Society of Chief Librarians
The new SCL President, Nicky Parker, talks about the challenges ahead for public libraries

Inside Story
A closer look at the award winning partnership between Edinburgh Libraries and HMP Saughton

What are Libraries For?
Sarah Bartlett reports on a recent public debate in Birmingham about the future of libraries
Stop looking …

… start finding

www.intellident.co.uk/smartblade
Welcome to the autumn issue of Panlibus Magazine.
This public library focussed issue has a theme of transformation running through it. At a time when libraries are under scrutiny and increasingly need to justify themselves, transformation may well be needed to keep them open. The newly appointed SCL President and Head of Transformation at Manchester City Council, Nicky Parker, notes that public libraries face many challenges ahead, but with that comes opportunities (p.14-15). Andy Hartwell, Managing Director at Substrakt, suggests that libraries can “enjoy a transformation to vibrant, community driven hubs” (p.16-17).

Marketing and libraries have not always gone hand in hand, but we see how Stirling Libraries transformed their service by applying some inexpensive marketing techniques (p. 6-7). We also hear from Edinburgh Libraries about how they are transforming lives through their award-winning partnership with Saughton Prison (p.4-5). Another award-winning library is the Glasgow School of Art, who won the Times Higher Education Outstanding Library Team award for 2010. Sarah Bartlett explores what sets them out from the rest and gave them the edge to be crowned worthy winners of the award (p.18).

There has been much debate about the role of librarians as teachers in academic institutions. With this in mind, the Universities, College and Research (UC&R) Group held an event that focussed on this topic. Rachel Westwood and Clare Langham from the West Midlands UC&R Group, provide an in-depth assessment of the day and the questions that arose (p.10-13).

Also in this issue, Southwark Libraries respond (p.9) to the misrepresentation of the closure of Newington Reference Library in Tim Coates’ article in the summer issue of Panlibus. I encourage you to get in touch and send through your thoughts on any of our articles - you could feature in the next issue. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy this issue.

Mark Travis
Editor, Panlibus Magazine
mark.travis@talis.com
Libraries Change Lives Award - Edinburgh City

Liz McGettigan, Head of Libraries and Information Services, City of Edinburgh Council

Saughton Prison in Edinburgh has won a national award for the achievements of its library – the only library in Scotland with a waiting list. You may be confused. If, as we’re led to believe, many prisoners can’t read, why are they so keen to use the library?

When you’re told, by Kate King, the prison librarian part-funded by the Scottish Prison Service and Edinburgh City Council, that even prisoners who couldn’t read helped with choosing new stock, achievements there start to stack up even higher.

A reader in residence at another prison once told how prisoners liked their library so much that they broke into it when it was shut. This story raises a laugh, but what has been achieved at HMP Saughton, in the face of the usual appallingly low literacy levels, is no joke. A quarter of those in prison are considered to have below functional levels of literacy. Recent figures from the Prison Reform Trust put it higher and said that more than two thirds of prisoners have literacy and numeracy levels so low they are ineligible for most jobs.

Drugs and alcohol will have played a role in the lives of many prisoners. At Saughton, the library offers them a chance to make more of their lives by employing prisoners as library assistants. ‘Would you employ a heroin user?’ Kate starkly challenged a conference audience of librarians at the award ceremony on 6 July.

The Libraries Change Lives Award is given by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals. It’s in its 19th year, and past winners have included an autism support service, work with refugees and asylum seekers, and youth work at Sighthill library, Edinburgh, which got previously unruly youngsters involved. Its title is self-explanatory, but you couldn’t get a more literal interpretation of the award as the 2010 winner. The library is not only changing the lives of the prisoners, but, as Kate reminded us, ‘It’s changing your lives too, because there is less crime.’ It’s well known that there is a connection between an inability to communicate - verbally or in writing - and crime.

The award’s judges also saw this: “This project has made a huge impact on all the prisoners and staff. Kate’s approach, empathy and passion has driven this life changing work, not only in the prison, but on release by giving prisoners improved life chances, which in turn have a wider impact on their families, communities and society in general,” says judges’ Chair Linda Constable.

The press is gloating over Ken Clarke’s prison reform row, but most agree on the need to devote more resources to preparing prisoners for life on the outside. The Justice Secretary knows this. He wants prisons to be places of punishment, but also of education, hard work and change: “It means rigorously enforced community sentences that punish offenders, but also get them off drugs and alcohol and into employment.” He ought to look to the library at Saughton for advice.

What has been achieved, since the new library opened in November 2008, is astonishing. In the first year, the library saw more than 12,500 prisoners through the doors. Prisoners no longer damage books, when previously figures were at 80%. It’s no surprise that Kate came from the award-winning library in Sighthill, where she engaged ‘hard to reach’ communities. Edinburgh Council’s Library & Information Services Manager Liz McGettigan says Kate is...
A prison library, which benefits from a professional librarian partly funded by Edinburgh City Council, has won a national award for its role in enhancing the life chances of inmates.

one of the most passionate people she has met about ‘making a difference’.

The library supports prisoners with their reading and writing. Following conversations with Kate, she works out their reading level. She organises activities to keep them involved in reading, such as weekly competitions. Support goes beyond reading: Kate helps them with creating CVs, and she has set up a Gamblers Anonymous group after the widespread problem came to her attention.

Saughton has been the only prison in Scotland selected to take part in ‘Reading Stars’, a literacy initiative from government-run agency Learning Connections. The programme involved families and prisoners taking part in reading and sporting activities together. “The biggest achievement was the fathers reading with their children,” says Kate. One prisoner says: “Me and my daughter became more involved in reading. There should be more projects like this as it encourages good behaviour among prisoners and a rise in drug-free prisoners.”

Many prison libraries in Scotland are not run by librarians but by prison officers who fit it into their other commitments. Kate found that the attitude of some staff was, prisoners can’t read and write, why bother with a better library? “In prisons, it’s not just the prisoners who become institutionalised,” says Kate. She hopes that the award, which is judged by other library professionals, may help get a Scottish Prison Library Service up and running.

Some prison libraries have problems sourcing appropriate books, but Kate is clear this isn’t the case. “No, we don’t have this problem. Having access to the resources of the Edinburgh City Council Library Service, we can satisfy requests and find out what’s available, as all the items are on one catalogue.”

Most prisoners with literacy problems would run a mile from being somewhere surrounded by books. Yet at Saughton there is a waiting list to join the library. And when a prisoner who has worked in the library is released - after picking up extremely useful skills - there are plenty of others keen to take their place.

The library looks great, and nothing like anywhere else in the jail, thanks to uber-cool, Glasgow-based designers CuriousGroup. Prisoners had input and helped to build and paint it and give the stock a complete overhaul. The old library was too small and it wasn’t attracting enough prisoners. A clever solution, spotted by Prison Unit Manager Barry Fowler, was to use the old prison gym. As it was situated in the work-sheds area, it would have more chance of drawing in the prisoners gardening and plastering nearby.

Library membership has increased by 100% across both prisoners and staff. It is relaxed and welcoming and has become the heart of the prison community, the place they want to be. One prisoner said he found it really hard to read before the new library opened because he couldn’t concentrate. Now, he says, ‘I find reading just as easy as breathing. I love it and I would be lost without it as it’s helped me through my sentence.’

A prisoner who worked in the library says: “If people want prisoners to rehabilitate they need to get help with reading and writing as you are always learning when you are reading. Reading also helps pass the time in here – and it’s good to read.” Since opening, 15 prisoners have been trained to deliver library duties, three have gone to college - and one was recently interviewed for a library job with the City Council.

One prisoner says: “Me and my daughter became more involved in reading. There should be more projects like this as it encourages good behaviour among prisoners and a rise in drug-free prisoners.”

FIND OUT MORE
Web: yourlibrary.edinburgh.gov.uk
Liz Moffat, Community Outreach Librarian, Stirling Council Libraries

Introduction
Stirling Libraries are reversing the trend of decline in issues and usage in public libraries. There are a number of reasons for this, namely the investment in an evidence-based stock management system, centralised stock selection and a stock promotion policy. However Stirling also has a clear policy on Reader Development and a marketing strategy, it is a key service plan objective, and these measures seem to be paying off.

Staff
Staff are seen as one of the best assets Stirling Libraries have, so investment has been made in them. With the setting up of working groups, all levels of staff are included in the membership, which gives ownership to the policies put in place. Stirling also decided to run in-house reader development courses for their staff, which has now been formalised in the subscription to an online training course.

Strong customer focus is vital to a good service. Applying retail techniques develops the focus further. A welcome to a service is what stays with you, apologising for delay, awareness of customer needs and listening are all part of the daily routine in dealing with customers. The first impression a person has is the one that stays in their mind, and a bad experience in one library can colour the view of all libraries.

Publishers are now recognising that libraries and library staff are connecting with their readers in a way that bookshops can’t. Staff know their readers and are not afraid to get out from behind the desk to go and talk to them. We have the consistent access to readers, so reader centred approach is a natural fit for us.

Promoting Stock
Post training, staff had the confidence to start up reading groups in a number of our libraries, and a reading group collection was set up. These sets of multiple copies can also be borrowed by privately run reading groups, so we have a database of contacts to promote forthcoming events too.

The Stock Promotion Group produced a stock promotion policy in which the undertaking of each library having at least two face on displays a month is given. Librarians can feed in to the stock promotion group with designs they would like, so everyone is generating ideas constantly.

Raising the Profile
Our annual Book Festival has helped to change the profile of libraries in Stirling. We created a brand and sent a clear message that events were run by libraries. We have raised the profile by showing our professionalism and polish. Working with partners and producing reading lists raises the profile as well. Partners are often surprised and pleased with the quality of our input to their campaigns. We recognise our opposition such as supermarkets and media (like TV, DVDs, music shops, markets, cinema, sports centres and the internet). But we have set up a partnership with our local bookshop and work with them. We often use local firms for sponsorship in joint competition.

