Managing the virtual library in the real world

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Key themes

- Electronic library economics
- Systems and technical issues
- Collection development
- Scholarly communication initiatives
- User issues
- Organisational issues
- Staff and skills
Definition & terminology

‘Electronic library’: a collection of networked digital information resources and associated technical and managerial infrastructure. It includes data and metadata in various formats which are created or assembled in order to provide a service to end users.

- ‘Virtual library’
- ‘Electronic library’ / ‘e-library’
- ‘Digital library’

- ‘Traditional library’
- ‘Analogue library’

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Pricing models

- Pricing models unclear
  - e.g. e-journals
    - free with print
    - print + x%
    - subject clusters
    - ‘take-it-or-leave-it’ packages
  - criteria
    - existing paper subscriptions
    - use
    - size of institution

- Need for libraries to be clearer about preferred pricing models

‘e’ is for ‘expensive’

e-library services are expensive:

- e-journals often add 6-10% on the periodicals budget
- e-reserve articles / chapters too expensive to scale-up
- e-books often 150+% of the paper book price
Institutional funding

- Level of funding
  - informing the expectations of senior institutional managers
  - the ‘e’ word can encourage funding
  - informing all users of economic realities

- Structure of funding
  - subject-based formula funding
  - professional judgement

Changing priorities

- Responding to trends: new service priorities
  - fewer: visits, loans, inter-library loans
  - more: e-accesses, user training needs

- New staffing priorities
  - cataloguing e-resources
  - user information skills training
  - ...

- New investment priorities
  - traditional > automated > electronic library
Development project funding

• Sources
  – Institutional - based on strategy
  – Regional bodies
  – National
    • e.g. in the UK: eLib, Research Support Libraries Programme, JISC development programme, etc
  – European Union
• Impact
  – projects to services
  – learning outcomes
  – cultural change

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Integration

- The need for integration
  - traditional library / e-library
  - different e-resources
    - different textual resources
    - different non-text media
- Example: the place of the OPAC
- Example: e-journal access

Interoperability

- Searching: Z39.50
- Sharing: OAI (Open Archives Initiative) Protocol
- Linking:
  - hard linking
  - OpenURLs
- Implementation:
  - commercial products or in-house development

\{ design principle: simple on the outside, smart on the inside \}
Metadata

- Different schemas
  - MARC
  - ISADG
  - Dublin Core
- Different curatorial traditions
- Different levels
  - item
  - collection

Access management

- Authentication and authorisation
  - IP-range
  - proxy server
  - personal usernames
  - digital certificates
  - single sign-on
- Personalisation
  - automatic
  - self-implemented
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Collection development

- Policies and strategies
  - integrated systematic collection policy
  - print v. electronic
    - parallel development
    - substitution
      - bibliographic resources
      - full-text: journals, books
    - e-formats: WWW v. CD-ROM
- Selection
  - criteria for selection
  - management of selection
Example: selection criteria

- Content
- Functionality
- Interface
- Access
- Licensing
- Authentication
- Format
- Technical requirements
- Integration with existing services
- Cost
- Training & support implications
- Archiving and preservation
- Hidden costs
- ...

Collection development 2

- Acquisition
- Licensing
  - move from public law to private agreements
  - consortium purchasing
- Ongoing access management
  - e.g. e-journals
    - title changes
    - management packages
- Content creation
  - digital surrogates
  - ‘born digital’
Collection development 3

- Digital preservation
  - OAIS (Open Archival Information System) Reference Model
    - http://ssdoo.gsfc.nasa.gov/nost/isoas/
  - LOCKSS (Lots Of Copies Keep Stuff Safe) model
    - http://lockss.stanford.edu/

- Copyright and IPR

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The context

Structural problems with academic publishing

• Impact barriers
  – authors give away their content and want to achieve impact not income
  – want to disseminate research widely
  – *but* publishers want to restrict circulation based on subscriptions

• Access barriers
  – researchers want easy access to the literature
  – *but* most researchers do not have easy access to most of the literature

‘Serials crisis’

Source: Swets Blackwell Periodicals Price Index
Possible solutions

- Reclaiming scholarly publishing
  - SPARC (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition)
    - http://www.arl.org/sparc/
  - Public Library of Science (PLoS)
    - http://www.publiclibraryofscience.org/
- Open access
  - Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI)
    - http://www.soros.org/openaccess/
- New journals
  - ELSS (Electronic Society for Social Scientists)
    - http://www.elsss.org.uk/
- E-print archives
  - centralised subject-based archives
  - institutional archives

E-prints and the library

Managing institutional assets

- Technical implementation
  - free software from eprints.org
  - OAI-compliant
- Collection development policies
  - pre-prints v. post-prints
  - ‘the library does the work’
- Advocacy
  - academic staff
  - senior managers

\textit{the librarian at the centre of the scholarly communication process}
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User issues

- User needs and behaviour
  - knowing your users: traditional / non-traditional
  - market penetration
  - off-campus use
- Marketing
- Training - information skills
- Liaison
- Support
- Monitoring and performance measurement
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Convergence

Example: Nottingham

Director
Information Services

- Assistant Director
  Customer Services
- Assistant Director
  IT Systems
- Assistant Director
  Research and Learning Resources
- Assistant Director
  Planning and Quality
Organisational trends

Examples:
• Team working
• Project working
• Flatter structures
• Improved communication
• Re-skilling / multi-skilling opportunities

E-library and other e-services

• Managed Learning Environments (MLEs)
  – Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs)
  – Management Information Systems (MISs)
• MLE / e-library relationship?
  – reading lists
  – e-reserves
  – personal information
  – searching for information
• Librarians and the organisational agenda
  – IT services
  – institutional administrators
  – faculty
Consortia and partnerships

- Local initiatives
- Consortia
  - regional
  - interest groups
  - national
- Cross sectoral
  - other libraries
  - archives
  - galleries and museums

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Roles

The librarian as...

• multi-media user
• intermediary
• enabler
• metadata producer
• communicator
• team player
• trainer / educator
• evaluator
• negotiator
• project manager
• innovator
• fund raiser
• ...

Skills

• Professional skills
• Technical / IT skills
• Flexibility
• Ability to work under pressure
• Communication skills
• Negotiating skills
• People skills
• Presentation skills
• Teaching skills
• Team working skills
• Customer service skills
• Analytical and evaluative skills
• Subject skills
• Project management skills
• Vision
• ...

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Fundamentals

We need to be...

• Service providers
• Partners
• Leaders of innovation

Not just managing change, leading change