Information Outlook, July/August 2016

Special Libraries Association

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SLA Launches New Community Platform

Looking to streamline its communications and make it easier for members to interact and collaborate with each other, SLA launched a new community platform, SLA Connect, in early June.

SLA Connect is intended to replace the discussion lists and wikis that were assigned separately to each chapter, division, committee, and advisory council. The platform is integrated with SLA’s member directory and automatically refreshes the member database as members update their profiles.

Following are some of the features and benefits SLA Connect offers to members:

- single sign-on from SLA’s Website;
- the ability to send e-mails to all association members as well as subsets of members;
- the opportunity to “put a face with a name” by adding photos to profiles;
- the ability to post resources in community libraries and share them with all community members; and
- the capacity to recognize fellow members with ribbons, badges, points, and other accolades.

“As chair of the SLA Technology Advisory Council, I’ve had the opportunity to test SLA Connect for a few weeks now,” wrote David Stern in a message to SLA members announcing the launch of the platform. “I can tell you from personal experience that SLA Connect does more than simply replace the current discussion lists—it will revolutionize the way you interact with fellow members.”

Another feature of SLA Connect allows members to decide how often they are notified of new messages. A “Daily Digest” combines all of the day’s messages into one e-mail, but members can choose to receive e-mails in real time (that is, as they are sent).

SLA Connect is being rolled out in stages, with new features and benefits being added at each stage of the implementation process.

Members Gather in Philadelphia for Annual Conference

Leadership skills and business strategies were on the minds of the more than 2,500 information professionals and their industry partners who gathered in Philadelphia in mid-June for the SLA 2016 Annual Conference.

The three-day conference offered more than 100 educational sessions as well as networking events, business meetings, social activities, and an exhibit hall featuring products and services from 173 industry partners. Highlights included an opening keynote presentation on learning and leading by management coach Erika Andersen, the presentation of awards to distinguished SLA members, the introduction of SLA’s new executive director, and a closing keynote on librarian leaders by author Marilyn Johnson.

The educational sessions were presented in a variety of formats, ranging from 20-minute “Quick Takes” to intensive, 90-minute Master Classes. Session topics included strategic planning, becoming the CEO of your organization’s information center, integrating customer relationship management into corporate research, digital counterintelligence, cyber-hygiene, gathering business intelligence, curating content, and “infopreneurship.”

At the opening general session, SLA presented its top honor, the John Cotton Dana Award, to Jim Matarazzo and Toby Pearlstein. SLA also presented its Rising Star and Judith L. Vormelker Awards, named five new SLA Fellows, and inducted two members into its Hall of Fame.

Five Special Librarians Named SLA Fellows

At its 2016 Annual Conference in Philadelphia, SLA named five leading special librarians to its 2016 class of Fellows.

SLA Fellowship, which recognizes mid-career information professionals for their past, present, and future service to the association and the profession, was conferred upon Brandy King, Brent Mai, Valerie Perry, Stephen Phillips, and Cindy Romaine.

Brandy manages information services at the Arnold P. Gold Foundation and is the head of Knowledge Linking, an information services firm in Massachusetts. She has spent the past 13 years working in academic health research and managing social media for several small businesses and nonprofits.

Her involvement with SLA started in earnest when she attended the 2005 Annual Conference as the recipient of the Innovations in Technology Award. Around the same time, she began serving as Webmaster for the SLA Social Science Division, eventually becoming division chair in 2012.

Brandy currently chairs the SLA 2017 Annual Conference Advisory Council and just finished a term on the Online Content Advisory Council. She was a speaker at the closing session of SLA 2014 and has co-authored a book and written several journal articles.

Brent is dean of libraries at Concordia University in Portland, Oregon, having served in that role since 2003. During his time as dean, he has led transformative changes, including designing and constructing a new library building, establishing a university press, and founding the Center for Volga German Studies and the Northwest Center for Children’s Literature.

Brent has served SLA in a variety of capacities, most notably as president (2012), when he pushed to expand SLA’s membership outside the United States (particularly in the Arabian Gulf and Asia) and into other fields that work with information. Prior to his presidency, he served on the SLA Board of Directors (2003–2006) and worked extensively on the Leadership Development Institute/Leadership Summit. He has
chaired and served on several committees, including the Awards & Honors Committee and the Annual Conference Advisory Council.

Brent has been active in the Business & Finance Division and was the division’s chair in 2001. In the Academic Division, he has served on the editorial board of the *Journal of Academic Librarianship* since 2009.

Valerie is director of branch libraries and head of the Agricultural Information Center at the University of Kentucky. She has served as secretary, archivist, and president of the Kentucky Chapter, treasurer of the Science-Technology Division (and business manager of *Sci-Tech News*), and chair of the Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition Division.

At the association level, Valerie is currently a member of the SLA Nominating Committee. She has also served on the SLA Board of Directors as past division cabinet chair (2014) and on the Member Preferences Task Force, the Volunteer Experience Task Force, and the Online Content Advisory Council.

Valerie has been honored several times for her many contributions to SLA and the information profession. The Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition Division gave her its Distinguished Member Award in 2007, and the Kentucky Chapter has honored her with the Kentucky Chapter Professional Award (2007) and the Larry Besant Professional Award (2014).

Stephen has participated on the SLA Member Preferences Task Force, the Advocacy Task Force, and the Value of the Information Professional Subgroup; he received a Presidential citation for his work on the Alternative Revenue Task Force. Additionally, he represents SLA and its aims as part of the Information Management Alliance, a U.K.-wide coalition of information organizations striving to effectively communicate the value of the information profession.

Cindy is principal at Romainiacs Intelligent Research in Portland, Oregon. As SLA president in 2011, Cindy focused on encouraging special librarians around the world to become “Future Ready,” and to that end she launched “Future Ready 365,” a blog that was updated daily with guest posts and garnered more than 4.4 million hits and 400,000 unique visits in 12 months.

Cindy has long been active in the SLA Oregon Chapter, serving as president in 1995-1996 and again in 2009-2010. She currently serves as secretary of the Competitive Intelligence Division and was previously the division’s communications chair. Cindy is also a member of the Leadership & Management Division and the User Experience Caucus.

In addition to her term as SLA president, Cindy has served on the SLA Board of Directors (2006-2008), the SLA Branding Task Force, the Professional Values Task Force, and the Public Relations Advisory Council. In 2003, the Nike Design Library, which she headed, received the Business & Finance Division’s Centers of Excellence Award for Management. *SLA*
Bibliometrics: Putting Librarianship on a New Track

MORE ORGANIZATIONS ARE DEVELOPING AN APPETITE FOR MEASUREMENT, DATA, AND ANALYTICS. BIBLIOMETRICS CAN HELP LIBRARIANS PROVIDE THESE SERVICES.

BY SARAH DAVIS, MLIS

John Harbison, a 35-year veteran of law libraries and information services, recently said that “libraries are a service, not a destination.” That’s a somewhat new point of view, but it’s good news for librarians, as it increases the value of their knowledge and training. With ubiquitous access to online information, employers of all kinds have a growing need for librarians, who know how to curate journals, develop metrics, and apply taxonomies.

One way that librarians can help organizations is by using bibliometrics. Bibliometrics is the scientific and quantitative analysis of academic research, a way of measuring the authorship, publication, and use of literature as a proxy for research. Simply put, bibliometrics demonstrates the value of library journal collections and can measure an author’s impact.

Some librarians working in bibliometrics focus on citation analysis. My group at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) does some of this, but we also look at what and where our authors publish. The tools we use to perform this work include Web of Science, a service for indexing scientific citations, and EndNote, a tool for creating bibliographies and performing some basic analyses.

The world of bibliometrics practitioners is a fairly small, tight-knit group, but it’s growing. Those working in bibliometrics aim to evaluate the output of authors, programs, institutions, and even countries. We study areas of scientific research and assist with library tasks such as evaluating journal titles for collection development. We also aid authors in selecting journals for publication and identifying seminal research.

Getting Involved
It’s not always easy to secure organizational support for bibliometrics. I became involved in it in 2012, when NOAA (where I work as a contractor) asked my group to develop a consistent method for tracking peer-reviewed articles that the agency’s authors were producing. The agency also wanted us to create some basic metrics. A colleague of mine spearheaded the creation of our bibliometrics program; I assisted him with the launch (along with another librarian). When he left for another opportunity in 2014, I took over leadership of the program.

