

# COUNTER JUMPING

Back a century or so, a 'counter jumper' was a salesperson. The view from the other side of that counter can be markedly different from the one most of our members are used to, so for this special feature INCITE invited industry vendors to give us their insights into the business of the industry as it is now. All these vendors are getting ready to share their latest news and the benefit of their considerable experience with attendees at the ALIA Biennial Conference next month – here's just a sample of what they will be talking about.

## Full service focus: James Bennett

James Bennett has been a library supplier and book distributor for over four decades, supporting public, academic, TAFE, specialist and reference libraries and, for over 20 years, they have distributed selected publisher lists to the broader book trade including academic, trade, and specialist booksellers. General Manager of Library Services and Business Development for James Bennett, Nada Stanojlovic says change is coming thick and fast in her world.

**“THE DIGITAL WORLD CONTINUES TO CHANGE THE WAY WE DO BUSINESS”**

— NADA STANOJLOVIC, JAMES BENNETT

The industry has changed significantly since 1964 but the most dramatic changes have taken place in recent years. For us, the acquisition of James Bennett by Baker & Taylor continues an industry-wide trend toward consolidation and has given us access to knowledge, experience, systems, processes, and economies of scale. From broadening our product offerings and improving the supply chain, to accessing bibliographic data

and new shelf-ready workflows, the focus is on providing all the elements the customer requires.

The digital world continues to change the way we do business – from the content to how we receive information, and on to digital marketing (e-newsletters, social media, website and the like) The reference market was the first to make the most of the digital age and changes started there a decade ago. In more recent times, e-books have become popular. We have been selling e-books since 2004 through our partnership with EBL. We have had to design new workflows to facilitate acquisition of e-content and we now work with a number of vendors to provide digital products, which are enhanced by customer specific e-cataloguing. We are seeing universities and other educational and special libraries benefiting significantly from fast access to online content, and public libraries will follow as soon as availability of a wider range of suitable e-books and e-book models is offered.

The growth in outsourcing continues to provide challenges and opportunities and clients expect a full service solution for all library types. Last year we launched CLS – a service that offers comprehensive technical solutions for today's libraries and we have also completed ISO 2001 accreditation for our processing services.

Other challenges include the growth in self-publishing, independent authors, and facsimile editions that continue to grow our database. Having a database that covers books sourced worldwide is a challenge, multiple versions





of titles can be confusing, and the number of ISBNs that are now being allocated to wiki publishers has surprised us all.

Multimedia is also another challenge. The DVD and CD supply chain works very differently to the book supply chain and product availability changes in the blink of an eye, pricing can change multiple times in the first few weeks of a release, and there is more packaging of content for the consumer market. We now have a dedicated entertainment team to work with customers on their multimedia requirements.

You can meet James Bennett's public and academic library consultants at Stand 45-46 at the Biennial Conference next month or contact them via their website [www.bennett.com.au](http://www.bennett.com.au).

**"WITH THE EXPLOSION OF NICHE APPS AND ONLINE RESOURCES, THERE WILL BE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIBRARIES TO CEMENT THEIR REPUTATIONS AS THE PLACE TO MAKE SENSE OF IT ALL"**

– NATHAN CHANESMAN, MYCAREEMATCH

### Hub for niche services: MyCareerMatch

*What to do with the rest of your life has to be one of the biggest questions we ever consider. If you're at school or university there's a career adviser to help but once you leave school, you're on your own. Increasingly, the library is the first port of call for those wanting information to help make that decision. Nathan Chanesman of MyCareerMatch says from where he's standing, libraries seem to be taking a higher profile role as the 'go to' space for niche community support services.*

The development of online career resources was a natural step for our company following years of working with educational institutions profiling students to improve their career choices. Research shows that finding a career that matches our strengths is important for career longevity and personal achievement. There's the added benefit of less stress and better life balance working in a job that uses our strengths, rather than being in a job we're not good at, but given that the content, focus and even the names of post secondary qualifications can change unrecognisably between one year's student intake and the next, it's a confusing environment for both the potential student and anyone trying to help.

From working with the educational institutions over many years, we've seen how the library is increasingly important to people attempting to make an informed study and career choice, particularly for the growing numbers of mature age students who are long term library users in both the public library and academic library setting. This fits with the broader trend towards libraries as the central service point for their communities – as recently reported in the Sydney Morning Herald, it's now not unusual for a frontline library staffer to find themselves helping out with filling in forms and directing patrons to community support services. Undoubtedly new technologies for delivery of these services are

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helping to cement this 'go to' role for libraries and we think that's a great thing because it is real evidence to funding agencies of the value of libraries above and beyond the physical space they inhabit.

