

How much do you really want to know? Harvesting to build institutional knowledge resources

Libraries are increasingly responsible for building institutional repositories of content published by and about their organisations or providing current awareness news feeds on these topics. While there are many options for subscription to current awareness services for print-based publications, there are now a diverse range of distribution channels for news information beyond the traditional print media. Of course, harvesting for conservation has deeper challenges than harvesting as a current awareness and topic-based news collection, including the diversity of formats in which content can be created and presented. News sources can include: twitter, snapchat, Facebook, WeChat, public and paywall protected news publications.

The library can play a role in both longitudinal collection of information and in effective topic-based collection. The very diversity of potential information sources presents an opportunity for the library to play a role as a trusted information source. Public libraries increasingly play a role in local history collation.

The library can also be important in bringing these resources together as library guides and current awareness bulletins and well researched papers. Open source software can provide a tool kit for the task, and the librarian moves from cataloguer to curator.