen Second Life named "Eye4You Alliance." The purpose of the Second Life Library 2.0 is to provide real library services to Second Life residents. The goal of the Eye4You Alliance is to create a safe, interactive, and informative space for young adults within the Teen Second Life virtual world and to collaborate with other educators who serve youth and are already present in Teen Second Life and in real life.

Each library offers tours and events within their virtual presences. They have been incredibly generous with the global library community in sharing their knowledge. The SirsiDynix Institute has planned a session to tour of Second Life Library 2.0. It will be archived as a webcast and available as a podcast through iTunes. Look for it at www.sirsidynixinstitute.com and view it at your leisure.

So here we are on the cusp of a third presence for all types of libraries—special libraries included. We have our physical presence, we have our virtual presence as a Web site/intranet, and now we can have a second life in our virtual worlds.

The initial creativity seems boundless. As I take my 'noob' (newbie) self through Second Life, I am feeling the same thing I felt when I put my first Web site up in late 1994. It's a combination of excitement and play, a sense of adventure and a burgeoning feeling that I am seeing the future again.

So, build yourself an avatar and learn to play again. It's going to be a sweet ride! And while you're there, look me up. My Second Life name is Squid Cagney. **SLA**

Some Quick Guidelines For Defining Public-Domain Works

If a work is of recent origin, it's best to assume it's protected—unless it was written by the federal government.

BY LESLEY ELLEN HARRIS

Although it's commonly used in copyright parlance, the phrase "public domain" is not in the U.S. Copyright Act. It is, however, commonly used to refer to content that is not protected by copyright law for a variety of reasons, including the following:

- The duration of copyright in the work has expired. For example, in the U.S., the copyright in a book expires 70 years after the death of the author of the book. In Canada, copyright expires 50 years after the author's death.
- The work has been produced by the federal government. In the U.S., works produced by the federal government do not have copyright protection. However, a work produced by a consultant to the government may have protection, and the copyright may be transferred to the government. In other countries, such as Canada, there is copyright protection in federal government works.
- The work is not fixed in a tangible form. For example, a speech, or lecture, or improvisational comedy routine that has not previously been written or recorded in any manner.
- The work did not include a proper copyright notice. In the U.S., this does not apply to works created after March 1, 1989, since a copyright notice is no longer mandatory to protect a work. However, prior to that date, notice of copyright was necessary on all published works, and without it, the work went into the public domain. Note that most countries do not have a copyright notice requirement.
- The work does not have sufficient originality. For example, lists or tables with content from public documents or other common sources may not be eligible for copyright protection.

Works in the public domain in the U.S. include the following:

- State judicial opinions.
- Legislative enactments and other official documents.
- Titles of books or movies, short phrases and slogans, lettering or coloring.
- News, history, or ideas. A description in text or visuals, for example, of any ideas, and so on, may be protected by copyright.
- Plots, characters, and themes from works of fiction.
- Procedures, methods, systems, processes, concepts, principles, discoveries, or devices.

When a work is in the public domain, it may be used and copied freely without any permission from, or payment to, the copyright owner. For example, you could publish a public-domain book in print or electronic form. You may also modify the book in any manner.

Adaptations of Works

Adaptations of works, including translations, amended versions, and annotated works of pubic-domain works, may have their own copyright as a new version of a work and may be subject to copyright protection on their own. For example, *Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet* may be in the public domain, but a new version with annotations or illustrations may have copyright protection in these new parts of the work.

LESLEY ELLEN HARRIS is a copyright lawyer/consultant who works on legal, business, and strategic issues in the publishing, content, entertainment, Internet, and information industries. She is the editor of the print newsletter, The Copyright and New Media Law Newsletter, now in its 11th year. If you would like a sample copy of this newsletter, e-mail contact@copyrightlaws.com. She is a professor at SLA's Click University, where she teaches a number of online courses on copyright, licensing, and managing copyright and digital content for SLA members. You may now register for the winter/spring 2007 courses at: *www.clickuniversity.com,* search for Harris Online Schedule.

In Other Countries

As touched upon above, the fact that a work either is protected by copyright in the U.S. or is in the public domain in the U.S. does not mean that the same work will have the same status in another country.

For example, a government work may be in the public domain in the U.S. but protected by copyright in Canada. Also, due to different durations of copyright in different countries, a work that is still protected by copyright in the U.S. because of the 70-year duration may be in the public domain for the last 20 of those years in a country where copyright duration is 50 years.