Research indicates that we have between four and seven jobs in our working lives now, where once we had just one or two, so there will be that many more instances where people need to update their knowledge about the options. It's just one example of how the community sees the library as their reliable resource of current information and, with the explosion of niche apps and online resources, there will be more opportunities for libraries to cement their reputations as the place to make sense of it all.

*My CareerMatch will be at the Biennial Conference on Stand 19. Drop by to find out more and see MyCareerMatch in action or email Nathan at [nathan@mycareermatch.com.au](mailto:nathan@mycareermatch.com.au).*

## Changing spaces: CAVAL

CAVAL's Manager of Copyright Permissions and Digitising Services, Sara Hearn, has been scanning recent articles and blog posts on the future of libraries and finding many predicted changes are already apparent in Australian libraries.

More technology is the main prediction but this seems somewhat obvious as libraries have been leaders in using technology for some time. Certainly, libraries continue to seek ways to support content on new platforms, the latest being devices such as e-book readers, tablets and smart phones. Libraries are also using social media to engage and interact with their communities, while digitising programs and crowdsourcing projects are enabling better community access to collections with unique content such as local history publications, minute books, photographs and family history records.

**"ANOTHER PREDICTION WE'VE SEEN IS THE NEED TO PROVIDE BETTER RESOURCES FOR SPEAKERS OF LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH"** – SARA HEARN, CAVAL

Another prediction we've seen is the need to provide better resources for speakers of languages other than English (LOTE). Australia has been a leader in delivering multicultural resources via its libraries but this need is only increasing.

The use of equipment that automates materials handling is also a major change. For example, university libraries are investing in automated dispensing systems which allow 24/7 access to high-use collections and automated sorting systems to manage the return of items.

But probably the most obvious change, already apparent, is the emphasis on the library as a community space. Many libraries are creating more open, social spaces for their users providing access to the library's and wider collections and resources digitally.

For academic and research libraries, change in allocation of space from physical collections to patron use is creating a need for alternative storage for low-use collections that continue to be required to support researchers. Although, sometimes reported in the mainstream press as controversial, offsite storage is a logical and cost-efficient solution for low-use collections. Discovery systems enable access to these collections and items are easily provided through document delivery or un-mediated interlibrary loan systems which deliver digital copies directly to researchers' desktops.

*You'll find CAVAL's products and experts at the Biennial Conference on Stand 17 or you can email Sara at [sara.hearn@caval.edu.au](mailto:sara.hearn@caval.edu.au).*

## Smart money: Raeco

Raeco's Marketing Manager Kellie Griffith says the library and information industry is as dynamic as ever. Given technological advancements, she says she has seen more change in the industry in recent years than ever before.

At Raeco, we're finding customers are becoming more price conscious and have fewer resources available, resulting in a need for efficiency improvements and a greater focus on strategic purchasing. While quality is still very important, particularly as furniture really should be able survive for a number of years in a high-use commercial environment, some purchase decisions are being

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made purely on price with little regard to longevity – making furniture disposable after only a couple of years.

We are seeing library space being put to more efficient use too, with a trend towards flexible furniture that can be easily relocated to maximise the library environment. This is driving demand for mobile furniture supplied on castors, flip tables and a preference for mobile shelving solutions over static options.

Global furniture trends reveal a number of new product innovations which will likely make their way into Australian libraries over the coming years, including reduced desk sizes

(as appropriate for tablets and laptops over desktop PCs), collaborative and flexible seating, advancements in ergonomics (particularly in task chairs), and a shift away from desks in favour of chairs with inbuilt tablet arms.

In terms of colour trends, designers are advocating white and natural timbers as the popular colours for 2012/2013 but we also know libraries still like to appeal to the communities they

serve with a splash of colour. Lime, purple, orange and red are still key favourites.

Check out Raeco's offerings at Stand 50 in the conference exhibition or email Kellie Griffith at [support@raeco.com.au](mailto:support@raeco.com.au).

**"WE ARE SEEING LIBRARY SPACE BEING PUT TO MORE EFFICIENT USE TOO, WITH A TREND TOWARDS FLEXIBLE FURNITURE THAT CAN BE EASILY RELOCATED TO MAXIMISE THE LIBRARY ENVIRONMENT" – KELLIE GRIFFITH, RAECO**

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