

Sector: Libraries

1. Major change drivers impacting on the sectors in the industry, now and over the next five years.

Internal Industry Issues

a. Current

- Recruitment in the profession. The public doesn't understand the complexity and breadth of work undertaken so people with the right personality and skills are not encouraged to enter the industry.
- Information technology sector is encroaching on many traditional library areas e.g. Knowledge Management, Information Systems, Information Management.
- Digitisation of collections – move from print based to electronic.
- Rapid growth of information which includes the issues of storage, retrieval and acquisition.
- Internet and free versus fee-based and verifiable information.
- The Internet provides instantaneous information - borrowers demand 'immediate' response to enquiries

Additional issues applicable only to the state library are:

- The State Library is a Memory Institution and as such its brief is to maintain Victoria's written history. This is becoming increasingly complex as many publications are now distributed electronically and previous issues are not retained. The State Library needs to ensure that all editions of publications are kept as well as digitalising hard copy materials.
- ##### **b. Future I (next five years)**
- The workforce is static but there may be rationalisation through centralisation of management and outsourcing of technical and clerical areas.
 - Ageing workforce and recruitment is an issue.
 - Outsourcing traditional technical services such as acquisitions, cataloguing, serial processing, end processing done offsite
 - With the exception of state and public libraries, many of the traditional technical and clerical work in libraries has been made obsolete so there will be a need for a more highly specialised workforce which translates into a workforce with mainly tertiary qualifications.
 - All library staff but especially library technicians will need to be multiskilled, with customer service skills of greatest importance.
 - Those who are working in public, state and national libraries will need skills to digitise and maintain current hardcopy collections.

External Industry Influences

a. Current

- Electronic information
- Copyright
- Free versus fee based information

- Increased customer expectation, which will lead to;
 - “Customer” focused approach to service provision
 - Focus on community needs
 - Knowledge of literature (literacy, reading matters) and subject areas
 - Well-developed information retrieval skills and the ability to teach others how to use the tools

b. Future (next five years)

- Changing and growing roles of public libraries from the traditional to local government information hubs. Libraries are now becoming a ‘council shop’ and will become a hub for all council and community information.
- Public libraries’ role is about community information. Staff will need some non-library areas of customer service. Digitalisation of local collections will be important, so training in html and meta data and other Internet applications such xml is important.
- Public and state libraries are becoming articulated memory institutions. State libraries have always had a role in preservation of the state’s ‘written history’. Public libraries will be expected to take on this role for local history both print based and increasingly electronic based
- State Library refocussed to assisting the entire Victorian Community not just Melbourne.
- There may be a push to outsource the management of local public libraries as has been done in the sports area; eg the YMCA runs many of the council recreation centres.

2. Enterprise and sector strategies to address the impact of the change drivers.

Internal Strategies

- Non-accredited courses are being devised and run by organisations such as the State Library of Victoria which have develop their own training for digitalisation.

External Strategies

- Centralisation of services and collections with State and National Libraries taking the lead.
- SWIFT project is to centralise everything it can. This may change the nature of funding for public libraries, which have between 15% to 20% of their funds provided by the State Government the rest comes from local government.
- New Zealand doing a great job in centralisation and rationalisations and strong lead taken by the National Library. Every public library has access to all electronic information purchased by the National Library.
- ALIA is being urged to look at the image of libraries with regards to recruitment.
- VICLINK is examining issues such as ageing workforce and recruitment.

3. Implications of these strategies for training need over the next five years, both positive and negative.

Impact on Individuals

- Changing role of library workers means retraining existing workers in non-library skills.

Impact on the Industry Sector

- Increased reliance on electronic information and the related issue of collection maintenance
- Changing governance and funding issues if true centralisation takes place.
- There will be a need for a more highly skilled workforce, as much of the clerical work will be automated.