



## ***“Impulse for Growth!”***

Laying the foundation for SLA membership acquisition  
and growth in Germany for 2008

SLA Research Grant 2007



**Augusta Ada King, Countess of Lovelace**

10<sup>th</sup> December 1815 – 27<sup>th</sup> November 1852

Ada Lovelace is regarded today as the “first programmer” in so far as she wrote “programmes” for a machine Charles Babbage was yet to build. Her impulse led to the growth of the computer industry we know today.

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Online Consultants International GmbH would like to give special thanks for all those information professionals who took part in the research project. This report is for you.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The challenges to the working environment and role played by information professionals in business, the public sector and academia are numerous and relentless. Professional associations play a key role in providing orientation, focus and support. But such associations can only make a contribution where they are present and active in the market of their potential members.

In Germany, there are specific professional organisations that are available to librarians, heads of research departments, information managers, in fact to information professionals (IPs) as an identifiable group. In order to assess the opportunities for the Special Libraries Association (SLA) and to build upon its membership in Germany, the SLA Board of Directors awarded a 2007 Research Grant to the project “Impulse for Growth”. The project has been carried out by Online Consultants International GmbH in Karlsruhe, Germany.

On the basis of identifying and locating information professionals more through a description of their competencies rather than by their job title, the project identified 10 key networks or associations for information professionals. The associations were identified through extensive desk research involving the investigation of websites, conference catalogues and proceedings as well as numerous discussions with librarians and information specialists.

From the conference literature, publication and networking activities of these networks and associations, the project then extracted over 200 prospective candidates for SLA membership. A list of the prospects has been included with this report as an MS Outlook \*.pst file.

One of the unexpected outcomes of the investigation into networks for information professionals was the revelation of the extent to which the SLA has already influenced developments in Germany. Two types of influence could be discerned. The first type of SLA influence occurred where the networks or associations had been involved in exchange programmes. The second type of influence is less overt and has occurred where German information professionals have directly modelled their activities on those of the SLA or its members, Guy St Clair (One-Person Libraries) and Helen Bowers (23 Things) being the two most prominent examples.

The report concludes with a comprehensive market analysis, from which are drawn detailed conclusions and recommendations for future action to consolidate SLA’s presence in Germany.

The investigation and report shows that amongst librarians and certain sections of the information specialist community in Germany, the Special Libraries Association and the SLA brand is already known and respected. The question is asked whether a strategy of building bridges – they are already there - could not be enhanced to one of positioning the SLA in Germany as the central hub in a network of professional associations targeted at information professionals in all sectors, but primarily in the commercial sector.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Changes and challenges for information professionals**

The challenges to the working environment and role played by information professionals in business, the public sector and academia are numerous and, it seems, relentless. Professional associations play a key role in providing orientation, focus and support. But such associations can only make a contribution where they are present and active in the market of their potential members.

In Germany, there are specific professional organisations that are available to librarians, heads of research departments, information managers, in fact to information professionals (IPs) as an identifiable group. However, the focus, interests and activities of these organisations tend to be disproportionately weighted towards the public sector and, most noticeably, the academic community.

There is good anecdotal evidence that corporate information professionals are leaving these established organisations because, as one long-standing former member of the German Society for Information Science and Practice (DGI – see below) put it, “the Society simply moves in a different world to that of the information professionals in business”. Nevertheless, information professionals from banks, financial institutions, law firms and large companies are organising themselves into mostly informal networks in order to provide mutual help, assistance and encouragement.

### **1.2. The research project “Impulse for Growth!”**

In order to assess the opportunities for the Special Libraries Association (SLA) and to build upon its membership in Germany, the SLA Board of Directors awarded a 2007 Research Grant to the project,

**“Impulse for Growth!”-**  
*Laying the foundation for SLA membership acquisition and growth in Germany for 2008.*

The research project was submitted by Online Consultants International GmbH, Karlsruhe, Germany. Michael Fanning, Managing Director of Online Consultants International GmbH, is the Project Leader.

A trigger and starting point for the research project is the *prima facie* case that there is in Germany a clear requirement for a pro-active professional organisation that represents the needs of information professionals in business yet at the same time helps build bridges to the public sector and academic world.

The aim of the research project **“Impulse for Growth!”** is to gather together in a single action or impulse a critical mass of contacts as well as a proven methodology of acquiring them. The contacts should not only include individuals who can be approached with respect to SLA membership, but also associations of information and library professionals. It is after all the associations, with whom some of the more strategic “bridges” can be built.

The research project is to conclude with the transfer of the knowledge acquired from the project to the SLA and in particular to SLA representatives in Europe and Germany. The aim here is to facilitate an effective transfer and dissemination of knowledge to enable the SLA to begin targeted acquisition activity<sup>1</sup> with a view to significantly raising membership numbers in 2008 and 2009.

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<sup>1</sup> Activities in this area have already begun. An SLA event introducing the SLA Divisions “Legal” and “Solo Librarians” is being hosted by a law firm in Frankfurt/Main on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

### 1.3. Revisions to the submitted research project plan

The project start unfortunately encountered a number of delays. These delays were due partly to project management conflicts, but also due to the unanticipated difficulties encountered in locating information for the project and verifying its reliability.

Fortunately, one of the positive developments in the Spring of 2008 that *de facto* caused revisions to the original project plan was the occasion of the visit of Janice R. Lachance, CEO SLA and Doug Newcomb SLA Chief Policy Officer to Frankfurt/Main in October 2008. The fact of Janice’s visit and the interest it generated both during the prior organisation and the actual visit, quite literally “built bridges” with some of the networks under discussion faster and with more impact than had previously been the case. The meetings and the discussions held during the visit have had a material impact on the research project, its original assumptions and hence outcomes. A list of the meetings held during the visit is given below.

PERSON / INSTITUTION	SECTOR	AFFILIATION
<b>Miriam Jaster</b> Director, Information Resource Center (IRC), U.S. Consulate General - Public Affairs	Public sector	“Online Stammtisch”
<b>Elka Sloan, Adriana Werner</b> Intelligent Resources / SLA members	Commercial	SLA, GfWM, “Online Stammtisch”
<b>Heide Bayer</b> Librarian, Ashurst LLP	Legal	OPL-Kreis (Frankfurt/Main)
<b>Ludger Hartmann</b> Manager Library Services, Allen & Overy LLP	Legal	OPL-Kreis (Frankfurt/Main)
<b>Stefan Zillich</b> Senior Research Analyst, Leonardo & Co.	Banking / Finance	GfWM “Online Stammtisch”
<b>Ulrike Falck,</b> Vice President, Information Services, Deutsche Bank AG	Banking / Finance	“Online Stammtisch”
<b>Prof. Dr. Stefan Gradmann</b> Presidential Candidate, DGI Professor at the Institute for Library and Information Science, Humboldt-University, Berlin	Academic	DGI
<b>Anne Bein</b> Vice-president, DGI Managing Director, Swets Information Services GmbH, Frankfurt	Commercial	DGI
<b>Dina Bott,</b> Main Office Corporate Communications, Inform@tions-Zentrum, Commerzbank	Banking / Finance	IK-Ring
<b>Dr. Bergenthum, Frau Rützel-Banz, Frau Schaper, Dr. Schmidt, Herr Wirth</b> University Library of the Johann Christian Senckenberg University in Frankfurt / Main.	Academic	Initiative Fortbildung
<b>Marion Ohlert</b> Library Manager, Dewey & LeBoeuf LLP, Rechtsanwälte und Steuerberater	Legal	OPL-Kreis (Frankfurt/Main)

Table 1: Meetings between CEO SLA and information professionals, Frankfurt/Main, October 2008

In particular, assumptions about how best to proceed with SLA prospects and how to actually lay the foundation for SLA growth in Germany was discussed in some depth. For instance, SLA members in Germany that met with Janice and Doug used the opportunity of their visit to explore the notion of an SLA Chapter for Germany. The consequence of these discussions for the outcome of the research project are examined more fully in the last section 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

## 2. BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH PROJECT

### 2.1. SLA’s desire and need to expand into other markets.

One of the recurring themes for all the candidates in the recent SLA elections to the Board of Directors was the desire to expand SLA membership to and in other countries. Whilst it is true that the SLA has more than 11,000 members spread over some 75 countries, by far the overwhelming number of SLA members are still within the United States. The table below shows for example the distribution of SLA members across the western part of Europe.

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF SLA MEMBERS (As of November 2008)
United Kingdom	122
Germany	18
France	6
The Netherlands	6
Switzerland	4
Belgium	4
Italy	2
Spain	2
Austria	1

Table 2: SLA membership in Europe Source: SLA

Clearly, as globalisation continues to affect all types and levels of business activity and information flows are increasingly disrespectful of boundaries, it has to be in the interest of the SLA to expand into other countries and market segments and in doing so secure more members. It is also in the interest of SLA’s current membership to embrace developments beyond their usual horizons and to enrich the collective knowledge pool and seek out opportunities abroad.

### 2.2. Germany as a potential market for SLA

Germany is certainly attractive as a starting point for building up a stronger SLA presence in continental Europe. Not only is the economy substantial and robust (even in the current economic climate), but also German institutions and businesses spend considerable sums of money on research and development – two very information intensive activities.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The factual information referred to in this section has been taken from the publication “Facts about Germany” published by the German Foreign Office. See <http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de> for further information.

Placed after the United States and Japan, Germany is considered to have the third largest economy in the world. With a population of 82.3 million, Germany is also the largest market in the European Union (EU). In 2007, Germany's gross domestic product (GDP) totalled €2.42 trillion, which translates into per-capita GDP of €29,455. This figure can be attributed primarily to foreign trade. With an export volume of €969 billion or one third of GDP in 2007, Germany is the biggest exporter of goods worldwide, and as such considers itself to be the "export world champion". More than every fourth euro is earned from exported goods and services – and more than every fifth job depends on foreign trade. The most important economic centres in the country are the Ruhr region (formerly characterized by heavy industry, it is developing into a hub for high-tech and service providers), the Munich and Stuttgart conurbations (high-tech, automobiles), the Rhine/Neckar region (chemicals) Frankfurt/Main (finance), Cologne, Hamburg (port, Airbus construction, media) Berlin and Leipzig.

Particularly attractive to the SLA is the fact that Germany currently commits around 2.5 percent of its GDP to research and development (R&D), considerably more than the EU average of around 1.8 percent (2006). The Federal Government plans to increase spending on R&D to three percent of the country's GDP by the year 2010. Moreover, Germany is also a leader as regards company-financed R&D, where the figure comes to some \$45 billion. The spirit of invention is also strong: In 2006, investors and companies from Germany accounted for over 11.7 percent of patents worldwide – putting the country at number 3 in the international rankings.

Daimler, Siemens, Porsche, Lufthansa, SAP, BASF are strong German brands that are internationally recognised. Such companies are part of a strong industry and services sector whose sub-divisions mirror the Divisions of the SLA. Where for instance in the United States, information professionals are strongly represented in the SLA Divisions, such as business and finance, legal, pharmaceutical / medical / health – it is reasonable to assume that information professionals in Germany will be similarly employed in these fields.

Yet, Germany's federal structures, be they political, legal, administrative or cultural, have also generated a diverse and fragmented business environment. The diversity and fragmentation is reflected in the networks available to information professionals. It is something of a paradox that in Germany – despite the robust economy and substantial spending on information hungry R&D – there appears to be no specific, indigenous professional association for information professionals in the commercial sector. A curious anomaly yet one that on the other hand must increase the attractiveness of Germany as a starting point for building up SLA membership in continental Europe.

### **2.3. Locating information professionals in Germany**

The research project started with the assumption that there are information professionals in Germany in the same proportional numbers with the same needs and issues as their colleagues in the United States. This unfortunately has to be assumed, as there is no association, nor directory, nor resource that can deliver that information.

SLA is a membership driven organisation. The question then arises how to find prospective members of SLA from within the commercial sector in Germany. Information specialists in organisations tend to be invisible. For example, there are few if any directories listing the information specialists within companies. Many companies are indeed not aware of the people they have, nor of the role of information specialist departments.

One exception to the lack of directories is a publication from K.G.Saur. However, this resource refers mainly to librarians in academia and the public sector. Some librarians or information specialists from large companies are also listed, but they are very much in the minority. This, it shall be seen, is a recurring theme.

Similarly, the websites of companies are not usable as a source of information to locate information specialists. Some information intensive companies such as lawyers and private equity companies are keen to display their “knowledge workers” in detail i.e. their lawyers and associates. Yet, the intellectual assets that supply these resources with the information they need remain in the background, invisible. This is partly to do with the hierarchical business culture that prevails in such organisations. It has also to do with the sheer ignorance and lack of understanding of what information specialists contribute to the firm.

In certain business circles in Germany, the visible library and invisible librarian represents another curious paradox. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, as the merger of international law firms with local law firms was at its height, many of the newly merged law firms in Germany built new premises. A clear trend – started by Freshfields in Düsseldorf - was to place the library on the ground floor with large windows enabling passers by to see it and wonder at the knowledge therein. The law firms White & Case and Gleis Lutz are such examples and they and their ground floor, large windowed libraries can be seen along the Bockenheimer Landstrasse in Frankfurt/Main. Yet, the guardians of these precious resources, the librarians and information specialists are usually nowhere to be seen.

An obvious alternative to locating information professionals within an organisation is to contact the organisation and ask to speak to....whom? Most of the large banks in Frankfurt/Main no longer maintain a physical library (see IK-Ring below). Some information specialists have even worked hard to distance themselves from the title “librarian”. It is not uncommon that asking for the “librarian” or “information specialist” leads to the Knowledge Manager or know-how specialist or even to an IT person.

This leads to the next point, namely that before the information specialists can be located, it is necessary to know who they are.

#### **2.4. Identifying information professionals in Germany**

Who are the information professionals is an issue in Germany as much as it is in the United States. The role of the library is changing across all sectors, especially as organisations and in particular companies are wrestling with classic as well as the newer (Web 2.0) information sources.

