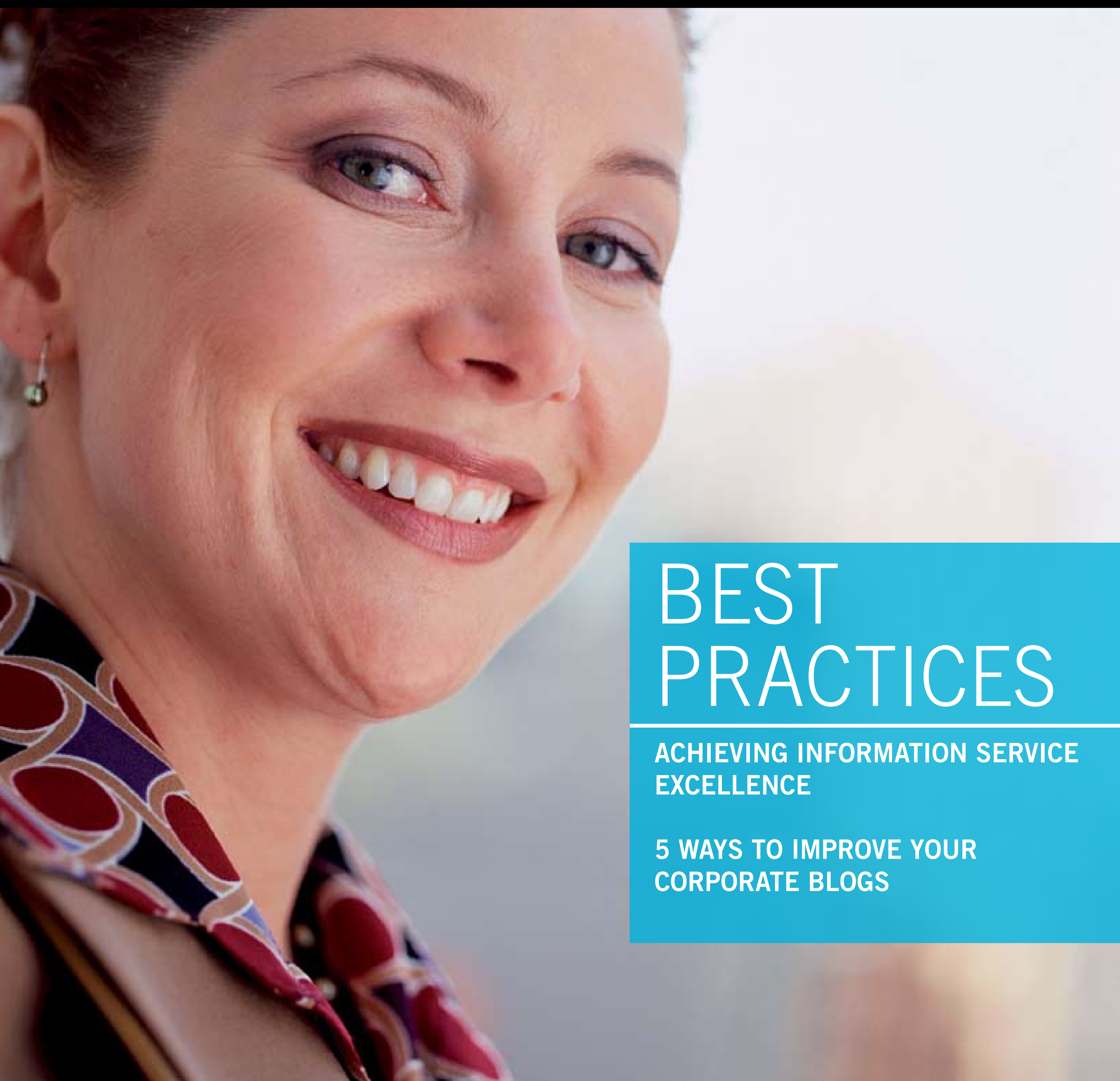
Information Outlook, January 2007

Special Libraries Association

01 | 07
V 11 | N 01

information outlook

THE MAGAZINE OF THE SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION



BEST PRACTICES

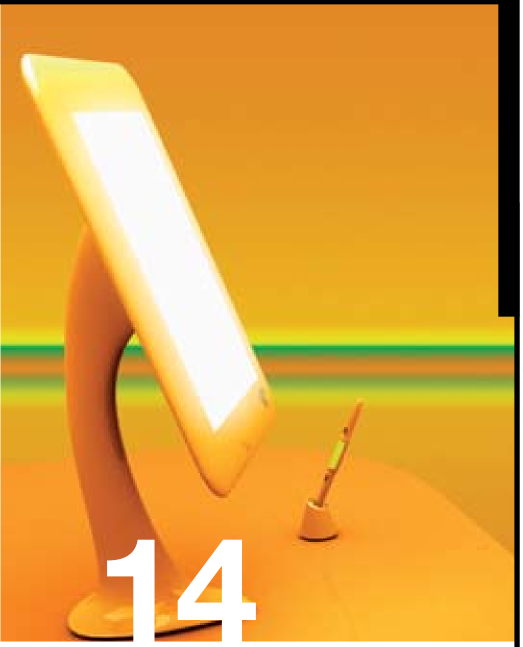
ACHIEVING INFORMATION SERVICE EXCELLENCE

5 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR CORPORATE BLOGS

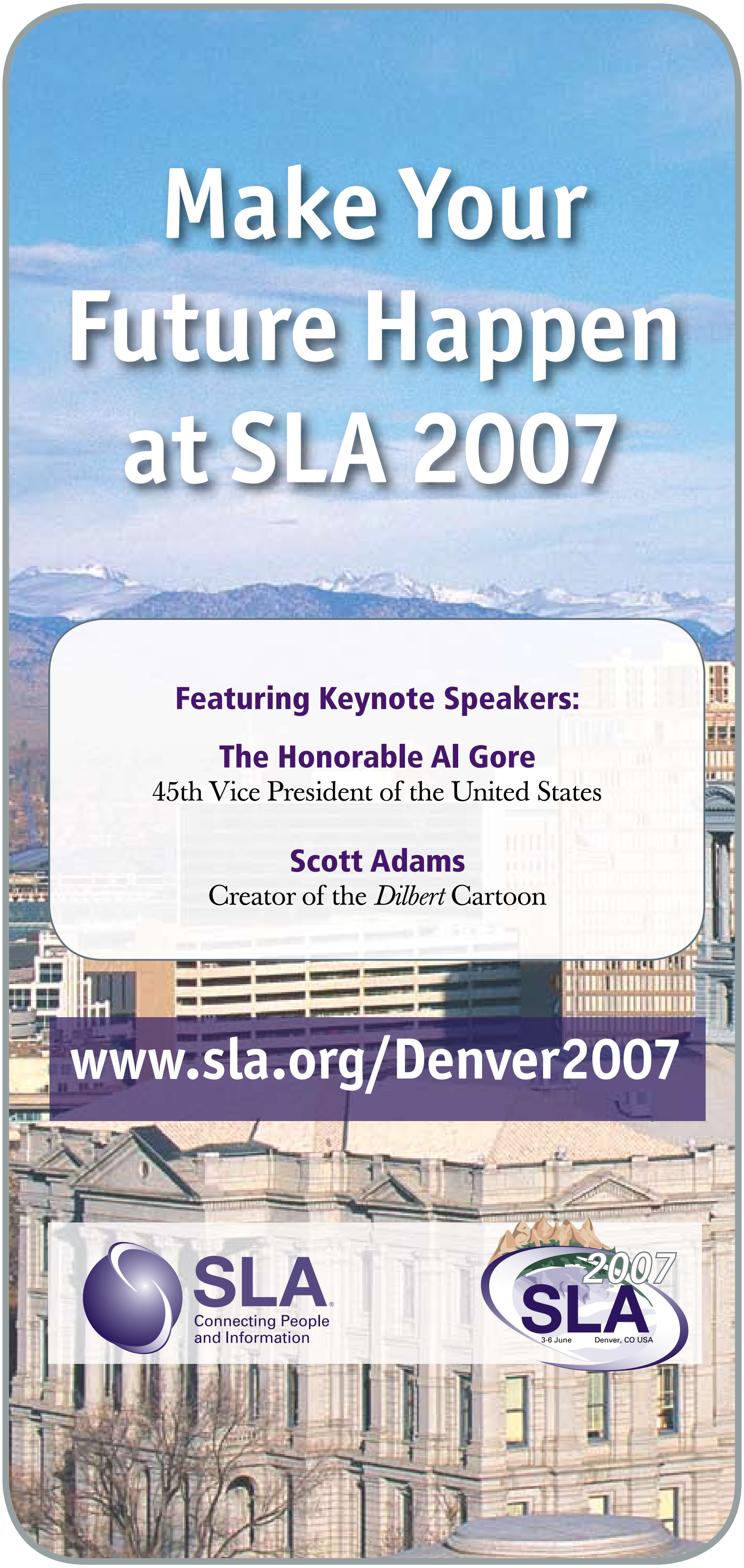
01
07
V 11 | N 01

information outlook

THE MAGAZINE OF THE SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION



Focus: Best Practices



information outlook

The Monthly Magazine of the
Special Libraries Association
Vol. 11, No. 01
January 2007

Publisher, Editor in Chief: John T. Adams III (jadams@sla.org)

Columnists:
Stephen Abram
Lesley Ellen Harris
Janice R. Lachance
John R. Latham
Debbie Schachter
Carolyn J. Sosnowski
Rebecca B. Vargha

Layout & Design: Nathan Yungkans

Information Outlook®
(ISSN 1091-0808) is the monthly, award-winning publication of the Special Libraries Association, 331 South Patrick Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, magazine@sla.org. (703) 647-4900

2006 Subscription Rates:
Annual subscription, $125 (U.S. and International). Single issue, $15. Please report missing copies promptly to publications@sla.org. To ensure continuous delivery of *Information Outlook,* please notify SLA promptly of address changes by writing membership@sla.org. When submitting address changes, please include all the information on the mailing label. Changes may not go into effect for four to six weeks.

Postmaster:
Send address changes to Subscriptions, *Information Outlook,* Special Libraries Association, International Headquarters, 331 South Patrick Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-3501, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Alexandria, VA, and at additional mailing offices. Canadian Publications Mail Agreement #40031619. Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: P.O. Box 1051, Fort Erie, ON L2A 6C7.

Advertising:
Acceptance of an advertisement does not mean endorsement of the product by the Special Libraries Association. To advertise, contact:

Eastern United States and Europe
Nancy Wood
55 Old Highway 22
Clinton, NJ 08809
Phone: (908) 730-7220
Fax: (908) 730-7225
nancyw@wgholdsworth.com

Western United States and Pacific Rim
Bill Albrant
250 El Camino Real
Suite 106
Tustin, CA 92780
Phone: (714) 544-2555
Fax: (714) 832-6840
billa@wgholdsworth.com

Information Outlook® is a registered trademark of the Special Libraries Association.

SLA
Connecting People and Information

magazine@sla.org
Information Outlook Online
Sponsored by
Standard & Poor's

Welcome to the New-Look Information Outlook

It's a fresh new look as SLA's magazine begins its 11th year.

BY REBECCA B. VARGHA, SLA PRESIDENT

In Roman mythology, the image of Janus is typically personified with two faces looking in opposite directions—backward and forward. His character is associated with doors and gates. January, his namesake, is an excellent time to reflect on the past year and to look forward to our future with a new format for Information Outlook. According to Edith Hamilton in her classic work, Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes, Janus was the Roman god of "good beginnings which surely result in good endings."

In anticipation of the years ahead, our professional publication is recreated with a spirit of renewal and positive evolution. Change is an integral part of SLA culture. The publication is 10 years old, and the beginning of a new year is an excellent time to unveil its new look. The new format is a major and exciting change for our organization.

Over the last several months, SLA staff have worked diligently with outside designer Bussolati Associates to develop and create an updated look for the publication. The goal was to establish a modern look that would appeal to a wide spectrum of members, regardless of specific industry or level of experience in the profession. My sincere thanks to the SLA staff who worked tirelessly to accomplish this task.

As you look through this premier issue, notice the stronger logo, which maintains and strengthens the publication's identity as a familiar source of information. The new, clean type faces for text and headlines add a contemporary look and improve readability. To improve uniformity and increase the margins slightly, the page grid has been standardized. Overall, this gives Information Outlook a subtly neater appearance.

In December 2006, I was very fortunate in having an opportunity to see the traveling exhibit titled "Monet in Normandy" at the North Carolina Museum of Art (*www.ncartmusem.org*).

Monet was a master of impressionism in France, and this exhibit includes 50 paintings of his works from private and public collections in the United States, Europe, and Japan. The exhibit was a partnership organized by the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, and the North Carolina Museum of Art. Since the paintings of Monet are among my favorites and the images are so familiar, I went to the exhibit expecting to see the usual enjoyable haystacks, water lilies, and poplars.

The exhibition was very different and exceeded my expectations. It focused on the region of Normandy where he painted real masterpieces. The range of paintings selected by the curators truly reflected Monet's achievements by encouraging one to look beyond first impressions. Along the same lines, I encourage you to look beyond the first impressions of Information Outlook. As SLA members, we are very familiar with the contents. Take a few moments to step back a few feet just as you would with a painting by Monet. Then move across the room and see how your impressions change. It really is a matter of perspective!

All the familiar columns and departments remain, but with new names that echo those of the past while adding a contemporary flair:

- Executive Outlook is now Info View.
- News Briefs is now Info News.
- Business Management is now Info Business.
- Web Sites Worth a Click is now Info Sites.
- Copyright Corner is now Info Rights.
- Information Tech is now Info Tech.
- Information Management is now Info Management.

Our profession is changing rapidly and Information Outlook is changing and moving forward to meet the needs of our members. Enjoy our new look and the reinvention of our publication as we move into the next 12 months together.

Centennial Planning

As we begin a new year, I am pleased to announce the creation of the Centennial Commission and Conference Committee for 2009.

The SLA Board of Directors created the group in December to plan our annual conference and centennial celebration in Washington, D.C., a mere two years from now. Dav Robertson is the chair of the group. You can reach him at *robert11@niehs.nih.gov.* Please share your suggestions and thoughts with him for celebrating SLA's 100th anniversary in 2009 as the planning process is beginning now.

In looking to our future, like Janus, we look to the past with a deep appreciation of just how far our profession has progressed over the last 97 years. As a membership organization, SLA represents the continuity of a progressive professional association while looking forward to a future filled with rapid change.

