

# The information professional in the knowledge management age

Information professionals may be missing out on job opportunities by failing to recognise that the information skills they have are the very skills that 'new economy' employers are seeking.

In their book, *Competing with knowledge: the information professional in the knowledge management age*, Nigel Oxbrow, founder and CEO of the UK information and knowledge management and recruitment consultancy TFPL, and Angela Abell, director, TFPL, identify the key skills of the information professional and relate these to the skills and competencies required by the fast-growing new economy companies.

*Competing with knowledge* is the first major review highlighting the role and impact that information professionals play within organisations, which specifically links the skills of the information professional to the effective management of knowledge within organisations, and the competitive advantages that businesses gain in adopting knowledge management practices. The book, published by the UK Library Association, draws heavily on TFPL's collaborative research with knowledge management leaders and TFPL's KnowledgeRecruit agency work with clients in developing and defining

knowledge management roles in both the commercial and public sector.

'As organisations move towards enterprise-wide knowledge and information systems, many of the traditional roles of the information professional will disappear. This book will help information professionals understand that their traditional skills in identifying, structuring and retrieving information are highly valued by those companies changing to compete effectively in the knowledge economy. A recent survey from the OECD highlights the increasing need for skilled information handlers as the knowledge workers of the future, and we believe that information professionals should recognise what their skills are, and that as the knowledge economy grows, competition to recruit them will intensify,' said Nigel Oxbrow.

From a practical level this book highlights important issues such as the changing nature of competition, knowledge mapping, information auditing, total quality management and the value of intellectual capital. While focusing on European developments, this book has major implications for Australian information professionals who wish to begin the process of empowering themselves for change, in the rapidly moving, knowledge-driven age. ■

## Back-to-basics libraries

The Ludd Library Foundation of San Francisco is undertaking a fund drive to design and build the Ludd Library, a free, public, independently governed library that will return library service to its roots: the promotion of reading, study and research in a quiet, respectful environment.

'Public libraries have emphasised technological gimmickry at the expense of books and reading,' says Foundation board chairman Nicholson Baker. 'Falling over themselves to be "hip" and "relevant", library administrators have destroyed libraries as places of cultural conservatorship, reading and quiet study and contemplation. In their places, they have erected noisy infotainment centres where anything but thinking goes.'

Joining noted author Baker on the Foundation's board is writer Sallie Tisdale and seven other respected intellectuals who desire to create an institution that will return librarianship to its roots and mission.

The fund drive will seek to raise US\$20 million to build a facility in San Francisco to serve as a testbed and prototype for additional Ludd libraries around the United States and Canada. Baker, in launching the campaign with seed money from himself and other board members, asserted that 'the Ludd Library will make a simple set of promises to its patrons — no computers, no computer games, a paper-based, real book catalogue, and a quiet, non-disruptive environment, with staff hired to be knowledge facilitators, not entertainers, computer support clerks, or security guards.'

'Our librarians will be real librarians,' said Baker. 'In an environment of public access under private control, they will be empowered to create and maintain an institution that promotes reading, study, and inquiry.'

The Campaign for Real Libraries, as the fund-raising effort is being called, will kick off in April with advertisements in major newspapers in North America. ■



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• **4/5 Riverina Regional Group.** ALIA: the *Ys and Where4s* — dinner for library workers with guest speaker Angela Bridgland, member of ALIA Board of Directors. The Wattle Room, Commercial Club, Albury, NSW, 7pm. \$22 per head. *RSVP by 26 April to:* Tim Eggleston, ph 02 6022 9103, fx 02 6024 1716, timeg@umrl.nsw.gov.au

• **15/5 NSW Branch.** Council meeting, first item of business Library & Information Week, all welcome. Sumitomo Room, Level 11, State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney, 6pm. *RSVP for catering purposes to:* Jo-anne Fuller, local presence co-ordinator, ph 02 9906 6000, fx 02 9906 5987, jojo1@ozemail.com.au

• **19/6 NSW Branch.** Council meeting, all welcome. Coles Room, Level 11, State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney, 6pm. *RSVP for catering purposes to:* Jo-anne Fuller, local presence co-ordinator, ph 02 9906 6000, fx 02 9906 5987, jojo1@ozemail.com.au

• **22/6 NSW CYSS.** Pre-Bookweek Extravaganza. Burwood Council Chambers, Conder Street, 6pm. For more information contact: Susan Campbell, ph 02 9911 9999.

• **17/7 NSW Branch.** Council meeting, all welcome. Coles Room, Level 11, State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney, 6pm. *RSVP for catering purposes to:* Jo-anne Fuller, local presence co-ordinator, ph 02 9906 6000, fx 02 9906 5987, jojo1@ozemail.com.au

• **21/8 NSW Branch.** Council meeting, all welcome. Sumitomo Room, Level 11, State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney, 6pm. *RSVP for catering purposes to:* Jo-anne Fuller, local presence co-ordinator, ph 02 9906 6000, fx 02 9906 5987, jojo1@ozemail.com.au

• **18/9 NSW Branch.** Council meeting, all welcome. Sumitomo Room, Level 11, State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney, 6pm. *RSVP for catering purposes to:* Jo-anne Fuller, local presence co-ordinator, ph 02 9906 6000, fx 02 9906 5987, jojo1@ozemail.com.au

• **16/10 NSW Branch.** Council meeting, all welcome. Sumitomo Room, Level 11, State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney, 6pm. *RSVP for catering purposes to:* Jo-anne Fuller, local presence co-ordinator, ph 02 9906 6000, fx 02 9906 5987, jojo1@ozemail.com.au

• **26/10 NSW CYSS.** *On the shelf and online: collection management in the children's library.* Burwood Council Chambers, Conder Street, 9-4:30pm. For more information contact: Mylee Joseph, ph 02 9777 7900, mylee.joseph@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

## QLD

• **4/4 Qld OPALs.** *Breakfast or lunch.* Hopgood Ganim, Lawyers, 3rd level, 141 Queens Street, City. Time: tba. Contact: Helen Gambley, ph 07 3234 7777.

• **7/4 Qld Library Technician section.** *Combined activity/meeting with Sunshine Coast Regional Group, Maroochydore.* Venue/time: tba. Contact: Marian Moyle, ph 07 3244 6446, marian.moyle@detir.qld.gov.au

• **10/4 Qld Library Technician section.** *The Rare and the Beautiful: a visit to the James Hardie Library of Australian Fine Arts to examine a range of their rare books and beautiful artists' books, and hear about the range of work carried out by the library.* Qld

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