FreePint®

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ABOUT FREE PINT

   FreePint is an online network of information searchers. Members receive this free newsletter twice a month: it is packed with tips on finding quality and reliable business information on the Internet.

   Joining is free at <http://www.freepint.com/> and provides access to a substantial archive of articles, reviews, jobs & events, with answers to research questions and networking at the FreePint Bar.

   Please circulate this newsletter which is best read when printed out. To receive a fully formatted version as an attachment or a brief notification when it's online, visit <http://web.freepint.com/>.

EDITORIAL

At the beginning of the year, the Department of Trade and Industry in the UK launched an initiative to help kick-start the 1999 Employee Home Computer Initiative <http://digbig.com/3tmf>. It gives staff computers to enable them to work at home. Bosses get tax breaks, and employees get a computer at home by paying in instalments from their wages.

If growing numbers of people are working at home, either as employees or independent consultants, then individuals will increasingly need to be supported technically.

There can be fewer distractions working at home, but it can sometimes be quite daunting when the IT helpdesk person is not there to help. Even if someone is on the end of a phone, it pays to know the basics of PC trouble-shooting.

One man who likes to be in control of his own PC is Peter Kaiser. His article this week will strike a chord when he says "things often go wrong, including freezes, crashes, and many varieties of incomprehensibility, that are just not your fault, computers are not user-friendly".

For solo working, online networks are invaluable and the FreePint Bar <http://www.freepint.com/bar> is always full of technical queries and tips. Let us know if there is a technical problem that you need help on. If there is an issue that is causing many of you problems, then we will consider running more articles in the newsletter, or running some virtual training.

In our interview with Jessamyn West by Jonathan Crowhurst, we deal with the controversial subject of the US Patriot Act 'Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism'. Essentially the Act has a clause that allows the examination of library records, and reading habits of patrons, to identify potential terrorists. It is librarians in the US who have emerged as some of the most strident critics of what they see as the Patriot Act's significant infringements on civil rights. Jessamyn West, who runs librarian.net <http://www.librarian.net> is no exception. She has strong personal views and has described herself variously as an activist, progressive, and "anarchist librarian".

Is the Patriot Act an essential tool on the war on terror (the US Justice department's line) or a limit to free speech? Of course, it is not that simple, so you should read the interview and related material online and make up your own mind. It is an important debate, and one that FreePint feels it is important to air. The Special Libraries Association made an important stand by letter last September against comments made by the US Attorney General that librarians had been easily misled about the Act by "breathless reports and baseless hysteria" <http://www.sla.org/PDFs/USDoJLetter.pdf>.

If you want to be ahead of the game in understanding copyright, then it is your last chance to send in your emails for our special Virtual Exchange <http://www.freepint.com/exchange/>.

Finally, subscribers to VIP - the only truly interactive information industry journal, are growing steadily. Suggest the content you want to see in future via the VIP lounge <http://www.vivavip.com>. Issue 3 is just out and includes product reviews of Net Snippets Professional, and ICC's Plum UK company and stakeholder information.

Annabel Colley Editor
FreePint <annabel.colley@freepint.com>

FREEPINT JOBS
<http://www.freepint.com/jobs>

The FreePint Jobs Update is being circulated widely every two weeks. This free newsletter now has 1,100 direct subscribers and is posted at the Bar and in the Bar Digest (circulation 11,000).

To see the Jobs Update No.68 visit <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27853> and to subscribe, modify your account at <http://web.freepint.com>.

Here are some of the latest featured jobs:

Content Management Coordinator
<http://www.freepint.com/go/j3003>
Great role for new grad seeking experience in managing content for a web site.
Recruiter: Sue Hill Recruitment

Senior Information Specialist (Pharmaceutical)
<http://www.freepint.com/go/j3037>
Pharmaceutical/Healthcare or Banking/Insurance sector expertise? Strategic/K.M./Senior Research vacancy for prestigious City client.
Recruiter: Glen Recruitment

Archivist
<http://www.freepint.com/go/j3054>
Develop and coordinate Tearfund's archiving and records management practices.
Recruiter: Tearfund

NB: There are 34 other jobs in the current edition of the Jobs Update <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27853>.