I wish everyone a successful and most productive year in 2007.

Yours in SLA,

Rebecca B. Vargha

SLA Member Chairs Bibliographic Control Panel for LoC

Updates on the information profession — and SLA.

SLA member José-Marie Griffiths of the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has been named chair of the newly formed Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control.

SLA member Gary Price of Ask.com is also a member. He was put forth and is serving as SLA's official representative to the group.

Building on the work and results of the library's Bicentennial Conference on Bibliographic Control for the New Millennium (2001), the group will:

- Present findings on how bibliographic control and other descriptive practices can effectively support management of and access to library materials in the evolving information and technology environment.
- Recommend ways in which the library community can collectively move toward achieving this vision.
- Advise the Library of Congress on its role and priorities.

"I agreed to chair this group because these issues are facing all libraries. It is an important opportunity for different sectors of the information profession to examine a common problem and recommend solutions that will benefit librarians and users," Griffiths said in a press release from the library.

Advances in search-engine technology, the popularity of the Internet and the influx of electronic information resources have greatly changed the way libraries do their work.

Libraries are looking at ways to catalog the avalanche of both print and digital materials that come to them for classification and control, and library managers worldwide recognize the need to examine critically the role of the catalog and its relationship to other methods of finding information.

During its inaugural meeting at the Library of Congress in November, working group members concluded that, rather than planning a single summit meeting on the future of bibliographic control, it would schedule three regional meetings during 2007. The venues will be in or near large airports in different regions of the United States to make it easier for a broad range of participants to travel to the meetings.

The working group also organized issues and affected parties into three broad categories: uses and users, structures and standards, and economics and organization. Each category will be the focus of one regional meeting in 2007. The meetings will be preceded by distribution of a background paper that gives an overview of the current environment in which bibliographic control operates.

In July or August, after the three meetings have taken place, the working group will meet again to draft a report and recommendations for public comments, which will be taken into account in the group's final report, to be issued by November 1, 2007.

Members of the Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control are:

- Richard Amelung for the American Association of Law Libraries.
- Diane Dates Casey, Janet Swan Hill, and Sally G. Smith for the American Library Association.
- Brian E.C. Schottlaender, Olivia M.A. Madison, and Judith Nadler representing the Association of Research Libraries.
- Robert Wolven for the Program for Cooperative Cataloging.
- Daniel Clancy for the Google Company.
- Jay Girotto for the Microsoft Corporation.
- Clifford A. Lynch of the Coalition for Networked Information.
- Lorcan Dempsey of OCLC.

More information on the Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control will be available at *www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future*. **SLA**

Libraries are looking at ways to catalog the avalanche of both print and digital materials that come to them for classification and control, and library managers worldwide recognize the need to examine critically the role of the catalog and its relationship to other methods of finding information.

A Grab Bag of Sites, All Worth a Click

LISZEN to blogs on information science, or listen to podcasts from college students. Or just work on your New Year's resolutions.

BY CAROLYN J. SOSNOWSKI, MLIS

New Year's Resolutions Guide **www.umm.edu/features/resolutions_guide.htm**

Happy New Year! As I was preparing this column, a colleague recommended including a site for those of us who are putting a positive spin on the new year by starting projects and setting other types of goals. The staff at the University of Maryland Medical Center has compiled some suggestions for a successful 2007, and we should try to apply these in our professional lives as well. A few to get you started: set realistic, attainable goals, share goals with others to keep yourself on track, use mistakes as opportunities for learning, and begin as soon as possible to get the momentum going. And reward yourself for a job well done!

LISZEN **www.liszen.com**

I can't help it…I'm all about the blogs. The new LISZEN—Library and Information Science Search Engine—uses Google Co-op, a create-your-own search engine, to search LIS blogs. Garrett Hungerford, the site's creator (also a public library network manager and an LIS student), started with the blogs listed on LISWiki (also worth a click), and now there are more than 500 blogs to search. If yours isn't listed, add your blog to the LISZEN wiki and submit your contact information. Simple. And now, simpler to find that post about [your topic here] that you know you read but can't remember where.

LiSRadio **www.lisradio.missouri.edu**

What are the LIS students up to these days? At the University of Missouri-Columbia, they're podcasting. Check out LiSRadio, where you'll find conversations on jobs and other LIS topics, plus interviews with vendors, publishers, and professors. Download a podcast from the archives, or view the calendar for upcoming shows of interest and listen live. Lots of instructions for listeners and participants. Subscribe to feeds for individual series or all of them. Some content is directed at local students, but you'll likely find something to listen to and even a few ideas for a podcasting in your own information center.

KnittingHelp **www.knittinghelp.com**

Amy Finlay has put together a detailed guide to knitting. Although learning from an individual or in a class may be optimal, the instructions and videos here are descriptive enough to get a beginner going on simple projects. Finlay offers helpful suggestions throughout, from cast-on to knit and purl to bind-off, and many stitches in between. Learn about tension, yarn types, needles, and how to correct errant stitches. The site includes links to free patterns, and there are forums and chat to share and learn from others. **SLA**

IEEE Continuing Education Stipend Essay Contest

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers continuing education stipend will be given to the Engineering Division member who submits the best essay on how the applicant will benefit professionally from an SLA continuing education course.

The winner will receive $1,000 for expenses incurred while attending any CE course offered at the 2007 Special Libraries Association Annual Conference in Denver. It may be applied to travel, food, and one night's accommodation. Award applicants must be members in good standing in the SLA Engineering Division for at least one year as of January 1, 2007.

The deadline for submission is March 1.

The winner will be required to submit an article to SciTech News within 12 months of completion on how the course helped him or her either in library applications or professionally.

Applicants should submit a one- to three-page (double-spaced) essay on how they will benefit professionally from the specific continuing education course. The applicant's full name should be at the top of each page. In addition, the applicant's full name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address should be included with the submission.

The recipient of the award will be notified by April 1.

Entries should be sent to: Penny S. Sympson, SLA Engineering Division Awards Committee, Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates Inc., 330 Pfingsten Road, Northbrook, IL 60062. She may be reached at (847) 753-7202 (voice), (847) 498-0358 (fax), or *psympson@wje.com.* **SLA**

Achieving Information Service Excellence

MARIAN THE LIBRARIAN HAS HER WORK CUT OUT FOR HER. WITH HER BOSS SCRUTINIZING PURCHASED CONTENT, SHE HAS TO DEVELOP A BEST-PRACTICES PROGRAM FOR HER DEPARTMENT.

BY BETTY JO HIBBERD

It's 6:30 p.m. on Monday and our heroine, Marian Paroo, has just finished a lengthy meeting with her manager. From the look on her face, the news is not good. Once again, the budget of the information center is being scrutinized and this time it's all about the purchase of content—one of her major responsibilities.

Marian's manager wants a new methodology developed and implemented that covers both the decision making and tracking for this task. But, more bothersome to Marian now, is that this methodology is to be based on "best practices" within the industry. And the project needs to be rolled out by the end of the quarter, a mere six weeks away.

Marian has a rising sense of panic because she's not sure just how to go about establishing a best practice. While everyone talks about "best practice," *exactly* what is it? Why should Marian's company adopt a process that may come from what someone else considers "best?" And what about obstacles she may encounter?

The goal of this article is to provide a starting point for our hypothetical Marian (whose name comes from "Marian, the Librarian" in *The Music Man*) and for anyone else who has run into a similar situation.

Definitions, Pitfalls, and Adoptions

While there are many nuances in definitions of best practice, they generally fall into two categories: those that originate in an external organization or those taken from a process that has been successful within your own organization. For our purposes, we will use the definition of a best practice as "a concept referring to the best way of doing something."

Using best practices is ideal for optimum performance, but Marian may encounter some obstacles. Internally, there are potential drawbacks in several areas. First, it is sometimes difficult to make tacit knowledge explicit or to explain exactly what is done in a "step-by-step" fashion to create a best practice. Additionally, the time it takes to research and create a best practice in a resource-shy environment may often seem overwhelming. Another stumbling block can be the identification of critical business knowledge that pinpoints gaps in the current process. Finally, it takes effort to implement and gain acceptance of a best practice within an organization so, frequently, it's much easier to continue with the current "accepted" workflow.

As for external obstacles, the cost of purchasing benchmarking reports or outsourced surveys can strain budgets. And, although there is discussion in the literature about working with colleagues in other organizations to share best practices, Marian may find that a best practice is considered a competitive advantage and so precludes this type of cooperation.

Should Marian take the trouble to adopt best practices only because her manager has requested it, or are there other reasons?

Given the expectation to do more with less and to ever maximize current resources, adopting a best practice

can help improve work processes for delivery of products and services to better meet client needs. That translates into achieving effectiveness, efficiencies, and economies that are extremely important to senior management. It also aids in building stronger relationships across the organization.

Perhaps most important, however, this type of effort, if communicated properly, will help prove the value of the information center, raising the perception of its importance to the organization and helping to gain improved support from upper management.

So, just how does Marian go about creating and implementing a best practice to help her gain control of content purchases, thereby pleasing her manager, making points with the organization and, in general, saving the day?

Five Steps To Operational Excellence

The process of identifying and implementing a best practice can be outlined in five steps:

- Assessing internal needs by looking at the business needs of the organization and how the information center must perform to help meet those needs, including performance objectives.
- Understanding current practices by capturing the current workflow that meets those business needs, and then by identifying the gaps and points of failure in the process.
- Examining alternative practices, whether internal or external, including research into benchmarks for the process and as analysis to identify possible improvements.
- Modeling the best practice by selecting an appropriate solution and then creating a new workflow or process for implementation.
- Implementing the new process, which requires measurement of the new service—and communication of the results to your staff, your customers, and senior management.

Let's look at each of these steps in more detail.

"In a business environment characterized by new ways of doing business and fiercely competitive marketplaces, workplace libraries are facing major challenges. Key to meeting these is the ability to demonstrate value for money and return on investment through the provision of highest quality service aligned with organizational goals. In this turbulent setting, the ability to share best practice and pool experience is invaluable and provides the workplace information manager with the opportunity not only to learn from others, but also to help establish and strengthen perceptions of the in-house information unit as being among the most effective."
— Caroline Oades, in "Benchmarking Workplace Libraries"

Step 1: Assessing Internal Needs

Before looking at business needs, it's important to clarify who are the customers of the information center. There are three groups: first, senior management or those who have ultimate control over your budget and existence; second, client users, those who use your resources and services, either through onsite visits or via electronic means; and, finally, the information center staff itself. The quality of service found in the information center is directly attributed to the knowledge, experience, and attitude of the staff. How they feel affects their performance and the type of service they deliver. (Gohlke, 1997)

All three of these customer communities are critical to Marian's efforts. These improvements will impress upper management and please her clients. *And* the full support of the staff is necessary to her plans as they must carry out the research and make the resulting improvements.

Identify business needs. Surprisingly, according to Laurie Kauffman, of Net Worth Consulting, Inc., business needs may look like they don't have much to do with information needs. But what could be more important to any business or organization than coming up with new ideas, developing better processes, or improving implementation of those processes, (Kauffman, 2003) the true "activities of business."

Identifying the gap between the status quo and potential business activities will pinpoint the business needs. In reality, this is the point of the activities the information center does for its clients. And it's important to realize that these activities of locating and filling the gaps are what are important to senior management—the first group of Marian's customers. For instance, requests for information coming into the information center—such as queries into the existence and utility of current technologies, market intelligence, and customer and competitor research—may already highlight some areas of business need and, in all likelihood, inform the content purchases that Marian is making.

And for Marian, an important question she might ask at this point is whether there is a regular review of content planning as it relates to stated organizational goals and objectives. Identification of the business needs can inform the type of content she needs to purchase. While she may already have a working list, because of the budgetary constraints to achieve this move to "best practices," a new examination of priorities and key drivers is in order.

It takes effort to implement and gain acceptance of a best practice within an organization so, frequently, it's much easier to continue with the current "accepted" workflow.

Identify performance needs. This part of step one is where Marian must combine the expectations of senior management and those of the information center clients so critical to the success of her project. For senior management, they fall into three categories: how much money you receive and how you spend it; how you save money for the company and how much; and how much time you save your clients that increases productivity. As you can see, this is all about the wise use of resources to help increase the bottom line.

As for clients, typically they expect the information center to offer expert service, and the information or content they need when they need it. Also of interest is how quickly information problems can be solved, and whether they will trade off time for quality—in other words, how well you fill their requests. (Gohlke, 1997)

One of the best ways to determine performance needs is to conduct a needs assessment. This is the process of gaining an understanding of your clients' information use habits, preferences, and perceptions, based on their direct feedback. It is also an opportunity to gain information about non-users as well as those currently served.

This process will give Marian a view of information and how it's used and perceived through the lens of the user. Often, info pros provide information into a narrow window of the work life of the professionals they serve. What other needs are not being met? What services are not valued? Can she eliminate some services to free up resources or improve other services to make them more appreciated? And what standards are acceptable to her customers?

Also, there are usually many non-users in an organization. Needs assessment studies allow information professionals to understand their needs as well. For Marian, this is a way to tap into potential supporters for the information center, which might translate into a budget increase.

Set performance objectives. Now that you've finished your needs assessment, you need to step back and look at what you've discovered or analyze the data. Needs assessment, just like anything else you do, should be placed in context of your overall business. You serve different kinds of users in different business groups and needs vary from group to group. To understand what each group values and communicate the value of your offering more effectively, it's important to look at the information from a needs assessment as a story that the data tells.

Here are some questions to get you started that have been taken from the balanced scorecard approach as explained in an article by Joseph Matthews:

- How do customers see the library? (customer perspective)
- At what must the library excel? (internal perspective)
- Can the library continue to improve and create value? (innovation and learning perspective)
- How does the library look to stakeholders? (financial perspective)

Now, after looking at the broad view, let's dig a little deeper. Take the information and ask yourself specific questions such as:

- What do users value?
  - Has this reshaped your thinking on content selection?
  - Have you discovered additional justifications to support your budget?
- Is there a feedback loop? Does your valuation of services match your clients' views?
- Are we doing things right?
- Are we doing the right things?
- What is the minimum performance users expect?
- The maximum? (Matthews, 2003)

The trick is to link them to a specific product or service provided— and ask what level of performance you need to reach.

Step 2: Understanding Current Practices

Marian may have a procedures manual that outlines the processes used now. However, absent that, she can begin by choosing a single workflow and documenting the steps. This will help her identify gaps and points of failure. The simplest way to do this is to begin with a sequential list of exactly what you do in a single process. Here is a very simple linear list of what might happen when a request for information comes into the center. (The accompanying box shows a graphical workflow view.)

