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iSchools in the Context of the Knowledge Economy



Moderator: Suliman Hawamdeh


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Panelist



- * **France Bouthillier**, Associate Professor and Director, School of Information Studies, McGill University
- * **Seamus Ross**, Professor and Dean, Faculty of Information, University of Toronto
- * **Andrew Dillon**, Louis T. Yule Regents Professor of Information, Dean, School of Information, University of Texas
- * **Herman Totten**, Regent Professor and Dean, College of Information, University of North Texas
- * **David E. Fenske**, Isaac L. Auerbach Professor of Information Science and Dean, College of Computing and Informatics, Drexel University
- * **Claire McInerney**, Acting Dean & Associate Professor, Rutgers University

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Ischools

The iSchools organization is a collection of Information Schools dedicated to advancing the information field.

The iSchools are interested in the relationship between information, technology, and people. This is characterized by a commitment to learning and understanding the role of information in human endeavors.

ischools.org

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Knowledge Economy

The knowledge economy is the use of knowledge (*savoir, savoir-faire, savoir-etre*) to generate tangible and intangible values. (Wikipedia)

“..We define the knowledge economy as production and services based on knowledge-intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technical and scientific advance, as well as rapid obsolescence.” (Powell & Snellman, Stanford, 2004)

“*knowledge-based economies*” – economies which are directly based on the production, distribution and use of knowledge and information. (OECD, Paris 1996)

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**Making a Case in the knowledge economy
funding of public Libraries**

General Argument:

Public Libraries are needed because poor people cannot afford to buy books and have access to Internet. Libraries provide much needed services profit institutions is not willing to make. It is free.

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**Making a Case in the knowledge economy
funding of public Libraries**

KE Argument:

Libraries are an integral part of the infrastructure needed to sustain innovative and highly competitive knowledge based economy. Information Literacy is no longer a commodity and it is an essential and integral competency for skilled workers in the knowledge economy. Libraries are essential investment in any nation future.

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Economic Success & Education

Countries around the world are in pursuit of highly-skill workers for their fast growing economies. The connection between economic success and education has led to widening participation in universities as viable business partners. How can iSchools capitalize on these opportunities and position themselves as catalysts of change and key players in the knowledge economy?

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Branding and Image

One might argue that the iSchools movement is nothing but a re-branding of traditional library schools given that the disciplinary articulation and the intellectual differences between the two entities remained less obvious. However branding of products and services is an important feature of the knowledge economy and contribute significantly to the organization intellectual asset. How can iSchools capitalize on branding and create products & services that truly position them as key players in the knowledge economy?

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LIS Jobs

The state of the economy has impacted LIS jobs significantly and translated into enrollment challenges. Some of the challenges faced by LIS graduates is the increased competition for LIS jobs and the changing market needs. What do you think iSchools should do to address the employability of LIS graduates and at the same time differentiate themselves from other disciplines?

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A Culture of Shared Vision

The iSchools sought to position a group of academic institutions to identify, clarify, and speak to the major issues, challenges, and driving questions at the nexus of information, technology, and society. To translate such vision into reality, there is a need for a cultural change and buy in from the faculty. To what extent do you think iSchools have succeeded in transforming a culture of shared vision among the their faculty

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Envisioning an iSchool Curriculum

“.....1) all information services now revolve around human-computer interaction; 2) teach students to think like anthropologists and look at the problems and issues from multiple viewpoints, multiple cultures, and multiple ecologies; and 3) students need to remember that language both enables and limits our ability to communicate with contemporary information systems - without a strong awareness of linguistic issues, we cannot provide information.“

Does this sound like a KM curriculum?

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