Library + Information Show – 21st + 22nd April 2004, ExCeL, London

The LiS, incorporating Total Library Solutions, covers all areas ofinformation and knowledge management. Of the 130 exhibitors, at least 50% are either new to the event or will be demonstrating new products.
Plus we have a comprehensive, free seminar programme with speakers including John Byford, British Library Legal deposit specialist to
Andrew Motion Poet Laureate. For more information please see - <http://www.lishow.co.uk>

Company information in an instant from BUREAU VAN DIJK

FreePint Virtual Exchange: Copyright and the new law : what it means for you"

Send in your questions for inclusion in this Virtual Exchange which will be available in March:

<http://www.freepint.com/exchange/>

WWW.MARKETRESEARCHONTHEWEB.COM

Willco at AIIP, Austin Texas, 29th April

Willco, technology providers to FreePint and a number of online communities, will be demonstrating their service at the conference of the Association of Independent Information Professionals (AIIP) in Austin, Texas, 29th April 2004.

<http://www.willco.com/aiip/>

MY FAVOURITE TIPPLES
by Jonathan Smart

Jonathan Smart BA (Hons), ALA, Dip Ed., has a background in various areas, including FE and HE libraries. He is currently at the University of Plymouth, about to move into the reorganised role of Academic Support Co-ordinator, Skills, where information literacy will be a core responsibility. He has for some time developed the delivery, support and assessment of IL within Business modules, and is interested in pedagogic aspects including developing computer-based assessment, diagnostic testing, working with learning styles and open/distance learning.

Submit your top five favourite Web sites. See the guidelines at <http://www.freepint.com/author.htm>.

- Resource Discovery Network <http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk/> - Highly recommended to students for its subject-specific Web tutorials - I hope the RDN manage to sustain the updating of its content.

- Pandia <http://www.pandia.com/> - Found this the other day (or, to be more specific, a colleague did). A more general approach to Web searching with associated tutorials -- useful as a basic introduction.

- Sheila Webber & Bill Johnston's information literacy place <http://dis.shef.ac.uk/literacy/> - Anyone with an interest in information literacy can hardly not include this site. A Weblog facility has been added recently.

- Big Blue <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/bigblue/> - One feature of this site that I found very useful is the comparative chart of characteristics of the information-literate person which includes elements identified by most of the major players in this field.

- BEST Business Education Support Team <http://www.business.ltsn.ac.uk/default.htm> - The Learning and Teaching Subject Network for Business (a subject area to which I was aligned). These are the sort of fora where we should be making the case for information literacy.

EVENTS

United Kingdom:

- "The Adaptable Enterprise" 15th March <http://www.freepint.com/go/e294>
- "Guidelines for Developing a Corporate Infrastructure for the Management of e-Records" 30th March - 29th June <http://www.freepint.com/go/e300>

Spain:

- "Gartner Symposium/ITxpo Barcelona 2004" 14th - 17th March <http://www.freepint.com/go/e270>

Australia:

- "Re-designing Your Intranet 2004" 16th - 19th March <http://www.freepint.com/go/e282>
- "Identifying and Managing Unstructured Information" 23rd - 25th March <http://www.freepint.com/go/e281>

United States:

- "Medical Device 2004" 21st - 25th March <http://www.freepint.com/go/e286>

New Zealand:

- "Web Search Pacific" 23 - 30 March <http://www.freepint.com/go/e305>

FREE PINT BAR
In Association with Factiva
a Dow Jones & Reuters Company

Industry research has been the main topic of enquiry at the Bar in the last two weeks. However, since most of the questions have been answered satisfactorily, there seems little point in repeating them here. So, here are a selection of unanswered or interesting items.

