

Work group 4
Information overload
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Critical assessment
Managing information
Google domination
Quality
Participation in web.2.0
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Information overload - is there really a problem? The amount of information available could be seen as something positive, too. There can also be "information underload."

The main question is to bring people to the knowledge they need. What kind of professionals do we need? The profession has changed.

It is easier to publish than ever before, no quality control. It is also easier to distribute information and knowledge. Still, the useful information and knowledge has to be found.

Filtering is one answer to information overload - individual, or social/technical filtering. There is positive and negative filtering.

Overload, yes, but what is enough? That depends on the task. "Yesterdays news", the time span can be limited to 24 hours, or, from a political view - four years.

It is important to work also outside library borders, find partners, cooperate with the business sector for instance.

Libraries should teach how to behave on the web for privacy, security.

Libraries should be on the social web - with relevant material, use the channels that young people use, speak the right language. Libraries have to find their users.

Young people are good at the technical part. How to change our profession?

Always give the users the best there is. Define clearly what libraries can offer, the key competencies.

Different target groups have different needs. The user survey, performed by the National Library in Finland:

In all library sectors service was the most important, the service-minded staff.

Also in Poland there has been a similar survey of library services.

A welcoming atmosphere is most important. It works like a trojan horse, people are inspired to come again, know more, learn more. The library can also be a "slow place", a place for calming down.

There was one thing never mentioned when I reported. I got criticized a little for this afterwards, so I mention it here:

There was this question posed by a distinguished group member from the Netherlands (a very inspiring conference speaker):

What do ladies of a certain age, ok, all ages, but we speak of the biggest group of users here, what do these ladies want to see at the service desk of the library?

The answer was: A handsome young man!

There is, no doubt, a deep wisdom in this.

Rapporteur Barbro Wigell-Ryynänen