

**The development of electronic resources in
libraries: effective marketing and
communication**

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Abstract

This submission addresses the change to the electronic environment in libraries. It presents eight selected research papers which cumulatively contribute to knowledge regarding the management issues arising from this change.

The specific elements of the research programme focused primarily on changes in academic libraries and secondly in public libraries. The implications of changes in different countries were investigated. The research programme evolved over time, as its applicability and relevance extended to other players in the developing library electronic resources field. The need for effective communication and marketing regarding electronic resources was identified as key, and it became increasingly evident that libraries needed to adopt marketing techniques appropriate to the changing environment and different to those techniques traditionally used. The linked elements of the research programme involve managing changing user needs in line with a changing user base, which includes remote users, and the requirements for changing staff skills. Further elements include work in a virtual environment alongside a physical environment and collaboration and consortia working.

The central aim of the research programme was to identify solutions for best practice, and funding was obtained for many of the research elements. Originality is demonstrated by investigation into an emerging area, using library websites at the time of their development and applying an experimental research technique.

Research methods from different research paradigms - positivist and interpretivist - were employed. Quantitative data was obtained to establish hard facts. Qualitative approaches enabled the acquisition of multiple perspectives and understanding of social constructions of meaning and knowledge, such as respondents' attitudes, feelings and perceptions. The extent and modes of discussion with respondents facilitated triangulation of methods that resulted in multiple views for synthesis so as to clarify understanding. All of the research was underpinned by an on-going literature review, which was vital in order to assess both what existed and current developments. The research methods used were applied in a sequence of eight stages as the electronic environment in libraries developed.

The research aimed to provide a fully rounded picture, investigating the issues arising from the introduction of electronic resources in libraries, and it achieved this by considering developments over a period of time just in excess of the past decade.

The papers present findings that can be applied by players in the field of electronic resource provision. Foremost amongst these was the requirements for educating library users, often in a remote environment, in the use of the new electronic resources, which were derived and the vital importance of operating different marketing and communication techniques, which was demonstrated.

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Statement of Contribution

This statement confirms that the author was the principal investigator and lead author on the co-authored papers included in this submission. The book chapters included in this submission were independently peer reviewed.

1. Overview and context of the research area

This submission focuses on the change to the electronic environment in libraries and presents eight selected research papers which cumulatively contribute to knowledge regarding the management issues arising. The research focuses on changing resource issues in libraries and their management. During the period just exceeding the past decade there has been constant and fast moving change in library/learning resource provision arising from the developing electronic environment. The research findings have application for all players in the field of academic electronic resources and electronic resources in public libraries.

The research focused on changing issues regarding the provision of electronic resources in libraries, with perspectives on the situation in a number of countries and with particular attention to effective marketing and communication.

The overall research **aim** was to investigate the issues arising from the introduction of electronic resources in libraries.

The specific research **objectives** were to

- identify changes in the library environment arising from the provision of electronic resources
- assess management changes arising from the introduction of electronic journals
- consider the issues arising from the introduction of electronic books
- investigate the range of players involved in the provision of electronic resources and the issues involved in working in collaboration
- consider the changing skills required by library staff for working in this electronic environment

- assess the requirements for educating library users in the use of new electronic resources
- analyse the change in marketing and communication techniques demanded by the new electronic environment.

The area of research was initiated at the time of potential change for traditional learning resources in academic libraries. It was developed from my state of knowledge at the time. This was based on my knowledge of the emerging literature, particularly through my role as Editor of an international journal *New Library World*, which aims to chart the latest developments for the profession, on my links to practice, particularly from serving on the *Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning Committee* of the *International Federation of Library Associations* and through my role as an academic, as Programme Leader for the MA Information and Library Management at Liverpool John Moores University.

Publishers, initially particularly of academic journals, were becoming interested in moving into the electronic market and, in order to proceed into the electronic market, they required management information in order to understand how academic libraries (a major consumer of academic publishing) perceived the benefits and barriers to incorporating electronic resources into their collections. Thus, initially the research programme was devised. Later, when in that market, publishers required data to inform their marketing strategies – in particular the ‘add-ons’ to their packages, such as the extras they provide to libraries for promotional purposes and assisting users.

For the academic libraries, many management issues were arising, including:

- managing the change from a physical to electronic environment
- changing skills requirements for the electronic environment
- increasing collaboration between libraries and managing the development of consortia
- marketing the new electronic resources to users

- educating users to use the new electronic resources effectively, notably in a changed situation where users could access the resources remotely without the need physically to visit the library.

The specific elements of the research programme concern management primarily in academic libraries and secondly in public libraries during a period of rapid change with the introduction of electronic resources.

“Information professionals operate in a complex environment and are under increasing pressure to deliver goods and services efficiently.” (Gorman & Clayton, 2005, p.14)

Therefore, the research programme evolved over time as its applicability and relevance extended to other players in the developing library electronic resources field. A major move from hard copy to electronic resources precipitated dynamic changes for all parties. The research relates strongly to change in provision of resources and its management, and key findings demonstrate that effective communication with the many parties involved is paramount to success in the changing electronic environment in libraries.

The linked elements involve managing changing user needs in line with a changing user base which included remote users, changing resources and the requirements for changing staff skills. Further elements include work in a virtual environment alongside a physical environment, management, collaboration and consortia working, and effective marketing and communication with all parties. The central aim of the research programme was to identify solutions for best practice.

The research programme investigated the situation in different countries. The research area commenced by investigating benefits and barriers to incorporating electronic resources in higher education libraries in the UK and in North America. North America was deemed to be important in the investigation as not only was it ahead of the UK in development of these resources, but also a larger market (Ashcroft & Langdon, 1999). Furthermore, another reason for investigation in North America was that it was leading the way in incorporation of electronic resources into academic libraries and was, in many cases, familiar with the needs of remote users because of geographical dispersion of students. The UK was investigated as an emerging market, which would need to develop appropriate management processes. Further research built on this and focused on

marketing of electronic journals, both from publishers to libraries and from libraries to their users. Two issues arising from these projects were investigation into the question of changing staff skills and issues regarding collaboration and consortia purchase (Ashcroft, 2002a; Ashcroft & McIvor, 2001). The latter project was developed in a further geographical context as researchers in Sweden requested the use of the research instrument to replicate the investigation throughout Swedish academic libraries, commissioning the author as a consultant (Ashcroft, 2002b). The research projects led to invitations to speak at two important European conferences (Ashcroft 2003; 2005).

The research programme was developed further to focus on electronic resources in academic libraries in developing countries. Nigeria was investigated as an example of a developing country, and findings of this part of the research have significance not only in terms of understanding issues specific to developing countries but also in terms of initiatives from developed countries regarding electronic resources. It investigated the nature of electronic provision, take-up and barriers to freely available electronic resources by libraries, thus raising implications for future development (Ashcroft & Watts, 2005). On the basis of this research, an invitation was received to speak at the American Library Association Conference (the largest international library conference) (Ashcroft, 2004), and an invitation was received to contribute a chapter to a book on global librarianship (Ashcroft & Watts, 2004).

Then the research programme focused on the emergence of electronic books on to the market and into academic libraries. This research considered the issues and themes arising from the electronic journals situation – management, consortia purchase, staff skills, user needs and marketing, but in relation to electronic books. This was again an important change issue for management given debate regarding whether the same principles would apply for electronic books given the different natures of journals and books and their uses (Ashcroft & Fong, 2005; Ashcroft, 2011).

A further focus was consideration of public libraries' provision in terms of learning. A government funded project commissioned by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) investigated adult learning provision in public libraries in England (Ashcroft et al, 2005). This research considered the nature of learning provision and resources and the extent of collaboration with other agencies. This divergence from the

initial focus, which was on academic libraries, was important because electronic resources were introduced in public libraries later than in academic libraries, with the first resources of electronic journals being less applicable to the public library sector than the academic library sector.

