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In this Folio

By Joanna Ptolomey,
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The continuing professional development of the library and information professional has many facets to it. In years gone by the conference, either attending or presenting, was seen as a solution for ticking some of those professional development boxes.

Trends for conferences seem to be changing. The big ticket conferences seem to be falling out of favour, in part because of concerns around budgets and identifying benefits. The rise of the unconference model coupled with social media has also created a shift in what we as professionals find really useful in helping us do our jobs and being more creative and innovative people.

This FUMSI report considers the role of the conference in relation to professional development. The articles are jam-packed with practical case studies. They include preparing and planning, managing time and outcomes at the event, running an event, and managing and developing conference experiences and outcomes beyond the event space and time.

Until recently I was Chair of a national health information organisation and every year we had our conference and AGM. I only wish that I had Jonathan Khan's seven things he has learnt about organising a conference. I heartily recommend that you pay attention to his lessons whether you are organising a local or national event. His seven tips will give you a great framework on which to build. You will also be amazed at the competencies and skills you develop and/or use in planning an event.

How often have you come away from an exhibition area or trade show with very little to show? Never fear, Judith Binder presents an illuminating sneak peek at the trade show and how to get the best experience and outcomes. Her tips include planning – taking advantage of opportunities and minimising errors. Doing homework or pre conference research is also crucial; who are the industry players, investigating hotel information, and considering hosted events and networking social opportunities. It's also very useful to

"Be organised and do research, plan until you drop, find the right people and speakers, build excitement and hey ... what about have some fun too."

About the Editor

Joanna is a freelance information consultant and analyst. She started her career in information as a clinical librarian in the NHS before moving to global consultancy group DTZ. Prior to working in the information sector Joanna was a project planning engineer in the construction industry for 10 years.

She is the author of a chapter 'Digital divide and accessibility' in *Government Information Management in the 21st Century*. She is also the author of the book *Taking charge of your career: a guide for library and information professionals*.

Joanna is the Use practice area contributing editor for FUMSI and a product reviewer for VIP. You can also follow Joanna on [Twitter](#).

report on what skills you used or developed in the process.

I have been a speaker on quite a number of occasions but it can still be difficult to know if your talk (and messages) will reach the audience as intended. Theba Islam discusses the process of peer review rehearsals using the Predux method, which has a positive effect not only on the quality of the presentations but also on strengthening a professional community.

There is life after the conference and a couple of excellent ways to build on the wave of new or renewed contacts is to use LinkedIn. Elizabeth Goodman provides excellent advice and tips for the building of your professional network beyond the initial meeting phase. I also like the idea of the story around an event and Jo Brodie shows how to use Storify. She also offers tips and recommendations around using large volume tweets.

Whether you are presenting, scouting for industry intelligence, organising or reporting from a conference, there are some themes. Be organised and do research, plan until you drop, find the right people and speakers, build excitement and hey ... what about have some fun too. Remember post conference is important too and make the most of the forward planning and in situ work you have already done.

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