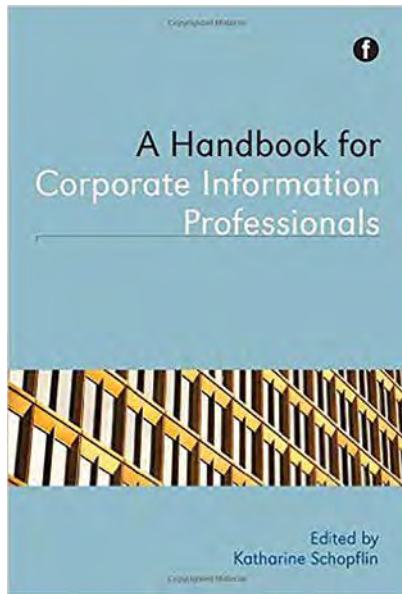


A Primer for **Corporate Librarianship and Information Management**

Melanie Sucha



A *Handbook for Corporate Information Professionals* is a concise, but thorough, compilation of contemporary topics in corporate librarianship. It covers practice areas such as corporate intranets, marketing, taxonomies, knowledge management, market analysis, electronic licensing, and end-user training.

Aimed at Corporate Librarians

While the broad term “information professional” is used in the title and by the various authors throughout the text, the content is presented from the corporate librarianship standpoint – as opposed to the standpoint of other information management (IM) domains, such as records management.

The primary audience becomes readily apparent in Katharine Schopflin’s introduction, which is an articulate description on the history of corporate librarianship and discussion of the discipline today. Many of the

topics in the book pertain to corporate library processes – that is, the management and dissemination of acquired published resources to support the business.

Linda-Jean Schneider and Simon Barron’s chapter, “The hybrid librarian-IT expert,” is focused solely on the librarian perspective. This chapter takes a traditionalist view of both the librarianship and IT disciplines, perhaps unfairly criticizing IT departments as being overly imposing, and it lacks discussion on more contemporary topics, such as the need for information governance and the skills that both IT and IM professionals have to offer in the governance domain.

Anneli Sarkanen and Katy Stoddard’s chapter, “Training end-users in the workplace,” is focused on the search and usage of library resources, without addressing use of internal document management systems or line-of-business information technologies.

This chapter demonstrates some outdated views, painting vendors simply as salespeople and discouraging vendor collaboration for training assistance – a point that runs contradictory to Tina Reynolds, Schneider, and Fiona Fogden’s more progressive arguments in favor of a collaborative approach with vendors in their chapter, “Working with suppliers and licensing for e-libraries.”

A Focus on Growth, Exploration

Other chapters are focused on growing the corporate librarian’s skill set to adopt broader IM duties relating to managing the organization’s internal information assets.

James Mullan’s chapter, “Manag-

A Handbook for Corporate Information Professionals

Editor: Katharine Schopflin

Publisher: Facet Publishing

Publication Date: 2015

Length: 184 pages

Price: \$125 (No. America); £59.95

ISBN: 978-1-85604-968-9

Source: www.alastore.ala.org (No. America); www.facetpublishing.co.uk

ing the corporate intranet,” offers solid strategic advice for content management and governance of an intranet platform, as well as covers best practices and hot topics for those new to using intranets and related social media features.

Danny Budzak’s chapter, “Practical knowledge management,” offers an introductory level overview of knowledge management, followed by practical advice on consulting with business clients to facilitate knowledge capture.

Helen Lippell’s chapter, “Building a corporate taxonomy,” gives advice on critical steps in this activity, such as running stakeholder workshops and aligning to end-user language.

These chapters are excellent summaries for librarians exploring growth in and beyond their roles or for information studies students exploring different career opportunities.

Uneven Writing Quality

While the compilation covers a number of current and relevant topics for corporate librarians, the quality of the writing varies throughout. Most chapters are very clear and easy to ab-

sorb. For example, Shaunna Mireau's chapter, "Internal and external marketing by information professionals," gives very thorough coverage of the topic and includes a mix of theoretic explanation of metrics and service delivery processes, balanced with illustrative anecdotes.

Other chapters are not so well-written. Phillip Weinberg's "Successful management of insight, intelligence and information functions in a global organization" contains many name-dropping references to other authors and field experts without explanation as to who these people are and what their views comprise.

Andrew Grave's chapter, "Successfully managing your team through

change and transition," has a vague title; the content is not so much a change management overview so much as guidance pertaining to organizational layoffs. Some of the advice ignores the need to understand unique corporate culture, and this could have negative outcomes in execution. Taking his blanket advice to leverage human resources teams but to use caution when approaching managers would certainly have varying results depending on the organization's unique culture.

Some Usefulness for All IM Pros

Since this text is aimed at one type of information professional, it may be challenging for those with

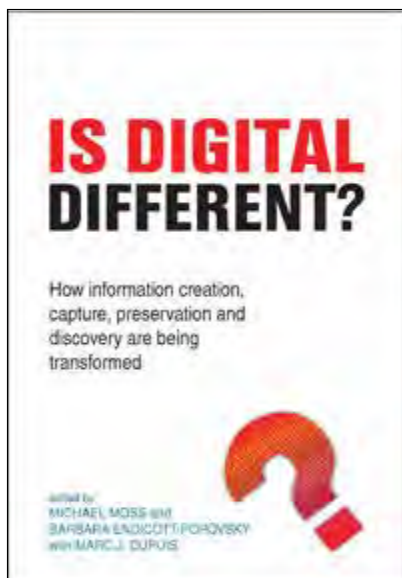
training and strengths in other IM backgrounds (e.g., records managers, content analysts) to leverage this material in a manner meaningful to their roles. However, this book does provide a vast breadth of topical coverage, so it could certainly be used by anyone to review an area of interest on a chapter-by-chapter basis.