The changing role of libraries and changing attitudes to information services impacts upon information professionals leading more often than not to increasing the fragmentation of what it is that they do. This was described well by one group of information professionals from the banking and financial sector in Germany, the IK-Ring (see below),

“The profession of the information professional is extremely diverse and as a result it is difficult to define it in concrete terms. Information professionals have so many different job titles such as documentalist, information broker, information manager or even knowledge manager. Typical work for an information professional in a financial institution would be to search for information on business and economy related issues in electronic databases and the Internet. The process would usually be initiated by another employee of the bank who would contact the information specialist department and ask them to find information for him or his department.”<sup>3</sup>

While this is an honest and frank portrayal of the work of an information professional in a bank or financial institution, its approach is still somewhat classic. The description sees the information professional as something of a servile information broker. As someone who flits about to gather information for a specific need identified by a third party.

The statement makes no reference to the role of the information professional in the organisation, to their competencies or to the skill set required – managerial and leadership as well as an ability to process information – to proactively promote information services within a bank.

The perception by information professionals of themselves as servile information brokers coupled with the plethora of job titles used to describe their position in organisations has had the consequence that in Germany there is no consistent or meaningful “Berufsbild” or professional image for information professionals.

To illustrate the point about job titles, the diagram below displays a myriad job titles selected from amongst German companies and taken from the Online Consultants International GmbH client database over the period 2007 to 2008.

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<sup>3</sup> From the IK-Ring website. See <http://www.ik-info.de/content/view/57/25/lang.de/>

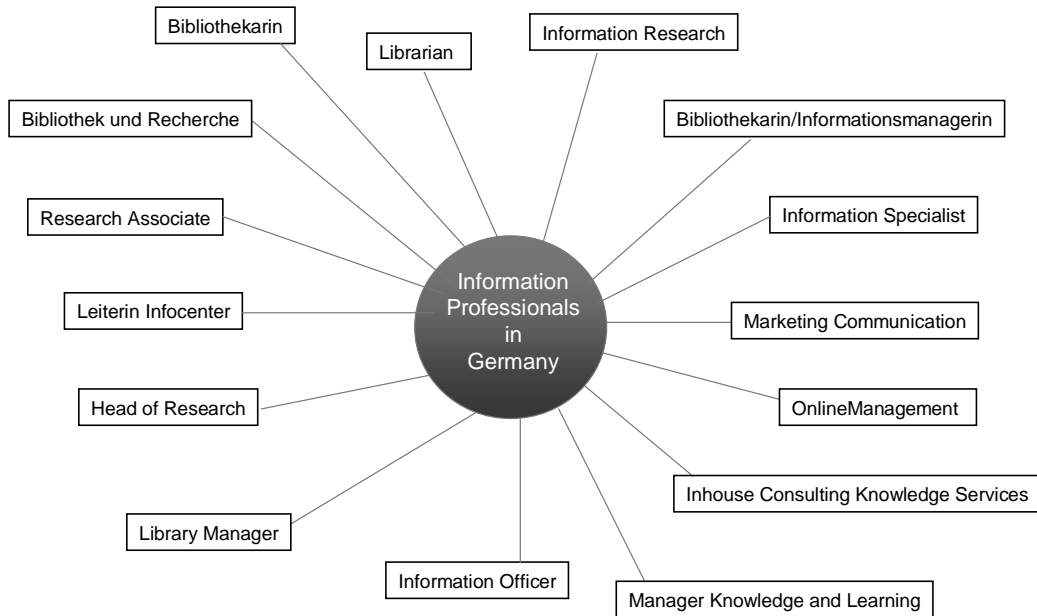


Figure 1: Job titles of information professionals in Germany

All the above job titles have been taken from German businesses. There is a noticeable and extensive use of English titles, terms and descriptions. This is driven partly by the need to find a uniform job description in international, globally active organisations. It is however also driven by the fact that the German information community has few original terms of its own.

Nevertheless, what binds those people that can be described as information professionals is that they have a high degree of information competence. They have had a training or have developed specialist skills in the organisation of information, in finding it and being able to apply it to solving problems and are able to help others to do so.

In other words, while the job title may vary, information professionals can be identified by their competences i.e. they can be identified on the basis that they are in an information hungry organisation and have, as part of their formal job description, information organisation, acquisition, processing and dissemination.

## 2.5. Locating information professionals in Germany

On the basis of being able to describe and locate information professionals more by a description of their competence than by their job title, associations or networks were sought for such information professionals that belonged to the following industry segments,

- Banking and Finance
- Legal
- Pharma, Medicine and Health services
- Top 500 Corporations

The associations were identified through extensive desk research involving the investigation of websites, conference catalogues and proceedings as well as numerous discussions with librarians and information specialists.

The desk research yielded the following list of groups or networks for librarians and information specialists in Germany. It is recommended that they be referred to as networks, as not all of those listed have the formal status of an association and therefore it would be both inaccurate and misleading to describe them as “professional associations”. The networks are listed here by their German language abbreviation which for convenience is used consistently throughout the report.

ABBREVIATION	NETWORK
(AGMB)	Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Medizinisches Bibliothekswesen e.V.
(AjBD)	Arbeitsgemeinschaft für juristisches Bibliotheks- und Dokumentswesen e.V.
(APBB)	Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Parlaments- und Behördenbibliotheken e.V.
(ASpB)	Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Spezialbibliotheken e.V.
(BIB OPL-Kommission)	Kommission für OPLs beim Berufsverband Information Bibliothek e.V.
(DGI)	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Informationswissenschaft und -praxis e.V.
(DVMD)	Deutscher Verband Medizinischer Dokumentare e.V.
(GfWM)	Gesellschaft für Wissensmanagement e.V.
(IK-Ring)	Informations- und Kommunikationsring der Finanzdienstleister (IK) e.V.
(P-D-R)	Pharma Dokumentation Ring

Table 3: List of networks for information professionals in Germany

These networks will be described in more detail in the subsequent section 3. THE GERMAN IP NETWORKS IN DETAIL. For the purpose of describing how individual information professionals were subsequently identified, it is important at this stage to understand that despite their variation and diversity, all the networks could - generally speaking - be described in terms of three characteristics,

- 1. The network maintains a degree of central organisation**  
e.g. Board of Directors, Advisory Council, group coordinator etc.
- 2. The network regularly holds a variety of events**  
e.g. Annual General Meeting, conferences, satellite events, training sessions etc.
- 3. The network regularly issues publications of various types**  
e.g. Conference proceedings, journals, newsletters, listservs etc.

It was from the information sources produced as a result of these three characteristics, that the details concerning individual information professionals could be extracted. For example, the website of the IK-Ring (information professional from the banking and finance sector) lists the contact details of the individual members of the Board of Directors<sup>4</sup> and Advisory Council<sup>5</sup> and also lists the institutional members. The German Librarians Conference (Deutsche Bibliothekartag – see below) on the other hand published a list of conference participants who attended the annual conference in Mannheim in June 2008.<sup>6</sup> The AsPB (information professionals in special libraries) issues a quarterly newsletter in PDF format.<sup>7</sup>

The 200 information professionals listed in Annex A to this report have been derived from such lists and information sources. The lists and sources whilst valuable were rarely complete as regards contact information. A phase of cross referencing and corroboration was needed to raise the reliability of the data.

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<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.ik-info.de/content/view/27/39/lang.de/>

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.ik-info.de/content/view/28/9/lang.de/>

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.bibliothekartag2008.de/de/Teilnehmerliste.htm>

<sup>7</sup> See <http://www.aspb.de/pdfs/ASpB-Newsletter-1-2008.pdf>

### 3. THE GERMAN IP NETWORKS IN DETAIL

In the following section the networks listed in Table 3 above are described in more detail. A standardised profile for each network is given to aid comparison. Additional points and characteristics of the network are emphasised where relevant. The description of the network concludes with any known contact with the SLA or clear influences of the SLA either directly or through its membership.

For a clearer understanding of how the networks are positioned in the information landscape in Germany and also to be able to compare and evaluate the networks in a meaningful context, the networks were categorised on the basis of the subject orientation of the majority of their membership. So using the subject divisions given previously, namely

- Banking and Finance
- Legal
- Pharma, Medicine and Health services
- Top 500 Corporations

the networks have been considered in the following order:

- **Banking and Finance**  
(IK-Ring) Informations- und Kommunikationsring der Finanzdienstleister (IK)
- **Legal**  
(AjBD) Arbeitsgemeinschaft für juristisches Bibliotheks- und Dokumentswesen  
(APBB) Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Parlaments- und Behördenbibliotheken
- **Pharma, Medicine and Health services**  
(AGMB) Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Medizinisches Bibliothekswesen  
(DVMD) Deutsche Verband Medizinischer Dokumentare  
(P-D-R) Pharma Dokumentation Ring
- **Top 500 Corporations**  
(ASpB) Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Spezialbibliotheken
- **Interdisciplinary**  
(BIB OPL-Kommission) Kommission für OPLs beim Berufsverband Information Bibliothek  
(DGI) Deutsche Gesellschaft für Informationswissenschaft und Informationspraxis  
(GfWM) Gesellschaft für Wissensmanagement

#### 3.1. Banking and Finance

In the banking and finance sector the most prominent professional association for information professionals is the,

- (IK-Ring) Informations- und Kommunikationsring der Finanzdienstleister (IK) e.V.

3.1.1. IK-Ring

**(IK-Ring) Informations- und Kommunikationsring der Finanzdienstleister (IK) e.V.**

(IK-Ring) Information and Communications Ring of the Financial Services Providers

The Information and Communications Ring of the Financial Services Providers (IK-Ring) are a collection of commercial organisations from the banking and financial services sector. The institutions that make up the IK-Ring operate outside the competitive environment to create innovative solutions, to fulfil the tasks of their respective information and communications departments and to promote further professional development and training for information specialists within those departments.

PROFILE: IK-Ring			
<b>Description:</b>	<p>The IK-Ring is a network of information specialists from the banking and the financial services sector.</p> <p>The purpose of the network is to promote the spread of “best practice” regarding information and knowledge management amongst banks and financial institutions. The IK-Ring also arranges continuous training programmes and provides coaching services to its members.</p>	<b>Events:</b>	<p><u>Annual general meeting</u> The IK-Ring AGM is held usually in spring.</p> <p><u>Conference</u> <b>IK-Symposium.</b> The Symposium is held every two years in April.</p> <p><u>Other events</u> Training sessions and meetings between members are arranged on a regular basis.</p>
<b>Profiles of members:</b>	<p>Large banks and savings institutions (Sparkassen), central reserve banks (Zentralbanken), regional banks (Landesbanken), trade and professional associations as well as credit cooperative associations.</p>	<b>Publications:</b>	<p><u>Conference proceedings</u> Proceedings of the IK-Symposiums. These are available back to 1987.</p> <p><u>Journals</u> <b>ik-report.</b> Publications issued on themes relevant to the work of the members of the IK-Ring.</p>
<b>Number of members:</b>	<p><u>Institutional:</u> 40 institutional members (September 2008)</p> <p><u>Individual:</u> There are no individual members.</p>	<b>Legal form:</b>	<p>The IK-Ring is a registered association, i.e. an “e.V.”</p>
<b>Fees for members:</b>	<p><u>Institutional:</u> Institutional members pay a fee.</p> <p><u>Personal:</u> Not applicable</p>	<b>Founded:</b>	<p>2000 - Registered as an association</p>
<b>Geographic coverage:</b>	<p>Germany, Austria and Switzerland</p>	<b>Contact person:</b>	<p>Frau Gabriela Lüthi-Esposito CEO IK-Ring CREDIT SUISSE Economic Research / ILSI Tel.: +41-44 333 42 95</p>
<b>Professional contacts:</b>	<p>Informal contacts with the “Online Stammtisch” an informal roundtable for IPs in Frankfurt/Main.</p>	<b>Web presence:</b>	<p><a href="http://www.ik-info.de">http://www.ik-info.de</a></p>

Although the membership of the IK-Ring is primarily the information and documentation departments, in German the „Informations- und Dokumentationsabteilungen (IuD-Stellen)“ of banks and financial institutions, the group also includes associative members from the academic world (e.g. Hochschule für Bank Wirtschaft) and other commercial areas, such as insurance (e.g. R+V Versicherung AG).

Continuing education is a major activity of the IK-Ring and to that end the group runs numerous programmes for its members throughout the year.

One of the specific characteristics of the IK-Ring is the creation and maintenance of the two databases called IKOM and MIND. These two databases are used extensively by information professionals and researchers throughout the financial services community. The work on the MIND and IKOM databases is carried out by internal and external information professionals.

- **IKOM - Press database**

This database provides access to over 4 million documents from 70 sources from a variety of German, Austrian and Swiss publications both national and regional and that are aimed at the business community and are published daily or weekly. The IKOM database has been produced by members of the IK-Ring since 1996

- **MIND – Credit and business literature bibliographic database**

The abbreviation MIND refers to the “MIND Managementinfo Wirtschaft” database. This database consists of 80,000 bibliographic references to articles from over 60 German and English language business and professional journals. The bibliographic references include abstracts (some also provide links to full-text databases) to literature which is primarily concerned with banking, the financial sector, management and business. This database has been produced by members of the IK-Ring since 1987.

Both the IKOM and MIND databases are hosted by the business information provider GENIOS<sup>8</sup> where they are distributed as paid for services. The IK-Ring also makes available to third parties the taxonomy it uses in the construction and maintenance of the two databases. The taxonomy has been jointly developed by IK-Ring members.

The IK-Ring are a small but for that very focussed network of information professionals nested within a specific market segment, namely banking and finance. Their activities are sustained through a mixture of membership fees and revenue derived from the maintenance of the two databases IKOM and MIND. Their important economic status within the banking and financial sector community has enabled them to conclude collective agreements with commercial business information providers such as LexisNexis and GENIOS. Of particular note is the observation by the IK-Ring representative that met with Janice R- Lanchance in October that only 3-4 of the institutions that make up the IK-Ring still have a physical library, i.e. less than 10%. Members of the IK-Ring know of the SLA but there is currently no active contact nor association.

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<sup>8</sup> See <http://www.genios.de>

### **3.2. Legal**

In the legal sector physical libraries on the other hand are still very much in evidence. The librarians responsible for the management of library and information resources within law firms in fact make a distinction between the local “Handbibliothek” and law firm’s central library or “Zentralbibliothek”.