Last time we were talking about library uniforms, and this time its information jobs. Employment in the information industry is being sought all over the world, from the Netherlands <http://http://www.freepint.com/go/b27758> to Chile <http://http://www.freepint.com/go/b27729>. Nearer to home, here in the UK, one job seeker just wants an employment break and has received lots of support from other FreePinters <http://http://www.freepint.com/go/b27691>.

Even when you're in employment, there are plenty of other information issues to make you scratch your head. Can you help someone wanting to design a classification scheme <http://http://www.freepint.com/go/b27803> or another re-classifying materials on the European Union <http://http://www.freepint.com/go/b27820>?

Pam Foster, Editor of business information publication VIP <http://www.vivaVIP.com>, is asking about your preferred format for receiving titles - electronic or paper? <http://http://www.freepint.com/go/b27714>. The latest editions of VIP Eye and VIP are also available, with the latter reviewing ICC's Plum and Net Snippets <http://www.vivaVIP.com/vip/>.

Four of our top posters have submitted tips and questions of their own to the Bar. One is looking for software to index words in document files <http://http://www.freepint.com/go/b27774> whilst another is new to the PRINCE2 project management system <http://http://www.freepint.com/go/b27713>. The third provides some very useful tips on searching the FreePint site using Google <http://http://www.freepint.com/go/b27716> whilst the fourth announces that the March edition of the ever popular 'Internet Resources Newsletter' is now available <http://http://www.freepint.com/go/b27827>.

Many thanks to all our regulars.

William Hann <william.hann@freepint.com>
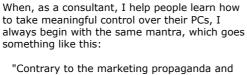Managing Editor, FreePint

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The FreePint Bar is where you can get help with your tricky research questions, for free! <www.freepint.com/bar>

Help with study for information-related courses is available at the FreePint Student Bar <www.freepint.com/student>.

Twice-weekly email digests of the latest postings can be requested at <http://web.freepint.com/>.

TIPS ARTICLE

"Taking control of your PC"
By Peter Kaiser

Peter Kaiser is a writer, editor, and IT consultant who lives in Switzerland and once taught at the Columbia University School of Library Science.

When, as a consultant, I help people learn how to take meaningful control over their PCs, I always begin with the same mantra, which goes something like this:

"Contrary to the marketing propaganda and public consciousness, personal computer software is complex and not easy to understand. It is definitely NOT 'user-friendly'! Things often go wrong, including freezes, crashes, and many varieties of incomprehensibility, that are just not your fault. You're not stupid. They're not your fault. Got that? They're not your fault."

However, there are some rather simple systematic steps you can take to make your PC more understandable, more reliable, much more secure, and over all, less troublesome. It's partly a question of understanding the software, and partly a matter of developing a small set of practices and habits that most people never think about. In return for the time it takes you to develop these, you can have a PC that runs better, won't be invaded or infected, has fewer disasters, and generally will tempt you much less often to blast it with a howitzer.

On this subject I definitely don't occupy an opinion-free zone! So, while not claiming to be a perfect exemplar, let me tell you something of how I deal with my own PC.

My overarching principle is to keep things simple. (Albert Einstein: "Everything should be as simple as possible, but no simpler.") If they're simple I can understand them. If I can understand them I can usually control them and make the system do what I want. Doing this often requires some effort up front, but the payoff is nearly immediate and always visible.

For instance, my PC has two 120-gigabyte disks (it knocks me out to have a quarter of a terabyte on my desktop!), which definitely makes my life easier, because with this much disk space I can make frequent full backups. I back up C: whenever I make any substantial change in it, anything that would take substantial time to reproduce, like installing a significant software package, e.g. a new version of my favorite browser, Mozilla Firefox <http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/>.

