
Book Reviews

GASH, Sarah EFFECTIVE LITERATURE SEARCHING FOR RESEARCH. Aldershot, Gower. Second edition 2000. 133 pages, paperback, 21.5 cms. ISBN: 0 566 08125 3. Price: £12.95.

The first edition of this book *Effective Literature Searching for Students* was published in 1989. The change of title indicates an attempt to appeal to a wider audience, the ability to locate published information being a useful transferable skill. Containing Prefaces to both editions, the author suggests the basic principles of literature searching have remained valid, with additional strategies developing to cope with changes in information technology. The structure of the first edition has been retained and augmented to take account of this, including a new chapter on Internet searching, with all references reviewed and updated.

With years of experience as both librarian and lecturer in information seeking skills and business information studies Sarah Gash has an excellent understanding of what is required of students and researchers. Beginning with a definition of what a literature search actually is and why it is necessary, the needs of novice searchers are taken into account, whilst reinforcing the importance of the process for jaded researchers who may need a gentle reminder. Moving on to the importance of preparation, we are reminded of some print formats, such as dictionaries and encyclopedias that can be easily overlooked, especially by those who believe that these days the Internet is the font of all knowledge.

After the groundwork comes the systematic search that the book recommends carrying out in a sequence of six stages - from library catalogue to institutions and people. Electronic and online sources are discussed next, including a brief history, an explanation of the various database structures (interesting to librarians but do other researchers really need to know this?) and Boolean searching. At this point the book at times seems a little dated, for example mediated searches are discussed at length and although they are of interest and should be mentioned, in this reviewer's experience they are somewhat of a rarity in the modern academic

library. There is, however, a very useful list of points for researchers to consider when preparing a search strategy, applicable to any type of electronic source.

The next chapter is devoted to Internet searching, with some suggestions for further reading. The researcher is advised to view this source with caution, for all the well-known reasons. The chapter answers questions such as - what is a search engine, describing differences between automated search engines, classified directories and subject specific gateways amongst others. There is also another useful list of tips for searching the Internet and a reminder of other facilities such as ftp, gopher and Usenet newsgroups. Consideration is then given to manual versus online versus Internet searching.

Although this review has concentrated rather more on the chapters containing the new developments, the following four chapters are equally important and offer useful advice on keeping records, obtaining and evaluating the material, writing references and citing references in the text. They all contain practical advice, discussion of advantages and disadvantages of various methods where appropriate and although detailed enough to be a useful reference book for any researcher, the novice is kept in mind at all times.

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HAYWOOD, Trevor ONLY CONNECT: SHAPING NETWORKS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM. East Grinstead, Bowker Saur. 1999. 296 pages, hardback, 22cms. ISBN: 1 85739 216 7 Price: £35.00

Congratulations must go to the author for this thought provoking and stimulating read. The author uses the infamous words from E.M Forster's *Howard's End* 'only connect' as a means of introducing this wide ranging book which attempts to shed light on the topic of communications and knowledge transfer, especially in relation to the use and impact of electronic networks. This is not an academic textbook, but much more a lively discursive analysis which looks at the historical, sociological and management impact of information and communications technologies (ICT) from their inception to the present time.

Chapters include a useful introduction and chronology of key events in the field of media, computing and communications which is right up to date; the historical background to ICT in terms of putting some context and analysis on the formative events of the last century; discussion of the impact of ICT in terms of shaping society; the changing face of telecommunications; the Internet and communications in organisations. The author explores the issues from a human and sociological viewpoint, which provides a means of placing technologies in a contextual framework; as he says 'almost every day sees a new technology that is heralded as helping us to do it better..cataloguing the seminal moments of the twenty years to 2020 will inevitably include some of this technological wizardry, but the defining moments are unlikely to be dominated by it'.

I found the chapter on the 'connecting organization' particularly interesting in terms of analyzing the nature of communications in organisations, both internally and externally and the impact this has on the success or otherwise of that entity. This chapter also explores the issues of employee communications and the barriers to doing this effectively.

In reading this book, my thoughts were drawn to Marshall McLuhan's *the Medium is the Massage*, written over thirty years ago, in which he explores and makes prophesies about the electronic age,

saying then that 'electronic technology is reshaping and restructuring patterns of social interdependence and every aspect of our personal life'. Trevor Haywood explores these themes with clarity and insight, and his broad research interests in the areas of economics and information, knowledge creation and public policy are apparent in his writing.