The “Handbibliothek” refers to the collection of legal textbooks, usually a mixture of standard and some specialist works that are maintained by the individual lawyer locally at their work place for their personal use. This is in contrast to the “Zentralbibliothek” which houses the books, journals and other publications available to all. Although this division is based upon physical copies of books and journals it is also mirrored by electronic resources. Internal intranets coupled with a system of restricted user access rights enable library managers in law firms to individually allocate electronic resources locally or centrally or both.

A consequence of this distinction is that the role of the law librarian as a specialist in both library science and practice is still very much in evidence and that the person of the law librarian is still associated with a physical location within the organisation. Also, in Germany it is not unusual to find law librarians with a legal qualification.

Currently in Germany there are two professional organisations that represent the interests of law librarians and information professionals who specialise in the legal sector. They are the,

- (AjBD) Arbeitsgemeinschaft für juristisches Bibliotheks- und Dokumentswesen
- (APBB) Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Parlaments- und Behördenbibliotheken

#### **3.2.1. AjBD**

##### **(AjBD) Arbeitsgemeinschaft für juristisches Bibliotheks- und Dokumentswesen**

(AjBD) Association for Law Librarianship and Documentation

The AjBD is an association of law libraries from specialist and university institutions as well as from the legal document centres of courts, public bodies and other legal institutions. Membership is nevertheless open to private individuals as well as institutional members and includes both categories of members from Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

PROFILE: AjBD			
<b>Description:</b>	<p>The AjBD's describes its purpose as threefold.</p> <p>Firstly to promote legal libraries as well as the legal documentation and information sectors in the German-speaking countries.</p> <p>Secondly to identify issues and to solve common tasks or at least to make recommendations for their solution.</p> <p>Thirdly to work with associations and organizations with similar objectives (see below).</p>	<b>Events:</b>	<p><u>Annual general meeting</u></p> <p>The AjBD annual general meeting is held at the annual national conference of German Librarians Association (<b>Deutsche Bibliothekartag</b> – see below) which is usually held in June.</p> <p><u>Other events</u></p> <p>Numerous satellite events are held throughout the year.</p>
<b>Profiles of members:</b>	<p>The libraries of the Supreme and Senior courts in Germany, law faculty libraries at universities as well the law libraries of law firms and large companies.</p>	<b>Publications:</b>	<p><u>Conference proceedings</u></p> <p><b>Proceedings of the Association for Legal Librarianship and Documentation.</b></p> <p>These publications carry articles on issues concerning law library, documentation and information systems and legal bibliography. Each issue deals with a specific topic.</p> <p><u>Journals</u></p> <p><b>RBD Recht, Bibliothek, Documentation (Legal, Library, Documentation)</b></p> <p>This publication is the official publication organ of the AjBD. In addition to reporting on AjBD issues RBD is a magazine covering the broad field of law / library / documentation / information and is the only such periodical in German-language Europe.</p>
<b>Number of members:</b>	<p><u>Institutional</u></p> <p>170 institutional members</p> <p><u>Individual</u></p> <p>Information not available</p>	<b>Legal form:</b>	<p>The AJBD is not a registered association.</p>
<b>Fees for members:</b>	<p><u>Institutional:</u></p> <p>€ 30 for sustaining members</p> <p><u>Personal:</u></p> <p>€ 30 for individual membership</p>	<b>Founded:</b>	<p>1971 - In Cologne</p>
<b>Geographic coverage:</b>	<p>Mostly national and German speaking regions of Europe.</p>	<b>Contact person:</b>	<p>BD Dr. Hans-Peter Ziegler Bibliothek des Bundesfinanzhofs Ismaninger Str. 109 81675 München Deutschland Tel: +49 (0)89 9231 358 Fax: +49 (0)89 9231 201 Mail: <a href="mailto:Hans-Peter.Ziegler@bfh.bund.de">Hans-Peter.Ziegler@bfh.bund.de</a> Web: <a href="http://Bibliothek des Bundesfinanzhofs">Bibliothek des Bundesfinanzhofs</a></p>
<b>Professional contacts:</b>	<p>APBB Initiative Fortbildung (Berlin) German Library Institute German section of the International Association of Law Libraries</p>	<b>Web presence:</b>	<p><a href="http://www.ajbd.de">http://www.ajbd.de</a></p>

Although the membership of the AjBD is mostly composed of law libraries from the Supreme and Senior Courts, such as the Federal Constitutional Court or Federal Supreme Court, as well as libraries of the Ministry of Justice, Max-Planck Institutes, Federal State and university law libraries and documentation centres, the AjBD also has a few members from the commercial sector. These are either legal information providers or law firms.

In other words the majority of the association's members are from the public sector either as civil servants or as academic staff. This means that their salaries are set by general tariff agreements and working conditions are both proscribed and regulated. This in turn has the practical consequence that professional development programmes as well as seminars or events to further professional development are either offered at no charge or for a notional fee.

For example, the AjBD is a partner of the **Initiative Fortbildung** (see below). This organisation is nested within the Central Library of the Federal State of Berlin in Berlin and runs events and programmes addressing issues of librarianship and library management. Although there are clear and obvious similarities in approach to the SLA the Initiative Fortbildung is only just beginning to embrace the leadership and management programmes or the professional development programmes run by the SLA. A brief survey of the publications issued by the AjBD also reveals the preoccupation with library themes such as bibliography collections or indexing. Although in the very recent issues there are articles on Web 2.0 there are no articles on the leadership or individual skill aspects of professional development as understood by SLA.

The AjBD is a long established group dealing with law librarianship in a traditional sense. Well connected in Germany, the AjBD is also internationally active representing the German section of the International Association of Law Libraries. Also of note, the AjBD and specifically two of its most prominent members, the library of the German Federal Constitutional Court and the library of the German Federal Supreme Court, both in Karlsruhe, actively participated in US/German Parliamentary and Public Sector Libraries visit in 2007.<sup>9</sup>

Under this exchange programme run by Initiative Fortbildung and sponsored by the Checkpoint Charley Foundation in Berlin, representatives from public sector libraries in the USA had the opportunity to meet with their equivalent in Germany. Many of the attendees from the United States are SLA members and reported in depth on their experiences during the SLA Annual Conference in Seattle in 2008.

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<sup>9</sup> See below section 3.6.2. Initiative Fortbildung.

**3.2.2. APBB**

**(APBB) Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Parlaments- und Behördenbibliotheken**

(APBB) Association of the Parliamentary and Public Sector Libraries

The second of the two associations representing the interests of law librarians and information professionals in the legal sector in Germany is the Association for the Parliamentary and Public Sector Libraries (APBB). The APBB represents the interests of parliamentary and public sector libraries as well as the documentation centres of public institutions.

PROFILE: APBB			
<b>Description:</b>	The APBB represents the interest of parliamentary and public sector libraries as well as their respective documentation centres.  The purpose of the APBB is to encourage cooperation between these institutions and to offer advice in subject specific as well as professional matters with a view to improving the welfare and performance of its members.	<b>Events:</b>	<u>Annual general meeting</u> The APBB AGM is held at the German Librarians Conference ( <b>Deutsche Bibliothekartag</b> – see below).  <u>Conference</u> The APBB annual conference is also held during the yearly German Librarians Conference.  <u>Other events</u> A programme of continuing education focussing on database research techniques and the internet, OPLs are held throughout the year.
<b>Profiles of members:</b>	Libraries of the Federal and Federal State parliaments, of government ministries, Chambers of Commerce (IHKs) and of religious institutions.	<b>Publications:</b>	<u>Journals</u> <b>Die “Mitteilungen”</b> – 2 per year Addresses APBB relevant issues and best-practice. <b>Die “Arbeitshefte”</b> - 1 per year Covers APBB themes in detail and from alternative perspectives.
<b>Number of members:</b>	500 libraries of varying sizes.	<b>Legal form:</b>	The APBB is not a registered association.
<b>Fees for members:</b>	<u>Institutional:</u> No fee. Members are expected to subscribe to the association’s publications a cost of €16,50 / year. <u>Personal:</u> No fee. The subscription requirement as above also applies.	<b>Founded:</b>	1955: Founded originally as a Commission of the Parliamentary and Public Sector Libraries under the Verein Deutscher Bibliothekare (VDB)  1957: Independent organisation run under the current name i.e. APBB
<b>Geographic coverage:</b>	National and regional	<b>Contact person:</b>	Dr. Jürgen Kaestner, Bibliothek Hessischer Landtag, D - 65022 Wiesbaden Tel.: 0611 / 350-380 Fax: 0611 / 350-379
<b>Professional contacts:</b>	AjBD Initiative Fortbildung (Berlin) IFLA	<b>Web presence:</b>	<a href="http://www.apbb.de">http://www.apbb.de</a>

The APBB is one of the largest professional associations of its kind in Germany. Given the federal nature of the country and resulting 17 different jurisdictions<sup>10</sup>, the number of potential members is high. Added to this membership is available at no cost. Members instead are expected to subscribe to the APBB's journals, a fee of €16.50 a year. But like the AjBD discussed in the previous section, the APBB with its more overt leaning towards public sector institutions counts very few if any commercial organisations amongst its members.

Nevertheless, the APBB has been at the forefront of the debate and discussion concerning the role and position of libraries in the digital age. In addition to the series of listservs that the APBB has actively promoted, the association issued in 2004 a document which is known as the **Leipziger Memorandum** considers a strategic direction for public sector libraries in the electronic age. Both the listservs and the Leipziger Memorandum are covered in more detail below.

### Listsers

The APBB membership has been very active in promoting discussion groups and networking through the medium of listservs. The currently active listservs are listed below:

- **BIB-JUR**  
Discussion forum for law librarians, public sector libraries and parliamentary libraries.  
Archive: <http://www.listserv.dfn.de/cgi-bin/wa?A0=bib-jur>
- **LIB-L**  
General librarianship themes excluding IT.  
Archive: <http://www.ub.uni-dortmund.de/Listenarchive/LIB-L/LIB-L.html>
- **Inetbib - Internet in Libraries**  
Focuses specifically on working with the Internet in libraries. This is a popular listserv with approximately 3,000 listserv members and an average of 10 mailings a day.  
Archive: <http://www.ub.uni-dortmund.de/Listenarchive/INETBIB/INETBIB.html>
- **RAK-List**  
Information about RAK for online catalogues, i.e. RAK2
- **One-Person Library (OPL-L)**  
Focuses on the One-Person Library independent of subject or discipline and involves approximately 1 mail a day.  
Archive: <http://radius.izn.niedersachsen.de/mailarchiv/opl/>
- **BIBMAN-L**  
This listserv focuses on the management of libraries and has approximately 260 active members and about 10 mails per month.  
Archive: <http://www.listserv.gmd.de/archives/bibman-l.html>

Registration information concerning these listservs is given on the website of the APBB.

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<sup>10</sup> That is the Federal government together with those of the 16 Federal States that make up the Federal Republic of Germany.

### Leipziger Memorandum

In 2004 the APBB published a strategy paper entitled „The Public Sector Library in the Age of Electronic Information“ (Die Behördenbibliothek im Zeitalter elektronischer Information). Known as the Leipziger Memorandum the paper was passed at the meeting of the members of the APBB at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Leipziger Congress for Information and Libraries, on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2004.

The aim of this memorandum is to explain the responsibilities held by and challenges facing the more than 1,000 government libraries in the Federal Republic of Germany as parts of modern authorities. Government libraries may vary in size, ranging from small libraries, such as court libraries, which are managed by only one or two librarians, to larger libraries with structures that allow work to be shared (e.g., the library of the German Bundestag). But they all have the same function within their respective authorities.

This function is described in the paper and the ratio between printed and electronic information analyzed. Coverage is also given to the responsibilities government libraries have with regard to providing information professionally via the Internet and in the context of eGovernment. The paper also gives an illustration of how government libraries can enhance their capacities themselves through co-operation and networking and how this capacity can be applied to optimise the provision of information for authorities.<sup>11</sup>

As with the AjBD the APBB is a long established group dealing with law librarianship in a classic sense. Well connected in Germany, the APBB is also internationally active in the IFLA. APBB members were also actively involved in the German libraries visit in 2007 under the exchange programme run by Initiative Fortbildung and sponsored by the Checkpoint Charley Foundation in Berlin as mentioned in the previous section.

The two associations described above represent the interests of law librarians in the classic sense of librarianship. Yet, they too are very aware of the pressures upon their membership. Not just of technology but also in the context of what is the role of a library in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Slowly, resources are emerging from these associations to help their members embrace the social networking applications referred to as Web 2.0. This has to be something of an irony given the long and extensive use of listservs and conferences. Yet, neither of these associations addresses the needs of law librarians working in a strictly commercial environment, such as a law firm or the legal department of a large company. These information professionals tend to be found in the BIB OPL-Kommission (see below) and through this route interact with the AjBD and APBB.

Nevertheless, both the AjBD and the APBB have international contacts which are being actively cultivated. The SLA is known to both these associations through the Initiative Fortbildung and through international forums like the IFLA and International Association of Law Librarians. The AjBD and the APBB differ from the SLA in that their membership is

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<sup>11</sup> Editor's note: The arguments for co-operation and networking were made at a time that predated the advance of what is currently referred to as "social networking" and Web 2.0.

largely institutional and that for membership they charge low or no fees at all. The opportunities for professional developments as understood by the SLA are low given the highly regulated working environment and remuneration schemes prevalent in the public sector.

### 3.3. Pharma, Medicine and Health Services

According to the German National Association of the Pharmaceutical Industry (Bundesverband der Pharmazeutischen Industrie e.V. - BPI)<sup>12</sup> pharmaceutical products in Germany in 2007 generated revenues to the value of €26.2 billion. In the same year Germany exported pharmaceutical products to the tune of €41.7 billion a growth rate of 14.5% over the previous year. In contrast Germany imported such products from Ireland, the USA, Switzerland, France UK, the Netherlands and Italy to the value of €32.6 billion which represented an increase of 14.9% over the previous year.

With research and development costs of the German pharmaceutical industry in 2007 at €5.7 billion (an increase of 5.2% over 2006) and 11,499 patents being registered (Germany is second only to the USA in this regard) the German pharmaceutical industry are intensive producers and users of information. It is not surprising therefore that the market segment pharma, medicine and health services is the sector where more associations for information professionals should be found.

