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Jobs, Discussion, Tips, Reviews and Events



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The FreePint Newsletter is available online in several formats and can be read, saved and forwarded at <a href="http://www.freepint.com/issues/">http://www.freepint.com/issues/</a>>.



### **Editorial**



I'll never forget the year I turned 10, when I had long stringy hair, long stringy arms and legs, and an ache to visit Disneyland. My parents, bless them, took me. We went with an older sister and her husband in a small Audi with no air conditioning via the scorching Sonoran desert.

Dear lord, it was hot, reaching 48 degrees for a little while. We sat like sardines in the car, sweating on each other, looking at saguaros and sand and the longest stretch of road I'd ever seen. We made it to our California destination without incident, although I think my parents are still miffed I was too scared to open my eyes in Pirates of the Caribbean. Waste of money.

This is the year we'd drive FreePint to Disney if we could, but we'll settle for throwing a 10th birthday bash for ourselves. We're celebrating by:

- Marvelling that we've been publishing for 10 years
- Launching the FUMSI Award for Most Useful Article (please vote right now! < <a href="http://www.freepint.com/events/online-info-2007/citation/">http://www.freepint.com/events/online-info-2007/citation/</a>)
- Planning an exciting new FUMSI magazine.

And, of course, we always celebrate by offering you the best articles we can, including an excerpt of FUMSI's successful information auditing report in its second edition, Joelle Lea's journey through the journal lifecycle, IA wiz Peter Merholz's favourite books (blame him for coining the word 'blog') and many other tips, tricks and useful ideas.

You can wish us happy birthday too at Online Information. RSVP < <a href="http://www.freepint.com/events/online-info-2007/">http://www.freepint.com/events/online-info-2007/</a>> to let me know you'll be there - we'd love to meet you!

Sincerely,

Monique Cuvelier Editor, FreePint e: monique.cuvelier@freepint.com w: <a href="http://www.onopoly.com/support/team/">http://www.onopoly.com/support/team/</a>>

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### FreePint FUMSI Report -- Information Auditing Report and Tool Kit



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ISBN 978-1-904769-22-4

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Jenny Zhan worked as an engineer in China, a librarian in the US. and as an entrepreneur and consultant in Switzerland. She researches culture and language contexts in global business and is a contributing editor to VIP <http://www.vivaVI P.com> and LiveWire. She also supports doodle.ch <http://www.doodl e.ch>, a preference finder for appointment coordination and other multi-choice tasks. Jenny speaks Chinese, English and German...

### My Favourite Tipples

by Jenny Zhan

Globalisation has come to affect nearly everyone on planet Earth, encompassing all major domains of economy, politics, culture and law. On the operational front, business globalisation can relate to adapting products and services to local languages, cultures and infrastructure.

- Globalization of Culture
   <a href="http://www.globalpolicy.org/globaliz/cultural/index.htm">http://www.globalpolicy.org/globaliz/cultural/index.htm</a> documents how technology and the spread of values and norms have created the possibility and even the likelihood of a global culture.
- The Localization Industry Standards Association < <a href="http://lisa.org/">http://lisa.org/</a>> is a leading forum for globalisation concerning multilingual business processes, services, software, documentation, etc. It produces original surveys and reports including the free publication LISA Globalization Industry Primer (2007).
- MultiLingual <<a href="http://www.multilingual.com">http://www.multilingual.com</a> publishes eight issues a year plus a free annual resource directory on language, technology and translation in the context of globalisation. Its Getting Started guides are published four times a year and freely downloadable.
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  The site provides access to insightful research reports containing useful numbers such as rankings. Some are free to download.
- Global by Design <<a href="http://www.globalbydesign.com/">http://www.globalbydesign.com/</a>> is the accompanying blog of the subscription-based newsletter. It focuses on Web globalisation dealing with a range of emerging issues through insightful discussions, interviews and analysis.

Like what you seen here? Read more on globalisation from Jenny Zhan on VIP's service-in-development, the LiveWire <a href="http://web.vivavip.com/forum/LiveWire/">http://web.vivavip.com/forum/LiveWire/</a>>.





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Country: United Kingdom

<a href="http://www.jinfo.com/go/j7851">http://www.jinfo.com/go/j7851</a>>

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<a href="http://www.jinfo.com/go/j7880">http://www.jinfo.com/go/j7880</a>

### Information Architect

At Macmillan Cancer Support, we want to manage our information better.