Determining the Status of a Work

Determining if a work is in the public domain in the U.S. is complicated due to various factors such as different durations for different works and amendments in U.S. copyright laws.

A helpful chart to determine whether copyright has expired in a work in the U.S. is at http://www.copyright.cornell.edu/training/Hirtle_Public_Domain.htm. Another chart is at http://www.unc.edu/~unclng/public-d.htm. **SLA**

Does Your Perception of Your Service Match Your Clients' Opinions?

You know you're doing a great job, but your clients may not agree. The magic is in the service, the personality, and the behaviors of you and your staff.

BY DEBBIE SCHACHTER

The special library and its reputation form the basis of its brand value. A lot has been written about branding, but I would like to reflect mostly on branding and reputation, rather than the marketing aspects.

Your information center is the intangible perception of your products and services, and as a service department, it is directly impacted by the behaviors of your and your staff towards each other and towards clients. It is the reputation that you build that forms your brand value, regardless of any overt branding activities you attempt within your organization. As an individual, you are in control of your personal brand. The library brand is affected by service, personality, and behaviors.

> The value of the brand evolves in the minds of the users through the experiences that they have with the service or products.

Branding Definition

A brand is both tangible and intangible. It incorporates the identity of a service, a product, or an entity, while at the same time representing the reputation associated with that service or product. Branding is a modern term for a very old concept, often using symbols to elicit consumers' emotional responses leading them into making positive associations and building consumer loyalty.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen emphasizes the importance of brand management in respect to the Bennet family name. When the youngest Bennet daughter, Lydia, behaves in an inappropriate manner, it has a direct negative effect on the reputation of all the sisters: "Our importance, our respectability in the world must be affected by the wild behavior…"

It may seem a bit of a stretch to relate Georgian societal rules to the importance of guarding the reputation of the modern information center, but the principles are equally valid. Especially in small libraries, your brand is indelibly linked to you and your staff. Its value is linked to your reputation for quality and service, and must be guarded and developed over time.

Whether you have had the opportunity to undertake a branding exercise for your library or not, it is important to understand the process and to consider the responsibility of your brand management on a regular basis. Your brand is linked directly to you and your staff in the provision of service. The value of the brand evolves in the minds of the users through the experiences that they have with the service or products.

If you go through a formal branding exercise, you investigate what your brand means to users and discover what you may want to change about that perception. If you have the opportunity to hold focus groups for different categories of users, you can identify what descriptive words and forms of identity represent the information center or its products.

For example, when asked to describe the library or a service, users may use descriptors such as friendly, information portal, busy, fast service, relevant; or they may use terms such as old fashioned, books, quiet, unwelcoming. I think you get the picture. Whatever you believe you are portraying, you may very well be surprised as to what users perceive. The type of brand icon that you would choose to represent yourself might be completely at odds with what users would perceive.

This disconnect between your presentation and users' perceptions, also links to the people behind the branding and marketing activities. As library manager, you represent the information services to the organization. You may be seen as progressive or repressive. Your staff will generally follow your model in respect to service and responsiveness.

Rebranding

So how do you successfully rebrand when you see the need to recreate your services and value to the organization in the minds of your clients? Obviously, the relevance of the work you do is directly linked to the organization's strategic directions and vision. Senior executives will usually have the final say as to what the information services are for your organization; constraints may be set through financial and other resources. How they perceive the brand value of library services or products is entirely relevant to you.

When doing your regular survey of clients—at a minimum annually—add a few questions relating specifically to your brand identity, as perceived by your users. You may discover one of two things: 1) your brand is strong and users' perceptions are aligned with what you are trying to achieve; or 2) your brand is weak and does not represent your information center or services as you would like or as they actually are.

> You can create an icon/image or you can simply develop packaging and new delivery methods to help clients to reinterpret your brand.

If your brand is highly regarded, you should consider doing nothing. An interesting phenomenon occurs, apparently, when consumers are faced with a new brand: they distrust it in favor of the old, more familiar brand. "In general, if you assume people will follow a simple rule—'In a choice between a known quantity and an unknown quantity, I'll take the one I know, even if there's something wrong with it'—you'll be surprisingly accurate in predicting customers' choices in a variety of markets." (*Harvard Business Review*, March 2007)

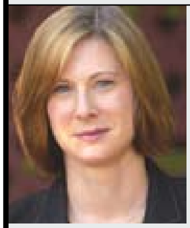
This phenomenon is called "neophobia," avoidance of the new, and it explains why people continue to ignore better services or products that appear on the market. In fact, if you decide to change your successful brand, loyal clients may become unnecessarily irritated with you, defeating the purpose the exercise.

