# Developing a model to teach Information Literacy at the National Library of South Africa.

Presentation by Kim Baker
Programme Executive: Document Supply and Information Services
National Library of South Africa
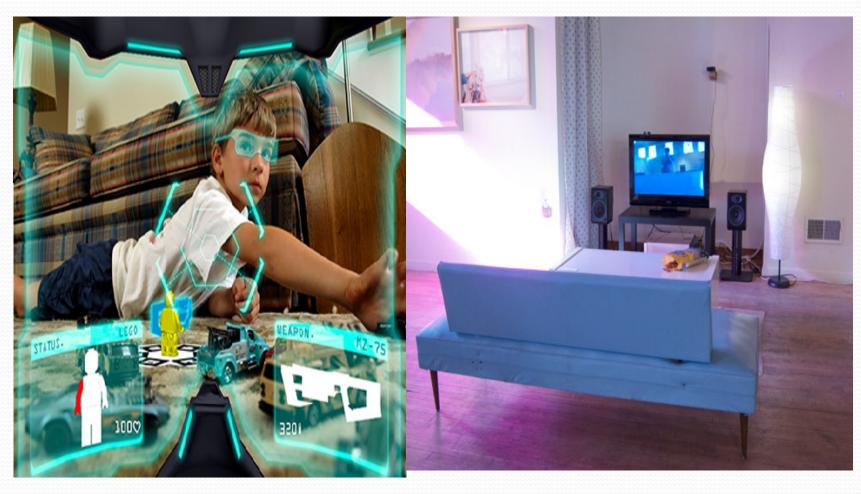E-mail: kim.baker@nlsa.ac.za
8 June 2011
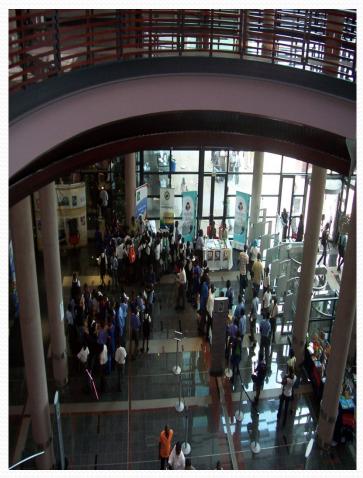University of Pretoria : UPLS e-Learning seminar

# How do we go from this…..

# ....to this?

# Answer:...information and IT literacy

# Presentation outline

- **Background and outline of the research problem**
- **Sub-problem**
- **Goals and objectives of the research**
- **Research design and methodology**
- **Where we are now**
- **Preliminary literature review**
- **Data collection, analysis and reporting**
- **Timeframe**
- **References**

# Background and outline of the research problem

- National Library of South Africa Act, Number 92 of 1998:

  **"The objects of the National Library are to contribute to socio economic, cultural, educational, scientific and innovative development by collecting, recording, preserving and making available the *national documentary heritage and promoting an awareness and appreciation thereof, by fostering information literacy,* and by facilitating access to the world's information resources" (South Africa: 1998).**

# Background and outline of the research problem (cont)

- To date, there has been no development of a scientific model of information literacy for the National Library of South Africa (NLSA), nor an exploration of what this role entails in the context of a national library

- Section 4 of the Act further stipulates:
  - "*(f)*     **to promote awareness and appreciation of the national published documentary heritage; and**
  - *(g)* **to promote information awareness and information literacy**

# Background and outline of the research problem (cont)

- In addition the Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation Charter commissioned by the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), and the National Council for Library and Information Services (NCLIS) identified lack of information literacy as one of the key challenges acting as a barrier to access and participation in a knowledge society. (DAC & NCLIS: 2009, 69 -71).

- With this background in mind, what is needed is a way to educate people about the national documentary heritage of South Africa, as well as develop an information literacy model that is appropriate for the National Library of South Africa.

# Sub problem:

- The National Library of South Africa is in a unique position to educate citizens and international clients on the national published documentary heritage of South Africa – but what is meant by the term "national published documentary  heritage"? What is unique, what is of value – why collect this material?

- DATA-INFORMATION-KNOWLEDGE-WISDOM (Ahsan & Shah: 2007) Even despite a Singularity)

# Goals and objectives of the research

- The goal of the research is to lead to the development of a model for information literacy that is both appropriate for the National Library of South Africa as a national library, and can include the "hidden ingredient"

# Research design and methodology

- A mixed method approach will be used, combining quantitative, qualitative and participatory methods in order to ensure internal and external validity , and this will be a cross-sectional study.

- 1) **Literature review and document analysis to explore the questions:**
- What existing models and frameworks of information literacy are there:
  - are they appropriate for the NLSA?
  - If not, can they be adapted for the NLSA context?
- And: our "hidden ingredient"

# Research design and methodology (cont)

- To test the following research question:

    - What is the current information literacy awareness level of NLSA users? and;

- 2) **Questionnaires** will be used (with sections to provide data on variables such as age, gender, race, language, education level,  etc., and then multiple choice questions, plus space for additional comments), designed to be as unobtrusive  as possible, although this is never completely possible  (failure to understand  the question/s, and response decisions (Bookstein, 1985: 25 - 27)

- 3) **Interviews** will then be conducted, for richer, qualitative data, and to be given in home language

# Research design and methodology (cont)

- Following this first phase, data analysis and collation of existing data will be done and finally, in order to propose a working model for information literacy for the NLSA:

- 4) **Focus groups** will be held at the NLSA in Pretoria, and Cape Town – some will consist of similar language and gender participants, and others will have a variety of language and gender participants. There is a need to ensure that the groups are not dominated by a language, gender or racial group, and that cultural sensitivities are taken into account in the process.