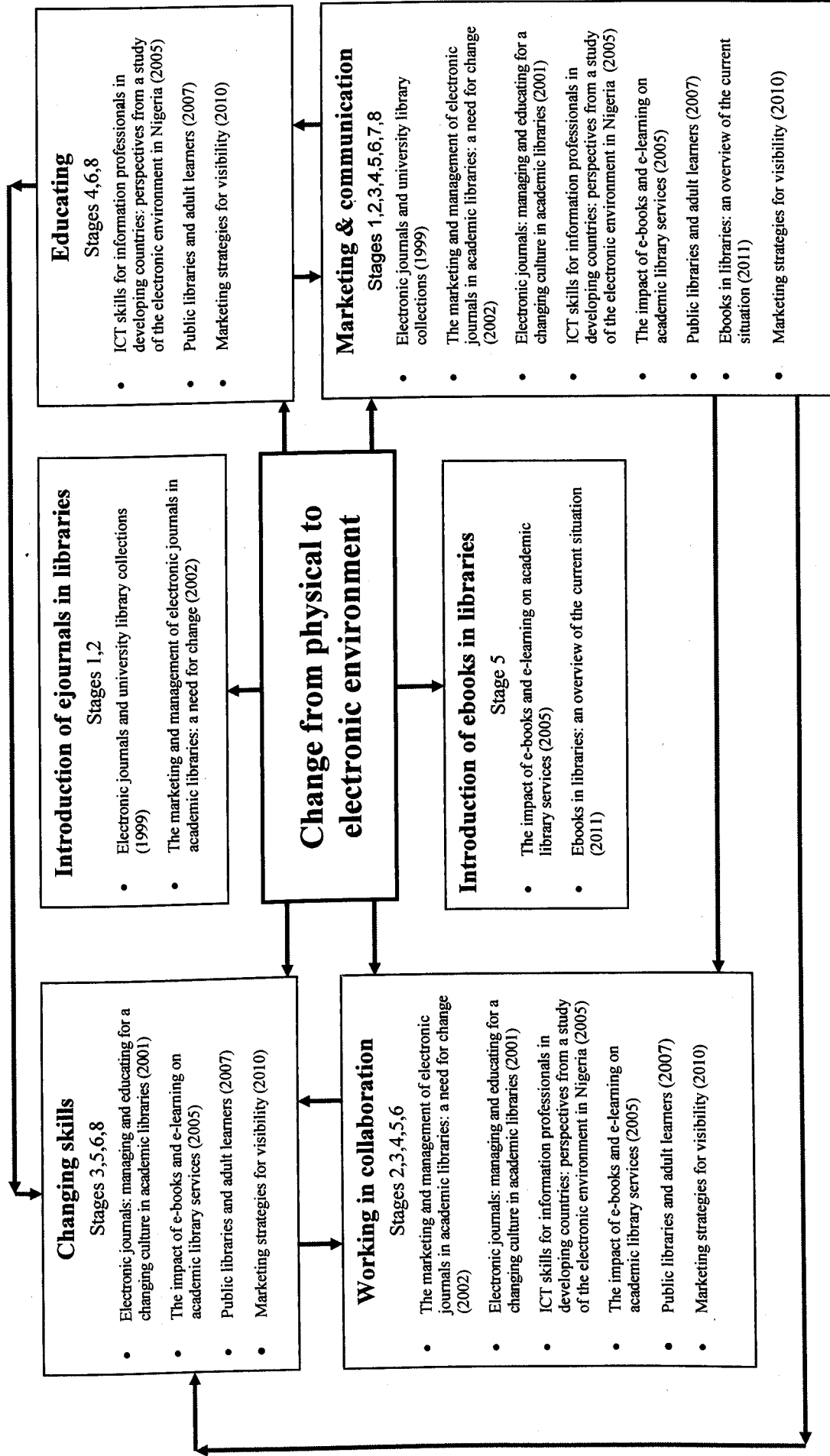
The research programme initially placed focus on academic libraries as they were pioneers in the introduction of electronic resources, but later the context was broadened by considering public libraries.

While undertaking the various projects that made up the research programme, the need for effective marketing of the changing electronic resources was identified, and it became increasingly evident that libraries needed to adopt marketing techniques appropriate to the changing environment and different to those techniques traditionally used. Thus the final stage of the research investigated marketing techniques used in other sectors in order to analyse their applicability in the new library environment.

The eight selected papers are drawn from the candidate's volume of published work. Three papers are sole authored and the candidate was the principle author of the other five papers. Figure 1 shows the links between these publications and the areas of investigation.

Figure 1

Conceptual links between publications



Overview of the research journey

This research journey commenced at the start of major change to traditional learning resources in academic libraries. One aspect of this change was the initial appearance of some academic journals in electronic format rather than, or as well as, in the traditional print copy. As Editor of the international journal *New Library World*, the author was invited to participate in discussions and meetings with the publishers *MCB University Press* (who later became *Emerald Group Publishing*), who were interested in moving into the electronic market. The author's dual role, both as an academic in a university which was likely to become a consumer of new electronic formats and as an editor for an academic publisher which was likely to produce in new electronic formats, stimulated the author's interest in a research topic which had potential for much further development. A further aspect of interest arose in respect of the author's role on the Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning Committee of the International Federation of Library Associations, a body that was interested in the consequences of the changes for the profession. Such professional developments in part related to the contents of academic courses, which are accredited by the professional body, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP). Thus the launch of the early electronic journals was akin to a trial or experiment which stimulates a subsequent series of reactions resulting in a changed environment.

The research journey progressed through the development of the electronic environment, which triggered a number of interlinked aspects for investigation, including the changing requirements for professional skills. New management skills were necessary for collaboration with other libraries, particularly for consortia purchase of electronic resources. Another skills development required was the development of appropriate education of users regarding these new resources, both onsite and remotely.

Communicating online formed another element of the research journey, which was the demand for effective marketing of, and communication about, the new resources. This necessitated change from traditional methods to those appropriate to the developing

virtual environment. This was another stimulating aspect of the research for the author, who is also a member of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations and has a background of work in public relations communication and marketing.

The end point of the research journey came with the development of electronic books and their launch on the market. This development resulted in a number of changes. Firstly, given the difference in nature between journals and books and how they are read, an immediate question was whether the same issues and principles for electronic journals would apply to electronic books? Secondly, electronic book publishers are still experimenting with pricing models (Lynch, 2012) and the development of various types of e-readers for electronic books has further implications for libraries related to the ways in which they make this resource available. Thirdly, the electronic book has much more applicability for public libraries than electronic journals and draws them strongly into the research arena. The continuing electronic book developments, which have been termed 'a revolution' (Armstrong, Lonsdale & Nicholas, 2006), indicate that the changes they present will continue into the future – as evidenced by the inclusion of six items about electronic books in the August 2012 issue of *CILIP Update*. The inclusion of public libraries into the research context was an important note on which to end this research journey.

The candidate's other 28 publications complement the selected publications. The research relates on one level to professional practice. Hence, alongside larger academic publications, some smaller publications were targeted at the professional press, and, in addition to presentations at major international conferences, some presentations were made to specific practitioner audiences (see 'Further Papers' – page 42). The reported research theme also broadened to consider related issues in other sectors, such as an analysis of a portfolio of Library and Information (LIS) journals articles content matter and relationship to the LIS curricula, provision for adult learners in public libraries, learning resource requirements of different groups of learners and facilities in public libraries, training and ICT provision in NHS trusts, and user perspectives on both academic and public libraries.

Research methods to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data were employed. Whilst it was important to obtain statistical data, it was also important to obtain information so as to record and analyse respondents' attitudes, feelings and perceptions. In addition to the methods reported in Section 3, the related research issues outlined in the paragraph above incorporated additional research methods, including focus groups and mystery shopping (see Appendix 1 – page 45).

The submission draws on a body of research undertaken during a major period of change in provision of resources in libraries. It is structured as follows: this section provides an overview and context of the research. Section 2 relates the published work submitted to the criteria for the PhD by Published Work award. Section 3 provides the rationale for the research methodology and provides details and context of the methods selected. Section 4 confirms the ways in which the eight selected publications contribute to knowledge. Section 6 concludes by demonstrating how the research programme met the aim and research objectives.

2. Published work submitted and the PhD award

LJMU regulations for the award of PhD by Published Work requires demonstration of a substantial, original and independent contribution to knowledge by published work. The published work must form a coherent body and be related to a common theme. This section details how the submission meets each of these elements.

Contribution to knowledge

Substantial

Funding was obtained for many of the research elements (see Curriculum Vitae for full details of all funding). Of particular significance were two separate research grants from MCB University Press, a journals publisher which was deliberating a move into the electronic market and which required these research results to inform their deliberations. This publisher later changed name to Emerald Group Publishing after moving into the electronic market and then funded two further research projects, one focusing on the situation in developing countries and the other to identify appropriate marketing and promotional tools. Thus the importance of the research was recognised. This importance was further demonstrated by funding from the University College of Borås, Sweden for the repetition of the second research process (see Methodology Stage 2) in Sweden. The investigation into UK public libraries' provision in terms of learning was a government funded project commissioned by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. The research continued and developed as the major change to electronic resources progressed and considered the situation in different countries. This time span and geographical approach enabled breadth of research, whilst the sharp focus also enabled research depth.

Original

This submission presents originality firstly by investigation into an emerging area and considering a full respondent population in the UK and a purposive sample in North America and presenting a comparison to identify emerging trends. Such investigation had not previously been undertaken and reported. The second phase of the research took a particular technique, the questionnaire survey, and applied it in the new electronic arena

by administering it as an electronic questionnaire, which was a new and experimental format at the time. Collaboration with an in situ researcher in Nigeria enabled novel interpretation of the research issues between developed and developing countries. A further aspect of originality was research using library websites at the time of their development. While the primary purpose was to investigate resources available to users via the websites, a secondary purpose was to observe the effectiveness of communication via these websites. The application by researchers to use the electronic research instrument and to provide consultancy services provides some evidence of external confirmation of originality, as does the invitation to speak at the American Library Association conference (the largest international library conference) (Ashcroft, 2004), and the invitation received to contribute a chapter to a book on global librarianship (Ashcroft & Watts, 2004). Another focus of originality was that the research results had implications for all parties involved – library professionals and staff at all levels, library users, and library providers/suppliers.