Recruiter: People Media
Country: United Kingdom

<a href="http://www.jinfo.com/go/j7884">http://www.jinfo.com/go/j7884</a>

### Systems Librarian

An academic college is looking for a temporary Systems Librarian for an ongoing role to start asap.

Recruiter: TFPL

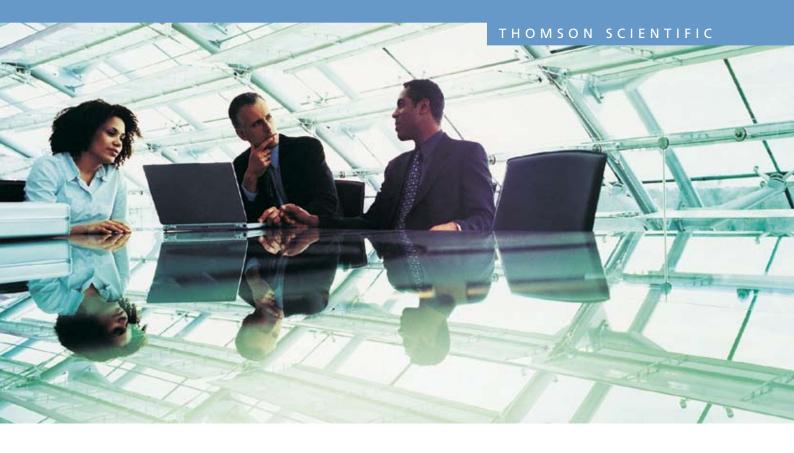
Country: United Kingdom

<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j7861>

NB: These are just a selection of information-related jobs in the Jinfo database

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### FreePint Bar



Monique Cuvelier is editor of the FreePint Newsletter. She has edited, launched and written for many magazines, newspapers and websites in the US and UK. Learn more about her at http://www.onopol y.com/support/tea m/.

Subscribe to the twice-weekly email digests at <<u>http://www.freepi</u> nt.com/subs/> File formats and computers are common topics on the FreePint Bar these days. Read on for summaries on these topics, as well as conducting European research and quiet places in London, and then go to the Bar <a href="http://www.freepint.com/bar">http://www.freepint.com/bar</a> for the full story.

- It seems the Internet is built on JPEGs and PDF file formats, so it's curious they don't play well together. That's what one FreePinter is finding on the Bar
   <a href="http://www.freepint.com/go/b188422">http://www.freepint.com/go/b188422</a>>, and she's looking for help going from one to the other. Read a few helpful strategies and a great deal helpful knowledge.
- Another Bar member is also grappling with a PDF-related question, this time regarding document design. She asks: if you're listing files available in both PDF and Word formats, what's the least clunky way of presenting the information? Lend your insights <a href="http://www.freepint.com/go/b193843">http://www.freepint.com/go/b193843</a>>.
- Well-intentioned people have been donating computers to charities for some time, but what do those charities do when they're overloaded with good intentions? Find advice for recycling and other places for donations here <<a href="http://www.freepint.com/go/b189628">http://www.freepint.com/go/b189628</a>>.
- Any parent knows 5-month-olds don't afford the quietest atmosphere, and offices can be full of distractions. So where can someone in London find a bit of peace and

quiet - without spending any money? Turns out, quite a few places. Interested in finding oases of solitude in the city? Read more <a href="http://www.freepint.com/go/b1913">http://www.freepint.com/go/b1913</a> 33>.

Finding information in Germany takes some flair, as one Barista who's challenged with finding official detailed registry information on companies in Hungary and Germany has found. A few excellent resources have cropped up on the Bar
 <a href="http://www.freepint.com/go/b1918">http://www.freepint.com/go/b1918</a>
 64>.

European research has been in our mind lately at FreePint. You can also find tips on researching information in a foreign market here http://freepint.com/issues/270907.htm #tips, read about researching the German telecommunications industry <a href="http://web.vivavip.com/go/vip/47">http://web.vivavip.com/go/vip/47</a> in our sister publication VIP and also purchase a helpful FUMSI report on European Research Resources <a href="http://web.freepint.com/go/shop/rep">http://web.freepint.com/go/shop/rep</a> ort/european-research/>.

