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My career in the information profession began when I was only 19 years old, over 20 years ago. I started as a general Library Assistant at Manly public library: my main duties were working on the circulation desk, shelving books and shelf tidying. About six months later I was offered the position of Serials Assistant. Eighteen months down the track, I was offered the position of Inter-Library Loan Officer, and continued in this capacity for many years. Over time I have seen numerous changes in information and document delivery technologies.

In 1995 I enrolled in the Associate Diploma of the Arts (Library Practice) course, and completed this part-time, graduating with Distinction. My professional education didn't finish there. While Manly Library was being restructured – from October 1997 to March 1999 – I was seconded to the position of Client Services Librarian (Special Needs). During this time I enrolled in a part-time Information Technology TAFE course and completed the Certificate III in Information Technology.

In 2001 I decided it was time to begin my university education, as I found out I would receive advanced standing as a result of my previous library studies. So the following year I enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Information) course, and graduated from UTS in September 2005. This would be one of the best career decisions of my life, as time would later show.

Independent, lifelong or continuous learning is all about making intelligent choices and being accountable for your individual learning activities. Many scholars observe the need for lifelong or continuous learning: in today's climate all individuals need to take responsibility for their own continuing education and learning. This is one of the current issues facing the information profession. It is imperative that today's information professionals are proactive and take responsibility for their own learning, as there are decreased opportunities for those unwilling to increase their knowledge and skills in a competitive job market. I believe it is truly important to be a member of your professional association, to network and keep abreast developments in the library and information sphere.

In February last year I secured my dream job – working as Research Librarian at Fairfax Media. I work closely with editorial staff and journalists in the newsroom and within a small team of information professionals responsible for reference and research work. Reference enquiries are diverse, for example the extensive reference resources enable me to provide journalists with a history of the Prime Minister's approval ratings, a timeline of conflict in the Middle East, statistics on broadband uptake in Australia or a land title for a NSW property. My UTS degree, my extensive work experience in an information service which had a client-service environment (including vast exposure to electronic databases), helped secure me the position.

Just as technological changes affect information work, change also alters our physical setting. The library at Fairfax was restructured just before I started working there. Instead of a traditional, separate library, librarians have been moved onto the editorial floors,

with a certain number attached to each masthead. This is also a trend in other media libraries, both in Australia and overseas. The *Age* library has two staff situated on the editorial floor and the *Guardian* has a similar arrangement. We attend morning editorial conferences, making ourselves more visible and accessible. As a result, close working relationships have developed between journalists and librarians and the number and intricacy of reference enquiries has increased. Our services are in greater demand than ever before. The Research Library collections are many and varied. Data are represented in many forms, including books, microfilm, CDs, journals and magazines, newspapers and clipping files. Apart from providing reference services to journalists and non-editorial staff, I also assist in maintaining the catalogue of the library's collection, update the corporate intranet and our own library intranet page, and administer loans of the hard copy files and index cards.

Initially my role was a 12-month contract; as a result of my exceptional performance I have been offered a permanent part-time role three days a week. Working at Fairfax Media and in the world of current affairs and corporate media information is stimulating, no day is the same as the one before.



### Corporate library benchmarks

The 2007 edition of this report is the sixth survey of corporate libraries. It presents a broad range of data, broken out by size and type of organisation. It includes more than 250 tables and charts, and is based on data from 48 major US corporate and other business libraries of organisations with mean revenues of approximately \$3.6 billion.

Among the issues covered are spending trends on books, magazines, journals, databases, CD-ROM, directories and other information vehicles, plans to augment or reduce the scope and size of the corporate library; hiring plans, salary spending and personnel use, librarian research priorities by type of subject matter, policies on information literacy and library education, library relations with management, budget trends, breakdown in spending by the library vs. other corporate departments that procure information, librarian use of blogs and RSS feeds, level of discounts received from book jobbers, use of subscription agents and other issues of concern to corporate and other business librarians.

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