SARAH DAVIS is a librarian for LAC Federal (part of the LAC Group) at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Central Library. She earned her master’s degree in library and information services from the University of Maryland in 2011. She is a member of SLA and has been a librarian for five years, but accepted her first library position in 2004. Contact her at Sarah.Davis@noaa.gov.
One way to get a manager’s buy-in for a bibliometrics project is to present it as a way to figure out where your organization’s money is going.

Bibliometric Rules of the Road
I’ve learned some basic principles while using these tools. First, most bibliometric data sets have skewed distributions. For example, the average is not representative of the data set, and librarians must account for this. Providing a median as well as a mean resolves this problem to some extent.

Second, citation counts and behaviors vary from field to field and over time, so it’s important to provide context to give your data meaning. It’s not possible to compare authors working in different fields of study, because citation conventions differ greatly across fields. Additionally, publications should be at least two years old to provide meaningful citation data, although this varies from field to field.

Third, bibliometric indicators depend entirely on data quality. If you want to retrieve high-quality results, proper author and institution disambiguation is crucial. As for database selection, we’ve found it’s important to carefully consider differences in coverage, search capabilities, and indexing quality.

Ultimately, all bibliometrics work starts with collecting a bibliography and looking at a body of work, then asking questions that define your goal. In other words, begin with the end in mind, then ask questions such as these: Does my employer want to know the organization’s output? Do the subject matter experts want to know about areas of research they should consider? Some researchers know the details of their output, so they want to learn who is using their papers. In this case, construct a citation analysis.

The Limits of Bibliometrics
Notwithstanding their usefulness, bibliometric indicators are imperfect, and librarians should only use them for their specific purpose. For example, librarians should only use journal impact numbers to evaluate journals, not the papers in those journals. Also, you can’t definitively know what bibliometric indicators actually measure. For instance, high citation rates don’t necessarily correlate with credibility—you may find that an article is being cited frequently because scholars are questioning the research that it presents. And bibliometric analysis only takes into account publications, not other factors. These metrics cannot, for example, replace peer review, so librarians shouldn’t use them as their sole method of evaluation.

Given the basic principles and limitations of bibliometrics, we can construct an outline to help guide the development of a bibliometrics program:

- Determine whether you have organizational and managerial support for a program. Moral support is good; funding is better.
- Consider your available resources. What software programs and databases do you already have, and which ones will you need to obtain? How much staff time can you dedicate to a bibliometrics program?
- Determine the level of participation (in terms of staff days or hours) you
Emerging Opportunities for Special Librarians

...can expect to receive from other offices and authors. Are authors willing to provide bibliographies to jump-start your projects? Do authors have (or are they willing to register for) ORCID or ResearcherIDs?

- Map the core and custom services you will offer. Ongoing projects, training, and analyses on request may require a different set of resources and will affect your staffing and outreach plans.
- Create a plan to raise awareness of your program. Newsletters, lunchtime talks, social media posts, Webinars, and Websites can all broadcast news about the launch and availability of the program.

Becoming a Bibliometrician

Getting involved with bibliometrics can be as straightforward as volunteering to create or participate in a bibliometrics program. To get started, attend seminars and workshops that are offered on the subject. Earlier this year, I delivered a bibliometrics presentation at Catholic University (sponsored by the SLA Maryland Chapter), and a number of workshops and symposiums have been hosted at the Library of Congress.

If a bibliometrics program is thrust upon you before you’re up to speed, take heart—you don’t have to start by evaluating a giant data set. Instead, you can start small with basic metrics (such as publication counts and citation rates) as you learn and evaluate bibliometrics software, much of which comes with tutorials and YouTube videos.

In the United Kingdom and The Netherlands, the popularity of bibliometrics has grown to the point that these countries are developing a lot of the tools being used in the field. Many bibliometrics tools also come from higher education. For instance, Indiana University developed the Science of Science (Sci2) Tool, which analyzes and visualizes scholarly data from individual contributors (up to and including a worldwide group of authors). Organizations like the Smithsonian Institution are starting to look into analyzing research output, too.

During my recent presentation at Catholic University, an attendee from the Smithsonian Institution remarked that some fellow librarians were looking at altmetrics. In contrast to citation metrics, altmetrics measure data about people, journals, and books appearing in social media, knowledge bases, and the news media. If you’re motivated to learn about bibliometrics, there’s much already available to help you build your skills.

Tapping into Bibliometrics

Bibliometrics can also be used to develop collections and to enhance and justify your budget. If your focus is collection development, you can use bibliometrics to rate a journal on its impact factor, how often researchers select it, and how frequently it is cited. It’s a way to confirm that researchers have the best available studies and data and don’t have to go elsewhere to find it.

The following four steps will help you design your bibliometrics project:

1. Define the scope. What are you looking for?
2. Identify outcomes. What will you do with the data you collect?
3. Choose a data source. This can be a tool, such as Web of Science.
4. Develop a methodology. Determine what your process will be, and document it.

While designing a program is important, getting a manager to support your efforts is critical. One way to get a manager’s buy-in for a bibliometrics project is to present it as a way to figure out where your organization’s money is going. Tell your manager that bibliometrics can determine how researchers are using what your organization produces. A manager able to report on these types of things will earn not only bragging rights for what his or her employer creates, but also a valuable financial measure for gauging output.

As the concept of the Library as a Service® takes hold, bibliometrics will surely be one of the services employers seek. Both the private and public sectors have an almost insatiable appetite for measurement, data, and analytics. Advance your career by becoming a librarian who can provide these services. Get involved with (and even master) this emerging opportunity, and you’ll have found another way to make librarianship vital. SLA

Resources

Open source tools available for Bibliometrics projects include the following:

- VOSViewer (http://www.vosviewer.com)
- Pajek Wiki (http://pajek.imfm.si)
- CiteSpace (http://cluster.cis.drexel.edu/~ccchen/citespace)
- OSviewer (www.osviewer.com)
- NodeXL (http://nodexl.codeplex.com)
- NetDraw (http://sites.google.com/site/netdraw-software)
- Cytoscape (www.cytoscape.org)
- Google Charts (https://developers.google.com/chart/)
Supporting the Commercialization of University Intellectual Property

ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS CAN MAKE AN IMPACT ON RESEARCH EFFORTS AT THEIR UNIVERSITY AND ON THE ECONOMY AT LARGE BY PARTNERING WITH THEIR UNIVERSITY’S TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER STAFF.

BY JENNIFER R. MARTIN, MA, CYNTHIA ELLIOTT, MA, SANDRA S. KRAMER, MS, MA, AND JIM MARTIN, MLIS

More and more academic institutions are exploring the market landscape by licensing the technologies emerging from their laboratories and classrooms and forming start-up companies. An increasing number of patents are being awarded to universities in the United States, and that rate is growing.

For example, more than 5,900 patents were issued to U.S. universities and colleges in 2014, up from approximately 1,000 in 1996 (National Science Board 2016). Invention disclosures, which are prospective inventions submitted before a patent application is filed, increased from 13,718 in 2003 to 21,596 in 2013 (National Science Board 2016). The number of start-up companies originating from universities has also grown during this time, reaching 759 in 2013 (National Science Board 2016).

A number of very profitable patents have come from university technology transfer efforts. For example, in 1965, the sports drink we know as Gatorade was invented at the University of Florida. An assistant football coach challenged research physicians to come up with a solution to combat the problem of heat-related illness that affected players. The researchers developed a formula that worked and became a huge success (Rovell 2006). The University of Florida receives 20 percent of profits in royalties from the invention of Gatorade, which, as of 2015, holds 77 percent of the sports drink market share in the United States (Rovell 2006; Mintel 2016).

The rise in patents awarded to colleges and universities is largely attributable to deliberate decisions to support technology development and transfer. According to Perkmann and others, “To
support commercialisation, many universities have established specialised structures, such as technology transfer offices (TTOs), science parks and incubators (Perkmann et al. 2013). These investments have paid off not just for universities, but for America as a whole: A study from the biotechnology industry reports that from 1996 to 2013, patent licensing activity involving industry and academia increased the U.S. gross industry output by up to $1.8 trillion (Griffith 2015).

Tech Transfer at the University of Arizona

At the University of Arizona (UA), librarians are contributing to the commercialization process through a partnership with a university-affiliated commercialization unit, Tech Launch Arizona (TLA). Tech Launch Arizona was created in 2012 to support the commercialization of UA technologies and innovations by securing patents and assisting units on campus in creating a marketable technology or product.

