

Closing address

Schizophrenia vs evolution?

The many roles of librarians

By

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Layout

1. Purpose of Colloquium
2. Some ICT in the library
3. Role of the librarian
4. Masters of the Universe vs obsolete dinosaurs
5. Reflect on papers
6. Future: Changing roles lead to schizophrenia or evolution

Purpose

Create an opportunity for practicing librarians:

- to share and learn from each other's experiences and strategies in addressing the changes and challenges that information technology brought to the higher education, academic and research library world



Purpose

Create an opportunity for practicing librarians:

- to reflect on their professional growth and experiences
 - recognize the value of their expertise, knowledge and experience
- to engage and network with their colleagues in the higher education, academic and research libraries



Purpose

- By celebrating the success we have had in using ICT in our Libraries to enhance our services or create new services
- Hence: Gems from the electronic coalface

Library ICT

- OPAC

- 1980 -automation of library catalogue
- 1990 – integrate circulation, acquisitions
- GUI, WEB user interface
- Networked include CDROM
- Hyperlink- not only catalogue, but render accessible all library resources from the OPAC
- One stop-shop
 - OPAC vs Library Web site is it resolved?



OPAC

These developments create an electronic environment that comes close to the ideal of the OPAC being a one-stop shop with a “common user interface” to various databases. However, while a common user interface may be possible technologically, not all libraries will opt to use it, considering such issues as loss of functionality.

Because of the ubiquity of the Web, users are becoming increasingly familiar with the Web environment, and are therefore not disadvantaged by the lack of a common user interface in the form of the OPAC. (Darries, 2002)

ICT in Library

- CDROM –
 - in mid-80's, print and electronically, bibliographic, encyclopedia's dictionaries, improvement in searching
 - Search interface – menu driven to GUI, different search levels
 - Networked, either via OPAC, remote access
 - Will continue to exist, like the book, with other electronic media

ICT in Library

- Online databases
 - Ojala (1999) 4 phases of development
 1. Batch era – input query, 2 days to process
 2. Interactive – entering into interactive dialog
 3. Dynamic – multiplicity of sources, mutability of information and access to that information
 4. Intuitive – software that learns from our searching behaviour
 - 1998 move to Web

ICT in Library

- Internet & WWW
- 1969 – ARPAnet used US government
- 70's-80's – Internet used US gov & scientific community
- 1991 development of Web Tim Berners-Lee
- Objective of the Web ...

ICT in Library

- provision of a simple protocol for requesting human readable information stored in remote systems accessible using networks;
- provision of a protocol by which information could automatically be exchanged in a format common to the information supplier and the information consumer;
- to allow documents or collections of documents managed by individuals to be linked by hyperlinks to other documents or collection of documents;
- the provision of a search option, to allow information to be automatically searched for by keywords, in addition to being navigated to by the following of hyperlinks;
- provision of the necessary software free of charge

New roles

- Intermediary & end-user
- Decrease in number of intermediary searches and increase in end-user searches. (Tenopir et al during 1990's)

New roles

Due to

- number of e-resources in library,
- availability of traditionally print resources on the Web
- the Web,
- remote access to library resources,
- increasing knowledge and use of technology by users

New roles

- Redundancy theory
- *“Access to the Internet will become so universal that libraries will become superfluous”* (Pollitz, 1994)
- Librarians will become obsolete-dinosaurs

New roles

- Cybrarian
- Librarians will play a central role
“as masters of the universe in a world increasingly reliant on information”
(Hathorn, 1997)

Taking the library to the users ... boldly going

- Cover of Incite, 1999, vol.20



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New roles

- Users prefer an information intermediary
- Package information
- Reference consultants who can give specialised advice and evaluation
- Link content from multiple sources
- Provide context
- Facilitator between user and information needs and publisher

New roles

- Primary architect of the information tools of the future
- Internet – part of information toolkit
 - New search rhythm
- Instructor/ facilitator of learning

New roles

- Instructor/ trainer/facilitator of learning
 - Bibliographic instruction
 - Teaming up with faculty
 - Search strategies systematically and efficiently
 - Negotiate different search interfaces
 - Access and use of e-resources
 - Evaluate
 - Information Literacy

New roles

- Library Web master
 - Library intranet
 - Library Web site vs OPAC as one stop shop of information
 - Personal web site
- Gateways and portals

New services

- Electronic Reference
- Institutional repositories
 - ETDs
- Online instruction
 - Online tutorials, e-mailed lessons and live instructions classes using chat technology – the virtual classroom.

Where is the added value?

- Collecting together
 - Organising
 - And rendering information accessible
- i.e. What librarians have always done