

Introduction

Technology has changed the face of libraries and is continuing to change how we work and how we deliver services to our library customers. The ability to identify and incorporate appropriate emerging technology trends into a library setting is paramount to continually providing excellent services.

This issue of *Library Technology Reports* focuses on personal strategies to stay on top of emerging technology trends and incorporate these trends into a library setting, with the goal of being better prepared for technology changes now and in the future.

This report explores four major areas:

- **Why Stay on Top of Technology Trends?** This chapter explains why library staff need to be familiar with emerging technology trends. I discuss examples of rapid technology change, different types of innovation cycles, how consumer behavior is driving and shaping innovation, and how technology changes affect current work and future job opportunities.
- **Trend Watching: Who and How to Follow.** What makes someone a trend watcher or trendsetter? In this chapter, I introduce you to some trendsetters and trend watchers in the library technology industry and some non-library trendsetters and trend watchers as well. Tools and techniques to

help follow trend watchers will also be discussed.

- **Practical Ways to Incorporate New Technology Trends.** Scanning the technology horizon is about more than simply reading tech blogs. This chapter introduces ways to discover what technology trends are impacting your local community and how. I also cover ideas on how to plan to incorporate new technology projects; how to start a project in a more manageable, less resource-intensive way through the use of pilot projects; what you can learn from the experiences of other libraries; how to do a technology process review; and the potential for overload and how to filter your information sources.
- **Current Technology Trends: How to Prepare and When Not to Pursue.** In the final chapter, I explore some practical ways to be better prepared for rapid technology change. I also talk about the differences between fads, trends, and tipping points and how to know if a trend is becoming mainstream or slowly disappearing. I also discuss when not to pursue an upgrade.

So, roll up your sleeves, grab your favorite drink, and get ready to focus on ways to keep up with quickly changing technology.