Information Outlook, October 2005

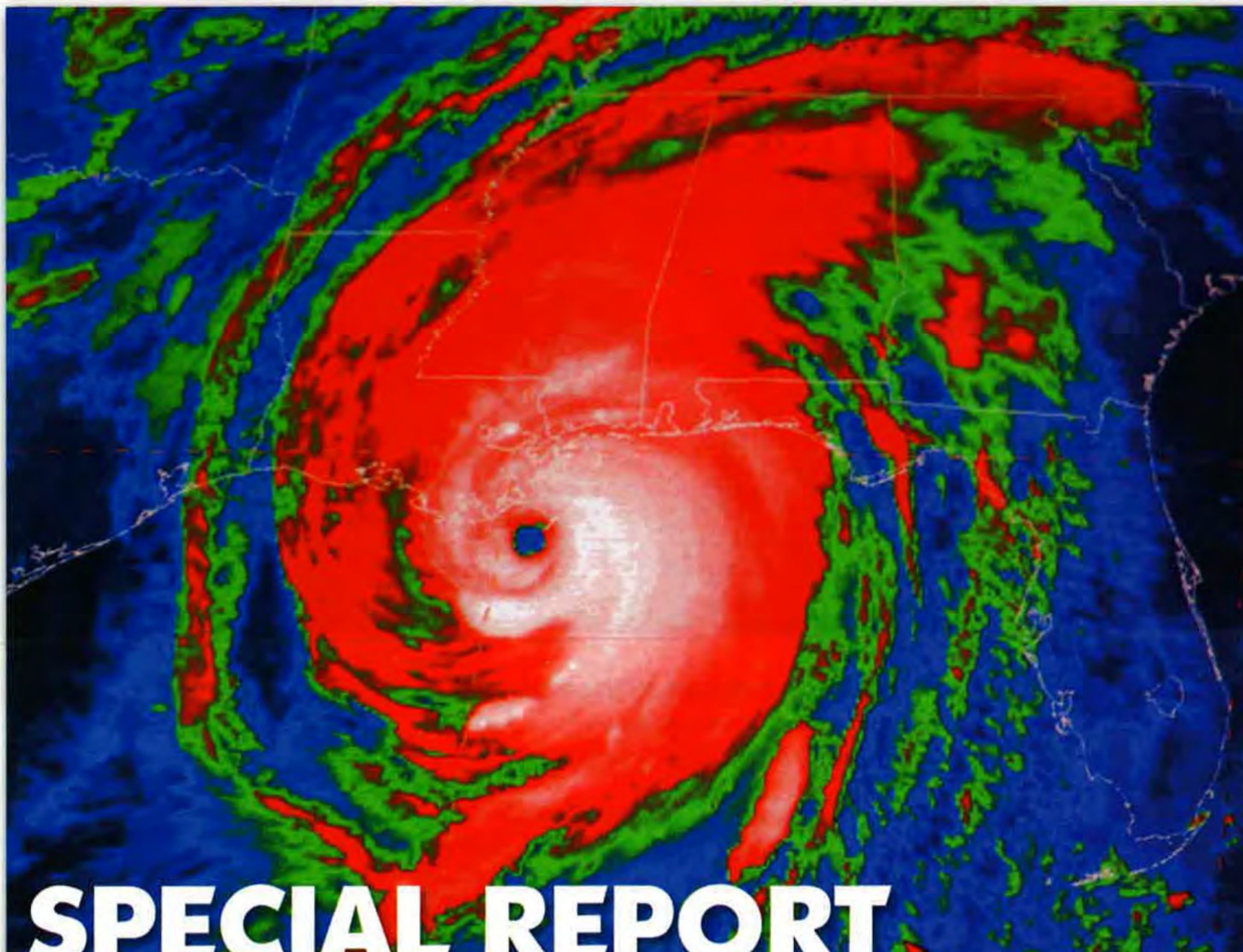
Special Libraries Association

vol. 9, no. 10

information outlook®

October 2005 www.sla.org

THE AFTERMATH



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Info Pros Respond to Katrina
SLA's Response to Natural Disasters
First-Hand Thoughts on the Storm

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table of
contents

FEATURES

THE AFTERMATH

Columns and Departments

information outlook

The Monthly Magazine of the
Special Libraries Association
Vol. 9, No. 10
October 2005

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

2004 Subscription Rates:
Annual subscription, $125 (U.S. and International). Single issue, $15. Please report missing copies promptly to publications@sla.org. To ensure continuous delivery of *Information Outlook,* please notify SLA promptly of address changes by writing membership@sla.org. When submitting address changes, please include all the information on the mailing label. Changes may not go into effect for four to six weeks.

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

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A To-Do List for September

Janice R Lachance

It's truly saddening to see the images transmitted from the southern United States in recent weeks, as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have wreaked havoc and brought absolute devastation to cities like New Orleans. While the people living in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas experienced loss of life and property, people around the world are left to wonder just what happened to the response of government in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. The increased focus on more coordinated preparedness and response to emergencies by government officials after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 yielded one critical learning point: information sharing among local, regional, and national governments must improve. It seems that we still have some work to do.

To be sure, the disastrous floods in New Orleans after Katrina passed the area exposed short-term and long-term weaknesses in the ability of government to protect citizens from disaster AND to help them in their greatest time of need. The latter is certainly the more egregious failing, since responsibility can be placed on all levels of government for a variety of reasons. But once things went from bad to worse, the ability of local, state, and federal emergency management agencies to get things done was shown to be atrocious. It is not possible to compare this disaster with the great tsunami that hit southern Asia last year. Save a dramatic investment in early warning systems for the region—which now are being considered—years of planning would have still resulted in a dramatic loss of life. New Orleans residents could have benefited greatly from a coordinated information sharing program, with governments and private sector organizations partnering to combine talents and generating awareness at strategic points in the evacuation and recovery processes.

Was the knowledge of the potential for a devastating flood something that was not shared effectively? Was that knowledge distributed widely enough or deeply enough throughout government circles? What must happen now to ensure that similar disasters do not occur elsewhere in the world?

In the wake of these natural disasters, there are lots of questions we must answer.

But we in the SLA community need only to look back to Don Tapscott's remarks at SLA 2005 in Toronto to glean some insight: Don told the capacity crowd that, in an age when access to information is unprecedented, we stand uniquely positioned to help deliver what people need to know, when they need to know it. Could we be on the verge of a new and more strategic value proposition for the information profession?

When we think about the current role played by info pros in society, we mostly think of the public or academic libraries in our communities. On a local or even regional level, however, the need for coordination of information sharing is now seen as an absolute necessity. This could be the dawning of a new place in the societal value chain for this profession. In fact, SLA is exploring this very possibility in partnering with the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science and the U.S. Government Printing Office to make an application for a grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The grant would be used to develop a training system to prepare librarians and information professionals to serve as information collectors and disseminators in local emergency preparedness programs, but also in the aftermath of a natural or man-made disaster. We'll hear about the success of that grant request very soon.

As the people of Louisiana and Mississippi were beginning to realize the impact of Hurricane Katrina, SLA members began to respond with queries on the safety and health of fellow members and offers of help. SLA's volunteers, the Information Professionals Alliance on Natural Disasters and Accidents (IPANDA) engaged Louisiana and Southern Mississippi Chapter President Lisl Zach to determine first steps. The IPANDA Blog was activated as a hub for sharing news and information, and SLA staff helped Zach to deliver a message to all info pros in our community—member and nonmember alike—asking for news on their personal safety, status of their collections, and offering assistance where needed. Several members from offered temporary room and board, and talk began of ways SLA could help libraries and information centers recover from the disaster.

In this issue of *Information Outlook*, Dav Robertson, chair of the SLA Task Force on Natural Disasters, tells us more about the SLA response strategy for natural disasters worldwide. And Forrest Spencer reports on the actions of many information professionals to help their employers and one another during these horrible experiences.

Moving forward, I encourage you to help us improve our response to future catastrophic events over time by getting involved in IPANDA. Together, we can make the SLA experience more valuable and go beyond member benefits. More important, let's all consider the value proposition of the profession to society, as this will ultimately help us to redefine our role in the global community.

SLA Votes

By now, you have no doubt seen the announcements regarding SLA's first-ever online balloting experience. If you haven't reviewed the details, you may do so at the SLA Bylaws Information Center (www.sla.org/bylaws). We will be announcing the results of the vote on 19 October. Look for a special edition of SLA Connections in your electronic mail that will report on the outcome and its impact.

web sites worth a click

By Carolyn J. Sosnowski, MLIS

MyPyramid.gov

www.mypyramid.gov

Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released a revised "food pyramid," which continues to serve as a nutritional guide for those interested in a healthy lifestyle. The new pyramid, based on the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, has an interactive and multifaceted Internet component. Users provide information about age, gender, and physical activity level, and the site makes recommendations for daily consumption from the five areas of the pyramid (grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, and meat and beans). Ideas for following the suggestions, in the form of "tips" and other resources, lead users to explore a diet rich in whole grains, deeply colored vegetables, and lower-fat foods. In a password-protected area of the site (where personal information is kept private), MyTracker allows users to plot and assess their diets and physical activity over time by entering food items (specific products and amounts) and exercise levels for analysis and comparison to the Guidelines. A helpful section for professionals offers teaching guides and a sample menu. At times, the site can be slow, but exploring MyPyramid is definitely worth the effort.

BookPage

www.bookpage.com

Subtitled "America's Book Review," this site contains reviews, interviews, and other tidbits for libraries, booksellers, readers, and publishers. BookPage is an extension of the print publication, which has been around since 1988 and is available at libraries and bookstores nationwide (a directory of locations is posted). Each month, more than 60 new items in a wide array of categories (mystery, romance, history, cookbooks, children's literature, autobiography, audiobooks, among others) appear on the site, either as part of the standard crop of reviews or representative of one of the month's themes (such as summer reading in July and women's history, gardening, and world travel in March). The Advice for Writers columnists answer questions and offer advice to authors looking for the straight story about getting published, finding an agent, and marketing their labor of love. Reviewer and interviewer credentials are listed with each piece, as are links to WorldCat, local bookshops, and an online bookseller price comparison tool. Searchable archives go back to 1996.

news briefs

Gartner Highlights Key Emerging Technologies

From corporate blogging to carbon nanotubes and speech recognition to service-oriented architecture, the 2005 Gartner Hype Cycle highlights the progression of an emerging technology from conception, to market over-enthusiasm, through a period of disillusionment, to an eventual understanding of the technology's relevance and role in a market or domain. It covers 44 technologies and trends.

Strategic planners who advise their organizations on the adoption of emerging technologies use the Hype Cycle as a guide.

The Emerging Technologies Hype Cycle is one of 68 hype cycles released by Gartner in 2005. More than 1,600 information technologies and trends across more than 60 markets, regions, and industries are evaluated by more than 300 Gartner analysts in the most comprehensive assessment of technology maturity in the IT industry. This year marks the tenth anniversary of Gartner's Hype Cycle, which was first introduced as a commentary on the common pattern of human response to technology. "The pattern resonated so deeply with technology planners, that we received requests the following year for an update. Every year since 1995, we have been publishing an Emerging Technologies Hype Cycle and applied the model to an ever increasing number of IT and business domains," said Jackie Fenn, Gartner fellow and creator of the first Emerging Technology Hype Cycle in 1995.

"The IT industry is awash with hype and buzzwords, and Gartner's Emerging Technologies Hype Cycles cuts through this to offer an independent overview of the relative maturity of technologies in any given domain," said Alexander Linden, research vice president at Gartner. "It provides not only a scorecard to separate hype from reality, but also models that help enterprises to decide when they should adopt a new technology."

According to Linden, companies can feel compelled to invest prematurely in a technology because it is being hyped or, conversely, they may ignore a technology just because it is not living up to early expectations. He urged organizations to be selectively aggressive in identifying technologies that could be beneficial to their business and evaluate these earlier in the Hype Cycle. "For technologies that will have lower impact on your business, let others learn the difficult lessons, and then adopt the technologies when they are more mature," Linden said. "It's less a matter of don't believe the hype and more a case of do believe the hype but only in the wider context of the marketplace, potential applications, and ultimately the relevance to your business today and tomorrow."

The Emerging Technologies Hype Cycle covers the entire IT spectrum, but Gartner has identified three key technology themes businesses should watch, as well as highlighting some of the individual technologies in those areas. Technologies that will enable the development of collaboration, next-generation architecture, and real-world Web are highlighted as being particularly significant.

Collaboration

A number of key collaboration technologies designed to improve productivity and ultimately transform business practices are identified in the Hype Cycle:

• Podcasting. Podcasting offers a way to "subscribe" to radio programs and have them delivered to your PC. Gartner predicts that podcasting subscriptions will grow increasingly important as the market for content continues to fragment, which will lead to a massive shift in radio, and ultimately TV, content delivery. Podcasting is an extremely efficient method for delivering audio and spoken-word content to niche audiences, and as such could become an important corporate communications tool.

• Peer to peer (P2P) voice over IP (VoIP). Vendor-proprietary P2P VoIP applications are under development although security concerns still need to be addressed. Services like Skype currently enjoy significant consumer adoption and are beginning to make inroads into the business landscape. Gartner predicts that the technology will be important for collaborative and multimedia applications as well as low-cost communications.

GARTNER HAS IDENTIFIED THREE KEY TECHNOLOGY THEMES BUSINESSES SHOULD WATCH

• Desktop search. Also known as personal knowledge search, this is an individual productivity application, residing on the desktop and using local processing power to provide search-and-retrieve functionality for the desktop resident's local e-mail, data store, and documents. Google, Microsoft, and Yahoo are competing for customer attention, adding to the hype but customers not exhibiting much interest in buying solutions. However desktop search will become a standard feature in Microsoft Longhorn, currently planned for 2006, and should reduce content recreation increase content reuse while raising productivity.

• Really simple syndication (RSS). RSS is a simple data format that enables Web sites to inform subscribers of new content and distribute content more efficiently by bypassing the browser via RSS reader software. RSS is widely used for syndicating weblog content, but its corporate use is only starting to be tapped for activities such as corporate messaging. Its simplicity makes it easy to implement and add to established software systems. Gartner predicts that RSS will be most useful for content that is 'nice to know' rather than 'need to know'.

• Corporate blogging. This involves the use of online personal journals by corporate employees, either individually or in a group, to further company goals. It reached the peak of hype in 2004 although mainstream firms have not yet got involved. Its impact will be on projecting corporate marketing messages primarily and secondarily in competitive intelligence, customer support, and recruiting.

• Wikis. A simple, text-based collaborative system for managing hyperlinked collections of Web pages; it usually enables users to change pages or comments created by other users. Wikis are becoming available from commercial vendors, in addition to many open-sourced products, but not yet from established enterprise vendors. However, they are widely used as collaborative, distributed authoring systems for online communities, especially those using open-source projects. Gartner predicts that Wikis will impact ad hoc collaboration and group authoring.

web sites worth a click

American Bar Association—Public Resources

www.abanet.org/public.html

This gateway leads consumers to the many free and informative resources on the American Bar Association Web site. Need to know more about the components of estate planning and not sure where to begin? ABA's Section on Real Estate, Probate and Trust Law provides information on wills, trusts, powers of attorney, probate, living wills, advance medical directives, and retirement benefits. Fact Books, available in PDF, give overviews of legal issues dealing with privacy, women, the elderly, and children in an easy-to-understand question and answer format. Read about the legal aspects of bankruptcy, divorce, or domestic violence in the "Legal Topics" section. There's also basic information about the courts system, the legal profession (statistics, careers), and finding an attorney and navigating the legal maze in your geographic area.