This book will be of interest to many groups of readers from students of information management and management more generally, those studying or teaching media and communications technologies and to all managers and individuals concerned with the technological and human impact of these technologies.

This book provides an immensely enjoyable as well as informative read, well written and well researched. I feel that this is a 'must read' for anyone interested in this subject.

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**MORT, David (ed) RESEARCHING
MARKETS BY INDUSTRY SECTORS: A
GUIDE TO SOURCES AND SERVICES.**

London, Headland Business Information. 1999. 113 pages, paperback, 30cms. ISBN: 1 85739 233 7
Price: £95.00

David Mort is a co-founder of Information Research Network, an independent market research and business information company, and was formerly manager of Warwick Business Information Service, a commercial information service supplying statistical data from the University of Warwick Library. He has written a number of guides to statistics, including *UK statistics: a guide for business users* (Gower, 1992) and *Sources of unofficial UK statistics* (Fourth Edition, Gower, 2000).

The aim of the present book is to offer "an introduction to the main sources of business information on the leading agricultural, industrial, building, and service sectors in the UK". It has a chapter on general sources of business information, covering company directories, statistics, and market research. There are then 15 chapters each devoted to a particular sector: Mining, Energy and Utilities; Metals; Agriculture, Food and Drink; Chemicals; Engineering; Electronics, Telecommunications and Computers/IT; Textiles and Clothing; Construction; Financial Services; Transport; Retailing and Wholesaling; Hospitality and Tourism; Publishing and Media; Advertising, Public Relations and Market Research; Education and Healthcare; and Other Services. It is worth reading the introduction to each chapter to get a clearer idea of its coverage. For example, Publishing and Media is divided into General publishing, newspapers and magazines; Book publishing; Television, radio and cinema; and New media. And Other Services covers Leisure; Local government; and Property. It is important to use the individual sector chapters in conjunction with the chapter on general sources of business information, and also to read between the lines! For instance, in the chapter on Hospitality and Tourism you will find no mention of the Key Note reports on the sector, and in the general chapter it says that Key Note reports cover over 220 consumer and industrial market sectors but it does not specify them.

To be fair, the guide does not claim to be comprehensive, but to offer pointers to the types of information available for each sector. Each chapter or part of a chapter is therefore divided into Company information and industry directories; Trade press; Market data and statistics; Internet; and Associations and information sources, as appropriate. The sources which have been included have been limited to those which are generally available and should be easily located.

For each printed or electronic source listed, there is a concise description of its coverage. This is followed for printed sources by publication details such as the frequency of publication and the price. For each association, there is a brief description of its activities. And for all sources there are contact details for obtaining further information (including URL). Prices will quickly become out of date, but it is nevertheless helpful to know the order of magnitude, such as whether something costs roughly £50 or £500. Unfortunately, prices are not quoted for a number of the sources listed.

A few minor improvements could have been made to the layout of the text. There are quite a lot of "orphans" (headings at the bottom of one column but the text to which they refer at the top of the next). Though, generally, bold, italic and a variety of font sizes have been used sensibly for headings and for the titles of sources, where chapters have been divided into sections, it is not immediately obvious where each section begins. For example, the chapter on Hospitality and Tourism is divided into two sections: Catering and Hotels; and Travel and Tourism. But, in small italics, these two headings do not stand out: they need to be larger and in bold type.

There is a good index, which is to be commended for including the titles of all the sources and organisations listed in the directory. But it would have benefitted from more rigorous editing in parts. For example, Energy World is listed in its proper place under E, but The Energy World Yearbook is under T; and there are entries both for Hotel & Catering International Management Association and for Hotel and Catering International Management Association but not for its commonly used acronym HCIMA.

The publishers claim that the sector by sector approach of this guide is unique. In fact, the *Macmillan directory of UK business information sources* by James Tudor (Third Edition, 1992) is similar, as it arranges its information by Standard Industrial Classification. However, the present arrangement would certainly seem to be useful for the researcher or student with a specific market in mind. Many other guides to business information have separate chapters on different types of publication (company information, patents, standards, market research, statistics and so on) and, though these guides may be more comprehensive in their coverage, the information relating to a particular market tends to be scattered. In short, the present volume and its companion *Market research sourcebook*, also edited by David Mort, (Headland Business Information, 1998) will be useful additions to the reference shelves of any library which deals with business information.