- Receive request for information
- Log request
- Conduct reference interview
- Conduct research
- Write up report
- Deliver to customer
- Follow up for feedback

After identifying the gaps, you would create a more detailed list of the process:

- Receive request for information
- Log request
- Conduct reference interview
- Conduct research
- Review with customer
- Satisfactory or
- Not Satisfactory
  - Clarify additional needs
  - Conduct research
  - Review with customer
  - Satisfactory
- Write up report
  - Include branding
- Deliver to customer
- Follow up for feedback
- Log feedback

Some of the questions Marian might ask during her assessment of customer needs or establishment of performance objectives and then depict in her workflow model are:

- Are there content resources that are purchased yearly as must-have vs. those purchased on an as-needed basis?
- How are "must haves" determined? By customer survey? By tradition?
- Is there a policy governing "as needed" content purchases?
- What is the process for fulfilling these requests?
- Are customers satisfied with current portfolio management process and fulfillment?

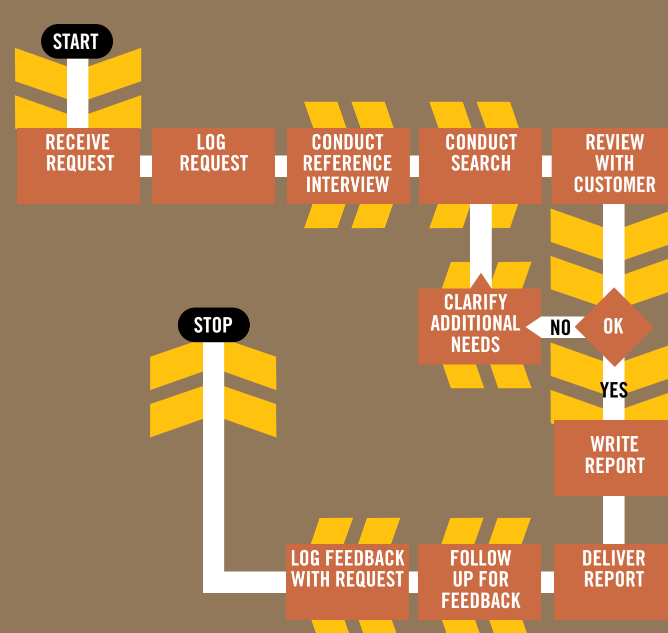
A MAP OF YOUR WORKFLOW

One way of depicting a process is in a flow model. An advantage of showing the workflow this way is that it helps to identify gaps, such as whether the customer is satisfied or if additional research is needed.

There are four figures used in a standard workflow:
Activity= rectangle The rectangle indicates activity: receiving a request, logging a request.
Decision= diamond The diamond is a decision point
Direction= arrow yes/no
Arrows, showing direction, can flow through the process or take you in another direction. They should be marked yes or no at as they leave the diamond.
Start/stop= oval The oval is a start or stop.

A mnemonic aid is ADDS—Activity/Decision/Direction/Start-Stop.

Here is our revised process for handling an information request in workflow format:



Step 3: Examining Alternative Practices

The third step can be very resource-intensive because the research and benchmarking required must either be purchased or conducted by the information center staff, meaning it costs either money or time.

Benchmarking. David Shumaker, in an interview in *Information Outlook* in 2002, defined benchmarking as "comparing your organization with other organizations and learning from the comparison. That can involve process benchmarking, which you can do with an entirely different type of organization from your own, to adopt a process in which their techniques can be applied to a process of your own. Another kind of benchmarking can be done with like organizations to compare service levels, budget, staffing, etc. I would divide it into those two areas." (Poling, 2002)

There are two ways to benchmark. You can bring together staff responsible for a major initiative with others in the organization to share information, ask advice, and discuss the lessons learned. Or you can research and learn from external benchmarks.

As best-practices creation is often a form of knowledge sharing, there can be opportunities for cross-functional interaction and relationship building during a benchmarking effort that can result in future, less structured knowledge sharing. According to Roger Strouse of Outsell, Inc., this informal method of networking or knowledge sharing can be supplemented by secondary information gathered by research means, such as reading articles on other libraries, using SLA resources, or calling comparable libraries, companies, or organizations.

There are, however, more formal methods to gain the requisite knowledge. These may require an outside consultant to put together a study with multiple participants, using surveys, phone interviews and the standard questionnaire. Additionally, you may purchase reports for this purpose. (Polling, 2002)

Competitive research. First, let's look at Marian's conducting her own research. She is probably already providing information to her organization about competitors, industry trends, and market factors. Now she needs to stop and consider for herself the implications of the information she provides, in the context of the information center. When supplying information to her clients, it could be a natural progression for Marian to step back and consider how her organization's competitors are deploying information. What are the processes they use? Would they be adaptable for her purposes? Remember, at this point, she has targeted a specific process, so her research can be quite narrowly focused.

Some other tactics Marian might investigate within her organization are around any formal knowledge-sharing initiatives. She could check whether there are communities of practice that span several departments but revolve around their use of specific content. She could also leverage any initiatives related to her content acquisitions that have been documented—in other words, reuse what has already been achieved by others. Networking to discover best practices is another, less formal, manner of acquiring knowledge of interest.

Before engaging in any more formal methods of identifying best practices within the industry, such as benchmarking reports and external consultants, or even networking with peers in other companies, Marian should make sure she has the support of senior management. These resources definitely will require additional funding.

Potential process improvements. Once the research is completed, analyze the data to identify the best practices for the targeted process. At this point, Marian should have several ideas as to how to improve her current content management process. She should note those possibilities of improvement for use in her revised workflow model.

Step 4: Modeling Best Practices

Modeling the best practice is where decisions are made as to what will work within the organization. This is based not only on the research, but also on the information professional's internal knowledge of the organization and the requirements for implementation.

Select appropriate solutions. To select the best solutions, Marian must assess each one through a financial lens, taking into consideration any increased costs. Remember, she may already have incurred costs in the research phase, so it's important that she under-

BETTY JO HIBBERD is the senior manager, North America information professional development, with Dialog, a Thomson business. She joined Dialog as a member of the knowledge center product support team in October 1998 when the U.S. headquarters was relocated to Cary, North Carolina. After a year in the knowledge center, where she served as team leader, she became manager, information professional and academic markets with responsibility for supervision of the Dialog Classroom Instruction Program, relationship development with information professional associations, and creation of the Dialog Info Pro Portal. In March 2001, her focus shifted to include the re-launch of the Quantum program and enhancing Dialog's program for library schools to include distance education and career support. Although her career began as a schoolteacher, she spent 17 years in sales and training before managing a research center focused on information systems and distance learning for Drexel University. She has an MSIS from Drexel University and a BA from West Chester University.

stand that these new improvements may require additional resources.

On the other hand, she can juxtapose those costs against the benefits, as the improved efficiency and effectiveness will save the organization money. Also, based on the needs assessment, the information center clients will now have a greater say in the provision and delivery of information products. This is considered a key element in customer satisfaction.

A side benefit for the information center is that this new aura of ownership creates a partner of clients. This additional support may help with any increased budget necessary to implement these new processes. Finally, there are benefits for the information center staff as well, not just in the better use of their time and efforts, but also in the improvement in morale, the building of even better relationships with their customers, and the introduction of a team approach to problem solving. (Gohlke, 1997)

Step 5: Implementing, Measuring and Communicating

As Marian works through the best-practice process, she should remember she is not only creating excellence for the purchase and tracking of content, she is also improving the position of the information center within the organization.

It's important to make sure that she involves the various groups within the organization. From the top down, Marian needs to find a champion at the senior management level who supports her initiatives. This person should be outside her direct chain of command, if possible. From a bottom-up position, Marian should also involve her clients. She should let *them* identify the knowledge they need and the performance they would like to see. It helps them to take ownership of the new process and support her efforts. Finally, Marian, as the information professional, is in the middle providing the tools, process, education, communication, and facilitation to make this new best practice succeed.

In addition to reward and recognition, the other factor that most quickly changes culture over time is measuring and reporting business results. With a tangible return on investment, the implementation of best practices has clear organizational impact. When the information center is in a leadership role, this also demonstrates its return on investment. Therefore, it's imperative that Marian identify and publicize examples of business results supported by the project, such as improved access to information, reduced project cycle time, and cost savings. She should view this as a marketing opportunity and partner with her organization's corporate communications department.

By taking a visible role in leading this best practice project with visible results, the information center and Marian become associated with the value of the project and it becomes self-evident ROI.

Developing Better Practices

Although we've used the term "best practice" throughout our story of Marian, it is because that is the common terminology. What we really mean is "better practice." Best seems to suggest a "definitive" practice, an ultimate goal. While this is possible in the abstract, frequently you need to adapt your practices to fit your organization. So, should you be tasked with developing a best practice, we urge you to remember Marian's project and think of it as an opportunity.

Some final thoughts on developing better practices: While the process can begin with relatively quantitative activities like benchmarking, it often moves to more qualitative work that is connected to issues such as morale and customer satisfaction. Additionally, by modeling the best possible business practices, the information center becomes credible in supporting others to do the same, while becoming much more visible and valuable through the link forged with administrative and managerial decision makers. Finally, this process requires the information center to take on the most challenging of jobs: researching its own organization and itself. **SLA**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Gohlke, Annette. August 1997. *Information Outlook*. "Benchmark for strategic performance improvement."

Gupta, Dinesh K.; Jambhekar, Ashok. July 2002. *Information Outlook*. "Which way do you want to serve your customers?"

Henczel, Sue. February 2005. *Information Outlook*. "To be truly accountable to your clients, identify their needs."

Hiller, Steve; Self, James. Summer 2004. *Library Trends*. "From measurement to management: using data wisely for planning and decision-making."

Lawes, Ann. Summer 1993. *Special Libraries*. "The benefits of quality management to the library and information services profession."

Matthews, Joseph R. March 2003. *Information Outlook* "Determining and communicating the value of the special library."

Oades, C. Winter 2003. *Library and Information Research News*. "Benchmarking workplace libraries."

Phipps, Shelley. Spring 2001. *Library Trends.* "Beyond measuring service quality: learning from the voices of the customers, the staff, the processes, and the organization."

Poling, Nikki. July 2002. *Information Outlook*. "Ahead of behind the curve."

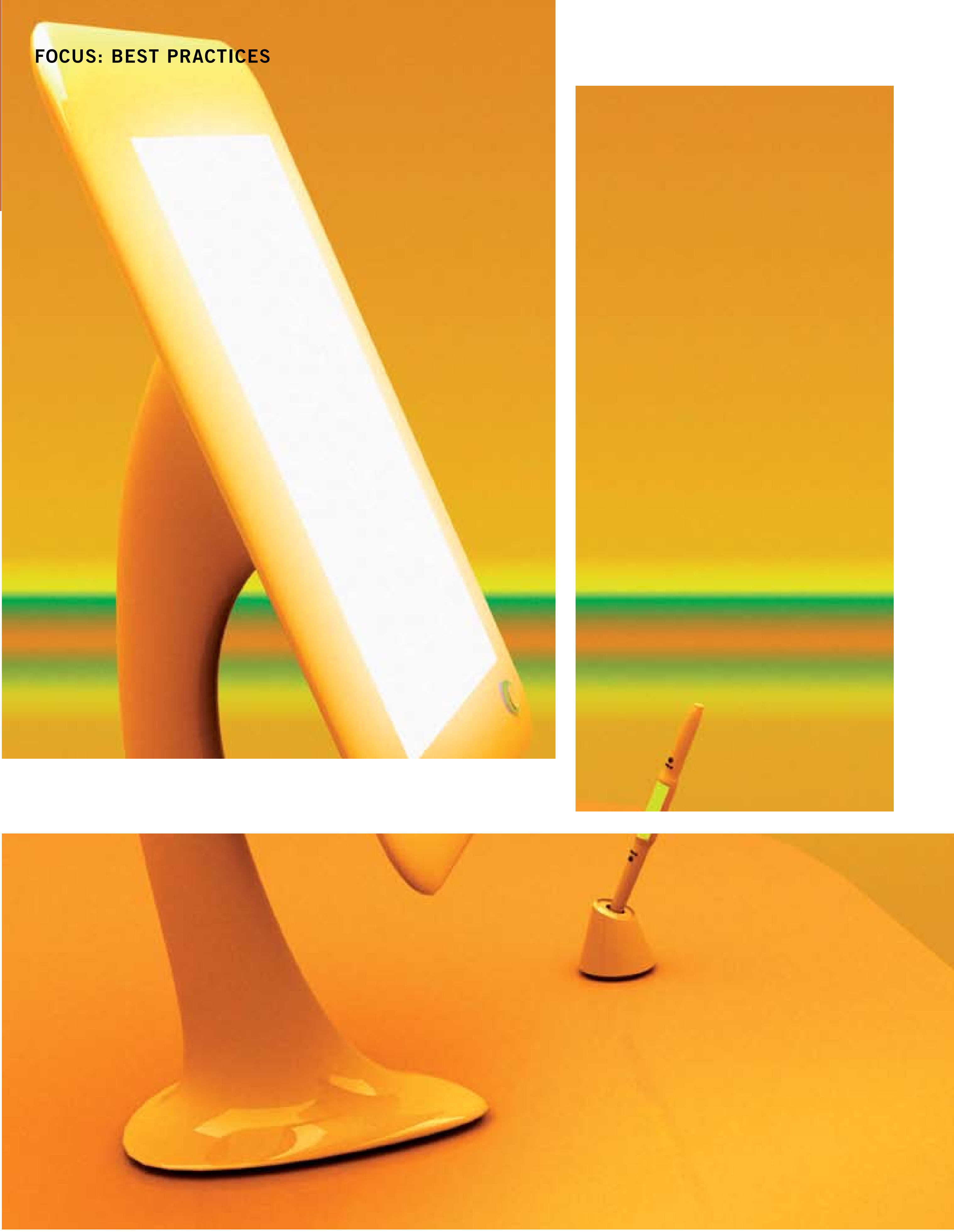
Strouse, Roger. March 2003. *Information Outlook*. "Demonstrating value and return on investment: the ongoing imperative."

BY THE SAME AUTHOR:

"An Assessment of LIS Curricula and the Field of Practice in the Commercial Sector," co-author. Paper presented at EUCLID-ALISE Joint Conference, Potsdam, Germany, July 2003 and published in *New Library World,* December 2004.