TLA began partnering with UA librarians in 2013 (Elliott, Martin, and Dewland 2015); in 2014, the UA Libraries (UAL) developed a formal agreement with TLA. Each librarian contributes his/her personal expertise—such as specialized knowledge in business, marketing, patents, or chemistry—to the evaluation of campus-produced innovations. Together, the librarians have assisted with the commercialization process of Tech Launch Arizona.

In 2015, the librarians were recognized by TLA with the I-Squared Innovation & Impact Award for Campus Collaboration (Tumarkin 2015). TLA Vice President David Allen, who presented the award, acknowledged, “Over the past two years, this collaboration has shown how bringing the vast resources and targeted expertise of the UA Libraries into the technology commercialization mix can be a true game changer. With the information the Business Intelligence Unit is bringing to the table, we’re providing our teams with the ability to make better, more strategic decisions and increasing our effectiveness in bringing the inventions of the UA to market.”

In addition to assisting with TLA projects, the team’s health sciences librarians are providing support to the Arizona Center for Accelerated Biomedical Innovation (ACABI). ACABI identifies “novel science, technology and other discoveries that may be brought to bear to develop novel solutions which may be translated to reality in the here and now” (ACABI 2015). ACABI is physically located on the UA Health Sciences campus, and it also partners with TLA. The librarians work with ACABI to provide information on a very broad range of innovative health care technologies.

The UAL leadership has actively supported the TLA/libraries partnership. One of the UA Libraries’ strategic priorities is “to develop and sustain new community engagement and partnering activities that increase the personal and economic well-being of the people of Arizona.” This strategic initiative explicitly states that the UAL will “provide market research and competitive intelligence to the Business Intelligence Unit of Tech Launch Arizona’s wheelhouse” (University of Arizona Libraries 2015).

Currently, six librarians provide research support for TLA; in recognition of the strategic importance of TLA’s work, the UAL administration recently approved the creation of an additional librarian position that will provide half-time support. Three of the six librarians currently supporting TLA previously worked in the biomedical industry before becoming academic librarians. Their experience with the innovation process has been a key reason for TLA’s success, as they have expertise in several different areas: patents, chemistry, market research, pharmaceutical pipelines, medical device development, and engineering.

The librarians have also had opportunities to expand their expertise, as the UAL has purchased additional library resources to support the commercialization process. For example, the UAL acquired AdisInsight to support the research needed to investigate drug development technologies. AdisInsight provides comprehensive profiles of drugs in development as well as overviews of licensing details. TLA contributed a significant amount of funding toward the purchase of AdisInsight (which was also welcomed by faculty in the College of Pharmacy).

According to preliminary statistics from TLA, based on the total number of disclosures in 2016, the UA College of Science holds the largest share of unique invention disclosures (34 percent), followed by the College of Medicine (25 percent), the College of Engineering (18 percent), and the College of Optical Science (13 percent). Nationwide, biotechnology (18.2 percent) and pharmaceuticals (15.1 percent) represented the greatest share of patents issued to U.S. academic institutions between 1996 and 2014 (National Science Board 2016). Thanks partly to the TLA, overall invention disclosures as well as start-up companies launched by the University of Arizona have increased. Table 1 shows the

Table 1. Invention Disclosures and Start-Up Companies

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<td>Exclusive Licenses &amp; Options</td>
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<td>Filled Income from Royalties and Patent Reimbursements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Agreements</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asset Demonstration Awards (Previously Proof-of-Concept)</td>
<td>19 ($703,449 awarded)</td>
<td>19 ($537,005 awarded)</td>
<td>17 ($814,788 awarded)</td>
<td>23 ($1,046k awarded)</td>
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<td>Patents Issued</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
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*FY 2014 represents TLA’s first full year of operation with a complete staff and processes and strategies in place. (Tumarkin 2016)
growth of invention disclosures and start-up companies at the university from fiscal year 2013 through April 2016.

**Library Support of Commercial Endeavors**

Outside the University of Arizona, however, few academic libraries are engaged in technology transfer at their universities, but some libraries have developed partnerships to increase support for the development of intellectual property. For example, the China Academic Library & Information System is a consortium that provides commercial patent databases and also supports patent retrieval services and patent information analysis (Feng 2015). In particular, the Nanjing Technology University Library has embedded library services within the university to support patent information services, moving a librarian out of the library and directly into the research process (Feng 2015).

At the University of Toronto Libraries, librarians are embedded within the MaRS Discovery District and provide market research to support local entrepreneurs. Under this partnership, two librarians are assigned to work with clients who are entrepreneurs in the community and also with professors and researchers at the university. The librarians conduct market research by “assessing [the] commercialization potential of . . . technologies by providing market data, identifying licensing partners and surveying the patent landscape” (Fitzgerald 2010). As a result of the partnership with MaRS, the librarians have expanded their portfolios to support the university’s commercialization efforts.

The University of Toledo Library has partnered with the Regional Growth Partnership to provide services for clients to help develop the local economy. The librarians offer consulting services on key business resources to support economic development growth. The resources include databases, books, and journals to support both scientific and market research that serve clients (Martin 2010).

Using e-mail discussion groups, the authors identified some academic libraries that support technology transfer and commercialization efforts at their institutions (as well as several others that expressed interest in exploring this type of engagement). Most of the respondents informally support their technology transfer units on a per-request basis. Of particular note is the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries, which co-developed (with the university’s technology transfer office) a Patent Landscaping, Market and Funding Opportunity Research Service for faculty, staff, and students. According to Cynthia Reifsnider, “We’ve run this service for three years and will continue to support the university, but we won a...
United States Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant last year to expand the service to greater North Carolina” (Reifsnider 2016).

Librarian Engagement
As these examples demonstrate, librarians are in a unique position to deliver high-quality market, patent, and scientific information to their university’s technology transfer units. This type of partnership can lead to higher levels of engagement within the technology transfer unit and provide other opportunities for librarians to engage the entrepreneurial community.

Several such opportunities have emerged this year since Tech Launch Arizona was selected as a winner of a National Science Foundation Innovation Corps (iCorps) grant focused on developing new technologies and innovation. Teams of new innovators apply, and selected iCorps teams receive funding to move their technologies toward commercialization. The librarians provide scientific, medical, and market research to each team to determine which ideas have commercial potential. TLA also engages with others who support the iCorps program and campus technology transfer efforts in the areas of business development, licensing, industry and corporate partnerships, company incubators, and start-up networks.

As a spin-off of this effort, health sciences librarians offer faculty grant applicants the opportunity to have their potential innovations reviewed by librarians. For example, a faculty member wrote a grant application for a medical device. The librarian’s search revealed a patent for the same type of device, saving the faculty member both time and effort.

As more and more universities move in this direction, opportunities are arising for academic librarians to position themselves as “game changers” in this arena. Many information professionals in academia are already contributing to the commercialization of university intellectual property, a trend not well documented in the published literature. We plan to explore this topic further and engage others who are also seeking opportunities to transform and leverage information professionals’ skill sets. SLA

RESOURCES


Reifsnider, C. 2016. E-mail message to author Cynthia Elliott. June 3.
Focus on Skills Rather Than Your Job Title

LISTENING TO OTHER WORKERS’ CONCERNS AND OFFERING TO TAKE WORK OFF THEIR PLATES CAN HELP LIBRARIANS GAIN NEW SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE AND PREPARE THEM FOR NEW ROLES.

BY LAUREN E. HAVENS, MSLS

Corporate America needs librarians. Unfortunately, business executives seldom realize the range of skills we offer and rarely think to reach out to us. So if we’re looking for new opportunities, we need to go to them.

Instead of looking for job descriptions with “librarian” or “knowledge management” in the title, consider your skills and how you want to grow. Key skills that I’ve seen in demand are customer service, marketing, communication, and connecting people to the resources they need. These skills can get you in the door in a variety of roles, and once you’re in, you can demonstrate your ability to do other things and shift roles as needed.

Roles and Opportunities

Following are some of the roles and opportunities that librarians may want to consider:

Project management/product owner. In these roles, which often focus on a piece of the company or technology, you are organized, help communicate within the team and across other teams, and help guide the product or project forward. You keep the project on track and manage people and/or aspects of the project.

To obtain and fulfill these roles, you may want to acquire some technical skills to work with programs like SQL and other tools the organization uses to build, monitor, and maintain services. For example, my company, Jet.com, uses F#, Office365 tools, and Splunk. The Slack chat environment has also been very useful for a variety of communications, including providing notifications related to our production systems. Some of our project managers have been able to build functionality within Slack to add automatic system alerts so that issues can be identified more quickly.