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### "Journal Lifecycle: Keeping Track of Periodicals"

By Joelle Lea



Joelle Lea has recently taken up a new library post. She has formerly held positions at the London Development Agency, National **Art Library** and the London School of Economics Library. She holds a Masters Degree in Information Services Management, and a Bachelors Degree

in
Archaeology and
Ancient History.
Her professional
interests include;
journal lifecycles,
search engine
development,
effective
information
retrieval and social
networks. You can
reach her at
<joelle\_lea@hotma
il.com>.

When I asked through the FreePint Bar back in December 2006 whether anyone had practical solutions to dealing with journal circulation, I only received one response. I took this to mean either that someone had found a fantastic solution and didn't want to share it, or that everyone else was still battling with circulation issues.

I joined the London Development Agency (LDA) shortly after they moved offices across London back in autumn 2006. Once I settled in, I noticed the journals that came into the agency were labelled up and dispatched, only never to be seen again. I found this surprising. Shouldn't journals be returned so that they could be collected and stored for future reference?

### The problem in depth

When the LDA had moved offices, the set-up of the small library was one of the last things to get done. Until January 2007 there were no shelves in the library and a disorganised collection of library material was still residing in large grey packing boxes. As a result there was nowhere to put journal back-issues, and staff were reluctant to chase them, knowing that they had nowhere to store them. Unfortunately, this led to the creation of staff serial hoarders.

My other concern was that there was no system in place to track whether journals were reaching all their intended recipients. In addition, the labels being used were created when the LDA was still in its old building. Employees were now no longer sitting near the same people, due to the office restructure, and several members of staff had since left or joined the agency.

The LDA subscribes to approximately 100 journal titles, for which there are some multiple subscriptions. Some titles are required by staff as soon as they come into the agency; The Economist is one such highly soughtafter title. Because of this, it was necessary to find a system that was as efficient as possible.

The one reply I received to my posting on the Bar mentioned the old-fashioned Kardex system, whereby notes could be written on the card, checked and erased. Unfortunately, I soon realised that this would prove to be too slow for the agency which requires information as soon as possible, and I would face a mass riot if staff had to keep posting journals back to me. Plus it would double the workload for a small team of four. I knew this wasn't the solution for us.

On investigating other journal management practices, I found there to be few that had a solution for circulating subscriptions around organisations. Whilst you could go through subscription suppliers to order and manage your journals there seemed to be very few solutions once you received the journals.

#### The solution

In identifying a solution, I needed something quick, manageable and able to be updated easily (to take account of our joiners and leavers). So I decided upon the simplest and easiest solution: I created an email alert system.

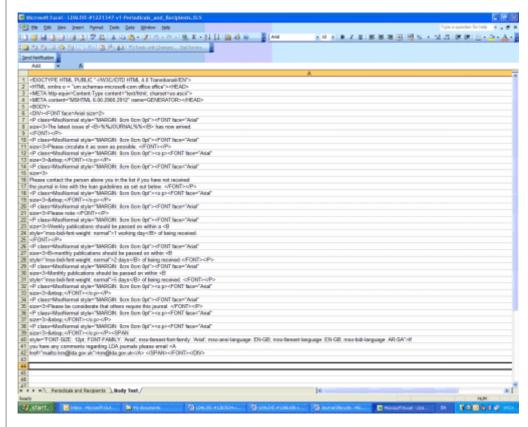


I arrived at this decision by way of time and financial constraints. It was not possible to buy in a solution. I also wanted to respond to feedback from staff regarding access to the circulation lists. Back in January I undertook a two-week review of the journals' lifecycle in the agency by conducting interviews with staff regarding their experiences with the circulation list system. The results of these interviews helped to shape internal policies and procedures.

First I created a spreadsheet detailing all the journal titles the agency receives, making sure that all multiple copies of the same title were included. Each title was linked to the corresponding it to create er circulation list, with staff names listed in relevant cell.

descending order to reflect their place in the circulation list. This was so that when the emails are sent out, recipients would know who appeared before them on the list.

After the creation of the spreadsheet, a generic email was created to be sent out when new journals arrived. This also gives journal details, including the journal title, circulation guidelines and contact details for the Knowledge Management team. This was then passed over to one of our consultants, Matthew Farley of MQF Consultancy Services Ltd, who programmed the spreadsheet to pick up the text and use it to create emails to those listed in the relevant cell.