Independent

The AHRC says that they assume that a doctoral thesis “contains material that can be prepared for publication” (www.ahrc.ac.uk). As well as the eight selected publications, the other items in the candidate’s volume of published work demonstrate a variety of publications. Publications include fully refereed journals, reviewed conference proceedings, reviewed contributions to books, invited contributions to books, invited and selected presentations at major international conferences, as well as articles in the professional press. Permission was sought to translate some publications into Russian as the research findings were of particular interest.

Coherent Body and Common Theme

The formation of the work into a coherent body is confirmed in the following sections, where the context for the overall research, the changing nature of provision of information in the developing electronic environment, is established. The methodological approaches were also developed throughout the body of the work in line with the

developing electronic environment. Figure 1 (page 6) demonstrates the links between the eight papers submitted in the context of investigation into issues arising in this developing situation and also illustrates that they emanate from the central common theme of the change from the physical to the electronic environment in libraries.

3. Research methodology

Rationale for research methods

Throughout the body of research, the literature review provided the background and context for the further methods employed for the primary research. It was vital to have a full picture of what existed prior to establishing an appropriate methodology and to identify any new developments and issues.

This research employed methods from different research paradigms - positivist and interpretivist, so as to compensate for the weaknesses in each approach (Gorman & Clayton, 2005). Whilst it was necessary to obtain quantitative data to establish hard fact, qualitative approaches enabled the acquisition of multiple perspectives and understanding of social constructions of meaning and knowledge such as respondents' attitudes, feelings and perceptions (Robson, 2002).

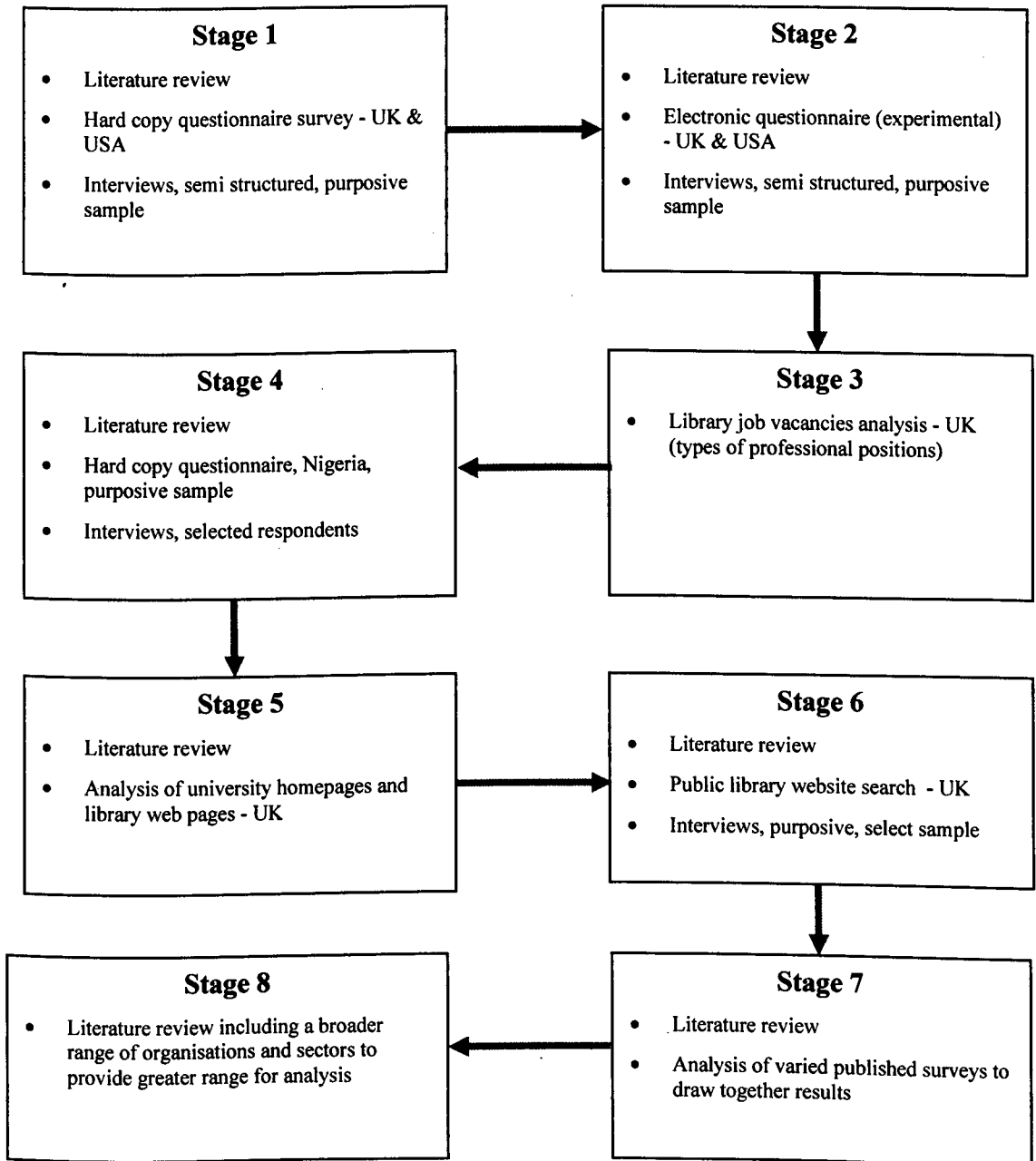
The research investigations had to be completed within a timeframe set by the funders. Thus a questionnaire was developed as a research instrument to gain mainly quantitative, but some qualitative data. Questionnaires enabled the collection of data from a large population in a timely way to build a broad picture (Moore, 2006). Interviews were adopted to gain detailed information. Interviews allow a friendly and more personal emphasis to data collection, allowing both parties to explore the meaning of questions posed and responses to those questions, and to resolve any ambiguities. Interviewing facilitates the exploration of causation – the enquiry into why organisations or individuals behave as they do, which could not be fully explored by quantitative research (Gorman & Clayton, 2005). All of the research was underpinned by an on-going literature review which was vital in order to assess both what existed and current developments.

Application of research methods

Figure 2 (page 14) provides an overview chronology of the different stages and methods used. In the remainder of this section each of the 8 stages is described in detail.

Figure 2

Process map – stages and methods



Methodological stance and summary of methodological approaches

“A research question can in almost all cases be attacked by more than one method” (Robson, 2002, p.370). For this research programme the author adopted a pragmatic approach by using whatever methodological approach seemed most appropriate for the issue under investigation. This led to the utilisation of mixed methods by adopting both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Whilst quantitative methods may not be suitable for exploring subjective issues, they were helpful in examining patterns across many cases and they also provided a good basis for further in-depth investigation through the collection of qualitative data. This approach followed methodological norms at the time.

Thus the author adopted a post-positivist stance as this research employed methods from different paradigms so as to compensate for the weaknesses in each approach. Post-positivism utilises elements of positivism and interpretivism (Ryan, 2006). Whilst the positivist approach provided objective knowledge and facts through the acquisition of quantitative data, the interpretivist approach enabled the acquisition of knowledge about the reasons or causation behind the facts through the acquisition of qualitative data. A post-positivist approach enabled interpretation of data gathered in light of underlying meanings, ideas & motivations. This triangulation, facilitated by combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, involved the use of multiple sources to enhance the rigour of the research and to enable a rich picture to be constructed.

Within the mixed methods approach specific methods utilised were literature review, survey and interviews. In terms of the literature reviews, it was vital to draw from a wide base of available information, to subsequently analyse that information, to keep abreast of developments and to inform and underpin any other methods required. The literature review was developed further by the analysis of information available on university homepages & library webpages. This had a dual purpose in that, as well as obtaining information, it provided insight into how it was presented and communicated to users. A further development of the literature review method was the examination of the main

professional vacancies publication in the UK, *CILIP Vacancies*, over a fixed period of time in order to compare new 'electronic' positions with more 'traditional' ones.

There was a strong emphasis on utilising surveys to obtain data. Hard copy questionnaires were used at the start of the research programme when the electronic environment was insufficiently developed for use. They were also used later to collect primary data in Nigeria, where the electronic environment in this developing country presented difficulties and barriers. Electronic questionnaires were used for later stages of the research programme. This was at a time when people were working on a variety of platforms, using variations of the same software and when today's electronic questionnaire facilities were not available. The use of the electronic medium for data collection was experimental at the time and aligned well with the author's ethos of being innovative in designing the research process.

Finally, another important method used was the interview, which was appropriate where a quantitative study via a survey had been carried out and qualitative data were required to clarify and illustrate the meaning of the findings. Semi-structured interviews were utilised as they were clearly focused, but were flexible enough to provide the opportunity to probe and explore responses. Thus, rather than an interviewee providing prepared answers to standard questions, these were designed to draw from the respondent's bank of knowledge.