PCMag.com Product Guides

www.pcmag.com/category2/0,1874,13,00.asp

This extensive site from *PC Magazine*, filled with product information, reviews, and buying guides, will help you navigate all of your electronics purchases, from digital cameras to printers to antivirus software. The detailed and cross-referenced reviews are dated and editor-rated. Users can search and browse by several criteria, such as price, capacity, and manufacturer (the extent of search and browse capabilities varies by product type). Some sections are meatier than others, but most contain several products, that can be sorted and selected by the user for side-by-side comparison—a helpful feature when trying to narrow down your choices. As a convenience, users can link out of the site and actually purchase products from online sellers... no need to leave your office.

Card Games

www.pagat.com

These days, it's hard to turn on the television and not find a poker or blackjack tournament to watch. Professional players and (especially) celebrities make Texas Hold'em look fun and easy. Now you, too, can find the rules for poker and hundreds of other card games. John McLeod maintains this huge site, which includes games from around the world. Learn the rules, strategy, and history of games like Peanut Butter (also known as Kemps) and Zanga (native to Spain). In addition to an alphabetical list of games, with cross references, there's a classified index where players can search for games by objective or country of origin, among several other categories. The site has numerous links to other resources on games, history, tournaments, and card tricks.

Carolyn Sosnowski, MLIS, is an information specialist at SLA.

Call for Papers

SLA Baltimore 2006: *Where Tradition and Transformation Converge*

SLA is accepting papers for presentation at its Annual Conference June 11-14, 2006, in Baltimore and for publication on its Web site.

The papers will not be formally peer reviewed. Instead, a panel of SLA members will evaluate abstracts of the papers. Authors whose abstracts are accepted will be asked to write the paper.

Topics of the papers should be related to library science, information management, research or other issues related to the work of special libraries. Abstracts also will be judged on substance, potential member interest, and relevance to the conference theme (Where Tradition and Transformation Converge) or to the SLA tag line (Connecting People and Information).

Authors need not be in academia, but the author (or at least one co-author) ***must*** be a member of SLA.

Submission Guidelines and Specifications

Full guidelines, including formatting instructions, are online at www.sla.org/baltimore2006/papers.

Deadlines

December 8, 2005 – Abstract due. Submit an abstract of your paper via e-mail to Terri Brooks, at brooks@ici.org. Abstracts should be approximately 250-300 words in length, roughly one page in 12-point text with normal margins. Applicants will be notified of acceptance by January 6, 2006

May 1, 2006 – Paper due. Submission deadline for the complete paper and copyright assignment to SLA. The copyright assignment form is available online at www.sla.org/documents/conf/copyrightform.html. Please print, complete and mail the copyright assignment to Contributed Papers, SLA, 331 South Patrick Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

June 11-14, 2006 – Conference presentation. Presentation of papers will occur during the SLA Conference in Baltimore.

Minimum Requirements for Acceptance

In addition to the quality and relevance of the proposed paper, it must meet these requirements:

- The abstract has been received by the deadline.
- The author (or co-author) is a member of SLA. Not a member? You can join online at www.sla.org/join.
- The author (or a co-author) commits to present the paper at the annual conference.
- The paper has not been published in or submitted to any other publication or conference planning group.
- The author (and any co-authors) also must be willing to sign a copyright assignment that will permit SLA to use the paper in various formats. Accepted papers will be posted on the SLA Web site shortly before the 2006 conference begins.

For examples of papers from SLA's 2005 Annual Conference in Toronto, see www.sla.org/baltimore2006/papers.

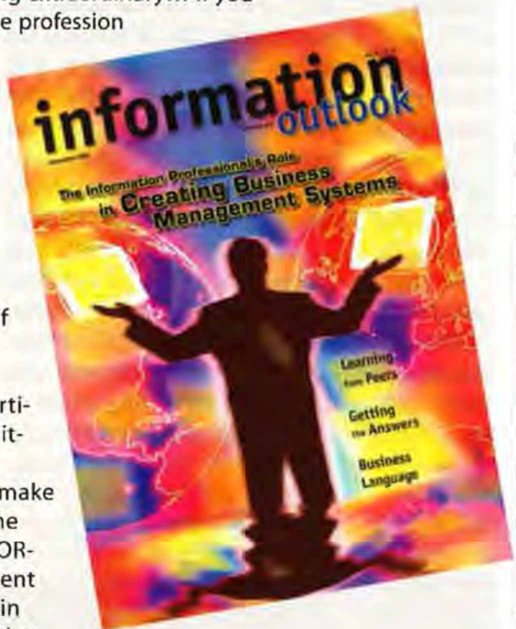
SLA
Connecting People and Information

How to Write for Information Outlook

SLA's monthly magazine is written primarily by and for information professionals. INFORMATION OUTLOOK interprets the news and covers trends and issues that affect information professionals in a global environment.

If you know of an interesting improvement in a special library or information center... If you've solved a difficult problem—or prevented one... If you or a colleague have done something extraordinary... If you want to give something back to the profession by sharing your experiences with others... We want to hear from you.

We welcome proposals for articles of interest to information professionals.



Topics

The editorial calendar is a guide for the editorial direction of the magazine. Each issue covers many more topics than those included in the calendar. "Cover article" topics for one issue will be suitable as features in another.

When you propose an article, make sure you can relate the topic to the specific needs of our readers. INFORMATION OUTLOOK readers represent companies of all sizes. They work in large libraries with large staffs and as solo librarians in small companies. Their experience ranges from senior professionals to beginners just out of school.

INFORMATION OUTLOOK readers want to read articles about new techniques, new ideas, new trends. They're interested in articles about search engines, knowledge management, international issues, copyright law, technology, innovation, the Internet. They're interested in articles on administration, organization, marketing, and operations.

INFORMATION OUTLOOK readers like case studies. They're interested in growing their organizations and in planning their careers. They want to know what works, and what doesn't work. They want success stories. They want to know how to confront problems and how to avoid them.

Articles should include something new, something different, something important. When the reader is finished, he or she should feel smarter than before.

A note to vendors and service providers

In many cases you may have the best and most current information on a topic. We invite you to share that expertise with our readers, to advance the body of knowledge of the profession. But—we'll insist that your articles do not promote your business or claim that your product or service is the only solution to a given problem.

Expanded writers guidelines are at www.sla.org/content/Shop/Information/writingforio/index.cfm.

To submit a proposal...

If you have an idea for an article, please send a proposal to jadams@sla.org outlining the article and your qualifications for writing it. A paragraph or two and a few bullet points will suffice.

We usually respond in a couple of weeks or less.

Editorial Calendar

Each issue of INFORMATION OUTLOOK includes articles on many more topics than the ones listed here. The calendar is only a general guide for editorial direction. "Cover article" topics for one issue will be suitable as features in another.

Please e-mail article queries and proposals to **jadams@sla.org**. If you are writing for a particular issue, your query should be early enough to allow for writing the article.

Issue	Cover Article	Deadline
January 2006	**Web searching** Possible topics: Meta directories, using online search engines, the best sites for various content areas.	Nov. 4, 2005
February 2006	**Managing** Possible topics: Planning, budgeting, supervising a staff, purchasing.	Dec. 2, 2005
March 2006	**Internal Marketing** Possible topics: Using intranets and e-mail, training internal clients, special events, tips for increasing usage, showing return on investment.	Jan. 6, 2006
April 2006	**Competitive intelligence** Possible topics: Ethical approaches, sources of information, analyzing information, adding value.	Feb. 3, 2006
May 2006	**Career development** Possible topics: Professional development, gaining expertise in content areas, résumé writing, interview tactics.	Mar. 3, 2006
June 2006	**Digital information sources** Possible topics: Selection process, RFP writing, maximizing usage.	Apr. 7, 2006
July 2006	**Managing** Possible topics: Planning, budgeting, supervising a staff, purchasing.	May 5, 2006
August 2006	**Knowledge management** Possible topics: KM systems, indexing information, low-budget KM.	June 9, 2006
September 2006	**Internal Marketing** Possible topics: Using intranets and e-mail, training internal clients, special events, tips for increasing usage, showing return on investment.	July 7, 2006
October 2006	**Web searching** Possible topics: Meta directories, using online search engines, the best sites for various content areas.	Aug. 11, 2006
November 2006	**Copyright** Possible topics: Global considerations, permissions, new laws and regulations	Sept. 8, 2006
December 2006	**Managing** Possible topics: Planning, budgeting, supervising a staff, purchasing.	Oct. 6, 2006

Work and Personal Life Balance

By Debbie Schachter

I had just completed a stressful week of multiple key deadlines—deadlines that have an impact on whether my organization will have the funding for several new projects—when I happened upon an article delivered to my e-mail from the *Ivey Business Journal*. Ironically, I had been too busy and frazzled to take a moment to review the publication—an issue related to work-life balance—until weeks after it had arrived in my inbox. (Higgins, Chris and Linda Duxbury. "Saying "No" in a culture of hours, money and non-support." *Ivey Business Journal*, July/August 2005: http://www.iveybusinessjournal.com)

I think most readers will relate to the stress of balancing work deadlines and personal life. After a quiet summer, when large numbers of staff are on holiday, September comes on with a push of energy and new initiatives. In both work and personal life it seems that September marks the new year—the beginning not just of school but also for board and committee work, professional development activities, and multiple personal commitments with family members.

Stress is a natural effect upon us when we feel the conflicting deadlines and sheer number of goals and responsibilities ahead of us. Our organizations and their inherent cultures can also have a huge effect upon our stress levels.

Most information professionals feel the stress of their workplace environment in different ways, both when the organization is particularly successful and when it isn't. As cost centers, libraries in for-profit organizations need to justify their existence, especially when profits overall are down. When the organization is booming, workloads usually increase, but additional staff don't necessarily follow right away (if at all). Certainly, most organizations are doing more with fewer staff nowadays, which has clearly added to the workload of each employee.

Some organizations also have the culture of arriving early and leaving late, which also adds to the stress for those who experience the implicit disapproval of managers who see staff members not regularly putting in extra time. New graduates or people who want to develop their careers are especially prone to working long hours. Younger librarians may not feel the stress of balancing work and personal lives yet, though, as they are starting out in their careers and may not yet have children or busy home lives that require their time.

As we get older, we need to balance our work and personal lives more. Over time, commitments and responsibilities outside of work develop, while at the same time our level of responsibility at work generally increases as we gain more expertise and obtain promotions. How the employer helps staff to resolve the work and personal life conflicts will determine the level of stress that we feel. At certain times of life you will feel the need to take on more work and career-related activities than at other times.

Obviously, when you are first starting out in your career you will be wise to show your range of skills, positive attributes, interest and work ethic to employers and prospective employers. Your reputation will precede you, and as those of us with a longer career in libraries understand, special library worlds are small ones. Your experiences and ability to balance work and life should help your development as a good manager.

Effects on Staff

Everything that you're experiencing—trying to balance work and life stresses—is also affecting your staff. Do you feel that staff members in your library or information center are committed to their work and care about their quality of service, or do you feel their lack of commitment? If employees feel that the organization doesn't care about their well-being, it is hard for them, as it is for you, to truly care about the organization's well-being. If you are an understanding manager, you probably allow leeway and support to help your staff balance their work and personal lives—and some employees may need a lot more support than others. There is no doubt, though, that employees who feel that their employer cares about them do feel more of a commitment to doing a good job.

Extracurricular activities, such as an association volunteer role, are equally important to yourself and your staff's personal and career development. But again, there needs to be some balance and understanding of just how much you can juggle while still being effective in your many roles. As a manager, your understanding of how to balance work and personal worlds, while still showing leadership and commitment to your staff, can be tenuous. If employees see their manager being absent frequently due to his or her personal life, it may appear to other employees that they aren't committed to their role. The library manager's absence

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

will be noted and remarked upon. Obviously we can't always avoid emergencies and other personal responsibilities, but a consistent pattern of absence or early departure, based on nonemergency personal choices, will have a negative impact upon staff morale.

At the same time, how you treat your staff members' requests for leave and unexpected absences will set the tone for their sense of commitment to their role at the library. Policies that are clearly understood and followed by all staff and managers will solve some of these problems. Consistent and fair treatment of all employees is also essential. It is important to be well informed about your staff and the stresses they are under, to see how you can best help them to do their job better, and to improve morale.

Our choices do make it possible to minimize stress at work and in our personal lives. We can choose to take on more work or projects to further our careers or we can choose to leave a company that doesn't support its employees through its human resources policies. We do have a responsibility also, as managers, to help our staff with their work-life balance. Finding the balance of work and life commitments—challenging ourselves in our career yet keeping stress to a minimum—is the quandary of our time, and it requires an individual response from each of us.

THE AFTERMATH

Info Pros Respond to Disaster

Rallying to Help Employers and Each Other

Working in Lisl Zach's Baton Rouge home, Brent Hightower boxes up back issues of *The Times-Picayune*.

By Forrest Glenn Spencer

Sunday, September 11, was the first time in two weeks 27-year-old Brent Hightower had a day to relax. He spent the day with new friends and some old familiar faces at a barbeque in Baton Rouge and then watched his beloved Saints lead a 23-20 victory over the Carolina Panthers in their first game of the season. The people of New Orleans needed some good news.

Hightower, a New Orleans resident and SLA member, was among the hundreds of thousands in the southern U.S. Gulf region who had their lives and way of life altered dramatically by Hurricane Katrina.

When Katrina approached the U.S. coast and gathered strength to a Category 3 hurricane on Saturday, August 27, Hightower went to his parents' house to help them evacuate the city that day and board up their windows. At that point, he decided to remain in New Orleans and remain with his associates at the *Times-Picayune*, helping them get the newspaper published without interruption, if possible, because by late Saturday night the National Hurricane Center had issued a warning that extended from Morgan City, Louisiana, to eastern Alabama. New Orleans was expected to be hit directly.

By 10 a.m. Sunday, August 28, the sum of many fears came to fruition: Katrina intensified in strength and elevated to a Category 5 with winds up to 175 mph and an expected 25-foot flood surge. New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin ordered mandatory evacuation of the city because Katrina was bearing down on them.

Hightower, who serves the *Times-Picayune* as a library archivist analyst and has been with the newspaper since 2001, joined the nearly 250 employees and some family members at their office building on Howard Avenue, just a mile from the Superdome in downtown New Orleans.

"I learned so much that night," Hightower recalled, in helping get the newspaper published and news uploaded onto its affiliated Internet site, www.nola.com.

Katrina came ashore on August 29 with 140-mph winds and a 20-foot storm surge; the hurricane struck that Monday morning as a Category 4.

Initially, those at the *Times-Picayune* had hoped to stay. The newspaper managers had hoped to be able to provide essential, breaking news during the immediate days after Katrina, even though many other news outlets had fled. Despite the loss of electricity and phone lines, the building had a generator to keep computers and presses operating. But by 10 p.m. that Monday, the Lakeview levee had been breached near the 17th Street canal—one of many levees that eventually flooded the city. By early the next morning water was rising rapidly throughout New Orleans. The newspaper's publisher, Ashton Phelps Jr., ordered the evacuation of everyone from the *Times-Picayune* building. They were to leave together via the loading docks and drive out of the city on the newspaper's delivery trucks.

"Nobody was injured," Hightower reported of those who had remained that Monday night. Taking laptops and other portable necessities, they abandoned the *Times-Picayune* building.