"Mapping Information Flows: A Practical Guide," co-author, *The Information Management Journal*, January 2004.

"Value and Vision: Business and Strategic Competencies for Leadership: The Dialog Quantum^2 Program," co-author, online article, *www.knowmap.com*, vol.2, no.4. October 2002.



5 Ways to Improve Your Corporate Blogs

BLOGS ARE A GOOD WAY TO SPREAD YOUR MESSAGE TO YOUR PUBLIC—AND TO INFORM EMPLOYEES OF COMPANY POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES. DO THEM RIGHT, AND YOU'LL SEE THE BENEFITS IN GREATER UNDERSTANDING. DO THEM WRONG, AND YOU'LL RISK LOSING READERS.

BY SUSAN J. LEANDRI

New technologies continue to affect the way organizations manage internal and external communications. But few are changing the way information is delivered and shared in quite the same way as blogs. Blogs—those quick, easy, and mostly informal Web sites—are being deployed externally by organizations to help enhance their image and brand, and internally to help improve the flow of information and maintenance of important networks.

So how might blogs change the way your organization communicates? And how can the info pro leverage this technology to add value in his or her organization and enhance the department's reputation for information services?

Key strategic objectives for librarians today include creating communities of practice, demonstrating expertise in knowledge management, and staying abreast of the latest knowledge sharing tools. Blogs address all these objectives, so it is important to have some familiarity with them—and how they are being deployed in corporate settings and by information professionals.

Many information professionals already use blogs to communicate with constituents on a regular basis and to establish their credential as knowledge stewards. They also use blogs to create communities of practice, since the sites can provide a forum for the quick interaction of many participants on a specific topic.

The appeal of blogs is their ability to provide fast and direct communication and the promise they hold of offering a place where genuine and honest interaction occurs. All forms of corporate rhetoric, public relations spin, overt marketing, and superficiality tend to ruin blogs and defeat their purpose. Blogs attract participants when they deliver compelling and credible content.

The interactive, conversational format of blogs makes them highly influential and helps the blog host build relationships with readers. Additionally, for internal use within a company, blogs are an excellent knowledge management tool for info pros to share information and manage projects.

Blogs also are inexpensive to set up and maintain. The software is available free online and is easy to download. But don't let the blog world's relative ease fool you. If you want to get the most out of a blog, there are best practices to follow that can help.

1. Use internal blogs to support connections and collaboration among employees and stimulate continuous innovation.
Companies strive to stay one step ahead of their competitors by finding ways to respond more quickly to market changes, opportunities, and competitive threats. They use a variety of knowledge management techniques and technologies to become more nimble and flexible to accomplish this critical corporate objective. Blog technology can help when it is used to support the development of personal connections and networks over corporate hierarchy and control.

Internal blogs foster collaboration and dissemination of company information and culture. They allow a work group to log in and view messages, presentations, and spreadsheets in one location. The blog content is searchable and can be organized by the end user according to date, contributor, subject, or other categories. For specific projects and processes, a blog can be superior to a corporate Web site because it focuses on a single issue and lists all the relevant information on one page, making it easier to navigate.

For internal blogs to be successful they must provide value to the individual employee, facilitate finding and contacting other similarly minded individuals, and be easy to access, read, and browse. The blogs are set up either as project specific or process specific. Management makes it clear that checking relevant internal blogs on a regular basis is a necessary activity and encourages it. Management also makes it clear that, although it is an extension of the employee's responsibilities, blog activities should not consume significant time out of the workday.

For specific projects, a blog can be superior to a corporate Web site because it focuses on a single issue and lists all the relevant information on one page.

BLOGGING SITES

For creating blog:
- *www.blogger.com*
- *www.typepad.com*

For blog search engines:
- *www.alexa.com*
- *www.blogpulse.com*
- *www.feedster.com*
- *www.pubsub.com*
- *www.technorati.com*
- *http://top500.feedster.com*

Management involvement is important, because if employees know that senior management is monitoring the blog, both blog participation and the quality of the responses will increase.

As a knowledge management tool, internal corporate blogs allow companies to post content with a personal voice, manage content in a searchable archive, apply context to the content, discover users with shared interests, increase teamwork, engage in dialogues on a companywide basis, and build networks around shared themes.

On the team level, blogs can be used to connect various work groups and facilitate project management and development. To establish this, the project blog is connected to a content management platform and configured to control user access, track document versions, and distribute different file types. Users access information according to their preferences. The blog allows them to stay organized and ensures that messages will not be lost through accidental deletion once they are posted. This process can be especially useful for employees who work virtually.

2. Create a corporate blog policy if one currently does not exist.
Blogs are a new medium with their own set of risks. Companies should not advise employee bloggers to simply follow current corporate communication guidelines alone, but should instead establish blogging rules. Librarians can be the ideal professionals to assume this responsibility.

The ideal for internal blogs is to generate postings that are authentic and unhindered but that do not reveal company secrets, privileged information, or disguise opinions as facts. Readers should be able to make a clear distinction between the opinion of a blogger and the stated position of the company on a particular issue. This greatly reduces the risks of legal entanglements associated with the inadvertent release sensitive business, financial, and personnel information.

However, it is important to remember that whatever guidelines you create are there to shape rather than inhibit blogging activity. Often, rules that are too restrictive create a temptation to breach them. For this reason, it's a good idea to choose the less-restrictive approach of having guidelines rather than formal policies.

In general, corporate blog guidelines should include the following provisions:
- Anyone reading a blog may view bloggers as approved spokespersons for the company. Therefore, bloggers should be clear that the views expressed are theirs alone and not necessarily those of the company,

and include a disclaimer to that effect on the blog's homepage.
- The company views personal blogs as a medium of self-expression; however, the company owns the content for any personal blog entries posted to a company site.
- The company owns the rights to concepts and developments that bloggers produce that are related to the company's business. Bloggers should consult their managers if they are considering posting any type of concepts or developments related to the company's business on a blog.
- Employees are responsible for their postings on company blogs—and blog at their own risk. They should be aware of the risk of being sued for issues that include obscenity, liability, defamation, and revelation of trade secrets. They also should acknowledge sources, check facts, and make corrections as necessary.
- Bloggers should not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the company or that of any third party that has a professional relationship with the company. They should consult the legal department if unsure what constitutes this type of information. Confidential and proprietary information is off limits and grounds for dismissal if revealed.
- Bloggers should be respectful to the company and its stakeholders, including employees, customers, affiliates, and competitors.
- Bloggers should not use company logos, artwork, or trademarks on their sites or reproduce company materials without securing permission to do so.
- The company may request temporary confinement of commentary to topics related to the company or suspension of blogging activity altogether if deemed necessary to ensure compliance with SEC-mandated quiet periods.
- Any media coverage of an employee blog should be routed through company channels.
- Employees should blog on their own time unless their job responsibilities include maintaining a company blog or they are using it for knowledge management or project management purposes.
- If bloggers have questions about the guidelines or any matter related to their site, they should contact the company's communications and or legal departments.

Additionally, best practices companies suggest bloggers periodically review the guidelines.

3. Use RSS feeds to enhance interactive experiences, promote awareness of the blog, and improve the blog's search-engine ranking.
When an RSS feed is established in a corporate blog, it creates a superior interactive experience. Blog readers are being regularly engaged every time there is news posted to the site.

What separates RSS from spam and blanket emails is that RSS feeds are by subscription only. The user has total control over an RSS feed and can cancel it any time. There is no cost in subscribing to an RSS feed, and no disclosure of personal information is required to receive one.

A major benefit of RSS feeds is that they improve a blog's search-engine rankings. Users who type in a search term or company name in a search engine and see a high-ranking blog may visit it and subscribe to it.

When research departments are eliminated, corporations often replace them with third-party libraries or contractors. As a result, librarians often have to redefine themselves and reestablish the need for their services within the business community. These solo librarians need to market themselves aggressively to create awareness of their talents and establish a network of contacts. Creating a blog with multiple links and an RSS feed is an excellent way to raise a librarian's profile and demonstrate expertise in the marketplace.

Additionally, to engage readers further, info pros can put extra features on their blogs, like podcasts, links to local newspapers or online news Web sites, and links to subject matter related to the blog.

4. Nourish the internal blog culture.
If your company does not blog, librarians can take the initiative and develop one or more. Items to go into the blog can include company policies, procedures, staff directories, project updates, suggestion box entries, meeting minutes, news, and announcements. Having a librarian in charge of the internal blog gives employees a go-to person for any blogging questions they may have, and ensures that the blog will be maintained and updated on a regular basis.

Regular blog updates with quality information will keep readers interested in the blog and increase blog awareness, especially if the blog has an RSS feed.

WHAT IS RSS?

Really Simple Syndication, or RSS, is a technology that allows blogs and Web sites to set up and subscribe to a content feed.

Users manage RSS feeds through a desktop application called a reader or aggregator that automatically downloads any new content from the subscribed source and delivers it to the user. The reader notifies the user, through a pop-up on the user's site or an e-mail, that new content is available. Users then read the headlines and decide whether or not to follow the links to the new information.

To obtain desktop RSS readers, users must download the application from a Web site. Many different readers are available, and currently there is no popular standard. Web-based RSS applications also exist, allowing users to access feeds through a Web site rather than a desktop. This provides users with access to their RSS feeds from any Internet connection, including wireless.

For more information on RSS feeds:
- http://www.microsoft.com/rss/UsingFeeds.aspx

For readers or aggregators for RSS feeds:
- *SharpReader.net* (Windows)
- *http://ranchero.com/netnewswire* (Macintosh)
- *www.bloglines.com*
- *www.attensa.com*

Librarians should also encourage bloggers to add content to the site to make it an important and valuable repository of information for the company.

To encourage usage and create a comfort level with the process, librarians can train employees on how to blog. Training should cover how to choose a title for the posting, how to insert links to off-site Web pages, and how to correct errors in an item once it has been posted. Librarians can prompt use by promoting the blog among staff and reiterating its benefits, such as how blog postings are simpler than sending bulk e-mail announcements and how blog searchability makes them an excellent place to store information to share with others. Additionally, learning about and using blogs will help keep librarians and their constituents up to date with communication and knowledge management tools.

5. Support the company's external blog strategy.

Organizations launch external blogs for many reasons: to enhance credibility, to build customer relationships; to strengthen employee recruitment efforts; and to test new ideas with the public. It's a good idea to for librarians to stay informed of the organization's external blogs, and the reasons these blogs exist. By monitoring their company's external blogs, and evaluating them based upon current research and other blogs, info pros can support their company's efforts.

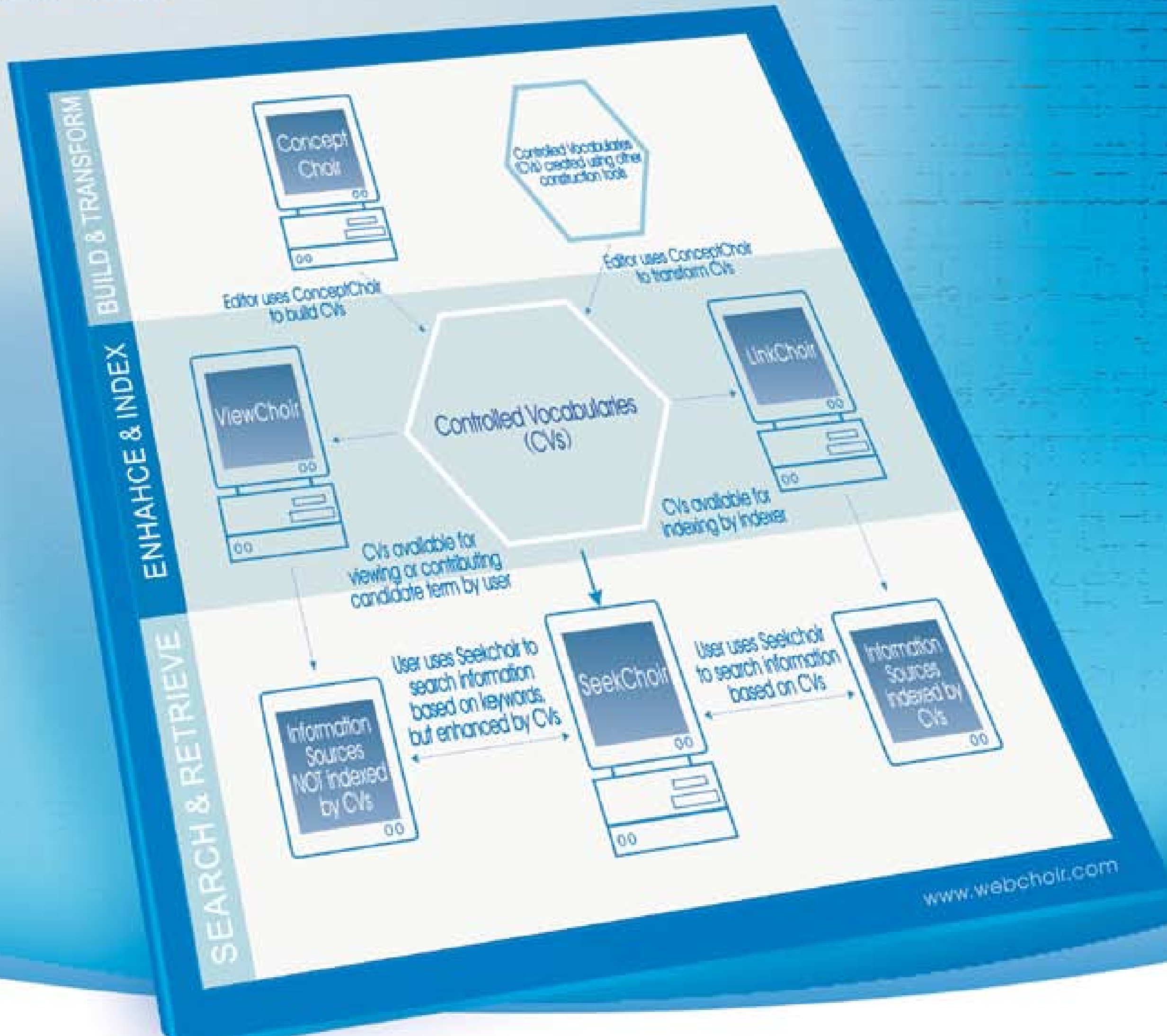
For example, if the company is using blogs to create a thought-leadership image in the marketplace, one might suggest that an executive with interest in blogging follow in the footsteps of corporate bloggers like Jonathan Schwartz, president and CEO of Sun Microsystems, whose blog focuses on enterprise software issues (blogs.sun.com/jonathan). A thought-leadership blog serves the dual purpose of establishing good relationships with bloggers who may be among your best customers.

