

Your voice

The emergence of 'cybrarians'

In response to Maelor Himbury's letter, 'The rise of the chief knowledge officer' in the Jan-Feb 2001 *inCite*, I'm thrilled to report that the news is good for the library profession. Librarians and other information service professionals are equipped for knowledge roles and, what's more, they are getting them.

John Caffrey, the general manager of knowledge management solutions for Lotus, stated in the Jan-Feb 2001 issue of *Image and Data Manager* magazine that managing the content of KM systems would be 'the responsibility of "cybrarians"' and they are a 'key factor in the effectiveness' of any KM system.

What we have discovered, as specialist recruiters of these higher-level, well-paid positions, is that information service professionals need vital additional skills including strategic management, negotiation, leadership, cultural change management and financial planning.

Skills that are 'extra' helpful for these choice roles include: journalistic skills, such as report

writing, abstracting, editing, etc; interpersonal/communication skills; a good understanding of ALL aspects of content management including principles and practices in library/information management, research resources, records management, and knowledge management; traditional information specialist skills such as information needs analysis; research skills and knowledge of appropriate online information resources; collection development principles and practices; and an understanding of organisational objectives, processes, politics, people and strategies.

This may seem overwhelming. However, our experience indicates that the 'plum' jobs in information management are now going to generalists who can make sense of what is a new space in the information world of most organisations.

Marion Nicolson, Sydney

A Federation note...

One item in Geoffrey Bolton's fine new biography *Edmund Barton: the one man for the job* (Allen & Unwin 2000) particularly took my fancy.

Apparently, in 1901 the first

Commonwealth government in its initial — but of long duration — location in Melbourne had the choice for parliamentary quarters of Victoria's Parliament House or the Exhibition Building.

It chose the former — doubtless to the chagrin of the displaced Victorian parliamentarians — because 'it had the better library'. An excellent and innovative library it remains, and isn't it nice to know that politicians at Federation had a keen sense of the value of libraries beyond that displayed by some of their successors?

Dr Alan Bundy, Adelaide

Environmental concern

I am not sure if other ALIA members have the same experience as I have. Every time I try to tidy up my desk, I always find that *inCite* magazines are incredibly heavy, even if I just hold up six issues. May I suggest that ALIA use some recycled paper to print the magazines instead of using that glossy paper, which not only is heavy and reflects light when reading, but also is not very environmentally friendly in nature, I imagine.

Eddie Ho, Hong Kong

Thank you for raising this concern, Eddie. ALIA is concerned about environmental issues too, and to this end we refuse to use metallic inks or varnishes, which have a significant impact on not only print-workers, but also entire ecosystems.

We would use recycled paper as our primary stock if it were cost-effective, or readily available (to make cost-savings, we pre-order an entire year's supply of paper stock). Unfortunately, if we were to use lighter or lower-quality paper, the ink from the back of each page would strike through to the other side and make much of what is printed unreadable.

Each year we review our options, and make an assessment on the basis of what paper stock is available, and at what cost.

Ivan Trundle
Managing editor

Your letters on any issue of relevance to the library and information sector are welcomed.

All letters should be addressed to the *inCite* editor and may be e-mailed to incite@alia.org.au, or faxed to 02 6282 2249, or posted to: Your voice, ALIA, PO Box E441, Kingston ACT 2604. Please include your name and postal address with your letter or e-mail.

Letters will be accepted for publication until the 18th of the month.

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