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Internet Librarian International 2013: a potpourri of information

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Sitting in the audience taking notes intermittently with a pencil inscribed with "made from recycled newspaper" courtesy of the Olympia Conference Centre, London, one had cause to appreciate the amount of effort that went into the organization of the Internet Librarian International (ILI) Conference 2013. The welcome and opening keynote session held in the main auditorium and presented by Peter Morville, President, Semantic Studios, USA on the topic "Inspiration architecture: the future of libraries" took participants through ways to teach for understanding and of teaching the use of technology "intertwingling" as things separate are now being mixed with other things. He remarked that the imbalance in information literacy is widening and even though there is more access to information, there is no commensurate making of more informed decisions. The library was portrayed as a keystone of culture, an act of inspiration architecture.

The conference theme for the first of the two days designed to be in three tracks: A – transformative technologies, B – connecting with community and customers, and C – new resources, new services, gave participants a hard time deciding which tracks to attend and how to spend their time. I started off with

Track C sub-theme supporting research, and listened to Starr Hoffman speaking on "Scholarly communication strategies." He discussed the issue of libraries creating institutional repositories and encouraging submission to the repository, suggesting that librarians will do well by teaching the use of altmetrics and bibliometrics, and scholarly social networks to their clients. Examples of networks for possible use were Academia.edu, Mendeley and CUNY Academic Commons. He also described the potential roles of the library in data curation as those of providing data, literacy and instruction; educating users on options and services; providing storage space and; metadata creation. Next was Terence K. Huwe who spoke on the topic "The library as digital publisher" and described digital publishing as being a new core competency defined as connecting a community through the art and science of communication. He presented *Library Publishing Toolkit* (a book) that teaches the rudiments of digital publishing. The program in the University of California was described wherein faculty adopted an Open Access Policy. Many examples of digital publishing like Michigan Publishing, Maize Books, and Amherst College Press were given.

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I rushed over to Track B sub-theme "community engagement" and listening to Jan Holmquist, developer of 23mobilethings speak, that was an eye-opener. He spoke about learning being the key in using mobile devices to deliver services in libraries as tools to engage the communities and for professional development. The 23mobilethings has many people working on it and is online 24 hours a day. Its focus is on translation, language and culture. It can be found at the site www.23mobilethings.com

Since I had decided to go through the three tracks before lunch, I went yet again to Track A on "Merging virtual and physical worlds: promoting collections" sub-theme. I had missed the first presentation on "Using technology for high impact innovation" but listened to Earl Givens and Ashley Todd-Diaz presenting on "Breaking down library walls with augmented reality". They explained how they were able to connect to users of their library by providing a platform to scan a device and get help. The brochure "talks" to the user in an interactive process with videos and photos in the brochure. The project was borne out of the need to connect to students with technology resources in the Special Collections and Archives of the Emporia University, USA. This collection had been closed down for some time but the renewed effort had generated attention to the collection than before. After this presentation, Dan Almour of OpenAthens, UK presented the functions of their link resolver. This resolver allows a single sign-out system, a remote access for libraries independent of the user's IP address.

The afternoon session saw Phil Bradley in Track C speaking on privacy: issues, ethics and resources. In an interesting and interactive session, he took participants through many ways in which privacy on the internet was being breached, and how this could be curtailed by users. Lots of information is being given away by digital fingerprinting and flash-based fingerprinting (e.g. recycling bins tracking phones in the city of London). The advice was to explore privacy settings of web sites one uses thoroughly and always sign out of sites after every use since many of the

sites track their users in hidden ways. Several tips were given for "plugging the leaks" such as, disguising ones IP address with a virtual private network (VPN), disable Javascript, using TOR instead and hide ones identity in order to protect it. Also, use search engines that do not store data (e.g. duckduckgo.com, blekko, zeekly.com, etc.), do not accept search engine cookies, use different search engines (do not stick to one), and avoid using terms with your name attached, among others.