The negative image - of libraries and...
A Fresh Approach
Part of the Marketing Strategy was to clean up our libraries and take away the cluttered, dingy look associated with them. We recognised we couldn’t really do anything about buildings and location without huge investment, but some things don’t cost anything.

First impression in the library is the Transition Zone, the area from outside to inside. The power spot is at the end of the landing strip around three metres into shop or library floor, and this is the prime advertising space, where bookshops put their Bookseller’s Choice or Book of the Month. This is where we can display our goods and catch the five-minute borrower.

We also gave counters a more streamlined professional look by de-cluttering them.

Tatty posters were taken down and replaced with new, laminated ones. We wanted to dispel the negative messages we had been sending out - don’t drink, don’t smoke, don’t use mobile phones, don’t bother coming in at all.

We established a Design Team and invested in specialist software and training. We made the commitment that these staff would have the time to produce the publicity as part of their working day.

Standard styles were developed. Apart from our statutory posters, the Design Team also produce good quality headers and book list covers. This enables us to have our own look and brand, without depending on or paying for a third party.

Mystery shopper
We encouraged staff to go into their libraries with a fresh eye, then visit another branch in the authority and see what improvements could be made. The idea of mystery shopper was created. The mystery shopper was there to take a fresh critical look at our libraries. In these early stages the findings were not good. From this though was born the wish list.

Money has been spent updating furniture and buying new display features, like good quality wooden dump bins, and portable eye catching banners to take along to events. Comfortable seating and low tables were bought for all the libraries.

Media contacts
Use is made of the free papers in the area. We find that they are better at publicising events and activities than the main local paper. We target what publicity we send to them to the area where they base themselves. Often they will send a photographer to an event, then publicise it. The beauty of the free newspaper is that they are delivered to every household.

We use a direct distribution company for 'off the page book festival' publicity and this is sent all over and to every paper and news organisation. The information sent to national radio is always addressed to individual programmes. This pays off with a BBC Scotland show picking it up and featuring our Festival last year.

How we start our press releases is important, catching the reader's attention with the first sentence and always putting the important information first as often the papers will cut the piece. We keep information positive. It is always to our advantage to write our own material, with a better chance to get printed if it is packaged and submitted with photographs. Photographs featuring schoolchildren sell more papers, as grandparents, mothers and aunties will all want a copy.

Local radio is a good source of publicity too. In Stirling we have built up a network of contacts and work alongside them.

There is a Council Design and Communications Team and we work with them on many of our new projects. They can refine ideas and sometimes help with funding. Our book festival brochure is a recognisable brand image. Festival logo and the Heart of Stirling brand ensure that the publicity receives national distribution.

Website
Although confined by corporate website restrictions we use the website to let the public know what is happening in the service. We also work with the web team to create an 'off the page' website publicising book festival events. Library staff in our design team have been trained to input information in this.

Flickr is a good visual way to let the public see what events have been taking place and we have a wiki for the different reading groups who can go in and add their comments about the books they have read and have discussions with members of other reading groups.

Evaluation
Evaluation is necessary to assess the success of whatever you are doing. User surveys, feedback forms, evaluation forms, word of mouth are all methods we use. We are pro-active in seeking evaluation and have forms at all events. The simpler and quicker to complete, the better chance of getting a good return. Taking heed of results we are not afraid to make changes if something tried doesn’t work. On the form we also ask for email contacts and this enables us to build up a database to send out information to past attendees and reading groups who support our events.

Marketing and reader development needs commitment - from the managers and from the staff. We have a pride in our libraries in Stirling. They may not be perfect but we are doing our best with what we have. We are proud of the service we provide and are always willing to go the extra mile. When change is necessary we adapt. Marketing Group membership is rotated to keep it fresh. This encourages all the staff to feel involved.

You can have the best line-up at a festival or a fantastic new innovative service, but to no effect if no one knows or hears about it.

Management are aware that for all the money spent on promoting the service, the biggest asset in marketing in the staff. They are the best advertisement the library has.

FIND OUT MORE
Email: moffati@stirling.gov.uk
What are libraries for?
Sarah Bartlett reports on a recent public debate in Birmingham about the future of libraries

Sarah Bartlett
Senior Analyst, Talis

How often do librarians come together with the general public to debate what a modern library service should offer? In September, a collaboration between CILIP West Midlands and The Birmingham Salon, produced a public debate entitled “What are libraries for?” A first class speaker – Brian Gambles, Assistant Head of Culture for Birmingham City Council - readily agreed to speak, recognising a rare opportunity to engage with such a broad audience. The debate also attracted a range of corporate sponsors – Talis and TopTec, The University of Birmingham and The Studio.

A deluge of promotional materials created a buzz over the summer. Strikingly designed flyers were placed on the noticeboards of local libraries as well as in copies of the CILIP Gazette. Online advertisements appeared on two popular Birmingham websites – Created in Brum and The Stirrer – paid for through sponsorship. We used Twitter to direct traffic to the main event pages on both CILIP West Midlands and The Birmingham Salon websites.

The Studio had donated its biggest room for the event. Five minutes after the doors opened, it was clear that the event would be a runaway success as a good mix of librarians and library users flooded into the venue and a palpable mood of excitement grew.

At 7.30pm, Brian Gambles told a packed room how “genuinely pleased he was that so many people in the city had come along to talk about public libraries”. He immediately introduced the theme of change – the almighty Barnes & Noble is closing its flagship bookstore in Manhattan; meanwhile, a faculty library at the University of San Antonio in Texas is building a bookless library. The libraries of the future are no longer built around the book, even if Brian’s own passion for books and information remains steadfastly in place. Crucially, Brian told the audience, the library is ours, not his. The city’s organisations and individuals will determine the shape of the library’s services.

Brian’s responder in the debate was Andy Killeen, a local author who recounted his lifelong love of libraries through a beautifully crafted narrative which took a spellbound audience from his childhood visits to Yardley library with its “reverent silence broken only by cold echoes of whispers” to today’s “bright, friendly, sometimes even noisy” libraries. He concluded by issuing a heartfelt plea to maintain libraries’ prime function as “temples dedicated to the joy and magic of the written word.”

The ensuing debate was of an impressive quality throughout, and the Twitter stream (#libdebate) was equally lively. People expressed concerns that the new central library would drain vital funding from the city’s branch libraries. We debated the role of technological innovations. One speaker recalled his delight that Print on Demand could publish an out-of-print book for him alone. Another bemoaned those people who “leave their memories of libraries in the rosy past”. One librarian had recently helped a library visitor to grow vegetables, and saw this as a potential route into book borrowing. Was such broadening of library activities desirable? There was a heated discussion about relevance. Does relevance impede the library from “rising above the vagaries of the market and improving the culture of the masses”? Can a book ever be irrelevant? Should libraries be quiet spaces for excellent books, or, as Brian Gambles argued, have young people adopted more social learning modes?

Months of preparation had delivered a dazzling debate that transcended professional discourse and had city-wide value.
The largely bleak and negative view of public libraries put forward by Tim Coates (Panlibus Magazine Summer 2010) is not one that we recognise in Southwark. The council is referred to in his article, we welcome the opportunity to present another perspective and share our experience of delivering library services to a very diverse and dynamic community.

Firstly I would like to clarify the position regarding Newington Reference Library. In 2007, elected members approved proposals for the reference service to be relocated from the first floor to the ground floor of the building, primarily because it failed to meet DDA requirements. This Victorian building had already been subject to a legal challenge under DDA.

We converted space (previously used by staff only) on the ground floor into a new information and study area, with a slightly increased number of study spaces (fifty in total), the same number of public access computers and free Wi-Fi access. We also increased provision of newspapers and magazines, and extended opening hours to include service on Wednesdays from 10am to 8pm. The most heavily used and current historical stock is available on request. The council undertook an extensive consultation with the local community about these proposals and heard the views of Mr. Coates when he attended a public meeting. I realise that some people remain opposed to the closure of the reference room as it was but the overall response from the community to the relocated service is positive. They support and understand the need to provide a fully accessible service and appreciate the improvements.

The staff in Southwark Libraries are very clear about their role and all contribute towards the key priorities of our service plan, which in turn reflects the priorities of the council and wider community. Our key areas of activity focus upon customer service, literacy and reader development, supporting children and young people, provision of information and learning services and community engagement.

A big priority is to make contact with hard to reach communities and encourage them to use their local library. Southwark Council took part in the ‘Welcome to your Library’ project and two staff have recently won the CILIP Diversity Award. This is in recognition of their work with the Somali and Ecuadorian communities, who have become established users of Newington Library.

Mr. Coates states performance data is not available. All Southwark libraries compile key performance statistics each month for each library. We use this data to improve and plan future provision. We also know how much our service costs and are held to account monthly and annually for our use of resources and our achievements.

Free access to a comprehensive range of book stock is at the heart of our provision and stock management is robust.

We have invested in modernising our catalogue and community information service and have established a ‘Skills for Life’ team which works with adults and families and supports local people who want to improve their skills and opportunities for training and employment.

Mr. Coates states, and we know, that the public want more books, longer opening hours and decent library buildings. Southwark has responded to these priorities in recent years by increasing opening hours, maintaining the stock fund and undertaking the repair and maintenance of its buildings, including the refurbishment of Newington Library within available resources.

Issues are increasing as well as the overall usage of the service and online access is increasing dramatically. Since refurbishment, issues at Newington have gone up by 18% and visits by 24%.

We were fortunate to receive £1.42m from the Big Lottery Fund Community Libraries Programme to modernise John Harvard Library and since its reopening in November 2009 the number of visits has increased by 22% and issues by 75%. In addition we have a new library under construction at Canada Water as part of a major regeneration programme, and a new mobile library that is going out to various locations across Southwark to encourage wider take-up of service.

