Doing things differently

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Now that we have had time to reflect on the changes to the UK higher education environment announced in late 2010, practitioners are starting to assess the new environment and think about how to respond. It feels like a transitional year when we are conducting business as usual but we know that there is a sea-change coming and we must prepare for the unknown. From reading and listening to the professional 'chatter' it is my impression that most libraries are not planning a radical new approach but are looking at their core business, making sure processes are streamlined and efficient and using technologies to save time, enhance existing services and extend their reach.

Sometimes, however, it is beneficial to cast a critical eye over how we do things and Ken Chad provides some thought-provoking insights into the 'positive power of disruption' to introduce this issue. We have summary reports of several major pieces of work including the RIN study on barriers to e-only access, the Resource Discovery Taskforce report and SCONUL's revision of the 'seven pillars' model of information literacy, all indicators of future change in core areas of library business. Using data and evidence effectively will be a major theme over the coming year and both the RIN report on the value of libraries and Dilys Young's article on use of the NSS data provide good starting points for all of us to think about how we might do this.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of working on the editorial board is receiving the reports of innovative projects in individual libraries. This time we have several articles describing how the application of different technologies has enhanced user education, the acquisitions process and repository development. Paul Staithorpe provides a useful primer on the use of Twitterfeed and we have a report on the innovative approach adopted at the 'mashed libraries' events.