You may also extend your organization's reputation-management programs by monitoring blogs. Many information professionals are familiar with the concept of reputation management, and closely observe what is being said about the company across traditional and Web media—including blogs. Monitoring also allows librarians to discover emerging trends in relevant areas of interest. Reputation management services and systems are available from many sources. **SLA**

Creating a blog with multiple links and an RSS feed is an excellent way to raise a librarian's profile and demonstrate expertise in the marketplace.

SUSAN J. LEANDRI
is managing director of the Global Best Practices operating unit of Pricewaterhouse-Coopers (*www.pwc.com*). Global Best Practices is a knowledge base of best practices information and benchmarking tools. She can be reached at *susan.j.leandri@us.pwc.com*. For more information on best practices in corporate blogging (internal and external) visit the Global Best Practices Web site and download the free white paper "Best Practices for Corporate Bogs" at *www.globalbestpractices.com/Home.*

WebChoir



ConceptChoir

ConceptChoir provides an exhaustive range of tools to develop controlled vocabularies (thesauri, classification schema, topic maps, etc.) inexpensively and efficiently, and easily to transform any controlled vocabularies into browsable and linkable hierarchies. ConceptChoir constitutes the first tier (Build and Transform) of WebChoir's three-tier end-to-end solution.

ViewChoir

ViewChoir easily supports publication of thesauri and other controlled vocabularies (CVs) on the Internet/intranet/extranet or on a CD, to enable the users to participate in collaborative building of controlled vocabularies with their candidate term submissions to enhance CVs and to greatly expand user capabilities in Internet/intranet/extranet searches through utilization of browsable CVs.

LinkChoir

LinkChoir enables integration of any browsable controlled vocabularies created or transformed by ConceptChoir with a variety of information sources by linking the terms in your CVs with fielded records in your data warehouses. ViewChoir and LinkChoir form the second tier (Enhance and Index) of WebChoir's three-tier end-to-end solution.

SeekChoir

SeekChoir enables creation of simple to complex search strategies to retrieve precise information throughout the Internet/intranet/extranet and/or data warehouses using keywords and/or browsable XML-based controlled vocabularies that are created or transformed by ConceptChoir. SeekChoir makes up the third tier (Search and Retrieve) of WebChoir's threetier end-to-end solution.

Enterprise Vocabulary Server

Young Professionals at the National Geographic

BY FORREST GLENN SPENCER

The National Geographic Society is one of the world's largest non-profit scientific and educational organizations. It reaches more than 330 million people globally through its magazines, books, DVDs, radio and television programming, interactive media, and maps. For 119 years, it has set its mission to "increase and diffuse geographic knowledge." It has employed talented and dedicated individuals—scientists, photographers, researchers, and writers—to reach that goal. The information professional has been a vital part of the Society's work.

From left: Susan Fifer Canby, vice president, libraries and information services, at the National Geographic Society with staff members Lisa Metzer, Margaret Turqman, Michael Jourdan, Alison Ince, and Krista Mantsch. Photo by Barbara Ferry

Today, the NGS staff includes 26 information specialists, led by Susan Fifer Canby, a 32-year veteran of the NGS and a past president of the District of Columbia Chapter of SLA. Like many great libraries, the distinguishing characteristic of the NGS libraries is the dynamism and teamwork of its staff.

SLA members Maggie Turqman, Michael Jourdan, Alison Ince, Lisa Metzer, and Krista Mantsch typify the vigor and talent of NGS librarians and the next generation of information professionals. They come from diverse backgrounds and are immersed in different interests—yet they come to their work not as five individuals, but as part of one team.

Their jobs include tackling research assignments, teaching staff training seminars, writing reports on business intelligence and trends—and connecting the right information to the right people in the organization. Their customers include the editorial and business staffs of National Geographic magazine, National Geographic Kids, Adventure, Traveler, the National Geographic Channel, books, and international partners.

MARGARET TURQMAN

Turqman, a senior business librarian, is responsible for coordinating the training programs and for marketing library services.

"My responsibilities complement each other," she said in a recent interview. "On the one hand, I am trying to let people know how the library can help them. And, on the other hand, I want to train them to do it all themselves."

One of the programs she is involved with is Total Research, which focuses on teaching research skills to NGS staff. "The goal of the training is make our staff better and more efficient researchers and to help them understand what resources we have," the New Jersey native said. "We try to answer every question under the sun, but we also have a finite range of topics that we tend to cover: geography, education, cultures, travel, sciences, etc. Our collection is not like walking into Barnes and Noble. We have a more special focus and we try and track our training to things that people need the most."

The program begins with a couple of classes covering basic research strategies and resources such as the library's catalog, archival material, and databases like ProQuest. Other classes focus on specific skills, such as advanced Web searching, finding experts, researching companies, and finding information about people.

"The idea is to help people who are trying to find information do their job better and faster. We hear some of the same questions over and over again," Turqman added. "We may know shortcuts to help them find their way faster, and we have all kinds of information on our Web site, too: research guides, online tutorials, and more." It's part of a new focus on exploring new technologies and delivering the information.

Turqman has been with NGS for more than four years. Her first job after college was performing editorial tasks for an information retrieval company in Washington, D.C., collecting and analyzing data from the SEC and other regulatory agencies. After a few years, she relocated to New Jersey and worked at a children's bookstore, then secured a job with Dun & Bradstreet. There, she worked on developing online business research products and helped train the sales people so they could understand the products when talking with customers.

"By that point I decided I wanted to be a librarian because I kept trying to help people find information," Turqman said. "Library school is a great opportunity to throw yourself into the profession and its technology. I have always been a user of libraries, and I became really interested in online searching at my school, and with new technologies that were just starting to emerge."

Turqman was in the first year of a doctoral program at the University of Maryland, working with her advisor, Eileen Abels, on virtual reference when she heard about the job opening at the Geographic Library. At the time, she wasn't looking for employment; but the job sounded so interesting she couldn't resist sending in a résumé. She applied was offered a job in March of 2002.

"I like every aspect of my job," she said. "It's a little bit of a lot of things. There's no time to get tired of it. People here at NGS are working on such a variety of projects that there is always something new and interesting happening. And our library is constantly exploring new technologies, developing new skills, and finding new ways to reach our users."

Working at NGS not only provides encouragement for professional exploration but also for geographic exploration, an opportunity to travel the globe. "In my latest vacations I've been rafting, kayaking, and diving in Belize, skiing in Switzerland and am currently planning a trip to Turkey," said Turqman. "There are about a million places that I'm dying to visit, and there's always somebody here at the Geographic who's been there and can give great advice on what to see and where to go. We get a fair amount of vacation time, so somebody is always off on a trip. We all cover for each other and wait to hear the stories and see the photos when they get back."

Our library is constantly exploring new technologies, developing new skills, and finding new ways to reach our users.

MICHAEL JOURDAN

Jourdan was a solo librarian at People for the American Way before he joined NGS. A self-proclaimed "political junkie," he dealt with issues related to the First Amendment and religious-right organizations. In this job, he did everything, from ordering and cataloging books to conducting database searches and writing reports.

"It was a great experience for me, given my interest in politics," he said. "But I prefer working at the Geographic, where I can focus on the kinds of work that made librarianship appealing to me in the first place, reference, and research."

A combination of individuals and circumstances helped shape the Michigan native's career: a career counselor who suggested librarianship as a profession; an opportunity to be a research assistant on a federally funded study on how public libraries help their customers by providing online community information; and, at library school, his faculty adviser, Dr. Joan Durrance, who taught him how to conduct research.

Margaret Turqman

Joined SLA: 1999; **Job:** Senior Librarian

Employer: National Geographic Society

Experience: Four years as a librarian, "plus experience in various other jobs that seemed to lead me to this career..."

Education: MLS, University of Maryland (plus one year toward a PhD), BA in English from the College of William & Mary.

First job: Editorial production assistant, Washington Service Bureau, a DC-based information retrieval company.

Biggest challenge: "Balancing the development of new ideas with 'business as usual,' and doing both well. And not driving people crazy when I tell them how much I love my job."

"Joan gave me to opportunity to try out new skills. I helped with applying for grants, designing surveys, leading focus groups, and sharing the results of our work in articles. I even got a chance to present at an ALA Mid-Winter meeting," he recalled. "I continue to use these skills today."

While at People for the American Way, he read about an opening for science librarian at the Geographic on the DC/SLA listserv. Now, he has been with NGS for nearly two years.

"The posting caught my eye, but I was hesitant about applying because I didn't have a hard science background," he said. "While I have taken some science classes and read the Science Times every week, I was worried that the lack of a science degree might be a disqualifier.

"I was pleased when they interviewed me because they looked beyond what was on my résumé. What they really want at the Geographic library are enthusiastic generalists—people who can track down answers on a wide variety of topics, from humpback whales, to business intelligence, to the history of Ethiopia. They look for people who are flexible and interested in learning new things."

As the science librarian, he selects science titles and databases, teaches science-oriented classes, and participates in a variety of shared duties with his teammates. He said he enjoys NGS's encouragement to pursue new avenues within the field, such as technology.

"For example, we've been working with podcasts," Jourdan said, "as another way to get the information we produce—the weekly and monthly reports for the Society—out to the staff. Sometimes people don't have time to read our reports because of their busy schedules, so we have these 20-minute podcasts that provide the highlights of what we found over the course of the week. We are embracing many new technologies that I probably wouldn't have been exposed to at a different organization."

Jourdan plans to stay with the Society for some time. He said he was amazed to find people who have been with the organization for more than 30 years, which is not a rarity at the Geographic. "People are dedicated to the material we produce and to the mission of the Society," he said.

He has been a member of SLA for five years and enjoys his affiliation. His supervisor at the People for the American Way suggested he join SLA and tap into its knowledge base for networking.

While at People for the American Way, he read about an opening for science librarian at the Geographic on the DC/SLA listserv.

"Mostly I use the SLA Web site for its online materials," said Jourdan. Another attraction is the DC/SLA listserv. "It's a great place to find answers, share ideas, and connect with colleagues."

Jourdan attended his first SLA Annual Conference in Baltimore 2006. He went to several seminars, mainly those focusing on science and environmental information. "I'm still learning a lot about the science field, and finding out more about what other information specialists are doing in their libraries is a big help to me," he said.

Michael Jourdan

Joined SLA: 2001; **Job:** Librarian

Employer: National Geographic Society

Experience: Six 6 years

Education: MS in Information, University of Michigan School of Information, 2000; BA in English Literature, University of Michigan, 1988.

First library job: Librarian at People for the American Way.

Biggest challenge: "Keeping up-to-date with the fast-paced world of science. And, getting that catchy National Geographic theme song out of my head."

ALISON INCE

Ince, a senior librarian, oversees the 45,000-book collection at the NGS library. She also shares in some of the duties as her teammates by taking shifts on the reference desk and teaching training classes to staff.

Every six weeks, she teaches "Advanced Web Research," a hands-on program that focuses on using advanced search features on Google and other search engines. She also participates in the Library's Coffee Breaks, informal 20-minute sessions that have become popular with NGS staff.

"These shorter sessions appeal to people whose schedules are so busy that they shy away from committing to the regular hour or hour-and-a-half classes. We offer the coffee breaks in various locations around the Society, trying to make it as convenient as possible for people to just pop in for a cup

Alison Ince

Joined SLA: 2001; **Job:** Senior Librarian

Employer: National Geographic Society

Experience: Seven years

Education: MS in Library Science, Catholic University, 2002; MA in English Literature, Catholic University, 2003; BA in English Literature, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, 1997.

First library job: Age 11: Volunteered in her school library one period a week. Age 24: Worked as a library assistant at a resource center in the Academy for Educational Development.

Biggest challenge: "Keeping track of all the new books being published and making sure our collection stays on track with NGS projects. Not getting distracted reading book reviews for fiction titles (which we don't collect)."

of coffee and learn something new. I've taught sessions on 'Ten Things You Didn't Know About Google" and another introducing a new database on world hotspots. These coffee breaks are one of our great success stories in reaching out to the Society."

Ince especially enjoys the teaching part of her job. She started out as a middle school teacher, spending two years teaching English as a second language in Japan and another year teaching English literature at St. Andrew's School in Potomac, Maryland.

"Those years showed me that I loved teaching but wasn't very settled in a school environment," she said. "I was looking for a different way of educating people."

After seeing how the school librarian, Anne Maschuich, was able to interact and teach students in a library setting, Ince became interested in librarianship. "The potential for teaching people over a reference desk instead of a teacher's desk appealed to me."

She attended Catholic University for her MLIS and MA in English. Because she had no previous experience in libraries, she sought out internships and part-time jobs throughout her coursework, working at a variety of libraries, including a public library, an environmental organization's resource center, a university library, AOL, and interning one semester at NPR. In March 2004, at the NGS library, she found the combination of teaching and researching that she sought, and in an environment that excited her.

"I thought I would never be able to get a job at National Geographic," Ince recalled. She credits her leadership with the student chapter of SLA at Catholic University and her attendance at DC/SLA events for helping her to get the job. "Susan [Fifer Canby] has told me repeatedly that it was my involvement in SLA that made her hire me. If I hadn't taken on leadership roles in library school, I don't think I would be working here today."

Susan [Fifer Canby] has told me repeatedly that it was my involvement in SLA that made her hire me. If I hadn't taken on leadership roles in library school, I don't think I would be working here today."

Ince has no doubts that NGS is the perfect place for her to be. "My job is constantly changing. My responsibilities now look hardly anything like the ones I had when I first started, nearly five years ago, and that's exciting for me. New ideas for projects, classes, coffee breaks, changes in procedures—all of that—is really supported here.

"We know we have to constantly redefine ourselves—as individuals and as a library—in order to stay critical for the Society." Ince added that she finds the people in the organization "very open-minded and curious. Each of us in the library has an active life outside of work. And since we are encouraged to take time off for traveling, I've been able to take some excellent trips just since I've been working here, spending weeks traveling alone around Egypt and Turkey, attending tango school in Argentina, and volunteering at a vulture conservation center in Croatia. We encourage each other to take vacations, often getting ideas from each other. It's a very healthy environment." She is currently working on her Spanish for her next excursion overseas.

LISA METZER

Some people are just born to teach and to share information.