We know that the approach to service development and delivery in Southwark is shared by many other library authorities. We are committed to exploring how we can improve partnership working with other South East London boroughs. This work is being supported by MLA under the recently launched Future Libraries programme.

We are all facing very tough times and know there may well be a radical shift in how public library services are provided in the future. This will require excellent leadership, clarity of purpose and the involvement of local communities. It is our view that this can be achieved and the foundations to make it happen are already in place.

Adrian Whittle
Head of Culture, Libraries Learning and Leisure, Southwark Council
London SE1
Rachel Westwood, Liaison Librarian at Newman University College and Honorary Secretary for the West Midlands UC&R Group and Clare Langman, Information Specialist at the Aston University and Events Officer for the West Midlands UC&R Group reflect on this motivational and action-packed event.

On the 26th May 2010 at The Teaching Grid, University of Warwick Library, CILIP West Midlands Special Interest Groups the Career Development Group (CDG) and the University, College and Research Group (UC&R) held a one day event to address the issue of librarians as teachers.

Bringing together the expertise and experience of noted practitioners, this participative event began with a buzz (or should that be a twitter) in the air as delegates started sharing experiences and tweeting about them. One thing became apparent almost immediately: whether they think of themselves as teachers or not, librarians all have an opinion on this hot topic.

Antony Brewerton, Head of Academic Services at the University of Warwick Library, kicked off the day with his talk New libraries, new spaces, new professionals.
He cleverly introduced us to the flexible teaching space in The Teaching Grid by moving us across from a soft seating area into a more formal lecture style space as he spoke to us. He was keen to emphasise the importance of experiential learning and suggested that more active learning is needed. He made the point that it is no coincidence that The Teaching Grid is in the library space and touched on what turned out to be one of the main themes of the day – teaching in the current economic climate – when he argued that as we face increasingly uncertain times, “teaching information skills is increasingly important so that we get a good return on our investment”.

Antony explained that The Teaching Grid has become an important space for librarians at the University of Warwick to have a presence in, because the flexible, neutral nature of the space brings together different groups and subject areas from across the university, resulting in the kind of collaboration that subject librarians everywhere strive to achieve. He finished by suggesting that as well as making effective use of space, the language that librarians use as teachers may hold the key to success. He showed a video of students giving advice to other students on how to make the best use of the library. The point he was making was that we can learn a lot from the jargon-free language that students use; one student’s advice was “don’t sit next to anyone pretty”, wise words indeed, but another student said “there are tutors in the library to help you” – an interesting perception of how they see us, the librarians.

Next up, Debbi Boden, Director of Library Services at Glasgow Caledonian University gave us food for thought with her presentation entitled Evolution – do we buy into it? She started by asking us to consider how we see our roles evolving; are we “cyber-librarians”, “social workers” or “still evolving”? To make the point that we as librarians, may see our roles evolving but there are still stereotypical images of librarians used in the media and elsewhere. She showed a (dare I say it) entertaining YouTube clip of ‘Eugene the Librarian’ an act on popular TV show Britain’s Got Talent.

Debbi pointed out that at this year’s LILAC (Librarians’ Information Literacy Annual Conference) which was held in Limerick, Ireland, the question on whether librarians are teachers came up time and time again and no-one could agree! She did argue though that “any librarian teaching needs teaching theory to underpin their knowledge.” We need to know how to plan and develop our sessions or we are not credible in the eyes of our institutions when we sit on Learning and Teaching and other such committees. Debbi believes that a good way in which we can gain the necessary pedagogical knowledge is to take the Postgraduate (PGCert) in Teaching and Learning. She is so passionate about the value of this qualification that she is recommending that all librarians at Glasgow Caledonian University obtain it within 2 years of joining the service if they don’t have it already.

According to Debbi, the next phase of this evolutionary process might see us developing in to ‘The blended librarian’ [1] which is defined as an academic librarian who combines the traditional skillset of librarianship with the information technologist’s hardware/ software skills and the educator’s ability to apply the technology appropriately in the teaching-learning process. This is undoubtedly a tall order, but Debbi suggests that we can achieve this through effective collaboration with academics and other experts in our institutions such as learning technologists. Arguably, of course, lots of us are already well on the way to blendedism…

Jo Webb, De Montfort University’s Head of Academic Services, gave a good insight into how membership of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) can give us professional recognition in learning and teaching. She spoke about the different routes available: Associate or Fellow, as well as the National Teaching Fellowship (NTF) scheme. The Associate and Fellow routes can be attained by completing a recognised qualification, such as a PGCert in Higher Education, or an application based on previous experience. Recently there has been a shift in policy emphasis which could have implications for accessibility of the HEA to LIS professionals, by potentially making it more difficult for LIS professionals to attain Fellowship of the HEA. Surprisingly though, the criteria hasn’t changed with this policy shift towards Associate status. The HEA also has a set of professional standards on which we can base our learning and teaching work on, all of which are attainable through our teaching roles.

Jo went on to raise the debate on whether we should be moving towards HEA
membership rather than concentrating on membership of professional bodies such as CILIP. In her opinion professional qualifications such as MCLIP have worked hand in hand with the HEA. She noted that she wouldn’t have gained the NTF without having the MCLIP and that the NTF had helped her to achieve the FCLIP. Jo concluded that professional recognition of the role in learning and teaching must be based on knowledge and application of pedagogy, discipline knowledge and professional ethics and values as a practitioner.

Following on from the theme of professional recognition, Sally Patalong from Coventry University discussed participating in the PGCert from three different perspectives: as a student, a practitioner and as an Action Learning Set Facilitator. Sally’s interest in teaching has evolved over the years. She revealed she initially undertook the PGCert because her role as a librarian increasingly involved teaching and she didn’t feel qualified to teach. After completing the PGCert she was asked to teach on one of the modules and more recently became an Action Learning Set Facilitator which involves facilitating a small group engaged in problem-based learning. As a result of participating in the action learning sets, she has improved her relationships with academics and has raised the Library’s profile with other departments. Sally has worked hard to develop action learning sets for librarians and has had her own action learning set as part of the PGCert.

She went on to discuss the principles of peer review of teaching and how they have set up teaching development partnerships at Coventry. These happen annually, are confidential and are separate from the management processes. They are linked into staff Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and give the opportunity to promote good teaching and further enquiry into learning and teaching. The partnerships are very much about having a dialogue and are focused on the exploration of what works and reflection on the assumptions under-pinning practice. Staff find the process really useful as it helps them to reflect on their teaching. Some have used the peer review report in teaching portfolios used in promotion based on excellence in teaching, which shows further benefits of taking part in a peer review of teaching.

In summary, Sally recommended that we ought to observe teachers from as many disciplines as possible, that we get feedback from students, reflect on it and where appropriate act on it, and keep evidence of everything that we do. One of the overriding benefits of undertaking the PGCert is an understanding of the vocabulary of teaching and learning which can only help to improve communication with academic staff.

After lunch Geoff Walton from Staffordshire University talked of the shift in librarians’ roles and how we need to prove that we are equal partners in the learning and teaching arena by engaging in research. Geoff is involved in a research informed teaching project and his work is based on empirical research. He outlined what he sees as the essential ingredients for teaching, namely planning, learning by doing, discourse between staff and students, and assessment. The delegates thought that self confidence and subject knowledge were also important. We had a discussion around Information Literacy (IL) and assessment and whether teaching IL without assessment is a pointless exercise. This topic split the group and made for a good discussion. People had a lot of different experiences and it all comes down to individual situations as to whether assessment can take place. For those of us who aren’t in the position of being able to assess, we felt that doing something is always better than doing nothing at all. Geoff listed the skills and attributes he believes we need as teachers, which are the ability to:

- Align learning outcomes to interventions and assessment
- Create imaginative
- Interventions
- Take risks
- Give away control
- Reflect

He also promoted the benefits of taking a teaching qualification, which seems be the overriding message from the event.

To keep us all alert mid-afternoon, Emma King, a Learning and Development Adviser at the University of Warwick led a group workshop: Teaching spaces and learning design. We were all split into six groups to explore how different environments can affect the student-teacher dynamic and whether effective teaching methods. In an activity which again highlighted the flexible teaching spaces in The Teaching Grid, the groups moved around the differently arranged zones, discussing what learning and teaching activities would be suited to each space and how existing practice could be adapted to make the most of the environment. The areas comprised: a formal / lecture style space, an empty space, an informal seating area, a
boardroom layout, cabaret style seating and an external computer training room.

Each of the authors followed a different group as they moved around the different spaces. Clare Langman says:

“I was in the group looking at the informal space and a boardroom style space. The informal area put students and staff on an equal footing and could help to break down barriers in that everyone was sitting on the same type of seating with no one person at the front but it was interesting how at first we sat down without moving the furniture around so that we were sitting in a row rather than in a circle. We thought the layout would be good for action learning sets, students’ presentations and individual inductions. The only negative aspect was that having a fixed screen on the wall meant that if the screen was to be used during a session you would be restricted as to what could be done with the space therefore decreasing its flexibility.

“The boardroom layout was completely different and much more formal. We thought it would be good for group work as it felt like a meeting which needed to have an outcome therefore it would be good to facilitate decision making. It did however, feel like someone needed to lead. If there was to be a teacher in a session in this space there was a question over where they would actually sit, there was no real focal point. Interactions tended to be in pairs rather than within the whole group as it were difficult sometimes to see who was speaking. Overall the main points regarding a suitable learning environment are flexibility, having the appropriate technology and having an environment appropriate to the group.”