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PENFOLD, Sharon CHANGE MANAGEMENT FOR INFORMATION SERVICES. London, Bowker-Saur, 1999. 205 pages, hardback, 24 cms. ISBN: 1 85739 281 7. Price: £35.

As one of the *Information Services Management Series* from Bowker-Saur, this well-presented book sets out to equip the information professional with those management skills applying specifically to the planning and implementation of change. The author approaches the subject from the assumption that as a profession we lack, not only the skills and experience to successfully deal with change, but, more crucially, the positive, and receptive, attitude required.

The book admirably sets its own context, beginning with an intelligent and thoughtful series of status reports which review the information profession, the Information Age and knowledge management. Direct quotes from key contemporary texts support and complement the main issues raised. Although these threaten to overwhelm the original text in a

few places, the author very neatly draws in the threads to provide a cohesive summary in the form of SWOT and PEST analyses. It is good to see sound management theory put into practice early on in the book.

Chapter 5 is the central chapter of the book – in more ways than one. It encapsulates the author's thesis, which identifies the need for change within the information profession and what the nature of that change could be, in the form of challenges and threats. The fundamental point outlined is that information services do not exist in a bubble but are part of global human development; societal and organisational change are key influences on how we manage those services. Integral to this is the need to change personally, to adapt and develop those skills and techniques that will assist the process of change within the information services context.

The remainder of the book aims to address that need. Starting with a review of change management theory to provide a "toolkit of methods", we then have a chapter devoted to the application of that theory to information services. This is rounded off by a series of case studies exemplifying the application of the theory.

I found the toolkit somewhat overwhelming though I can understand the need to catalogue a comprehensive list of approaches from which one can select those most appropriate. Some of that selection is done for us as the author expounds more thoroughly on key techniques to apply to an information services framework for change: *inter alia*, skills audit, SWOT and PEST reviews, information mapping, SMART planning. For anyone seeking to use this text as a practical guide to managing change, this chapter is excellent and very accessible.

The case studies make interesting reading though they are all large commercial or academic information services. It would have been useful to see how change management techniques might have differed in one-person special libraries or multi-branched public libraries. Admittedly, this lack of breadth is mitigated by a very useful reference list of case study literature. As the case studies were lifted from external sources, they lack consistency in style and structure which means comparative study of them is not straightforward.

The text is completed with an extensive and up-to-date bibliography which will assist the reader in extending their knowledge of the changing nature of the information profession and relevant aspects of management theory.

In summary, a well-written and very useful addition to the literature of information services management.

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ADAIR, Sarah (ed.) INFORMATION SOURCES FOR THE PRESS AND BROADCAST MEDIA.

East Grinstead, Bowker-Saur. Second edition 1999. 242 pages, hardcover, 24 cms. ISBN: 1 85739 261 2 Price: £45.00

This is the second edition of a valuable part of the 'Guides to information sources' series. As with the first edition published nearly a decade ago, this takes a slightly different approach to the topic from that which is taken by others in the series. This difference in emphasis is that the Guide is not an attempt to give the reader an exhaustive (or even selective) directory of the range of sources available in the press and broadcast media, but rather an attempt to show three things:

- what sources exist
- how journalists and other media professionals use them
- to what extent the information professional has a role to play in this sector.

The second difference in the new edition is that, as the editor says in her introduction, this is not a replacement for the first edition. This new edition is rather a complement to it – only one chapter of the second edition (that on sound archives) is a direct updating of one in the first edition.

The current edition has much the same intended audience as did the first – those working, or

interested, in the media in all its forms. The Guide would be of use to those studying and analysing the media industry as much as it would to those working within it. There are, also, a number of more general chapters which cover areas which have been the subject of some debate within the information professions - a good example of this is Barbara Semonche's chapter on information quality on the Web.

The other chapters are well-chosen and are of more general applicability than some of those in the first edition (which had a number of very specific chapters). The case studies which are included not only give a good insight into information use within the particular organisations but also provide a very useful list of sources. Annabel Colley's chapter on the role of the BBC TV programme researcher, in particular, has a fairly extensive annotated list of sites and sources that might be of use. Whilst many of these sources may already be known to the audience, there are a number here which may not be and her annotations are helpful in offering a quick guide to the types of information each source provides.