With well-written and easily consumable chapters, it is also a quality resource text for its primary audience, offering many insights and up-to-date information on performing information and library services in the corporate environment. **END**

Melanie Sucha can be contacted at msucha@suncor.com. See her bio on page 47.

How the Hybrid Information Environment Is Transforming Libraries, History, Scholarship

Mary Broughall



Is Digital Different?, edited by Michael Moss and Barbara Endicott-Popovsky, is a collection of essays that brings together global experts discoursing about the impact of digital

technology on information services. Focusing on the issues surrounding the transition from an analog to a digital environment, contributors examine whether analog practices and procedures are still valid and if they shape or distort those in the digital realm.

One of the co-editors opens the book with a brief overview entitled "What is the same and what is different," which is a fitting summary of where the compilation starts and where it's going. Despite the title, the assumption is that digital *is* different and the various authors take us on a tour of "How information creation, capture, preservation and discovery are being transformed," a very apt subtitle to the manuscript.

Finding Stuff

Chapter 2, "Finding stuff," explores the ways in which we now search for

Is Digital Different? How information creation, capture, preservation and discovery are being transformed

Editor: Michael Moss and Barbara Endicott-Popovsky, with Marc J. Dupuis

Publisher: Facet Publishing

Publication Date: 2015

Length: 360 pages

Price: \$95 (No. America) £49.95

ISBN: 978-1-856-04854-5

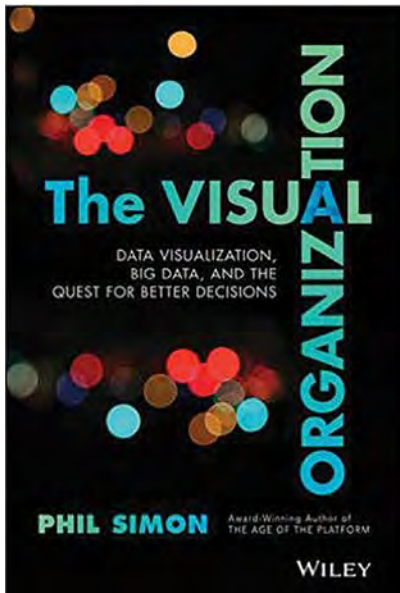
Source: www.alastore.ala.org (No. America); www.facetpublishing.co.uk

"stuff" (yes, it is different) and how the scattered nature of the now and future "stuff" finding is consumer driven. It also marks a change, they argue, in

Visualize It!

The Key to Driving Better Business Decisions

Robert Bailey, Ph.D., CRM



The author of *The Visual Organization*, Phil Simon, indicates that it is not a book about how to do data visualization – or dataviz, as he calls it. Rather, it’s a book about becoming a *visual organization*, one that is “composed of intelligent people who recognize the power of data” and who “routinely uses contemporary, powerful, and interactive dataviz tools to ask better questions and ultimately make better business decisions.”

These interactive and robust tools allow an organization to analyze its data, records, and information, as well as their relationships, to discover trends, diagnose technical issues, and unearth valuable insights about its customers and services.

According to Simon, because every organization has data, all can benefit from data visualization, including to:

- Understand past events and why they happened
- Monitor current activities

- Generate insights and make more informed organizational decisions
- Discover and identify nuanced issues and ask better questions about existing processes

Profiles Visual Organizations

Simon writes that too many organizations “rely on old standbys [like] bar charts, simple graphs and the ubiquitous Excel spreadsheet. And their business decisions suffer as a result.”

He explains clearly how visualization tools and strategies are being used successfully in organizations every day, featuring profiles of some of the organizations who get it – like Netflix, Autodesk, and eBay. For example, Netflix’s data-centric mindset is captured in its three-part credo:

1. Data should be accessible, easy to discover and easy to process for everyone.
2. The longer you take to find the data, the less valuable it becomes.
3. Whether a dataset is large or small, being able to visualize it makes it easier to explain.

Parallels with RM

Netflix’s credo is not much different from any good records manager’s view. The important additional element of Netflix’s formidable data capabilities is data visualization.

Simon also stresses *metadata*, or data about data, which records managers also recognize as critical to what I call the five rights: getting the right information to the right person at the right time at the right place in the right format

Certainly data visualization goes well beyond everyday recordkeep-

The Visual Organization: Data Visualization, Big Data, and the Quest for Better Decisions

Author: Phil Simon

Publisher: Wiley

Publication Date: 2014

Length: 240 pages

Price: \$50

ISBN: 978-1-118-79438-8

Source: www.wiley.com

ing, but the commonality between the two is the purpose they both also share with data mining, business intelligence, analytics, and enterprise reporting: to lead organizations to a better understanding of their information assets and drive more informed business decisions.

Applies to All

This is a book that every records manager should read. Data visualization is now mainstream, and records managers need to understand its best practice and how it applies to their roles. It will certainly help them illustrate to upper management the bridges between data, records, and the organization’s decision-making needs. In fact, it applies to all employees, as they also can use data visualization to improve their work.

As the volume of electronic records continues to grow, the challenge will, too, but as this book makes apparent, the types of tools available to handle this challenge will also continue to improve. **END**

Robert Bailey, Ph.D., CRM, can be contacted at robertbai@mccarran.com. See his bio on page 47.