# Where we are now

- Conceptual document analysis
- Opening up of Reference Library and streamlining of services in Pretoria (anticipated to be August/September 2011)
- At present averaging on 30,000 users per month in Pretoria – profile indicates that many require basic library orientation, basic library instruction already, which will be provided in the Reading Room – this area will also deliver the Information Literacy courses in 2013

# Data collection, analysis and reporting

- The full literature review will report the findings of the conceptual exploration of information literacy and our hidden ingredient

- Sampling techniques for questionnaires will be convenience based (users in Pretoria and Cape Town), and interviews and focus groups will use purposive sampling derived from responses in the questionnaires

- Results from questionnaires will be collated into an Excel format to display independent variables identified (race, age, etc), show results from multiple choice questions, and provide samples of data sets of qualitative input from participants. An analytical report will highlight any findings (for example, if any variables such as language or ethnic background have a common pattern in terms of results).

# Preliminary literature review

- **Information literacy**:

  - This is a well researched area both in South Africa, and globally, so the literature is rich, and the most relevant research needs to identified and explored

  - Different conceptual approaches to information literacy: behaviourist, constructivist and relational (Andretta, 2005: 17)

  - Two main models, the REACTS model, and the Big6 Model apply to university teaching environments (Bothma, et al., 2008: 15)

# Preliminary literature review (cont)

- **Information literacy**: (cont)

  - In South Africa, projects have been launched in higher education, schools, and attempts made in the community although the community projects focused mainly on computer literacy (Underwood, 2002: 5 – 10)

  - Courses can be taught one-on-one, or in groups (workshops which are fully planned taking into account learning styles, barriers, including pre-assessment phases, delivery and evaluation) (Poyner, 2005: 81 – 100)

# Preliminary literature review (cont)

- **Information literacy**: (cont)
  - Frameworks exist to assess information literacy competencies, (desired skill set outcomes), and two of these were developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), and the Australian and New Zealand Information Literacy Framework. (Bothma, et al., 2009: 16 – 17). These are generic frameworks, applicable globally.

  - The preliminary search reveals a number of areas to be fleshed out, namely approaches, models, frameworks, and practical applications (case studies), both globally, and specifically in South Africa. The environments of application in schools, communities and universities need to be explored for applicability to a national library environment.

# Data collection, analysis and reporting (cont)

- Findings from the report on questionnaires will be used to compile interview questions for further exploration. Interviews will be given by staff who speak the same home language as participants, and documentation/notes will be kept of every stage of the process

- Results of interviews will be analysed using the constant comparative method, and a report of the findings will be completed

- The report from the interview stage will be used in compiling open ended questions for input from the focus groups – these conversations will be recorded for final data analysis of this phase

# Timeframe

- Literature review and document analysis – throughout 2011
- Design of questionnaires – 2012
- Distribution of questionnaires – 2012
- Data evaluation from questionnaires – 2012
- Compilation of interview questions – 2012
- Interviews in Pretoria and Cape Town – 2012
- Data evaluation from questionnaires – 2012
- Focus Groups – Early 2013
- Final data evaluation, formulation of a conceptual model, and implementation – throughout 2013

# References

- Ahsan, S. & Shah, A. 2007. Data, information, knowledge, wisdom. [Online]. Avalable: *citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.89. (2011, June 3)*

- Andretta, S. 2005. *Information literacy : a practitioner's guide*. Oxford. Chandos Publishing.

- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. 2001. *The practice of social research*. South African ed. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

- Bookstein, A. 1985. Questionnaire research in a library setting. *Journal of academic librarianship*. 11 (1) 24 – 28

- Bothma, T., Cosijn, E., et al. 2008. 2nd Ed. *Navigating Information literacy: your information society survival kit*. Cape Town: Pearson Education (South Africa).

- De Jager. K.  2010.  *Data collection and evaluation*. University of Cape Town: Centre for Information Literacy.

- De Jager, K & Nassimbeni, M. 2002.  Institutionalizing information literacy in tertiary education: lessons learned from South African programs. *Library Trends*. 51 (2) 167-184

- Department of Arts and Culture & National Council for Library and Information Services. 2009. The library and information services (LIS) transformation charter. 6th draft. [Online]. Available: http://www.dac.gov.za/publications/reports/2009/Transformation%20charter-6th%20draft-22102009.pdf (2010, July 2)

- Powell, R. R. 1993. *Basic research methods for librarians*. 2nd Ed. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

- Poynter, A. Enabling end users. Information skills training. 2005. Oxford. Chandos Publishing.

- South Africa. 1998. The National Library of South Africa Act. Act 92 of 1998. Pretoria: Government Printer.

- Underwood, P. 2002. South Africa: A case study in development through Information Literacy. White paper prepared for UNESCO, the US National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, and the National Forum on Information Literacy, for use at the Information Literacy Meeting of Experts, Prague, the Czech Republic. [Online]. Available: http://www.nclisgov.com/libinter/inforlitconf&meet/papers/underwood-fullpaper.pdf (2006, May 7)