The professional associations catering for the needs of information professionals in this market segment are:

- (AGMB) Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Medizinisches Bibliothekswesen
- (DVMD) Deutsche Verband Medizinischer Dokumentare
- (P-D-R) Pharma Dokumentation Ring

Each of these associations will be covered in more detail below.

#### 3.3.1. Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Medizinisches Bibliothekswesen e.V.

##### **(AGMB) Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Medizinisches Bibliothekswesen e.V.**

(AGMB) German Medical Libraries Association

Founded in 1970 the German Medical Libraries Association is a prestigious organisation serving the needs of hospital, university and doctor's libraries as well as the libraries of pharmaceutical companies and medical documentation departments. Akin to the "Arbeitsgemeinschaften" in the legal sector, namely the AjBD and APBB, the AGMB has its roots in librarianship and library science and its membership is made up of a mixture of institutions and individuals.

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<sup>12</sup> Pharma-Daten 2008, BPI e.V., Berlin, see <http://www.bpi.de/Default.aspx?tabindex=2&tabid=304> .

PROFILE: AGMB			
<b>Description:</b>	The purpose of the AGMB is the promotion of medical librarianship and information management, as well as furthering and supporting co-operation between medical libraries at the national and international level.	<b>Events:</b>	<p><u>Annual general meeting</u></p> <p>The AGMB annual general meeting is held at the AGMB national conference which is held in different cities and most usually in September.</p> <p><u>Other events</u></p> <p>Numerous other satellite events are held throughout the year.</p>
<b>Profiles of members:</b>	Hospital, university and doctor's libraries as well as the libraries of pharmaceutical companies, medical documentation departments, DZM, DIMDI, DKFZ.	<b>Publications:</b>	<p><u>Journals</u></p> <p><b>GMS - Medizin – Bibliothek – Informationen (GMS-MBI)</b> is issued 3 times a year and is each time devoted to a particular theme.</p> <p><u>Other publications</u></p> <p>Individual publications such as white papers (see below) are also issued on an occasional basis.</p>
<b>Number of members:</b>	The AGMB reports 474 members in total for 2008. <u>Institutional</u> Separate figures not available. <u>Personal</u> Separate figures not available.	<b>Legal form:</b>	The AGMB is registered association.
<b>Fees for members:</b>	<u>Institutional:</u> Fee for sustaining members only. No fee for institutional membership. <u>Personal:</u> There is no fee.	<b>Founded:</b>	1970 - In Cologne 2000 - Registered as an association
<b>Geographic coverage:</b>	Mostly national and German speaking regions of Europe.	<b>Contact person:</b>	Dr. Diana Klein AGMB President Universitätsbibliothek Würzburg Tel.: +49-931-888 5910
<b>Professional contacts:</b>	The AGMB lists numerous affiliations to medical information associations throughout the world. A complete list is given below.	<b>Web presence:</b>	<a href="http://www.agmb.de">http://www.agmb.de</a>

As part of its information dissemination activities the AGMB produces a journal and issues white papers and runs numerous listservs.

### Publications

In addition to its scholarly publication the **GMS-Medizin – Bibliothek – Informationen (GMS-MBI)** the AGMB issues white papers and statements on themes of concern and

relevance to medical librarianship and information management in health care institutions. Two such papers, published in 2004 and worth mentioning are

- The hospital library: Its value for the hospital as an enterprise <sup>13</sup>
- Standards for hospital libraries in Germany

### Listservs

The AGMB is an active user of listservs or mailing lists for its networking. The most prominent AGMB mailing list is the MEDIBIB-L which currently has approximately 160 active members. The mailing list is an open, unmoderated discussion list for all librarians in Germany, Switzerland and Austria that work in medical or hospital libraries as well as the libraries of pharmaceutical companies and information brokers. Created in 1994 the list invites discussions and the exchange of views and experience of all kinds. Other than an internal Wiki there are no Web 2.0 applications being used on the AGMB website at the time of writing.

### Professional contacts

The AGMB has also extensive contacts with the following international organisations:

- **United States:**  
Medical Library Association (MLA)  
International Cooperation Section of the MLA
- **Canada:**  
Canadian Health Libraries Association
- **European Union:**  
European Association for Health Information and Libraries (EAHIL)
- **Finland:**  
Bibliothecarii Medicinae Fenniae
- **Norway:**  
Norwegian Library Association. Section for Medicine and Health
- **The Netherlands:**  
Biomedical Section of the Netherland's Society of Librarians, Documentalists and Information Specialists (NVB-BMI) IFLA Section of Biological and Medical Sciences Libraries

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<sup>13</sup> An English language version of this paper is available from the AGMB website under the web address <http://www.agmb.de/papooopro/index.php?menuid=12>. The approach and tenor of the AGMB's white paper is similar to that of the „Leipziger Memorandum“ issued by the APBB in 2004 (see above).

- **United Kingdom:**  
Health Libraries Group (HLG) of the Library Association  
University Medical School Librarians Group UK (UMSLG)

The international links of the AGMB, although on the one hand extensive, are on the other hand confined to similar organisations. Whilst this is understandable from the point of view of the type of subject specific information involved, the AGMB has shown signs that they too are suffering from the discipline independent pressure of fighting attempts to reduce budgets; of having to reposition library services; of having to articulate and promote the library's contribution to the organisation and to thereby secure the library's survival. Indeed, the title of their recent AGM in September 2008 in Magdeburg was telling with the title "**AGMB: weiter bilden - Netze knüpfen - Zukunft sichern**" which can be rendered in English as "AGMB: develop professionally, join networks and secure the future".

Significantly, the AGMB white paper "The hospital library: Its value for the hospital as an enterprise" is similar in tone and content to that of the "Leipziger Memorandum" issued by the APBB in 2004. As an indicator of how acute the concern of the AGMB is, in early 2008 the AGMB Board of Directors, prompted by falling membership numbers, invited the membership to form a Task-Force to investigate the future direction of the association and to develop and submit proposals for a future vision for the association. In July and August 2008 the Task-Force conducted a survey of its members on these issues. The results were not yet published at the time of writing.

### **3.3.2. Deutsche Verband Medizinischer Dokumentare**

#### **(DVMD) Deutsche Verband Medizinischer Dokumentare**

(DVMD) German Association for Health Information Managers (HIM)

Whereas the AGMB has its roots in the librarianship world, the German Association for Health Information Managers (HIM), the DVMD traces its origins back to medical data and documentation as well as to the information management side of clinical trials.

The German Association for Health Information Managers (HIM) was founded in 1972 by the first accredited HIM specialists in medical documentation. The scope of the profession has been built upon ever since, with the qualifications of "Assistant for Health Information Management" (a 2 year-training) and "Graduate HIM Specialist" (4 years of university-education) being included within the occupational field.

Over the past few years, the association has opened up to other employees in the HIM profession. In particular, career changers from within the healthcare professions have been encouraged to join the DVMD and use the association as a vehicle for advancing their professional interests.

PROFILE: DVMD			
<b>Description:</b>	The declared goal of the DVMD is to create transparency within the field of medical documentation (which includes health information management - HIM) and to provide orientation for its members and to offer a forum for the exchange of information, knowledge and best practice.	<b>Events:</b>	<u>Annual general meeting</u> The DVMD AGM together with its national conference is held most usually in April.  <u>Other events</u> Numerous satellite events are held throughout the year.
<b>Profiles of members:</b>	Health information managers and clinical data specialists in hospitals, medical research institutes, in the pharmaceutical industry and medical-technical industry, in private research institutes, in health boards, oncological post-care coordination centres, in the Association of Compulsory Health Insurance (CHI) Physicians, in health insurance companies, in software companies and big group practices.	<b>Publications:</b>	<u>Journals</u> <b>Medizin_Dokumentation und Medizin_Informatik mdi</b> , which with the BVMI and the DVMD is a joint association publication issued quarterly.  <u>Other publications</u> The standard work for HIM professionals in Germany produced by the DVMB „ <b>Dokumentation und Datenverarbeitung bei klinischen Studien</b> “ by Prof. Wilhelm Gaus was updated and reissued in 2008.
<b>Number of members:</b>	<u>Institutional:</u> 27 sustaining members <u>Personal:</u> 979 ordinary members	<b>Legal form:</b>	The DVMD is a registered association.
<b>Fees for members:</b>	<u>Institutional:</u> €200 for sustaining members <u>Personal:</u> €60 for ordinary members	<b>Founded:</b>	1972 - In Cologne 2006 – Name change / claim see below.
<b>Geographic coverage:</b>	Mostly national and German speaking regions of Europe.	<b>Contact person:</b>	<b>Executive Secretary:</b> Sabine Kapsammer <b>Postal Address:</b> DVMD – Deutscher Verband Medizinischer Dokumentare Postfach 10 01 29 68001 Mannheim  Tel: 0621 / 71761393 Fax: 0621 / 71761395 E-Mail: <a href="mailto:dvmd@dvmd.de">dvmd@dvmd.de</a>
<b>Professional contacts:</b>	The DVMD lists numerous affiliations to medical information associations in Germany and some internationally. A complete list is given below.	<b>Web presence:</b>	<a href="http://www.dvmd.de">http://www.dvmd.de</a>

As mentioned in the profile the declared goal of the DVMD is to create transparency within the field of medical documentation (health information management), to provide orientation and to offer a forum for the association’s members. A special emphasis is on providing young people in the course of their studies with access to work experience and an insight into the qualification requirements of their desired and respective job.

### Further HIM education

That the DVMD has its roots in the education of health information managers is very clear from its continued emphasis and activities in this area. The most significant characteristic of educational curricula in this field is the different, graded levels of qualification and the linking of a well-grounded knowledge in medicine and health information management with knowledge in information technology. This goal is accomplished through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and decision-making capabilities in the following subjects: anatomy, physiology, pathology and pharmacology in connection and together with medical documentation, clinical trials, statistics and the documentation of literature. Further elements of this educational mix are technical English, hospital management and data privacy.

The DVMD also supports educational institutions in the development and topicality of their curricula. Continuing education and specialist training of DVMD's members ranks among their most important concerns. The DVMD offers training sessions and provides support with respect to choosing suitable educational offerings from other providers.

### Professional Tasks

Given that listing and describing the competencies of information professionals is more revealing than their job title, it is worth looking briefly at what DVMD members understand as their professional tasks.<sup>14</sup> Members of the DVMD cover information intensive activities such as,

- **Patient records management**

All aspects of patient records management and in particular (and ever increasingly) the management of the electronic patient record (EPR, German: EPA). Additional tasks in this area involve the effective planning of patient care, the monitoring and supervision of economic performance and compliance with legal standards. Fulfilling these tasks requires HIMs to work closely with physicians and health care personnel.

- **Internal quality assurance**

Health Information Managers are involved here in tasks such as taking care of the design of standard forms and on-screen forms as well as the implementation of surveys, the development of data bases and the statistical evaluation of collected information. With respect to the area of quality benchmarking, Health Information Managers provide important support for the data report that is a required submission to the German Federal Office for Quality Assurance, which in German is the “Bundesgeschäftsstelle für Qualitätssicherung”, BQS.

- **IT maintenance support**

The task of data processing comprises the support and the maintenance of IT-equipment and their respective system- and application programmes, the design and implementation of data bases for therapy studies and specialized documentation, as

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<sup>14</sup> A fuller listing in English is available from [http://www.dvmd.de/berufsbild/berufsbild\\_e.php](http://www.dvmd.de/berufsbild/berufsbild_e.php).

well as the documentation of functions. In a hospital, Health Information Managers are involved in the development of hospital information and communication systems, in programming, in user training and support, and in the further development and customisation of software.

▪ **Documentation of literature**

Regarding the documentation of literature Health Information Managers carry out the selection and acquisition, the formal capture and the content-related indexing of medical literature. Furthermore, they perform online-inquiries in appropriate literature-databases and the internet and check the result of the query for relevance according to the customer's request.

This brief extract serves to show that librarian type tasks (i.e. as described in the point "Documentation of literature") and functions play only a small part in the total spectrum of information based activities carried out by Health Information Managers.

International contacts

The professional contacts of the DVMD include:

- **BVMI:** Berufsverband Medizinischer Informatiker e.V.
- **DGfM:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Medizincontrolling e.V
- **DGI:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Informationswissenschaft und Informationspraxis e.V
- **ERT:** European regional Team
- **GMDS:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Medizinische Informatik, Biometrie und Epidemiologie e.V. In particular the GMDS: Section – Medical Documentation
- **IFHRO:** International Federation of Health Records Organizations
- **INCDMA:** International Network for Clinical Data Management Associations
- (Recruitment service): md-stellenbörse.de

The DVMD is a very specialised and focussed group. Their focus reflects the areas in which Health Information Managers (HIM) have very clear responsibilities. These responsibilities vary from researching literature sources to overseeing patient records and ensuring compliance with legal obligations. The proximity of HIMs to data subjects, i.e. mostly patients and to users of the data, i.e. doctors and other medical specialists, also contributes significantly to the professional standing of Health Information Managers.

Nevertheless the DVMD is also wrestling with image, position and name.<sup>15</sup> In an amendment to its name in 2006 which added a qualification to the title of the association,

**DVMD - Deutscher Verband Medizinischer Dokumentare**

„Der Fachverband für Berufstätige in der Medizinischen Dokumentation“

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<sup>15</sup> Compare this with discussions within the SLA whether to stay with "Special Libraries Association" or change to "Information Professionals International". See SLA Annual Report 2003.

the DVMD sought to stress that it is the specialist association (in German “Fachverband”) for professionals (in German “Berufstätige”) in the field of medical documentation. In other words all professionals are welcome not just those with specialist skills in information or library science.

The amendment to the name is a subtle yet significant development. The DVMD is emphasising its position as an umbrella organisation, recognising that career paths in the information industry (or any other for that matter) are becoming increasingly non-linear.

It is important to note also that the DVMB is active in conducting market research for the benefit of its members and in particular how junior members of the profession find placements. An initial survey carried out in 2002 has been repeated in 2008. The DVMB is the only association of those reviewed so far that has included a job finder website called **md-stellenbörse.de**<sup>16</sup> under its list of contacts or links.