The Tuesday newspaper was never printed, but the publisher, editors, and reporters were determined to continue collecting and distributing the news. They were in the middle of the worst natural disaster in American history and they were determined to get the information out to the public. Hightower remained with them; he wanted to help any way he could. Hightower's duties had been working in digital archiving, primarily PDF files, and managing the real estate collection.

On the Road

That Tuesday morning, Hightower was part of a 12-member team that traveled to Houma, Louisiana, 57 miles southwest of New Orleans. The Houma Courier offered a place for his associates to eat, use the computers, contact their families, and, equally important, get a newspaper out. The plan was to produce the *Times-Picayune* in a PDF format—but the layout would be that of a traditional newspaper—and upload it to the NOLA.com Web site.

"I did things that night I never did before," Hightower said. "I worked with [the Courier's] IT people. They were awesome, everyone there. They fed us spaghetti... jambalaya. They took care of us."

The first PDF of the *Times-Picayune* was published and uploaded to the Web site for Wednesday distribution: 17 articles, one editorial, and 12 photographs. Hightower's job became clear: "I became responsible in getting material on NOLA.com, making sure everything got out."

After a long day and night in Houma—and after a restless sleep filled with nightmares of water rising all around him—Hightower and his associates were sent to Baton Rouge, some 65 miles north of Houma, which escaped the brunt of Katrina. They rejoined the rest of the *Times-Picayune* staff in getting the newspaper printed again while continuing coverage via the PDF format paper. By Friday of that week—again, with the assistance of *The Houma Courier*—the *Times-Picayune* began printing at least 50,000 copies of a condensed newspaper, one-fifth its normal circulation run. The staff was determined to continue producing and delivering a daily newspaper, and Hightower was alongside his associates, sharing that quest.

But like his associates—and hundreds of thousands of others in that region—he found himself in another city and homeless. More than 225,000 evacuees went to Baton Rouge, doubling the population within days.

Through a quick series of chance meetings and calls with other SLA members in the area, Hightower connected with Lisl Zach, president of the SLA Louisiana Southern Mississippi Chapter and an assistant professor at the School of Library and Information Science at Louisiana State University. She and her husband immediately opened every room of their house to Hightower and other evacuees who needed to have

First-Hand Thoug

Lisl Zach is an assistant professor at Louisiana State University and president of the Louisiana/Southern Mississippi Chapter of SLA. The following are her thoughts as the recovery from Hurricane Katrina began.

Obviously, our first thoughts as information professionals must go to all the people who have suffered personal loss and dislocation as a result of the hurricane.

I watched the disaster unfold in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast from the relative comfort of Baton Rouge—while there was some damage around town, power was back on for most people within a couple of days.

We had been getting the early waves of evacuees since the Friday before the storm, and by Tuesday, when the situation in New Orleans became desperate, almost everybody I knew was housing a cousin or an aunt or a friend of a friend. My attention, as soon as I had access to the Internet, was focused on connecting with as many of our Louisiana/Southern Mississippi Chapter members as possible.

We got the first message out to our membership on Tuesday evening; the response was not encouraging—more than 40 percent of the e-mails were returned as undeliverable. On Wednesday, I started hearing back from a few people in the chapter as well as from concerned SLA national members.

Dav Robertson of the SLA Task Force on Natural Disasters contacted me about helping to coordinate their outreach effort to members affected by the disaster, and I worked with John Crosby of the SLA staff to draft a message to the local chapter membership expressing SLA's willingness to help out

The 17th Street Canal stretches southward between Jefferson and Orleans Parishes in this aerial photo taken Sunday, September 4. The uncompleted bridge in the foreground enabled Corps of Engineers contracts to drive sheet piling to close off the canal from Lake Ponchartrain. Looking down the canal, the breach into Orleans Parish is visible. The skyline of New Orleans lies in the distance. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo by Alan Dooley)

hts on the Storm

in any way appropriate. The IPANDA Web site was updated to carry offers of assistance from SLA members around the country. I was personally touched by the messages that I received, both from colleagues I knew in the Museum, Arts, and Humanities Division and from SLA members I had never met, offering their thoughts, prayers, and practical help during this stressful time.

As the days have passed, we have heard from many, but not all of our chapter members, and I trust that we will learn soon that all have found safe havens. I was lucky to be able to offer a place to stay to a displaced librarian from the Times-Picayune (an ex-student), so I have had a unique first-hand experience watching how our members have responded to this crisis with resourcefulness and good spirits.

I have heard from friends and colleagues who have ended up as far afield as Pittsburgh and Northern Virginia, but who are only waiting for the opportunity to return to the area and get back to their collections. We have been very encouraged to learn that many of these collections have come through the devastation without major damage, although we also fear that many have been lost.

It will be the work of weeks, months, and even years to restore and rebuild these collections. While this experience has been a great tragedy, it has taught us much about the power of our professional network and the strength of our community. As president of the LaSoMi chapter, I want to thank all the people at SLA headquarters and the membership at large for their support and encouragement during these difficult times.

a comfortable, dry home during the first post-Katrina weeks.

Hightower lauded the Zachs' generosity. "They've been awesome—with what they have entrusted to me—and the others—into their home." Between four and eight individuals stayed with the Zachs in those first couple of weeks following Katrina.

SLA headquarters was quick to react for its active and inactive members. "As Americans pull together, and with the help of our friends around the world, to respond to Hurricane Katrina, so is SLA, its members, and units," said Pam Rollo, president of SLA, in a statement to the membership. "We are seeking help from all corners of our community.

Through a weblog set up by SLA's Information Professionals' Alliance on Natural Disasters and Accidents (IPANDA), we are beginning to promote offers made by SLA members to assist other librarians and information professionals in ways that will surprise you." (See accompanying article, "SLA's Response to Natural Disasters.")

Hightower is appreciative of the SLA members. "It's a tight community here in Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi. SLA members have been wonderful in coordinating housing, getting messages to others. I've never seen this kind of action before."

"Baton Rouge was spared the worst of the storm when it veered east into Mississippi," Zach said. "LSU is now a major disaster relief staging area. I have a message out to the local chapter... asking anyone who has heard from people in the affected areas to let the rest of us know."

SLA member Sarah Barnes and her husband were at home in Baton Rouge when Katrina entered Louisiana. "During the storm a huge tree limb (about 10 to 15 feet long) broke off of a very large oak tree in the neighbor's property," Barnes recalled. "It came down just like a spear and went through the roof of my garage. Thankfully, it did not damage the car, nor did it affect any electrical lines in the garage. We were without power for about 36 hours." The Barneses were among the fortunate.

Broad Assistance

Assistance by other SLA members has not been limited to Louisiana. When officials in New Orleans began to clear thousands of evacuees from the Louisiana Superdome and Ernest Morial Convention Center Labor Day weekend and send them to the Astrodome, members of the Houston chapter were working to welcome those who escaped Katrina alive only to face a week of squalid conditions under high temperatures and humidity, as relief efforts slowly seeped into the region.

"On Friday, September 2, I volunteered to work at the Houston Astrodome," said Gilberto Morales, MLS, information resources specialist, Baker Hughes-Houston Technology Center. "I was instructed to report to the Red Cross staff, which happened to be located at the east entrance. This gave me an opportunity to walk through the dome's floor area covered with some 12,000 cots and also the second floor hallway, which was being used for sleeping areas. I got goose pimples right away but did not have a chance to think about the situation too much since I was immediately approached by evacuees with all sorts of questions. I noticed that most... were at ease, resolute, and in high spirits. This event gave me one of the most humble feelings of my life."

More than 160,000 Hurricane Katrina survivors were staying reportedly at 675 shelters in 23 states. Houston, Texas, was the nearest metropolis to absorb a large influx of evacuees quickly.

Sara Davis, with the library at Jacobs Engineering Group in Houston, volunteered through her church and was expecting the worst, something dark and dreary. "I was one of hundreds of volunteers that helped out at the George R. Brown Convention Center. My experience certainly didn't match my expectation. I got to help a woman... leave for her temporary home, with family, [to] San Antonio. It was such fun to walk with her through the checkout process and then wave good-bye as family members took her to their home."

Many corporations affected by Katrina have been providing aid, too. Houston-based Halliburton immediately created a collection portal on its intranet site and provided collection boxes for the employees to give. Within two weeks Halliburton employees gave more than $300,000—and Halliburton matched it dollar-for-dollar.

Connie Bihon, a Halliburton Energy Services technical librarian and an SLA member, reported that "3,000 of our employees became evacuees, and volunteers registered to provide housing for any of those employees or their pets through our community relations department."

Another Houston resident and SLA member, Dina Dreifuerst, with Jones McClure

Publishing, is proud of her city's response to the disaster. "I think each and every citizen... has donated money, time, and/or supplies. I've volunteered at official shelters several times, and have also worked to support families staying at area hotels and in temporary housing. This has been a truly eye-opening experience for me."

Even in a disaster, some glint of humor emerges from the relief effort. "The newest fashion accessory around town," Dreifuerst added, "is a bright orange 'volunteer' wristband."

As the first priority has been to save lives, the next order of business for many is to begin reassembling individuals' lives and livelihoods. For librarians and information specialists that includes assessing the potential damage to precious books, archives, and computer files in many libraries, museums, and other centers. Because of the flooding, the fear of mold is prevalent as the water recedes.

"I'm sure that once things begin to settle, we will try to organize help directed at recovering any of the collections that have been spared by the disaster, but right now we are all focused on the continuing health and safety risks to our friends and colleagues," said Dr. Zach."

As reported on Yale University's library discussion list, Tulane University Library Director Lance Query got "word that the main library at Tulane seems to be okay. It appears to have escaped the flooding, or at least has only minimal damage.... The librarys offsite storage facility seems to have taken in about a foot of water, which will be difficult to clean, but is okay considering how other parts of the city have fared.... He expects it will be at least a few weeks before he can return."

IFLA Statement

"IFLA members and other colleagues around the world have been shocked and saddened by the destruction wrought by Hurricane Katrina," said Alex Byrne, president, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, in a prepared statement. "At this stage it is of course necessary to focus on the evacuation of those who have lost all and are still in danger... It is also necessary to take urgent steps to try to safeguard documentary heritage which may be retrievable and to begin to assess the needs of libraries, archives and museums at the earliest possible opportunity."

Hightower could not agree more: for example, he alerted the library and information community on September 4 that he was determined to preserve the newspaper's archives during this disaster.

He requested "archival storage boxes, acid-free... a must. Desire some five boxes, 25-by-17 inches but I'll go for one at this point. Also need buffered archival paper, minimum dimensions the same....You'll be helping preserve the historical record of the *Times-Picayune* for generations to come."

Mona Hutchinson of Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas, came through quickly for him and responded. Hightower maxed out his credit card in getting the archival boxes and paper to Baton Rouge, but he said it was worth it.

"As librarians we are also worried about the collections that have been lost, scattered, damaged, or otherwise endangered," added Zach. "Many offers of assistance, support, and supplies have been received, and we sincerely hope... these needs [will be] known so that the available volunteers can be channeled to secure and preserve these collections to the greatest possible degree."

Also arising from this disaster is a reminder how computers have become an essential part of our society, and the donations of them have become almost as important as food and shelter.

Rebecca Hamilton, a Louisiana state librarian, reported that they were "being inundated with evacuees needing to file FEMA applications, unemployment, search for loved ones, etc. and are coming into our public libraries to use the computers. Our libraries have greatly extended their hours to accommodate the people but they need additional computers and printers....This is our greatest need."

Perhaps the other greatest need is the need to reconnect with one's way of life before Katrina. Throughout the library and information community—corporate, government and academia—institutions and other centers are expanding their access so others can make reconnection possible.

SLA member Alexandra Simons, who works at the University of Houston, reports the university began receiving students from New Orleans shortly after Labor Day. "The Law Center at U.H. has become 'Loyola West' and is allowing the students and faculty from Loyola's law school to use the classrooms and library facilities, mainly on weekends and evenings." Her husband, Spencer Simons, is the director of the O'Quinn Law Library at U.H.

And from other sectors: the Lexington (Kentucky) Public Library created a database of information for library associations in the affected states; mathematicians from one of the eight New Orleans universities were given alternative access to the American Mathematical Society's MathSciNet and journals so they may continue their work; the National Endowment for the Humanities made available at least $1 million for emergency grants to libraries, colleges, universities, museums, and other institutions affected by Katrina in the Gulf states.

"I've spent my entire life in Mississippi and it breaks my heart to see what Katrina has done to the people and places I know so well," said Lee Ann Robertson, an SLA member with the law firm of Butler, Snow, O'Mara, Stevens, Cannada. "There isn't one person in this state that hasn't been affected... by this horrific storm. I've never personally witnessed such an outpouring of neighborly love!"

Karen Santos Freeman, SLA's Director of Communications, has a close connection with New Orleans. Her father immigrated through the Port of New Orleans in 1952, and his family has lived in its suburbs. She has made annual visits to the Big Easy since she was a child. In mid-August this year, she and her husband enjoyed a vacation in the French Quarter. A week after they returned to Virginia, Katrina struck.

"It's hard for me to accept the pictures of devastation and human suffering," Freeman said. "New Orleans is such a big, in-your-face, alive city. I can't believe it will never be the same. I don't believe it. New Orleans is strong and resilient. It has survived centuries, and I think it will bounce back from this."

But it will take time to clean up. 90,000 square miles of the southern U.S. has been destroyed by Katrina and some 160,000 homes are believed to be uninhabitable. Once the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers gets the last of the water pumped out of New Orleans, it will take time to fully assess the damage, repair the infrastructure, process the claims, and decide what to do next. Brent Hightower, like many other people in that Gulf region, is a changed person. He said that material things have lost their importance to him, and that whatever the *Times-Picayune* does next, he'll do next. "They're like my second family now."

Forrest Glenn Spencer is a Virginia-based independent development and competitive intelligence researcher. He specializes in developing potential donor prospects for nonprofit organizations, such as America's Promise – The Alliance for Youth, the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship, and the American Red Cross. He also works with other clients in tracking and reporting on the activities of competitors in various industries. He was a 14-year broadcast news associate and has written for numerous print and Internet publications for the last several years. He can be reached at fspencer@chemsoft.net.

SLA's Response to Natural Disasters

By Davenport "Dav" Robertson

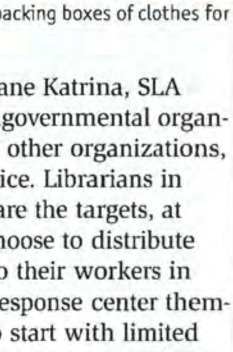
SLA member Dina Dreifuerst, of Jones McClure in Houston (in purple shirt), works packing boxes of clothes for Katrina evacuees.

Tsunami, flood, hurricane, or earthquake—what role can SLA play in the aftermath of a natural disaster? How can information professionals be of assistance?