Body text created by Matthew Farley, MQF Consultancy Services Ltd

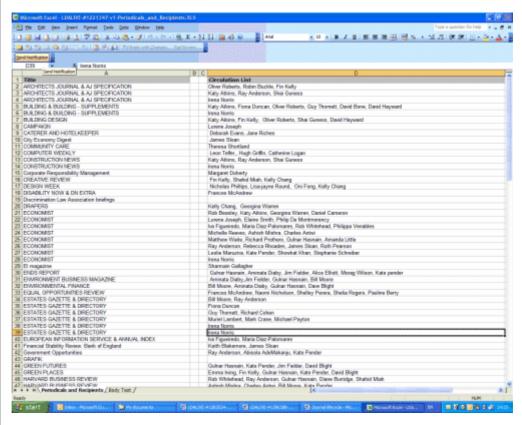


According to Farley, 'Behind the scenes of the Excel workbook are a couple of simple macros. The main one scans through the list of titles on the "Periodicals and Recipients" and composes an email addressed to the individuals on the circulation list informing them of its arrival. This code makes use of the fact that under the covers an email can be written in HTML: it uses the template on the "Body Text" sheet and customises it with the journal name then displays it for review and sending. The second macro simply creates the toolbar button to enable the user to start the process (and removes it when closing the workbook).'

### How the system works

As soon as a new journal has been checked in and labelled, an email is sent out via the spreadsheet informing staff that the latest issue has been received. This allows staff to be kept upto-date as soon as new issues become available. The spreadsheet can also be easily edited when staff join or leave the agency, request to go on a new circulation list, or to be taken off a list.

To send out email alerts you simply click on to the title for which you are sending out an alert. For each issue received of the same title you choose the corresponding circulation list, such



The periodicals and recipients spreadsheet, note the 'Send Notification' button in the top left hand corner.



as Economist 3 for the third Economist mailing list. Once the correct field you want in column A is highlighted, click on the 'Send Notification' button. This generates an email to all the names in the corresponding cell, inserting the pre-written text into the email. The process is quick and simple, and a number of email alerts can be sent out in a matter of minutes.

We check any Out-of-Office emails that are generated in response to email notifications for mentions of extended leave, so staff names can be temporarily removed from the list to help the circulation flow around the agency. This has proved extremely useful, as through this process we have found out about staff who are going on paternity or maternity leave and have not informed us. This could have resulted in journals sitting on their desks during their leave, preventing other staff from being able to read them. In addition, when staff have left the agency, email alerts have prompted them to inform the knowledge management team of their impending departure. All of this is vital information for ensuring the system remains current.

The email system works both ways, and also allows staff to contact us. For instance, if a member of staff urgently requires a journal, this enables them to know as soon as it comes in. Staff also use the emails to notify us if they haven't received a title, or if it has been slow to circulate. More frequently they have been sending out emails to the rest of their circulation list asking them to pass on magazines, a practice which, until the email alert system was created, was not possible.

# FreePint Forthcoming Articles

#### [Provisional]

- Corporate IT convergence
- Keeping Track of Periodicals
- Self Assessment
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- Taking Enterprise from Web 2.0 to Web 3.0
- Professional and Business
   Development for the Independent
   Worker
- Ethical Acquisitions
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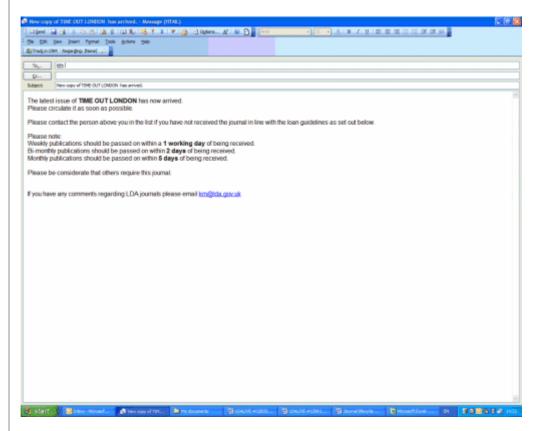
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The emails also serve as a reminder of the guidelines for publication circulation times. They have been used to send on additional messages to staff

regarding a particular publication and allow us to be specific about which circulation lists we target and disseminate information to.