Marketing. There are a variety of positions for librarians within marketing teams. If you have experience working with marketing staff and campaigns in libraries, you can tailor your résumé to qualify for positions with corporate marketing teams. Alternatively, if you’re interested in a marketing position within a library, offer to help the marketing team within your current organization to gain some experience or transition fully to the team by showing how your organizational skills can help them.

Marketing teams often need help coordinating with product teams and other groups and especially with speaking the same language. For example, some marketing campaigns may emphasize certain brands, so librarians can help ensure that consistent phrasing and tags are used in social forums.

Human resources. Called “Talent Experience” at Jet, HR may incorporate training components under its umbrella. If you are interested in pursuing a training role, you may want to...
Another way I discovered new opportunities and grew my role was by thinking about how I could help take work off of other people’s plates.

consider helping to structure or coordinate training programs to get your foot in the door. In my case, even though I don’t have the technical depth of the programmers around me at Jet, I have helped structure training opportunities for them and define training paths so they can continue to grow personally and professionally.

**Leveraging Skills**

I have seen the potential for librarians to fill these kinds of opportunities through my work at Jet.com. I currently work in technical knowledge management, a sort of librarian/communications hybrid role.

Jet.com was started by a handful of employees working in a basement. The company later graduated to “real” offices in Montclair, New Jersey, which we soon outgrew. We now have our headquarters in Hoboken, New Jersey, with a window view of Manhattan just across the river.

Saying that Jet.com has grown quickly is an understatement. The Website publicly launched in July 2015, and in November 2015 the company raised more than $500 million and was valued at around $1 billion excluding that funding (Del Ray 2015).

Before I started working at Jet, I talked with people at the company and listened to them describe the problems they were encountering. What I heard made me think that my skills and background as a librarian would be useful—that cleaning up a product catalog didn’t sound too different from organizing a library database. I sent my résumé to the business lead on the product catalog team and was hired as a temporary contractor in February 2015. A few weeks later, with the work going well, I joined Jet full-time as employee #130 (or thereabouts).

To get my foot in the door, I had leveraged the organizational skills I had acquired as a librarian and my experience working with a different kind of catalog. I was now part of the product catalog team, which aggregated different streams of incoming data, cleaned it up, and made it available for searching, pricing, and displaying on our Website. Although we could not use the same normalization and sorting rules for household tools or clothing that I had used for books, the organizational skills I had gained as a librarian were very useful for understanding how to approach the problem.

In order to do the job well, however, I also needed to acquire some technical skills so I could do things like create SQL queries and understand how the different databases worked together throughout the company. Learning these skills would also make new opportunities available to me—database knowledge and querying abilities are assets for anyone looking to help companies create cleaner product information and catalogs.

By the time Jet.com publicly launched in July 2015, we had moved to our current Hoboken offices and added several hundred employees. During that time, it had become apparent to me and many others that we could not continue to go without project documentation, especially within the tech groups. At that time, if a few key individuals had gone on vacation or quit suddenly, it would have significantly damaged our ability to operate. What had been beneficial for getting a site like ours off the ground as fast as possible—allowing small systems known intimately by just one or two people to spring up quickly—was increasingly becoming a liability. We could not afford to have critical organizational knowledge stored only in the heads of people who could choose to walk out the door at any time.

With the help of a few key individuals, I took on a temporary project with the order management team to document their processes. This allowed us to show that documentation could work and provide immediate benefits—it gave the engineers a playbook they could use to solve technical problems that came up while they were on pager duty and also created documentation that allowed the business side to more easily communicate with other teams. While our attempts to advocate for an official knowledge management role continued to be rejected, we were able to create a technical writer role that I then used to continue the process of documentation, which was desperately needed.

Once the most critical aspects of documentation were addressed, I had time to look for new opportunities and fill new roles. For example, I had noticed that the tech teams were scattered throughout the organization, without anyone speaking for them at key functions, so I spoke up and advocated for representatives from the tech side of the organization to be present at monthly company-wide presentations. I also tried to help ease the tech recruitment process and generally became a point of contact for the tech group. You can replicate this approach in your organization by stepping back and trying to identify people who should be made aware of opportunities but aren’t in the loop—say, someone who’s missing from particular e-mail lists.

Another way I discovered new opportunities and grew my role was by thinking about how I could help take work off of other people’s plates. In my tech writer role, I focused on creating documentation to free people up from manual tasks, such as by making information about a system readily available so that questions could be resolved with a Web link rather than being answered in person again and again. Having a playbook to refer to when issues came up overnight allowed the person on duty to fix the problem without having
to awaken other people. There were months when our tech systems seemed like babies, waking up the developers every few hours and making it difficult for them to perform well at work the next day.

**Seeing the Need**

Going from the slow-paced world of libraries to a fast-paced start-up environment was disorientating in many ways. I could not afford to wait patiently for my manager to give me permission to take on a project. Waiting for permission at a start-up wasted valuable time. It was better to surge forward and ask for forgiveness later than pass up the opportunity to be valuable and do things that I saw needed to be done.

If you are looking to move into a corporate environment, be aware of this and other cultural differences. You should be comfortable with proactively identifying new opportunities to use your skills to help solve problems.

Pursuing opportunities in the corporate world also means living where they live. Keep your LinkedIn profile up to date and active. Use meet-ups to get to know a company and talk with people who know the company’s needs. I got my foot in the door at Jet by talking to people and explaining to them how their challenges were similar to things I had handled in the library world. These individuals had not considered hiring a librarian because they didn’t understand that what they needed were skills, not a title. They needed the skills that a librarian possesses, but there was no library for a librarian to manage.

By focusing on the skills that you enjoy using and how you can apply them to help the organization or team you want to join, you can find corporate roles that will allow you to grow. For example, working at Jet has allowed me to acquire valuable experience in communications simply because I saw that there was a need and surged forward to help address that need, not because my job description required me to do it. Similarly, there are a lot of opportunities in the corporate world for individuals with a library background, even those who lack a master’s degree in library or information science.

**REFERENCES**

Connecting Knowledge Management to Disaster Recovery

SPECIAL LIBRARIANS CAN APPLY KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT TO CORE BUSINESS PROCESSES SUCH AS ORGANIZATIONAL DISASTER RECOVERY PROGRAMS TO CREATE NEW ROLES FOR THEMSELVES AND EMERGE AS BUSINESS LEADERS.

BY RON ASPE

A ny support function, whether within a corporation, a government department, a professional services firm, or a non-governmental organization, must tie its mission and goals to the strategic imperatives of the parent to remain relevant and enjoy true importance. It follows that when special librarians are proposing to implement a knowledge management program, it must be seen to support core business processes and solve related problems.

Unfortunately, although KM projects are often marketed as making people more effective, it’s challenging to quantify the return on effort, and evidence will be anecdotal at best. Another barrier to adoption is that knowledge management is usually practiced as a stand-alone discipline, and as such it lacks the strong, immediate, and broad familiarity that will loosen organizational purse strings and lock in C-level advocacy. To anyone other than a knowledge management practitioner, KM is often considered non-essential and therefore isn’t a priority when budgetary and staffing resources are allocated.

Although the perception is that KM is non-essential, the reality is that a strong, well implemented, and well managed KM program weaves throughout the organization, anchoring and optimizing every core business process. The challenge is to change people’s perceptions so that knowledge management is no longer viewed as helping only its practitioners, but instead is seen as absolutely essential to organizational viability. One way to meet this challenge is to systematically tie KM to critical internal functions, telling stories that everyone can understand.

Essential Business Processes

Every organization has a number of core business processes that are widely understood to be critical to operational and strategic success. All of these can be optimized with excellent KM capabilities.

The accounting function provides a great analogy when thinking about how knowledge management protects your organization. Clerks and accountants follow established rules and procedures in recording information that is fundamental to your organization’s survival in the event of a crisis. Note that they do not create this information—they simply categorize and store it.

Similarly, a disaster recovery plan captures knowledge and preserves it for easy retrieval by all stakeholders in the event of an emergency. Nothing more, nothing less. A good KM program does exactly the same—it inserts itself into daily, standard operating procedure. At the conclusion of every important event, the knowledge gained is categorized, stored, and made available for research and reuse.

Disaster recovery provides a powerful opportunity for KM to support business continuity efforts. Every organiza-

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tion has (or should have) a disaster recovery plan, and KM has a key role to play in ensuring organizational survival. A disaster recovery plan is like insurance—you don’t really want to pay the premiums, but you certainly don’t want to take the risk.