On the basis of its national and international cooperation activities, the DVMD has developed a series of networks with other associations in the field of health care information provision. There are no known links to the SLA.

The DVMD is also active representing the interests and position of its members in the course of the legislative process.

### **3.3.3. Pharma Documentation Ring**

#### **(P-D-R) Pharma Documentation Ring**

(P-D-R) Pharma Documentation Ring

The third association for information professionals in the sector pharma, medicine and health services is the (P-D-R) Pharma Documentation Ring. The P-D-R is an association whose members represent the scientific information departments of the leading international R&D-based pharmaceutical corporations.

The 21 member companies that constitute the P-D-R continue to account for approximately 60% of the total global turnover of ethical drugs (approximately \$500 billion); by far the majority of the top 20 global pharmaceutical companies are P-D-R members.

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<sup>16</sup> See <http://www.md-stellenbörse.de>.

PROFILE: P-D-R			
<b>Description:</b>	In essence, the PDR represents the interests of the scientific information departments of its member organizations, all of which are R&D-based pharmaceutical companies or major chemical companies with strong pharmaceutical activities.	<b>Events:</b>	<u>Annual general meeting</u> PDR holds its AGM at alternate locations as determined by the association member hosting the event.  <u>Other events</u> Satellite events are held throughout the year.
<b>Profiles of members:</b>	Scientific information departments, R&D-based pharmaceutical companies and major chemical companies with strong pharmaceutical activities.	<b>Publications:</b>	<u>Publications</u> PDR proposals and statements are issued on an irregular basis. Many PDR members also write regularly for the industry publication <b>Pharma Marketletter</b> .
<b>Number of members:</b>	23 institutional members (September 2008) Individual and personal memberships are not available.	<b>Legal form:</b>	The PDR is not a registered association.
<b>Fees for members:</b>	<u>Institutional:</u> Fees are not levied for members.	<b>Founded:</b>	1958
<b>Geographic coverage:</b>	International coverage but mostly European based.	<b>Contact person:</b>	<b>Mr. Henning Nielsen (President)</b> Novo Nordisk <a href="mailto:hepn@novonordisk.com">hepn@novonordisk.com</a>
<b>Professional contacts:</b>	DGI	<b>Web presence:</b>	<a href="http://www.p-d-r.com">http://www.p-d-r.com</a>

The Pharma Documentation Ring (P-D-R) held its 49th Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Philadelphia, USA from the 25th – 28th September 2007. This was the first occasion that the association has held a meeting outside Europe and is in recognition of an increasing involvement from US headquartered companies and delegates. There was no change to the total number of corporate members during the previous 12 months.

Similar to the DVMB above the specific nature of some of the activities carried out by PDR members determine the focus of the association. For example in the PDR Information Review 2003 the topic discussed involved certification of patent information scientists. Certification of information professionals is a theme that is also being discussed at length in other networks and association such as the DGI (see below).

### 3.4. Top 500 Corporations

In Germany small and medium size enterprises, i.e. firms that constitute the famous German “Mittlestand” employ over 70% of the country’s work force and provide over 80% of the placements for trainees<sup>17</sup>. Yet, the Mittelstand is only responsible for 38% of the €5 billion generated by German businesses and industry combined. In other words a small group of large companies, referred to here for convenience as the “Top 500” generate most of the overall revenue.

Organisations within the Top 500 companies are usually intensive users of information and will, like for example Siemens, BMW, Lufthansa etc. maintain a dedicated library to cater for their information needs. The information needs however, are becoming increasingly more varied, ranging from information brokerage to market research to credit assessments to archiving.

Yet, the corporate libraries that oversee much of the information activities of these organisations are scarcely identifiable as a group *per se*. There is no professional association dedicated to their needs. They do not for instance have a trade association that focuses on them as a group such as to be found in banking and finance (IK-Ring), legal (OPL-Kreisen) and pharma, medicine and health services (AGMD, DVMD and PDR).

Of the associations for information professionals being considered in this survey, the most relevant for corporate librarians is the

- (ASpB) The Association of Special Libraries.

#### 3.4.1. Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Spezialbibliotheken e.V.

##### **(ASpB) Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Spezialbibliotheken e.V.**

(ASpB) The Association of Special Libraries.

The (ASpB) Association of Special Libraries is an umbrella organisation composed of approximately 1,000 Special Libraries from libraries and information institutions, research institutions, companies, government agencies, museums, religious organizations, etc. in German-speaking countries. The ASpB is open for membership to both institutions and individuals.

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<sup>17</sup> See Institut für Mittelstandforschung, Bonn 2006/2007 <http://www.ifm-bonn.org/index.php?id=99>

PROFILE: ASpB			
<b>Description:</b>	The purpose of the ASpB is to, promote cooperation of special libraries and information specialists; support the exchange of expertise; further the qualifications and training of its members; represent the interests of its members in policy making bodies and in political and public forums.	<b>Events:</b>	<p><u>Annual general meeting</u> Takes place usually within the German Librarians Conference (<b>Deutsche Bibliothekartag</b> - see below).</p> <p><u>Conference</u> The ASpB conference is held bi-annually most usually in September. The next conference will take place in Karlsruhe in 2009.</p> <p><u>Other events</u> Numerous satellite events and workshops are held throughout the year.</p>
<b>Profiles of members:</b>	University libraries, libraries of parliaments, of public bodies and any institutions that maintain specialist collections in areas such as churches, religious institutions, museums as well as any institution covering such areas as arts, culture, history, law, sociology, politics, language, literature, medicine, natural sciences, engineering sciences, technology and the economy.	<b>Publications:</b>	<p><u>Conference proceedings</u> ASpB Conference Proceedings are available back to 1969.</p> <p><u>Journals</u> The ASpB Newsletter which is issued quarterly goes back to 2005 in PDF format.</p>
<b>Number of members:</b>	The ASpB reports that it has a total of 576 members in the following proportions: 91% are institutions (see below) 9% are individual members	<b>Legal form:</b>	The ASpB is a registered association.
<b>Fees for members:</b>	<p><u>Institutional:</u> No fee is charged but members are obliged to take the Proceedings of the annual conference.</p> <p><u>Personal:</u> No fee. Obligation as above.</p>	<b>Founded:</b>	<p>1946 – Founded as the “TWZ” (See below)</p> <p>1961 – Renamed as ASpB</p> <p>1967 – Became registered organisation</p>
<b>Geographic coverage:</b>	Mostly Germany and Austria with some institutions from Italy and the United Kingdom.	<b>Contact person:</b>	<p><b>ASpB Geschäftsstelle</b> <b>Jadwiga Warmbrunn</b> Herder-Institut Bibliothek Gisonenweg 5-7 35057 Marburg Tel.: 0 64 21 / 91 78 41 Fax: 0 64 2 1/ 184 139 E-Mail: <a href="mailto:geschaeftsstelle@aspb.de">geschaeftsstelle@aspb.de</a></p>
<b>Professional contacts:</b>	DVB – Section 5 IFLA – Part of National Committee	<b>Web presence:</b>	<a href="http://www.aspb.de">http://www.aspb.de</a>

The ASpB is one of the oldest associations for information professionals in Germany. The current association’s predecessor was established in 1946 as the Association of Technical and Scientific Libraries (in German the "Arbeitsgemeinschaft der technisch -

wissenschaftlichen Bibliotheken"). One of the predecessor association's early tasks in post-war Germany was to produce a directory of journal collections and serial works covering the natural sciences and technology. It was the directory that was referred to as the "TWZ" (see the Profile above).

Since then the ASpB has grown to become a coalition of over 1,000 special libraries in German speaking Europe. The ASpB as an umbrella organisation has effectively provided a universal forum for libraries and information institutions in research institutions, companies, government agencies, museums, as well as religious institutions. The aim of the ASpB is to advocate and promote cooperation between special libraries and information specialists. This includes an intensive exchange of expertise which is carried out during the ASpB's biannual Conference.

The ASpB is an important player in the different interest groups representing librarians in Germany. ASpB members are on the Board of the Federal Association of German Library Associations (BDB) and the Advisory Board of the German Library Association (DBV), where the ASpB maintains its own section referred to as "ASpB/Sektion 5 im DBV".

#### Membership composition

The ASpB today has 576 members. 91% of the members are institutional members. 20% are from the field of research, 10% are from universities, institutes, colleges and state libraries and 11% are from art and museum libraries. The proportion of libraries from the business community makes up 15% of the total. Church archives and libraries, medical facilities constitute about 4%. Libraries from administrative and social institutions and other bodies together make up about 20%. The proportion of individual members constitutes 9% of the total number of members.

As a rule the ASpB does not require a fee from its members. Rather the ASpB members are expected to purchase a copy of the Annual Conference Proceedings. In 2005 the proceedings cost €63.60 for ASpB members.

#### Listservs

To supplement its Newsletter the ASpB at the beginning of 2008 started a new listserv "ASpB-Spezialbibliotheken". Some 250 subscribers have already subscribed to it. The listserv has been set up by OPL-Kommission's Web 2.0 expert Herrn Dr. Jürgen Pliening for the ASpB. The aim of starting the listserv has been to enable ASpB members to exchange experience and to network.

The ASpB is a long established and well connected association for specialist librarians through its function as an umbrella organisation. International connections are catered for through its involvement with the DVB but also through IFLA. The SLA is certainly known to the ASpB and good relations between the two organisations have been cultivated by Elka Sloan the SLA Representative in Germany.

### 3.5. Interdisciplinary networks and associations

In the previous sections the associations for information professionals were considered on the basis of the information market segments they covered. In other words the associations were regarded as being discipline specific. This part of the report considers associations that cannot be easily or comfortably slotted into a discipline category. Nevertheless, the networks reviewed fulfil the selection criteria for associations of information professionals in that within their ranks are members whose job description – in terms of their competence to work with information – qualifies them as “information professionals”.

The associations discussed in this section are,

1. (BIB OPL-Kommission)  
Kommission für OPLs beim Berufsverband Information Bibliothek
2. (DGI)  
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Informationswissenschaft und Informationspraxis
3. (GfWM)  
Gesellschaft für Wissensmanagement

#### 3.5.1. BIB OPL-Kommission

##### **(BIB OPL-Kommission)**

##### **Kommission für One-Person Librarians beim Berufsverband Information Bibliothek**

(BIB OPL-Kommission)

Commission for One-Person Librarians under the Berufsverband Information Bibliothek

The association or rather group being considered here is the Commission for One-Person Librarians which is nested within a parent organisation, the Berufsverband Information Bibliothek e.V. (BIB) which can be rendered in English as the Professional Association for Information and Library Personnel. This association will be looked first before proceeding to the BIB OPL-Kommission.

##### Berufsverband Information Bibliothek e.V. (BIB)

The **Professional Association for Information and Library Personnel** (BIB) is a relatively young organisation and was formed following the merger decision taken at the Assemblies of **VdDB** (Verein der Diplom-Bibliothekare und wissenschaftlichen Bibliotheken) and **vba** (Verein der Bibliothekare und Assistenten e.V.) at the 1st Joint Congress of BDB and DGI in 2000 in Leipzig.

BIB is a professional association for all those who work in libraries and information institutions as well as for the students and trainees of the relevant disciplines. BIB has currently about 6,300 members. The association has been built as a network for professional exchange and interaction. It organises and promotes further education programmes and is actively involved in lobbying and the participation in political developments that affect the association’s membership and the environment they work in.

In addition to education and training, which is conducted at both the regional and national levels BIB (co-) organises meetings and conferences, the most important being the

- German Librarians Conference (Deutsche Bibliothekartag)
- BIB-Summer course (BIB-Summerkurs)
- EKZ-BIB Seminar (EKZ-BIB Seminar)

The association is the editor of the German library journal "BuB: Library and Information Forum" which has the biggest circulation amongst professional journals for libraries and librarians. BIB, together with the ekz.bibliotheksservice GmbH and the German Library Association (DBV) make up the editorial team for the journal.

In order to make librarians, libraries and information centres more visible in the political decision-making process and amongst political bodies in general BIB, in its own right but also together with the library of the German Association of Library & Information (BID), conducts professional lobbying and press work.

BIB also has its own specialist working groups which record and consolidate best practice, advises on tariff issues and works to position library policy issues. The work of BIB is also carried out in 15 regional groups (based on Federal States) where independently active associations work locally to spread information, organise training opportunities and cultivate networks.

The BIB network and its active members also thrive on the exchanges and opportunities for cooperation at national and international level. BIB is a member of the following groups and organisations,

- Conference of information and library training institutes (Kiba),
- Working for youth,
- Political Culture Society
- Federal Academy for Cultural Education,
- International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)
- EBLIDA (European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations).

The BIB Membership fee varies from €35 to €90 per year according to the member's income. Members receive the journal BuB for free and discounts on events and publications. BIB members are also encouraged to take part in one or more of the BIB commissions:

- Education and professional development (Ausbildung u. Berufsbilder)
- Library policies (Bibliothekspolitik)
- Classification of personnel and remuneration (Eingruppierung u. Besoldung)
- Further education (Fortbildung)
- Management and organisation (Management u. betrieblich Steuerung)
- One-Person Librarians (Solo Librarians)
- Association marketing and communications (Verbandsmarketing u. –kommunikation)

The report is concerned specifically with the BIB One-Person Librarians commission.