Email example sent out to staff.

### **Feedback**

Staff used to become frustrated when they did not receive journals, but they did not know how or to whom to communicate this frustration. The email alert system has opened channels of communication both to and from the Knowledge Management team and staff across the agency. Staff on the circulation lists are now better able to communicate directly with the team

and this has resulted in noticeable improvements in the way in which lists are devised. Staff insights prove invaluable and without a more transparent contact this would not have been possible.

Overall the results have been positive. During the staff interviews one director was pleased at the way journal lifecycle was being looked into. The Knowledge Management team has become more



transparent about the way in which journals are circulated, and staff now have more control over the way in which the journal lifecycle operates.

Setting up the email alert system is relatively easy. Once the initial data has been input and a programmer has created the necessary coding then it requires very little maintenance and upkeep.

#### **Lessons learned**

The most important lesson I learned is that members of staff are not very forthcoming if something isn't working. Unless you approach them they will never tell you if they are dissatisfied. Staff are willing to accept that systems may be not be perfect and are willing to put up with something even if it frustrates them. Library and information professionals need to challenge this assumption. By physically going out into the organization and speaking with staff, you can answer queries, concerns and explain situations. Once lines of communication are set up, staff are much more willing to approach you directly.

Additionally I discovered that sometimes the simplest solution can be the best suited to your needs. The answer doesn't have to be complex or expensive.

### **Related FreePint links:**

• Journal Circulation Issues on the FreePint Bar <a href="http://www.freepint.com/go/b8672">http://www.freepint.com/go/b8672</a>



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### "My Favourite Books"

By Peter Merholz



Peter Merholz is President and a founding partner of Adaptive Path. He is an experienced information architect, writer, speaker and leader

the field of userexperience design. He also publishes <a href="http://peterme.co">http://peterme.co</a> m/>, and is perhaps most (in)famous for coining the word 'blog'. As an expert in information architecture, these are the books I find indispensable to my work.

- "The Design of Everyday Things,"
   Donald Norman. It's almost hoary to mention it, but it's one of the few books that changed my life. I've written more about it here:
   <a href="http://www.peterme.com/archives/000561.html">http://www.peterme.com/archives/000561.html</a>
- "Understanding Comics," Scott McCloud. A brilliant long-form essay on the nature of creativity, how humans process visual information and the power of narrative.
- "Designing for People," Henry Dreyfuss. Written over 50 years ago by America's pre-eminent industrial designer, it lays out a user-centered design philosophy long before the phrase 'user-centered design' entered our professional language. Refreshingly clear, straightforward and free of the BS that clouds much design writing.
- "The Visual Display of Quantitative Information" and "Envisioning Information," Edward Tufte. These two are required reading for anyone involved in communicating visually. (His later two you can pass on.)
- "Who Built America? The American Social History Project." This CD-ROM, based on a textbook, set the standard for what a multimedia digital book should be. Developed in 1993, its marriage of text, sound, imagery and video, along with its engagement with archival sources, still inspires.

- "The Architecture of Happiness," Alain de Botton. The most recent book on the list, but definitely worth inclusion. A delightful book-length essay on the power that architecture has over our emotional state, fabulously illustrated with perfectly-selected photos.
- "How Buildings Learn," Stewart Brand. This is one of those books that every Information Architect (IA) has read, even though it has nothing to do with IA. Stewart looks at how buildings evolve over time, and his book serves as a reminder that all of us are creating things that people are going to \*use\*.
- "Information Architecture for the World Wide Web, 2nd Edition," Lou Rosenfeld and Peter Morville. Still the best 'Web design' book out there, with a strong focus on what it actually takes to build great sites. And I'm not saying this just because I was a technical editor.
- "Interface Culture," Steven Johnson. Getting a little long in the tooth, but Johnson's book is the first extended piece of critical writing on the subject of interface and interaction design from the viewpoint of a nondesigner. Valuable in recognizing how interfaces engage with the culture that creates them.
- "The Cluetrain Manifesto" (multiple authors). Written in the midst of Web 1.0, this tract on what it means for businesses to meaningfully engage in business online contains deep truths that still frighten most organisations.



