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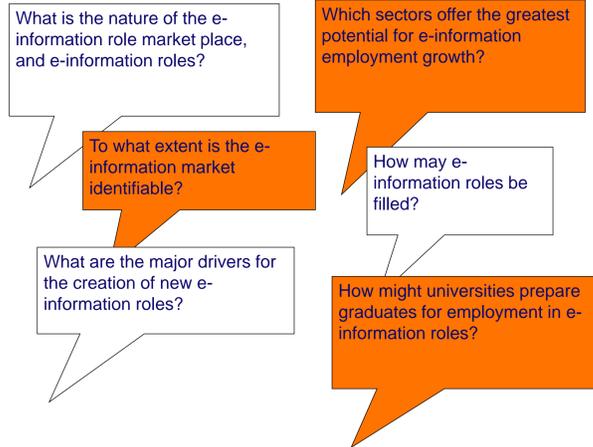
RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Research aims

The research aimed to improve understanding of current and emerging roles in electronic information environments in order to:

- Reveal the extent of career opportunities for information specialists in the wider information environment (i.e. beyond the boundaries of "traditional" information work)
- Uncover real evidence that can be used to generate higher interest in IM and KM as an attractive domain(s) of study, and employment
- Influence University course/programme design and delivery so that graduates who enter the information job market are adequately prepared for employment
- Build bridges with key stakeholders in the wider electronic environment

Research questions



E-information sample job titles

Business analyst **Cataloguer** **Coach** Community and network facilitator **Competitive intelligence officer** Compliance officer **Data steward** Database designer **Digital project manager** Digital records preservationist **E-learning facilitator** Freedom of information officer **Informatics officer** Information architect **Information officer** Information scientist **Interactive project manager** Intranet editor **Knowledge harvester** Librarian Portal manager Researcher **Statistician** Taxonomist Technical writer Trainer **Usability expert** Virtual conference organiser **Web content manager** Web project manager

RESEARCH DESIGN

Data collection activities

- Desk research: literature search and review; analysis of TFPL recruitment placements; analysis of job advertisements
- Internal consultation: TFPL internal discussions/brainstorming, including consultation with networking group members (such as the Bath Club)
- External consultation: survey of key informants; interviews; group discussions of preliminary findings

Set	Date	Activity	Data subjects	Scope
1	March 2006	Internal (TFPL) consultations	TFPL advisors, recruitment staff, Bath Club (~28)	Series of 6 meetings held in London
2	March 2006	Analysis of job data	"Internal" & external job ads	Mainly UK
3	May 2006	Web-based survey	Information specialists (42)	Mainly UK
4	May 22 2006	Focus group	Information specialists (12)	Glasgow
5	May 2006	Interviews	Sub-set of survey respondents (16)	Europe and USA
6	June 14 2006	Feedback seminar	Information specialists (22)	London

MAIN FINDINGS

Nature of the e-information job market

- Developed and diffuse
- Exhibits particular flavours according to industry
- Recent growth in information analysis, project management and information architecture roles
- Greater opportunity in the public and voluntary sectors

Functions of current e-information roles

- Acquisition and collection management of electronic resources
- Editing electronic content
- Information governance
- Provision of access to electronic information content, e.g. portal development
- Information analysis
- Creation/origination of electronic content
- End-user support in the deployment of electronic sources

Skills requirements

- Core IM skills, especially those relevant to building information architectures and managing content
- General IT literacy
- Core personal attributes, e.g. flexibility, confidence, enthusiasm
- Certain skills combinations in demand, e.g. project management plus awareness of electronic publishing

EXTENDING THE REACH

Career opportunities

- Variety in career opportunities, especially in the private sector where all-rounders are sought for roles that extend beyond traditional information delivery
- Particular areas of expertise in demand: information architecture, content management, teaching/training in support of learning
- Greater opportunity currently in the public sector in the UK

Accessing the opportunities

- Seek out opportunities advertised across a range of media
- Look beyond job titles to identify e-information role opportunity
- Recognise competition for jobs from others with "non-traditional" information backgrounds
- Keep up to date with hot topics of concern to target employers
- Develop desirable skills sets
- Provide clear demonstrations of suitability in applications for posts

Key messages for bodies

- Need for training provision in particular applications of e-information work: content management; information architecture; teaching/training and support of learning
- Need for development of skills, particularly in the new graduate population: core IM skills, basic skills for the work place, especially IT literacy; core personal attributes

NEW ROLE REALITIES
EXTENDING THE REACH OF INFORMATION SPECIALISTS
 Hazel Hall, Napier University, UK
 Angela Abell, TFPL Ltd, UK

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further work on the themes presented here, undertaken with reference to other research conducted by TFPL, is expected to lead to the development of a framework of current and emerging e-information roles. This will be reported in a future issue of *Business Information Review*.

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Drivers of the e-information job market

- Technological developments
- Government targets
- New legislation
- Globalisation
- Need to support/measure efficiency/profitability
- Moves to online collaborative work
- Top public voluntary sector drivers are government targets related to the efficiency agenda, relocation of government services from the centre, and the transformational government programme
- Top private sector drivers are technological developments and globalisation

Royal Academy of Engineering secondment

This work was partially supported by the Royal Academy of Engineering, the sponsors of Hazel Hall's industrial secondment with TFPL undertaken between February and July 2006.

The Royal Academy
of Engineering