Following a different group, Rachel Westwood observed:

“One group in the formal / lecture style space, felt that any session held in there would be lecturer-led and that the space was restrictive in terms of engaging with students. They did conclude though that the space would be suitable for induction sessions for example, when good use could be made of Audience Response Systems, the Cephalonian method or even mobile learning. When the group moved on to the empty space, there were terrified looks all round and the first thought was ‘what on earth would we do in here?’ After this initial panic however, the group decided that engagement with the students would be a lot better and although sessions would require careful planning, role playing activities or a ‘poster trail’ (where students work in groups to create a poster on a particular topic and then move around the room making comments on each other’s posters) could work effectively.

“When we all got back together to discuss our thoughts at the end of Emma’s workshop, it became apparent that there were lots of different opinions about which types of teaching spaces were most appropriate and what should be taught in them.”

To round off and sum up an exhilarating day, all the speakers, who were joined by Jo Alcock from CDG and the University of Wolverhampton (representing new professionals), took questions from the delegates. When asked “Are we comparable to our academic colleagues?”, Geoff Walton suggested that we should create our own peer observation standards, while Jo Webb pointed out that the HEA standards can be applied to different teaching contexts and Debbi Boden spoke up for tailor-made standards which she has helped to develop through the SirLearnaLot project funded by the HEA Information and Computer Sciences Subject Centre and the CILIP CSG Information Literacy Group.

Jo Alcock clearly echoed the view of many other delegates when she said that, before the event, “I wasn’t aware that I could be that involved with the Higher Education Academy, such as having Associate Membership”. Food for thought indeed, and ‘Librarians as Teachers’ was so successful and well-received that a follow-up event is already being planned for next year.

Rachel Westwood is the Liaison Librarian at Newman University College, and Clare Langman is the Information Specialist at the Aston University.

References:
I’m obviously extremely honoured to follow in the footsteps of previous Presidents, and what a challenging time it is to hold that role. I’ve taken over during a period of immense change for the public sector, and I see that as an opportunity and a challenge rather than a problem. The financial situation presents us with some difficult decisions over the next year and budget constraints will prove to be challenging but collectively, services will need to rise to this and out of partnerships will come new opportunities. We need to be advising our locally elected representatives on how we can preserve and protect the best of what we do, whilst at the same time leading the drive to adopt new ways of working, become more efficient and develop the skills of our workforces.

My new role has to be fitted in with a day job. I’m the Head of Transformation at Manchester City Council which involves a major programme of work to transform every council service, driving forward efficiencies and service improvement as well as improving outcomes for residents and investing in our staff. It’s a three year programme which includes the renovation and transformation of the civic estate including a major transformation of the Central Library. The builders moved in yesterday so after ten years’ planning, it’s finally happening which is very exciting. There’s a new approach to customers, placing them at the heart of service delivery with a new call centre, a new interactive and transactional website and a programme of developing customer service centres in the neighbourhoods and city centre. Council services are being transformed to be more efficient, staff are adopting new ways of working (including moving to open plan offices and mobile working) and we’re focusing much more on working in a more joined-up way across neighbourhoods.

It’s a challenging agenda with scary timescales and big efficiency targets, but what is really exciting is how we’ve been able to reposition libraries at the heart of this new agenda. Libraries are the council’s shop window in every neighbourhood; the city is opening four new libraries this year, the Central Library is having a huge makeover and new services are coming online every month. The results are encouraging – over the last five years, visits to the city’s libraries have increased by 17% from 2.8 million to 3.1 million a year. There has also been a 42% increase in the number of young people visiting library homework clubs and the loan of children’s books is up by 11%, and that’s against a backdrop of declining visitor figures nationally. The above gives me heart that there is a still a place for the public library service in this country despite some of the doom and gloom stories that have appeared over the last few months. There are a lot of examples demonstrating that investment in library services leads to greater usage and those services which have placed themselves at the heart of the transformation agenda in their local authority are thriving. The key ingredients are all there: locations that would be the envy of any business, over 150 years of knowledge and expertise in public service, staff who are passionate about providing an excellent service, and where transformation has been done well, great political support.

The challenge for SCL is to ensure that the positive messages get an equal hearing in the press, that lessons learned are shared across library services and that we continue to keep the customer at the heart of service provision. But, in some cases we also need to transform our services and I mean transform not change. That’s why we’ve agreed in SCL that for the next three years we’re going to focus on four key outcomes:

- Transforming services
- Focus on efficiency
- Workforce development
- Partnerships
So what does all this mean? Transformation means new ways of working, placing the customer at the heart of service delivery, reinvigorating the workforce, investing in their skills and knowledge, examining our back office processes, looking at more collaboration and shared services, encouraging and enabling customers to do more things for themselves (particularly transactions) and really focusing on our core business. For the record, I think that’s reading, learning and information.

It means books and reading and reading groups, and it also means helping people to get online. That’s why SCL has endorsed the government’s drive to get millions more people online by 2012 by encouraging 500,000 library customers to get online. We need to refocus on our traditional role as information providers but in a new way, sometimes online, often as the first point of contact with the council for residents and as signposts to the other public services which could be collocated in our buildings.

It means reinventing ourselves for the new age of austerity. It means doing more things with other people. It means joint procurement, smaller back offices, collocation with other services, new governance arrangements and tighter contract management. It means embracing digital technology and automation and it means customer self-service. We recognise that, and so SCL is supporting the MLA/LGA led Future Libraries Programme. There are ten pilot schemes underway where communities around the country will have the chance to test drive the ambitious change programme.

Transformation really is about people, both customers and staff. Workforce development is at the heart of the agenda. A flexible, liberated and multi-skilled workforce will result in better, more responsive services. There will be a need for new types of flexibility in order to seize the new opportunities that new ways of working will bring and in some places it probably will mean a smaller workforce, doing different but more fulfilling things.

The stakes are high and there are some clear choices ahead for local authorities. In those places where libraries are key to regenerating neighbourhoods, central to the transformation agenda, contributing to local political priorities and improving residents’ life chances, the future is secure. I think that means providing a free, welcoming space where the community can meet, an excellent choice of books and access to any other book through shared arrangements, services available however and whenever people can best access them, and efficient procurement and management arrangements.

It means customers enter a library looking for a book but leave with a new job, a new skill or more information. It means doing things other than providing a warehouse of books and I know that won’t be popular with the more traditional library customer but that’s the reality. Our libraries need to be places where people can develop new ideas and archive their histories, where children develop a love of books and reading, where people can get online maybe for the first time and where people can find out the things they need to know and access a range of public sector services. Positioned correctly within their local authority, libraries can do all of these things and still keep to their core values and core services. Enabling residents to order a new wheelie bin in their local library is not a threat to the core public library service, it enhances it.

Explained and positioned properly, libraries do have a future and that’s the challenge for SCL. Nationally, we will be sending out consistent positive messages about libraries. Locally we will be passionate ambassadors for libraries, with politicians, colleagues in other parts of the local authority, and local people. It’s our job to inform and advise our elected representatives, manage our services efficiently and improve our services to customers.
Libraries are already regarded as social institutions. However, their status as visitor attractions is expected to return in the 21st century. Libraries are primed to become the gateways into a city’s identity. They will enjoy a transformation from inward facing keepers of ‘quiet’ information to vibrant, community-driven hubs. Technology will link libraries with their environment and integrate their resources with the cultural and social assets around them. The concept of Linked Data has arrived.

Linking data will take libraries a step beyond the drive to digitise the material that each collection possesses. This isn’t a question of turning dusty volumes into scanned, clear images that can be displayed on a screen. It’s also not about encouraging people to go online rather than visit a library, or indeed go online when they visit a library. It’s about providing each visitor with a personalised perspective of the library, transforming their short trip to source a book or see an item of interest into a rich experience that starts with their original purpose for coming and takes them on a journey through spaces and places which has been imagined specifically for them. Like changing the filter on a camera lens to give you a better picture, structured data is set to give a new outlook to users of 21st century city libraries.

These changes are being brought about because libraries are responding to the needs of their visitors and potential visitors. People’s expectations of public information services are higher than ever before. Currently, what could be a colourful experience can easily become a wasted journey, with the visitor left wondering why something couldn’t have been done to prevent the inconvenience. The perception that smarter technology could combine with better information and make the visitor journey more palatable and personal is growing in the public mindset.

Substrakt’s recent research has highlighted what visitors expect from libraries and how they regard them in terms of their place in the fabric of their surrounding towns and cities.

- 47% of people intend to visit a library in the next 12 months – more than intend to visit an amusement park
- Two-thirds of people look at maps or site plans before visiting places such as the library
- Over half of visitors to a library would download information to their mobile phone before visiting
- 60% of visitors to places like the library read user reviews before going
- Only one in five people want to be directed straight to the thing they came to visit on arrival
- 40% of visitors are frustrated by lack of staff and information when experiencing new places
- 86% of potential visitors to a library would like to use interactive information kiosks
- Four in ten visitors to the library think their visit would be made more special by meeting people there with similar interests

This research supports the conclusion that libraries have the potential to integrate themselves further with their communities by being more than just a place to use the Internet. They can empower their own data via Internet applications and link it with that of others, to formulate better visitor experiences. By creating relationships between their library management systems and other local information sources, adding partnerships with leisure and tourism facilities and creating accessible and social ways of sharing data, a library becomes a knowledge hub for the spaces and places that surround it.

Technologically, empowering the libraries to become civic gateways will mesh public and private hardware and software. Visitors’ mobiles and laptops will be able to work in conjunction with the data stored in the library and around the city in a more accessible and productive way. Interactive kiosks and on-site terminals will use information from public and private databases and booking systems to link together personalised recommendations and experiences. Applications, augmented reality and graphical representation addresses such as QR codes and barcodes can be utilised to produce digital mapping, way-finding and 3D modelling solutions. Social media applications can be linked to create user-generated tours and suggestions for routes around a library and beyond into its town or city. An Urban Lens can be created, with a focus on the library.