If there is a clear disconnect between your brand (related to you services or products) and clients' perception of your brand, you must consider a rebranding exercise. I have had the opportunity to do this for a large special library (a stand-alone organization), and it was a very revealing process. Having staff and stakeholder focus groups to help identify the descriptions that you would like to apply to the information center and its services is useful in developing the new brand. You can create an icon/image or you can simply develop packaging and new delivery methods to help clients to reinterpret your brand. Just as it takes time to develop the organizational vision, developing a tag line may take time, but is very useful to help to clarify the information center's image and purpose to clients.

At the center of all of this, especially in smaller libraries, is the staff.

> You may need to work on training for developing client service skills if your brand has been damaged through poor customer service.

You may need to work on training for developing client service skills if your brand has been damaged through poor customer service. Because libraries are service organizations, the people who provide the service have the greatest impact on the brand. Make sure you are being proactive in your brand management, with an emphasis on quality. Consider rebranding primarily when there is a clear disconnect between what you are trying to achieve in the minds of your clients, and what they perceive, rather than just for the sake of the exercise. **SLA**



DEBBIE SCHACHTER has a master's degree in library science and a master's degree in business administration. She is the associate executive director of the Jewish Family Service Agency in Vancouver, British Columbia, where she is responsible for financial management, human resources, database and IT systems, and grant application management. Schachter has more than 15 years' experience in management and supervision, technology planning and support, in a variety of nonprofit and for-profit settings. She can be reached at dschachter@jfsa.ca.

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http://www.searchenginestrategies.com/sew/ny07/

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The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Hong Kong
www.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/conference/aldp2007/info/index.htm

11-14
Museums and the Web
Archives & Museum Informatics
San Francisco, California
www.archimuse.com/mw2007

14-17
2nd Latin American Conference of Library Science
Buenos Aires, Argentina
www.el-libro.com.ar/33feria/2CIB

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SIIA Content Forum and Codie Awards
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www.siia.net/cf/2007/

16-18
Computers in Libraries 2007
Information Today
Arlington, Virginia
www.infotoday.com/cil2007/default.shtml

16-18
European Information Society Conference
Hämeenlinna, Finland
www.hameenliitto.fi/eisco2007/index.php

16-19
AIIM Expo
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
www.aiimexpo.com/aiimexpo2007/v42/index.cvn

18-22
Association of Independent Information Professionals 21st Annual Conference
Minneapolis, Minnesota
www.aiip.org/Conference/2007/index.html

23-26
First International Conference on Research Challenges in Information Science
Ecole Marocaine des Sciences de l'Ingénieur & Institut du Futur de l'Informatique
www.farcampus.com/rcis/index.php

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Art Libraries Society of North America 35th Annual Conference
Atlanta, Georgia
www.arlis-se.org/atlanta2007

April 30-May 3
Society of Competitive Intelligence Professionals International Annual Conference
New York City
www.scipstore.org/07annual/index.php

MAY

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Internet World
Ithaca Business Media
London, UK
www.internetworld.co.uk

1-3
Perfect Information Conference
Bath, U.K.
www.perfectinfo.com/learningevents.htm

6-11
4th International Evidence Based Library and Information Practice Conference
Chapel Hill-Durham, North Carolina
www.eblip4.unc.edu

4-11
4th International Evidence Based Library and Information Practice Conference
School of LIS at UNC-Chapel Hill and UNC Institute on Aging
Chapel Hill-Durham, North Carolina
www.eblip4.unc.edu

5-10
Patent Information Users Group Annual Conference
Costa Mesa, California
www.piug.org/2007/an07meet.php

8-12
16th International World Wide Web Conference
Banff, Alberta, Canada
http://www2007.org/

10-12
Canadian Association for Information Science 35th Annual Conference
Montréal, Canada
www.cais-acsi.ca/2007call.htm

15-16
Enterprise Search Summit 2007
Information Today
New York City
www.enterprisesearchsummit.com

18-23
Medical Library Association Annual Meeting
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
www.mlanet.org/am/index.html