Stages

Stage 1

For the initial research investigation an accurate picture had to be obtained of the situation regarding the incorporation of electronic journals into higher education libraries in the UK. For this purpose, the survey was to cover the total population. The population was ascertained from the UCAS Directory. Some smaller institutions, such as branches, were eliminated, culminating in a total of 110 UK universities for survey. In order to obtain a good response rate, it was essential to address the survey to the library professional responsible for electronic resources in each of these universities. Information about these relevant respondents was obtained by looking at websites (which overall were not well developed with relevant information at this time), and by telephoning the relevant library services. Thus a list of UK respondents was developed.

Northern America was the other target geographical area as it was ahead of the UK in the process and a larger market. As North America has a large number of higher education institutions, the Association of Research Libraries and the email discussion list 'serialst' were used to establish a purposive sample to cover large and smaller universities, single and multiple site university libraries and geographical dispersion resulting in a total of 120 North American universities for survey.

A hard copy questionnaire was designed for use in both the UK and North America. This was pilot tested in various libraries to cover single and multiple site libraries and university and other higher education institutions to ascertain if it would work in all situations. Minor amendments were made as a result of the pilot test. Questionnaires were despatched with an accompanying letter (and a reply paid envelope in the UK). The UK response rate of 50% was satisfactory. The US response rate of 23% was less satisfactory, but provided an indication of the situation. Data from the completed questionnaires were entered into a database for analysis and, amongst other factors analysed, comparisons were drawn between the UK and North American situations.

In order to obtain more detail on some issues arising, telephone interviews were employed with a purposive sample. Respondents were identified from the completed questionnaires so as to provide a broad sample to include institutions with heavy usage of electronic journals, those in consortia or collaborative groups, and a good geographical spread.

Stage 2

The second research investigation focused on similar populations to the first. Again the full population of UK universities was to be covered and a purposive sample from North America. Again it was vital to obtain a good response rate, and targeting the right respondents was of extreme importance. However, at this time, job titles and responsibilities had begun to change with the changing electronic environment. Reliance could not be placed on, for example, information on university websites, which could be out of date or misleading in terms of responsibilities. Thus potential respondents were contacted prior to distribution of the survey to elicit cooperation or for direction to a relevant respondent if responsibilities had changed.

In the changing electronic environment, electronic questionnaires were a 'new' form of survey. This form was adopted for a number of reasons. Firstly electronic distribution and response would be speedy, which was important for the time frame of the investigation, particularly for the North American respondents. Secondly, it was appropriate to the nature of the research. Thirdly, it was experimental in nature and, therefore, also appropriate for the research process itself. Electronic questionnaire facilities available today, such as SurveyMonkey and Bristol Online Surveys, did not exist at that time. Consideration had to be given to the nature of the electronic survey and various options were analysed. In order to elicit a good response, it was vital to make the process easy for respondents. At this time respondents were working on a variety of computer platforms, not all had sophisticated tools and many variations of the same software were in use. Microsoft Word was commonly in use, so a questionnaire was developed using Word. Great attention was paid to design, given screen and scrolling considerations, etc, and also to the instructions given to respondents. Again this was pilot

tested prior to distribution and minor adjustments made. The funder requested that findings were presented in an easily re-usable format, and some respondents had also requested information from the findings (which was agreeable with the funder). Thus Microsoft Access was used for the entry and analysis of data, providing a format which was easily usable by others. The UK response rate of 50% was satisfactory. The US response rate of 26% was less satisfactory, but provided an indication of the situation with some of the responses providing extremely detailed information.

More detailed information was obtained via semi-structured interviews with a purposive sample of respondents identified from the completed questionnaires. As in Stage 1, this sample was determined to include respondents from institutions with heavy usage of electronic journals, institutions in consortia or collaborative groups, and good geographical spread.

Stage 3

As the findings from these projects highlighted changing staff skills and a hotbed of discussion about job titles, responsibilities and financial rewards, an angle arising from these investigations was the issue of changing staff skills. Library job vacancies in the UK over a fixed period of time, as advertised in the main professional vacancies publication, *CILIP Vacancies*, were analysed so as to evaluate the new 'electronic' positions available in comparison with 'traditional' positions. These were considered in the context of the research findings, and this process was repeated later to determine any further changes. The implications regarding changing staff skills were also drawn out from this process.

Stage 4

Another stage of this body of research moved beyond the changing electronic environment for libraries in leading developed countries. In meeting the objective of increasing the effectiveness of the scholarly knowledge creation and transmission process in particular in relation to initiatives in the developing world, a project focused on electronic resources in academic/state libraries in Nigeria as an example of a developing

country. It was important to include various 'state' libraries in this project as they are used as a resource by academics and focus only on higher education libraries could have resulted in a biased or false picture. Initially much desk research and an extensive literature review were required to establish the extent and nature of the initiatives and electronic resources available to developing countries, many of which were freely available. The nature of this project led to the requirement of a researcher in situ in a developing country as it was vital to have local knowledge and contacts. This researcher employed was the Webmaster of the Office of Governor. Given that some electronic resources emanating from developed countries are freely available in developing countries, it was also important for researchers from a developed country and from a developing country to work in collaboration. In this situation, a purposive sample of relevant professionals was developed from those libraries most able to provide access to electronic resources and to be accessed by those in the academic community. A questionnaire survey was distributed by the researcher in situ, who advised that hard copy was most likely to elicit good response as the electronic environment presented difficulties and barriers. This was followed up by interviews with selected respondents in order to obtain more in depth information. Advice from the researcher in situ was that face-to-face interviews would elicit the best response. Again data was recorded using Microsoft Access for ease of dissemination.

Stage 5

The research theme was developed further with the emergence of electronic books on to the market and into academic libraries. Given the different natures of journals and books and their uses, for example the difference in reading an article on screen and downloading it in comparison to a book, debate was arising as to whether the same principles as those for electronic journals would apply to electronic books. Desk research was required to establish what was on the market, both in terms of subjects and in terms of electronic book readers and interfaces, which were at the time in an early stage of development. This investigation considered issues and themes arising from the electronic journals situation including management, consortia purchase, staff skills, meeting user needs and marketing. The research population was all university libraries in the UK.

This was determined from the UCAS directory, resulting in 120 universities for investigation. The emergence of electronic books on to the market occurred at a time when the university electronic environment was well established. Thus it was appropriate for the research to draw from examination and analysis of information emanating from institutional homepages and from university library webpages, and institutional search engines were utilized. This approach also facilitated observation of the effectiveness of communication to library users via webpages. The research was repeated one year later to investigate the extent of any change in this situation.

Stage 6

Another developmental aspect of the theme was to investigate the resources and provision for adult learners in public libraries in England, and to ascertain public library collaboration with other agencies. This aspect is supportive to the main theme as it investigated all resources and provision, which included electronic provision and resources, with emphasis on adult learning. However, it developed the research theme further by providing an opportunity to consider developments in public libraries. It followed the methodological approach adopted in Stage 5 by again employing website searching – websites of public libraries in England were sampled and information obtained both from the websites and from the library services on request. A purposive select sample of 6 public library services in England was identified. The sample was selected to cover the following criteria: geographical location; type of library services (such as county, city, borough); Beacon and non-Beacon library services; and size of library service. A semi-structured interview schedule was designed, drawing on issues from the funder's (MLA) project brief and key factors from the literature review, enabling an opportunity for further probing where appropriate. Some interviews were conducted face-to-face and the remainder by telephone.

Stage 7

The literature review, while vital for obtaining a full picture of what existed prior to establishing an appropriate methodology, was also used to provide an overview of the developing situation of provision of electronic books in both academic and public

libraries. A variety of survey results had been published on different aspects of the electronic book market, but each focused on different library sectors, markets and participants. The concept of this literature review was to avoid incurring survey fatigue, and to draw together the published survey results, recent published literature from various authors and information from various websites, with focus again on the UK and USA, so as to analyse this information with consideration of the findings from the previous research projects.

Stage 8

The final stage in this body of research was to further investigate appropriate marketing strategies in the changed electronic environment. Appropriate marketing was an element included throughout all of the previous stages of the research and strongly emphasised. Thus this is an underpinning rather than supportive element as the need for greater visibility of a changed image of libraries and their updated electronic environment was demanding further attention and demanding alternatives to the traditional marketing techniques employed. This stage employed the literature review as the feasible method to obtain information regarding marketing and communication techniques from a broader range of organizations and sectors, rather than just libraries, so bringing together a greater range of relevant information for analysis. This approach was utilized so as to consider how commercial organizations maximize favourable awareness about what they do and so to consider how their techniques and approaches can be applied to library and information services. Whilst library and information services may not have financial resources available for marketing at the same level as many commercial organizations, this analysis demonstrated that much can be done with a small or limited budget.

4. Contribution to knowledge

In this section each paper demonstrates how the specific research objectives (see Section 1 – page 1) were achieved.

Paper 1

Refereed, Principal author

Ashcroft, Linda and Colin Langdon (1999) Electronic journals and university library collections. *Collection Building*, 18 (3), 105-113. ISSN: 0160-4953

Overview and contribution

The first paper introduces the research topic at a time when electronic journals were being introduced into university library collections. This was a time when it was early days in the development of electronic journals and when it was reported that electronic journals, and what they evolve into, will be at the heart of scholarly communities that are created tomorrow. However, rapid technological change and wide diversity in electronic publishing brought about challenges for librarians, particularly in terms of management and planning. This paper reports on an initial research project designed to investigate the benefits of and barriers to the purchase of electronic journals in university library collections. Whilst the library and information profession had embraced new technology, this was pioneering research as little had been published at the time which investigated the range of issues arising from this change in library provision.

