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LI 850XO: Management of Information Agencies  
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### Information Diet

*Profile: You are in charge of cataloging at a large public university library. As such, you manage six professional catalogers and a team of paraprofessional catalogers in charge of non-original cataloging. You need to keep up with the latest trends in cataloging and the management of meta-data. You report to the Dean of Libraries.*

It is especially important for a technical services manager to stay up-to-date. Even a year or two of not paying attention to current issues and trends in library technologies or metadata standards can cause a cataloging librarian to fall behind. Just as in other disciplines, there are formal and informal ways for cataloging librarians to participate in the information transfer process and to stay connected to the community they serve. As a participant in this process, I am especially interested in locating and following sources that innovate and create new knowledge, finding outlets where that information is disseminated and diffused, and putting that information into practice.

The stakeholders that I serve include: first of all, students at my public university; second, my employees (the six professional catalogers and the team of paraprofessionals mentioned above); and third, my superiors (including the Dean of Libraries). Therefore, I am interested in staying up-to-date in three different subject areas: trends in higher education, trends in management, and trends in cataloging and technical services. Because I am likely the university's only manager with a subject specialty in cataloging, however, I should focus most of my energy on monitoring cataloging trends.

Innovation in cataloging happens at a rapid pace and the conversations that surround the creation of new knowledge in cataloging are happening primarily in an informal way, either online or at conferences. I am interesting in monitoring these conversations and am most interested in hearing and reading information from the following cataloging change agents and industry insiders:

- **Diane Hillman**, Research Librarian at Cornell University and former project manager and Metadata Specialist for the National Science Digital Library Project. Blog: <http://litablog.org/>
- **Karen Coyle**, librarian and a consultant in the area of digital libraries. Blog: <http://kcoyle.blogspot.com/index.html>
- **Terry Reece**, Oregon State University Cataloging Librarian. Blog: <http://oregonstate.edu/~reerset/blog/>

- **Nicole Engard**, an Open Source Evangelist for LibLime. Blog: <http://www.web2learning.net/>
- **Stephen Abram**, SirsiDynix's vice-president of innovation. Blog: <http://stephenslighthouse.sirsiidynix.com/>
- **Lorcan Dempsey**, OCLC Vice President and Chief Strategist. Blog: <http://orweblog.oclc.org/>
- **Roy Tennant**, Senior Program Officer, OCLC Programs and Research. Website: <http://roytennant.com/>
- **Karen Schneider**, Community Librarian at Equinox, the support and development company for Evergreen. Blog: <http://freerangelibrarian.com/>
- **Kevin S. Clarke**, Digital Initiatives Librarian, Coordinator of Web Services at Belk Library and Information Commons at Appalachian State University. Blog: <http://kevinclarke.info/journal>
- **David Bigwood**, Cataloging librarian, Lunar and Planetary Institute. Blog: <http://catalogablog.blogspot.com/>

All of these people have personal blogs and some even have Twitter feeds. Many speak at conferences or are part of committees or roundtables that I also watch. I list people as resources first rather than web addresses first because individuals change their names less frequently than blogs do. I also chose to list people before cataloging topics because interesting people are where ideas are generated. Thus, by reading and listening to these people, hopefully I can see past today's Big Thing and may be the first to know about tomorrow's Big Thing.

That being said, however, it is important to follow national initiatives and I currently look for news concerning RDA, PCC, BIBCO, NACO, SACO and CONSER. I also subscribe to the following listervs: AUTOCAT, LIS-RAREBOOKS, WEBCAT-L and USMARC-L. AUTOCAT is the largest of the listervs and the one I read first if I am short on time.

I attend a variety of conferences to stay connected, some topical and some hosted by professional organizations. I also send my staff to conferences and ask them to report back to me. For instance, I recently sent my metadata cataloger to the annual ContentDM conference so that she could gain knowledge about our newly acquired database. I am a member of the following divisions of the American Library Association (ALA): Library Administration and Management Association (LLAMA), Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS) and Library Information Technology Association (LITA). Although I am not a member, I also keep an eye on the Special Library Association's Committee on Cataloging, on the Visual Resource Association (VRA)'s Cataloguing Cultural Objects Project, and on the various review and working groups of International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)'s Cataloging section.

I also occasionally browse more traditional sources of information, such as periodicals and journals. Sources I currently look through include:

Chronicle of Higher Education  
Journal of Library Administration  
Library Administration & Management  
Library Resources & Technical Services  
College & Research Libraries  
Library Journal  
Training  
Library Trends  
Technical Services Quarterly  
Cataloging & Classification Quarterly  
Library Resources & Technical Services  
LC Cataloging Newslines

If you are interested in cataloging and technical services management, some of these online resources might give you a jump start:

- LOC's General, Descriptive Cataloging  
<http://www.loc.gov/aba/cataloging/policy/>
- University of Georgia Library's Online Resources for Catalogers  
<http://www.libs.uga.edu/catalog/tools.html#General>
- IFLA's Digital Libraries: Metadata Resources  
<http://www.ifla.org/II/metadata.htm>
- The Open Road, a blog about open source topics, not specific to libraries  
[http://news.cnet.com/openroad/?tag=rb\\_content;overviewHead](http://news.cnet.com/openroad/?tag=rb_content;overviewHead)
- Resource Description and Access page <http://www.rdaonline.org/>
- The eXtensible Catalog (XC) Project <http://www.extensiblecatalog.org/>
- TechEssence, a blog about information technology written in laymen's terms  
<http://techessence.info/>

One way I ensure that I am listening to the larger conversation about cataloging is by participating in it myself. I publish, join committees, and speak at conferences in order to keep the dialogue going. All of these resources and responsibilities may sound overwhelming, but it is through outside sources that I improve my own job performance. Reading and listening to other helps me better find out what LOC subject headings are current, deal with vendors, act as a responsible member of local cooperatives, manage for change, learn about current training and hiring competencies for staff, and find out how electronic resources impact our OPACs. Finally, it is vitally important that I not lose sight of students and faculty when considering various trends and forecasts. Students and staff are a vital resource that must be listened to and so I occasionally make time to sit in at the reference desk. How are the needs and desires of our students changing? How can my cataloging teams create better access to our

library's resources? It's important to remember that sometimes our patrons are the foremost experts on our cataloging.