BIB OPL-Kommission

The BIB Commission for One-Person Librarians (OPL) was created in May 1997. The Commission specialises in questions and problems that specifically apply to librarians working in academia, public sector or commerce who quite literally work alone or with a small team. The Commission plans and coordinates numerous activities for OPLs. Some of these activities are inter-regional. The Commission acts also as the single contact point for OPLs.<sup>18</sup>

PROFILE: BIB OPL-Kommission			
<b>Description:</b>	The work of the BIB OPL-Kommission for its members is based upon four pillars, networking, further education, publications and public relations and advocacy.	<b>Events:</b>	<u>Annual general meeting</u> The OPL-Commission does not hold one.  <u>Other events</u> Numerous satellite events are held throughout the year.
<b>Profiles of members:</b>	The Annual Report 2007 of the OPL-Kommission sees as its target group librarians from the academic world or from the public sector who work literally alone or in very small teams. It is noteworthy that OPLs in commerce are not referred to the document (see below).	<b>Publications:</b>	<u>BIB</u> BuB B.I.T.  <u>BIB OPL-Kommission</u> <b>OPL Flaschenpost</b> (newsletter) “ <b>Checklist Series</b> ” (see below)
<b>Number of members:</b>	<u>BIB membership:</u> 6,300 members (individuals) <u>BIB OPL-Kommission:</u> About 450 members (oci estimate)	<b>Legal form:</b>	BIB is a registered association. The BIB-OPL Kommission has no independent legal status.
<b>Fees for members:</b>	<u>BIB membership:</u> Between €35-€90 depending on earnings. <u>BIB OPL-Kommission:</u> BIB fees apply. No additional fees.	<b>Founded:</b>	2000 – BIB was founded following the fusion of two older associations. 1997 – OPL-Kommission was started
<b>Geographic coverage:</b>	Mostly national and German speaking regions of Europe.	<b>Contact person:</b>	<b>Frank Merken</b> (Vorsitz) Stadtbücherei Wipperfürth Lüdenscheider Str. 48 <b>51688 Wipperfürth</b> Telefon: (02267) 64480 Telefax: (02267) 64439 E-Mail: <a href="mailto:stadtbuecherei@stadtbuecherei.de">stadtbuecherei@stadtbuecherei.de</a> or <a href="mailto:opl@bib-info.de">opl@bib-info.de</a>
<b>Professional contacts:</b>	<u>BIB</u> IFLA (Claudia Lux is President) EBLIDA	<b>Web presence:</b>	<a href="http://www.bib-info.de/komm/kopl/index.htm">http://www.bib-info.de/komm/kopl/index.htm</a>

<sup>18</sup> See Annual Report 2007 <http://www.bib-info.de/komm/kopl/opl07.htm> (German only).

In addition to the publications BIB members receive as part of their regular membership the BIB OPL-Kommission produces a lot of information targeted specifically at the OPL-Commission members. The most prominent of these are the Checklist Series and listservs.

### Checklists Series

Since 2003, the OPL-Commission has published a series of “checklists” for one-person libraries. These documents are aids written in a relaxed and accessible manner in which everyday problems confronting one-person librarians are addressed, discussed and solutions offered. The authors of the OPL-Kommission’s checklist series have modelled their efforts on those produced by Guy St. Clair in his – as the German authors themselves put it - “unforgettable one-person libraries publications”.

The current list of publications covered by the checklist series has been given here as it indicates the issues of concern to OPLs and the chronological sequence in which these issues have been addressed.

- Checklist No. 1: Moving Library
- Checklist No. 2: Creating an Intranet
- Checklist No. 3: Saving costs
- Checklist No. 4: Library Software
- Checklist No. 5: Making Selections
- Checklist No. 6: Human Resources
- Checklist No. 7: Managing eJournals
- Checklist No. 8: Building a Library
- Checklist No. 9: Rethinking Classification Systems
- Checklist No. 10: Creating a Home Page
- Checklist No. 11: Marketing the individual services of OPLs
- Checklist No. 12: The Image of One-Person Libraries
- Checklist No. 13: The Teaching OPL
- Checklist No. 14: Using and Implementing RSS
- Checklist No. 15: PHP and MySQL
- Checklist No. 16: Creating Wikis
- Checklist No. 17: Market Analysis for OPLs
- Checklist No. 18: Creating and Using Weblogs
- Checklist No. 19: Change Management
- Checklist No. 20: Contributing to Weblogs
- Checklist No. 21: Cooperation
- Checklist No. 22: Social Software
- Checklist No. 23: Researching in Public Libraries
- Checklist No. 24: Creating CMS with CMSimple
- Checklist No. 25: Barrier-Free Information
- Checklist No. 26: Better Organisation at Work with Web 2.0

### Listservs

The OPL-Commission also refers its members to the following listservs,

- **Mailing-Liste OPL**

This is a mailing list for German language One-Person Librarians and has been operating since December 1997. As of October 2007 the listserv has been hosted by

the research network DFN allowing users to obtain detailed information about the resource, subscribe and unsubscribe and view the mailing list itself.

See <http://www.listserv.dfn.de/archives/bib-opl.html>

- **dsol**

This listserv refers to the mailing list of the SLA's own Solo Librarian's Division. The OPL-Commission advises its members that to subscribe they should send an e-mail to [lyris@lists.sla.org](mailto:lyris@lists.sla.org) with the word SUBSCRIBE in the body of the text in the following form

**Subscribe SLA-DSOL Ihre E-Mail-Adresse Vorname Nachname**

The OPL-Commission further advises that subscribers do not have to be SLA members to use this resource. It also notes that the Solo Librarian's Division also has two weblogs: a [Conference Blog](#) and the [Solos Helping Solos Blog](#).

BIB represents a very broad church. As an umbrella organisation it embraces library and information professionals across a wide range of institutions. The bulk of the activities within the greater organisation are conducted at the regional level as well as in the Commissions. BIB is like the SLA in that it promotes education for its members and lobbies actively for them. It is unlike the SLA in that the large majority of its members come from the public sector and academia. This is reflected in the organisation's respective fee structures.

It is a curious but telling omission that in its Annual Report 2007 the OPL-Commission describes clearly its target groups but makes no mention of librarians from the commercial sector.<sup>19</sup> This would explain why OPL-Circles, in German "OPL-Kreisen", have emerged in Frankfurt/Main, Munich and Berlin independently of and in addition to the BIB OPL-Kommission and are not directly affiliated with the OPL-Kommission or the work of BIB.

Nevertheless, in the particular instance of the OPL-Kommission the influence of the SLA is overt and strong. Not only are the Checklists inspired by one of the SLAs most prominent members, but the OPL-Commission actively promotes the use of the SLA Solo Librarian listserv to its members.

### **3.5.2. DGI**

**(DGI) Deutsche Gesellschaft für Informationswissenschaft und Informationspraxis e.V.**

(DGI) German Society for Information Science and Practice

The German Society for Information Science and Practice (DGI) is the largest network for information specialists in Germany. Founded in 1948, it represents the interests of

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<sup>19</sup> See the BIB OPL-Kommission Annual Report 2007 at <http://www.bib-info.de/komm/kopl/opl07.htm> and specifically point 2 under the title "Zielgruppe" meaning target groups.

information professionals and specialists across a variety of subject areas and market divisions, i.e. academic, public sector and commercial.

PROFILE: DGI			
<b>Description:</b>	The DGI sees as its main objectives the provision of a forum for information professionals between themselves and their suppliers (providers) and users; vocational education and training in information and knowledge management and related disciplines; representation of members of the profession in professional and public environments.	<b>Events:</b>	<p><u>Annual conference</u></p> <p>The “DGI Online-Tagung” is the DGI’s annual conference and as from 2007 is hosted by the Frankfurt Book Fair in October of every year. The DGI has just concluded a five year contract with the Book Fair as hosts. Last year’s event recorded 900 participants.</p> <p><u>Regional conferences</u></p> <p>The Oberhoff Colloquium is now in its 24<sup>th</sup> year. This is an annual event held together with the VDI in and around Magdeburg in the Eastern part of Germany. 100 participants took part.</p>
<b>Profiles of members:</b>	Mainly the academic faculties and departments of public sector bodies that focus on information, documentation and library science. To a lesser extent the information and documentation departments or centres of large companies also make up a proportion of the DGI’s membership.	<b>Publications:</b>	<p><u>Journal</u></p> <p>Information Science &amp; Practice (IWP). Published eight times a year.</p> <p><u>Publications</u></p> <p>As well as the proceedings of its conferences the DGI publishes regularly on all aspects of information science and practice.</p>
<b>Number of members:</b>	<p><u>Institutional:</u></p> <p>158 corporate members. 17 sponsoring members.</p> <p><u>Personal:</u></p> <p>1,058 members</p>	<b>Legal form:</b>	The DGI is a registered association.
<b>Fees for members:</b>	<p><u>Institutional:</u></p> <p>€270 for corporate members. €350 for sponsoring members.</p> <p><u>Personal:</u></p> <p>€95 for individual members</p>	<b>Founded:</b>	<p>1948 – DGD “Deutsche Gesellschaft für Dokumentation” (German Society for Documentation)</p> <p>1998 – Renamed as DGI</p>
<b>Geographic coverage:</b>	Mostly national and German speaking regions of Europe.	<b>Contact person:</b>	<p>Prof. Dr. Stefan Gradmann President DGI Geschäftsstelle Hanauer Landstraße 151-153, 60314 Frankfurt am Main Telefon 069 430313, Fax 069 4909096 E-Mail: mail@dgi-info.de Internet: www.dgi-info.de</p>
<b>Professional contacts:</b>	AsPB, ABDS, (Fr), BID, BVMD, Frankfurter Book Fair, ICI, KIBA, SVD/ASD (Ch).	<b>Web presence:</b>	<a href="http://www.dgi-info.de">http://www.dgi-info.de</a>

The activities of the DGI are co-ordinated through both regional and working groups. The DGI has eleven regional and five theme-orientated working groups. These regional associations and specialised bodies promote the development of specialised information areas and they are responsible both for the work done and the content. They constitute the backbone of the DGI by facilitating communication, sharing experience and providing forums for further training.

The five theme-orientated Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are:

- Patent information and documentation
- Information brokerage
- Terminology and language use
- Education and information literacy concepts
- History of information in Germany.

In 2007 the Annual Conference of the DGI was held at the Book Fair in Frankfurt/Main. From this initial cooperation, the DGI has now been able to conclude a five year contract with the Book Fair to hold the DGI Annual Conference and the DGI AGM at the Fair. A positive development for the DGI this has been a meeting of kindred spirits. Only recently, the Book Fair, after some deliberation, decided to focus on electronic publications and specialist information and to keep the venue for the Fair in Frankfurt because of its unique location for international travellers and because the city has a strong tradition in the media and information industries. After all, up until the arrival of the internet Frankfurt/Main was the traditional home of the information professional. Frankfurt/Main had been the city that held exhibitions dedicated to the information business, where information science and practice could be studied and where information professionals were likely to get a good job.

The DGI is also committed to the certification of training programmes and packages for information professionals. Since 2001 the DGI has provided information specialists that have had several years of on the job experience with a means of certification of their qualification's portfolio. The certification system is recognised internationally and is based on the European Certification Manual **“Euroguide LIS: Competencies and aptitudes for European information professional”** which is updated on a regular basis.

A new Working Group within the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Informationswissenschaft und Informationspraxis e.V. (DGI) is going to be created by the end of the year. The newly created group will take the title “Information Competence in Businesses”,<sup>20</sup> in German “Informationskompetenz in Unternehmen”. This group will work closely with a similar Working Group that specialises in information competence in schools and further education. Both these groups are part of an initiative repositioning the DGI as the centre of excellence in German speaking Europe for the advancement of information competence as both an essential personal (i.e. individual) and collective (i.e. organisational) skill.

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<sup>20</sup> The idea of information competence in business is similar to the idea of Business Information Literacy discussed in the SLA Division Business & Finance.

The DGI is well positioned across the information community in Germany. The Society however, has moved from being documentalists to librarians rather than from being documentalists to subject related information managers as the DVMD has been able to do in the health services sector. The DGI does embrace themes of interest to information professionals in commerce but up until now has been slow to exploit this. In terms of their organisation they are in a half way house between a public sector institution and a commercial organisation. Too independent to be supported by the public sector the DGI is not commercially focused enough to sustain its activities through independent action and own products and services.

On the positive side the DGI has embraced the notion of information competence which is a key concept with which to drive an active information awareness in organisations of all types. Similarly the DGI has embraced the idea and practice of certification, an idea that will become increasingly more important as the traditional education paths fail to adequately train a wide spectrum of current and future information professionals.

The DGI has no known contact with the SLA other than those that were established in the context of Janice R. Lachances's visit in October 2008.

### **3.5.3. GfWM**

#### **(GfWM) Gesellschaft für Wissensmanagement e.V.**

(GfWM) Society for Knowledge Management

The third of the inter-disciplinary associations for information professionals is the Society for Knowledge Management. Although, as its title suggests the society concerns itself with knowledge and know-how management *per se*, the group has been included in the study for two reasons.

Firstly, the field is still emerging. It is not uncommon to find information and library departments that have been given responsibilities for knowledge management tasks.

Secondly, many information professionals traditionally from the information side of life are members of the Society as there are few other opportunities to meet fellow information professionals.

PROFILE: GfWM			
<b>Description:</b>	The aim of the Society for Knowledge Management (GfWM) is twofold. Firstly, to promote the professional and constructive exploitation of knowledge as a key resource. Secondly to advance the need for a holistic view of knowledge management in terms of human aspects, organizations and infrastructures.	<b>Events:</b>	<u>Annual general meeting</u> The GfWM AGM is held in September.  <u>Conference</u> <b>KM-Symposium.</b> The annual Knowledge Management Symposium which is held in Karlsruhe is jointly organized by the local KM group “AKWM e.V.” and the Society for Knowledge Management.  <u>Other events</u> Each of the GfWM regional “Roundtables” or “Stammtische” (see below) run their own events. Attendance varies between 10-20 (Bielefeld) to 30-50 (Frankfurt/Main).
<b>Profiles of members:</b>	Knowledge managers, researchers, librarians, information specialists and related practitioners who are actively involved in the development of knowledge based services. Also decision makers within industry, the scientific community and politics as well as those generally interested in this emerging field.	<b>Publications:</b>	<u>Newsletter</u> The <b>GfWM-Newsletter</b> appears every 2 months.
<b>Number of members:</b>	The Society reported 181 active members in September 2007.	<b>Legal form:</b>	The GfWM is a registered association.
<b>Fees for members:</b>	<u>Institutional:</u> €500 for sustaining members and €250 for corporations. <u>Personal:</u> €45 for individual membership.	<b>Founded:</b>	2000 - Registered as an association
<b>Geographic coverage:</b>	Mostly national and German speaking regions of Europe, i.e. Germany, Austria and Switzerland.	<b>Contact person:</b>	Ulrich Schmidt (Präsident) Gesellschaft für Wissensmanagement e.V. Postfach 11 08 44 D-60043 Frankfurt am Main E-Mail: <a href="mailto:info@gfwm.de">info@gfwm.de</a>
<b>Professional contacts:</b>	The relative youth of the GfWM means that it is still building up international contacts. However, in Germany the regional network is now well established (see below).	<b>Web presence:</b>	<a href="http://www.gfwm.de">http://www.gfwm.de</a>

The GfWM communities are organised into two categories, the “Roundtables” (in German “Stammtische”) and “Specialist Teams” (in German “Fachteams”).