19-23
IRMA International Conference
Information Resources Management Association
Vancouver, Canada
www.irma-international.org/conferences/2007/index.asp

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Canadian Library Association 61st Annual Conference and Trade Show
St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada
www.cla.ca/conference/2007/index.html

JUNE 3-6
SLA Annual Conference
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www.sla.org

May 28-June 1
Canadian Health Libraries Association Conference
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
www.chla-absc.ca/2007/index_e.htm

May 28-June 2
Libraries in the Digital Age
Dubrovnik and Mljet, Croatia
www.ffos.hr/lida

JUNE

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Search Engine Strategies
Search Engine Watch
Toronto, Canada
www.searchenginestrategies.com/sew/toronto07/index.html

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9th International Conference on Enterprise Information Systems (ICEIS)
Institute for Systems and Technologies of Information, Control and Communication and Universidade da Madeira
Funchal, Madeira, Portugal
www.iceis.org

ADVERTISING INDEX

SLA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

If You Want To Be an Influential Info Pro, Look for the Not-Ordinary Nuggets

Information professionals are well placed to become key members of their organizations—catalysts for new thinking.

BY JOHN R. LATHAM

In his book *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell refers to people he calls "influentials," who are unusually informed, persuasive, or well connected. Although Gladwell is concentrating on social epidemics, the definition of an influential hit a chord with me as I thought how that phrase aptly describes an information professional.

If we cannot be unusually informed within our organizations, we might as well give up, or at least say goodbye to career advancement. Looking at definitions of "unusually," I came across words like remarkably, exceptionally, and extraordinarily, which, to me, are just extensions of the word "very."

The definitions that I preferred in this context are "not ordinarily" or "atypically." If we are going to be noticed and appreciated, of course, we have to be "very" informed, but to be remembered by the people who matter in our organizations and seen to be truly valuable, we need to find those atypical or out-of-the-ordinary nuggets of information. We have so many people now who are capable of finding information adequate for their needs that we have to find the bit that hits you between the eyes and says, "That's an amazing idea, why can't we do it?"

Okay, I hear you say, "And how do I find time for that?" I do not have enough time to deal with the day-to-day requirements of my job, let alone to go gold digging. And what am I looking for?

The true answer is, I don't know. It is quite possible that you won't be the person who sees the true potential of the information shared, but being the catalyst is fine. I refer you to Stephen Abram's "Info Tech" column in the February issue of *Information Outlook*, in which he suggests that you set aside 15 minutes a day to play with new Web sites and services, and learn about new technologies. Use some of this time to forward links that you think might interest colleagues and management even if they do not appear to have any obvious relevance to your business.

As a caveat, I suggest that you explain why you are sending the links so that the recipient does not get into the delete mode. Comments like "Interesting in light of what we were talking about last month," or "Amazing new concept or technology," will help to avoid the recipient's wondering why on earth you sent the link. I personally enjoy receiving this sort of information, but some people view it as spam, unless they receive a well-researched report about why some new technology or concept should be considered.

Persuasion

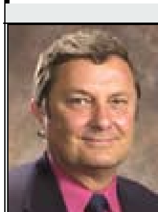
Influentials have to be persuasive. Some of us are just better at being persuasive than others. I am not a good salesman, so I have to rely on being well prepared and knowing the best way to keep the individual's or group's attention to get my point across.

Being well connected was Gladwell's third requirement for an influential. Nepotism might help, but I would not put too much emphasis on that approach. Debbie Schachter's excellent "Info Business" column in the February *Information Outlook* explains how working with boards effectively is an important management role.

To this, I would add a few of my lifetime experiences. It is important to isolate the shakers and movers within the organization, and, believe me, these may not be the CEO or VPs. You certainly have to keep them in your sights, but someone else, or some group or committee, may be the real power within the organization. Make sure you keep well connected with all of them.

Cultivate the executive assistants and anyone who has the ear of the CEO, president, or whomever you decide is a real mover and shaker. Asking for advice about good resources or where to look for information does not necessarily mean that you are not doing your job, but often flatters and roughs up their peacock feathers. They may take credit for your idea, as board members love to show off in front of their peers, but hopefully you will retain the kudos in their eyes. Just make sure that you keep a record of your involvement in case they conveniently forget.

Finally, don't forget Debbie Schachter's important point that you should keep your immediate boss informed if you are dealing directly with the board, as you do not want to appear to be undermining your immediate superior by "going above her/his head."



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