Nowadays it's a routine for me to:

1. Uninstall any previous version of the new software 2. Scan C: for viruses and worms and take any required action 3. Install the new software 4. Use the software to check that it works 5. Scan the partition for filesystem errors 6. Clean the junk from the partition (*.tmp, etc.) 7. Defragment C: 8. Make an image backup of C:

Does that seem like a lot of work? Not really: steps 1-4 are absolutely necessary, of course, and steps 5 and 7 are something everyone should do at least monthly or more often. That leaves cleaning up the junk and making an image backup.

Okay, step 6 is optional - leave the junk if you like. Personally I simply don't like to have it there. But I've also seen a system in daily business use that had more than 30,000 *.TMP files more than a year old in C:\Windows\Temp. Tsk, tsk.

But the image backup is crucial.

So what is an "image" backup? It's a copy - an "image" of an entire partition encapsulated in a single file called an image file. Every directory (folder) and file is inside there along with all its attributes, and you can easily retrieve them.

But, and this is a huge BUT - you can also restore the entire partition as of when you made the backup. Here you probably already see the point, but I'll make it anyway: once you know you can restore a system that you know is good, with software known to work the way you want it to, you've become free to experiment and to make mistakes.

Experimenting, making mistakes and learning from them are the essence of learning and taking control of your system. Kids have no fear of this. We needn't either.

Suppose you want to try out some software. Do that. You like it? Fine: keep it. You hate it? No problem: don't bother to go through the pain of uninstalling it, under Windows you can seldom entirely uninstall a package anyhow, and worse, some actually CAN'T be uninstalled. Instead, just restore your latest image backup. I do this all the time. Indeed, it's so easy that I often set aside a day or two to try out several different packages that interest me, knowing that when I'm done with the experiments, I can restore the system without a trace of all those software installations. Sometimes I try an installation several different ways to get exactly what I want, restoring the clean system between installations. It's so simple to take an image backup that I can experiment with different combinations of software by making temporary backups along the way to repeat different variations. So I can really find what works best for me.

The same goes if the worst happens and somehow your system does become infected: just restore the latest uninfected image. "Latest"? On one of my hard drives right now are my last twelve image backups, though I have CDs of every backup. CDs are cheap, and if my disk dies
-- which happened to me once -- I'm still covered.

There are several reputable image backup

Related Free Pint links:

- 'Computer' articles and resources in the FreePint Portal <http://www.freepint.com/go/p27>

- Post a message to the author, Peter Kaiser, or suggest further resources at the FreePint Bar <http://www.freepint.com/bar>

- Read this article online, with activated hyperlinks <http://www.freepint.com/issues/040304.htm#feature>

- Access the entire archive of FreePint content http://www.freepint.com/portal/content/

packages, for instance, PowerQuest Drive Image <http://www.symantec.com/driveimage/>; Symantec Ghost <http://www.symantec.com/ghost/>; Acronis True Image <http://www.acronis.com/products/trueimage/>, and perhaps others. They differ from one another in details and ease of use, but they all do the job and they're worth the money.

There's a lot more to taking control of your PC, but this is where it begins for me: being free to experiment and learn.

"An Introduction To Freedom Of Information"

ISBN 1-904769-03-9

This report covers the role that publication schemes play in the UK's freedom of information regime; the rights of applicants; the handling of freedom of information requests; complaints procedures; the exemptions; fees and charges; the importance of having good records management systems and procedures in place; and the interface between data protection and freedom of information.

<http://www.freepint.com/shop/report/>

KeepingLegal

Concerned about complying with the laws on copyright, data protection or freedom of information? Subscribe to the free Information Law Newsletter in order to keep abreast of developments and/or regularly visit <http://www.KeepingLegal.com>

VIP 3 and VIP Eye 4

VIP and VIP Eye review business information products and news announcements. The latest editions provide an in-depth review of ICC's Plum and Net Snippets, along with guest comment from a senior information industry executive.

Find out more about VIP at <http://www.vivaVIP.com>

Jeremy Williams spent most of his career in the automotive supply sector in engineering, marketing, and product management, before setting up the 1835 Company in Paris with the aim of helping smaller companies expand their markets and launch innovative products <http://www.1835company.com>.

