

Librarian as Communicator: Case Studies and International Perspectives

Edited by Helen Fallon and Graham Walton

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Librarian as Communicator offers an insight into how Information Professionals around the globe are communicating. It is a research-informed volume comprised of a combination of review articles and case studies originally published in the [New Review of Academic Librarianship, volume 22, issues 2-3 \(2016\)](#). The case studies deliver practical advice for readers and complement the review chapters that provide a more theoretical examination of communication.

The book explores specific projects and services within libraries that seek to improve communication and could be replicated or adapted for our own institutions. There is also consideration given to the areas that librarians are naturally positioned to contribute to, such as digital scholarship and digitisation.

For library staff who want to develop online communication with their users, this book provides many ideas. Inspiration can be taken from the use of Pablo the Penguin (brand mascot at the University of Portsmouth (chapter 9). The mascot establishes a connection with library users that cannot often be replicated with increasing self-service approaches and changing staff in the Library.

The University of Liverpool describes the social media techniques used to raise the profile of their Library and connect with students (chapter 11). Advice is provided for the reader on how best to manage social media for maximum advantage. Another option to consider is the virtual enquiry service (chapter 6) established by libraries in the North of England.

Social media can also be encouraged as an important part of a researcher's communication strategy as highlighted by Linköping University Library

(chapter 16). They have created a useful [web-based information package](#) for their researchers that can be drawn on by other libraries.

For institutions wanting to improve face to face communication, the pop-up library at Birmingham University (chapter 1) is an initiative that can be implemented to highlight key services to students. Traditional models of liaison are examined in chapter 5 and this will be useful for any institution wanting to evaluate their subject support communication.

As well as communication with user groups, the book also focuses on written communication produced by the library profession. The value of blogging for knowledge sharing, reflective practice and community engagement is highlighted in chapter 4 and could serve as encouragement for readers thinking of writing a blog. The collaborative blog, [Libfocus](#), may be particularly appealing to beginners who want to feel supported in the writing process.

Starting with a less formal medium of communication such as blogging could encourage librarians to publish formally in a journal or book. Chapter 8 reviews the published research output of academic librarians from higher education institutions in Ireland and suggests that research activity by



academic librarians should be fostered. Academic writing can increase the visibility of the library, encourage community collaboration and raise the individual's profile. For those working in Research Support or Scholarly Communications it would be especially useful to understand the publishing process that researchers face and how to support them.

For anyone working with Postgraduate Research (PGR) students, chapter 13 from De Montfort University will be useful. Library staff carried out a research project to determine better ways of communicating with this student group. They identified the key crisis points experienced by PGRs and suggest ways that librarians can intervene with targeted support.

Librarian as Communicator is suitable for anyone working in a library who wishes to improve institutional or personal communication, or is seeking development areas for their Library Services. Whilst there is a lot of material covered in the book, one of the strengths of *Librarian as Communicator* is that it can be approached as a series of standalone chapters rather than a continuous read, making the book accessible and crucially manageable from a time commitment point of view.

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