



Business is booming

At the time of writing, I have just spent four days involved in induction meetings with new members of the ALIA board, a Board meeting, the Annual General Meeting, a Board planning day with the new Board, and the annual ALIA Roundtable meeting with related

Associations and ALIA sectoral groups.

It's been a very 'business' week.

The Annual General meeting this year included a series of Notices of Motion received from an ALIA member. While none of those motions was successful the Association will improve the manner in which Notices of Motion are handled prior to the next Annual General Meeting and provide templates for members wishing to present motions.

In the other meetings many conversations around budgets, processes, and systems were held.

It is not that long ago that such a conversation would have been an anathema to a library or information professional. In some ways it never needed to be had, because the library may have been a more important selling point than the skills and customer service of the library staff who were servicing clients.

The panelled walls that embraced the corporate or government library or the rules that controlled the public library space provided a sense of obvious gravitas. As with early information technology professionals, librarians benefitted from the significance of the place in which they worked together with the mystery that surrounded what they did.

The work of the modern library and information professional has become an activity, not a place. The five-day, full-time week is an historical artefact for public librarians; clients of special and university libraries and information services want information now, they want it remotely, and often on a mobile device. The information sources that are used are often as available to the client as they are to the librarian or information worker.

Added to these challenges, the business responsibilities of providing an information service have in many cases devolved to the staff. The costs of providing the service, the management of those costs, choosing the systems that are required to

deliver the service, measuring the client satisfaction with the service and selling the benefits of the service against other business units competing for a share of funding are functions that professionals must perform today.

ALIA Training is delivering new and relevant courses that fill the need to provide many of these skills. The ALIA Professional Development scheme provides a measure for members to use when looking for that new or improved job that involves broader business skills. ALIA Groups also provide a wonderful resource for members to understand the issues and opportunities that impact colleagues in a similar sector or geographic location, to network and to seek and offer support.

Your association exists to support you in dealing with the challenges and reaping the rewards the profession continues to offer. We understand the business of being a library and information professional is becoming more demanding, challenging, and exciting.

For this profession, ever at the forefront of creating and leveraging improvements in information gathering, maintenance and dissemination, quite simply, it's business as usual.

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ALIA SNAPSHOT

LIW goes YouTube

Did you see our special YouTube video for Library and Information Week? If you missed it, check it out now: bit.ly/Koobky

Travelling overseas?

Don't forget your qualifications are recognised internationally thanks to ALIA's reciprocal recognition agreements. Holders of ALIA-accredited qualifications at graduate level may seek Charter membership of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) in the UK. Both the American Library Association (ALA) and the Canadian Library Association (CLA) accept ALIA-accredited LIS masters degrees. You can take advantage of these agreements while travelling, for job exchanges, secondments or a permanent move. For more information, visit www.alia.org.au/education/overseas/qualifications.html