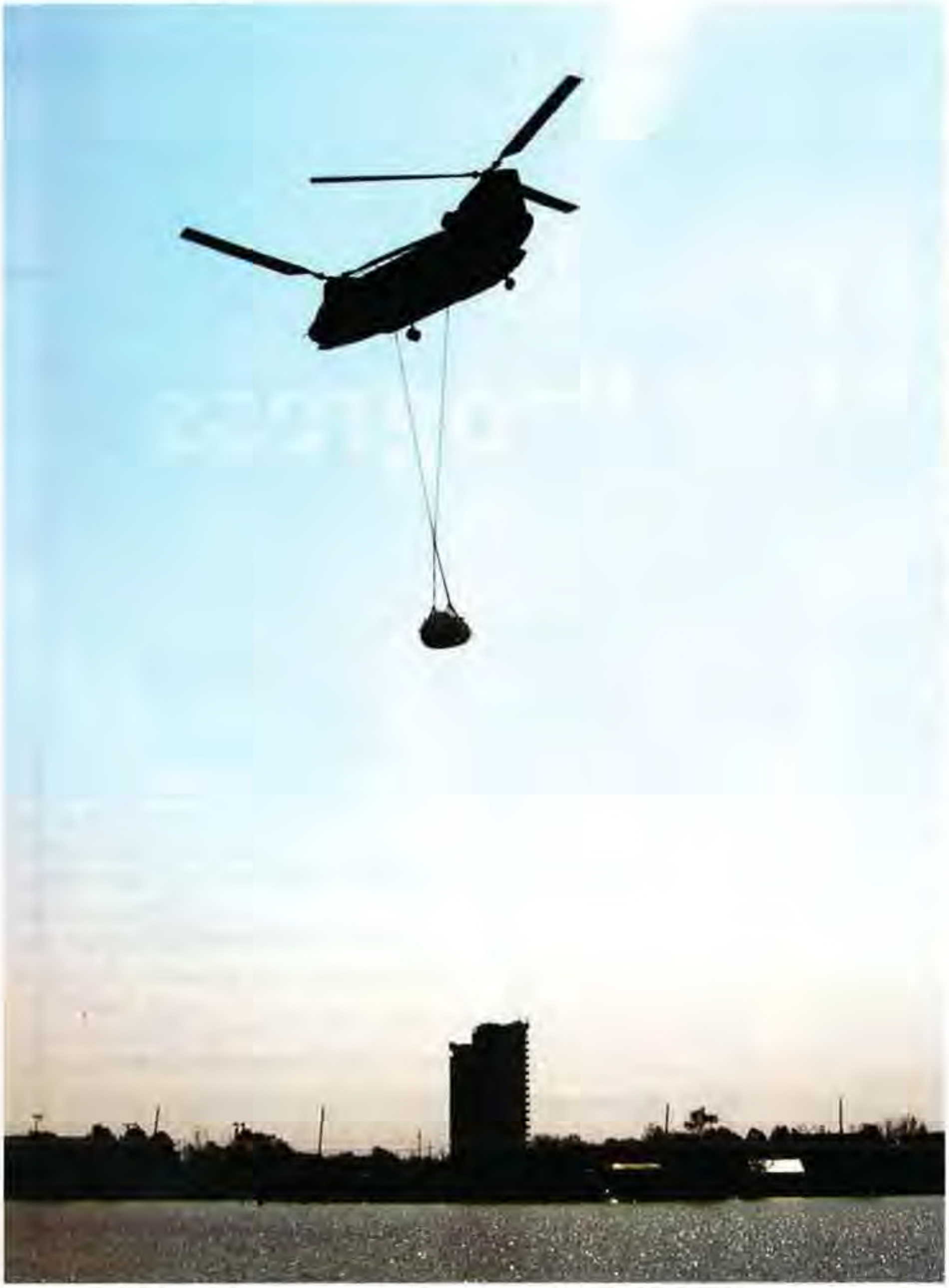
Following the tsunami of December 26, 2004, SLA set out to answer these questions. Then-President Ethel Salonen created the Task Force on Natural Disasters to investigate ways in which information professionals could apply the skills and knowledge expressed in the SLA Competencies to assist in relief, recovery, and reconstruction efforts. As a result, when Hurricane Katrina struck the U.S. Gulf Coast on August 29, SLA had a communications tool, IPANDAnet, in place to respond to the catastrophe. IPANDAnet (http://slablogger.typepad.com/ipandanet/) is an SLA Weblog that serves as a forum to exchange information between information professionals and those involved in relief and recovery efforts. Established by the task force after the tsunami, IPANDA (an acronym for Information Professionals Alliance on Natural Disasters and Accidents) is a network of volunteers who stand ready to provide information assistance to librarians and information professionals who work for relief agencies and to the relief workers themselves. The volunteers also assist special librarians and information professionals who have been seriously affected by a disaster. The IPANDA network includes volunteers with a wide range of subject skills and volunteers who have experience with library recovery efforts.

The IPANDA response center was announced in "SLA Connections" on Earth Day, April 22. By May 1, the announcement resulted in 16 definite volunteers and expressions of qualified interest from dozens more. Several of the volunteers are in organizations like the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, which are helping to fund reconstruction efforts in tsunami-stricken South Asia, and the Australian Red Cross. Some are in India and Indonesia. Some have Peace Corps connections.

Following Hurricane Katrina, SLA notified selected nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other organizations, announcing the service. Librarians in these organizations are the targets, at first, and they can choose to distribute the announcement to their workers in the field or use the response center themselves. The idea is to start with limited exposure and build up experience. Later, the plan is to expand to all NGOs involved in disaster relief, recovery, and reconstruction.



Davenport "Dav" Robertson, MSLS, is library director, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, Research Triangle Park, N.C. He is chair of the Task Force on Natural Disasters and a member of the SLA Finance Committee. He served on the SLA Board of Directors as the 2003-2004 Chapter Cabinet Chair. Dav served two years in Korea in the U.S. Peace Corps. Send your suggestions to him at robert11@niehs.nih.gov.


An Army CH-47 Chinook helicopter boosts a sandbag containing 15,000 pounds of sand and gravel en route to a mission to fill one of the breaches in the New Orleans-area levee and flood wall system, Sunday, September 4. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo by Alan Dooley)

The Task Force

When the tsunami hit South Asia, people around the world felt the grief of one of the worst disasters in history. Immediately, people wanted to know how to donate money for the relief effort. Members of SLA were no different, and within days, the association set up a Web page and spreadsheet listing the charities and other relief agencies to which our members could make contributions. SLA's rapid response set an example for other associations to use.

In those days, as the number of casualties rose and the world grasped the extent of the devastation, some SLA members began discussing whether SLA could do more. Our members are caring, motivated, and knowledgeable people with great potential for being of service to others. Could there be a role for information professionals to play in responding to this and other natural disasters? Some SLA members thought there could, and President Salonen appointed a task force to look into it. She asked me to chair the task force and to take advantage of the upcoming SLA Leadership Summit in Tampa in January to generate interest and ideas. At the meeting, Salonen announced the initiative to the leadership and I convened a focus group that brainstormed and came up with suggestions. The momentum generated in Tampa led to the appointment on February 2 of the task force.

There were four key points in the charge to the task force:

- Use the expertise of information professionals.
- Use volunteers; avoid incurring costs.
- Work with other associations to avoid duplication of effort.
- Develop a knowledge base for use in the future.

The task force comprised both SLA members and staff in order to build on what had already been accomplished and to ensure a unified approach. The task force established a community of practice and used it and e-mail and conference calls for planning and for developing documents.

Information Gathering

Having established early on that SLA members in the affected countries of South Asia were not harmed or affected directly, the task force gathered information about the condition of libraries and international efforts to assist them. The first and most comprehensive news came from Sri Lanka, where the National Library identified 177 school libraries, 53 public libraries, and 68 libraries attached to religious institutions as either destroyed or damaged. (http://www.ifla.org/V/press/tsunami-SriLanka-report2.htm) The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and UNESCO teamed with the National Library and Documentation Services Board to coordinate library rehabilitation and reconstruction in Sri Lanka.

Elsewhere, reports of library damage were hard to come by. In the Aceh province of Indonesia, 23 of the 72 staff members of the Provincial Library, including the director, perished (http://www.ala.org/ala/iro/iroactivities/Tsunamiindonesianreport.htm), and all the library materials and equipment on the ground floor of the two-story library were destroyed. A brand-new bookmobile and at least two of the eight public libraries in Aceh were destroyed.

Education International reported that half of the schools were destroyed—914 elementary schools, 155 junior high schools, 67 high schools, and 15 vocational schools—and at least 2,000 teachers were listed as missing. (http://www.ei-ie.org/tsunami/en/indonesia.htm)

The Center for Documentation and Information of Aceh, with its manuscript and rare book collection was practically obliterated. At Iskandarmuda University, two miles inland, the Chronicle of Higher Education (http://chronicle.com/weekly/v51/i20/20a00101.htm) reported a 60-foot fishing boat came to rest beside the library, and the books in the library survived because they were on the second floor.

Due to the massive loss of life, the president of the Indonesian Library Association and director of the National Library of Indonesia told American Libraries "that the first priority for Indonesian Librarians is not rebuilding collections but manpower." (American Libraries, February 2005, p. 11)

One SLA member, Lucya Dhamayanti, was situated to provide substantive information about the condition of libraries in Indonesia. She is the head of the Indonesia National Library's division of library conservation, and, thanks to grants from the Museums, Arts and Humanities Division and the San Andreas Chapter, she made a presentation at the SLA Annual Conference in June in Toronto where she described the actual conditions and restoration efforts. (http://www.sla.org/division/dmah/tsunami_3.pdf) The photographs showed rubble where libraries had been. Dhamayanti described rare books and official documents that were lost or in need of extensive restoration.

The task force next sought to find out what other library associations were doing. IFLA was taking the lead in coordinating aid to libraries in the region. After consultation with SLA, ALA, CILIP, and other associations, IFLA recommended the establishment of central funds to which all associations and their members could contribute. IFLA will accept requests from libraries in the affected countries and work with the funds to determine how to distribute the money. SLA is working closely with IFLA in this regard.

Charge to the Task Force

To investigate and establish ways in which the global community of information professionals can contribute their expertise in information organization and access to the recovery efforts following the tsunami in South Asia. The focus will be on voluntary contributions of time and resources rather than direct financial donations. Vital to this effort will be alliances between SLA and other library and information organizations to make the best use of the knowledge and skills of the informal, international network of information professionals. The resulting methodology will be used as a model for providing assistance in future instances of natural disasters.

To volunteer to be an IPANDA responder: Send your name, organization, and subject expertise to IPANDA@sla.org.

A Role for SLA

Determining that IFLA was going to address library needs clinched the task force's decision to try something different—to establish a volunteer-staffed, loose network of information professionals to assist the relief and recovery workers with their information needs. The focus would be on the NGOs, charities, and other aid groups working in the affected countries. The task force discussed at great length whether relief workers would take the time to use a response center of the type envisioned. It was especially helpful in this discussion that Pam Osborne, an information professional who works for Mercy Corps (one of the NGOs), was a member of the task force. She was able to provide feedback from some relief workers that shaped the outcome. The task force also debated whether to attempt to do a needs survey among the relief workers but in the end decided not to burden them with a survey at this time. The task force also decided that the only substantive way to know if the NGOs would use the response center was to go ahead and set it up, make it easy to use, implement a communications plan and market it, provide quality assurance, and learn from experience.

First responders already have a robust resource for obtaining information to meet immediate humanitarian needs, ReliefWeb (http://www.reliefweb.int) from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. SLA could not possibly know more about local conditions and resources than the U.N. or the field workers themselves, so the task force decided to focus the response center on more general information such as evidence-based practice and methodology in a variety of subjects.

Why did SLA undertake this project? Considering the Competencies for Information Professionals (http://www.sla.org/content/learn/comp2003/index.cfm), who else is more qualified to address a broad range of questions having to do with a variety of environmental, medical, social, and economic concerns than the diverse members of SLA? Our information professionals are the experts around the world in providing reference assistance in all the fields encompassed by disaster relief, recovery, and reconstruction. SLA is uniquely positioned for the type of knowledge sharing that arises from a natural disaster.

The IPANDA Response Center

When the task force established the response center and named it the Information Professionals Alliance on Natural Disasters and Accidents, the idea was to involve members of all kinds of library associations. The task force contacted the heads of other library organizations to judge their interest in participating; but even though the idea met with a positive response, the task force decided it would be best to first get it going with SLA members and extend it later. In February, the task force sent out an announcement to the Asian Chapter and the International Information Exchange Caucus with a call for volunteers and suggestions. That was followed by a call to action sent to the Leadership discussion list and included in the February "SLA Connections." The task force sent an information "toolkit" to the leadership discussion list, which the unit leaders used to help spread the word and call for volunteers among their chapters and divisions. In April, members of the task force held a briefing for leaders that was conducted via a conference call and a Web-based slide presentation, and two days later SLA officially announced the IPANDA response center.

In addition to calling for volunteers, the task force compiled information on organizations, Web sites, collections, and other resources to use in disaster response. Pam Osborne provided many helpful Web links to the major sites that relief workers already use. Carolyn Sosnowski, SLA's information professional, took these lists and created a Web-based resource directory that is a part of the infrastructure of the IPANDA response center. Staff also established the question-and-answer response infrastructure that became the IPANDAnet blog.

Relief and recovery workers and their organizations' information professionals can ask questions by e-mailing IPANDA@sla.org. A volunteer will take a question, research it, and send the results to the person who asked it. A record of the questions and answers will be maintained on the blog. Quality assurance methods are being developed. Other communication media, such as cell phone text messaging and Instant Messenger, are being explored. A discussion list for the volunteers to use to exchange ideas and stay in touch was also established.

Although the initial relief period following the tsunami has passed, the task force believes that NGOs will have questions that relate to such issues as the following:

- Health care in temporary shelters.
- Building design in reconstruction.
- Psychological counseling for dealing with trauma and convincing people to return.
- Technical issues involving fishing and other businesses.
- Environmental issues relating to plant and beach restoration.
- Municipal development and capacity building.
- Transportation and other infrastructure issues.

Knowledge Base and Model

In April, U.N. Special Envoy Bill Clinton, who had been appointed by President Bush to assist in the tsunami recovery effort, said, "We have to learn from what has been done and from what we're doing now, and come up with a set of best practices for how we should have an early warning system, how we should mitigate the disasters that do occur, how we should manage those that occur, and how we should deal with the kinds of challenges that we face here. Now, if we do all these things, then we will have a model which not only the United Nations but the NGO community and the world can use in future crises." (http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/khii-6bf3j8?opendocument) One of the goals of the task force is to establish a knowledge base that can be used for coping with disasters in the future. The IPANDA response center and the questions and answers that will be handled by it, the dynamic resource directory, and the lessons learned from

National Archives to

The National Archives has launched several initiatives to aid in the recovery of original records in the states of Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana that have been affected by Hurricane Katrina.

The initiatives include the following:

- At the request of the Department of Health and Human Services, the National Archives will provide a senior conservator to assist the State of Louisiana Medical Examiner and the Orleans Parish Coroner in providing document recovery advice and support.
- The Archivist of the United States in his capacity as chairman of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) has authorized emergency grants of up to $25,000 from current grant funds to the State Archives in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama for disaster assessment and response activities identified in consultation with their State Historical Records Advisory Boards.
- NHPRC will consider additional grants as needed per affected state of up to $100,000 from next year's budget when these funds are appropriated. The NHPRC also is working closely with the leadership of the Council of State Archivists and the Society of American Archivists to identify other funds and sources of support.
- The National Archives is working with FEMA to identify avenues for the affected states to quickly obtain emergency funds for recovery and preservation of documents efforts .
- The National Archives is continuing dialogue with federal and state officials to assess their needs.