This project undertook surveys of those library professionals responsible for the provision of serials in both UK and North American university libraries. A postal questionnaire was used as the electronic environment was not adequately developed at this for successful electronic delivery and response. The research investigated the extent

of electronic journal purchase at the time and the different delivery options. Also investigated were the constraints to incorporating electronic journals into collections, which including cost, the supporting hardware and software, site licence problems and lack of a permanent archive. The important support factors of promotion and evaluation of this new resource were identified.

Findings confirm the statement that “rapid changes ... make planning by librarians for electronic journals management exceedingly difficult ... like shooting at a moving target” (Nisonger, 1996, p.223). Findings contribute to knowledge by ascertaining the ways in which respondents were particularly concerned about complexities of systems, lack of standardization between publishers, the resulting burden on human resources and barriers for users new to these resources. A surprising result was the low level of evaluation of electronic journals, given the user needs focus. It was identified that if publishers could offer consistent solutions to a number of the problems arising, then this would benefit all parties. Areas for further research were identified from the issues arising.

Paper 2

Refereed, Sole author

Ashcroft, Linda (2002) The marketing and management of electronic journals in academic libraries: a need for change. In Savard, Rejean (ed) *Education and research for marketing and quality management in libraries*, K G Saur, 173-189. ISBN: 3-598-21829-X

Overview and contribution

The second paper developed the research topic at a time when electronic journals were becoming more established in university library collections. At this time when academic libraries were increasingly incorporating electronic journals into their collection, the ramifications of this transition to an electronic environment necessitated a review of practices and procedures and had a significant impact on library staffing and

management. This contribution provides results of a research study which investigated the management of electronic journals in academic libraries in the UK and North America, and focused on how libraries were marketing and evaluating these electronic products. The role of the publisher/supplier was also examined.

This research drew from the initial project and developed themes pertinent to the situation for all parties at the time. Thus the changing electronic environment for academic libraries was investigated to consider various perspectives. With focus on marketing and evaluation issues, traditional marketing strategies were considered in terms of management of the new media. The research covered both current practice and plans for the future and, whilst responses confirmed that North American institutions were more advanced in this process than those in the UK, there was agreement between North America and the UK on choices for the future. Whilst consortia was found to be more developed in North America than the UK, the need for a different type of collaboration was identified – that between librarians and suppliers, and the research captured the nature of benefits that librarians would welcome from suppliers.

Findings address the comment from Luther (2000) that “Electronic journals represent a significant and growing part of the academic library’s offerings. As demand for e-journals increases, librarians are faced with a new set of decisions related to acquisitions and services”. Findings contribute to knowledge by drawing together information regarding all players in this changing environment for academic libraries. The need for further collaboration between librarians and suppliers was clearly identified, as was a change in power base for librarians with the development of consortia. The need to change the nature of promotion and user education for these new resources was confirmed.

Paper 3

Refereed, Principal author

Ashcroft, Linda and Stephanie McIvor (2001) Electronic journals: managing and educating for a changing culture in academic libraries. *Online Information Review*, 25 (6), 378-387.
ISSN: 1468-4527

Overview and contribution

The third paper developed the research topic at a time when management regarding electronic journals brought specific issues into prominence. Specific issues arising from the research were developed and formed the focus of this paper. Electronic journals were becoming more established in academic libraries but could not be considered trouble free. Considering the evaluation and promotion of electronic journals in North America and the UK, the aim was to identify significant differences in the way that electronic journals were being managed and to identify successes in order to establish best practice.

Many large experimental initiatives in both North America and the UK proposed solutions for accommodating electronic developments into library practice, but no clear direction had emerged indicating future best practice and the electronic journal marketplace had not then stabilised. The changing role for librarians was reflected in a change of job titles and job descriptions. There was continuing difference between the IT technician and the librarian, yet librarians needed increasing levels of technical competence, not only to advise users, but also related to how to deal with faults and follow up ongoing problems, and to make major IT-related decisions, for example on access passwords as the proliferation of access passwords required at the time was creating a barrier for users.

Findings endorse concerns expressed about library staff having to “share responsibility for identifying candidates for purchase, evaluating potential purchases, helping students and faculty use e-journals effectively, incorporating information about them in their classes, and helping publicize them to their constituencies” (Montgomery, 2000, p.300). Findings contribute to knowledge by assessing how the existing skills of librarians had to be reinvented in the changing electronic environment. Librarians were being increasingly required to work with different groups within and outside their institutions. Beyond the

role of working with faculty and library suppliers, this could involve setting up and participating in consortia agreements, liaising with technical departments and suppliers to resolve IT related problems, and employing advanced negotiating skills to work with others in consortia purchase situations, and regarding complex site licences and copyright agreements. Librarians had to keep abreast of the latest developments and increasingly spend more time on outreach/awareness activities and on user education. Thus the whole area of electronic resource development demanded effective management of this change.

Paper 4

Refereed, Principal author

Ashcroft, Linda and Chris Watts (2005) ICT skills for information professionals in developing countries: perspectives from a study of the electronic environment in Nigeria. *IFLA Journal*, 31 (1), 6-12. ISSN: 0340-0352

Overview and contribution

The fourth paper developed the research topic at a time when some electronic resources were being made available to libraries in developing countries. The research programme was developed further to focus on electronic resources in academic libraries in developing countries. Some resources were being made freely available to libraries in developing countries through various initiatives and from some suppliers, but largely from developed countries to developing countries. This investigated both the nature of electronic provision available, the level of take-up and barriers to take up.

In developed countries, the explosion of electronic information delivery resulted in the need for electronic user support. A number of electronic reference services developed in response to this need. Hence virtual reference service was a new development of electronic provision by libraries. This was taken as an example for this paper to provide a contrast between how library electronic resources were being used in developed countries and the difficulties and barriers to use of more basic electronic resources in

developing countries. The study in Nigeria found that, even in the major libraries, there was low take-up of resources, even those made available through special initiatives, and that hardly any respondents had formed or joined a consortium for purchasing. Of those libraries surveyed, only 38.5% were using NUNet, a project to connect all the Nigerian universities on a wide area network and to the Internet. A major problem identified was lack of awareness of what was on offer, then the benefits of what was on offer. This research benefited from having a researcher in situ with local knowledge and contacts.

Findings consider various reported problems regarding electronic resources in developing countries including accessibility problems in terms of bandwidth and power (INASP, 2003) and that fact that “the meagre information resources that one finds in libraries are grossly under-utilised” (Mutula, 2004, p.283). Findings contribute to knowledge by raising implications for future development in terms of freely available electronic resources for libraries in developing countries and how the level of take-up can be improved. The significance of local knowledge is an important issue. The need for raising awareness in terms of promotion and education was identified, but in light of barriers pertaining in developing countries.

Paper 5

Refereed, Principal author

Ashcroft, Linda and Shirley Fong (2005) The impact of e-books and e-learning on academic library services. In Achleitner, H. & A. Dimchev, eds. *Libraries, globalisation and cooperation: papers from the International conference held in Sofia, Bulgaria, 2004*, Emporia State University, 219-227. ISBN: 0-934068-15-1

Overview and contribution

The fifth paper developed the research topic at a time when electronic books were being introduced into university library collections. In light of further developments in the electronic environment for academic libraries, the project developed the existing research

theme to investigate the introduction of electronic books on to the market and into academic libraries, considering the changing situation regarding this developing resource.

This considered the issues and themes arising from the electronic journals scenario – management, staff skills, user needs and marketing. Initial research was undertaken in 2003 into the extent and nature of electronic book provision, and this was repeated one year later (2004) in order to investigate developments in this provision. The UK situation was investigated. This included consortia purchase initiatives, which had been adopted in North America but were just commencing in the UK. This was again an important issue given debate regarding whether the same principles for electronic books would apply given the different natures of journals and books and their uses. The use of library webpages for electronic book links was investigated. The different platforms for reading electronic books were investigated. However, a further research question was whether electronic books would work better in some subject areas than others and, if so, which and why. Consideration was given to new features, such as interactive options available with some electronic books.

Findings consider reported comments that proper publicity and marketing is needed before a larger number of people begin to read electronic books (Chu, 2003). Findings contribute to knowledge by both assessing the role of electronic books in academic libraries and the management of change arising. During the research process the effectiveness of library webpages in terms of raising awareness of and promoting electronic books was also assessed.

Paper 6

Refereed, Principal author

Ashcroft, Linda, Janet Farrow and Chris Watts (2007) Public libraries and adult learners. *Library Management*, 28 (3), 125-138. ISSN: 0143-5124

Overview and contribution

The sixth paper developed the research topic at a time when electronic resources were becoming available in public libraries, which took place later than in academic libraries. Public libraries have always provided for adult learners but have moved more slowly into the electronic environment than academic libraries. Thus the research theme moved later into the public library arena, but at a time when public library websites were established and could be systematically searched.

