

## I have a dream...

I have a dream. That libraries (the brick and mortar type) all over the world will be situated in shopping centres. They will be buzzing with noise, activities, and vibrancy to the extent that those who are still nostalgic about quiet libraries might need to resort to a bushwalk instead. The 'shooshing' philosophy is, I hope, gradually disappearing and those libraries that still enforce

such nonsense laws should take a long hard look at how their patrons interact and learn in their information centres.

Information today does not have to be in libraries anymore. It can be held on remote servers enabling information to bypass libraries altogether. Library staff have to make sure that they maximise the use of the library facilities in order to provide environments conducive to learning, in whatever way that might be defined by future learners. In other words, give the people what they want! After all, libraries only exist because they have patrons/users/clients that use their facilities, products, and services.

Coordinating events and workshops to achieve information and technology literacy among the users is one of the many important roles that librarians will need to take on in the future. No doubt such tasks are being acted upon already, but I believe they will become an increasingly larger element of the LIS professional role.

Lastly, in my dream, the L word is no longer used. The word 'library' actually comes from the Latin word *libre* or *libri* meaning book. I suppose back in the dark ages, it only seemed natural to call a room full of books a library. But in the future, how will knowledge be stored? Perhaps it could be a microchip easily inserted into our bodies, and instantly imbuing us with all sorts of knowledge, ranging from how to bake wonderful meringues to building an aircraft carrier. It sounds farfetched, but the book as a source of knowledge now has to share its place with a number of other media, which will only increase as time goes on. In my dream, libraries of the future will be called: *Scientias* – the Latin word for learn and acquiring knowledge; and librarians will be known as *Scientists* – facilitators of knowledge. This is worth pursuing – don't you think?

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