Back to Track B, a panel session chaired by Marydee Ojala on Community Connections had presentations made by Aase Andreassen from Politiken, Denmark; Anita Laamanen of VTT, Finland; and Ken Chad of Ken Chad Consulting, UK. Aase and Anita spoke about the new directions their libraries were taking. The newspaper library in Denmark serves journalists from three different newspapers and the librarians have to perform their roles innovatively in anticipation of the needs of journalists. The journalists were observed not to use the internet that much but preferred face-to-face learning; therefore the library creates a good atmosphere for this, being a gathering point for them.

Anita Laamanen explained how the VTT Library, Finland a globally networked multi technology applied research organization, moved to virtual services. Established in 1997 the library progressed from 306 e-journals to 34,000 e-journals and 55,000 e-books in 2013. With mobile staff working remotely one to two days a week, and with 24/7 availability, their success is built on deployment (recommendation, training and communication, and advertisement on the intranet), technical knowhow and financial stability. Their challenges are cost (because of the large area covered), the fact that only about 10 percent of their users have hand-held devices available to them, and changing work patterns.

Ken Chad spoke on the topic "Seize opportunities to revitalize what you do" in which he proposed a "job to be done" (JTBD) methodology for accomplishing library tasks and suggested a customer/user analysis of not looking at the needs but analyzing what is the problem to be solved, who

needs to solve the problem and what are the circumstances.

Track C was the next port of call for me, where Mary Peterson of South Australia Health Library Service moderated the e-resources session. Rachael Green presented on behalf of Moshe Pritsker of the *Journal of Visualized Experiments*, USA, on the topic "How peer-reviewed video publications will save sciences." Their journal is a purely scientific journal in which they video the experiments as they are being carried out and then take back to the laboratory. This project started in 2006 and saves time, money and frustrations of researchers who find it difficult to perform experiments reported by others in conventional journals. Their slogan is "Stop reading, Start watching." Their videos are copyrighted but the authors have rights to use their work for teaching purposes. It is not a product accessible online, and institutions can subscribe and their users gain access from there.

Paula Evans and Heather Lincoln next presented on "Customizing library business resources for delivery via iPads." The experience of the Imperial College, London in this regard was described. Students are given iPads to use which have interactive reading lists and links to four resources pre-loaded. The usages of the iPads are measured periodically. The reading lists are in-house ones generated by collaborating with faculty, and the electronic resources are provided in real time.

Helen Leech of the Surrey Library Service also spoke about "e-books in UK public libraries", describing how the suppliers of the e-resources mostly concentrate on academic libraries. Because of e-book reading needs from tech-savvy users in public libraries, shelftree was created (www.shelftree.org.uk). For the future, the new library in Birmingham is organizing a national workshop in November where one of the issues to be discussed is e-lending and e-reading day as a National Reading Day is being proposed. A challenge is that one cannot borrow a library book on a Kindle reader.

The second day of the conference also had three tracks this time A was marketing and impact, B was search, discovery and data, and C was the new professional – skills and roles. This second day had me deciding to stay on

Tracks A and C if only to concentrate a little as I was to present in Track C myself in the afternoon. The keynote delivered by Joe Tree of Blipfoto, UK on the topic "Sharing and saving" was a wonderful journey into how Blipfoto started and developed from a venture that spent nothing on marketing to one that has more than 400,000 users to date. The idea of Blipfoto is to share one photograph per day. The program is open, well indexed and users can self-curate their photos and stories. It has photomap facilities that can zoom on any place and see what happened each day there, from what has been uploaded. Joe pointed out that each story is an access point to somebody's life, and is a useful tool for historians in particular. With £25 per annum, one can get a subscription. Copyright of photos on Blipfoto remains with the exhibition, not the company, and only personal registrations are allowed, though the individual can tell the story of an organization. He ended on the note – Start Saving Your Life!

Track A on marketing and impact proceeded with Kay Grieve and Michael Halpin's paper on "Becoming human: social media to nurture customer relationships." The efforts of the University of Sunderland to enhance their customer experience and therefore produce a seven-step Marketing Toolkit were discussed. The customer should inform service delivery thus the library staff should engage the customer and make sharing an important factor. Staff and customers need to be themselves to connect through nurturing conversations, and using conversational tools like Facebook, Twitter and so on. They demonstrated how their library used this method to get feedback from a page linking them pictorially.