Positioning KM as a disaster recovery essential increases its emotional appeal and imbues KM with a powerful sense of urgency and importance. After all, what CEO would want to be held responsible for failing to secure the organization’s intellectual assets? What mid-level manager would want to explain why vital organizational learning isn’t being recorded as part of his or her department’s disaster recovery program? And what employee wouldn’t want his or her work included in such a recovery program? Excluding such work would imply the employee is either incompetent or unimportant.

Applying KM to Disaster Recovery

Knowledge management practitioners can apply classic KM principles to a disaster recovery strategy. These principles include capturing, codifying, and curating critical knowledge, communicating with stakeholders, and connecting stakeholders with resources wherever and whenever needed.

Identify critical knowledge resources: Interview staff in each department or functional area and identify the resources they must be able to access to continue performing their duties in the event of a disaster.

Determine how best to capture critical knowledge: Devise methodologies for gathering and categorizing the knowledge for easy recovery.

Design a disaster-proof knowledge vault: Source, configure, populate, and continually update a digital repository.

Establish vault access protocols: Determine who will have access to the vault and under what circumstances.

Monitor and report vault contributions: Ensure that the contents of the knowledge vault are continually updated; flag and address knowledge gaps.

Communicate with stakeholders: Keep everyone up to date on the purpose and status of the vault (this is an ongoing effort).

Train stakeholders: Ensure that vault contributors are trained in all elements of contribution and access (this is an ongoing effort).

Note that KM and records management (RM) overlap to the extent the Vital Records Guidelines from ARMA (formerly the Association of Records Managers and Administrators) can serve as the starting point for developing a KM-based disaster recovery program. However, vital records are not necessarily knowledge resources, and it takes a KM professional to recognize the difference. For example, a drug patent would be considered a vital record, but the knowledge resources leveraged during the research and development process, as well as the knowledge gained while performing the work to develop the patent, are even more vital to the long-term success of the organization. The U.S. Patent Office will have a copy of the patent; it will not have all the research that informed and resulted in the patent.

Just as KM does not necessarily encompass vital records, it discriminates among other types of information as well. Good KM captures key items that will be needed if and when the time comes to rebuild. Good KM always weeds out the non-essential information and resources, in part by determining the impact of a given knowledge asset’s loss on the organization.

Simply storing everything is not a substitute for KM and will not help your organization rebuild itself in the event of a disaster. This approach will not help maintain continuity in the event a manager leaves the team, and it is certainly not going to help when a key employee leaves. Why not? Simply because there is too much information on hand, and not enough time to sift through it.

Connecting the Dots

KM, then, offers an ideal lens through which to view an organization’s disaster recovery plan. But this begs the question: Who should manage the KM duties within an organization? I maintain that librarians and knowledge management specialists are uniquely positioned to offer solutions and perspectives to optimize essential processes, including disaster recovery and business continuity.

Unlike professionals in functions such as accounting or information technology, librarians are, by role and by orientation, interdisciplinary. Who better, then, to connect the dots between knowledge management and critical operating procedures?

Some will say that librarians’ plates are already too full to add KM and disaster recovery. It’s true that today’s librarians are being asked to deliver more, often with fewer resources. Here’s the thing, though—delivering more with less shouldn’t even be on the radar screen. Instead, change the conversation and make it about how you can offer more to your organization, using proven library and knowledge management tools and techniques to look at existing issues through a different and more powerful lens.

Great Starting Point

A KM-based disaster recovery program is a great starting point for implementing a KM mindset throughout your organization. Furthermore, research performed during the implementation process will empower special librarians and knowledge management professionals to identify other areas of the organization where a KM strategy can anchor and optimize core processes.

Once you have a strong KM function in place, preserving it and ensuring that it’s perceived as essential is often about marketing. Positioning KM as essential to the successful implementation of a core business imperative such as disaster recovery both enhances the perception and delivers the reality of KM leadership. This positioning sets the stage for exciting opportunities for special librarians.
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Like many of their peers, Angela Pagliaro and Kelly Bergman “found” librarianship—Kelly after working as a marketing analyst, Angela after a brief stint as an English language teacher and tutor. The two are not content, however, to simply let their clients “find” the library and its services.

To promote the services of their organization’s library, the two developed a graphic that defines what the library does and how it can meet clients’ needs. This graphic became the foundation of a paper they presented at the SLA 2016 Annual Conference in Philadelphia. The paper, “Levels of Engagement Framework: Meeting Users at the Intersection of Need and Know-How,” was voted the best contributed paper presented at SLA 2016, earning Angela and Kelly free registration to SLA 2017 in Phoenix.

“I’d like to start out talking a little bit about your backgrounds. What are you doing now professionally, and how did you get to this point in your careers?”

Kelly: Librarianship is my second career. Prior to this, I was a marketing analyst for a greeting card company, and I really enjoyed the research aspect of it. I tried to find ways to learn more about how I could further my research skills. I ended up finding the MLIS program at Rutgers and was very intrigued by it. I knew I’d always wanted to get my master’s degree, and I found a really good fit with Rutgers.

I earned my MLIS in 2009, and then started working at ETS, Educational Testing Service, as a temp. I was in a temporary position for two years, then...
was hired as a full-time employee. Due to internal opportunities, I moved from being an analyst to a consultant, and now I'm managing Knowledge Services at ETS.

Angela: I started in libraries when I was an undergraduate, working in an archive. I didn’t know that I could make a career out of librarianship, but I kept it in the back of my mind. After I graduated, I taught English abroad and worked in some schools, and I thought I would just become an English teacher. But when I found myself thinking about graduate school more and more, I gravitated toward library science. I had very little knowledge of what librarianship looked like or what I wanted to do with it, but I just knew that it was for me. I earned my MLIS at Rutgers, and when I was approaching my last semester, I saw there was a temporary position available at the ETS Library. I got in touch with the staff, the temporary work became full time, and the rest is history.

ETS is a nonprofit, so I’m curious: What you would say are the salient features, if any, of working in a nonprofit library as opposed to, say, a public or corporate library?

Kelly: From the perspective of Knowledge Services, the way things run is similar to other types of libraries. You still have budget issues, and you still have to make sure you’re getting information to clients in a timely manner.

I think the big difference is that the work we do in a nonprofit is very mission driven, which for our organization means making sure there’s quality and equity in education. We have our mission printed on our badge, which is really a nice feature. But in terms of the inner workings of the library, it’s very similar to a corporate library or an academic library.

Angela: Like a public library, we are nonprofit. But unlike a public library, we have a very tailored collection. We have a big research and development division at ETS. Historically, and even now, it’s a great place for researchers to come to work. And when researchers from academic settings come to visit ETS, they see the library, and I think there’s a feeling of comfort there.

Kelly: At its core, ETS is a research-based organization. They really try to leverage our unit, Knowledge Services, to help recruit researchers to come to ETS. And like Angela said, it gives them comfort to know they’ll have resources available that are equivalent to those at an academic library.

Apart from the library, what does Knowledge Services encompass at ETS? What other resources are available?

Kelly: The ETS Library is at the heart of Knowledge Services, which also includes an archive of the history of ETS. The main non-library functions we support are data collection and reporting related to finance and other special projects. Our skills in collecting, organizing, and reporting data make us an attractive resource to other divisions.

Angela: I think a lot of corporate libraries have eliminated their physical collections. We retained ours, and it’s growing—slowly, but it’s growing. A physical collection is a common staple of libraries, and yet untraditional in the corporate setting.
Kelly: Yes, we have a very large physical collection. And we’re so fortunate, because they showcase the library’s collection in the headquarters on the first floor. So when somebody comes into the headquarters, where the office of the president is, they see it. We have about 20,000 physical books, we circulate items, and we still have print journals that route. Any way that we can get information into the hands of researchers who need it, we’ll do it, no matter how traditional the service.

Angela: In addition to seeing the physical collection in our headquarters, our patrons see the ETS Library staff in an open environment, just beyond the collection. Our resources seem traditional, but in a corporate setting they are pretty unique!

Angela: We do check-ins with them, and we’ll ask them to try out something new to help us decide on purchases or identify the bugs. They contact us when something isn’t working for them, and we contact them when we acquire new resources. We co-construct searches with them from time to time and provide learning sessions. They are definitely friends of the library.

Angela: I think our users in research are definitely our biggest advocates. We want to ensure that any-one at ETS can reach out to the library for anything.

You just mentioned the contributed paper. Tell me more about it and the “levels of engagement framework” that it’s based on.

Angela: The paper was almost a by-product for us; initially, we wanted to create something that would represent the different ways people engage with us. The Levels of Engagement visual started as a marketing tool to inform users of the services we offer. We found ourselves with an overwhelming list of examples that support each level, and those examples eventually drove the content featured in our paper.

