Bringing your library into view

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Information horizons

• A metaphor
• Useful in understanding the context of a person’s information use
  – Includes information resources
  – Includes constraints on use of those resources
Let me introduce you to....

... an engineer
(a fictional story)
Jane’s information need

To learn more about current thermostat systems
Jane’s information horizon

- Other engineers in her firm
- Her work team
- The firm’s tech reports
- Her personal library
- The firm’s info center
- Database
- WES colleagues

[Images of Jane, her work team, other engineers, the firm’s info center, her personal library, and a database]
Jane in another situation...

...recently diagnosed with breast cancer
Jane’s information horizon

- Her aunt, a breast cancer survivor
- Her mother
- Her husband
- Her father
- Her brother
- Her family physician
- Her oncologist
- Her public library
- WES colleagues
- Emma, her best friend
The place of libraries on Jane’s information horizon

- For sense-making in her role as engineer
- For sense-making in her situation as cancer patient
Two factors affect the position of information resources

- Accessibility
- Ability to also provide social or emotional support
Should we try to influence Jane’s view of her information horizon?

**YES**

**NO**

**IT DEPENDS**
Jane’s information horizon (revised)

Her brother

Her mother

Her aunt, a breast cancer survivor

Her father

Her husband

Emma, her best friend

Jane

Her oncologist

Her family physician

Her public library

Her brother

Her husband

Her mother

Her aunt, a breast cancer survivor

Her father

Her public library

WES colleagues

Her public library

Emma, her best friend

Her public library
How can we bring about these changes?

Move beyond helping people FIND information...

...to helping people USE information
Library services supporting more effective information use

- Services supporting re-use of existing information
- Services supporting the creation of new information objects
- Services supporting learning
- Services supporting people helping people
Re-use of existing information: open-video.org
Creation of new information objects

NC State University, Digital Media Lab

Video and audio editing equipment
Florida State University Library
Digital Media Lab

Lab used for the creation of an online herbarium
University of Virginia, Brown Science & Engineering Library

Music technology lab
Griffith University, Queensland
Learning

Group learning through instruction

A context for individual learning

One-on-one learning assistance
People helping people

Learning Commons, NC State University Library

Access Grid, NCeSS (UK)

Collaboration Center
Health Sciences Library, UNC-CH
More ideas?

Comments? Suggestions?

Questions?
References

Photo/image credits

- Photo of Dawn Fitt, President of the Women’s Engineering Society (UK), [www.wes.org.uk/councilmembers.shtml](http://www.wes.org.uk/councilmembers.shtml)
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