- "Design Research," edited by Brenda Laurel. About half to two-thirds of this isn't all that valuable, but the remainder of the book more than makes up for it. Laurel probes the boundaries of research, which is essential as we design for an increasingly uncertain world.
- "Shaping Things," Bruce Sterling.
   What happens when everything is,
   well, information? Bruce delves into
   the subject of spimes and reorients
   your view of things in the world. And,
   hey, I even dug the (oft-criticised)
   graphic design.

#### **Related FreePint links:**

- "2001 to 2006: Five Years of Information Architecture" By Karen Loasby
  - <a href="http://www.freepint.com/issues/211">http://www.freepint.com/issues/211</a> 206.htm#feature>
- "Information Architecture and Web Usability Resources" By Hal P Kirkwood
  - <http://www.freepint.com/issues/190 701.htm#tips>
- "Books About Usability" By Dr. Jakob Nielsen
  - <a href="http://www.freepint.com/issues/100">http://www.freepint.com/issues/100</a> 806.htm#bookshelf> "

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### FUMSI Report Excerpt: Preparing and planning an audit

By Sue Henczel



Sue Henczel is well known for her consulting and training in information auditing, and in particular for her writing. Her book **Information Audit:** A Practical Guide'. was published in 2001 by K.G. Saur (Munich). She is the author of many chapters, articles and conference papers and presentations on information auditing, knowledge management, performance measurement and benchmarking.

Sue works with UNESCO and the Japanese Funds in Trust to evaluate instructional modules for librarians in developing countries and has recently been invited to join the United Nations consultant roster.

In recent years, much progress has been made in the way organisations gain value from information audits. Now there is a range of experienced practitioners and consultants to draw upon. By using this article, you can learn what goes into an information audit, and prepare for data collection, analysis and reporting. You can read our step-by-step guide for staging an information audit in the FreePint FUMSI report Information Auditing Report and Tool Kit.

An information audit is a research process that has planning, data collection, analysis, evaluation and reporting stages. The planning stage is often the longest and most tedious, as it needs to examine all aspects of the audit process and then customise them to align with the characteristics of the organisation to be audited. The planning stage allows you to find a project sponsor, understand how the organisation works and the value it places on information and to anticipate the barriers that can impact on the success of the audit (communication, cultural, political, resource-based).

Below is an outline of the components of an information audit and some of the preparatory processes that need to be completed prior to commencing an audit.

### Components of an information audit

Generally all information audits should have the following common features:

- What is: An assessment of the information resources created, acquired and used in the organisation, including an understanding of how information flows through the organisation. Including the role of people and information systems
- What should be: An information needs analysis derived from examining organisational objectives and business processes. This will identify critical information requirements
- Gap analysis: An analysis of what should be against what is
- Recommendations for action:
   Recommendations and actions
   focused upon eradicating the gaps in
   terms of organisational priorities.
   These are broken down into short
   and long term actions, and also
   prioritised
- Actions: Actions that form new organisational policies, procedures, strategies, and systems
- Performance measurement: The setting of indicators and targets to measure the effectiveness of action related to business objectives
- Plans for subsequent audits: The cycle of subsequent audits will depend on business need and the rate of change being experienced by an organisation.



Prior to commencing an information audit, it is critical that those driving the project understand their organisation including its internal and external environments.

- The organisation's mission, goals and values determine the focus of the project objectives
- The size and geographical diversity of the organisation determines the ideal or necessary scope of the audit
- The internal culture of the organisation determines the type of data gathering methodology that will work best and the timing of the project
- The internal political situation and management structure impacts on the levels of support, resourcing and stakeholder buy-in
- The external environment (legislative, political, economic) can impact on how and when the audit is conducted, the level of support it receives and the level of acceptance of the findings.

### **Develop clear objectives**

Sometimes an audit is clearly triggered by an event that makes the purpose clear but it is often the case that once an information audit is put forward as a process, many different stakeholders across the organisation will have differing purposes in mind. It is critical that the purpose for conducting an information audit is established and that clear objectives are defined. The objectives must be articulated

in the language of the organisation and agreed to by all members of the audit team and key stakeholders. Ideally they should conform to SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable/Action-oriented, Realistic and Timely).

