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## IT integration into LIS education: an academic librarian's perspective

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### Abstract:

*Technology is a driving force in many aspects of society today and there is need to constantly update skills to remain relevant and socially included. Resisting change and avoiding emerging technologies in the 21st century eventually leads to a state of becoming 'useless' as revealed by two librarians at the La Biblioteca Aperta (Open Library) Conference in Milan, Italy, March 2017. Research by the author also highlighted the importance of librarians acquiring information technology (IT) skills as libraries have been at the forefront of embracing technologies, ranging from online reference services and library automation to more recently, social robotics. As such, incorporating IT into the library and information science (LIS) curriculum has become imperative over time. One example is the Master in Information Technology (MIT) initiative in Africa funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York since 2011. It aims to provide practicing librarians an opportunity to acquire IT skills relevant to the library environment and speaks to technology trends. The programme exposed librarians to various aspects of IT related to the operability of library systems and implementation of Web 2.0, as well as exposure to international best practices. The purpose of this paper is to showcase how IT has transformed academic librarianship and the 21st century academic library particularly in the South African context. Some outcomes of IT integration in the LIS education include increased confidence in embracing and implementing new technologies in the workplace, continuous network building for collaborative projects, and the ability to disseminate best practices both nationally and internationally through conferences and publications. Recommendations include continuous collaborative research projects between various stakeholders within the university community that complements the vision and mission of universities. It is hoped that this paper will provide insight into new possibilities for academic librarians.*

**Keywords:** Information Technology Integration, LIS Curriculum, Academic Librarianship, Emerging Technologies, Collaboration.

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