

metadata; developing a content management strategy; technology options and costs; making the business case; the CMS business; managing the project; writing a statement of requirements; the selection process; implementation; content migration, and resources. I found the chapter on content management strategy particularly useful; the author notes that there has been a welcome and long-overdue shift from seeing a website as a repository of information that the organization thinks would be useful to a visitor to seeing a website through the eyes of a user. He covers the use of personas to develop an information architecture for a site.

It is gratifying that information professionals get a plug, but not surprising given its publisher. However, I did wonder that putting this plug at the beginning might put off other readers, e.g. IT or communications managers who might be leading CMS projects. In the introduction Martin White claims that there is "virtually no area ... where information professionals cannot make a significant and on-going contribution to the effective management of content, and thus information and knowledge, in any organization that is struggling to cope with business in the 21st century." And it is true that information professionals have a role in metadata, search, information architecture, and information and content audits. It would have been a bonus to have case studies included, a feature of Orna's Practical Information Policies that I found particularly interesting. In this there is only one, on personas used by a university project. Martin White's approach represents the ideal; sometimes it is useful to learn lessons from projects where the ideal staffing or time was just not available.

There are a few signs of hasty editing and some gremlins, but these are minor and do not detract from the usefulness of this book. The annotated list of resources is especially useful. When there are so many websites and books on content management, it is helpful to focus on those recommended by an expert. The index is reliable. Each chapter has a summary of key points, handy for showing to project sponsors, for example. Throughout the text there are diagrams, summary tables, and a very useful chart to assess if you need a CMS at all, on which you can score the weight of your current content management problems.

Highly recommended. You could read this in a day or two and feel confident in embarking on a content management project.

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The information society: a study of continuity and change. 4th ed

John Feather. London: Facet Publishing, 2005
ISBN 1-85604-497-1 240pp £22.95

This book was first published in 1994 and has reached its fourth edition. It is intended for students on courses in information studies, librarianship and communications. Within the broad area of communications, students of media, media production and multimedia will also find it useful. This book enables students to gain a basic understanding of the social, political and professional issues which are being generated by our growing dependence on computer networks in almost every aspect of our lives. To quote, "we have carefully avoided extended discussions of some of the underlying theoretical issues about the nature and concept of information." At one level the computer is an empowering tool which gives unprecedented access to information and to communications; at another it might be seen as an implement of control, giving unlimited power to those who control the information that it stores. Feather sees the central dilemma of the information society as how to resolve that issue.

This wide-ranging book covers the information-dependent society we live in by covering the historical, economic and political contexts. The historical context is that of writing, printing and other systems of communication. The economic context is the commodification of information and the means of its storage and transmission, covered here in chapters on the information market-place and access to information. Politically there is power to be derived from the possession of information and a loss of empowerment caused by its absence. Feather covers the political dimension in chapters on information rich and information poor, and information, the state and the citizen. The final chapter looks at the information profession: a domain delineated.

Feather considers the information paradox: that technology has made more information more available to more people than at any time, but made access to it more difficult. He goes into some depth in the latter part of the book about the debate on the boundaries of the legitimate information needs of a democratic state. The traditional book publishing model is covered in some detail because the process has become the paradigm of information transfer. Feather tracks the critical shift in structure of the information market place; that the commodification is extended from the product to its contents and the means of accessing its contents.

Naturally the Internet is covered, and he contrasts the power of the internet as against the power of transnational media groups: "The ubiquitous URL is the symbol of the revolution."

He is positive, as the potential for greater access to information has been created by the very technologies which have made it possible and perhaps even necessary to restrict that same access.

The most interesting section for me was that on data protection and personal privacy, reflecting on the use and holding of personal data by the public and private sector. He does not mention the amount of information held on 'loyalty' cards, perhaps of concern when £1 in every £8 spent on shopping is spent at Tesco supermarkets. He is correct in stating that intellectual property, data protection and freedom of information all exemplify different aspects of the three-way relationship between information itself, that state and the individual citizen. The state's role here has been to intervene in the chain of communication between the source and the user of information.

The final section on the information professional notes that the disaggregation and recombination of skills...is typical of the changes brought by computers in the information world; traditional boundaries are being eroded and there is convergence between traditionally separate activities.

I hope this book will have further editions. There are so many developments of relevance. Perhaps the next edition will find newspapers declining even further; in this edition Feather talks about media finding ways to survive as newspapers in a society in which they are not the preferred news medium. Personally I hope ID cards do not get adopted here, but if they do get through, Feather will no doubt have a useful perspective on them. There will also be in place by then the electronic patient record for the health service (assuming this will be one of the public sector IT projects that succeeds). This includes the concept of an electronic "sealed envelope" into which will be placed any information that patients want to be kept confidential.

Feather sees the critical test of freedom of information in the UK as "whether the ingrained culture of secrecy in British government will change; early indications are not uniformly encouraging. He mentions that a new argument is that the control of flows of information is an essential weapon in the 'war' [sic] against international terrorism and criminality. In the scholarly publishing world there is the development of open access journals.

Rather than a bibliography of endless sources, there is a useful note on further reading. This guides the novice to the best books on the various topics discussed as well as what to read regularly.

As with all Facet books, the production is of a very high standard; well typeset with elegant fonts, and sturdy binding even in paperback. The index is decent, although it misses knowledge management, which is discussed briefly and some readers may wonder about

- are we in a knowledge economy or an information society?

Facet Publishing's website includes a sample chapter at time of writing: Chapter 5: information rich and information poor

[<http://www.facetpublishing.co.uk/286.pdf>]

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The Academic Library 2nd ed.
Peter Brophy. London: Facet Publishing, 2005
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This introductory textbook is described as providing "a comprehensive overview of the changing functions of higher education libraries and the organisational cultures in which they operate". Topics include the historical context, the library within the institution; the increasingly heterogeneous user population; the impact of ICT, library systems and networks; resource and access management issues; performance indicators and the measurement of impact; the academic library building; human resources and professional matters; and future trends.

The approach taken for much of the book is primarily historical and focused on the UK. For example chapter 5 "The impact and opportunities of ICT" is devoted to a summary of the many government funded e-lib projects of the nineties, many of which are listed by name. However I looked in vain in the index for a reference to open url, SFX, deep linking or link resolver or indeed metasearch, cross searching or single search. However these techniques are widely used in academic libraries today to provide direct access to content in multiple sources. This functionality is also a key selling point for major library management systems yet no reference to it is made in chapter 8 "Library systems".

Also not to be found in the index was any mention of Google or indeed search engines as a concept. However any discussion of undergraduates or information skills must be incomplete without recognition of the impact widespread access to the internet and to search tools must have.

After so much history I turned with particular interest to the last chapter "The academic library of the future". Brophy identifies headline trends in the context of the opportunities and threats they offer. The section on information resources discusses the future of electronic v. print, the development of eprint repositories and their impact on the publishing industry, the role of electronic books for textbooks and scholarly monographs and the concept of learning object repositories. Then he touches on the future impact of household gadgetry, televisions and games monitors