Related links:

- Find out more about this book online at the FreePint Bookshelf <http://www.freepint.com/bookshelf/recherche.htm>

- "Recherche-Handbook - Wirtschafts-Informationen" ISBN 3540442723, published by Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg.

- Search for and purchase any book from Amazon via the FreePint Bookshelf at <http://www.freepint.com/bookshelf>

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"Recherche-Handbook - Wirtschafts-Informationen"
Written by Vorgehen, Quellen and Praxisbeispiele
Reviewed by Jeremy Williams

Anyone who has ever had to try and find information about German private companies will know how hard it is. Anyone who reads this book will not find out much more about this topic, but will receive an excellent course in the basics of business intelligence.

The book, in summary, is a primer in how to go about finding the information you are looking for, where you should look, and strategies you should apply. Beyond this it contains in-depth descriptions of the contents, costs, and use of the online databases Genios, GBI, Lexis- Nexis, Dialog, Datastar, Profound, Factiva, FIZ and STN; and 76 pages of other sources (addresses, Internet addresses, phone numbers), including chambers of commerce, professional databases, supplier databases, takeover directories, market briefings, associations, country-based information sources, university dissertations, libraries, and newsletters. FreePint gets two paragraphs and includes the definition of "Pint" (Note to self: must conduct market study on how many users of FreePint actually know this!). Most of the sources are reviewed in a couple of paragraphs so you can see what you are likely to find and how much it may cost.

The book is built up in logical sections relating to different kinds of search and information source. Each topic is built from the ground up, with practical examples. The text is interspersed with relevant tips and the frequent use of tables and summaries helps the readability. Each section begins with a summary of the subtopics to allow the beginner to orient or subdivide the search for better success.

The first section is about how to put questions in order to get sensible answers, and how to build up a search strategy. The second section deals with the major professional databases listed above, how to use them (including a complete index of search commands and allowed means of payment). The next four sections deal with the four mains areas of research, namely: company information; market and sector information; country information; and information about persons. All are complemented by descriptions of suitable information sources and how to go about using them. The next section describes the use of newspapers, journals, books and dissertations in addition to the sources already described. Section 8 deals with the important sidebars of limitations of searches ("Why can't I find anything out about ..."), documentation of your search, and copyright. Section 9 answers the question "How do I stay up to date now that I have done my research?", and the last section is the (well-ordered) list of information sources.

To put the spotlight on the German market for a moment, the book confirms what we all suspected - all German company information is based around the Creditreform <http://www.creditreform.de> standards and you have to pay a few euros for it. Other than that the German online databases (FIZ-Technik, Genios) are worthy competitors to the better-known Lexis-Nexis and Factiva. But it'd be a poor book if there was nothing new in it, and I consider that, apart from those with long years of experience and really deep expertise, anyone will be better armed for the search after reading the book. Let's hope it gets translated into English soon.

FreePint Forthcoming Articles

- Virtual Exhibitions
- Electronic Surveillance and Personal Data
- Care and Early Years Education
- History and Historians
- Marketing for the Info-entrepreneur

If you have a suggestion for an article topic or would like to write for Free Pint then please contact <penny@freepint.com> or sign up for the Author Update at <http://www.freepint.com/author.htm>.

FREE PINT

FEATURE ARTICLE
"Librarians and The War On Terror"
By Jonathan Crowhurst

Jonathan is reading an MA in Library and Information Studies at City University. His research interests include information law, library history and development, legal information, user studies and the impact of the internet on libraries. Contact him at <jonathan@crowhurst0277.freeserve.co.uk>, or see him on the web at <http://www.jonathancrowhurst.net>.