Once established in the planning process, the objectives will be refined and further defined once the project is resourced, the audit team is formed and support for the project has been generated. You can find an exercise to help you develop clear objectives from the Information Auditing Report and Toolkit.

### **Identify key stakeholders**

Stakeholders may be internal or external to an organisation, and their support is critical to the success of an information audit. Key stakeholders include:

- The project sponsor or champion from a strategic level of the organisation
- Managerial stakeholders
- Operational stakeholders those who deal with information at an operational level (eg, staff in a call centre)
- Staff who will be directly influenced by the outcome of the audit.

Depending on the purpose and scope of the audit, stakeholders may also include regulatory bodies, customers or the general public.



An excellent resource for understanding the role of stakeholders can be found at

<a href="http://digbig.com/4ttnb">http://digbig.com/4ttnb</a>. Written for anthropologists, this website is useful in that it provides definitions of stakeholders, types of stakeholders and details of how to do a stakeholder analysis.

### Defining the scope of the audit

The issue of scope is a common problem for information auditors. If an organisation is medium sized or large the problem is often daunting - where do I start and who/what should the audit cover? Ultimately the scope will be defined by the purpose of audit, strategic priorities and resources and budget issues.

The physical scope of an information audit could be:

- Organisation-wide (preferred)
- Based around core business processes, for example processes related to sales or marketing
- Business unit or department based
- Geographic, for example a specific site, campus, office, region, country.

The information scope of an information audit could be:

- Information type or format, for example electronic records, inhouse or external databases, print subscriptions, etc.
- Information related to a specific area of legal or regulatory compliance, for

example risk management, Freedom of Information (FOI), workplace safety, etc.

Ideally, an information audit is conducted across an entire organisation, as this provides a comprehensive view of the current information environment - needs, usage, behaviours, flows, etc. If an audit is scoped more narrowly, or geographically or by information format/type, it must be realised that a full picture is not possible as many interactions with other units and the external environment are excluded.

Note: Sampling is only an option if there are homogenous groups that use the same information in the same way. Therefore, the size of the organisation and the availability of resources to conduct the audit are inextricably linked.

### Create an audit team

Consider whether in-house or external expertise and resources will be used for the various stages of the information audit. Use cost comparisons to support the case for additional resources from within the organisation or authorisation to employ external resources.

When putting together an audit, the following skill groups should be considered:

- Project Management: Skills in task and resource management
- Research: Primary research method skills in terms of questionnaire and interview design, data analysis and evaluation



- Information Management: Understanding and managing the lifecycle of information
- Human Resources: Skills in understanding staff development and training needs
- Negotiation and Facilitation: Skills in drawing out key ideas and discussion from groups of people.

The team roles required for an audit, depending on the scope would be:

- Project Manager: Coordinating and ensuring the project comes in on time and budget, plus ensuring consistent processes for documentation and write the final report
- Auditors: Actually carrying out the audit
- Data/information Managers:
   Managing data and information
   inputs and outputs and conducting
   statistical manipulation.

It is important that staff working in the information management function of the organisation are made aware that an information audit is not evaluation of their own personal performance, but an assessment of information in order to improve organisational performance. Equally important is to communicate to them that they are the best-placed people in the organisation to play a key role in the audit process.

Obviously heavily dependent on the scope, it can often be hard to generally quantify costs of an information audit.



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### Related FreePint links:

- "Information Auditing Report and Tool Kit" 2nd edition by Sue Henczel
   <a href="http://web.fr">http://web.fr</a> eepint.com/g o/shop/report /infoaudit2/>
- "Information Auditing: Key Concepts and How To Get Started" By Steve Wood
   <a href="http://www.freepint.com/issues/111104.htm#feature">httm#feature</a>
- Review of
   "Information
   Auditing A
   Guide for
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   />

The main component of costs will be staff time - of those managing the audit and those interviewed and surveyed. There could also be costs in terms of technology investment if specialist software for analysis or mapping is required.

### Outsourcing

Outsourcing the work of an undertaking the audit can be attractive proposition to an organisation if the funds are available. However outsourcing does not mean that an organisation should lose ownership of the audit project: there still must be drive, commitment and leadership in order to make sure the audit achieves the desired outcomes. It is important that subsequent information audits are conducted in a similar manner to previous ones so that trends can be identified and measured. If a consultant or external team is selected, ensure that the team works closely with staff to ensure that an understanding of the process is transferred to them.