When Metzer was very young, she played "school" with her sisters in the basement of her home. With old-fashioned desks, she was the teacher and her sisters were the students.

Today, in the NGS Library, Metzer helps coordinate staff training programs, serves as corporate intranet trainer, and works with her team on shared duties. She also helps develop new training classes to meet the changing information needs of the NGS research and business staff.

"We administer a staff training program called the National Geographical Learning Systems," Metzer explained. "It gives staff opportunities to learn and develop professionally with classes such as Presentation Skills, Introduction to Map Reading, and Records Management. I work with staff to help coordinate and market the classes. Right now I am developing a class on Mindmapping and Information Organization."

Metzer's training duties also includes her role as intranet portal trainer. "Many NG divisions have their own intranet sites," Metzer continued, "and staff members manage the content for these sites. I help train the content managers on the application we use. It's a great deal of one-on-one training. I enjoy interacting with staff across the Society, and I constantly learn new things."

Metzer, an Ohio native, began her career as a sixth-grade reading teacher in Nashville, Tennessee. "My first year of teaching presented many challenges and benefits, and I learned a lot," she recalled. "It helped me understand what I wanted in a job, and I didn't want to continue teaching as a full-time profession. By happy accident, I applied to library programs, intending to pursue a career in school media. When I entered the University of Tennessee's School of Information Sciences program, I became completely interested in other aspects of the degree."

In December 2006, she earned her MS in Information Sciences from the University of Tennessee. "I began my master's degree in Knoxville as a full-time graduate student," Metzer said. "I enjoyed being on campus—participating in class discussions, interacting with students, working with professors, and serving as a student leader."

As a graduate research assistant, she also assisted Dania Bilal with research on school Internet access and use. "Working with Dr. Bilal inspired me to advance in the field of information sciences, pursuing opportunities for leadership and professional growth."

After her first academic year, she spent the summer as an intern with the Smithsonian Institution's National Postal Museum in Washington, D.C., working on collections management. After a semester back in Knoxville, she accepted a temporary full-time job offer with the Smithsonian and decided to complete her master's degree online.

Metzer has been with NGS less than a year, but she already feels engaged and thrives in her work at the library. She discovered the job opening on the DC/SLA listserv.

"The National Geographic Society's library is an exciting place to work," she said. "We explore the newest technologies and ideas and how they can improve our information products and services." She said she has been able to draw experience from her time as a teacher, which has enhanced her current profession and work at NGS.

Lisa Metzer

Joined SLA: 2005; **Job:** Senior Analyst

Employer: National Geographic Libraries & Information Services

Experience: Approximately three years total—sixth-grade reading teacher; collections management; Smithsonian Institution National Postal Museum.

Education: BA, Harding University, 2003; MS, Information Sciences, 2006.

First job: Library volunteer, Northwood Middle School, Sidney, Ohio. "I helped my aunt, Carol Edmonds, who is the school librarian."

Biggest challenge: "Keeping up with recent training and technology tools and trends—very exciting! Finding time to pursue my various hobbies including reading, singing, calligraphy, ballet, and Bible study."

KRISTA MANTSCH

Mantsch is a social science and reference librarian coordinator for reference and research services at NGS. Her job includes keeping the library's reference services up to date. She also works to market those resources and the library's in-depth research services to staff and integrating them fully into the work of the NGS's various divisions.

"I attend the weekly Traveler magazine staff meetings," said the Illinois native. "It's an excellent way to more fully integrate the library services into their planning and production processes. I also pick up on what topics are upcoming in the publication and on their Web

FORREST GLENN SPENCER is a Virginia-based independent information professional, editor, and writer. He is a deep background researcher for political media companies and non-profit organizations. He is also editor of *The Google Government Report*. He can be reached at fgspencer@gmail.com.

Mantsch said she moved to Washington, D.C., looking for a job at a non-profit and had four different jobs before joining the Society. The DC/SLA listserv posted the job.

site, so that we can effectively push our resources out to them."

Mantsch's journey to the Society began when she completed her graduate studies in Budapest. "I was interested in countries going through economic and political transitions. And I had the opportunity to study Eastern European history in Hungary," she recalled. "The experience was wonderful—studying with and learning from the students who had lived through the very events that I was studying: the fall of Communism and so on."

Upon completing her first master's degree in Modern Eastern European History, she decided to return to the U.S. to study library science. "Part of my interest in these countries was the role access to information played in transitions," Mantsch said. "For example, the role of a free press, the rewriting of history books, and access to government documents. Library and information science seemed like a logical continuation of what I had been studying. It also seemed to be a more practical degree as well."

Mantsch has been at NGS for nearly three years and enjoys the opportunities of growth. She said she has been building up her job and has taken more of leadership role now than she did at the beginning.

"I started out as a news librarian, but the job has really developed from there. One of the best parts of working at National Geographic is the opportunity to expand my skills and to take initiative and leadership on new projects.

"I enjoy working closely with the staff at NGS in order better understand their research needs so that instead of being reactive to requests, we can be as proactive as possible in pushing resources and services when they are most needed."

Mantsch said she moved to Washington, D.C., looking for a job at a non-profit and had four different jobs before joining the Society. The DC/SLA listserv posted the job.

"And as usual in a small town like D.C.," she said, "someone I worked with at CNN was friends with someone who worked at NGS. So I got together with the friend for coffee to get the inside scoop." In a quick turnaround after the interview, she was offered the job.

"It's an interesting and stimulating place to work. When I walk through the building in the morning, I may pass a photography exhibit of refugees in Southeast Asia, and another exhibit on medieval castles, and in the evening there may be a talk by one of our photographers. It's just an amazing place to work. You can see why people stay here for a long time."

Mantsch is a new member of SLA and currently serves as the webmaster for the DC/SLA Web site. She originally got involved with the DC/SLA Young Professionals group—a fellowship and social networking group—and is involved with the International Relations Committee.

Like her teammates, she has embarked on many travels overseas. "In the last three years I've been lucky enough to visit Panama, Argentina, and Egypt," said Mantsch. "When you travel, you have an opportunity not only to experience the culture, history, and nature of a place, but also to interact with people at a personal level. It's a chance to move beyond preconceived ideas on both sides. I think that's one thing the Society itself tries to do: Demonstrate all that we have in common despite living in vastly different cultures, and at the same time celebrate how wonderful and fascinating our differences are. It's amazing to take part in that, either at a personal level or through our work." **SLA**

Krista Mantsch

Joined SLA: 2006; **Job:** Librarian

Employer: National Geographic Society

Experience: Six years

Education: MS in Library and Information Science, University of Illinois; MA in Modern Central European History, Central European University, BA in History and Political Science, Oberlin College.

First job: Slavic and East European Library, University of Illinois.

Biggest challenge: "Fully integrating library research services into the planning, production and information gathering processes of Society staff; resisting the temptation to constantly regale friends with the obscure trivia and interesting factoids picked up on the job."

Management Doesn't Understand the Role of Info Pros

BY JOHN R. LATHAM

The vast majority of respondents to an SLA survey do not believe their organization's management understands the value the information profession. More than 80 percent cited this misunderstanding as an important issue for info pros.

A similar number of respondents are concerned that they are not included in management discussions when it would be appropriate and valuable. This is a corollary to the perceived lack of management's awareness of their value.

Almost 80 percent of the respondents see a strong need to upgrade their skills and competencies.

SLA's membership study, sometimes known as the "Super Survey," has been carried out every five years since 1986. This article is a summary of data from the report prepared for SLA staff and the board of directors.

Overall Attitudes

Most respondents are satisfied with their chosen profession, particularly those who are current SLA members and those who have the most experience in the profession. Most respondents believe they will be satisfied with their jobs over the next five years. While more than four in 10 plan to look for a new job in that timeframe, only one-quarter plan to seek new employment actively in the next two years.

It is no great surprise that chapters and divisions received the highest ratings for overall satisfaction with the organization. The longer-term members show a higher percentage of satisfaction than those who have been members for one year or less. This may suggest a need for SLA to develop additional communication programs for new members—or that opportunities are geared more to senior members of the profession.

The greater satisfaction shown by longer-term members may reflect the fact that divisions are active in planning SLA Annual Conference sessions, and that conference attendance is higher among the longer-term members.

Most current and former members say they belong or used to belong to a chapter and more than two-thirds have attended a chapter meeting at least once a year. The value of chapter meetings is particularly evident in that it is the only SLA activity which members are willing to pay their own expenses more than half the time, as opposed to seeking reimbursement by their employers.

Reasons for Joining and Staying

Networking is the primary reason for initial SLA participation, with its importance increasing when individuals face the decision to renew their memberships. In fact, while members from different business sectors vary in their reason for joining, networking is a unifying theme in membership renewal.

The next three most popular reasons given for joining and renewing are professional advancement, receiving information about the profession, and enhancing one's professionalism.

SLA is judged far superior to other organizations in its networking activities. The membership directory, meetings and conferences, and leadership opportunities are also perceived as SLA strengths. Overall, those products and services that are used the most also are gauged to be most satisfactory and useful. Awareness, usefulness, and satisfaction with SLA's annual conference are all stronger than for other products and services offered by the association, although ratings are nearly as high for chapters and divisions. In terms of publications and information, the annual salary survey and workplace study, the membership directory, the discussion lists and *Information Outlook* earn the top ratings.

Emerging Issues

To provide the best possible products and services for members—and to recruit new ones—SLA must understand emerging issues in the profession. At least three-quarters of the respondents rated several topics as having current or emerging importance:

- The lack of awareness by management of the information professional's value garnered the highest proportion, with half of all respondents rating it as very important, and an additional 33.8 percent saying it is important.
- Only slightly fewer respondents emphasized the need to upgrade skill sets and competencies (79.6 percent).
- Not being included in management discussions when it would be appropriate and valuable also rated highly (78.0 percent).
- Close behind was the perceived lack of public understanding of what information professionals do (77.3 percent).
- Respondents also worry about the possibility of library/information center closures (74.9 percent).

A salary not being commensurate with experience was important to just over seven in 10 respondents. A higher proportion of respondents under 35 years old saw salary as a current or emerging issue. This indicates either that they have higher opinions of their worth or that opening salaries are continuing to be low.

Only about four in 10 believe that outsourcing or replacement by Internet search engines is a very important or important issue.

Demographics

There have been some interesting, but not altogether surprising, changes in the demographics of the SLA membership over the last 10 years. Eighty-three percent of SLA members are now located in the U.S., compared to 91 percent in 1996. The percentage of the membership in Canada has increased from 8 percent to 10 percent, in Europe from 1 percent to 3 percent, and in the rest of the world from no recorded percentage to 4 percent.

The percentage of respondents who work in the corporate sector has dropped from 59 percent in 1996 to 47 percent in 2006. Conversely, the percentages of members working in academic institutions and non-profits have increased respectively from 15 percent and 9 percent to 22 percent and 14 percent. Members from government organizations have remained constant at 14 percent, but members from public libraries now represent 3 percent of the membership, compared to a non-recorded percentage in 1996.

Networking is the primary reason for initial SLA participation, with its importance increasing when individuals face the decision to renew their memberships. SLA is judged far superior to other organizations in its networking activities.

Among the most significant changes in demographics are the aging of the membership and its experience in the library field. The percentage of SLA members over 55 years of age has doubled from 14 percent to 28 percent over the last 10 years, and those in the age range of 46 to 55 have increased from 16 percent to 31 percent. Conversely, those in the age ranges from 36 to 45 and under 36 years have decreased respectively from 34 percent and 36 percent to 24 percent and 17 percent.

This means that almost six out of 10 of SLA members are aged 46 or over, compared to three out 10 in 1996. The U.S. data for the aging of the population has moved in the same direction, but much less markedly. According to U.S. Census Bureau reports, the population over 45 in 1996 was 33 percent, compared to 38 percent in 2006 (*www.census.gov/ipc/www/idbpyr.html*).

Although we do not have the exact comparisons by year, the data indicate that the percentage of members with seven or fewer years' experience in the library field has increased from 22 percent to 28 percent over the last 10 years, and those with between eight and 15 years' experience has decreased from 30 percent to 23 percent. At the top end, the percentage of those with more than 16 years' experience has stayed roughly the same at 49 percent.

At first glance, this statistic appears to be in contradiction to the aging of the membership, but when one takes into account that nearly 48 percent of respondents answered that librarianship or the information profession was not their first career, it may merely reflect the fact that people are entering the profession later. The 2006 study data show that the average years of work experience in the profession for members of one year or less is 8.0 years, compared to an average of 16.4 years of work experience overall. We do not have comparable data for 1996.

There has been little change in gender; the percentage of male members increasing from 15 percent in 1996 to 17 percent in 2006.

The percentage of members with a master's in library or information science has remained constant at 88 percent.

Technology Use

One reason for conducting the survey is to establish how members and potential members network and communicate so that SLA can provide services, products, and networking opportunities in the appropriate formats. Many respondents use both desktop computers and laptops at work and personally. It is no great surprise to see that the difference between the use of laptops and desktop computers is greater at work than personally.

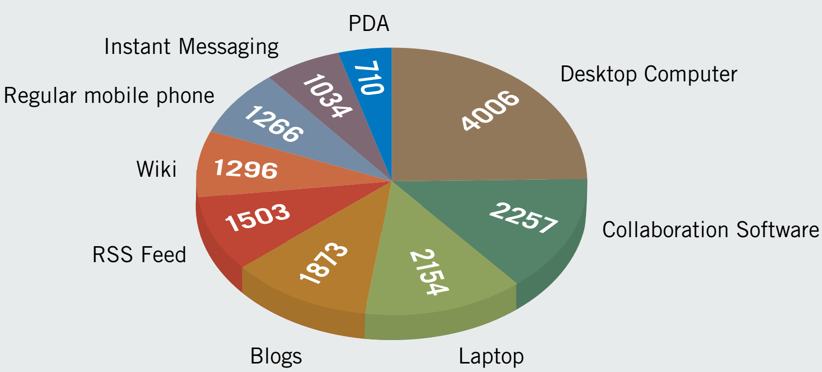
The survey shows that senior management (CIO/VP/Executives) (75.8 percent), product sales managers (85.7 percent), and owners of their own business (74.5 percent) use regular mobile phones for work significantly more often than other staff, as the percentage of work use for all respondents is only 25.7 percent. This tells us that they spend a lot more time out of their offices. Overall, respondents use mobile phones for work just 25.7 percent of the time, but use them for personal calls at more than three times that rate.