Key to the success of Linked Data projects such as Urban Lens will be ensuring that all electronic roads in and out of the library lead to the unique catalogues, bibliographies and archives that they contain. Each digital solution must be developed for each library and its corresponding location with the original purpose of the journey to the building in mind – to find a resource contained within. The added unique element for the visitor is two-fold. Firstly, a personalised route to that resource which helps them bypass all the negative aspects of a trip they dislike. Secondly libraries can add an element of unexpected value to visitor journeys – discovery of more than they came for. The benefits are not just social, but commercial too. Librarians and other staff will have increased opportunity to focus their roles. Operational processes will be automatically streamlined and economies possible. Linked Data also presents several revenue generation opportunities through retail and commercial partnerships and sponsorships.

The options to connect public information via digital media are a real possibility and will not just put libraries back on the map in their location, they will become the map for their location.

Libraries as gateways to the urban experience

Andy Hartwell, Managing Director, Substrakt

Andy Hartwell, Managing Director, Substrakt

Libraries are already regarded as social institutions. However, their status as visitor attractions is expected to return in the 21st century. Libraries are primed to become the gateways into a city’s identity. They will enjoy a transformation from inward facing keepers of ‘quiet’ information to vibrant, community-driven hubs. Technology will link libraries with their environment and integrate their resources with the cultural and social assets around them. The concept of Linked Data has arrived.

Linking data will take libraries a step beyond the drive to digitise the material that each collection possesses. This isn’t a question of turning dusty volumes into scanned, clear images that can be displayed on a screen. It’s also not about encouraging people to go online rather than visit a library, or indeed go online when they visit a library. It’s about providing each visitor with a personalised perspective of the library, transforming their short trip to source a book or see an item of interest into a rich experience that starts with their original purpose for coming and takes them on a journey through spaces and places which has been imagined specifically for them. Like changing the filter on a camera lens to give you a better picture, structured data is set to give a new outlook to users of 21st century city libraries.

These changes are being brought about because libraries are responding to the needs of their visitors and potential visitors. People’s expectations of public information services are higher than ever before. Currently, what could be a colourful experience can easily become a wasted journey, with the visitor left wondering why something couldn’t have been done to prevent the inconvenience. The perception that smarter technology could combine with better information and make the visitor journey more palatable and personal is growing in the public mindset.

Substrakt’s recent research has highlighted what visitors expect from libraries and how they regard them in terms of their place in the fabric of their surrounding towns and cities.

- 47% of people intend to visit a library in the next 12 months – more than intend to visit an amusement park
- Two-thirds of people look at maps or site plans before visiting places such as the library
- Over half of visitors to a library would download information to their mobile phone before visiting
- 60% of visitors to places like the library read user reviews before going
- Only one in five people want to be directed straight to the thing they came to visit on arrival
- 40% of visitors are frustrated by lack of staff and information when experiencing new places
- 86% of potential visitors to a library would like to use interactive information kiosks
- Four in ten visitors to the library think their visit would be made more special by meeting people there with similar interests

This research supports the conclusion that libraries have the potential to integrate themselves further with their communities by being more than just a place to use the Internet. They can empower their own data via Internet applications and link it with that of others, to formulate better visitor experiences. By creating relationships between their library management systems and other local information sources, adding partnerships with leisure and tourism facilities and creating accessible and social ways of sharing data, a library becomes a knowledge hub for the spaces and places that surround it.

Technologically, empowering the libraries to become civic gateways will mesh public and private hardware and software. Visitors’ mobiles and laptops will be able to work in conjunction with the data stored in the library and around the city in a more accessible and productive way. Interactive kiosks and on-site terminals will use information from public and private databases and booking systems to link together personalised recommendations and experiences. Applications, augmented reality and graphical representation addresses such as QR codes and barcodes can be utilised to produce digital mapping, way-finding and 3D modelling solutions. Social media applications can be linked to create user-generated tours and suggestions for routes around a library and beyond into its town or city. An Urban Lens can be created, with a focus on the library.

Key to the success of Linked Data projects such as Urban Lens will be ensuring that all electronic roads in and out of the library lead to the unique catalogues, bibliographies and archives that they contain. Each digital solution must be developed for each library and its corresponding location with the original purpose of the journey to the building in mind – to find a resource contained within. The added unique element for the visitor is two-fold. Firstly, a personalised route to that resource which helps them bypass all the negative aspects of a trip they dislike. Secondly libraries can add an element of unexpected value to visitor journeys – discovery of more than they came for. The benefits are not just social, but commercial too. Librarians and other staff will have increased opportunity to focus their roles. Operational processes will be automatically streamlined and economies possible. Linked Data also presents several revenue generation opportunities through retail and commercial partnerships and sponsorships.

The options to connect public information via digital media are a real possibility and will not just put libraries back on the map in their location, they will become the map for their location.
A catalogue of possibilities

From stage to shelf
Imagine that a town’s theatre is showing Arthur Miller’s ‘View from the Bridge’ starring Helen Mirren. To promote the play and encourage people to get under the skin of Miller’s work, a library’s Urban Lens could feature the ‘Five recommendations’ from the actress of further reading by or about the playwright, his work, or 1950s America that can be found in the library. People could also be prompted to buy show tickets or purchase a copy of the play from Amazon.com.

A walk through the city’s history
Many cities have several historical walking tours. Imagine if the library could promote the tours whilst drawing visitors to the library into exploring further with books and archive material? The way-showing solution could produce a visual map, dotted with literary sources to seek out, old photographs to study, and even user generated content which tells the story of times gone by in the city. Tickets to tours could be purchased, as could concessionary refreshments by clicking on locally advertised restaurants and bars.

Central to the community
Many cities have many successful community events that don’t at first glance concern a library. But what if they could get involved by simply showing people another side to a story? For example, imagine if during a Christmas market, the library way-finding solution had an interactive map of the market’s layout, with user reviews and links to recipe book trails or cultural backgrounds on the cuisine available.

Finding more than just books
Many people will be using the library on a regular basis and will develop their favourite parts of the new building. Where’s the quietest corner? What if you need bright lighting or like to be near the coffee shop? What if the way-finding solution could make each visit more personal to visitors by showing them (for example) which parts of the library are busiest today, or how many desks are free in the archive section?

FIND OUT MORE
Email: andy@substrakt.co.uk
Web: www.substrakt.co.uk
Twitter: @substrakt
Sarah Bartlett, Senior Analyst, Talis

The librarians at the Glasgow School of Art were delighted to win the Outstanding Library Team category of the Times Higher Education Leadership & Management awards in June. Such accolade is just desserts for a small team that has delivered an impressive range of innovations in technology, information literacy and service provision, tailored to a highly specialised student body. The 1,900 students at the Glasgow School of Art, 11% of whom are dyslexic, are more readily defined as visual practitioners than as academic readers, and this presents both challenges and opportunities to the library.

InfosmART

One initiative in particular stood out in the library team’s application for the award. InfosmART is an application built in-house with the specific needs of the Glasgow School of Art community in mind. Catering for all levels of study up to PhD, it comprises five online interactive modules designed to develop information literacy skills. It has benefited from the rapid informal feedback loops that are possible in a small institution, and the result is a genuinely user-centred application.

Testing innovation

Small agile organisations are increasingly associated with innovation. The library manages to combine circumspection with agility in its innovative philosophy, and believes strongly in no-cost experimentation using freely available software. It utilises diverse technologies in imaginative approaches to library provision, then tests its own innovations using both formal and informal consultation mechanisms. The team is currently evaluating comic book software as a means of translating library guidance into a format suitable for visual practitioners. The format can incorporate photos of those members of staff providing support, and is seen as being of particular benefit to international students. The library has also started to deliver both service and subject-specific updates through a number of blogs, bringing current awareness services bang up-to-date in a visually attractive medium that appeals to the creative user base.

Eliciting the needs of library users is taken very seriously indeed, and care is taken not to fall back on lazy assumptions, even with such a small and homogenous student body studying a narrow range of subjects. The library has been surprised to discover a strong user preference for traditional academic library estate at a time when the big open spaces typified by the nearby Glasgow Caledonian University’s Saltire Centre remain strongly influential across the sector. Close investigation has revealed that the institution’s students do not perceive group work to be a priority in library provision – they are already collaborating in the studio, where they spend a great deal of time. In this context, the library means something very specific and quite traditional – an opportunity for individual immersion, reflection and access to both scholarly materials and technology.

Challenges ahead

Small isn’t always beautiful. A library with relatively small physical estate and only 8.5 FTE staff members will inevitably face operational challenges. Concerned that too much staff time is spent manning the library’s enquiry desks, the academic liaison librarians at the Glasgow School of Art are experimenting with a virtual enquiry desk as a more flexible mechanism, and their doors are always open for students who prefer face-to-face interaction. Such a pragmatic and responsive approach to service planning must bode well for what will undoubtedly be a challenging future. Aside from the inevitable budgetary constraints, the library will have to accommodate a targeted 20% growth of the institution’s postgraduate community. This is likely to present challenges not just in terms of space, but also in collection development - with previously esoteric combinations such as art and biology becoming increasingly common.

A truly outstanding library team

Despite all their successes, what really makes librarians at the Glasgow School of Art the Outstanding Library Team of 2010 is cohesion. The team is small enough to involve everyone in consultation and planning. All team members have their own areas of responsibility, irrespective of their position in the hierarchy, and frequently find themselves implementing new ideas only half an hour after inception. Importantly, the library has adopted many of the risk-taking and can-do values of the wider creative institution. This outstanding library team is open in every sense.
University of Greenwich library delivers value for money

Demonstrating value for money has never been more important than in today’s challenging climate. So it comes as no surprise that the US-based Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) has identified the intensification of accountability and assessment as one of its top ten trends in academic libraries for 2010 [1]. A number of university libraries, having surveyed the new landscape of austerity, are responding constructively by ensuring that their services deliver those outcomes critical to the ongoing viability of the institution as a whole.