A number of chapters cover the more technical side of the information sources debate. Patricia Baird's chapter on creating the electronic picture library and Gertrud Erbach and Lynda Iley's chapter on the creation of an intranet at News International are cases in point. The former outlines the options available for digitisation, the latter gives an outline of how News International went about setting up their intranet. These chapters give a much-needed insight into the infrastructure needed for information sources to be properly used.

All in all, this second edition is an excellent complement to the first. The gap in time between the two allows this edition to update without superseding the first. For instance, Justin Arundale's chapter on information management in the first edition, whilst slightly dated, is still a helpful covering of the issues. The chapters in this new edition are timely and current, with much to commend the collection.

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WILSON, Thomas D. and ALLEN, David K.
EXPLORING THE CONTEXTS OF
INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR. London, Taylor
Graham. 1999. 625 pages, paperback, 23 cms.
ISBN: 0 947568 75 1 Price: £65.00

This rather large paperback provides the papers presented at the second international conference on research in information needs, seeking and use in different contexts, held in Sheffield in 1998. It comprises the text of 43 papers, broadly divided into the themes of: Keynotes (there are five of them!); Theoretical Perspectives; Health Services Context; Everyday Life; Work Environment; Organisation of Information; and Information Systems Perspective. No record of any discussion after the papers is given, and there is no index.

Inevitably, the papers vary greatly in style, length, rigour of approach and content. Fortunately, only one or two, such as the first of the keynote papers by Introna, manage to combine irrelevance with obscurantism. The large majority are both readable and highly relevant to the theme. Overall, I found the authors taking a post-modern, post-structuralist or critical realist approach least convincing.

Some of the authors address theoretical questions, and many describe the results of recent experiments, or simply give brief descriptions of work in progress. Some of the papers, such as Wilson's and Spink's, provide excellent overviews of the current state of theoretical play. Others, such as that by Audunson, offer intriguing ideas for links between the field of research and other research specialisms. In this case, the analogy between whether juries find a defendant guilty or not guilty is compared to users finding information to be relevant or not relevant. Pettigrew's paper draws attention to the importance of touch in information flows between nurses and patients. Many years ago, a notable experiment in the USA demonstrated that library users were significantly more satisfied with the service they had received if they had just been touched by a member of library staff, and this is a topic that deserves further study. Other papers offer fascinating insights into largely unexplored territory, such as Green and Davenport's study of why and how people use popular media, and Ross' work on why and how people use pleasure reading (mainly fiction) to gain information. For example, the wish to impress someone one is attracted to by obtaining

information on a topic known to be of interest to that other person appears to be a major motivation in information seeking. Many of the papers provide good descriptions of mainstream research in progress.

There are a small number of typographical errors. There is also some inconsistency in the way that authors cite their references. Some cited papers are not given their full bibliographic citations – they can be easily identified as they are highlighted with *** in the bibliography after the paper. One or two authors adopt the annoying habit of citing unpublished works in their bibliography. I found only one outright error, the claim that the copyright in Medline is shared between the NLM and Silver Platter. It is owned by NLM alone, and I suspect the authors were referring specifically to the copyright in the CD-ROM of Medline supplied by Silver Platter. In some papers, mathematical results with far too many digits are given, and at other times figures do not total to 100% when they should.

Despite these minor niggles, and the presence of a small number of rather odd papers, the book can be strongly recommended to all undertaking research in this important area, and also to those teaching and learning information seeking. Those undertaking research will find much of interest and will gain ideas for novel approaches by reading the book cover to cover. Students should, however, be guided to those specific chapters that are of most use to their studies.

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MURPHY, Alison SURVEY OF NHS LIBRARIES: STATISTICS FROM THE NHS REGIONAL LIBRARIANS GROUP 1997-98.

Loughborough, LISU, 1999. 41pp. A4 spiral bound. ISBN 1 901786 21 8 Price: £17.50.

MURPHY, Alison PUBLIC LIBRARY MATERIALS FUND AND BUDGET SURVEY 1998-2000.

Loughborough, LISU, 1999. 266pp. A4 spiral bound. ISBN 1 901 786 20 X Price: £27.50.