In initiatives already under way, the National Archives has:

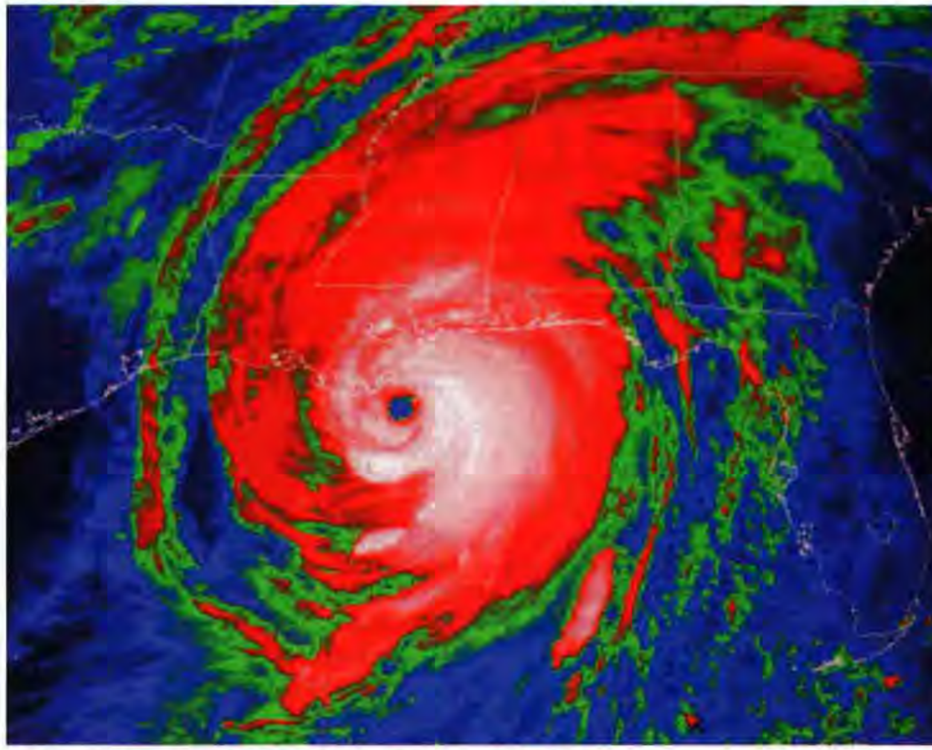
- Aided the victims of this disaster—veterans and retired civil servants from the Gulf Coast region—by providing expedited access to copies of their veterans and civil service records so that they can establish or re-establish their personal information and obtain relief benefits.
- Developed a Web presence for federal agencies and courts, state and local governments, cultural institutions, and the general

responding to Hurricane Katrina and other disasters will be that knowledge base. The knowledge base and lessons learned can serve as a model to be used by SLA or other organizations to provide information immediately following a disaster in the relief period, in the subsequent recovery period, and then in the reconstruction phase.

Other Options

The task force solicited suggestions for additional ways in which SLA can provide assistance to the people of the South Asian countries. Unfortunately, most of them involve costs. However, that should not deter SLA from considering them because it is likely that funds can be raised to implement them, perhaps from our units, vendor partners, or from individual member donations. One repeated suggestion is to get the SLA units involved somehow. Other suggestions include:

- Partnering with the World Computer Exchange to place used computers in libraries and schools in the affected countries.
- Collecting books, journals, furniture and equipment to send to libraries.
- Twinning with or "adopting" libraries.



A National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration infrared satellite image shows the center of Hurricane Katrina, situated about 90 miles to the south, southeast of New Orleans at about 5 a.m. EDT Monday, Aug. 29, 2005. (AP Photo/NOAA)

- Providing preservation or restoration materials to libraries.
- Sending expert SLA members to assist in specific libraries; this could include supporting Asian Chapter members to travel in-country
- Offering free or reduced membership fees temporarily to information professionals in the affected countries.

Lessons Learned

Aid in Preservation

public which contains recovery and preservation guidance and information. http://www.Archives.gov.

- Offered Federal agencies with offices in the affected regions advice and assistance on records recovery issues, emergency disposal, and other records management issues through the National Archives headquarters and the Atlanta and Fort Worth regional archives.
- Consulted that federal agencies concerning classified national security information that may be affected by the hurricane.
- Delegated authority to federal agencies to destroy contaminated records that constitute a menace to health, life, or property if those records have a temporary disposition of 10 years or less and if the information from the records is likely captured, at least in part, in other sources.
- Utilized National Archives professional preservation and records management staff from across the nation to provide advice and assistance in the region.

U.S. Archivist Allen Weinstein said, "The potential loss of information that directly affects the lives of people in these states is staggering. The loss of our collective memory of this region, 'identity loss' in other words, is at stake. Property deeds; birth certificates; personal papers; information documenting the rights and entitlements of citizens, such as social security and veterans benefits, are all at risk. Records found in federal, state, local, and cultural sites must be rescued.

"As 'first preserver's, the National Archives is committed to being a partner, along with the major archival organizations, in helping assess, recover, and preserve these irreplaceable records. We are sending both financial and human resources to aid in this disaster and will continue to offer assistance as long as it is needed. Archives staff has already spent hundreds hours working with federal agencies and our partners in state and local government to scope out this effort and begin to identify and recover records. In the coming days and weeks, working with our partners in the states and the federal agencies, we are committed to spending thousands more."

One lesson learned is the obvious one: Despite the best intentions of everyone involved, it takes a long time to launch a project using volunteers who have other jobs to do. It takes time to perform the information gathering, build the coalitions, develop the infrastructure, review the policies, and create and carry out a communication plan.

A related lesson is that the IPANDA initiative is a long-term project. It was meant to address the tsunami disaster, but it can grow and flourish beyond the immediate need. Therefore, the task force recommended in its report to the SLA Board of Directors in Toronto in June that incoming President Pam Rollo reappoint the Task Force on Natural Disasters with the charge of providing oversight to the IPANDA response center to ensure its viability and success in the coming year, and to further investigate other options and recommend a funding plan to carry out some or all of them. The task force specifically recommended that the association pursue a partnership with the World Computer Exchange(WCE) as described in an action plan developed by Barbie Keiser, the Washington, D.C., Chapter's International Relations Committee Chair and a member of the task force.

Response to Katrina

President Rollo did reappoint the task force, and her action paid off. The IPANDAnet structure was in place when Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast. Within two days of landfall, the task force decided on two ways SLA could immediately respond. One was to work with the president of the Louisiana/Southern Mississippi Chapter, Lisl Zach, to try to contact and determine the well-being of SLA members in the region, and the other was to activate the IPANDAnet blog as a means for communicating the condition and needs of the affected members to the outside world.

SLA staff members quickly provided Zach with member lists and e-mail addresses, and she sent out a message of sympathy from SLA to all those affected and alerted them to the IPANDAnet blog. The SLA president, executive director, and I also sent out an announcement to the leadership discussion list expressing SLA's sympathy and outlining action being taken, notably focusing attention on the blog. Task force members attempted to contact fellow information professionals in the region and searched the Web and discussion groups for other library blogs and news.

The IPANDAnet blog had quick results. SLA members posted gracious offers of housing, transportation, and financial support for displaced colleagues. Links to other library-oriented blogs and to collection clean up and recovery resources were added. Information about members from New Orleans and elsewhere trickled in as telephone and data lines were reestablished. As of this writing it's still too early to know how the special libraries and organizations where SLA members work fared. Mold may turn out to be the principal problem they face when they eventually return.

There is considerable comfort among victims and among those concerned for them in simply having a means to communicate with each other. It is no small accomplishment in times of crisis to know someone cares. Whether or not the IPANDA network eventually functions as an information center for relief and recovery workers, it has proved its value as a communications tool to connect information professionals together in times of disaster.

Next Steps for SLA

SLA set up the IPANDA network of volunteers to provide reference assistance to relief and recovery agencies. The next steps are to:

- Continue recruiting volunteers to be IPANDA responders, develop quality assurance procedures, and ensure IPANDA's long-term viability.
- Work with SLA's vendor partners to secure the donation of online resources.
- Use the volunteer network first to provide reference assistance to SLA members whose organizations have been severely damaged by Hurricane Katrina.
- Offer assistance to information professionals working for the Red Cross and other charitable organizations in the Gulf Coast, as well as in South Asia.
- With time and experience, expand the information service to directly assist relief and recovery workers.
- Use the experience gained in developing an SLA response to the tsunami and Hurricane Katrina to build the knowledge base to cope with future disasters.

In a different vein, the task force is promoting an SLA partnership with the WCE. Steps are already under way to involve SLA divisions in creating a manual on the disposal of worn-out computers for the WCE to distribute. Chapters can get involved in donating and collecting used computers by partnering with the WCE chapters in major cities. SLA can work with WCE to place computers in university libraries, museums, or in other special libraries in countries where disasters have occurred. SLA members can be sent to those countries to serve as trainers and short-term consultants. Through the partnership with the WCE, SLA has an opportunity to have an important impact on information access in devastated regions.

SLA members are compassionate and service-oriented. Through such means as IPANDAnet and a partnership with the WCE, SLA can make a material contribution to aid people who have suffered through a natural disaster. These volunteer projects take advantage of the competencies exhibited by SLA information professionals. They illustrate a unique role for SLA in disaster recovery. The experience gained from investigating a variety of options and establishing and operating these projects will be used to build a knowledge base for the future. As evidenced by our quick response to Hurricane Katrina, SLA will be well-prepared to act swiftly when disaster strikes again.

Members of the task force are: *John Ganly, Sue Henczel, Barbie Keiser, Pam Osborne, Sylvia Piggott, Roberto Sarmiento, Janice Lachance, John Crosby, Carolyn Sosnowski, and Lashawn Sagers.*

How Search Engine Marketing Tools Can Work for You

Or, Searching Is Really All About Finding

Second of Three Articles

Summary

This is the second of three articles. Part 1 appeared in the August issue of Information Outlook.

Search engine optimization and marketing covers a wide range of activities, many of which are similar to what a reference librarian, systems librarian, or market researcher does. Although the focus is the World Wide Web, many of the tools that are used have broader applications for special librarians.

Internal corporate processes. Web analytics tools measure and analyze corporate sales, customer preferences and problems, viable products and channels, and other issues that may provide answers for questions received by special librarians.

Competitive intelligence/market research. Keyword research, Web site saturation and popularity tools can provide information on a company's competitors: how they are marketing on the Internet, what they are spending on online marketing campaigns, how they are pricing their products.

Legal issues. Who Is tools can provide valuable information relating to copyright and trademark issues. Link Popularity tools can show who is deep-linking to your site. Log files, in conjunction with Who Is tools, can tell you who may be committing click fraud on your paid placement campaigns or spamming your e-mail servers.

Back end knowledge of how Web sites work. These tools can show you what may be keeping search engines from indexing your site and can highlight customer service issues.

By Terry Brainerd Chadwick

Web site saturation and popularity tools show how much presence a Web site has on search engines through the number of pages of the site that are indexed on each search engine (saturation) and how many times the site is linked to by other sites (popularity).

If your company wants to generate leads from Web site traffic, you need to understand your organization's Web presence, particularly in relation to that of your competitors. Generally, the more Web presence you have, the easier it is for people to find your site; that is, if those pages contain the keywords people are looking for and if they rank high enough in search engine rankings for people to see them. Most search engines include some form of link popularity in their ranking algorithms. Pay attention to this so you can learn the number of sites that are linking to yours, which is very important. Knowing where your site stands in these two areas can give you a good idea of what you need to do to improve your Web presence.

Many tools measure various aspects of saturation and link popularity. My favorites are Link Popularity +, Top 10 Google Analysis, and Marketleap's Link Popularity and Search Engine Saturation.

Link Popularity + (http://www.uptimebot.com) shows much more than its name implies. It measures the number of backlinks (incoming external links to your site); linked domains (all pages that link to any page in your domain, including internal pages); pages of your site that are indexed; and pages that contain your URL in the Google, Yahoo, AlltheWeb, AltaVista,

How to use keyword saturation and popularity tools

1. Top 10 Google Analysis, and Marketleap's Search Engine Saturation and Link Popularity can help you identify some of your online competitors and determine how you compare in the terms you use to describe your products and services.

2. If you get a question about why your company Web site isn't performing as well as a competitor's site in search engine rankings, the Link Popularity +, Top 10 Google Analysis, and Search Engine Saturation tools can illustrate why—or show why your site is doing well.

3. Librarians often spend a lot of time explaining to people why it is important to use more than one search engine in doing research. Thumbshot is a good tool to graphically show the lack of duplication in search results.

4. The Google Dance tool is good to know about if two searches for the same phrase return different results. Use it to see if Google is in the midst of updating its index.

5. Use Google Results or Google Dance for a concise list of numbered search results.

6. Froogle and the other shopping search engines are an easy and effective way to find out what your competitors are charging for your type of product and how your pricing compares. Because Froogle is a free service, it has a broader range of companies to compare with. However, Froogle also has a smaller percentage of visitors, so it may not be representative of all shopping visitors.

Hotbot, MSN, Teoma, Lycos, AOL, and Alexa search databases. (See Figure 1.)

Once you register (it's free), you can also see overall Google page rank, the number of pages you have at each Google page rank, and whether your site is listed in the DMOZ Open Directory, one of the major search directories. Page rank is one indicator of a page's popularity and authority. Registration lets you do mass reviews of up to 16 domains and have the results e-mailed to you. (See Figure 2.)

This has become one of my favorite tools, because it provides one of the most comprehensive snapshots of Web presence as far as the number of search engines it covers and the type of information it shows. The one area it doesn't cover is competitor comparisons. When I need to do a competitor comparison, I use the Top 10 Google Analysis and Marketleap tools.

Top 10 Google Analysis (www.Webuildpages.com/tools/internet-marketing-google.htm) provides the top 10 search results for a keyword on Google, along with the ranking of the base URL. This makes it a great competitive intelligence tool. (See Figure 3.)

The results also show the number of pages indexed by Google and Yahoo; the number of backlinks for the reference URL and for the domain as a whole from Yahoo, Google PageRank, Yahoo Web Rank, and AllInAnchor (query words in anchor text of links pointing to the site); body keyword density (ratio of keywords to total words); and link keyword density (ratio of keywords in links to all links).

This tool is a good indicator of the overall standings of your competition on the two major search engines and provides information about what gives them their rankings (keyword density,

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

number of links to the site, number of links with keywords to the site, number of pages indexed, and page ranks). By analyzing the key characteristics of the top 10 sites for a keyword, you can get a good idea of what it takes for the term to rank well. (See Figure 4.)

To use this tool, you need to have a Google API code, available free from Google (www.google.com/apis). The API code lets you run a limited number of specialized searches on Google.

Marketleap offers a suite of free SEM tools, including the Search Engine Saturation Validator, the Link Popularity Analysis, and the Keyword Verification Tool. (See Figure 5.)

The Search Engine Saturation Validator (www.marketleap.com/sitein dex/default.htm) shows the number of pages that several top search engines have in their databases for your Web site and the sites of up to five competitors. The search engines covered are AlltheWeb, AltaVista, Google/AOL, Hotbot, MSN, and Yahoo. I use this tool primarily to see how the site I'm optimizing compares with specific competitors on the number of pages indexed by the search engines. In general, the more pages a site has indexed, the greater the opportunity to be found by searchers. (See Figure 6.)

What I like most about the Link Popularity Analysis (www.marketleap.com/publinkpop) is its ability to choose competitors with whom to compare link popularity, along with the ability to see the link popularity for 25 other Web sites in a company's industry category. If your company's industry isn't included, you can choose General, which shows the link popularity for 25 companies across a number of industries. What you get back is how your site compares with others in your industry on link popularity on the AlltheWeb, AltaVista, Google/AOL, Hotbot, MSN, and Yahoo search engines. (See Figure 7.)