In the wake of the World Trade Center attacks of September 11 2001, George W. Bush signed into US law a piece of legislation which has split library and information science (LIS) practitioners (and liberal opinion) - 'The Uniting and Strengthening of America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism' or USA PATRIOT Act 2001 <http://www.epic.org/privacy/terrorism/hr3162.html>. The law also included a number of antiterrorism measures, but several provisions in the Patriot Act (as it became known) are seen by many as an attack on some of the fundamental rights enshrined in the US Constitution <http://digbig.com/3tks>.

The US Patriot Act 2001 (USAPA 2001)

There is a set of comprehensive links to full text of the legislation itself and an excellent PowerPoint presentation on the Act, its implications, and other related resources at <http://digbig.com/3tkr>. The web site Taking Back America: USA Patriot Act and Civil Liberties <http://www.lib.washington.edu/suzref/patriot-act/> has further information on civil liberties issues.

Paul Sturgess wrote an excellent article in one of the CILIP Updates on privacy <http://digbig.com/3tkt>, while the Guardian maintains an excellent Internet freedom web site <http://digbig.com/3tkw>. Other organisations such as the Electronic Frontier Foundation <http://www.eff.org> work to promote privacy and intellectual freedom in cyberspace.

Over-reaction? Why are people so worked up? One would argue that 9/11 was a terrible event and further steps should be taken to prevent terrorist outrages happening again. Others argue: "If you have nothing to hide you have nothing to fear". Indeed, many in the US Administration are at pains to point out the "benign" nature of the Act.

A leading commentator in the American LIS community is Jessamyn West, a Vermont-based librarian who maintains <http://www.librarian.net>, a blog of LIS news and views. She has much to say on USAPA 2001 and my email interview with her on this elucidates the concerns of some in the profession. I would like to thank her for her time answering my questions below.

JC: What is it about USAPA that has the library community so concerned?

JW: Other than the basic curtailment of previously protected liberties, there is also the introduction of librarians as people who can get arrested and charged merely for refusing to comply with a search warrant or ignoring or otherwise breaching the gag order concerning their patrons. Under section 215 of the PATRIOT Act, if the FBI come to your library and want to know what a patron has been checking out, or even who has been checking out a particular book, not only do you have to tell them, (which violates most patron confidentiality policies in libraries), you also aren't legally allowed to inform anyone that this happened, including the patron. This seems to be an obvious violation of my right to free speech. It's all cloak and dagger stuff, all the secrecy - and many librarians, but by no stretch all, are against it. There are, indeed, many librarians who see the PATRIOT Act as a perfectly legal way to fight terrorism.

JC: How has the War on Terror and the subsequent security legislation in the US directly affected library workers and library patrons?

JW: I think its forced librarians to really take a look at their privacy policies and patron confidentiality. So, for example, libraries are considering the reasonableness of keeping patron borrowing records once a book has been returned. Only requiring initials on computer sign-up lists, that sort of thing. Overall, there's a chilling effect. Patrons worry that their librarians may have to rat on them, library workers worry that they may have to choose between ratting on their patrons and going to jail. Everyone has had to take a look at their personal moral feelings about the issue.

My personal view is that I feel strongly that the PATRIOT Act is extralegal and not really as useful for fighting terrorism as it is for controlling citizens. If you were attracted to librarianship because you love books, or love helping people and don't have a strong civil liberties bent, then this may be a tough time for you to be a librarian. I feel there is definitely some division in the profession over this issue.

JC: What, to your knowledge, have been the worst abuses perpetuated under the USA Patriot Act legislation by the federal authorities?

JW: The PATRIOT Act does a lot of stuff, not just

to libraries. There is the potential for wiretapping of public pay phones, secret grand jury proceedings, collecting and keeping dossiers on foreign students, etc. The point is, the USAPA authorizes all sorts of previously non- legal assaults on civil liberties, plus it causes the justice department to make websites like <http://www.lifeandliberty.gov/>, in which my freedom-loving colleagues and I are told that we are perpetuating myths about the act! My view is that at some level, the fact that no abuses have yet been perpetuated doesn't mean it's not bad legislation.