The library at the University of Greenwich is finding the quest for accountability to be a two-way process. At the same time as the senior management team reviews its incumbent technologies to gauge the return on investment, a number of academic departments are questioning the value of the library service itself. Whilst it is inevitable that with such tight budgets academic departments will be taking a hard look at both internal and external costs, the library is taking a proactive and methodical approach to the challenge.

In an attempt to correlate library usage with academic attainment, the library has conducted a study involving all schools, not just those voicing resentment about the cost of the service. Iain Gray, the library’s System Manager, recalls scoping out the exercise: “We set out to quantify the library usage of UK-based undergraduate students at the University of Greenwich, and then map it to degree classifications obtained by students”, he says.

The study was carried out during the 2008-9 academic year. Iain explains how the data were gathered: “We obtained a list from our student record system, Banner, of everyone who had completed undergraduate studies in 2009. We exported this list into Excel. We then extracted the students’ borrower numbers along with number of library issues (excluding renewals) over the course of their studies. The two datasets were then combined in an Access database.”

What the findings revealed was a positive relationship between library usage and academic attainment, as Iain recalls, “Overall, the findings were what we expected – those who obtained a first class degree took out more books than those who obtained a third, for example. However, this pattern wasn’t uniform across all schools. In one particular school, there was in fact a negative correlation – meaning that the more books issued to a student, the lower the degree classification. Some schools did demonstrate stronger correlations than others - Humanities, a traditionally book-intensive discipline, was one such example, as was Business Studies.”

Examination of the research carried out at the University of Huddersfield offers the possibility of extending the analysis to other metrics, such as gate entries. As the University of Greenwich augments its e-resource provision, comparisons between printed and electronic usage will add a valuable dimension, as the University of Huddersfield has already found. “It seems likely”, notes Iain, “that certain schools are making more use of e-resources than others, hence the low uptake of the library service as defined in this study. At the moment, we can only ascertain that students from those schools are definitely not using printed materials.” For libraries such as the Universities of Greenwich and Huddersfield, the findings have a habit of raising more questions than they answer, and there seems to be ample scope for obtaining a more in-depth picture of the relationship between library provision and student outcomes.

Weather-proofing the academic library through this difficult period requires constant vigilance, as Iain and his colleagues understand. “It’s not just about justifying ourselves to schools,” concludes Iain, “it’s also about adjusting our offering on the basis of evidence.”

Haringey Libraries saves £30,000 and over three tons of CO₂ through electronic messaging

Haringey Libraries serve a population of 230,000 residents in North London from 9 locations across the borough and generate approximately 72,000 overdue and reserved item notices every year. Until recently, all of these notices were delivered by post.

After taking over as ICT & Systems Manager at Haringey, Lesley Pink realised there was a huge problem.

“For me, I couldn’t justify sending out all these letters when I knew there was an alternative”. Cost and impact on the environment were the main concerns. “When the post office changed its pricing structure, our notifications were classed as large letters – costing us 51p each, just in postage”.

In addition to postage, stationary costs, specialised printing equipment and staff time all contributed to a very expensive and wasteful process.

Having worked with TALKINGtech before at a previous library, Lesley was keen to make the most of their Talis Message service which Haringey was currently only using for self-service telephone renewals. Haringey upgraded Talis Message to add electronic notifications by Voice, SMS text message and (through Talis Alto) email. Customers who had registered a valid email address were opted in to receive an email, those with a phone number would receive a professionally recorded voice message or an SMS text message for those with a mobile phone.

In order to achieve the greatest possible reduction in postal notices all contact methods were essential. “Not everyone has an email address” Lesley commented. “It’s important that we offer the widest possible choice. We had a few email addresses but mostly we had telephone numbers”.

The other key feature for Lesley was the ability to capture messages that weren’t delivered. For example, if someone wasn’t home and didn’t have voicemail, notices could still be delivered by post. “That is the icing on the cake; it’s made it work so well.”

Haringey went live in February of 2010 and the results have been nothing short of amazing. “From 1,400 postal notices a week we are now down to 30 a day, in the first week we saved over £400 in postage alone” said Lesley. The service has been well received by customers and staff, with only one request to retain postal notices which the service accommodates with ease.

The implementation of electronic messaging has achieved the twin aims of reducing cost and the impact on the environment. Haringey estimates they will save over £30,000 per annum, not including staff time or printing costs. In addition, based on carbon emissions calculations that compare sending a letter with a phone call, Haringey will reduce its CO₂ emissions by over three tons* this year alone.

Commenting on the lessons learnt, Lesley has two pieces of advice for other libraries wanting to address costs and environmental impacts.

“Don’t underestimate the amount of time to implement the service, give yourself plenty of time for testing and secondly, we should have done it years ago, it’s one of the best things we have done, we could have saved ourselves thousands”

Reference: Standard letter incl. delivery generates 51grams of CO₂ in comparison to 0.61grams per 2 minute phone call: ref: The environmental impact of mail - Pitney Bowes 2008; Gamma Telecom website.
The Talis Additions Partner Programme was established to build strong relationships with third party companies. This provides customers with a wide choice of complementary technology services which seamlessly integrate with Talis products. As well as establishing robust integration with existing partners, we continuously review the market for the companies that are providing the latest products and explore how we can work together; further extending the choice of the latest, best of breed products that work with Talis products.

Over the summer we have developed relationships with three new partners:

**Bowker join Talis Additions offering more enrichment choices**
We are pleased to announce that Bowker has joined the Talis Additions Partner Programme. Libraries using Talis Prism 3 can now add book jacket images provided through Bowker’s Syndetics Solutions, and through the partnership we are working with Bowker to enable a wealth of other enrichments.

**Serials Solutions join the Talis Additions Partner Programme**
In the short time since its launch, the Serials Solutions Summon™ service has become well known for its ability to search the full breadth of content found in university library collections whilst delivering a simplified experience in the form of a single search box and results screen.

This high quality and usable discovery tool is designed to bring researchers back to library resources, and is underpinned by a single unified index delivering search results in less than a second. Through the new partnership between Serials Solutions and Talis, data can now be automatically exported from the Talis LMS to Summon™ in the form of “Talis Connect for Summon™”, providing a more personalised service for your users. Libraries will find the Summon™ service easy to set up and integrate into their current library operations.

**Substrakt brings the Urban Lens concept to Talis**
Digital media agency Substrakt has joined Talis Additions, bringing its Urban Lens linked data concept to the library community. The Urban Lens technology enables places and spaces, such as public libraries, to become community hubs. Instead of using an information kiosk to locate a book, Urban Lens builds a unique user journey using the customer request. For example, a trip to a London library to borrow a book on the history of the blitz becomes an experience, with Urban Lens recommending not only further reading with user reviews, but giving suggested local walking tour maps, relevant exhibitions, cafes with wartime history to stop at and suggestions from other visitors. The library becomes a community information centre, attracting a wider footfall for itself and encouraging its own customers to experience their environment in a new way. Urban Lens is a commercially viable information system, offering libraries the chance to forge marketing and advertising partnerships with mutual benefit.

We are also delighted to bring you the latest news from our partners including:

**BookData MARC now available on Talis Base**
Driven by customer demand, the Nielsen BookData service is now available through Talis Base, providing access to over 13m MARC21 records for books and other published media - the most comprehensive coverage of in print, out-of-print and forthcoming titles available worldwide. Customers of the BookData MARC service can choose between UK & Ireland and internationally published titles, with records delivered seamlessly through Talis Base. The service is available via a direct subscription with Nielsen BookData.

**FIND OUT MORE**

- Email: grant.white@talis.com
- Talis Partners: www.talis.com/partners
- Bowker: www.bowker.co.uk
- Serials Solutions: www.serialsolutions.com/summon
- Substrakt: www.substrakt.co.uk
- txttools: www.txttools.co.uk
- Nielsen BookData: www.nielsenbookdata.co.uk
We all know the role of the library is changing, and with the easy attractions of internet access, DVDs, CDs and the like, it can seem as if the importance of the conventional book is being overshadowed by the presence of newer, more instantaneous communication.

So how are books going to compete in the new environment? Is there a way to communicate their desirability and unique character in a format that appeals to the modern reader? And is it possible to bring readers, authors and books back into the heart of the library? In other words: how are traditional books going to compete for attention in the 21st century library?

In fact, the answer could lie in a new product that works by harnessing the immediacy and impact of modern multimedia to direct people towards the pleasure and interest of simply reading a book. The product is called WonderWall, and its name is a good indication of what it achieves.

How WonderWall works

To the casual observer, WonderWall looks like a fairly normal, though stylish, set of shelves, and it provides libraries with an eye-catching way of highlighting individual titles. But there is more to WonderWall than meets the eye; as soon as a book is moved, it triggers a media event on an LCD screen housed in the unit. The potential reader is immediately given an opportunity to find out more about the book they have in their hand. This could range from a simple synopsis to a full multimedia presentation by the author themselves, giving a personalised overview of the title and speaking directly to the target audience.

As well as its primary use as a book promotion tool, it has a host of other functions, such as a catalogue and web searcher, reader guide, picture or movie display and can even be connected to Nielson Book Data. With a little imagination, the WonderWall becomes a vital element in a library’s communication arsenal, particularly effective for special events or the display of collections.

The birth of a new promotional tool

It was while working with the University of Central Lancashire that the company 2CQR, who were already the market leader in installing Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) in libraries, came up with the idea of WonderWall to answer the needs of academic staff craving a better way to promote their books.

WonderWall has come a long way since its early beginnings and is now a fully developed product, ranging from large freestanding units to compact desktop models which can be transported from library to library. They can also be custom built in a range of colours and finishes to complement any library’s requirements.

A glimpse of the future

A fascinating insight into WonderWall at work ‘in the field’ is at Haringey Public Libraries where it is used to help children’s literacy and increase interest in books and local authors. Local authors have recorded short interviews which are activated as soon as a book is placed under the WonderWall ‘hot spot’. This provides added interest to the library user, helps author’s titles stand out against their peers’, and potentially leads to the increased issuing of the titles – benefiting both library and author.