The tool shows your presence on the Web in terms of number of pages in each search engine's index that contain a link to your site, including your own Web site. Another valuable component of this tool is that it

Figure 7

gives you an idea of whether your link numbers make your company a major player on the Web:

- Limited presence: 0–1,000 references.
- Average presence: 1,001–5,000 references.
- Above-average presence: 5,001–20,000 references.
- Contender: 20,001–100,000 references.
- Player: 100,001–500,000 references.
- 900-pound gorilla: 500,000+ references. (See Figure 8.)

Needless to say, there are very few 900-pound gorillas. In some niche industries, there may not be any sites that come close to having this many total "references" across all the major search engines. (Note: "Total" data are inflated, because they include the total of all links for the six search engines, which means many duplicates. Nevertheless, the total is a good relative indicator of what it takes to be a top site.) The General Industry category lists 14 gorilla sites; the top five are listed in Figure 9.

By looking at the sites linking to your site, you can get an idea of the volume and quality of pages linking to you and who may be referring traffic to you. Once you know who is linking to you and the part of your site they are linking to, you can examine the areas of your site that are performing well and those that aren't. By checking out competitors who are outperforming your site, you can see who is linking to them and figure out what you need to do to improve your visibility. (See Figure 10.)

Marketleap's Keyword Verification Tool (www.marketleap.com/verify/default.htm) provides a quick way to see if your site ranks in the top 30 keywords through keyword verification. Many studies have shown that the vast majority of people don't look beyond the first 30 search results. You may have numerous pages indexed with plenty of links pointing to your site, but if you're not ranked in the top 30 on keywords that people use to search for your products and services, you're not visible. The Keyword Verification Tool covers AlltheWeb, AltaVista, AOL, Google/AOL, Lycos Pro, Hotbot, MSN, Netscape, and

Figure 8

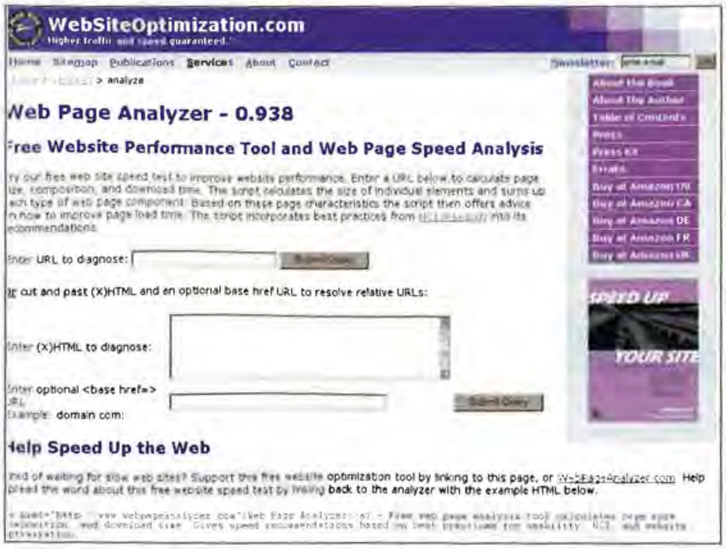


Figure 9

Marketleap Top 5 Most-Linked-To Web Sites

Most-Linked-To Web Sites	Number of Links
Yahoo.com	51,624,212
Mp3.com	26,652,540
Amazon.com	24,213,964
Microsoft.com	18,340,881
CNN.com	10,777,438

Figure 10

Figure 11

Figure 12

Figure 13

Figure 14

Yahoo. (See Figure 11.)

Thumbshots (http://ranking.thumbshots.com) lets you compare the top 100 results for a term on two different search engines or compare two different terms on the same search engine. You can highlight a particular site to see where the site ranks on both search engines. (See Figure 12.)

The output is visual, with lines connecting pages that rank in the top 100 on both search engines or keywords. Pages from your site are in red, and those of other sites that have pages on both sides are in blue. Hover your mouse over any of the hundred circles and see the URL, rank, and, if available, a thumbnail image of the page. The text output includes the number of overlapping links and number of unique links. (See Figure 13.)

The comparisons also show how little duplication there is on the Web—there are usually very few connecting lines between search engines. In a search on "retail displays," only 15 pages ranked in the top 100 on both Google and Yahoo.

I like this tool because it shows you where your site is ranked along a 100-dot line for a phrase on two search engines or how it ranks for two different phrases on one search engine. I use it more for seeing how two different terms rank on the same search engine than for search engine comparison, as there are other tools to do that. I've used it most often for demonstrating to clients the success of using one phrase over another in their site's content. (See Figure 14.)

Link Desirability

The next two tools are designed to help you determine the "desirability" of having another site link to yours. Not all links are created equal—some can even hurt your search engine rankings. Generally, a popular site that contains a few relevant links will be a better site to seek a link from than a "link farm" site that is nothing more than a collection of links. Although Google's PageRank is considered to be an important indicator of the link popularity of a site, I don't give it much weight when I'm looking for a site from which to request

Figure 15

a link. Instead, I look at whether the site is a good fit for the one I'm marketing, and whether a link on that site would benefit both sites. (See Figure 15.)

One tool, Link Appeal by Webmaster Toolkit (www.Webmaster-toolkit.com/link-appeal.shtml), calculates the desirability rating of a link on the URL you specify. The calculation includes factors such as page rank, number of outbound links, and overall percentage of links to HTML. It is intended as a guideline for evaluating whether you should ask for a link on a certain page or not. (See Figure 16.)

The Class C Checker (www.Webmaster-toolkit.com/class-c-checker.shtml) allows you to check whether two domains are hosted on the same Class C IP range. Links from sites that are not on the same range as your site are thought to give more weight. (See Figure 17.)

Search engines don't like duplication in search results, so having a different IP address can help separate sites that are located on the same servers and may share databases or programming elements. Because EBSCO hosts many sites, I use Class C Checker more for the latter purpose than for link popularity. (See Figure 18.)

Other Ranking Tools

While the following tools aren't strictly SEM tools, I find them very valuable in my work.

The main Google search engine doesn't number results, which can make it difficult to figure out where you rank on a particular term. But Google Results (www.google.com/ie?q=&num=100&hl=en) gives numbered results. A disadvantage is that it only shows title and URL information, so identifying your site among the results can be difficult (unless your site name is in the title). I generally do a search on the main Google search engine and use the browser's Find option to see if my site's URL is in the top 30 or 100 results. If it is, I make a note of the title, then go to Google Results and redo the search. I check to see my site's numbered ranking. This is a lot easier than trying to physically count search results on a screen. (See Figures 19 and 20.)

Figure 16

Figure 17

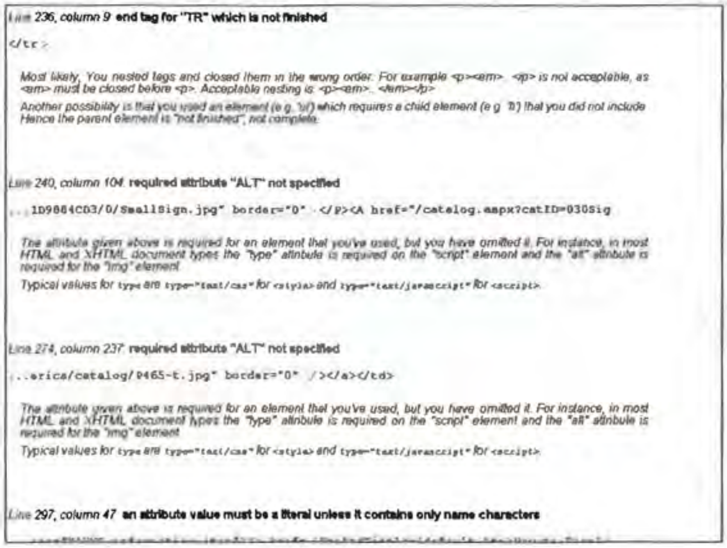


Figure 18

Figure 19

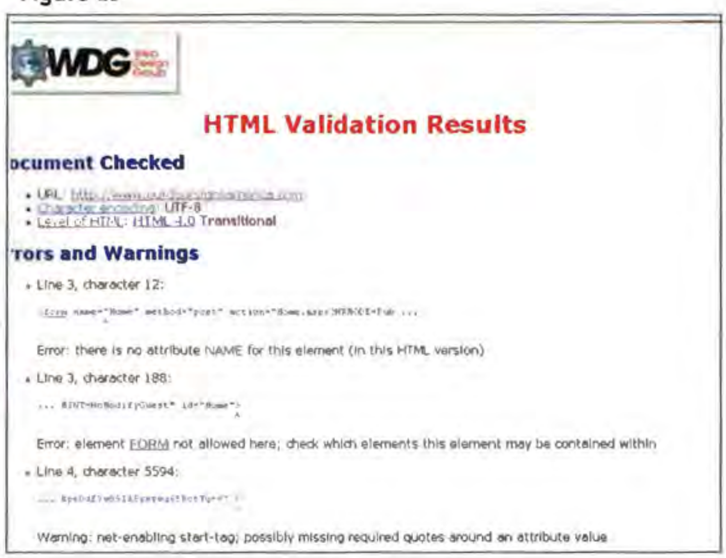


Figure 20

Figure 21

Google Dance (www.google-dance-tool.com) has two uses. The first shows how you rank on the various Google servers; the second presents numbered results. I use this tool primarily for numbered results, unless I've discovered that I'm getting vastly different rankings when I search on a term within a short period of time. (See Figure 21.)

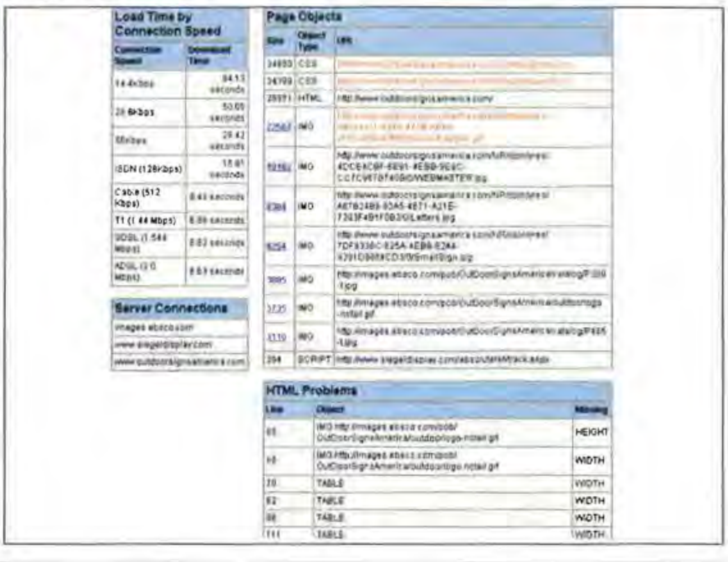
Froogle (www.froogle.com) is Google's shopping search engine. It allows companies to add their products to the site free of charge. I use Froogle in two ways: to expand a site's listings on the Internet and to illustrate price comparisons. Because Froogle is free, it is the simplest way for an e-commerce company to get all its products listed online. And because Froogle results sometimes appear at the top of Google results, it's a good way to get a site to show high in rankings if it doesn't do so organically. Currently, Google is generally not allowing new sites into top-ranked positions for at least six months after launch. (See Figure 22.)

Froogle is valuable in price comparisons because it helps me understand where my clients' pricing is compared with that of their competitors. You can do price comparisons on the other shopping search engines, but the only Web sites you find on those are companies that pay to be on them. All our e-commerce clients who meet the requirements for Froogle are added to it when ESWS redesigns a Web site. (See Figure 23.)

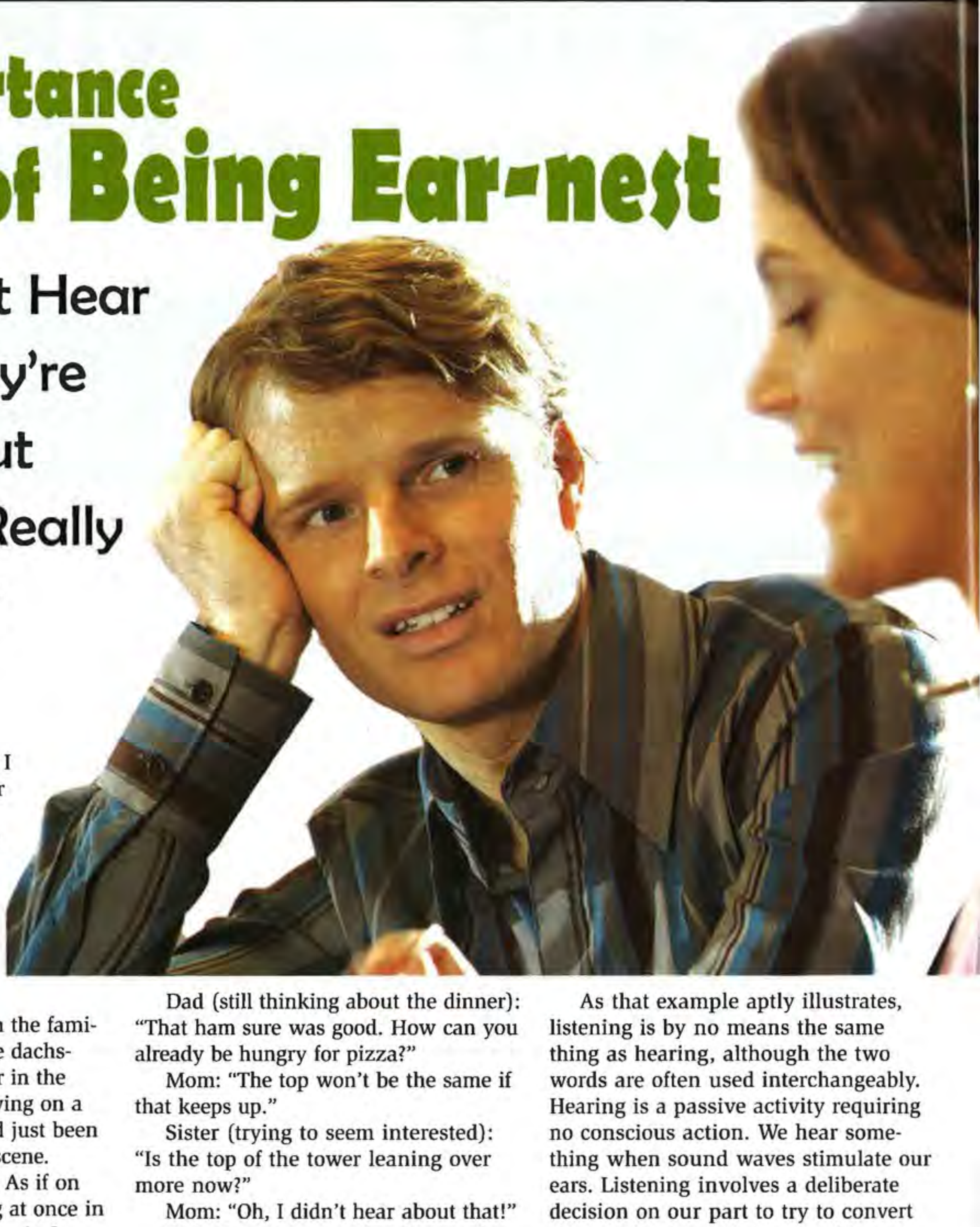
Terry Brainerd Chadwick is a former corporate librarian and independent information professional turned search marketing specialist. She became involved with search engine optimization and Web design 10 years ago, after becoming frustrated with searching for information on hundreds of Web sites a day for her competitive intelligence and market research projects. She is a past president of the Oregon Chapter of SLA.