The use of a PDA also varies by type of job. For the major users of a PDA—senior management (39.4 percent), product sales managers (35.7 percent), and webmasters (26.3 percent)—SLA may wish to consider PDA-friendly formats of communication for this group. Owners' use of a PDA is only 19.1 percent, which probably indicates that they are more cost conscious and therefore are less likely to have both a mobile phone and a PDA for work. Only 14.4 percent of all respondents use a PDA at work.

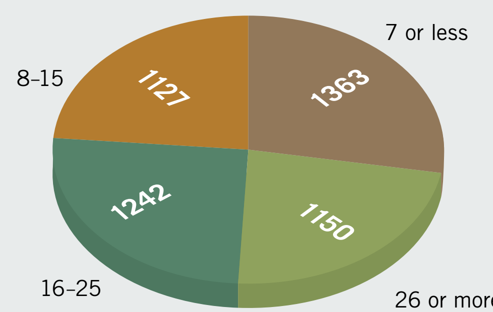
Nearly half of all respondents use collaboration software at work. A significant percentage use blogs (38.0 percent), RSS feeds (30.5 percent), and wikis (26.3 percent). Clearly, respondents are becoming major users of these new communicating tools, but are not yet so comfortable using them to create content. Only 7.4 percent of respondents create content for blogs, 2.8 percent for RSS feeds, and 3.5 percent for wikis. A very small percentage overall use Skype (2.0 percent), but usage is much higher in the U.K. (9.4 percent), countries other than the U.S., Canada, or Australia/New Zealand (10.8 percent), and among CIO/VP/executives (12.1 percent).

Only 8.4 percent use podcasts for work, but twice as many do for personal use.

TECHNOLOGY USED FOR WORK



YEARS' EXPERIENCE IN INFORMATION PROFESSION



Survey Methodology

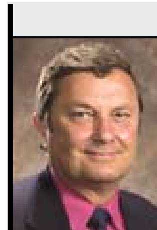
SLA conducted the survey in the spring of 2006 to assess the needs of its membership and measure satisfaction levels with its benefits and services. The results from this survey, combined with other periodic surveys, provide valuable measures for SLA's board and staff. Those surveyed included the entire SLA membership and a sample of more 10,000 individuals identified as former members, information school alumni, and individuals who had never been members.

To minimize the burden on individuals completing the survey and to maximize the response rate, two questionnaires were designed using the same background questions. Each questionnaire was distributed to a randomly selected group of half of the respondents. Using the background characteristics to match the samples, all responses were combined into one database for analysis.

The response rate for completion of the survey for current members was 41 percent. The response rate for former members and for those who had never joined was 7.1 percent.

Association Research Inc., an independent organization located in Rockville, Maryland, conducted the Web-based survey, analyzed the data, and prepared a report on the findings. All respondent information has been kept confidential, and the report did not reveal information from any individual source.

Because of the proprietary and confidential nature of some of the data in the study, the full results are not being published. Questions about the study may be addressed to SLA Chief Operating Officer Nancy Sansalone (*nsansalone@sla.org*) or John Latham (*jlatham@sla.org*).



JOHN R. LATHAM is the director of the SLA Information Center. The Information Center is sponsored by Factiva, a Dow Jones and Reuters company.

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
April	Digital Information Sources — Possible topics: Selection process, RFP writing, maximizing usage	Feb. 16, 2007
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

Ego Feeds Track What They're Saying about You, Your Company

Feedback is serious business. Getting it through the Web is easy and, with many services, free.

BY STEPHEN ABRAM

Time for a fun column to start the New Year—I thought I'd disclose a small secret this month. I have an ego. Shockers! I have a number of feeds set up from a bunch of free services to monitor the Web for any mention of "me." And it's slightly more complicated than it looks, since the Web, sadly, doesn't yet benefit from library name authority files. Therefore, I have to check out at least this many pseudonyms:

- "Stephen Abram"
- "Stephen Abrams"
- "Steven Abram"
- "Steven Abrams"
- "Steve Abram"
- "Steve Abrams"

I have avoided the big misspellings so far—Abrahm(s), Abraham(s), etc.—but I do use the phrase search since it removes a bunch of largely genealogical clutter.

It's more than just vanity. Since I give many speeches and write often, it's an excellent feedback mechanism. It lets me see who's talking about things I've been involved with. I represent my company and SLA, as well as myself, in public settings and it's vitally important to be aware of some of the public feedback. I can't follow every single library blog, podcast, webcast, and Web site, although I do have about 500 blogs in my Bloglines (*www.bloglines.com*) aggregator. I also find a bunch of freeform feedback this way to SLA, my employer, and the library sector in general. Indeed, I have corporate ego feeds for SirsiDynix, Sirsi, Dynix, and the "SirsiDynix Institute"

My Doppelgangers

Of course, I do have to put up with all those other Stephen Abrams out there! There's an esteemed Harvard librarian in the group, along with a doctor (a medical pain management expert), an active high school student, and horrors, a right-wing candidate in the last U.S. election who appears to stand for everything I despise. A few false drops are not a real pain to me. I'd rather not miss anything. At least I don't share a name with a celebrity or major author; then I'd have to bring out the full sack of Boolean tricks.

Now, this approach is not without its perils. You do get the positive reviews, the simple reportage, and constructive criticism. On the other hand, I also get the occasional opinionated blog posting that hits my hot buttons. I was once called "Baldy McWheezy Laugh" on a blog posting after a day-long workshop. At first, I was offended. But then I remembered what I learned early in life: Anyone who makes fun of someone physically or criticizes laughter is saying more about themselves than me. I've found, over my life, that anyone who has issues with my large (read loud) exuberant laugh is just so, well, as Mary Richards said, "That's just so high school, Mr. Grant."

Another time, a person blogged that she had trouble hearing at the back of the room during a full-day workshop and was disappointed she had missed so much. I still regret deciding not to suggest through the blog comments that she should ask herself why she didn't feel empowered to stand up and change seats for an entire day. Was it a level of discomfort with minimal change, or a preference for being an all-day victim of a thoroughly changeable situation? Not once over seven hours was there a request to increase the level of the microphone. Sometimes real-time complaining is in order rather than living the blog life of retroactive reflection.

I am using these two real examples to show some of the ability to get feedback and potentially deal with it. I've had people complain about humor, slides, points of view, and politics that I wouldn't have picked up without my ego feeds. I can then take the feedback as a gift. Like a wedding gift, I can love it, use it, lose it, return it, or only bring it out when Aunt Sally visits. Generally, I treat all feedback seriously. And I have found hits around the world in many languages. Our reach as a profession is truly more international than ever.

> I can then take the feedback as a gift. Like a wedding gift, I can love it, use it, lose it, return it, or only bring it out when Aunt Sally visits.

More than Ego

Now this isn't totally an ego column! In some respect, we all work for organizations and communities that are collections of individuals. Many of us work for enterprises that have a number of famous and quotable folks involved. How many of us have ego feeds set up as a matter of course for our users and our organizations? How many of us have built an RSS ego feed for our organization? A large number of us, I suspect.

If you send me your favorites at my e-mail address, I'll update this column with a blog posting at Stephen's Lighthouse. (Please see the author's box for contact information.)

If your organization is not one with deep pockets, you can build a poor-man's version of a watch with a few quick, free alerts.

Quite a few of us manage or participate in large contracts for professional "watch" services. There are many good ones through Factiva, Thomson Dialog, LexisNexis, and so on. These can be supplemented by Web watch services. And if your organization is not one with deep pockets, you can build a poor-man's version of a watch with a few quick, free alerts. Here are some simple suggestions on what you might want to be watching:

- Personal names of your executives, board, key public figures.
- Brand names and trademarks.
- Your organization's name, nicknames, and stock symbols.
- Your primary homepage URL.
- All of the above for your organization's major competitors.
- All of the above for key clients, targets, etc.
- Key regulatory issues (e.g. DOPA, CIPA, USA PATRIOT, etc.).

In SLA's case, it's in our best interests to know when SLA, Special Libraries Association (and, sadly, Special Library Association), CEO Janice Lachance, President Rebecca Vargha, etc., are in the news or blogosphere. We are information professionals and know its raw power. We can harness it in our own service. Indeed, our new member benefit, the NewsGator RSS feed (*www.newsgator.com/news/archive.aspx?post=110*) is an ideal example of this sort of thinking.

Here are the top four that I find the most useful. I am sure our folks in the News Division and the Competitive Intelligence Division have a plethora of other choices—both free and fee.

Google Alerts (www.google.com/alerts).
From the site: "Google Alerts are email updates of the latest relevant Google results (Web, news, etc.) based on your choice of query or topic. Some handy uses of Google Alerts include:

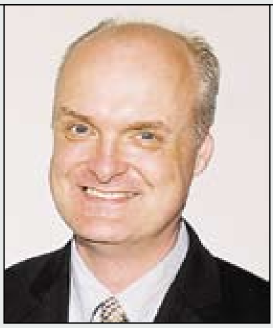
- "Monitoring a developing news story.
- "Keeping current on a competitor or industry."

Digg (http://digg.com).
From the site: "Digg is a user driven social content website. Ok, so what the heck does that mean? Well, everything on digg is submitted by the digg user community (that would be you). After you submit content, other digg users read your submission and digg what they like best. If your story rocks and receives enough diggs, it is promoted to the front page for the millions of digg visitors to see."

Technorati (www.technorati.com).
Create a Watchlist on any topic, event, or name you like. You then have very quick access to what's being said out there.

Blogfluence (www.blogfluence.net).
Rate your firm's blogging influence. Alternatively, has some blogger just slammed or libeled you or your organization? Check out whether anyone reads, links, or pays attention to them. You can play a huge game of Whack-a-Mole in the blogosphere.

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.*



How to Develop an E-Commerce Strategy for Your Library

Is there anything your library can sell online? If so, you can make a cash contribution to the bottom line.

BY LESLEY ELLEN HARRIS

Although terms like "e-commerce" sound like the domain of an online bookstore or travel agent, it is a key area that all special libraries should explore with vigor. Technologies now offer all of us new opportunities, challenges and strategies. Online commerce, or e-commerce, allows enterprises to exploit and sell their merchandise and intellectual property. E-commerce is often a part of an enterprise's overall efforts to establish their presence on the Internet. This article discusses some of the opportunities available for your library and enterprise in the virtual world.

What is E-commerce?

Simply put, e-commerce is about financial transactions that take place in a Web site. There are three main categories of e-commerce:

1. Direct commerce refers to financial transactions that are conducted online such as banking transactions or purchase orders. Often payment for the product or service is made online while delivery is effected offline. It is important to remember that there are security considerations—real and psychological—about online payment by customers. An example of direct commerce is purchasing a book online that is delivered by mail or courier to a house or office.

2. Indirect commerce refers to a promotional form of e-commerce on the Internet. E-commerce should not be considered completely separate from the established aims and achievements of an enterprise. There should be a considerable integration of services. Indirect commerce is intended to encourage customers to pay a membership fee or make a voluntary contribution.

3. Digital commerce refers to purchasing and delivery that take place online. From customer payment to the delivery of services, digital commerce exists only in an electronic medium; this is in the forefront of the information revolution that the Internet continues to hasten. The opportunities for creative and profitable endeavors are most pronounced in this area. An example would be purchasing an article or image online, which is then transmitted, online to the customer.

Why Use E-commerce?

Your Web site visitors are now performing many tasks online, from paying utility bills, to buying clothes and food, to registering for tennis and soccer lessons. Paying online is no longer scary (i.e., insecure), difficult or burdensome, nor is it rare—it has become the norm in many circumstances. From your library's perspective, e-commerce capability can mean a smaller physical space, less staff, 7/24 accessibility, and worldwide customers. What are you waiting for!

Incorporating E-commerce

Every enterprise has different expectations in its level of involvement with the Internet. It is important, therefore, that goals be established early and progress be assessed often. There are a number of objectives that might involve e-commerce. First might be an increase in revenue, but a number of other objectives are also important to keep in mind. They might involve an increase in efficiency and an improvement of service. Access to information might be enhanced by involvement in e-commerce. A teaching curriculum might be supported, or an interest community might be brought together. Your initial challenge is to identify your strengths, translate them into an electronic environment, and improve on the overall level of service and products offered to clients accessing your institution in any medium.

At this point one should be acquainted with the important aspects of e-commerce. A brainstorming of ideas has occurred and your store has committed itself to developing a presence on the Internet. However, many technical issues must be resolved. Choosing an Internet service provider is an example of the many decisions that must be made. Domain names must be registered. People are needed

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. 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: *http://sla.learn.com/learncenter.asp?id=178409&sessionid=3-EA2A6B76-7B56-49CC-BAC9-9ABD07E483AD&mode=show&page=41.*

to design and run the site on a daily basis. These things cost money, and budget restraints may alter previous strategies. Moreover, issues of copyright and intellectual property are relevant whenever content is made available to consumers. The privacy of your customers and their personal information is important. To save costs, some enterprises use a cyber shop—an existing Web site that may be likened to a mall—instead of creating their own Web site from scratch. Developing an e-commerce and online strategy will help guide you through this process.

> Paying online is no longer scary, difficult or burdensome, nor is it rare—it has become the norm in many circumstances.

How is Money Collected?

There are many options for collecting money via your Web site, from including a form your visitors can print out and mail to you with a check or credit card information, to providing a 1-800 number visitors can use to make payment over the telephone, to allowing for credit card purchases. Other interesting options include using digital cash and micro-payment systems (for small purchases such as a 2-cent purchase for an image.)

E-commerce Strategy?

It is a well thought-out document that clearly sets out how e-commerce and the online environment may help your institution make money directly or indirectly from the Internet. It is based on examining your current "offline" goals as well as your online goals, and provides a step-by-step process of initiating or improving your e-commerce and online activities.

Your strategy will provide you with a blueprint of how best to implement e-commerce in your institution. It will also help convince others in your institution of the importance of your online presence. Your Strategy is a living document that will be amended as e-commerce develops both in your institution and on the Internet.

A good strategy is one customized to meet your needs. You must establish your goals, both offline and online, and see how they match or differ, then determine from there what constitutes your strategy.

Getting Started

You may already have some e-commerce set up on your Web site or you may be totally new to this area. If you have some e-commerce on your site, make a list of the various parts of this e-commerce, then evaluate the list in terms of ease and expense for you and your customers. Is it effective? Would it be best to try different things? How may you expand your e-commerce initiatives?