Kelly: I agree with what Angela said earlier that the researchers here at ETS are our biggest advocates, but we have so many resources applicable to other areas, such as finance, legal, marketing, HR, etc. We want users to
take advantage of our corporate-wide subscriptions and understand that the library has something for everyone.

The Levels of Engagement framework shows this assortment of services. The last two levels of the framework, Organize and Embed, are probably the ones most unfamiliar to our users. Having them understand that we’re available to help organize their data and partner with them on critical projects helps expand the reach of Knowledge Services.

For example, the whole concept of embedded work is new to the ETS Library. Before I became the manager of Knowledge Services, I began working very closely with the folks in New Product Development. The idea of a librarian being embedded in a group was new to ETS, and it ended up being a huge success. So now that role has expanded to other divisions.

What kind of new product development does ETS do?

Kelly: We design new ways to measure knowledge and ability. For example, our current tests include the GRE, PRAXIS, TOEFL, and TOEIC. We’re developing new types of tests, really trying to look beyond the edge. We’re asking, what is testing going to look like in five years? How are people going to want to measure ability in the future? What kind of technology will support that measurement?

Angela: Some of the people who work in New Product Development have business backgrounds, and there may be some gaps in information management. Knowledge Services provides that intervention for them by performing customized search requests, keeping information organized, and connecting people to people for knowledge transfer.

You’ve mentioned technology a few times here. Is there a piece of new technology or a trend in the field that you two are excited about, either personally or for ETS specifically?

Angela: I think we have to move a little bit faster than our users and anticipate what kind of information or technology will be needed for them to perform their work. In the industry we support, the library needs to be responsible for knowing what’s trending in education, technology, and policy. In a different scope but the same principle, the library needs to know how our own industry and resources are evolving.

Kelly: A new favorite of mine is virtual reality. I think virtual reality is a technology that could influence a lot of different areas, including educational measurement. That’s something on the horizon that I think is going to be revolutionary for a lot of different industries. It’s also a lot to fun to play around with different devices that enable the VR experience!

Kelly, you’re a professional woman in a leadership role. Is leadership something you fell into, or did you always have leadership aspirations? What has your leadership experience been like?

Kelly: I did sorta’ fall into that role. I have to say that the key to my success is my manager, Karen McQuillen. She’s now the executive director of our entire division; she used to be in my position, manager of knowledge services.

Having her as a mentor has really helped me develop as a leader and understand the different qualities of good leadership. I have to say that, based on what I’ve seen so far, leadership is very dependent on the team you lead. I think a lot of leadership is related to finding ways to have each employee work on things that match their skill set. In the library world, you have a lot of tasks: circulation, inter-library loan, archives, reference. I think one of the goals of good leadership is to match each person’s skills to those tasks, so I do a lot of shifting of responsibilities among the staff.

Right now we have five team members in Knowledge Services, and I manage each person differently. I meet with the team weekly and with each person weekly just to do a check-in and make sure everything is aligned. I’ve only been in this role for about six months, but so far, I see the biggest success when someone is doing what they enjoy because their work matches their skill set.

Angela: Kelly and Karen both exhibit qualities of leadership. They’re both listeners and learners. They will always give you time. I can have honest conversations with them when I feel discouraged or in need. That thoughtfulness is who they are as people, and they carry it through with everyone they work with, inside and outside the library. I think the root of librarianship is wanting to
help, and that’s what the two of them are about.

We hear a lot in library land about needing to do a better job of demonstrating our value. You say the ETS Library has been around more than 50 years, but there are a lot of libraries that have been around for 50 years that don’t have the same prestige or recognition. Do you perform a lot of outreach or develop metrics to quantify your value?

Kelly: I think you have to be very flexible and shift with the times. I think you need to be very agile and responsive to the needs of your clientele.

There are a lot of different ways that we engage with our clients and get to know their needs. One of the things Angela can probably speak about is how you can take a single information transaction, like someone looking for a book, and dig further to find out what that person is working on. And a lot of times, relationships develop from that.

Angela: We just gave our contributed paper presentation, and one of the examples we cited was of a patron who came to us because she followed a journalist on social media and needed full access to the resource. We added it to our subscriptions, but then we realized there was another group at ETS that could also find that service valuable. That other group informed us that the resource completely reshaped how they were getting work done.

We captured their testimonial in a qualitative way, but we also looked at it in a quantitative way. We asked them, what does this content allow you to do now that you could not do before? How often do you use the resource? How much time does it save, and has the quality of the work improved?

When it comes to library sustainability and talking about value, I think you need numbers. That said, the numbers aren’t helpful unless they come with a narrative. Without that narrative, everything’s relative—you have no idea what the results really mean and how to measure impact. Tying numbers to work is essential for understanding the library’s value.

My last question is about the coolest thing you guys have done in your career—something you’ve seen or an experience you’ve had, whether at ETS or elsewhere.

Angela: I had this really great professor in college. It was his last year teaching, and with the final class approaching, we all wanted to make it a really special day.

I was working in the archive and came across a picture from his first year of teaching. He was giving a lecture and he was in a natural pose, one we’d all seen before. The archivist allowed me to make a copy of it, and our class framed it and gave it to the professor. He had such a genuine reaction, a mix of happy, sad, surprised, honored, humbled. It was clearly special for him. All I was thinking was, this is connecting him to a time of his life that he forgot, or maybe it was a picture he never saw.

Being the intermediary was extremely gratifying in a way that I didn’t think much of at the time, but when I look back now, it’s the first thing that comes to my mind. I think it was my first exposure to connecting someone to something they don’t know was out there or had forgotten. There’s something really exciting about that, especially when they show gratitude. It doesn’t always happen, but when it does, you need to catalog it for yourself—not just as a librarian, but as a human being.

Kelly: Wow, I can’t top that! I think that’s a perfect way to end this conversation. SLA
Has this ever happened to you?

You’re trying to explain your work to a friend, and you find yourself struggling to find the right words. Or perhaps you’re lobbying your manager for a new position or working with your human resources department to draft a job description for an information professional, and you’re having trouble finding the right vocabulary to describe the necessary competencies and qualifications. Maybe, if you’re a current library student or recent graduate, the challenges of making sense of your school’s curriculum and selecting the right courses to develop your skills will still be fresh in your mind.

If you can identify with any of these scenarios, SLA’s newly revised Competencies for Information Professionals may be just what you’ve been looking for. Approved by SLA’s Board of Directors in April, the revised competencies were developed during a year-long process by a task force appointed by 2015 SLA President Jill Strand. The task force followed an open process with multiple opportunities for member input, thereby ensuring that the final product represented the insights of the full membership of SLA.

The result is a resource that every special librarian can use, no matter what career stage you’re in, what industry sector you work in, or what type of responsibilities you have.

The competencies are posted on SLA’s website at http://www.sla.org/about-sla/competencies/. They’re divided into two main groups, core competencies and enabling competencies.

The relationship between these two groups is shown in the accompanying image. The inner circle shows the core competencies, which are unique to information professionals. These competencies answer the question, “What do librarians and information professionals do better than anyone else?”

The core competencies are critically important, because they differentiate information professionals from other types of professionals. By applying our core competencies to the needs of our organizations and communities, information professionals create value—value that we alone are capable of creating.

As the image shows, the competencies document spells out the following core competencies:

- information and knowledge services;
- systems and technology;
- information and knowledge resources;
- information and data retrieval and analysis;
- organization of data, information, and knowledge assets; and
- information ethics.

Of course, it’s unlikely that any one of us will possess all the competencies to the same degree. Some of us will be especially strong in certain areas, others in different areas. But each of us will find one or more competencies that set us apart within this framework.

For example, if you’re a student or prospective student, the competencies describe what you’ll learn in an academic program in librarianship, information science, or a related discipline. If you’re a professor in the library and information science field, the competencies provide a framework to help shape the curriculum—they define what your program teaches that other departments and disciplines do not. If you’re a working professional, the competencies are a guide to your professional development, helping you determine whether to explore new areas or build on your current strengths. Finally, we can all use the competencies to explain to our managers, human resource professionals, and others what librarians and information professionals do and why they need to hire us!

The outer circle in the image shows enabling competencies, which aren’t unique to information professionals. These competencies don’t differentiate us from other professions; others possess them just as we do. That’s why they aren’t “core” competencies.