#### GfWM Communities - Roundtables

The Roundtables provide members and their guests with a chance for a regular interdisciplinary exchange of information and knowledge on the subject of knowledge

management. The meetings which usually take place once a month strive to inform, develop perspective and help those active in the field move between theory and practice. Roundtables are currently held in the following regions and locations,

- Bielefeld / East Westphalia-Lippe
- Brunswick
- Frankfurt/main
- Hanover
- Mittelfranken
- Munich
- The Rheinland (Aachen, Cologne, Bonn, Dusseldorf)

Each Roundtable decides upon its own agenda for its meetings and is autonomous as regards its organisation. The GfWM however provides basic tools and resources (i.e. standard presentations, checklists, standard invitation letter or e-mail etc.) to support the local groups in the running of their events.

#### GfWM Communities – Specialist Teams

The second category of GfWM communities is the Specialist Teams. The Specialist Teams focus on a particular area within the Society and are answerable to the Board member allocated to that team. The Teams keep members up to date about the latest events, trends and developments within the Roundtables, other Specialist Teams and related stakeholders. Joining a Specialist Team entitles GFWM members to automatically receive e-mail alerts about news items. The Specialist Team currently active are,

- Knowledge Management Specialist Team
- GfWM Meeting Coordinators
- GfWM Board Support
- GfWM Knowledge Portal
- Infrastructure Team

The Society for Knowledge Management is relatively young compared to the other associations discussed in the report. The Society operates on a low resource base and is still in the process of building up its infrastructure. It is nevertheless, like the OPL-Circles mentioned earlier, an example of an emerging network created from a perceived need within a largely commercial environment.

Although there are no overt links between the SLA and the Society for Knowledge Management, the themes and issues that preoccupy the Society are very similar to those of the SLA's Knowledge Management Division.

### 3.6. Other networks and networkers

In the above profiles of the associations aimed at information professionals two institutions were constantly referred to and for that warrant additional attention. They are the

- Deutsche Bibliothekartag
- Initiative Fortbildung

#### 3.6.1. Deutsche Bibliothekartag

The “Deutsche Bibliothekartag” rendered in English as the “German Librarians Conference” is the annual event for librarians and information professionals from all market sectors in Germany. The conference is organised jointly by the Berufsverband Information Bibliothek e.V. (BIB) and the Verein Deutscher Bibliothekare e.V. (VDB) together with Deutschen Bibliotheksverband e.V. (DBV). It is customary to host the event in different cities each year. The forthcoming 98<sup>th</sup> German Librarians Conference will be held on 2nd to the 5th June 2009 in Erfurt.

The focus of the 2009 conference will be „Libraries in a new light“ („Ein neuer Blick auf Bibliotheken“).<sup>21</sup> The aim of the slogan is to challenge and provoke thinking on how libraries and their role are perceived in politics, in society and in cultural circles generally. The conference wants to capture current criticism, future thinking, attendees’ experience as well as innovative aspects of working with our cultural heritage. The conference, as in previous years, is particularly appreciative of international contributions and participants.

The 2008 German Librarians Conference which was held in Mannheim attracted over 2,800 registered attendees and approximately 150 exhibitors. Given its importance and central position in the calendar of most librarians many of the professional associations reviewed earlier hold their annual general meetings at the German Librarians Conference.

#### 3.6.2. Initiative Fortbildung

One of the most active institutions in promoting further education for librarians is the "Initiative for Continuing Education in Academic and Research-Oriented Special Libraries and Related Institutions", in German the “Initiative Fortbildung für wissenschaftliche Spezialbibliotheken und verwandte Einrichtungen e.V.” which for convenience will be referred to hereafter as the Initiative Fortbildung.<sup>22</sup>

A registered association the Initiative Fortbildung was founded in 2001 in direct response to the closing of the German Library Institute and with it, the Consultancy Office for Special Libraries. The Consultancy Office for Special Libraries was renowned for the high quality of

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<sup>21</sup> See <http://www.bibliothekartag2009.de> for further details.

<sup>22</sup> See <http://www.initiativefortbildung.de/> for further details.

the training and advisory services it provided. Due to the uncertainty surrounding the likelihood of a successor to the Consultancy Office the Initiative Fortbildung was created and sees itself as the logical successor to the Consultancy Office.

The Initiative Fortbildung is one of the few champions in Germany of continuous learning in the information and librarianship world. Traditional concepts of continuing education are more broadly interpreted than was the case in the past. The target groups have been expanded. The Initiative Fortbildung's programme is designed to be effective for staff members in archives, information centres, museums, special libraries, etc., as well as for information brokers and for information professionals who are currently unemployed and who would like to gain new skills to be able to move into other areas of the information market.

The emphasis of the training programmes offered by the Initiative Fortbildung is on facilitating lifelong, strategic learning. Continuing education is especially important where traditional training programmes do not sufficiently prepare a person for the demands placed upon them in the daily workplace.

Membership of the Initiative Fortbildung association is open to individuals at €50 per year and to corporations at €150 per year.

#### Contacts with the SLA

The Initiative Fortbildung is a particularly good example of the gradual influence of the SLA upon librarians in the German market. The Managing Director of the Initiative Fortbildung Frau Evelyn Morgenstern is herself a member of SLA. She was also one of the main coordinators of the German Parliamentary and Public Sector Libraries Study Trip in October 2007 undertaken by American librarians and supported by the Checkpoint Charley Foundation.<sup>23</sup> Many of the American librarians are also members of the SLA and reported on their experiences during the SLA Conference in Seattle in 2008. The study party covered libraries in Berlin, Hamburg, Dresden, München, Karlsruhe, Frankfurt/Main and Straßburg.

Lastly, it is worth noting that the following SLA members are also on the Advisory Council of the Innovate Fortbildung:

- **Judith A. Siess**  
Information Bridges International, Cleveland, OH
  
- **Guy St. Clair**  
SMR International, New York. N.Y.  
SLA members (MF CHECK) are in the Advisory Council.

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<sup>23</sup> See [http://www.initiativefortbildung.de/html/schlaglichter/2007\\_Studienreise.html](http://www.initiativefortbildung.de/html/schlaglichter/2007_Studienreise.html)

#### 4. MARKET ANALYSIS

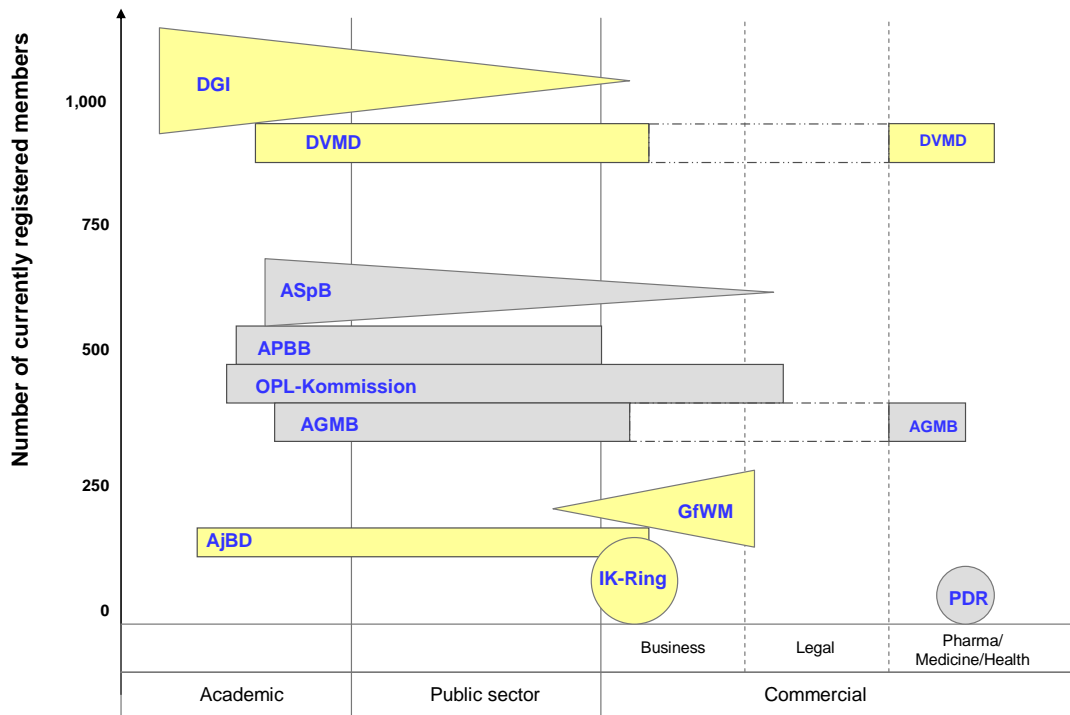
The market analysis will be broken down into three sections which will cover the

1. Relative positioning of networks for information professionals in Germany
2. Evidence of the influence from the Special Libraries Association (SLA)
3. Critical barriers to promoting the SLA value proposition in Germany

##### 4.1. Relative positioning of networks for information professionals in Germany

In the previous sections, a number of networks and associations were identified that can be described as catering specifically for the needs of information specialists in Germany. Each of the networks or associations was profiled and specific attributes and characteristics were highlighted. Where there was evidence of the influence of the SLA upon this network or association, this too was noted and remarked upon.

The diagram below gives a pictorial overview of the landscape for networks or associations aimed at information specialists in Germany.



Divisions and sub-divisions within the information market

Figure 2: The relative position of the networks for information professional in Germany

The aim of the pictorial representation is to give an indication of the relative positioning of the ten networks discussed in the report. The key indicators are as follows,

- **Horizontal axis**  
The horizontal axis represents the information market segment i.e. academic, public sector or commercial. The commercial sector is further sub-divided into business, legal and pharma / medicine/ health.
- **Vertical axis**  
The vertical axis gives an indication of the relative size of the network in terms of members. Membership numbers are given as understood by the network itself, i.e. the diagram represents the total number of members for the network and makes no distinction between sponsoring, corporate or individual members.
- **Shape**  
The shape of the network represents its spread across the different communities of information professionals as found in the greater information market.
- **Colour**  
The colour of the network indicates whether members pay membership fees or not. Yellow shaded networks require that their members pay an annual membership fee. The grey shaded networks indicate that members are not required or are not expected to pay an annual membership fee. In the case of the ASpB and AGMB, members are expected to pay a nominal fee for the Proceedings of the Annual Conference. In the case of the OPL-Kommission, a membership of BIB is implied. However, because there is no extra fee to BIB members for use of the OPL-Kommission and that the OPL-Kommission resources are completely accessible to third parties and that many of the local OPL-Kreise (circles) that the OPL-Kommission has spawned also do not charge fees, the OPL-Kommission has been classified as a non-fee paying network.

The diagram shows that the networks available to information professionals in Germany are heavily weighted towards the academic and public sector. The commercial sector is completely missing an adequate representation. From the network profiles discussed in the previous sections, there is also no evidence that any of the networks are seriously moving into the commercial sector despite the fact that many networks have reported dwindling numbers (AGMB) and are aware of the potential in the purely commercial markets (DGI).

For information professionals seeking an association amongst those currently available, many have found a nest within groups such as the OPL-Kommission, the ASpB (special libraries) and more recently the GfWM (Society for Knowledge Management). Two networks from the commercial sector, the IK-Ring and the PDR involve institutional membership only and are highly specialised serving the banking and pharmaceutical sectors respectively.

The two largest networks are the DGI and DVMD who both report over 1,000 members and curiously (and perhaps significantly) who both originated from the world of documentation

and document management. Both the DGI and the DVMB are fee-paying organisations. This is in contrast to the ASpB, OPL-Kommission, APBB and AGMB all of whom have their roots in librarianship and library science and who do not require membership fees, save for the exceptions discussed above.

From these observations the following conclusions can be drawn:

- **None of the networks reviewed are specifically targeting IPs in commerce**  
There are a number of professional associations in Germany who target information professionals. However, there are no organisations that specifically cater for the needs of information professionals in commercial organisations. Also, despite the acknowledgement by groups such as the DGI or ASpB that there is a need, none of the current players are moving into that space. i.e. there is an awareness of potential opportunity but no action.
- **Yet, IPs across all sectors are expressing similar pains and needs**  
A common thread articulated in publications at conferences or in white papers over the last two years has been the need for information specialists and their respective departments, to better articulate their activities and to ensure that their efforts within the organisation are recognised, respected and valued. See for example the APBB's "Leipziger Memorandum" and the AGMB's "The hospital library: Its value for the hospital as an enterprise".
- **Solutions are being sought through active formal and informal networking**  
Virtually all the networks and associations under review show strong networking activities. The networks themselves and their physical manifestations, i.e. conferences, are very interlinked. For example, the AjBD, APBB, and DVBN all routinely hold their annual general meetings within the German Librarians Conference (Deutsche Bibliothekarstag). Although curiously anxious about the social networking opportunities offered by Web 2.0, many of the associations have been maintaining and are actively participating in listservs for many years. It must be also said that networking has also been a means with which the information professionals in the commercial sector have been able to compensate for the lack of association specifically dedicated to them. On top of the OPL-Kommission, the survey has discovered OPL-Kreise (circles) in Frankfurt/Main, Munich and Düsseldorf. These circles have little formal structure, yet their members meet regularly once a month and are on each other's mailing lists.
- **No evidence of convergence, but clear signs of divergence**  
Despite the similar pains and the desire to connect and share experience, the dominance of a proportion of public servants and academics in the networks means there is not a readiness – some would say a means - to pay a membership fee for a professional organisation in the region of €160. A consequence of this is that many of the activities that are being put on for information professionals are offered at low cost or no cost. This is in turn tending to fragment the diverse market even more.

## **4.2. Evidence of the influence on the networks of the SLA**

An unexpected outcome of the investigation into networks for information professionals has been the revelation of the extent to which the SLA has already influenced developments in Germany. Although this influence was not specifically looked for, it was evident enough to warrant mentioning. There are essentially two types of influence.

