

DOES POSITION WITHIN THE LIBRARY AFFECT MOBILE TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTANCE?

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BACKGROUND

Study into factors affecting the uptake of mobile technology in vocational, education and training (VET) sector libraries

PARTICIPANTS

14 VET libraries, staffing ≥ 10

8 Institute of Technology and Polytechnics (ITP), NZ

6 Technical and Further Education (TAFE), Australia

42 librarians

14 Library Manager (LM)

14 Systems Librarian (SL)

14 Qualified Librarian (QL)

FACTORS INVESTIGATED

Service Length

Service Experience
(Position)

Technology Competence

TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCE

Position	Level of Technology Competence				
	Beginner	Average	Competent	Comp/Advanced	Advanced
L i b r a r y Manager	5 (35.7%)		6 (42.9%)	2 (14.3%)	1 (7.1%)
S y s t e m s Librarian	1 (9.1%)	2 (18.2%)	5 (45.4%)	1 (9.1%)	2 (18.2%)
Q u a l i f i e d Librarian	6 (40%)	3 (20%)	5 (33.3%)	1 (6.7%)	
Other		1 (50%)			1 (50%)

IMPACT OF POSITION ON

Attitude towards technology usage

Required workforce competencies in the mobile
environment

Required training to deliver services to mobile
devices

Preferred methods of training

ATTITUDE TOWARDS TECHNOLOGY USAGE

43 attitudes were described

The 'Need to up-skill' (n=17) emerged in responses relating to the need for all staff to acquire the skills needed to master the new technologies. Additionally 'Some staff are keen to lead [change or adoption of new technologies], others prefer to follow' (n=11) was expressed.

Library staff expressed the belief that by up-skilling and engaging in innovation, they, themselves, were responsible for the change in behaviour. Staff across the three positions noted attitude was critical in moving into a new environment.

These attitudes were examined as determinants of intention to work effectively within the mobile technology environment and subsequent behaviour around specific training requirements for implementation.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS TECHNOLOGY USAGE

Theme	Position		
	Library Manager	Systems Librarian	Qualified Librarian
Staff need to up skill n=17	5	5	7
Some staff are keen to lead, others prefer to follow n=11	4	5	2
More work has resulted n=8	2	5	1
Better service provision n=8	1	5	2
More technology-related questions are directed to staff n=6	2	1	3
Some staff experiment with technology n=6	3	1	2
Little impact n=6	3	0	3

REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

42 skills, competencies and knowledge identified

Competence in using different mobile devices –

LM 4/19, SL 7/19, QL 8/19

Willingness to try things out – LM 3/11, SL 3/11,
QL 5/11

Ability to link new technologies with new opportunities –

LM 1/8, SL 3/8, QL 4/8

Roles would differentiate skills required –

LM 3/7, SL 2/7, QL 2/7

IT skills – LM 6/7, SL 0/7, QL 1/7

GREATER AWARENESS

Library Managers – IT skills 6/7, developing collaboration with library users 3/4, understanding of main trends and capabilities of mobile technologies 2/3, generic technology skills, skills to enable staff to leave the desk

Systems Librarians – specific programming skills 3/3, confidence working with a mall screen 2/3, information literacy skills, knowledge of compatibility issues

Qualified Librarians – mobile environment doesn't change the competencies required 2/4, ability to link new technologies with new opportunities 4/8, competence in using different mobile devices 8/19, knowledge of best practice for utilising mobile technologies

REQUIRED TRAINING

41 training requirements were identified

All 3 positions were particularly interested in hands-on opportunities for staff to acquire skills with mobile devices.

Systems Librarians were more interested in technical training, identifying training on browser displays, file size requirements, comparison of device functionalities, programming languages and digital data management

REQUIRED TRAINING

Training Requirements	Position		
	Library Manager	Systems Librarian	Qualified Librarian
Hands-on working with range of mobile devices n=13	5	3	5
Using an e-book reader n=9	4	1	4
Web applications for iPhones, mobile devices n=8	3	3	1
Creating mobile-friendly web pages n=8	6	0	2
No current training or plans to introduce n=6	2	2	2

GREATER AWARENESS

Library Managers – creating mobile-friendly web pages 6/8, Web 2 training - wikis, blogs, Twitter, Facebook 3/5, use of mobile technology in education 2/2, text messaging 2/2, matching essential technologies with users

Systems Librarians – Web applications for iPhones, mobile devices 4/8, use of products 2/2, comparison of different device functionalities 3/3, programming or evaluative software relating to scripting 2/2, coding languages, text editing tools

Qualified Librarians – awareness of mobile technologies, their possibilities and functionalities 3/4, developing resources in appropriate file size 2/2, Determined by what is being implemented 2/3, best practice in developing information for display on mobile devices, Library Guides

PREFERRED TRAINING METHODS

42 training delivery preferences were identified

Half (52.4 %) the sample believed the most effective method of acquiring the necessary skills was to be allowed to handle the new technology and work through themselves how best to use it.

PREFERRED TRAINING METHODS

Training Methods	Position		
	Library Manager	Systems Librarian	Qualified Librarian
Provide the technology for hands on learning n=22	6	9	7
Innovator-led n=16	6	4	6
In-house workshops n=15	9	3	3
External delivery n=12	6	2	4

GREATER AWARENESS

Library Managers – in-house workshops 9/15, external delivery 6/12, explore best training solution 7/10, conferences 4/6, professional training, KPIs will determine the approach, staff induction

Systems Librarians – provide the technology for hands-on learning 9/22, on the job 2/2, technology type will determine training 3/6, competency self-assessment, trial services

Qualified Librarians – demonstration software or websites 3/3, mentors 4/5, face-to-face 6/10, discussions

COULD POSITION INFORM PLANNING?

Library Managers placed greater emphasis on planning for technology impact while other staff positions realised the benefits of positively accepting mobile technologies.

Systems Librarians were not concerned with perceived ease of use of mobile technologies as an impact upon the work environment however, this concern was noted with regard to training methods. Qualified Librarians preferred to be assisted in acquiring technology competence through the availability of a mentor.

In regards to the specific on-the-job training required to enable effective development and delivery of mobile technology services, preferred methods of professional development delivery were hands-on, self-paced learning with guidance or training provided by a trusted, expert colleague available to assist at point of need.

IMPLICATIONS

Library management should consider the provision of strong direction in understanding and advocating the benefits of new technologies in the workplace, develop a clear continuing professional development plan and ensure the provision of a supportive environment.

Staff should be allowed the opportunity to develop technology competencies, with a range of mobile devices made available for all staff to train on. Each staff member should have easy access to the device and to personalise it.

The availability of competent professional colleagues to provide timely assistance at point of need was identified as a preferred method of receiving training. It is recommended that technology champions be identified from amongst staff, not necessarily restricted to library staff, who can be trained to assist their colleagues



Thank you

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