

Crowdsourcing the Big Questions at Internet Librarian International - the Library Innovation Conference

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ILI is all about responding to challenge through innovation. When putting together the conference programme, we aim to create a forum for delegates to share ideas, learn new skills, hear about new tools and technology and make unexpected connections. The aim is always to help delegates discover new approaches, practical skills and strategies that will make a difference to their organisations, clients and communities.

This, however, is easier said than done. ILI delegates come from all library and information sectors, from public to academic to government and corporate settings. And they are a very international bunch - delegates often come from more than thirty countries. So they bring a variety of experiences, and face a wide range of challenges. That said, as delegates chat over coffee or a glass of wine, it's the similarities more than the differences that always seem to come to the fore.

This year, we wanted to find a new way to harness this diversity of experience when putting together the conference programme. As always, ILI's international advisory board have been busily collaborating via Skype, social media and Google docs to shape this year's topics and speakers.

In addition, for the first time, we've been keeping the conversation going with over one hundred previous ILI delegates, who have helped us to develop this year's programme by telling us about their professional interests, challenges and ambitions. Throughout the year we've asked our Panel about what they want to see, hear, learn and even eat!

Panel members have generously shared their current challenges as they develop or enhance their services. And despite their varied backgrounds, some common themes strongly emerged:

- Engagement, communication and visibility - communicating services and resources, promoting awareness and visibility among users
- Justification of library services and expertise; making users, senior management, stakeholders and funders aware of the library's relevance and value

- Ever-increasing formats - the transition from print to digital; disseminating multi-changing formats to a wide range of preferred user platforms without reducing functionality; the provision of consistent authentication methods
- Staffing: how to develop staff and expand skills and expertise
- Budgets - working with limited budgets in order to avoid gaps in collections and not meeting user needs
- Physical space and layout - study areas, navigation, orientation, making it work with limited resources
- Understanding and making the most of user behaviour in 'digital spaces'

These themes have in turn shaped the development of six conference tracks:

- The learning library; the learning librarian
- New tech for a new world
- Engagement: real impact on real communities
- Understanding users and influencing use
- Improving search and supporting research
- Setting digital content free

In addition, two 'big questions' emerged from the Panel: how do info pros influence others about how important they (and their services) are, and how do they compete with Google? These challenges will be explored in depth in dedicated conference sessions, and returned to through the six main tracks.

We hope all these elements will combine to create an unparalleled forum for sharing, learning and enhancing delegates' professional skills and the value of the services they offer.

ILL - the library innovation conference - will take place at Olympia Conference Centre in London on the 18th & 19th October 2016. UKeIG will once again be partnering with ILL, enabling members to claim a 25% discount. The Tony Kent Strix and Jason Farradane Awards will be presented during the conference. The former is in recognition of an outstanding contribution to the field of information retrieval, the latter in wider recognition of an outstanding contribution to the information profession.

UKeIG members will be able to access their 25% discount, and online registration will be open early in July. Meanwhile, copies of this year's full event programme can be reserved at: www.internet-librarian.com.

ILL is co-located with launch event, **Taxonomy Boot Camp London**
www.taxonomybootcamp.com/London

Further information from organisers, Information Today:

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