The first type of SLA influence is where the networks or associations have been involved in exchange programmes. The Initiative Fortbildung referred to earlier on has been very active in this regard. Not only has the Initiative Fortbildung invited over speakers such as Guy St Clair, Mary Ellen Bates and Judith Siess, but also both Guy St Clair and Judith Siess sit on the Advisory Council (Beirat) of the Initiative Fortbildung. Although sponsored by the Checkpoint Charley Foundation based in Berlin, the Initiative Fortbildung played a very active part and was instrumental in the now famous German Parliamentary and Public Sector Libraries exchange visit of 2007.<sup>24</sup> One of the other networks, the ASpB (special libraries), has regularly invited the SLA Representative in Germany to moderate at meetings and conferences.

The second type of influence of the SLA upon the networks for information professionals is less overt but nevertheless traceable. The best example here is the OPL-Kommission and its Checklists, which were inspired by Guy St Clair and his publications on one-person-libraries. In another example, the author of a website promoting Web 2.0 applications for librarians, Netlib 2.0, acknowledges the direct influence of Helen Bowers who is also the author of the SLA's 23 things.

The above instances show that amongst librarians and certain sections of the information specialist community in Germany, the Special Libraries Association and the SLA brand is already known and respected. This provokes the question as to whether a strategy of building bridges – they are already there - could not be enhanced to one of positioning the SLA in Germany as the central hub in a network of professional associations targeted at information professional in all sectors, but primarily in the commercial sector.

## **4.3. Critical barriers to promoting the SLA value proposition in Germany**

The report has shown that information professionals in the commercial sector are not being catered for by a professional association. The report has also highlighted the influence of the SLA through a process of gradual reference and referral. A question that then arises following on from these conclusions and observations is that if there are already such links and connections in place, why then have not more bridges been built? It is just a question of letting a value proposition mature in the market over time, or are there hidden barriers to a wider acceptance of the SLA proposition?

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<sup>24</sup> See [http://www.initiativefortbildung.de/html/schlaglichter/2007\\_Studienreise.html](http://www.initiativefortbildung.de/html/schlaglichter/2007_Studienreise.html)

From the survey it is possible to identify two critical barriers to a more general acceptance of the SLA value proposition, namely

- The price point for membership and with it a corresponding sense of value
- The relevance of SLA materials and resources and the need for adaptation

#### **4.3.1. The price point for membership and with it a corresponding sense of value**

Considering again in Figure 2 the relative positioning of the networks under review, only 5 out of the 10 networks considered here charge a fee for membership. Of the 5 organisations that do charge a fee, only 4 of them offer individual membership. The average annual fee for individual membership of these 4 associations (DGI, DVMD, GfWM and AjBD) is €57,-. This is almost a third of what the SLA charges its regular members. In other words, the relatively low price point together with the fact that only 4 out of the 10 networks charge their individual members for membership, exerts a strong downward pressure upon the level of fees for membership of a professional association as promoted by the SLA.

However, this comparison although on the surface correct and reasonable needs to be couched in context.

Firstly, the majority of the networks and associations discussed above are aimed at the academic and public sectors. Membership of a professional organisation in many of the networks discussed above is assumed in the first instance to be institutional.

Secondly, the academic and public sector communities are both highly regulated market segments, subject to numerous rules and regulations and where tariffs are agreed collectively.

Thirdly, there is still a wide difference in the expectations and perspectives between the information professional in, for instance, the United States on the one hand and Germany on the other. SLA members in the United States are driven by and work within a culture of individual responsibility for professional development. In Germany, the working environment and culture of the academic and the public sectors – and it must be said, to some extent the private sector – is still very paternalistic i.e. “my employer knows what is best for me and will provide.”

The practical point for consideration here is: would the SLA attract more members in Germany faster by reducing its fees? The answer to this question has to be no. This is simply because a reduction in price will not make a valuable proposition more valuable, nor would it clear the cultural fog that impedes information professionals in Germany from taking control of their own careers.

#### 4.3.2. The relevance of SLA materials and resources and the need for adaptation

Information professionals are the primary target of this investigation and report. Whereas the current price for SLA membership would be a hard barrier to potential SLA members from the academic world and the public sector, for the commercial world, the current SLA fee structure should be seen as more of a “soft barrier”. Here the decision to become an SLA member is influenced less by the actual price than by the question of what do I get that is relevant and helpful to me for the price that I pay?

The question is a fair, direct and reasonable one given that, as the SLA proposition currently stands, a German information professional has to,

- work with all the information and resources in a foreign language, i.e. English
- access or receive resources that they can hardly use locally, e.g. the salary review.

That said, the key to addressing the question lies in that part of the question that says “*what do I get that is relevant and helpful to me*”. This is primarily an information and knowledge gap and can be answered simply and efficiently through targeted marketing and sales activities. For example, discussions carried out during the investigation already revealed areas of the current SLA proposition, e.g. SLA Divisions “Legal” and “Solo Librarians”, that are of real potential interest to the law librarians of large German law firms. With this kind of target audience, English is less of a barrier.

Intuition says or even dictates that over time, a degree of adaptation of the SLA’s materials and resources - in terms of language, style and content - to a local German audience would be desirable. Seen in a long-term perspective, such adaptation may be even necessary. These thoughts were much aired during Janice R. Lachance’s visit to Frankfurt/Main. Yet, curiously and in a way that was telling, no one who advocated adaptation could describe what the adaptation should be and who would be the best qualified to undertake the task.

In conclusion, the survey has identified price and relevance as two critical barriers to promoting the SLA value proposition to a wider audience in Germany. Equally, the survey can give no evidence to support the view that a reduction in price would increase membership.

Instead, it is argued that the SLA needs to look at how to best position itself to drive the sense and understanding of value behind its proposition and to, where necessary, adapt this proposition to local needs. The pains experienced by information professionals, as indicated in some of the network profiles, as well as the solutions they are seeking out to alleviate them give some indications of how certain SLA products and services, e.g. those relating to the articulation of competencies and the value of information professionals, can be adapted to a local German audience.

Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, while the sense of rugged individualism and personal responsibility that marks the American way is still to a large extent absent in Germany, there is a growing recognition in the country that information professionals will have to take on more responsibility with respect to their professional development. The traditional employment institutions – traditionally providers and protectors in this regard – are themselves struggling to keep abreast of developments in the information society and knowledge economy. Professional associations that offer professional development programmes and continuous training courses that are accredited, respected and wished for by industry are likely to become the better friend and protector of information professionals in the future.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section draws together the conclusions derived from the investigation and report. The section finishes with recommendations for further action and practical steps towards laying down the foundation for SLA membership acquisition and growth in Germany for 2008 and 2009.

### 5.1. Conclusions from the report

From the investigation and report, the following conclusions can be drawn:

#### **Conclusion 1:**

**There is a class of information professional in the commercial sector in Germany akin to information professionals in the USA.**

There is a class of individual in Germany that can be referred to as an “information professional”. These are typically individuals who work in the information specialist departments of large corporations, banks, law firms and institutions. The role played by the information professional in their respective organisation has become extremely varied, fragmented and diverse. Information professionals are also having to deal with new situations that their basic training did not equip them for, e.g. training, management and leadership. Information professionals are identifiable less by their job descriptions or title and more by competencies they possess and can demonstrate.

#### **Conclusion 2:**

**Although there is no SLA equivalent in Germany, information professionals are seeking out networks for the exchange of information, experience and practice.**

There are networks of information professionals in Germany, but these are overwhelmingly focussed on the academic and public sectors. The older networks are from the library and documentation side of the information industry. Whereas the more recently founded groups are related to the knowledge management side of the information industry. There is no single network or association in Germany which focuses on the needs and wishes of information professionals in the commercial sector.

#### **Conclusion 3:**

**Information professionals in the commercial sector in Germany have needs similar to SLA members in other countries.**

The information professionals in the commercial sector in Germany suffer for not being visible within their organisation to their clients as well as to their peers. A consequence of this is that the contribution made by the information professional within their organisation is not recognised, not valued and therefore not rewarded. A common complaint amongst information professionals is that their role is also not recognised by classic structures such as the employment office, job recruitment agency or even the personnel department.

Other issues that materially influence the welfare and well-being of the information professional at work can be articulated in the following questions,

- How to sell the value of what information professionals do?
- How to fight off efforts to reduce staff or cut costs (outsourcing)?
- How to keep up to date with recent technical and information management practices?
- How to get continuously educated when travel budgets are being cut?
- How to find alternative / similar employment when job is cut?

These are clearly aspects of an information professional's life in Germany, to which the SLA value proposition directly appeals.

**Conclusion 4:**

**The SLA value proposition as it currently stands is relevant to information professionals in Germany, but needs systematic and targeted promotion.**

Many information professionals in commercial organisations in Germany are aware of the SLA. The perception however, is that it is big and American. This is a perception that needs a considered handling. After all, the SLA is big and American and to many of its non-US members, that is one of its attractive features. However, both in the USA and overseas, the SLA can also demonstrate powerful and long-standing regional credentials. SLA Europe and SLA Asia are just two examples. In the global economy, the SLA's global reach has to be one of its biggest attractions.

**5.2. Recommendations for advancing the SLA value proposition in Germany**

From these conclusions, the following recommendations are made for laying the foundation for growth in Germany. The following 3 recommendations constitute the three phases of an initiative “Impulse to Growth!” to increase SLA Membership to over 75 members by the end of 2010,

- **Phase 1:** SLA builds a local Division SLA Germany
- **Phase 2:** Maintain an SLA presence at three events in 2009
- **Phase 3:** Begin a phased adaptation of SLA materials with selected partners.

Each phase is discussed as a specific recommendation.

**Recommendation 1:**

Build an SLA Chapter in Germany around a nucleus of members in the Frankfurt/Main area. The business segments to be targeted are

- Banking and financial services
- Large international law firms
- Pharmaceutical companies

The SLA value proposition would be rolled out in a series of stages:

MARKET SEGMENT	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
Legal	<u>Passive</u> Materials & resources	<u>Active</u> Networking	<u>Interactive</u> eLearning
Business & Finance	<u>Passive</u> Materials & resources	<u>Active</u> Networking	<u>Interactive</u> eLearning
Pharma	<u>Passive</u> Materials & resources	<u>Active</u> Networking	<u>Interactive</u> eLearning

Table 4: Stages of a systematic and targeted roll-out of the SLA products and services

The themes to focus on would be,

- Value of information services
- Marketing of information services
- Business intelligence / information competence
- Competitor intelligence as a sub-part of business information competence
- Knowledge management

The essence of this recommendation is to use what is available now to cater for currently identified and articulated needs and to build up the SLA membership in Germany. This recommendation anticipates no systematic adaptation of content etc. other than what members do themselves.

**Recommendation 2:**

Maintain an SLA presence in three events in 2009. They are,

- **2nd-5th June 2009 : Deutsche Bibliothekarstag 2009, Erfurt, Germany**  
The German Librarians Association (Deutsche Bibliothekarstag) was mentioned several times in the networks' profiles. The German Librarians Conference is one of the biggest events in the year for librarians from all market segments. Many of the networks hold their annual general meetings there. An SLA presence at this conference would enable the SLA to meet these groups in an informal and cost-effective way. There is also a possibility of giving a presentation at the Conference. A proposal was sent in time for the closing date of 26<sup>th</sup> October 2008.
- **28-29<sup>th</sup> September 2009 : ASpB-Tagung, Karlsruhe, Germany**  
The ASpB already has established links with the SLA through the activities of SLA's representative in Germany Elka Sloan. The ASpB has held SLA moderated forums on topics such as "competitive intelligence" and would welcome such again at its 2009 conference in Karlsruhe.
- **14th-18th October 2009, Book Fair, Frankfurt/Main, Germany.**  
The Frankfurt Book Fair is the biggest publishing and media event in Germany. Held every year in October, the event is hosted by the Frankfurt Exhibition Centre which has now also become host to the Annual DGI Conference (see DGI above). It is recommended that the SLA avail of the invitation extended by the DGI during the meeting between Janice R. Lachance CEO SLA and the DGI representatives of the Board of Directors to have DGI host an SLA presence at the Book Fair.

As was pointed out earlier, the SLA in Germany has been building bridges. An SLA presence at the conferences and exhibitions described above would help move the SLA from building bridges to organising a hub around which the other networks revolve.

**Recommendation 3:**

It is recommended that for the long-term, the SLA look seriously at a systematic and planned adaptation of the SLA value proposition to the specific needs of information professional in Germany. As this is not an activity that a SLA Germany Chapter alone is likely to be able to fulfil, it is recommended that the SLA through SLA USA, Europe and Chapter for Germany seek a strategic partner. The aim of the partnership would be for the SLA to acquire depth in order to sustain itself (against future competition) and to take advantage of the international cooperation possibilities, i.e. German information professionals out to UK and USA.. The organisations that should be considered for long-term strategic partnerships are the following:

- DGI
- IK-Ring
- GfWM

## ANNEX

### A1. LITERATURE

#### **InfoPro des Jahres – Networking für Frankfurt**

Interview with Janet Hopkins, SLA Award Winner 2007, PASSWORD, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

#### **The Visible Librarian: Advocacy and Marketing**

Judith Siess, Workshop, Initiative Fortbildung e.V., Stuttgart, 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> October 2005.

#### **From Librarianship to Knowledge Services: Marketing the Specialised Library**

Guy St. Clair, Workshop, Initiative Fortbildung e.V., Berlin, 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> May 2004.

#### **Leipziger Memorandum – Die Behördenbibliothek im Zeitalter elektronischer Informationen**

Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Parlaments- und Behördenbibliotheken (APBB), Leipzig, März 2004.

#### **All change? Reskilling for the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Tim Owen, keynote address, 33<sup>rd</sup> BIALL Annual Study Conference in Liverpool, June 2003.

### A2. SLA PROSPECTS IN GERMANY

The list of 200 information professionals has been attached to this report as an MS Outlook \*.pst file. The list has been derived from a variety of sources as described in a previous section (i.e. 2.5. Locating information professionals in Germany) of the report. The lists and sources consulted whilst valuable were rarely complete as regards contact information. Hence cross referencing and corroboration was needed in order to increase the reliability of the data.