JC: Who are the main opponents of the legislation and why? Surely any legislation preventing another 9/11 is a "good thing".

JW: If it's actually working to prevent terrorism, certainly. I think that by its very nature it's pretty difficult to fight terrorism. It's even tougher in a nation that has been accustomed to as many freedoms as we have had. I guess my feeling is that the Constitution is in place to guide us in times of crisis, not to be tossed out the window in times of crisis. You look at what went in to 9/11 and it seemed to be more of a failure of intelligence, a failure of government agencies to cross-communicate, mostly based on funding issues. Many of the hijackers were flagged with existing technology, by the existing airport staff, and were allowed to board planes with then-legal items in their carry-on luggage.

The PATRIOT Act won't stop people with a suicide wish from killing others; it will only make the American population fearful of their government as well as of terrorists. Legislation that actually tightened up the holes in security might be a good idea. Foreign cargo being checked - really non-glamorous stuff that has much more of an impact on national security than knowing what books Muslims are reading. But it would just require money and would not be very sexy, so not enough people are doing it. It's like mad cow disease, it's totally preventable with enough staffers to check beef, and with real slaughterhouse hygiene, but that costs money and dips into profits so no one wants to do it. What we really see is Americans loving freedom but also businesses loving profits so that implementing real security, which might scare away customers isn't even considered.

JC: How can civil liberties be balanced against legitimate security concerns?

JW: 1. Agree the constitution is there for a reason

2. Give a sceptical American public a reason to want to work with the government, not against them

3. Engage in real dialogue, free from rhetoric about security concerns. Now that we have been getting all the news about Iraq not having been a real threat to the US, I think people are really sceptical of the government's ability to state risks clearly and accurately. I'm not sure how you get that trust back.

4. Results, and not kangaroo court results. To me, the result you want is the American people more free from fear, not just safer and afraid. That would be a sign to me that whatever we were doing was "working"

5. Define 'legitimate security concerns'. when you have federal agents telling people to "be on the lookout for foreigners with almanacs", it becomes tough to take anything they say seriously. That credibility gap needs to be dealt with. Some people do not trust Ashcroft (Attorney General) <http://www.usdoj.gov/ag/index.html> and Cheney (Vice President) <http://www.whitehouse.gov/vicepresident/> and those are problems the government should be addressing, not just speaking in the language of fear.

JC: What is the LIS community doing to protest against this erosion of some of the rights enshrined in your constitution?

JW: Public awareness is part of it. Letting our patrons know the issues and how they can work to protect their own rights, as well as allowing us to assist them. The Vermont Library Association sent out packets to every public library letting them know what the PATRIOT Act is and how to legally work within it strategically. The California Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee <http://digbig.com/3tkx> has been working closely with the ACLU <http://www.aclu.org> to do more public awareness, etc. At some level people need to know their rights are being abridged and they need to let their elected officials know that they won't put up with it. I am lucky to be in a state that has some fairly liberal Congressmen in terms of the PATRIOT Act and we are continuing to work with them and point out that it is NOT un-American to stick up for the constitution.

We also do programs at national and local library associations, work with other public officials and business owners. Bookstores are also in danger under the PATRIOT Act, they need to know the issues, before the FBI come to their door.

JC: Should the library community, in the UK and elsewhere, be concerned at what is happening in the US and how can we help?

JW: I think the more we communicate cross-culturally the more we get a sense of what other people are up against, and maybe how they dealt with the same things in the past. As librarians, I believe we have some core values in terms of wanting to maintain and protect access to information. I think it goes both ways, we should be working with the UK library community to assist in their issues and problems and the reverse is also true.

Some of the best commenting on these issues have come from the British press - BBC <http://digbig.com/3tky> and the Economist <http://www.economist.com>. Encouraging Americans to get news from other countries as well as seeing how the US press is covering the issues can be very enlightening.