Guest editorial: bites, bits, and video games: the changes ahead by James M. Matarazzo

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Abstract

Special and research **libraries** are experiencing growing and conflicting pressures in a rapidly changing environment. At the same time that organizations are increasingly viewing information as central to their competitive position in the marketplace, there has been a veritable explosion in the amount of information available for review and analysis. The result is that today and even more so tomorrow, it will be more—not less—difficult to find and utilize information for effective decision making, research, and publications.

In many respects, the special and research **libraries** have been the unwitting recipients of this apparent paradox. Caught between the demand for delivering better, faster, and more information and knowledge on the one hand, and the difficulty of identifying, retrieving, and synthesizing information and knowledge on the other hand, the role and place of these information centers of tomorrow are undergoing considerable debate. At one extreme, some would argue that traditional **library** functions should be largely outsourced and many services transferred to the end-user. Others would view the core **library** functions as providing the springboard for enterprise-wide policies and procedures regarding information and **knowledge management.**

In light of the above discussion, we conducted a study in 1997 and again in 2000. We selected a number of U.S. corporations and research **libraries** as grappling with this underlying dilemma. More specifically, this research was concerned with the direction in which special and research librarians and information managers saw their own **libraries** moving in the future.

The subject **libraries** were selected largely because of their presence in industry and the academy, and because they were large organizations with at least some global presence. Structured interviews were conducted with the head of information and **library** sciences within each organization. To insure candid responses those in the survey were assured of confidentiality.

Article Outline

References

1. Teresa Frydryk, "Our Basic Education and Training," in the *MLS Renewal for Special Libraries Proceedings* (Boston: Special Libraries Association, Simmons College GSLIS, 2001).

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