This paper drew on a government funded study undertaken for the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, which reviewed selectively adult learning provision inside and outside public libraries in England, identifying key strengths in public library services for adult learners, thus taking a more specific angle directed by the government brief. It continued the collaboration aspect, but in terms of public libraries and other adult education agencies, again highlighting the need for effective communication and negotiating skills. The question of changing staff skills arose, particularly concerning the need for understanding different learning methods and how to manage ongoing engagement with learners. The need to promote services to attract potential learners was highlighted, with websites becoming increasingly significant. Like academic libraries, public libraries need to provide a flexible and supportive learning environment, including accessible facilities (ie 24/7 or supporting distance learners).

Although this project is somewhat divergent from the main research area in terms of type of library, it is important and relevant because it broadened the research area into the public library arena, where electronic resources were introduced later than in academic libraries but were becoming increasingly important. Thus this is a supportive angle to the main research theme. It focused on the learning provision, rather than leisure provision of public libraries. Furthermore collaboration between academic and public libraries for resource provision was becoming more noticeable. Thus this facilitated some consideration of public libraries to be drawn into the research area.

Findings relate to the key document *Framework for the future* (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2003) which sets out current strengths and key areas for development for public libraries in supporting lifelong learning and the benefits to be gained from public libraries working in partnership with other organisations. Findings contribute to knowledge by identifying the unique role of public libraries in adult learning provision, identifying other providers so as to avoid duplication of provision, and identifying 3 'grey' areas requiring attention. The 3 grey areas comprised the hazy distinction between formal and informal learning, the disparities and question of effectiveness of promotion and attracting learners, and the variations in methods of evaluation and feedback in the situation where formal methods may be off-putting to learners. Also identified was the great disparity in the websites of the public library services sampled in terms of structure, ease of navigation, presentation and levels of information available, which not only raised difficulties in terms of the levels and comparability of the information collected but could also have deeper implications for those less experienced adult learners choosing to find out about library provision in this way. (However, there was awareness that website design and content is often dictated by corporate views, which can prevent libraries from presenting their websites as they would wish.)

Paper 7

Refereed, Sole author

Ashcroft, Linda (2011) Ebooks in libraries: an overview of the current situation. *Library Management*, 32 (6), 398-407. ISSN: 0143-5124

Overview and contribution

The seventh paper developed the research topic at a time when electronic books were becoming more established in both academic and public libraries. The provision of electronic books in both academic and public libraries continues to be turbulent, which in some respects echoes the early situation of electronic journal provision. The nature of electronic book provision is fluid, both in terms of the type of electronic books provided

and the means of access and reading, but many issues regarding provision pertain to both academic and public libraries.

This is a literature review, drawing together recent published literature, particularly a number of published research reports, from various authors and information from various websites, and analysing this information with focus on the findings from the previous publications submitted for this award. The situation in both the UK and USA was considered. Parallels with electronic journals were identified in terms of licensing, platforms and costs. However, minimal popularity for consortia purchase of electronic books, particularly in comparison with that for electronic journals, was identified

The findings in this paper received a good report. “This paper provides a useful summary of various research projects conducted into the use of ebooks in Academic and Public libraries over the past few years ... This may be useful for library staff building business cases and trying to convince others of the take-up of ebooks in the sector” (Tennant, 2011). The findings contribute to knowledge by providing an overview of the current situation regarding electronic books in academic and public libraries. Whilst there have been many research projects into electronic books, each has focused on different library sectors, markets and participants. A few pervasive elements were identified in this review. Firstly, there is a need for suppliers to consider the early experiences of electronic journal suppliers and to avoid creating confusion and difficulties for libraries. Secondly, there is a need for libraries to raise awareness about the electronic books they offer and how they offer them. Importantly, the need for effective communication was highlighted. This includes utilising the most appropriate means of communication and involves all players in provision of electronic resources by libraries.

Paper 8

Refereed, Sole author

Ashcroft, Linda (2010) Marketing strategies for visibility. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 42 (2), 89-96. ISSN: 0961-0006

Overview and Contribution

The eighth paper developed the research topic at a time when the development of marketing skills and techniques was both identified and demanded by the changing electronic environment in libraries. Marketing of new electronic resources has been identified as an important management issue, and the changing electronic environment has demanded development of marketing techniques and skills. The need for appropriate marketing strategies was prominent throughout the research programme and thus an underpinning issue.

This is a literature review which aimed to take a different approach to the marketing issue by moving outside the information/library environment and demonstrating how other sectors have applied marketing techniques effectively. In order to draw more broadly on experiences in other sectors, the literature review approach was deemed most appropriate. This paper incorporates examples to demonstrate how commercial organizations, and also charities, maximize opportunities to raise favourable awareness about what they do, how they have taken opportunities to draw national and international media attention and to promote themselves favourably to a wide audience. Techniques demonstrating the significance of the right timing, the importance of having the right resources in place, using the right means of communication to reach the various audiences involved together with the need for ongoing evaluation relate in the same way to libraries as to other organizations.

Findings relate to the fact that all organizations need a marketing strategy and, as Robinson (2006) points out, this need applies to libraries just as it does to other organizations with customers, clients or users. The findings contribute to knowledge by demonstrating how the library and information sector can adopt effective marketing techniques, as a need for libraries to raise awareness about the resources they offer and how they offer them has been identified. Examples from other sectors show how their

approaches can be applied to libraries to their benefit. Furthermore within the library sector, examples demonstrate how some libraries are now negotiating effective sponsorship deals and attracting favourable media coverage in doing so. This broadens the context of marketing to establish relevance in the minds of a variety of audiences.

5. Critical reflection and overview

The author pursued research in an area that was undergoing constant development and change throughout the period of investigation. The research commenced at a time that coincided with the launch of the first electronic journals and it identified emerging trends related to these initial electronic resources. As the research progressed, the market saw more and increasingly sophisticated electronic resources, the development of electronic databases and then moved to electronic books. The development of these resources influenced the design of libraries/learning resource centres and the ways in which these centres made their resources available. These changes to electronic resources included a shift in skills sets as they influenced the ways in which staff worked, the education and advice provided to their users and the ways in which the users accessed resources. Understanding the consequences of these changes formed part of the research. In a period of such widespread changes it was vital to avoid being sidetracked with one particular issue and to keep a balanced focus on the overall aim of the research programme.

Consideration of developments in more than one country provided greater insight into the situation and added depth of results, and collaboration with an in situ researcher in Nigeria enabled novel interpretation of the research issues between developed and developing countries.

Reflecting on the research programme, a crucial factor was the necessity for viability purposes to establish limits throughout the process. These limits included the establishment of samples of respondents for viability purposes. Great attention needed to be given to the structuring and selection of these samples in order to obtain the best results. Looking back it is clear that the most restrictive limit was time - in particular regarding funded research, with funders stipulating when results were required. Drawing a timeline within a constantly changing situation was very difficult and in some ways restrictive, but necessary for viability. Continuing developments in the field presented difficulty in drawing a limit for the purpose of this thesis. For example, e-books was a

hot topic at this year's Frankfurt Book Fair. Publishers are trying to keep up with the popularity of e-readers and tablet computers, which will affect libraries, and the variety of purchasing models for libraries was under discussion, as were issues surrounding creation, distribution and marketing (Lynch, 2012). Hence the research topic continues to develop.

On reflection, in terms of the approach to the research programme, the author was greatly influenced by Moore (2006, p.94), who said that "to get the full value from your research you must be prepared to disseminate the results ... to those people and organisations that can make use of it". This is the firm belief of the author. Dissemination of research results was of great importance, and the need to not only publish in formal reports and in research journals, but also to reach out to practitioner audiences who were in the midst of managing the changes to their collections arising from the inclusion of electronic resources was paramount. Thus, in addition to publishing in academic journals, the author also published in the professional press and presented to a variety of different audiences in different countries.

The author was pleased to engage in informal discussions related to the research as it progressed, and it became clear that approachability was of particular relevance to the author's chosen approach. This engendered good response when undertaking specific blocks of research.

6. Conclusion

According to Moore (2006), the PhD candidate is expected to explore previously uncharted territory. Furthermore, doctoral research often comprises 6 stages – initial focus, literature review, specification of research problems, research methods and findings, analysis and output. The initial focus was derived from the candidate's professional interests and as editor of an international journal, the publisher of which was venturing into the electronic market at the time of its creation.

The literature review has continued throughout the period of research so as to keep account of new trends. It has also developed in approach in light of the changing electronic environment with particular attention to electronic resources and information available from websites. The literature review was the appropriate method for bringing together relevant elements of data for the last stages of the research.

The research area developed through investigation in a number of different countries and through investigation from a number of angles, including the range of players - professionals, suppliers and users. The specific elements of the research investigations concern management issues and effective communication in libraries during a period of rapid change with the introduction and development of electronic resources. The linked elements include managing changing resources, managing work in a virtual environment alongside a physical environment, management of collaboration and consortia working, managing the requirements of changing staff skills, managing changing user needs and educating users in the use of changing resources (including remote users), and effective marketing and communication with all parties. The key question was to consider the situation in more than one country and identify any solutions for best practice.