BOHME, Steve and SPILLER, David PERSPECTIVES OF PUBLIC LIBRARY USE 2: A COMPENDIUM OF SURVEY INFORMATION.

Loughborough, LISU, 1999. 301pp. A4 paperback. ISBN 1 901786 14 5 Price: £75.00.

The Library and Statistics Unit at Loughborough University continues to gather, edit, compile and publish statistical information that is of great value to the library profession in the UK, and provides a source of data for librarians overseas. The quality is high, both in content and presentation.

The data presented for **NHS libraries** relates to **1997-8** and was collected by the **NHS Regional Librarians Group**. It provides information on expenditure, sources of funding, provision of services, resources and their use, analysis of potential and actual user populations, and physical accommodation and hours of opening. Looking at it as a lay person involved with NHS administration, the data presents a picture of variation around the UK. Now while this is interesting to the internal management of the NHS, one data item that would have been valuable would be the population in the communities served by each of the regions. In earlier editions, data were provided for each service point, but as this has grown, it has been aggregated into regions. This is terrific if you want to make regional comparisons, but it might also have been helpful if it had been possible to make some comparisons within regions which could be accessed at the community at large. As a resident of Wales, a comparison can be made between the magnificent service provided by Prof. Lancaster at the University of Wales College of Medicine, located in Cardiff, and the small collections available in the rural hospitals of Wales. When the community is pressing for improved health care, little is heard about the vital support services provided for the clinical staff.

Having made that point, the statistics provided were derived from an 89% response rate which is high. We learn that nurses form the largest group of potential users, followed by non-clinical staff, and then medical and clinical staff. The highest actual usage was also by nurses, followed by students, the medical and then the non-clinical staff. Making comparisons of expenditure was less easy due to variable accounting procedures, but generally the libraries spend half their budgets on staff, and roughly twice as much on journals as on books. Electronic information accounted for around 5% of the overall budget or nearly £1.5m per year. There was some variation in spending on journals and electronic information within the regions. It will be interesting to see how expenditure on electronic information changes as more regions have improved access to the Internet.

The **Public library materials fund and budget survey** is important for it provides the out turn data for 1997/8, the original and actual expenditure for 1998/9, and estimates for 1999/2000. The summary indicates that 1998/9 was the first year in which the total materials expenditure has increased over the previous year since 1994/5. However a 2.9% increase follows three years of substantial decreases, and is well below the increases in book and periodical prices for that period. The total library expenditure rose by 1.4% compared with 2.1% in the Retail Price Index, but there is a projected increase of 2.7% for 1999/2000. Staff numbers reduced by 1.7% and, perhaps surprisingly, mainly affected non-professional staff.

In the commentary the compiler has classified authorities according to their comparative funding position – high, low or average, relative to each sector – deduced from their 1997/8 per capita expenditure. So, to select some examples at random: Tower Hamlets has had a substantial increase from a low position; Birmingham a substantial increase from an average position; and Manchester a substantial increase from a high position. But conversely: Barnsley is the only authority to have a substantial decrease from a low position; Gwynedd a substantial decrease from an average position; and North Lanarkshire a substantial decrease from a high position. There is a considerable volume of useful information for benchmarking by managers of local authorities, for chief librarians for planning, for local authority members for contemplation, and

users for lobbying. Let's hope that a copy is placed at each service point so that users can examine them.

Perspectives of public library use 2 is the second in a compilation of survey information and follows England and Sumsion's *Perspectives of public library use*, published in 1995. It is designed to be a reference tool for use by public librarians as a basis for planning and decision-making since it includes book marketing data, government reports, research carried out within public library services and by independent research organisations, and academic departments including relevant theses. It is arranged by topic, and in covering surveys selects the most relevant data and tables.

The design and layout is clear and, although it is intended as a reference tool, can also be read sequentially to provide an overview of the state of public libraries in the UK. Students are likely to find it a source of topics for assignments and a foundation for theses. As a form of continuing professional development it should be required reading for professional and many non-professional staff, particularly the section which covers information and communications technology. The authors provide a valuable service by bringing together sources of information that are not otherwise easily and quickly gathered together.

These comments do not do full justice to the volumes when condensed into a short review. The three volumes are all informative, and - even to someone who is not involved with decision-making - provide fascinating reading. Who said that statistics were dull?

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