



— the bottom line

I've found another skeleton, and I'd like some help to grind the bones to fertiliser.

At the end of April '86 we had 4738 Associate Members and 143 Technician Members. These are the Association's professional membership categories. The problem is that while technicians are usually considered 'more professional' than plain 'ordinary' members, some librarian members consider themselves 'more professional' than technician members. Shades of John Cleese. And as long as technicians feel themselves economy class passengers on the flight to a bright new bibliographic future, their proportion of the membership is unlikely to rise above the current 3%.

It is a fact that Librarians and Library Technicians *usually* perform different roles within their employing organisations. However, it is also the case that many highly-motivated technicians make librarian-type contributions to their libraries. And it's as well they do so, because some librarians are merely minding the store.

The Association has sought to clarify the situation by producing a *Statement on the roles of librarians and library technicians*, *Work level guidelines for librarians and library technicians*, and more recently a *Draft Statement on library appointments*. None of these statements is completely satisfactory

because the objective of both librarians and library technicians is the same — to promote, establish and improve libraries and library services. It makes no sense to describe technicians in 'support' roles and librarians in 'leadership' roles when both groups are equally involved in the provision of service to consumers.

The library customer couldn't care less about the educational background of library staff. It only becomes an issue when service failure can be clearly linked to training. The customer wants information — not 'information from a librarian' or 'information from a technician'. The quality of the information supplied varies with the professionalism of the person supplying it — not with the membership category to which they belong.

The Corporate Plan and Review Committee is right on top of this one. It recommended (p.54) that the Association revert to four broad membership categories.

1. Professional Members;
2. Personal Members other than Professional Members;
3. Institutional Members; and
4. Student Members.

Whilst not spelled-out, category 1. members obviously include both technicians and librarians. There is no other applicable category. At last we have a more enlightened view of professional membership, and one which acknowledges the separate identities of both technicians and librarians. Librarian Members, certainly. Technician Members too. But both groups sharing the professional membership category, paying the same fees, and subscribing to the same goals.

Ours is a one-class airline.

Ian McCallum
President

INFORMATION ONLINE 87

Following the success of the exhibition at Information Online 86, planning for the 1987 exhibition is well advanced. Over 1800 people visited the exhibition at the Hilton Hotel in January this year, but non-librarians far outnumbered librarians!

Of the librarians, special librarians were the biggest group (399), followed by public librarians (91), academic and college librarians (76), and a few school or teacher librarians.

About 1240 representatives of other professions also visited the exhibition. 345 people employed in business, management, sales or who are self-employed, 180 from the sciences and engineering, 180 lecturers, tutors, teachers, and students, 150 from the computer industry, 90 exhibitors including the telecommunications industry, 75 who were either retired or did not indicate an occupation, 70 from the world of finance, 60 representing the media, publishers and the leisure industry, and the remainder included lawyers, doctors, health administrators, consuls and diplomats, police, architects and artists.

The exhibition for INFORMATION ONLINE 87 promises to be even more exciting. There are only a handful of vacant booths left, but in case there are any last minute cancellations, latecomers will be placed on a waiting list. Exhibition passes will be available free of charge again in 1987.

The opening function for the Exhibition in 1987, also promises to be an Australia Day evening to remember!

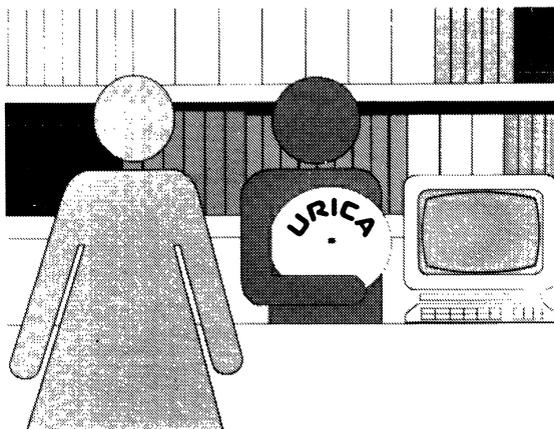
URICA. Simply the best library computer system ever invented.

Libraries have been central to mankind's store of knowledge for thousands of years. But only today, with the advent of the URICA Library System are librarians able to perform their proper function without being bogged down with routine clerical tasks.

URICA, tomorrow's software, available today

The URICA Library System runs on the Reality/Sequel range of Microdata computers.

Being the most sophisticated library system available today, it is ideally suited for use in a wide variety of library applications such as public libraries, regional libraries, major reference libraries, academic libraries, technical and professional libraries.



URICA helps librarians in:

- Enquiry
- Cataloguing
- Circulation
- OPAC (Online public access cataloguing)
- Acquisition
- Serials Control

Software packages available

- URICA86
- Mini-URICA
- Special-URICA

Library management with improved control

Amongst its many uses, URICA reduces the labour component of many clerical tasks, reduces the cost of creating and maintaining bibliographical data, provides information in the form of reports on the library's activities, and so provides library management with improved control over its resources and services.



AWA COMPUTERS

Adelaide (08) 333 2044
Brisbane (07) 369 3577
Canberra (062) 47 7522
Hobart (003) 34 4532
Melbourne (03) 529 4133

Perth (09) 321 9334
Sydney (02) 922 3300
Newcastle (049) 67 5433
Auckland 78 9055
Singapore 469 8822