The research aimed to provide a fully rounded picture, investigating the issues arising from the introduction of electronic resources in libraries, and it achieved this by considering developments over a period just in excess of the past decade. The specific

objectives were all achieved. The changes were identified as they developed in different countries. As well as identifying the range of players involved, the issues involved in working in collaboration and the changing skills required by library staff, findings were produced which had application for all players in the field of electronic resource provision by academic and public libraries. The requirements for educating library users, often in a remote environment, in the use of the new electronic resources were assessed. The vital importance of operating different marketing and communication techniques was demonstrated. The extent and modes of discussion with respondents facilitated triangulation of methods that resulted in multiple views for synthesis so as to clarify understanding.

The outputs from this research include refereed journal articles, refereed conference papers and reports to funding bodies. Other outputs include presentations as invited speaker at both international and smaller professional conferences. These outputs contributed to the ongoing development of the candidate's research ideas as well as enabling their dissemination to both academic and professional audiences.

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Ashcroft, Linda and Chris Watts (2004) Change implications related to electronic educational resources. *Online Information Review* 28 (4), 284-291. ISSN: 1468-4527

Appendix 1
Research application

Research application

| Research method | Source of information | Type of information identified |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Literature review | Journals | Survey populations |
| | Books | Theory |
| | Newspapers | Facts |
| | Government reports | Issues |
| | News Releases | Viewpoints |
| | Promotional Literature | Questions |
| | Websites | Common aspects |
| | | Overview |
| Questionnaire | Library managers | Facts |
| | Library professionals | Changes |
| | | Issues |
| | | Common concerns |
| Interview | Library managers | Facts |
| | Library professionals | Perceptions |
| | Library suppliers | Attitudes |
| | | Feelings |
| Focus Groups | Library users | Facts |
| | | Issues |
| | | Feelings |
| Mystery shopping | Library staff | Facts |
| | | Attitudes |
| | | |

Appendix 2
Curriculum Vitae

Curriculum Vitae

Linda Ashcroft, BA, DipLib, MA, MCLIP, MCIPR

Visiting Research Fellow/ Reader of Information Management

Liverpool Business School, Faculty of Business and Law

Liverpool John Moores University

Email: L.S.Ashcroft@ljmu.ac.uk

Academic Qualifications

MA Information and Library Studies (Distinction) (Liverpool John Moores University)

Postgraduate Diploma Librarianship and Information Studies (Liverpool John Moores University)

Effective Manager Diploma (Open University)

BA (Hons) English Literature and Sociology (2:1) (University of Liverpool)

Professional Qualifications

Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals

Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations

Academic Responsibilities (JMU)

Programme Leader MA Information & Library Management (1996-2005)

Faculty Research Committee (2002-2004)

School Management Team (2002-2004)

School Research Committee (2005 to 2010)

Module Leader

Postgraduate

Research Methodology

Research Planning

Masters Dissertation

Resource Management

Collection Management

Public Relations

Information Sources

Undergraduate

Public Relations
Media Relations
Public Relations Planning and Strategy
Records Management Collection Management
Desk Top Publishing
Information and Communication Skills
Writing for Information Retrieval
Principles of Public Relations

Additional Professional and Academic Practice

- International LIS (Library and Information Science) Advisor to Emerald Group Publishing (2005 to date)
- Chair of BAILER (British Association for Information and Library Education and Research) (1996 –2004)
- Committee Member Continuing Professional Education and Workplace Learning Section of IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations) (2005 to date)
- Committee Member Library Journals Section of IFLA (2002 to 2005)
- Chair of Continuing Professional Education Round Table of IFLA (2000-2002)
- Member of Government Advisory Group (DCMS) on 'Empowering the Learning Community' (2002-2003))
- Member of European Forum on LIS education In Europe: curriculum development (2005)
- Committee Member Institute of Information Scientists Northern Branch (1996-2002)
- External Examiner – Information and Communications Undergraduate Programme, Manchester Metropolitan University (2008 to date)
- External Examiner – Postgraduate Programme in Information and Library Management. Loughborough University (2003 - 2009)
- External Examiner – Information Studies Programme, University of Central England (2003 - 2008)
- External Examiner – PhD, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen (2004)
- External Examiner - School of Library and Information Studies, Aberystwyth University (2000-2003)
- External Assessor – MA Information & Library Management/MSc Information Management, Manchester Metropolitan University (2003)
- External Assessor – BA Information Studies University of Central England (2003)

Research Related Activities

- Member of Programme Committee for EUCLID/ALISE Conference, Germany, July 2003
- Chair of Programme Committee for 4th British Nordic Conference on Information and Library Studies, Dublin, Ireland, March 2001
- Member of Programme Committee for 3rd British Nordic Conference on Information and Library Studies, Sweden, 1999
- Arts & Humanities Research Council – Reviewer of research proposals (ad hoc basis)

Funded Research

- University of Salford, Evaluation of quality of service at enquiry desks (2009) [Linda Ashcroft, grant holder - £950]
- CDL/DEFRA, Analysis of quality and performance in UK government libraries (2008) [Linda Ashcroft, grant holder - £4,000]
- Emerald Group Publishing, The LIS curriculum and LIS journals (2006) [Linda Ashcroft, grant holder - £1,200]
- Museums, Libraries and Archives, Public libraries and adult learners (2005) [Linda Ashcroft, grant holder - £10,905]
- CDL/DEFRA, Survey of quality and performance in UK government libraries (2004/5) [Linda Ashcroft, grant holder - £4,467]
- Northwest Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, INSPIRE project (2004) [Linda Ashcroft, grant holder - £5,400]
- Emerald Group Publishing, Investigation into the effective provision of electronic resources in developing countries: initiatives, barriers and solutions (2003/4) [Linda Ashcroft, grant holder - £4,000]
- Northwest Development Agency, Healthy workplace information initiative (2003/4) [Linda Ashcroft, grant holder - £12,000]
- NHS Workforce Development Confederation, Education/training project (2003/4) [Linda Ashcroft, grant holder - £9,500]
- MCB University Press, Investigation into effective evaluation and marketing techniques of electronic resources for university librarians in the UK and North America (2001/2) [Linda Ashcroft, grant holder - £5,000]
- MCB University Press, Electronic journals in higher education libraries. (2000/1) [Linda Ashcroft, grant holder - £5,000]

Current Personal Research

E-books and university libraries

Publications and Conference Presentations

Editor

Linda Ashcroft. Editor of *New Library World* 1993 to date, ISSN: 0307-4803
[Leading Editor Award (2006) in the Literati Network 2006 Awards for Excellence]
[Leading Editor Award (2008) for Outstanding service in the Literati Network 2008 Awards for Excellence]

Linda Ashcroft (2005) Editor, *Coping with continual change – change management in SLIS: Proceedings of the Euclid/Alise conference*, Emerald, 175p. ISBN: 1-84544-156-7

Linda Ashcroft, (2002) Editor, *Continuity, Culture, Competition – the future of library and information studies education?: Proceedings of the 4th British Nordic Conference on Library and Information Studies*, Emerald, 290p. ISBN: 086176-655-5

Linda Ashcroft. (1997) Guest Editor of *Journal of Managerial Psychology* 12 (5), ISSN:0268-3946

Funded Research Reports

Ashcroft, Linda (2006) Evaluation of service quality at enquiry desks: mystery shopper report. Liverpool John Moores University, 12p

Ashcroft, Linda, Janet Farrow, Graham Matthews, Bob McClelland, Chris Watts (2005) *Provision for adult learners in public libraries in England*. MLA, 93p. ISBN: 1-903743-83-4

Ashcroft, Linda (2004) *INSPIRE project report*. Liverpool John Moores University, 52p

Ashcroft, Linda (2004) *Healthy workplace initiatives database*. Liverpool John Moores University, 20p

Ashcroft, Linda (2004) *Cheshire and Merseyside Workforce Development Project Report*. Liverpool John Moores University, 57p

Ashcroft, Linda (2001) *Investigation into effective evaluation and marketing techniques of electronic resources for university librarians in the UK and North America*. Liverpool John Moores University, 53p.

Ashcroft, Linda. (2000) *Electronic journals in higher education libraries*. Liverpool John Moores University, 77p.

Chapters in Books

Ashcroft, Linda and Chris Watts (2004) The digital divide. In Kesselman, Martin and Irwin Weintraub (eds) *Global Librarianship*, Marcel Dekker, 151-162. ISBN: 0-8247-0978-0

Ashcroft, Linda (2003) Internet and Marketing Communication In Gupta, Dinesh K and Ashok Jambhekar (eds) *An integrated approach to services marketing: a book of readings on marketing of library and information services*, Allied Publishers, 238-248. ISBN: 81-7764-417-3

Ashcroft, Linda (2002) The marketing and management of electronic journals in academic libraries: a need for change. In Savard, Rejean (ed) *Education and research for marketing and quality management in libraries*, K G Saur, 173-189. ISBN: 3-598-21829-X

Ashcroft, Linda. (1997) Marketing of Information and Library Services. In Bakewell K G B (ed) *Managing user centre libraries and information services*, 2nd ed. Mansell., 191-216. ISBN: 0-7201-2270-8

Refereed Articles

Ashcroft, Linda (2011) Ebooks in libraries: an overview of the current situation. *Library Management*, 32 (6/7), 398-407. ISSN: 0143-5124

Ashcroft, Linda (2010) Marketing Strategies for visibility. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 42 (2), 89-96. ISSN 0961-0006

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Turner, Richard, Graham Matthews, Linda Ashcroft & Janet Farrow (2007) The management of independent secondary school libraries in England and Wales: the skills and perceptions of library managers. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 39 (4), December, 213-222. ISSN 0961-0006.