Enabling competencies are, however, essential for our success. If we don’t possess and apply them, it’s unlikely...
we'll be able to use our core competencies effectively. Take one example: marketing. We can hardly claim to have unique competence in marketing. Many organizations—not only for-profits, but also nonprofits, universities, and government agencies—maintain marketing functions in-house and/or contract for marketing services. (And it’s also true that information professionals often participate in marketing teams.) But more broadly, we know that regardless of which organizational needs or functions we address, we’ll probably need to apply effective marketing strategies in order to succeed.

So, be sure to read the competencies statement carefully, with your own needs as well as those of your organization in mind. Use the competencies to plan your own professional development. Use them on the job, with your managers and HR staff. Use them to talk to your friends. As you’re using them, adapt them to your own situation.

Our professional competencies have evolved rapidly in the two decades since the first SLA competencies statement was published. We can be sure they’ll continue to change in the years ahead. This is a living document, so be ready to contribute to it in a few years when it’s time for the next revision. SLA

**Competencies of Information Professionals, 2016**

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‘Happy Birthday to You’ Now in Public Domain

A U.S. judge has ruled that the lyrics to the famous song are not protected by copyright, meaning they can be used freely without securing permission.

BY LESLEY ELLEN HARRIS

“Happy Birthday to You” is recognized by Guinness World Records as having the most famous song lyrics in the English language. Since 1988, its self-proclaimed copyright owner, music publisher Warner/Chappell Music, has been collecting royalties (licensing fees) of roughly $2 million annually for its use.

Warner/Chappell collects these fees from anyone using the song on a commercial basis, so all those times you celebrated birthday parties with friends and family by singing this song, you were not responsible for paying licensing fees. However, if you included the lyrics in a movie or TV show, for example, Warner/Chappell asked you to pay licensing fees.

In September 2015, however, U.S. District Judge George King ruled that Warner/Chappell owned some of the musical arrangements (the melody)—but not the lyrics—to “Happy Birthday to You.” On June 27, King approved a settlement under which Warner/Chappell agreed to pay back $14 million in licensing fees and relinquish all rights to the song.

The settlement was the result of a suit filed by film director Jennifer Nelson, who challenged a request from Warner/Chappell to pay a $1,500 licensing fee for using “Happy Birthday to You” in a documentary about the song. Nelson, who was joined by other plaintiffs, argued that Warner/Chappell’s position—that two sisters, Patty and Mildred Hill, had written the lyrics in 1893 (originally as “Good Morning to You,” with the birthday lyrics added later as an optional verse) and published them in a songbook; that the sisters assigned the rights in the songbook to a music publisher, Clayton Summy; and that Summy, whose company was eventually acquired by Warner/Chappell in 1988, copyrighted certain piano arrangements of “Happy Birthday” as well as a second verse in 1935—was not valid because the common law copyrights in the lyrics had been lost due to general publication or abandonment before the lyrics had been published. (Nelson also claimed that the Hill sisters may not even have written the lyrics.)

Warner/Chappell agreed to the settlement, although it continues to believe that a 1935 copyright registration should have entitled it to a presumption of copyright validity. This means that “Happy Birthday to You” is now in the public domain; absent the settlement, the song would have been protected by copyright law in the United States until 2030.

Defining Public Domain

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

Although the phrase public domain does not appear in the U.S. Copyright Act, it is used to refer to content that is not protected by copyright law, for any number of reasons. These reasons include the following:

The duration of copyright in the work has expired. For example, in the United States, the copyright in a book expires 70 years after the death of the author(s).

The work was produced by the federal government. In the United States, works produced by the federal government do not have copyright protection; however, a work produced by a consultant to the government may have protection, and the copyright may be transferred to the government. (Note that in countries such as Canada, there is copyright protection in federal government works.)

The work is not fixed in a tangible form, such as a speech or lecture or improvisational comedy routine that has not previously been written or recorded in any manner.

The work does not include a proper copyright notice. In the United States, this rule does not apply to works created after 1 March 1989, after which date a copyright notice is no longer needed to protect a work. Prior to that date, however, notice of copyright was necessary on all published works; without the notice, the work went into the public domain. (Note that most

LESLEY ELLEN HARRIS has spent her entire career in copyright law, as a lawyer-consultant, author, and educator. She developed the SLA Certificate in Copyright Management Program in 2007 and teaches the nine courses in the program. She has written four books and regularly blogs at www.copyrightlaws.com in plain English. She tweets at @Copyrightlaws.
countries do not have a copyright notice requirement.)

The work lacks sufficient originality. For example, lists or tables with content from public documents or other common sources may not be eligible for copyright protection.

In addition to “Happy Birthday,” works in the public domain in the United States include the following:

- state judicial opinions;
- legislative enactments and other official documents;
- titles of books or movies, short phrases and slogans, lettering, and coloring;
- news, history, and ideas (although a description of ideas in text or visuals may be protected by copyright);
- plots, characters, and themes from works of fiction; and

- procedures, methods, systems, processes, concepts, principles, discoveries, and devices.

Determining the Status of a Work

Determining whether a work is in the public domain in the United States is fairly complicated due to various factors, such as different copyright durations for different works and amendments to U.S. copyright laws. A helpful chart for determining whether copyright has expired in a work in the United States is at http://www.copyright.cornell.edu/training/Hirtle_Public_Domain.htm. Another chart is at http://www.unc.edu/~unclng/public-d.htm. SLA
Creating Connections in the Research Enterprise

A paper presented at the SLA 2016 Annual Conference describes the role an academic library played in helping faculty identify funding sources for their research.

BY MERLE ROSENZWEIG, MALS, JUDITH E. SMITH, MSLIS, ANN CURTIS, AND AMY PUFFENBERGER, MAM

At the University of Michigan, both the Taubman Health Sciences Library (THSL) and the Medical School’s Office of Research (OoR) strive to facilitate faculty efforts in developing original scientific research. The first step in this process is finding the necessary funding to initiate the research project.

The mission statement of each unit makes their collaboration a natural fit to accomplish this. The OoR’s mission statement reads, in part: “The Office of Research at the University of Michigan Medical School is constantly striving to enhance the research enterprise, including maintaining an investigator-focused infrastructure, facilitating and diversifying investigators’ avenues for funding, and streamlining research processes.” (University of Michigan Medical School Office of Research 2016)

The mission statement of the THSL includes the following sentence: “The mission of the health sciences library is to be a valued partner, fully integrated into the work of the university and providing leadership in knowledge management for education, research, patient care, and community outreach.” (University of Michigan Taubman Health Sciences Library 2015)

Faculty Funding Needs

To assess the funding needs of university researchers, OoR conducted a survey on the paths that researchers took to identify funding opportunities. In their survey responses, the faculty and staff expressed frustration with the time it takes to search for new funding opportunities as well as the lack of a central campus guide for funding resources. Between juggling administrative and teaching responsibilities, attending meetings, and working in the lab and the clinic, they could not find time to seek research funding. Also, they felt overwhelmed with e-mails and information about funding that, in many instances, did not meet their specific research needs.

The results of the survey revealed an obvious need for an online guide to streamline the task of finding funding resources. The OoR responded by approaching the informationists at THSL and other university librarians with the idea of developing such a guide.

The interested parties met regularly to discuss the design and content of the guide. The members of OoR provided their expertise in design and communication, while THSL informationists and librarians contributed their in-depth knowledge about the numerous information resources available for identifying research funding and provided expertise in search techniques.

Guide Layout

The team created a streamlined design to save researchers time in finding resources. The design limited the number of tabs (four in total) on the landing page of the guide and labeled the tabs so that users can intuitively understand the content of each area. (The tabs, reading from left to right, are titled Home, Finding Funding, Grant Writing Preparation & Training, and Research Collaboration.) In addition, the design incorporated a left navigation panel into each page of the guide to provide access to a consultation form and to “quick links” listing high-use resources.

The consultation form allows users to request a personalized meeting with an informationist. It uses BMC Numara FootPrints software to track requests submitted to an e-mail address. Eight informationists and librarians rotate duties in responding to the requests.

Guide Usage

By developing the guide and establishing the consultation service, the library has increased its role in the research enterprise across the entire campus. Those seeking information about research funding at the university now have a one-stop resource to help them. If someone needs information tailored to his or her specific research interests, a campus-wide system has been established to handle and address these requests.

Since the rollout of the guide and accompanying consultation service in July 2015, both have been a resounding success. As of April 2016, there have been 11,504 views of the guide and approximately 139 interactions with researchers through the consultation service.

