



Technically Speaking

I.T. vs. Librarian

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By Stephen Ingram

There is a longstanding belief that IT staff and Librarians are two departments separated by a different language. The vast changes in access to high speed internet, the proliferation of smartphones and tablets, and the variety of formats in which digital content are consumed is changing how these departments can best serve their communities patrons. IT staff and reference librarians will have to collaborate to adapt the traditional library model to serve the rapidly advancing technological needs of our patrons.

Digital has become the new norm in the library field. All the traditional services of a public library are now inte-

grated with technology. The arrival of smartphones and tablets has allowed staff and patrons to digitally access library services and the adaption rate is growing as new devices are reaching larger sections of the population. What once would have been strictly in the realm of the IT department is now in the hands of the

-continued on p. 2

Technically Speaking's

Featured Quotation

People are the quintessential element in all technology... Once we recognize the inescapable human nexus of all technology our attitude toward the reliability problem is fundamentally changed.

GARRETT HARDIN, *Skeptic*, July/August 1976.



As another year comes to an end, we reflect on our accomplishments and look forward to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. The CATS division of SCLA has strived (and will continue to devise) valuable programs and learning opportunities for all members of SCLA.

This year's Annual Library Tour took place on 4/23 and began at the Emma S. Clark Memorial Library. Director Ted Gutmann led the group through Suffolk County's oldest public library operating in its original location. The tour continued at the Melville Library of SUNY Stony Brook. Fiona Grady coordinated several departments for a highly informative and well paced tour providing attendees with a sense of the diverse services offered at this busy academic library.

Suffolk County Libraries received 540 Google Nexus Tablets through a state grant, *NY Rising* and TIF has been on hand to help library staff decide how to manage these tablets and make them available to patrons in an efficient manner consistent with the grant's requirements.

Natalia Tomlin, Technical Services Librarian and Assistant Professor at LIU CW Post gave a presentation, *Resource Description and Access* (RDA) to an audience of about 75 at SCLS on 11/13. RDA is a new metadata standard designed to guide catalogers. It represents a significant shift from AACR2. A special thanks to Tom Cohn for help making this possible.

-IT vs. Librarians (continued)

general public. IT and Library staff will be working closer together as the services of the library stretch further into the digital field and staff responsibilities will further overlap.

This ease with digital services have been adopted by staff and patrons is a point of both concern and excitement for the future of IT staff and Librarians. As content moves strictly to a digital distribution model, it could mean that the basic foundation of knowledge management is shifting into the hands of the users, and not the trained professionals in the field. As with most disruptions, there are always new opportunities that arrive with such changes. IT and Librarians will need to recognize the changing landscape and present new ways to move our services to this digital environment. By themselves, the isolated responsibilities of each department will prevent them

from meeting the needs of their community. Collaboration between the two departments will allow libraries to bring new services to the public faster and staff will be better equipped to support technological changes. Access to technology is a competitive advantage which has all but disappeared now that once expensive computing power and software can be both portable and cloud based. The difference in IT and Library staff must come from the recognition that digital services will be the core business of the library.

Inevitably, there will be resistance as both departments feel that they serve different needs of the library and should not mix. It seems likely though, that there will be little choice in the matter as both services are currently stepping into the waters together to help decide which direction the library system is heading and how they will get there.



Above: Ted Gutmann at the CATS Annual Library Tour , Emma S. Clark Memorial Library.

Below: William Glenn of SUNY Stony Brook starting the tour at the Melville Library' s Central Reading Room.



Above: Stephen Ingram presenting at the 2013 Long Island Library Conference.

Below: Lively discussion at the September TIF Meeting at Cutchogue Free Library.



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Upcoming Events:

12/10/13: IT vs. Librarian- 10 AM Brentwood Public Library–
CATS Annual Board Meeting *Tech Holiday Grab Bag, Tech
Item \$10*

12/18/13: Analyze This! Facebook Analytics-10 AM East Islip
Public Library, **RASD** Marketing and Electronic Resources
Committees

1/7/14: CATS Board Meeting- 9:30 AM SCLS

1/9/14: TIF Meeting-10 AM **Your** Public Library

1/9/14: Literati Training and Round Table-10 AM and 2 PM
at SCLS

1/16/14: Analyze This! Google Analytics- 10 AM East Islip
Public Library, **RASD** Marketing and Electronic Resources

CATS would like to thank current President Stephen Ingram for all his hard work this year. We welcome incoming President James Matias, VP/President Elect Xibe Solis, Secretary Kelly Harris and new Board Members Lisa Bitran and Mary O' Grady.