The advantage of outsourcing can be that the company contracted can take a detached outside view of information in the organisation without any pre-conceived ideas. This can be very important in an organisation where 'information politics' have been taking place with regard to disputes over information ownership and information sharing. However the disadvantage may be that the company contracted does not understand your organisational culture and structure and that the findings lack real insight.

When evaluating companies the following issues should be considered:

- Has the company worked in your sector before - do they have some background knowledge of the issues faced by your organisation?
- What scale of audit has the company worked on before -do they have the resources to meet your deadlines?
- What do they agree to supply in terms of survey results and reports?
   What format will they be supplied in?
- Can you contact any of the other organisations audited by the company?
- Is the company linked to software suppliers - is there an interest related to software solutions that may be sold? Will this prejudice the audit findings?
- What skills do the auditors that will be working on your audit have? IT/IS? Project Management? Information Management? Negotiation? Facilitation?

### Ready to begin

Now that you know what goes into an information audit and have begun assembling your team, you can plan data collection, analysis and reporting. Learn all about how to run your own audit in the FreePint FUMSI report Information Auditing Report and Tool Kit.



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- "Skillfair Consultants Conference" 1 November
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- "Flag and Bell Pub Crawl for Techies"
   1 November
- <a href="http://www.freepint.com/go/e952">http://www.freepint.com/go/e952</a>
- "Introduction to Art & Design Reference Resources" 5 November
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- "SCIP UK Networking Event: Speeding Dating with the Software Vendors" 7 November
   <a href="http://www.freepint.com/go/e949">http://www.freepint.com/go/e949</a>>

#### **United States:**



- "Searching the Internet: Google and beyond" 6
   November
   <a href="http://www.freepint.com/go/e895">http://www.freepint.com/go/e895</a>>
- \* "KMWorld & Intranets" 6 11 November <a href="http://www.freepint.com/go/e936">http://www.freepint.com/go/e936</a>>

### Singapore:



"KM Asia 2007" 29 - 31 October < <a href="http://www.freepint.com/go/e882">http://www.freepint.com/go/e882</a>>

NB: This is just a selection of information-related event listings in the FreePint Events database <a href="http://www.freepint.com/events/">http://www.freepint.com/events/</a>>.

### Gold

A look back at what FreePint covered at this time in previous years:

- FreePint No. 216 19th October 2006. "Outsourcing Research Information: An Introduction" and "IT Compliance Conference: Interesting Landscape on the Other Side of the Information Fence" http://www.freepint.com/issues/191006.htm
- FreePint No. 193 27th October 2005. "Shifting Platforms - CD to online publishing" and "Measuring Public Relations" http://www.freepint.com/issues/271005.htm
- FreePint No. 170 28th October 2004. "European Industrial Relations Sources" and "How European companies can turn the challenge of environmental regulation into profit" http://www.freepint.com/issues/281004.htm
- FreePint No. 147 16th October 2003. "Insurance: a review of websites" and "Out of sight but not out of mind: virtual meetings" http://www.freepint.com/issues/161003.htm
- FreePint No. 123, 17th October 2002. "Is your site slow, medium or fast, and does it really matter? Essential Sources for Web Performance Analysis and Improvement" and "Taking the Plunge into the Entrepreneurial World of the Independent Information Professional" <a href="http://www.freepint.com/issues/171002.htm">http://www.freepint.com/issues/171002.htm</a>
- FreePint No. 98, 18th October 2001. "WAP Sites and the Mobile Internet" and "Working in Information in the UK Voluntary Sector" <a href="http://www.freepint.com/issues/181001.htm">http://www.freepint.com/issues/181001.htm</a>
- FreePint No. 73, 19th October 2000. "Geology On The Web" and "European Document Delivery Suppliers and Resources On The World Wide Web" http://www.freepint.com/issues/191000.htm
- FreePint No. 48, 21st October 1999. "Notes on the Net: A trawl around the Music Sites" and "Unblocking the Web: digital technology and the telephone line"
- <a href="http://www.freepint.com/issues/211099.htm">http://www.freepint.com/issues/211099.htm</a>
- FreePint No. 24, 29th October 1998. "Delivered to your Desktop" and "Making it part of your life" http://www.freepint.com/issues/291098.htm



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