As Lesley Pink, Haringey’s ICT and Resources Manager puts it: “The children just love it, and WonderWall has proved so popular that most of the time we’ve issued all the author’s books and have to use photocopies.” In fact, WonderWall has proved so much in demand that Haringey have placed an order for three more.

Chris Robb of 2CQR comments “The positive feedback we’ve received from users has been incredible and we’re just so pleased that WonderWall is being put to such great use.” For 2CQR it is part of the dynamic future that RFID technology has opened up. WonderWall is just one of the products and software solutions being developed to meet the demands of the modern librarian.
The Future is now
by
Jeremy Clarke

‘Can public libraries modernise the way in which services can be delivered instead of resorting to cutbacks?’ A question posed by the upcoming Modernising Public Libraries conference.

In order to achieve this the library world must reach out to the rest of the community and do what it does best – share knowledge. This will pave the way for public libraries to plan new approaches and move forward positively in the face of difficult times.

This is the aim of the Future Libraries Programme in its plan to facilitate the cooperation of 36 local authorities in exploring new strategies to develop library services. A flavour of the areas being test-driven include: collaboration between authorities as well as with private and voluntary sectors; achieving rural outreach via community transport providers; the role of volunteers; and networks of sustainable local service points, known as Library Links.

In a recent article entitled Hands off our public libraries, Terrence Blacker brands these ideas ‘the privatisation’ of public libraries. While there must always be room for scepticism it is important to remember that there was a time when libraries were not supported by computers, databases and the internet. Should these developments have been considered the evil technologising of a sacred tradition?

There is public outcry at the closure of community post offices around the country, and much local support when one remains, re-housed in a sweet shop or hardware store. Retail outlets like Boots and the online clothes store ASOS are now collaborating in order to streamline services for the benefit of their consumers. Why should we not see some libraries relocated to shopping centres and supermarkets? Much as I am a fan of fresh bread from a local bakery and bacon from the butcher, I’m sure many of us would agree that supermarkets usefully bring together a range of products and services (for example photo development and eye tests) under one roof.

Libraries themselves are no longer only places to borrow books, with broadband access, IT training, literacy sessions and after-school clubs being some of the many reasons people now use public libraries. With this model for shared service provision working successfully, perhaps it is time for other add-on services.

Whilst this may sound like bandwagon jumping, I think changes must be made carefully, with public consultation and thorough planning. But we shouldn’t shy away from fresh approaches and changing attitudes. I have heard enough people talking about 21st century libraries but I’m still not sure what one looks like.

Working in close partnership with our customers, Talis has been instrumental in driving the library world forward for 40 years.

We have contributed significantly to the development of innovation in libraries and want to continue in that way. The people we work with are talented, innovative and dynamic, but above all – they believe passionately in everything they do.

We are looking for people who demonstrate a strong desire to learn, flourish in a challenging environment and are comfortable being accountable for the role they undertake. Change is an inherent part of Talis, so if you think you possess the skills, aptitude and expertise to contribute to that change, get in touch – because we’re hiring.

Job of The Month – Support Analyst

To find out more and view a list of our current vacancies, please visit www.talis.com/careers

We’re hiring.

Job of The Month – Support Analyst

To find out more and view a list of our current vacancies, please visit www.talis.com/careers
LibScan was developed following the success of BookScan for Libraries, which provides libraries access to UK retail book sales information. Since launching in April 2009 LibScan has grown rapidly and now represents data from over 44 library authorities, collected from over 1,200 library branches, and measuring over 5 million issues per month. LibScan therefore provides the most comprehensive and timely view of public library book lending statistics available in the UK.

LibScan is free to participating library authorities; in return for providing weekly issues data, libraries receive access to a powerful online reporting tool. Using these reports, libraries can compare their own issues with the aggregated data for the rest of the LibScan panel. Reports can be produced on a number of criteria including genre, author, title and format. Participating libraries can use these reports to review and update stock profiles, manage selection and disposal decisions, inform stock “experimentation” and (perhaps most importantly) help book funds stretch further. Libraries who also subscribe to BookScan for Libraries can, for the first time, directly compare book lending with sales data within the same online tool.

The use of evidence in stock selection has become an increasingly important topic of conversation in public libraries. Until recently selection information has centred on either internal system data or marketing materials. Now, however, Nielsen Book’s tools including LibScan and BookScan for Libraries provide the means to validate and challenge these decisions using qualitative, independent data from the external market. Combining the use of these tools with local expertise and customer knowledge leads to informed stock selection and a more relevant and satisfying experience for the library user.

Libscan is supported by all major library management system providers. Talis customers wishing to join Nielsen LibScan will require a Talis Connect licence to extract the required usage data, however, as part of the Nielsen/Talis partnership, this service will be provided free of charge.

To further increase the value and accessibility of LibScan, Nielsen Book and Talis are working together. LibScan’s best-lending charts will be published in each edition of Panlibus Magazine, helping readers to better understand the library sector and to identify up and coming trends well in advance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LibScan Author Chart</th>
<th>TCM (Total consumer Market) Author Chart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Meadows, Daisy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Patterson, James</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wilson, Jacqueline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Simon, Francesca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Roberts, Nora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Donaldson, Julia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Inkipen, Mick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Deary, Terry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Blyton, Enid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Beaton, M.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BookScan TCM Volume sales by author and LibScan borrowing data for 4 weeks ending 8 August.
*Official Footnote* Charts are from Nielsen BookScan Total Consumer Market, representing sales through 6,500 high street, internet and independent retailers and LibScan, representing lendings from 44 library authorities

The Top 10 TCM Author chart is dominated by sales in the adult fiction category (8 adult authors and 2 children’s & young adult authors) whilst the LibScan Author chart reflects a different balance for lendings; (3 adult authors and 7 children’s authors) with only two authors making a showing in both charts.

FIND OUT MORE
email: info.bookscan@nielsen.com
web: www.nielsenbookscan.co.uk
tel: 01483 712 222
Embedding Libscan Data in Talis Decisions Reports

Are you interested in knowing how your book stock holdings match up against what’s hot in libraries across the country? Would you like to include both Libscan data and your own data in a single automatically-generated routine report for senior management without having to spend time manually cutting, pasting and formatting in a word processing package?

Libscan reports will allow you to look at your own loan data or the data for the entire panel [i.e. all participating libraries]. Libscan data is however focused just on loans: it does not attempt to collate data about stock holdings, reservations, ILLs or even borrower age groups.

In many situations it is desirable to combine broad-based Libscan data with the more detailed and specific data available in your own library. One example might be to contrast panel-wide “most popular authors” with the frequency of occurrence of particular authors in your library’s stock (as shown below).

Talis are working with Nielsen to explore how Libscan data can be used in Talis Decisions. For example, this kind of report makes use of the facility in Talis Decisions to consume data from several different types of data source; Talis Decisions isn’t limited to the universes. Furthermore it can combine multiple data inputs from such disparate sources so that (for example) both Libscan data and Universe data can be displayed in the same report.

To learn more about how to do this, there are examples of combining data on the Talis Decisions blog. We can also write reports for you to your specification. Please contact us with comments, as we are keen to explore how Libscan data can be combined with Talis Decisions.

FIND OUT MORE

Web: blogs.talis.com/decisions
Email: john.hardy@talis.com
Web-based search tools, notably Google, have altered expectations around the library OPAC forever. Forward-thinking academic libraries are aligning their web presence with more general online experiences of university students. Within the institution, the library is under increased pressure to harmonise its front-end applications and tools with the university website and systems such as the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). In response to these changes, the library of Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) has selected Talis Prism 3 to combine simplicity and ease of use with institution-level interoperability.

The university now has in mind more deeply joined-up user scenarios across diverse campus applications. Angela Warlow, the university library’s Library Services Manager (Systems and Databases), explains, “Many projects across the institution are exploring the development of a more unified user experience. The university is in the process of replacing its VLE with Moodle, which will be in place right across the institution by 2011, and will be using Talis Aspire for its resource lists.”

Reviewing the OPAC

It is in this context that Angela and her team reviewed Talis Prism 2, the incumbent OPAC: “Despite innovations such as the integration of users’ library accounts into the campus portal, the Talis Prism 2 interface was starting to look a little clunky, and users were forced to think a little too much when searching. What do distinctions such as ‘keyword’ and ‘title’ mean to students brought up on Google’s single search field?” Angela was also finding that the maintenance effort and hardware costs of locally-deployed applications such as Talis Prism 2 were increasingly unjustifiable, and could no longer ignore the sector-wide trend towards remotely hosted applications.

Once Angela had evaluated Talis Prism 3 with her team, she was confident that it had the potential to meet the changing needs of the library and its users, and harmonise with corporate strategy. She therefore scheduled the implementation of the application with Talis.

A cloud-based OPAC

A small number of infrastructural modifications were pre requisites to the migration of the library OPAC to Talis’ remote hosting service. First of all, the Talis Consultancy team set up a mechanism (known as Local Data Services) that would enable the remotely-hosted Talis Prism 3 to interoperate with the local LMS for item availability and customer account information. They then set up a tenancy for MMU on the hosted service, incorporating a ‘sandbox’ test area, and a demonstration environment for forthcoming releases, as well as the live service. Once MMU’s cataloguing data had been imported into a hosted data store accessible from the tenancy, the project moved into design phase. With the involvement of Talis’ Design team, a look and feel was applied to the tenancy to meet the requirements of the university.
As Angela Warlow recalls, “We sent our institutional web guidelines to the Head of Design at Talis, and told him that our Talis Prism 3 interface needed to blend in with the university website. He came back with two or three designs. Straight away we liked the direction he took, and only minor tweaks were required. Talis’ Design team was fantastic; they provided a very responsive service which was well received.”

