Apps and attitudes: towards an understanding of the m-librarian's professional make-up

Kate Davis
Queensland University of Technology
k3.davis@qut.edu.au

Helen Partridge
Queensland University of Technology
h.partridge@qut.edu.au

Mobile technologies are changing the way people live, work and play. They are significantly altering the nature of human interaction and the manner in which individuals and communities connect, communicate and use information. A small but growing number of libraries are beginning to apply mobile technologies to provide new services or to enhance traditional services. In doing so these libraries are making themselves not only more available but also more relevant to their users. Recent discussion within the library profession has explored the trends and developments for mobile devices and their impact on library services. Interestingly, these discussions have not considered the impact these new devices will have or are having on the librarian. What, if any, skills, knowledge and attitudes do librarians need to add to their existing toolkits to assist them in designing and delivering mobile services and collections?

This paper will discuss a research project that identifies the skills, knowledge and attitudes of the m-librarian. The researchers interviewed library and information professionals who are engaged in the provision of m-library services throughout Australia. The paper will provide a discussion of the preliminary findings that have emerged from the research. The research is significant because it establishes an open dialogue between current industry professionals, library science educators and the professional association on the evolving skills and knowledge required by information professional in a world of rapidly changing technology. This dialogue will guide the development of current and future education of library and information professionals.