Figure 22

Figure 23



The Importance of Being Ear-nest



You Might Hear What They're Saying, but Are You Really Listening?

By Donna M. Fisher

Recently my husband and I hosted a holiday gathering for a group of family members that included his parents and sister. After dinner, the five of us were languorous from the heavy meal but still eager for conversation and the chance to catch up on the happenings in each other's lives. As we relaxed in the family room, Cocoa, my miniature dachshund, sat happily on the floor in the midst of us, contentedly chewing on a cylindrical rubber toy she had just been given. It was a quiet, serene scene.

Then the word fun began. As if on cue, everyone began speaking at once in a confusing mixture of sounds. As I heard the various conversations unfold, a kaleidoscope of meanings and messages appeared—some understood, some not-so-well understood, and some completely misunderstood.

Mom: "Cocoa sure does like that toy."

Sister (yawning): "Uh-huh."

Mom: "It's kind of shaped like that tower that's falling."

Sister (eyes now drooping): "The Leaning Tower of Pisa?"

Mom: "Yes. That's the one. She's chewing the top off."

Dad (still thinking about the dinner): "That ham sure was good. How can you already be hungry for pizza?"

Mom: "The top won't be the same if that keeps up."

Sister (trying to seem interested): "Is the top of the tower leaning over more now?"

Mom: "Oh, I didn't hear about that!"

Dad: "I saw the Leaning Tower of Pisa when I was in Italy."

Mom (excitedly): "I hope it doesn't fall."

Dad: "I'm not falling asleep!"

And so it went. Soon, even the dog looked confused. My exasperated husband got everyone's attention by shouting, "Isn't anyone listening?" Obviously, no one was.

As that example aptly illustrates, listening is by no means the same thing as hearing, although the two words are often used interchangeably. Hearing is a passive activity requiring no conscious action. We hear something when sound waves stimulate our ears. Listening involves a deliberate decision on our part to try to convert what we've heard into something meaningful. In interpersonal communication, hearing becomes listening when we become actively involved with what a speaker is saying.

According to statistics quoted by the Inter-

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national Listening Association—an organization devoted to promoting the study, development, and teaching of listening and the practice of effective listening skills and techniques—we spend about 45 percent of our time listening but only remember about 20 percent of what we hear. Complicating this issue is that we listen at the rate of about 125–250 words per minute but think at a rate of 1,000–3,000 words per minute (www.listen.org/pages/factoids.html.) These statistics indicate that there is clearly a need for most of us to learn better listening techniques. As librarians and information professionals, we know that listening well is a critical part of our jobs.

The following are some reminders and suggestions to improve your professional and personal listening skills.

***Do* listen attentively**. Give people to whom you are listening your undivided attention. Focus all your energy on them. Make eye contact, and nod or verbally acknowledge you have understood what was communicated to you. This conveys to those you are listening to that you are paying attention to them and that they and what they are saying are important.

Reduce or eliminate as many mental and physical distractions as possible. Libraries, despite their reputations as quiet refuges, are often noisy places, filled with the hum of photocopiers, the chatter of patrons, and sometimes other distractions, such as phones and street traffic. If it is necessary and possible, move to a quiet area in the library to improve good listening and communication. Finding a quiet place has the advantage of helping protect your patrons' privacy and the confidentiality of their requests.

Rid your mind of mental distractions as well. Forget about the six e-mail reference requests you have to answer before the end of your shift, that you ran out of gas on the way to work, or that you have a budget report due this week. When you're listening to a patron, nothing is more important. Not the patron you just finished helping or the patron next in line, but the one who needs you right now. Every patron deserves all your attention and interest.

***Don't* make assumptions or presumptions**. Listen to the entire message before you respond. Think about what the speaker has said. Make sure you understand the meaning, and ask for clarification if you're not sure. Take notes if necessary. Ask appropriate questions, such as, "Can you give me an example? Can you give me more details about what you mean? Are there any satisfactory alternatives to what you're requesting?" Rephrase the request and repeat it back to the speaker until you're sure you understand the request. Don't begin formulating your response until you are certain you have a clear picture of what is being communicated to you.

Don't be in a hurry and don't rush your patron to finish. Be patient and don't interrupt. Take into account any physical barriers to communication, such as language and speech difficulties or hearing limitations. All these factors can hinder communication and interfere with the listening process. Making sure you have clearly understood the message is the surest way to minimize misunderstanding.

***Do* listen for nonverbal messages**. We have all had plenty of training in reference interview techniques in which we were taught that nonverbal communication and body language can be just as important as words. Listen closely for any nonverbal messages patrons may communicate. Facial expressions, tone of voice, body posture, physical distance from the listener, and mannerisms all add to speakers' messages. Are they smiling or scowling? Do they seem calm, upset, fearful, intimidated, angry? Are they relaxed, or do they appear to be under stress? Is their demeanor appropriate to the situation? Watching for and listening to nonverbal communication help you tailor your responses in order for you to best address patrons' needs.

***Don't* be judgmental**. Focus on your patrons' requests, not on their personal appearance or their physical characteristics. Listen objectively. Don't argue or interject your opinions or feelings. It's not your job to consider whether a patron's request seems appropriate. If it adheres to library policy, you should fulfill a request to the best of your ability. Information professionals are in the business of serving, not of passing judgment.

***Do* listen to yourself before you speak**. Remember, speakers are listening to you as much as you are listening to them. Make sure the words you choose clearly express what you want to say, and especially that they are respectful of the person who will hear them. Remember you can always amplify and elaborate on what you say, but retracting words already spoken is infinitely harder. We do damage to our personal and professional reputations that is difficult, if not impossible, to undo when we communicate misinformation to our patrons. Take a moment to consider the accuracy, completeness, and appropriateness of your answers before you respond to your patrons. Listen to yourself before you speak, lest you find yourself in the unenviable position of wishing you could rescind what you have just said.

***Do* listen to yourself even when you are not speaking**. Listen to your silent self. Your best ideas may come to you when your mind is relatively unoccupied. You may come up with creative insights into situations that may have been stumbling blocks for days or weeks. I have often had the solution to a work problem unexpectedly pop into my head while I was engaged in a relaxing leisure activity like walking or listening to music, or even in the middle of the night while sleeping. Keep a pad and paper or small tape recorder in a handy location so you can jot down or tape these thoughts at a moment's notice.

Modern life is filled with much unwanted and extraneous noise that we try to filter out. Switching on the listening mechanism in our brains is not automatic; it takes a conscious effort. Fortunately, with practice, you can develop the skill of active listening. As I discovered at that holiday gathering, if you do not listen well, language becomes no better than gibberish.

Ernest Hemingway said, "I like to listen. I have learned a great deal from listening carefully. Most people never listen." If listening is that important to a great American writer, how can it be less important for the rest of us? Listening effectively is probably the most important element in successfully understanding and fulfilling information requests. So be quiet and listen. You might actually hear something.

coming events

October 2005

EUSIDIC Annual Conference
European Association of Information Services
October 9-11
Innsbruck, Austria
http://www.eusidic.org

Internet Librarian International 2005
Information Today
October 10-11
London, UK
http://www.internet-librarian.com

Part 1: The Principles of Conducting a Library Benchmarking Project
October 12
http://www.sla.org/virtualseminar

3rd International Evidence Based Librarianship Conference
Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)
October 16-19
Brisbane, Australia
http://conferences.alia.org.au/ebl2005

Internet Librarian 2005
Information Today
October 24-26
Monterey, CA, USA
http://www.infotoday.com/il2005

Part 2: Integrating Benchmark Findings Into the Information Product Development Lifecycle
October 26
http://www.sla.org/virtualseminar

ASIS&T 2005 Annual Meeting
October 28-November 2
Charlotte, NC, USA
http://www.asis.org/Conferences

November 2005

Part I: Unlocking Knowledge from Text
November 15
http://www.sla.org/virtualseminar

KMWorld & Intranets 2005
Information Today
November 15-17
San Jose, CA, USA
http://www.kmworld.com/kmw05

Part II: Case Studies and Implemention Roadmap
November 29
http://www.sla.org/virtualseminar

December 2005

Copyright for the Corporate Librarian: The Importance & Consequences of Copyright Issues in the Digital Environment
December 7
http://www.sla.org/virtualseminar

Communicating the Value of Your Service
December 14
http://www.sla.org/virtualseminar

January 2006

SLA Leadership Summit
January 18-21
http://www.sla.org/

index of advertisers

United States Postal Service

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

1. Publication Title: Information Outlook	2. Publication Number: 0 0 1 5 - 4 2 1 0	3. Filing Date: 09/30/05
4. Issue Frequency: Monthly	5. Number of Issues Published Annually: 12 x a year	6. Annual Subscription Price: $125.00

7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4)
331 South Patrick Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
Contact Person: John T. Adams III
Telephone: 703-647-4919

8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer)
331 South Patrick Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank)
Publisher (Name and complete mailing address)
Special Libraries Association (John T. Adams III)
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Editor (Name and complete mailing address)
Special Libraries Association (Loretta Y. Britten)
331 South Patrick Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address)
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331 South Patrick Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)

Full Name	Complete Mailing Address
Special Libraries Assoc	331 South Patrick St Alexandria, VA 22314-3501

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box → ☐ None

Full Name	Complete Mailing Address

12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one)
The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes:
☐ Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
☐ Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)

PS Form 3526, October 1999 (See Instructions on Reverse)

13. Publication Title: Information Outlook
14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: SEPT 05

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)	14,700	13000
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541 (Include advertiser's proof and exchange copies)	10,122	10107
(2) Paid In-County Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541 (Include advertiser's proof and exchange copies)		
(3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution		
(4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	1,979	2843
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 15b. (1), (2),(3) and (4))	12,101	12950
d. Free Distribution by Mail (Samples, complimentary, and other free) (1) Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541		
(2) In-County as Stated on Form 3541		
(3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS		
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)		
f. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 15d. and 15e.)		0
g. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c. and 15f)	12,101	12950
h. Copies not Distributed	2,599	50
i. Total (Sum of 15g. and h.)	14,700	13000
j. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15c. divided by 15g. times 100)	100	100

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership
☐ Publication required. Will be printed in the October 2005 issue of this publication. ☐ Publication not required.

17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner — [illegible] — Date

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

Instructions to Publishers

1. Complete and file one copy of this form with your postmaster annually on or before October 1. Keep a copy of the completed form for your records.
2. In cases where the stockholder or security holder is a trustee, include in items 10 and 11 the name of the person or corporation for whom the trustee is acting. Also include the names and addresses of individuals who are stockholders who own or hold 1 percent or more of the total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities of the publishing corporation. In item 11, if none, check the box. Use blank sheets if more space is required.
3. Be sure to furnish all circulation information called for in item 15. Free circulation must be shown in items 15d, e, and f.
4. Item 15h., Copies not Distributed, must include (1) newsstand copies originally stated on Form 3541, and returned to the publisher, (2) estimated returns from news agents, and (3), copies for office use, leftovers, spoiled, and all other copies not distributed.
5. If the publication had Periodicals authorization as a general or requester publication, this Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation must be published; it must be printed in any issue in October or, if the publication is not published during October, the first issue printed after October.
6. In item 16, indicate the date of the issue in which this Statement of Ownership will be published.
7. Item 17 must be signed.

Failure to file or publish a statement of ownership may ***lead to suspension of Periodicals authorization.***

PS Form 3526, October 1999 (Reverse)

Enterprise-Wide Copyright Permissions

By Lesley Ellen Harris

You need to make 35 photocopies of an article for your department's staff meeting.

You plan to scan and post an article on your enterprise's intranet.

You will be including an article in the electronic reserves for a course you teach each year at the community college (in addition to your full-time job.)

Yes, you need permission to make these reproductions. Rather than look at each reproduction/permission issue on its own, your enterprise should consider a single consistent approach to copyright permissions. This procedure should deal with when permissions must be sought, and with the procedure and form in which they are obtained.

Is Permission Necessary?

Your first consideration is always—is permission necessary? Although this is a legal question, when you should obtain permission to use a copyright-protected work is also a policy or interpretative matter for your enterprise. Copyright law is not always clear. There are many gray areas, like the notion of fair use. When does fair use come into play? You can interpret fair use narrowly or broadly. If your enterprise is risk adverse, fair use will only come into play for very small uses like quotations from works.

Otherwise, your enterprise may interpret fair use much more broadly. Your attorney can advise you on your enterprise's permissions procedures. Consider taking your attorney's advice and preparing a plain English written permissions procedure. This, of course, could be part of a copyright policy or a broader intellectual property policy. It can help educate your employees and also help prevent unauthorized uses of copyright-protected works in your enterprise.

Basic Questions

Below are guidelines when developing your permission procedures policies. If the answer is YES to the questions below, you may need to obtain copyright permission before using the work. In addition, take into account the special considerations also discussed below.

- Are you using a work that is protected by copyright?

Tip: Ideas, history, and facts are not protected, just the words used to express them.

- Is the duration of copyright still running or is the work in the public domain?

Tip: Copyright protection lasts 50 years (in Canada) or 70 years (in the U.S.) after the author's death; if using the work on a Web site, get permission for life-plus-70 years.

- Is the work an adaptation or translation of a public domain work?

Tip: Adaptations and translations may be copyright-protected works even if they are based on public domain works.

- Are you using a substantial portion of a work?

Tip: Generally, very small uses of works, such as quotes, do not require permission.

- Are you using the work in a copyright sense?

Tip: Reproducing, publishing, scanning, posting electronically, performing in public, or adapting a work are copyright uses.

Special considerations:

- Is there an exception in the law that exempts you from obtaining permission?

Tip: Exceptions are generally limited and vary from country to country.

- Are you using the work in a country where an author has moral rights? If so, are you modifying the work in a manner that may be prejudicial to the honor or reputation of the author, and does the author's name appear in association with the work?

Tip: If possible, obtain a waiver of moral rights if you are using the work on a worldwide basis.

Since obtaining permission may take some time, requests for permission should be made at least six weeks before they are needed, or earlier if possible.

Locating a Copyright Owner

If permission is required, you will need to locate the owner, or representative, of the materials. The copyright office of your country is a great resource if the copyright owner has registered his work. Other research tools are telephone books, online directories, and professional associations. For print uses, a copyright collective such as Access Copyright (in Canada) or the Copyright Clearance Center (in the U.S.), may be of help. Such collectives also have reciprocal arrangements with similar organizations around the world and may provide you with permission to use works from other countries.

Once you have located the copyright owner, you should call him or her or send a fax, letter, or e-mail, with the following information:

1. Title of the source for the material (book, magazine, painting title, etc.).
2. Creator/author of the item.
3. A description of the item you wish to reproduce.

Lesley Ellen Harris is a copyright lawyer/consultant who works on legal, business, and strategic issues in the publishing, content, entertainment, Internet, and information industries. She is the editor of the Copyright & New Media Law Newsletter: For Libraries, Archives & Museums *and the author of several books, including* Licensing Digital Content: A Practical Guide for Librarians. *She often speaks at conferences and teaches online courses on copyright and licensing. For more information, visit http://copyrightlaws.com.*

4. The page number(s) of the item (if appropriate).
5. The ISBN (in the case of a book) or ISSN number (in the case of a magazine).
6. Year of publication (also include the month or season in the case of a magazine) and edition, if applicable. This enables the copyright owner to identify exactly what it is you wish to reproduce.

