



CLOSER COLLABORATION IS EXACTLY WHAT WE NEED

Dear Editor,

Janine Schmidt raised an important question for our profession in *INCITE* (Jan/Feb 2014) when she suggests "Perhaps closer collaboration between the practice and the teaching of the profession would bring better learning?" Although Janine focussed on expert searching, the need for closer collaboration has been evident for many years in many areas in my view.

Over the years, I have met many graduates who were not exposed to real life budgeting for libraries and other management skills, such as strategic planning and professional marketing concepts – as opposed to promotion and advocacy – and yet were encouraged to believe they were capable of being managers on graduation. It is sad to meet graduates who do not know the difference between budgeting for total costs including labour, rent and capital expenditure and budgeting for direct materials only (for example publications, licences) so when cost cuts are demanded they may not understand where to make the most astute strategic cuts. Also some appear to believe that knowing how to attract media attention or to produce fliers are all that is needed for marketing.

Equally, I have also met many graduates with elementary knowledge of both the search process and the online resources available either for free or for a fee. Many law schools in Australia have encouraged their students to use Lexis. Therefore when the students graduate and start work they are already familiar with the search protocols and the content. However most (not all) library schools in Australia have rejected offers for free access to vendors' online services and so their students graduate without first-hand experience of the resources they may have to use after graduation. How then can they guide their users to be competent searchers?

Janine discussed the web-scale discovery search engines used in networked environments such as large public and

academic libraries. I think it is also important to consider the convergence now occurring between workflow management systems, knowledge management, records management, know-how tools and other management systems. In my view, it is critical that library educators are fully familiar with these new trends from major vendors. This is especially necessary to make sure future graduates wanting work as special librarians in government, companies and law firms are familiar with the access to information their clients now have at their desktops and on their mobile devices, irrespective of whether there is a library and a librarian or not.

I would like to believe that professional librarians in law firms, government departments and companies will continue to play a pivotal role in the dissemination of information within their organisations and also in the harnessing of internally created data and information. But I believe there is a risk in the future that some may be replaced by sophisticated expensive systems authorised and paid for by upper management.

I would also like to believe that librarians will continue to be the experts responsible for evaluating information sources, including online resources, and training users how to search various sources including the free web. I also think professional librarians may find valued niches by honing their information analysis skills and learning how to transform the information they retrieve into insights.

In my view there are significant information technology changes occurring now that will impact on the role of special librarians especially. I hope Australian library and information science educators are thoroughly familiar with the changes and are adjusting their curricula, developing and maintaining strong relationships with all relevant vendors.

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NO (AGE) LIMITS

Dear Editor,

I noticed the Jan/Feb 2014 issue of *INCITE* featured hipster librarians. But you know there is no age limit to hipster. Check out the librarians at our university, all dressed up to promote their services. Featured are Connie Pan and Suzanne Munro of the Sydney campus library.

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CALLING ALL POP UPS

We are a group working together on a project concerning pop up libraries as a part of the Shared Leadership program offered by the State Library of Victoria. We chose the topic of pop up libraries because we are excited by the possibilities inherent in them to promote what public libraries have to offer in a fun and unexpected way.

Aided by our project sponsor, Library Services Manager at the Shire of Campaspe Jenny Mustey, we plan to investigate the pop up libraries currently operating nationally and reflect on their success in promoting the services we offer to users and non-users of the public library system.

If you or your library service have recently, or currently, run a pop up library, please get in contact with a member of our team to tell us about your experience. Our members are Asha Davis, Mildura Rural City Council Library Service; Celia Rice, Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation; Deanne Spagnolo, Brimbank Library Service; Josephine Struck, Moreland City Libraries and Suzie Bull, Mornington Peninsula Library Service

Please email us at popuplibraries@gmail.com.

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