Ashcroft, Linda and Chris Watts (2005) ICT skills for information professionals in developing countries: perspectives from a study of the electronic environment in Nigeria. *IFLA Journal*, 31 (1), 6-12. ISSN: 0340-0352

- Ashcroft, Linda and Chris Watts (2004) Change implications related to electronic educational resources *Online Information Review* 28 (4), 284-291. ISSN: 1468-4527
- Ashcroft, Linda (2004) Developing competencies, critical analysis and personal transferable skills in future information professionals, *Library Review* 53 (2), 82-88. ISSN: 0024-2535
- Varga-Atkins, Tunde and Linda Ashcroft (2004) Information skills of business students, *Library Management* 25 (1/2), 39-55. ISSN: 0143-5124
- Ashcroft, Linda (2002) Issues in developing, managing and marketing electronic journals collections, *Collection Building*, 21 (4), 147-154. ISSN: 0160-4953
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- Ashcroft, Linda and Stephanie McIvor (2000) LIS research and publishing: the forces of change. *Library Review*, 49 (8/9), 461-468. ISSN: 0024-2535
- Ashcroft, Linda (2000) Win-win-win: can the evaluation and promotion of electronic journals bring benefits to library suppliers, information professional and users? *Library Management*, 21 (8/9), 466-471. ISSN: 0143-5124
- Ashcroft, Linda and Colin Langdon. (1999) Electronic journals and university library collections. *Collection Building* 18(3), 105-113. ISSN: 0160-4953
- Ashcroft, Linda and Colin Langdon. (1998) Electronic journals in higher education libraries. *New Library World* 99 (1144), 243-247. ISSN: 0307-4803
- Ashcroft, Linda. (1997) Crisis management - public relations. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 12 (5), 325-332. ISSN:0268-3946
- Ashcroft, Linda (1994) Effective press releases. *Library Management*, 15(8), 24-27. ISSN: 0143-5124
- Ashcroft, Linda (1994) For your information. *Voluntary Housing*, May, 26-28
- Ashcroft, Linda (1994) Training for co-operation. *New Library World*, 95(1111), 28-29. ISSN: 0307-4803

Ashcroft, Linda (1993) Establishing a slide and photograph library. *Library Management*, 14(7), 36-40. ISSN: 0143-5124

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Ashcroft, Linda (2010) Public library promotion in a changing society . *Bridging the digital divide: libraries providing access for all?: Proceedings of the 18th BOBCATSSS Symposium 2010*, University of Parma. <http://hdl.handle.net/1889/1248>

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Ashcroft, Linda (2008) Information literacy in the UK – the beginning or the end?. *Globalization and the management of information resources: International conference held in Sofia, Bulgaria 2008* <http://slim.emporia.edu/globenet/Sofia2008/>

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Invited/Keynote Conference Presentations/Papers

Ashcroft, Linda [Invited speaker] 2008. *Writing for the professional literature*. Hanzehogeschool Groningen, Netherlands

Ashcroft, Linda [Invited speaker] 2007. *Writing for the professional literature*. Hanzehogeschool Groningen, Netherlands

Ashcroft, Linda [Invited speaker] 2006. *Writing for the professional literature*. Hanzehogeschool Groningen, Netherlands

Ashcroft, Linda [Invited speaker] 2006. Write: be part of the professional conversation. *Globalization, Digitization, Access, and Preservation of Cultural Heritage: papers from the International conference held in Sofia, Bulgaria 2006*:

Ashcroft, Linda [Invited speaker] (2005) A skills refocus for digital libraries? *Digital Library Education: International Workshop 2005*, Florence

- Ashcroft, Linda [Invited speaker] (2004) Writing for the professional literature. *Sofia 2004: new librarians: challenges and opportunities*
- Ashcroft, Linda [Invited speaker] (2004) .The digital divide: barriers to collaboration. *American Library Association Annual Conference: International Relations Round Table*, Florida, USA
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- Ashcroft, Linda [Invited speaker] (2004) E-books: the current position in UK university libraries. *E-books: how to make them work* MMIT
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- Ashcroft, Linda [Keynote speaker] (2003) Promotion in perspective. *CILIP Publicity and Public Relations Group Annual Conference*
- Ashcroft, Linda [Keynote speaker] (2003) *Electronic resources in developing countries*. Emerald Library Link Workshop, IFLA conference, Berlin
- Ashcroft, Linda [Keynote Speaker] (2002) *The digital divide and the electronic environment*. Emerald seminar. IFLA conference, Glasgow
- Ashcroft, Linda [Keynote Speaker and Convenor] (2002) *Authors Workshop*. IFLA Conference, Glasgow
- Ashcroft, Linda [Keynote speaker] (2001) *Promotion and evaluation of electronic journals*. Emerald seminar, IFLA Conference, Boston
- Ashcroft, Linda [Invited speaker] (2000) *E-journals – the issues*. Institute of Information Scientists Northern Branch Seminar, England
- Ashcroft, Linda [Convenor] (2000) *Library partnerships: the benefits*. IFLA conference, Jerusalem
- Ashcroft, Linda [Invited speaker] (2000) Electronic journals: the issues. *ARCLIB Conference*, England
- Ashcroft, Linda (1999) [Guest Speaker] *Public Relations and the library/information profession*. The British Library, England

Ashcroft, Linda and Clive Hoey. (1999) Using the internet for effective publications. *The PPRG Annual Conference [Library Association]*. England

Ashcroft, Linda. (1998) The role of University ILM departments in Continuing Professional Development. *IFLA Conference*, Amsterdam

Articles

Ashcroft, Linda (2011) American Library Association Conference 2010, *New Library World* 112 (3/4), 183-187. ISSN 0307-4803

Ashcroft, Linda (2010) American Library Association Conference 2009, *New Library World* 111 (1/2), 70-74. ISSN: 0307-4803

Ashcroft, Linda (2009) American Library Association Conference 2008, *New Library World* 110 (5/6), 294-299. ISSN: 0307-4803

Ashcroft, Linda (2008) American Library Association Conference 2007, *New Library World* 109 (3/4), 185-190. ISSN: 0307-4803

Ashcroft, Linda (2007) American Library Association 2006, *New Library World* 108 (1/2), 85-88. ISSN: 0307-4803

Ashcroft, Linda (2006) Mystery shopping: improving services in Liverpool Libraries. *Library + Information Update*, 5 (4), April, 40-41. ISSN: 1476-7171

Ashcroft, Linda (2006) American Library Association Conference 2005, *New Library World* 107 (1222/1223), 160-163. ISSN: 0307-4803

Ashcroft, Linda (2005) American Library Association Conference 2004, *New Library World* 106 (1212/1213), 286-289. ISSN: 0307-4803

Ashcroft, Linda (2005) Emerald's Library Link Workshop: IFLA World Library and Information Congress 2004 *New Library World*, 106 (1208/1209), 84-93. ISSN: 0307-4803

Ashcroft, Linda (2004) American Library Association/ Canadian Library Association Conference 2003 *New Library World*, 105 (1/2), 76-78. ISSN: 0307-4803

Ashcroft, Linda (2003) Raising the issues of salaries and status for library/information professionals, *New Library World*, 104 (1187/8), 164-170. ISSN: 0307-4803

Ashcroft, Linda (2003) Online Information 2002, *New Library World*, 104 (1187/8), 103-104. ISSN: 0307-4803

- Ashcroft, Linda (2002) American Library Association Conference 2002. *New Library World*, 103 (1181), 399-401. ISSN: 0307-4803
- Ashcroft, Linda (2002) Online Information 2001, *New Library World*, 103 (1174), 103-104. ISSN: 0307-4803
- Ashcroft, Linda (2001) American Library Association Conference 2001. *New Library World*, 102 (11670/1171), 464-466. ISSN: 0307-4803
- Ashcroft, Linda (2001) Partnerships in the electronic age. *Library Hi Tech News*, 10-12. ISSN: 0741-9058
- Ashcroft, Linda (2001) Online Information 2000, *New Library World*, 102 (1163/1164), 166-167. ISSN: 0307-4803
- Ashcroft, Linda (2000) American Library Association Conference 2000, *New Library World*, 101 (1159), 325-327. ISSN: 0307-4803
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- Ashcroft, Linda (2000). IFLA conference. *New Library World*, 101(1153), 33-35. ISSN: 0307-4803
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- Ashcroft, Linda (1999) IFLA Conference '98. *New Library World* 100 (1147), 89-91. ISSN: 0307-4803
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PAGE/PAGES
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