Also include:

1. The purpose for which you wish to reproduce the item (research, commercial, educational, etc.).
2. Whether the use is for profit or not.
3. How the item is to be reproduced (photocopied, retyped, or scanned). Where the item will appear (on a Web site, in an online or print-based course). It is also important to specify if the item is to be distributed mechanically (photocopied) or digitally (via a listserv or Web site).

Consider creating a standard permissions letter or form. This could be appended to your copyright policy.

An Electronic Database

It is always prudent to obtain permission in writing. After obtaining permission, keep all written requests and responses on file, particularly any written agreements outlining the rights granted to you and any limitations on use. Also keep any records of payment of fees. Consider creating an electronic database so others in your enterprise can easily search the database prior to using a copyright-protected work to see if permission has already been obtained by your enterprise.

Acknowledging Permissions

It is also a good idea to include a credit line or credit list for example: From Doe, Jane. *Corporate Humor.* Published by Laughing Press, 2004, pp. 210-220. Reprinted by permission.

"Getting Permission: Where and How?" is an excellent guide that deals with when permission is needed, and where to obtain it. See: http://www.publishing.wsu.edu/copyright/getting_permission/index.html.

CCC is at: http:// www.copyright.com; Access Copyright is at: http://www.accesscopyright.ca. For copyright collectives in other countries, see: http://www.ifrro.org/members/index.html.

Tips to Boost Innovation for You and Your Library: Part 3

By Stephen Abram

We're finally at part three of this series. Here are the final 10 tips and a bonus tip. (If you missed the first two parts, check out *Information Outlook* for August and September 2005).

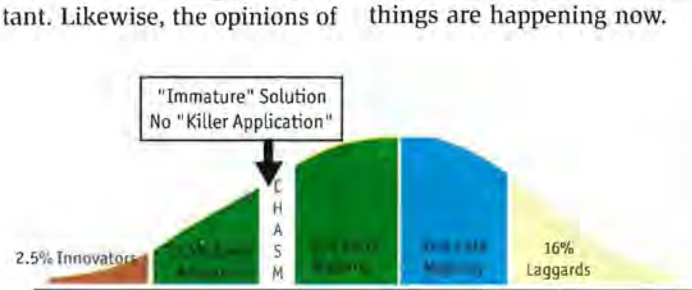
1. Understand the adoption curve.

I love the adoption curve. It explains so much about why certain people are not as comfortable as others with innovation and change. Yet everyone (or nearly everyone) eventually adapts to changes in our world. Basically, innovations need to attract the use and attention of 15 percent of your target group before they break the overall inertia of the market. Bridging the chasm between the early adopters and the greater majority is a major challenge.

I have found in the early phases of a new product that the opinions of early adopters are the most useful. As the product progresses through its lifecycle, the reactions and opinions of later adopters become increasingly important. Likewise, the opinions of folks who have a predilection for late adoption offer little substantive advice on transformational or leading-edge technologies. We can easily track innovators through early adopters and early through the late majority in the adoption of Internet access and Web sites through libraries.

2. Do research for yourself, too.

Set up alerts on your hot issues and hot technologies. Your research skills are not just for your clients—use them in your own cause. Read the blogs in your field and have a trusted circle of bloggers who alert you to cool ideas, changes in your field, and Web sites worth a look. Make sure to attend the SLA keynotes and trends sessions at conferences and not just the core sessions in your area of expertise. Keep your mind open to the viral effects of these new information grapevines. Just look at the success of such technologies as RSS, blogs, wikis, and so forth, which was achieved with little or no formal advertising. So many exciting things are happening now.



Time of Adoption of Innovations

3. Bring management on board first.

Then add customers and users, before you launch. This is a truism in every book about innovation and product management. Yet it is shocking how often it's ignored. Without your management on board, with their understanding of the goals, product, and overall agenda, you risk failure. They are key stakeholders and can certainly drive a stake through the heart of your project. Keep them in the loop, continuously.

4. Feedback is a gift.

Like that wedding gift from Aunt Sally, you can keep it, display it, return it, or hide it in the closet. It's your choice. Don't overvalue one piece of out-of-context feedback or let it loom out of perspective and balance. Feedback is best digested in the aggregate rather than in small doses. Squeaky wheels are fine and need to be oiled. But if it's the engine that needs attention, then that well-oiled wheel is just a distraction. Feedback shouldn't be cause for stomach-wrenching stress. You are in control of how it can be dealt with (well or constructively or badly) and need to hear and accept this gift from your stakeholders. Do you have feedback mechanisms on your Web site?

5. Measure—don't just count.

Decision-makers CANNOT interpret your statistics. They either don't have enough background or just don't have the time to invest. You have to do it for them. This is the real beauty of the NDP (Normative Data Project, http://www.libraryndp.info). It allows you to compare numbers between like library systems and branches. Sirsi's Director's Station lets you find insights into the basic operating information of your library. Between the NDP and the Director's Station you have

Stephen Abram, MLS, is vice president, innovation, for Sirsi Corporation. He is past president of the Ontario Library Association and current president of the Canadian Library Association. In June 2003 he was awarded SLA's John Cotton Dana Award. This column reflects Stephen's personal perspective and does not necessarily represent the opinions or positions of Sirsi Corporation. Products are not endorsed or recommended for your personal situation and are mentioned here as useful ideas or places to investigate or explore. Stephen would love to hear from you at stephen.abram@sirsi.com.

the power of Wal-Mart-style systems at your fingertips. The NDP and the Director's Station enable you to create perfect visuals (bar charts, pie charts, graphs, and maps) that communicate difficult financial and statistical information effectively to decision-makers.

6. Sacrifice can be temporary.

Every organization has thousands of ideas that are worthy of consideration. No organization can use them all. That's the tough part. When you have 100 good ideas to choose from, the critical skill isn't in choosing 5 but in sacrificing 95. Learn the skill of temporary sacrifice. You can store your good ideas in an idea parking lot and bring them forward into the strategic planning process as you complete projects. If you don't focus and choose to limit your energy to achieving success on only those that will deliver the most value up front to your enterprise and users, then you are choosing mediocrity.

7. Cheap is expensive.

Especially in the long run—think of cheap products as pilots for the real implementation. This seems obvious, but I am always shocked by the needless nickel-and-diming that limits the success of a project. Good budgeting and management are truly necessary, but financing success is different, as is placing a higher value on doing it right than on doing it cheap. Every project should recognize the real costs in conversions, customization, user adoption, marketing, introduction and launch, client support, and so forth.

8. Build for the future.

Too often projects that are planned for 18 to 36 months naively assume that things will stay the same technologically. Remember the lessons of the past, when things mutated quickly—DOS became Windows; diskettes became CD-ROMs; Netscape begat MSIE, which begat Firefox; online dial-up became Web broadband; and so forth. You can't be certain of the future, but you can't wait for total stability either. That's the ambiguity. Dealing with ambiguity is a key competency in change management and introducing innovation.

9. Learn from best AND from bad practices.

I admire those who can craft and communicate best practices. I also find it difficult to cull from these best practices exactly what caused "success." However, when I hear about a worst practice, I seem to learn quickly and see the moral of the story really rapidly. It's interesting how that happens. Here is a list of the lucky seven themes of bad practices in introducing innovation:

- Multiple, ambiguous objectives.
- Different functional objectives.
- Focus on current customers and confusion about future target customers.
- Narrow engineering focus on elegant solutions and a leisurely attitude to time.
- Lack of team ownership for project and blame shifting.
- Narrow specialists in functional chimneys.
- Unclear direction, no one in charge, accountability limited, inconsistent or invisible executive support.

10. No mistake is ever final.

One of my better bosses had this phrase framed on the wall of her office. She said she was going to get it done in needlepoint one day. We were part of a Skunk Works that was tasked with rebuilding technology for a major corporation as well as introducing transformational change into a huge market and changing the overall culture of the companies involved. No small task. Not only did we make many mistakes, but we learned from them. If we weren't making mistakes, we weren't trying hard enough. We tried to limit the exposure of our experiments, but like learning to skate, if you're not falling down, you're just not learning well enough. My boss's sign, "No mistake is ever final," encouraged us to try just a little bit harder to achieve greatness because we knew we had her support. If you want to change things for the better, you have to be a change agent, and that means you have to be comfortable with making mistakes and dealing with them effectively—and with learning all the time.

11. Have some fun!

We are often too serious. Our work is serious and our impact on our communities is enormous! However, working creatively, trying new things, and being innovative are fun. Take the time to recognize that, and live your life to the fullest. Celebrate your successes and your team's work. Champion your library's achievements! Reward your colleagues when they succeed. Don't ever get so heads down that you can't see the big picture. It's a wonderful world.

We've arrived at the end of this three-part series. I hope you have found my old insights useful. I think these could form the basis for a good discussion between development teams and library managers. As I said at the beginning, not every one is guaranteed to work every time or in every situation. It's always good to keep talking, debating, and working together to move our organizations and our communities forward. Finally, I'd also love to hear what you've learned over the years.

Do You Know SLA Members with Board Potential?

The Nominating Committee is looking for the next leaders of SLA. The committee will meet at the SLA Leadership Summit in Houston, January 19-21, 2006, to recommend a slate of nominees to the board for the 2008 association year.

Specifically, the Nominating Committee is directed to:

1. Seek recommendations for nominees from suitable sources in the association, especially from chapter officers and division officers.
2. Select a balanced slate of nominees for association officers and members of the Board of Directors, and upon their acceptance,
3. Present the slate to the Board of Directors.

To provide broad representation on the association board, the Nominating Committee invites members to nominate themselves or recommend colleagues who might serve in the following positions: president-elect, division cabinet chair-elect, chapter cabinet chair-elect and two directors.

Details about responsibilities for each of these positions can be found at: http://www.sla.org/content/SLA/governance/bodsection/descriptions.cfm.

To ensure SLA continues to be relevant and influential in the information- and knowledge-based 21st century, it is critical for the board to be composed of diverse, enthusiastic, and visionary individuals committed to the profession. Members who have been active and successful contributors to chapters, divisions or association-level committees are needed as candidates.

There are many SLA members in the organization who can fill this need, although members of the current Nominating Committee may not know some of them. Therefore, you are invited to submit names, including your own name if you are interested in being considered.

The committee is looking for 10 people, two candidates for each of the five positions, for 2008.

Please forward the following information for people you think are ready and willing to serve the profession as SLA board members:

- Nominee's name, address, phone number.
- Identify the position recommended for each individual you name.
- Length of SLA membership.
- Offices held in Chapters, Divisions, or at the association level.
- Membership in association-level Committees.
- Other activities with SLA (on chapter and division committees, teaching CE courses, awards received, articles published, etc.).

Include other information the committee should know. For example, what it is about this person that makes them a great nominee for the election slate? It would also be helpful if you can provide any other relevant comments that distinguish this individual among your colleagues.

SLA
Connecting People and Information

Recommendations may be sent to any of the following persons by January 13, 2006:

Spring 2007 Election Chair

Wilda Newman (2004-2006)
wildanewman@yahoo.com
Knowledge Resources Associates, LLC
5964 Rosinante Run
Columbia, MD 21045-3826
USA

Committee Members

Richard Geiger, Chair-Elect
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Andrew Berner
aberner@universityclubny.org

Liz Blankson-Hemans
liz.blankson-hemans@thomson.com

Marcia J. Rodney
mrodney@ball.com

Staff Committee Member

Linda Broussard
lbroussard@sla.org

Leaders, take the first step. Name yourself or identify others that you know are ready for the next step in their professional careers. Give back to SLA and identify those leaders that you know are waiting in the wings to take on these rewarding and fun leadership roles. Do you see a leader? Tell us about him or her!

Serving on the SLA Board of Directors is guaranteed to be a challenging and rewarding experience. It will provide an opportunity to expand management and leadership abilities through service in an international professional association. Please give some serious thought to who might bring fresh ideas and energy to the board and send us your recommendations. All information submitted will be handled confidentially.

SUPPLIER DIRECTORY

3Ms Part II

By John R. Latham

Don't worry, I am not going to preach about manners again, nor inundate you with my dear, departed mother's epithets. This time the three Ms are Manage, Manage, Manage.

Personally I have never had a problem with the L word, and am quite happy to call myself a librarian. I have always believed that it is how you do your job that matters, not your name. A rose by any other name, and all that. I still interpose the word librarian with information professional when describing myself, but not so sure that is particularly informative. The phrase "information professional" is qualitative and does not tell anyone what I do. I hope that I am professional in everything I do at work. I have decided that in the future I shall call myself an information manager because I manage information.

Dictionary definitions of "manage" include "to handle or direct with a degree of skill, to make and keep compliant, or to exercise executive, administrative and supervisory direction." We certainly do the first two, and more often than not, the last one.

Just think of all the systems being sold today that include the word "management": knowledge management, content management, digital asset management, electronic resources management, records management, database management, human resources management, enterprise systems management, and many more. Even if the subject, such as human resources, is not our sphere of influence, we need to get involved. Why? Because we know about access, communications, order, and all the things that have to be included in the systems to make them work effectively and efficiently. It is rarely the technology that does not work, but the common management issues such as lack of effective communication, misunderstanding of user work processes, or poor or clumsy access.

Although we are becoming more involved in the planning processes of these types of systems, we will not be automatically asked unless we prove our management skills.

Personal management. Project a professional image at all times. In Mallory Stark's recent article in *Information Outlook*, she states: "Your professional image is the set of qualities that represent perceptions of your competence and character as judged by your constituents." ("Creating a Positive Professional Image," Mallory Stark. *Information Outlook*, August 2005, 24-27.) It may be unfair, but the perception of competence, certainly by your superiors, is initially more important than your proven competence. By projecting confidence you reflect social competence. By being ethical, honest, and well-groomed, you project business competence.

Quality management. Strive for perfection. It's not attainable, but at least you can cut out the sloppy errors that show a lack of professionalism. You or your staff may have carried out some excellent research, and prepared a timely and detailed report, but make sure that it is visually pleasing and easy to understand. Use information center letterhead or logos, especially if delivered electronically. The more professional your products look all the time, the more likely you are going to make an impression on the decision-makers. Remember that, although you can be delivering a report to someone who is well aware of your professionalism and value, the report may be passed on to others within the "food chain" of the organization, whom it is even more important to impress.

Don't accept inaccuracies in your internal correspondence or e-mails. They also may be forwarded to others within the organization. It is a bore to read over every e-mail you send out, but that is what professionalism is all about. Spell-check does not find all typing errors, words omitted, or grammatical errors, but the CEO reading it will. Avoid including personal comments or criticisms of staff or customers in e-mails. Apart from being unprofessional, you never know where they are going to end up. Unless you are Richard Nixon, oral communication is safer than written for anything that you would not like repeated. Also remember that anything that comes from your staff is going to reflect on you as supervisor, so the same rules apply. As a manager you need to set up some simple system of reviewing the quality of work and correspondence from everyone in your department.

Financial management. This area is often overlooked by information managers, but it is all-important to the head honchos who are going to add you to new project teams or authorize an increased budget. It is not just a matter of meeting or exceeding your budget, but also being aware of the whole organization's finances and the industry's trends. You make a great impression if you can communicate that you understand the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and how your products and services impact them financially. Mergers or takeovers or changes in government funding policies will eventually impact every area financially. Keep ahead of the curve and make suggestions on how your information center can be integrated into the new organization, and how financial savings can be made. Every area is vulnerable to drastic changes in such circumstances, and good managers anticipate them.

Manage, manage, manage.

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