Next to present was Gary Green on "Your catalogue wants to go out and play." He spoke about projects the Surrey Library had implemented: the Surrey Fiction Book Map, the Queen Elizabeth project and the Guilford Literary Walk demonstrating how each link on the catalogue gave more links to library databases, transcripts of audio and video presentations linking to internet based media like the Worldcat, Proquest, YouTube and so on. There is hope for expansion of the project.

The next session attended in Track C moderated by Ulla de Stricker of de Stricker Associates, Canada, was quite interesting. It featured a panel session comprising Simon Edwards of CILIP, UK; Alison McNab of Kimberlin Library, University of Nottingham, UK; and Arthur Weiss of AWARE, UK. Deb Hunt of Mechanics' Institute, USA was unavoidably absent from the panel however, the discussions centered on the topic "Your glittering career: who is the new professional?" and each panelist gave a view on what the new professional should be. Issues like self-management, developing ones skills, having passion and energy for information work and being ready to take risks and manage change are germane for the new information professional amongst other things. Sharing what they felt had the greatest influence on what they are today, the panelists identified curiosity, doggedness, being adaptable and willing to change, desire to connect with people, sharing, collaboration, taking on new roles and looking for opportunities as the answer. The discussions were quite engaging and informative and the advices for new professionals are – manage the process of knowledge delivery properly, seek opportunities in the future for new services and think about the issue of having special courses for knowledge managers to learn how to tap into new opportunities.

After lunch, I presented my paper titled "The embedded librarian in a techno-savvy academic environment" on the efforts of staff of the library in the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria to collaborate with faculty in ensuring that the library facilities are well utilized. The embedded nature of the Use of Library course, having a Use of Library component was described as well as findings from in-depth interview with librarians on how embedded they are in the performance of their roles especially towards faculty and students. The mix of service provision and academic work provides a situation where teaching faculty information literacy skills often on a one-on-one basis exists and is yielding results. There are plans to teach faculty use of these technologies and then replicate in the departments on a wider scale.

Karin Westerberg from Lulea University of Technology, Sweden spoke about "Cooperation for change in an academic environment." She described a project which was developed with an IT strategy to change the University's technology base. A SWOT analysis was done on the library and it was found that the most wanted thing was provision of facilities for mobile functions. An application was created that allows users to do a lot of things but social media is not included as the university is skeptical of social media. There is the need to embed the library web site in the university web site. The conclusion was that innovation, creativity and collaboration are necessary to be the change one wants.

The last session before the closing plenary I attended was in Track A on teaching digital literacy and tech skills. Listening to Orna Rosh speak on "Developing an online information literacy course for history students" was refreshing as she dwelt on the project of the University of Haifa, Israel in teaching staff how to deliver information literacy content. Short clips were shown introducing the library to international students, presenting scholarly articles using visual learning aids, and other such media. Moodle is used there as the course management software.

Thereafter, Ilana Barnes and Mary Dugan spoke on "Scaling up: hybrid instruction" dwelt on user information literacy training and the hybrid system operating in the Purdue University, UK where students had both electronic tuition as well as face-to-face interaction. The students get credit points for participating in the information literacy assessment and also take part in focus group discussions and take pre and post-tests as part of the project.

The closing plenary wrapped up the conference as Marydee Ojala, Donna Saxby and Jan Holmquist took participants through discussion of what they found interesting during the conference. This was done uniquely by asking participants to talk to their neighbor about what they gained and each one report what the other said. This provided further opportunity for networking, opportunities which had been earlier created during the lunch, tea breaks and sponsors showcases during the conference.

Takeaways from the conference included information about Open

Access, MOOCs, new technologies, digital publishing and changing roles of information professionals. Participants were also encouraged to think of their skill sets and consider ways of sharing, and opportunities to improve their skills. There was a general consensus that the conference theme was apt and all the Tracks and sessions were extremely useful and interesting. For me, ILI 2013 was a potpourri of information, information resources, information professionals who contributed to professional development of participants. The parting note – see you at ILI 2014!

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