A more intuitive search interface
 MMU library was then in a position to launch Talis Prism 3 in the live environment, running initially in parallel with Talis Prism 2. From the outset, Angela had no doubt that Talis Prism 3 offered a more intuitive search experience: “The interface has been greatly simplified. We’ve found in the past that most users are reluctant to explore less obvious features and may not make use of them.”

In Talis Prism 3, the purpose of features is very clear, and functionality deemed to be particularly useful (such as “Find out more by this author”) is made prominent. Talis has sought to balance the need for simplicity with the granularity still required in academia. A range of sophisticated capabilities will meet the needs of multiple stakeholders, not just undergraduate students, right across campus. Talis has introduced new search modifiers such as Classification Number, and the advanced search facility has been retained.

Frequent upgrades
 Because Talis Prism 3 is hosted remotely, updates to the application can be made much more frequently, and with minimal operational disruption. The demonstration environment, separate from the test area, enables Angela and her colleagues to preview forthcoming software releases, giving sufficient time to plan and carry out any requisite changes to the overall library service. One product enhancement that has been made since the library adopted Talis Prism 3 is an improvement to item availability information. Angela confirms that site-specific information remains very important to academic library users, and her team was particularly impressed with changes that enable users to see quickly which sites have available copies. “We currently have seven sites, one of which is in Cheshire. It’s quite conceivable that someone might travel to one of the Manchester sites if they believe that something is on the shelves here. It’s important to make library transactions easier for users who may have little time to spare.”

Positive feedback
 Happy with the positive feedback from students and staff alike, Angela is preparing to make Talis Prism 3 the default catalogue, ready for the start of the next academic year. She is particularly encouraged by the usage statistics which increased hugely with the introduction of the item availability changes, as a result of librarians enthusing to their users. At the end of the university’s exam period, Angela will be arranging with Talis to change the host name to blend in with the institutional web address, integrate lists from Talis Aspire (the new resource list management system), and also connect Talis Prism 3 to the campus portal. At this point, MMU will start to reap the full benefits of a library OPAC hosted ‘in the cloud’. Angela eagerly anticipates the reduction in hardware costs – two locally installed servers were needed for previous versions. The library team will no longer have to plan for system downtime when upgrading.

However, the most important driver is the student experience; Talis Prism 3 is part of a host of developments bringing the user experience up-to-date right across the university. As Angela points out, “Students compare Talis Prism 3 to Google and to Amazon, and I think it holds up very well in that regard.”

FIND OUT MORE

Contact: sales@talis.com
Visit: www.talis.com/prism

www.talis.com | Autumn 2010 | Panibus Magazine | 27
Doing more with less – can technology help?

Mick Fortune, Managing Director, Library RFID Ltd

These are unpredictable times. As I write this, at the end of August, when the debate about the role of libraries (especially public libraries) seems highly topical, I am acutely aware, such is the pace of political change, that by the time this appears in print, libraries may have already enjoyed their fifteen minutes.

I read last issue’s piece by Marshall Breeding with huge interest. I first met Marshall in Boston last year and since then Talis has helped us stay in touch by including us both in the last ever Library 2.0 Gang podcast. As he’s probably the best-informed commentator on the library systems scene, I’ve asked him to speak about the possible changing relationship between LMS and RFID systems in London later this year. But it was Marshall’s comments about the pace and means by which technology permeates the library landscape that really caught my attention.

I’ve spent most of my working life in library automation, but I cannot recall a time when there was greater uncertainty about the future for either the profession or the technologies upon which it depends.

So can technology help us to “do more with less”? I think the answer is a qualified “yes”, but with new technologies emerging all the time, it’s not always clear what the implications of deploying them might be, and with the “systems librarian” now seemingly on the endangered species list, the skills required to make risk assessments are in short supply.

Often it is to the suppliers that librarians turn for advice, and thankfully that advice is usually honestly and freely given. But sometimes even the suppliers aren’t aware of the wider impact of the solutions they have developed.

As you might expect, I’ll try and explain what I mean by looking more closely at my own current “cause” – RFID. The story of RFID has, so far, been a success. The timing of its appearance in the library landscape could not have been better. Libraries saw its ability to provide self-service circulation as one answer to their budgetary nightmare. The public broadly welcomed it; the libraries saved space, time and sometimes even money.

LMS providers saw RFID as adding significant value for both libraries and their users by adding self-service capabilities to existing functionality. In none of the surveys I have carried out over the last two years has anyone expressed any doubt about the wisdom of using RFID for self-service.

But that was then, and this is now. RFID has moved on and, in the library world, is no longer confined to self-service circulation. New functionality and new products, from smart shelves to smartphones, have begun to appear on the scene. Technology may sometimes move very slowly – as Marshall suggests – but it can also move in unpredictable directions.

Self-service was not in itself a new idea. The use of RFID to combine multiple item processing with security tagging was different, but the underlying mechanisms that made it all work had been present for almost 25 years.

All the systems needed was a barcode number so, to begin with, that was all that was written on the tags. But as RFID suppliers saw the potential to use tag data storage capacity to do much more, things began to change. Librarians too began to insist on storing use-count, location and sometimes even bibliographic data on the actual tags.

The more specialised these solutions became, the more difficult it was to change any part of it. A single RFID company supplied everything – from the tags to the scanners – because all these systems were in effect “closed”. Something had to change, and something did in 2009 – when the UK RFID suppliers all agreed to support a common data standard with a single UK data model. Although sadly, so far, not a single UK installation has been implemented.

We must assume that situation will change – and everyone seems to agree that it will. So what will the impact of a much more sophisticated data model be?
It’s a very difficult question to answer of course, but I think it’s already clear that the relationship between LMS and RFID is changing and is likely to change even more rapidly. While LMS companies seem mostly focused on improving communications between the two systems - essentially assuming that roles will remain unchanged - RFID companies have been extremely active in developing new solutions - like the smart shelf system at Cardiff University, or the management systems being developed in the Far East that use the “live” stock as the catalogue. Or the new RFID project in the USA that will route ILL requests across entire states.

What unites these projects is that none of them require a link to the LMS. Perhaps we are approaching a time when the LMS can be “liberated” from the task of managing a diminishing physical stock, leaving the task to someone else?

RFID could be one answer to “Doing more with less” but there will be a need for greater understanding of how these systems interact if control is to be maintained. The same I suspect applies to most other emerging technologies – like the use of QR codes for example.

The challenge for the librarian is not perhaps to acquire the technologies that can “do more with less”, but to acquire the skilled staff that can make sure they work.

### Training Calendar

#### October 2010

- 21 Using Google Analytics in Libraries (webinar)

#### November 2010

- 10 Talis Decisions – Infoview and web intelligence XI-R2 (classroom)
- 16 Talis Decisions XI-R2 Scheduling (webinar)
- 16 Introduction to the Talis Database and SQL (classroom)
- 23 Exploring the Talis Decisions XI-R2 Universes (webinar)

#### December 2010

- 7 An Introduction to UNIX Part 1 (webinar)
- 9 An Introduction to UNIX Part 2 (webinar)
- 14 Using Talis Decisions XI-R2 A refresher on reporting basics (webinar)

For more information, or to register your place at an upcoming session, please visit www.talis.com/training.
Product Updates

The September Product Roadmap has now been published with new developments in all of the functional areas that are covered by Talis products.

User Experience
Work has been continuing on the cloud-based applications of Talis Prism, Talis Aspire and Talis Engage – all of which have regular monthly release cycles. One of the main themes that we have been working on is the linking of datasets in order to enhance the research and discovery functionality of the catalogue, which appears on the roadmap as the Semantic Data model. We have some customers who are starting to use these features already and development will also continue. Another of the recent enhancements has allowed the library catalogue to flag items that also appear in the reading list system, ensuring tight integration between Talis Prism and Talis Aspire.

Back Office Efficiencies
We’ve added Library of Congress Authority records to Talis Base and made these records discoverable in the staff interface, meaning that it is quicker to authorise bibliographic data. We are also developing the managed EDI service, Talis Gateway, to accept audio visual messages, meaning that the supply of this material can benefit from the same process improvements as book stock currently does.

Integration
We’ve launched a new suite of integration modules, Talis Workflow. The first two of these are aimed at integrating web forms with the main LMS and reducing the need for rekeying of data by staff. Linking both ILL request and borrower joining forms directly to the staff interface, Talis Alto, will ensure that customers will get their requests handled more quickly, without having to wait for library staff to re-type information.

FIND OUT MORE
Web: www.talis.com/roadmap
Email: sales@talis.com
“The WonderWall is the perfect solution... providing information on our books in an interactive way”

Lesley Pink, Haringey Public Libraries ICT and Resources Manager

See the latest products on our new website: www.2cqr.com
we are your txt people

Our fully library integrated txt system allows you to send and receive txt messages to multiple people in an instant using your computer. simple :)

2 way communication that is quick, to the person, to the point, secure and cost effective. clever ;)

- Talis certified
- Inform customers of reservations in seconds
- Overdue Reminders managed and sent instantly
- Save staff time and reduce costs

mail merge: personalise messages when sending to groups

message archive: store all your previous messages for easy reference

templates: recycle commonly used messages again and again

inbox rules: filter and re-direct txts to other phones, e-mail and auto-reply to sender

schedule messages: set the day and time and let the system deliver

groups: sort your address book into handy groups

delivery report: a message only works if it's been received

2 way: true communication is only ever 2 way

weapon of mass communication

secure: we use the same security protocol as online banking

export data: need copies of message data for a meeting, no problem!

import data: import data from any existing database

support: real people here whenever you need us

free training: every customer gets training until they are happy and confident

integration: we’re compatible with almost every software system out there, put us to the test

Our fully library integrated txt system allows you to send and receive txt messages to multiple people in an instant using your computer. simple :)