The collaborative effort to design and produce the guide and consultation service can serve as a model for
other librarians seeking to partner with stakeholders at research institutions. Establishing and proactively maintaining a collaborative relationship with units across the research enterprise can build a sustainable system to help researchers navigate the complex funding process.

REFERENCES

Quite content to describe the world in terms of mathematical formulas, most engineers will go to great lengths to avoid writing. Write they must, however, to communicate—not only with engineers outside of their specialty, but also with non-engineers. These communications might require the use of text and figures to supplement data tables and formulas, or even require a literature review to demonstrate knowledge of the field.

To address these issues, in 2011 the Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas began to provide a series of optional workshops on technical writing for engineering graduate students. The goal of the workshops is to improve the writing quality and publication acceptance rate of graduate students in the College of Engineering. The project is a collaborative effort, bringing together the authors, the University Libraries, and various subject matter experts.

In each workshop, the instructors share their experiences in scholarly publishing and consulting with the students to illustrate concepts and best practices. Over the years, the workshop series has grown from two workshop topics—How to Prepare a Paper for Publication and RefWorks—to seven, including one workshop, Grants, that now is offered by colleagues in the College of Engineering and the Office of Sponsored Programs. Using formal and informal feedback from students and faculty, the content and learning activities are updated each semester, and workshop topics are expanded. (Even the two initial workshops have been updated and expanded.)

The workshops typically taken in the first year are the following:

The Papers workshop originally addressed the organization, writing, and editing of manuscripts. Over the years, the focus of this workshop has evolved to address how to develop journal articles and conference papers so they have a good chance of being accepted.

Reference Tools originally focused on RefWorks, a referencing tool offered to all UNLV students, faculty, and staff. As student and faculty feedback began to indicate the use of other tools (such as Mendeley), the workshop expanded to include them. Another expansion in 2015 introduced a section on how to cite references correctly and also touched on plagiarism.

New topics continually are added based on feedback from attending students and their faculty. The workshop series now includes the following:

Introduction to Technical Writing Resources at UNLV is the first workshop held in the academic year. It provides new graduate students with an overview of the writing resources and services available, including the Technical Writing workshop series, workshops held by the University Libraries and the Graduate College, and seminars, as well as consultations provided by UNLV’s Writing Center.

Literature Review explains which databases and search tools to use, how to search, evaluate, and store information sources, and how to write a high-quality literature review for any type of manuscript.

References, Citations, and Referencing Tools, which evolved from the RefWorks workshops, compares the features of several software tools for reference management. It includes a facilitated discussion of citation ethics and hands-on practice in paraphrasing.

How to Prepare a Technical Report provides training on how to identify the audiences for a technical report for grant agencies as well as best practices for organizing, writing, and editing the report. This workshop also includes tips for creating a style guide for successive reports to the same agency.

The Technical Writing Intensive is the culminating workshop for the school year. It is an invitation-only opportu-
nificantly each year—a typical cap is
to
dance as well as gathering information
arily have focused on increasing atten-
sation that is being captured within the
nity. They are participating in a conver-
the dialogue of their scientific commu-
articles, the students are entering into
ers. Through their theses, dissertations,
findings and recommendations to oth-
shops together—engineers must write
theses and dissertations.
experts at one event. Students may
consultations from a variety of campus
nity for students to receive one-on-one
consultations from a variety of campus
ners at one event. Students may
bring any writing project, including their
theses and dissertations.
A consistent theme ties all of the work-
shops together—engineers must write
in order to communicate their research
findings and recommendations to oth-
ers. Through their theses, dissertations,
conference presentations, and journal
articles, the students are entering into
the dialogue of their scientific commu-

Assessments of the workshops pri-
arily have focused on increasing atten-
dance as well as gathering information
to improve the workshop content and
design. Attendance has increased sig-
ificantly each year—a typical cap is
60 students, with wait lists not uncom-
mon. In November 2015, the series was
included as part of the UNLV Graduate
College Research Certificate Program
and opened to graduate students from
across the campus.
Based upon the successful expan-
sion of this workshop series, the authors
worked with the Engineering College’s
associate dean for research, graduate
studies & computing to develop another
workshop, Ethics in Engineering. This
workshop explores topics in research
ethics, publishing ethics, computer
coding ethics, and intellectual property,
including copyright law, patent law, and
trade secrets.
Meanwhile, improvements to the tech-

cal writing series continue, including a
partnership with UNLV’s Writing Center
to modify and deliver some of the con-
tent related to writing mechanics and
style. Assessments to improve each
workshop and the overall series also
continue. Additional research on the
workshop series is being considered
and may include (1) determining how
participation in the workshops changes
a student’s sense of identity as a schol-
ar or a writer and (2) whether there is
a correlation between content under-
standing and this sense of identity.

Using Active Learning to Teach
Students to Use Library Resources

An SLA 2016 poster presentation documented the
advantages of engaging business students in learning
about library resources.

By Stacy Gilbert, MLS

At Texas A&M University, business
faculty frequently invite business librar-
ians into their classes to teach students
how to use library resources for their
class projects. The result is that, during
their college careers, undergraduate
marketing students hear the librarians
talk about the same business resources
over and over.
To keep the instruction sessions fresh
and relevant, I create and reinvent les-
don plans for each class. By moving
away from the passive “sage on stage”
instruction delivery method (in which a
teacher stands at the front of the room
while students watch), I was able to
develop lesson plans that incorporate
active learning. Active learning is “any
instructional method that engages stu-
dents in the learning process,” and it
usually involves student participation
(Prince 2004).

I used active learning tactics to teach
two undergraduate marketing classes
during the spring 2016 semester. One
lesson featured a “Choose Your Own
Adventure” theme wherein students
used the online polling software Poll
Everywhere to vote on the databases
they wanted to learn, then answered
corresponding practice questions. The
other lesson plan provided step-by-step
instructions for using several databases,
thus allowing the students to learn the
databases on their own and then pres-
ent their findings to the class. Based on
an informal assessment that included
responses to the in-class exercises, the
lesson plan with pre-written instructions
was the more successful of the two.

Lesson Plan 1
The first instruction session for the
senior-level Retail Merchandising class
required students to select their own
“database adventure.” At the beginning
of class, the students reviewed a hand-
out with descriptions of nine business
databases: RKMA Market Research
Handbooks, IBISWorld, Statista, Mintel
Reports, eMarketer, PrivCo, Factiva,
Hoover’s, and SimplyMap. Using Poll
Everywhere, the students voted to deter-
mine which databases they wanted to
see demonstrated.
After the students voted, I demonstrat-
ed the top five resources (IBISWorld,
RKMA Market Research Handbooks,
Statista, eMarketer, and SimplyMap).
After the demonstration, the students
used Poll Everywhere to answer prac-
tice questions using the databases. I
then reviewed how to find the answers.
The learning outcomes for this

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at Texas A&M University. She can be reached at stacygilbert@library.
tamu.edu.
The learning outcomes for this instruction session included the following: (1) students will become familiar with databases for their project, (2) students will learn how to evaluate databases with the “five W’s and H” method (who, what, where, when, why, and how), and (3) students will show their database knowledge by demonstrating the database.

Before the class started, I created worksheets for each database. The worksheets also described features of the database (e.g., how to download a report) and contained questions designed to help the students evaluate the database.

During the class, students followed the steps to using the databases, then answered the evaluation questions. The students were encouraged to “think-pair-share,” a process whereby they started by working independently, then paired to help classmates who got stuck. Ultimately, each group selected one to three people to demonstrate the database to the class.

This class was more successful than the “Choose Your Own Adventure” class. Having students work through the databases themselves rather than follow my demonstration allowed them to work at their own pace and helped maintain their attention level. The active learning methods like think-pair-share and peer teaching worked well—the students seemed engaged with the database instructions and were eager to demonstrate the databases. While demonstrating the databases, the students explained nearly all the information I would have covered. Peer teaching made the students accountable for their learning and provided a way to assess what they learned from the worksheets.

FRESH AND RELEVANT

In libraries, the traditional approach to database instruction usually involves a librarian showing databases to passive students. There are, however, innovative teaching techniques available that can increase students’ engagement and, consequently, their retention and understanding of material. By developing two lesson plans that used active learning to teach library databases to marketing students, I was able to make students accountable for their learning through peer instruction, create opportunities for students to think independently and discuss their ideas in groups (think-pair-share), and use technologies such as Poll Everywhere.

In future library instruction classes, I hope to find more ways to incorporate step-by-step instructions and peer instruction into my teaching, as well as more information literacy skills. I will continue to implement these improvements and other active learning ideas while developing new lesson plans to keep the library sessions fresh and relevant.