If you have not yet begun any e-commerce on your site, decide what it is you are trying to gain from it. Make a list of the items that would best be purchased online, and the best way to purchase them. Are you able to sell research services, digital photographs, or self-published documents? Think of your customers and what they are looking for. What are your e-commerce goals? Then determine how best to incorporate all these things in your e-commerce strategy. Always keep in mind that there is no one model strategy, but that you must be creative to fit your goals and needs. **SLA**

One Trend is Certain: There Will Be More Trends

Some ideas will come, others will fade. What's important is keeping your job relevant to your organization.

BY DEBBIE SCHACHTER

As we start a new year, it is interesting to consider what new trends will appear. Some will have unexpected effects. Others will fall by the wayside.

The information professional is challenged by trends arising from numerous sources. The trends that tend to have the primary impact are those that evolve directly in our company's industry. For-profit organizations will always be concerned about retaining the competitive advantage and will need to make business decisions based on competitors, vendors, and clients—both locally and, increasingly, globally. Non-profit organizations don't have the profit concern but must continue to show the value they provide to the community they serve. They must provide relevant services and products under the critical eye of stakeholder members, donors, and granting bodies.

The info pro has to be aware of trends in industry generally, at both the local and international levels. A merger, a change in leadership, a major competitor's actions may all have a huge effect on how our company is run or how executives' expectations may change. At the same time, the information industry itself is changing. Vendors, competitors, innovation and technological developments, evolving client needs and expectations—are all factors. We are continually striving to be aware of emerging trends at all these levels. We do so not necessarily to become early adopters (although in some organizations that is the expectation) but to see which trends provide real value. Providing value and ensuring clients' perceptions of the relevancy of the special library or information center within the larger organization are paramount.

It is hard to forecast which trends will endure, and those few that do are the ones that prove to have real value over the long term. Determining just what those trends are, however, sometimes takes quite a long view.

For example, a study conducted in Australia examined the changing competencies and skills expectations for librarians over a 30-year period, based on employment advertisements. Not surprisingly, trends affecting the workplace have had a dramatic impact on the expectations of librarians. "Technological change (e.g., high incidence of requirements for Web design and maintenance, and e-resources) has profoundly influenced the LIS field of employment, as have the behavioral characteristics and interpersonal skills (such as flexibility, creativity, negotiation, and communications skills, and so on) required to operate in an increasingly technological and changing environment, and management skills are increasingly called for." (Kennan et al. Australian Academic and Research Libraries, vol. 37 no. 1, March 2006). Much of the work that SLA has been undertaking regarding the competencies of special libraries are reflected in these skills expectations of employers.

Another example that relates to changes in employment affecting every industry is the concern over the aging workforce in Western nations. Many studies have concluded that there will be a large number of librarians retiring between 2010 and 2020 (part of the Baby Boom retirement). This has spurred a trend in larger organizations to ensure that more junior staff learn management, budgeting, and other skills as part of a concerted effort at succession planning. Human resource professionals identify similar trends affecting the workplace generally: outsourcing/off-shoring of jobs; increased demand for work-life balance; retirement of large numbers of baby boomers at the same time; work intensification as employers try to increase productivity with fewer employees (HR Focus August 2006).

Companies are feeling the pressure to identify trends that will affect their profitability. McKinsey Consulting recently reported: "According to new research, companies that shift their portfolios to align them with favorable trends are much more likely to achieve strong growth and profits" (McKinsey Quarterly 2006 Issue 3). Trends that managers have identified in their research include more intense competition, globalization of business affecting industries locally; innovation in many industries causing a dramatic pace of change; and the importance of effective strategic planning to identify and adjust for these areas of change.

The flip side to all of this trend watch is the tendency of organizations to jump on the emerging trends without careful analysis of their true value out of fear that they will be left behind.

The flip side to all of this trend watch, however, is the tendency of organizations to jump on the emerging trends without careful analysis of their true value out of fear that they will be left behind. Management trends specifically are problematic with the promise of improved performance, reduced expenses, increased productivity, improved competitiveness all leading organizations to become eager to adopt these emerging systems.

But the rate at which new management trends come and go has been increasing rapidly. Last summer, the Wall Street Journal reported: “A 2000 study by professors at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette on 16 ‘management fashions’ in the past 50 years found that idea life cycles are shrinking. From the 1950s to the 1970s, it typically took more than a decade for interest in an idea, measured by press mentions, to peak. By the 1990s, that interval had shrunk to fewer than three years.”

> “From the 1950s to the 1970s, it typically took more than a decade for interest in an idea, measured by press mentions, to peak. By the 1990s, that interval had shrunk to fewer than three years.”

What Does It Mean?

As our companies adapt to the changing business environment, the info pro also must adapt. As customers, we convey our changing needs to our vendors, and our vendors make adaptations to ensure their profitability. Most special librarians tend to be aware of the changing special library environment as well, with trends in streamlining services, providing seamless access to information and value-added activities to our clients as their needs change. Past SLA and other library conference themes, for example (monitored courtesy of my colleague Debbie Millward), make it easy to see the trends that have interested special librarians over the last decade or so:

- 1990s—knowledge management
- 1999—end of the physical library
- 1999—the threat of the Internet
- 2000—change management
- 2001—strategic planning
- 2002—branding and marketing
- 2003—embracing the Internet
- 2004—predicting the future: wireless, outreach, but still need physical library
- 2005—communication: manners, battling jargon with precision
- 2006—finding sanctuary from technology, to invent and think

It is clear that we are just as anxious as other corporate executives to find those trends that will have real value to our clients and our organizations, and at the same time help us do our work better. It should also be noted that info pros not only have been looking at how technology changes the way we work, but how we want to work differently. It will be interesting to see what trends will make their appearance this year and which ones will disappear further from our view. **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*.

JANUARY 2007

CLICK U Live!
Web 2.0 in Libraries: Theory and Practice, Part 1
January 10, 2007
www.sla.org/clickulive

2007 ALISE Annual Conference Association for Library and Information Science Education
15-18 January 2007
Seattle, WA, USA
www.alise.org/conferences/2007_conference

ALA Midwinter Meeting American Library Association
19-24 January 2007
Seattle, WA, USA
www.ala.org/ala/eventsandconferencesb/mid-winter/2007/home.htm

CLICK U Live!
The Tools of Web 2.0, Part 2
January 24, 2007
www.sla.org/clickulive

2007 Leadership Summit
24 January 2007 - 27 January 2007
Reno, NV, USA
www.sla.org/2007leadershipsummit

Board Meeting
24 January 2007
Reno, NV, USA
www.sla.org/2007leadershipsummit

Information Online 2007 Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)
30 January-1 February 2007
Sydney, Australia
conferences.alia.org.au/online2007/

FEBRUARY 2007

CLICK U Live!
Making Information Architecture Real, Part 1
February 7, 2007
www.sla.org/clickulive

Web Based Communities 2007 International Association for the Development of the Information Society (IADIS)
18-20 February 2007
Salamanca, Spain
www.webcommunities-conf.org

Thinking Outside the Borders: Library Leadership in a World Community Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records
18-20 February 2007
Phoenix, AZ, USA
www.lib.az.us/extension/thinking.outside.the.borders.cfm

CLICK U Live!
Making Information Architecture Real, Part 2
February 21, 2007
www.sla.org/clickulive

International Conference on Semantic Web and Digital Libraries Indian Statistical Institute
21-23 February 2007
Banglore, India
drtc.isibang.ac.in/icsd

Electronic Resources & Libraries 2007
22-24 February 2007
Atlanta, GA, USA
www.electroniclibrarian.org/conf/conf.htm

2007 Code4Lib Conference
28 February-2 March 2007
Athens, GA, USA
www.code4lib.org/2007

MARCH 2007

IPI-ConfEx International Patent Information
4-8 March 2007
Sorrento, Italy
www.ipi-confex.com

CLICK U Live!
RSS Feeds: The Future of Information Delivery, Part 1
March 7, 2007
www.sla.org/clickulive

National Conference on Library and Information Studies Sri Lanka Library Association
8-9 March 2007
Colombo, Sri Lanka
www.slla.org.lk

ASIDIC Spring Meeting 2007 Association of Information and Dissemination Centers
11-13 March 2007
Orlando, FL, USA
www.asidic.org/meetings/spring07.htm

EUSIDIC 2007 European Association of Information Services
11-13 March 2007
Roskilde, Denmark
www.eusidic.net

CLICK U Live!
RSS Feeds: The Future of Information Delivery, Part 2
March 21, 2007
www.sla.org/clickulive

Information Architecture Summit ASIS&T
22-26 March 2007
Las Vegas, NV, USA
www.iasummit.org/2007

Information Ethics Roundtable 2007
23-25 March 2007
Tucson, AZ, USA
library.hunter.cuny.edu/tdoyle/ier2007.htm

Buying & Selling eCon-tent Information Today
25-27 March 2007
Scottsdale, AZ, USA
www.buy-sell-econtent.com

ACRL 13th National Conference Association of College & Research Libraries
29 March-1 April 2007
Baltimore, MD, USA
www.acrl.org/ala/acrl/acrlevents/baltimore/baltimore.htm

APRIL 2007

CLICK U Live!
Building a Content Management Strategy: Part 1, The Business Side of the Equation
April 11, 2007
www.sla.org/clickulive

The Academic Librarian: Dinosaur or Phoenix?
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
11-12 April 2007
Hong Kong
www.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/conference/aldp2007/info

Computers in Libraries 2007 Information Today
16-18 April 2007
Arlington, VA, USA
www.infotoday.com/cil2007

AIIM 2007
16-19 April 2007
Philadelphia, PA, USA
www.aiimexpo.com/aiimexpo2006/v42

21st Annual AIIP Conference Association of Independent Information Professionals
18-22 April 2007
Minneapolis, MN, USA
www.aiip.org/Conference/2007

CLICK U Live!
Building a Content Management Strategy: Part 2, Tools and Specifications
April 26, 2007
www.sla.org/clickulive

ARLIS/NA 35th Annual Conference Art Libraries Society of North America
26-30 April 2007
Atlanta, GA, USA
www.arlis-se.org/atlanta2007

SCIP07 Society of Competitive Intelligence Professionals
30 April-3 May 2007
New York, NY, USA
www.scipstore.org/07annual

MAY 2007

4th International Evidence Based Library & Information Practice Conference School of LIS at UNC-Chapel Hill and UNC Institute on Aging
4-11 May 2007
Chapel Hill-Durham, NC, USA
www.eblip4.unc.edu

16th International World Wide Web Conference International WWW Conference Committee
8-12 May 2007
Banff, Alberta, Canada
www2007.org

CLICK U Live!
Twelve Tips for the One-Person Library
May 9, 2007
www.sla.org/clickulive

Enterprise Search Summit 2007 Information Today
15-16 May 2007
New York, NY, USA
www.enterprisesearchsummit.com

CLICK U Live!
MLA Annual Meeting Medical Library Association
18-23 May 2007
Philadelphia, PA, USA
www.mlanet.org/am

What's on the Horizon: A Look at Where Our Profession Is Heading
May 23, 2007
www.sla.org/clickulive

CLA 2007 Canadian Library Association
23-26 May 2007
St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada
www.cla.ca/conference/2007

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

JUNE 2007

SLA 2007 Special Libraries Association
3-6 June 2007
Denver, CO, USA
ww.sla.org

ADVERTISING INDEX

SLA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Reflections on the New Year, Reflections on Member Benefits

In the spirit of improved communication, here are some infrequently discussed resources you can find on our Web site.

One hundred and ten years ago the British Empire, which ruled approximately 25 percent of the world's population, entered Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee year. You can just imagine on what scale that anniversary was celebrated.

In 2007, there will be a lesser-known diamond jubilee, namely that of my birth, but somehow I doubt that 25 percent of the world's population will join in the celebration.

It is on occasions like New Year's and birthdays that one gives time to reflection. What have been the most significant changes since 1897 and 1947? For the former, I suggest the advancement of transportation, from horses to space travel, and supersonic flights. For the latter, I suggest the advancement of communication, from the pre-dial telephone and black-and-white television to satellite-connected mobile phones and the Internet. Although the modes and speed of communication have advanced significantly in recent years, I am not sure that we have actually become better communicators.

The results of SLA's 2006 membership study, a summary of which is included in this month's *Information Outlook*, show that we need to do more communicating to our members about the resources and benefits available to them. Because of this, and in the spirit of the New Year and new Information Outlook design, I should like to bring to your attention the resources for which the Information Center is responsible.

News Connections

Included in this section of the Web site are the new SLA Feed Reader, Factiva News, and Nexcerpt News. The feed reader, a partnership with NewsGator, delivers RSS feeds to the desktops of SLA members. You can customize this resource to provide you with feeds of interest to you and your work, which will increase the value of the information you provide and improve communication and collaboration within your organizations. We are looking to add feeds to the category folders all the time, and look forward to receiving your suggestions at *resources@sla.org*. The articles provided through Factiva Track Modules are grouped into eight topic areas. Nexcerpt.com is a Web-based news feed based on similar news items and subject interests of our members.

Information Portals

SLA's Information Portals have been created over a number of years, and are regularly updated by Information Center staff when new resources come to our notice. They are not intended to be exhaustive, but are a useful first stop when looking for information on a certain topic. There are more than 40 different subjects covered, which we group under the following broad topic areas: careers, intellectual property, international, Internet/intranet, knowledge management/communities of practice, competitive intelligence, management/services, marketing/value, and technology/software. Please let us know at resources@sla.org of any resources that you come across.

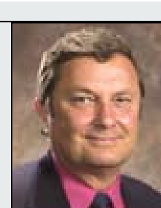
SLA Podcast Center

Since July 2006, the new podcast center has provided links to podcasts from SLA CEO Janice Lachance, and other staff. The monthly Information Management column from Information Outlook is narrated, and you'll also find reports on Click U and the Career Center, practical information resources for SLA members, and a report from SLA President Rebecca B. Vargha from the October board meeting.

CONSULT Online

This is a directory of SLA members who are library/information consultants. A search on this database is free and is available to members and non-members interested in locating a consultant who may assist, on a normal commercial basis, with such areas as library management, technical services, or other subject specialties. Searches can be prepared using drop-down menus of areas of expertise, and the searches can be narrowed by city, state or province, country and region.

Unless otherwise shown the resources above can be found from links from the Resources web page at *www.sla.org/content/resources/index.cfm.* **SLA**



JOHN R. LATHAM is the director of the SLA Information Center. He can be reached at jlatham@sla.org. The Information Center is sponsored by Factiva, a Dow Jones and Reuters company.

Dialog Custom Solutions

We tailor information solutions to suit you.

THOMSON™