

### Research Services



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### Overview

- Context of the research library
- Constraints and changes in libraries
- Constraints and changes in research
- Researchers' needs
- Libraries' strategic development
- Conclusions
- Background reading

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### The research library context

- Historical role as centre of the university
- Prestige building denoting centre of research
- Extent of collections critical

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### Research libraries: constraints and changes

- Changes in role
- Diminishing importance of physical collections
- Digital shift
- Visibility

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### Changes in role

- Erosion of position of library in the university
- Still managing premium space
- Librarians' reporting lines drop downwards
- Library staff not changing competencies
- Confusion over changing interface with researchers
- Broadest access is outside libraries
- Research no longer starts at the library

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### Diminishing importance of physical collections

- Print is no longer the core
- Journals are now (for the most part) online
- Books are reaching a tipping point
- Google provides broader access than any one library
- Size of library collections not critical to researchers
- Ownership does not outweigh access

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### Digital shift – where is the digital library?

How to avoid library services...

- General consumer experience of instant online information
- Pay per view direct from publishers to researchers
- Library not always using digital formats to suit researchers
- Post 1900 digitised or digitised on demand
- Special collections low visibility

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### Visibility

The library is paradoxically invisible to researchers because:

- Online materials arrive at the desktop without a library label
- "It's all on the Net"
- Researchers seldom visit the library
- Self service circulation implies self-service research
- Library staff are not where the researchers are
- Extent of library contribution to research underestimated

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### Researchers: constraints and changes

- Time
- Finance
- Publishing
- Recognition

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### Time

- Increasing numbers of students
  - Primacy of student experience
  - More teaching
  - Less time for research
- Increase in publications
  - No time to read everything

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### Finance

- Diminishing government support for research
  - Need to bid for external research funding
  - Need support for making bids
  - Judged by success in attracting funds

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### Publishing

- Pressure to publish
- Multiple channels for publication
- Publication to be combined with impact
- Publications to be measured by others

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### Recognition

- Publication brings recognition
- Publication brings promotion
- Publication brings funding

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### Researchers' needs

- Research starts at the office
- Intuitive information systems
- Personalised support
- Mobile support
- Sharing of work in progress
- Publication in different forms
- Online access to outputs
- Preservation of outputs

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### Research starts at the office

- Research starts online not at the library
- Library catalogue only one search area
- Researchers not necessarily proficient searchers
- ? 2020 all research materials will be online ?
  - Online analysis systems will support research
    - But will the library support the systems?

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### Intuitive information systems

- Google has raised all our expectations (we now think it is intuitive)
- Libraries run legacy systems
- They are not always easy to understand
  - Not intuitive except to library staff

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### Personalised support

- Research is often individual
  - Research team may start the work
- Researchers do ask help of others
  - Would they ask the library?

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### Mobile support

- Researchers need online support wherever they may be
- First resource unlikely to be the library

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### Sharing of work in progress

- Invisible college is now online

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### Publication in different forms

The changing nature of the research record:

- Blogs
- Twitter links
- Working papers
- Conference papers
- Journal articles
- Books
- The library should be the storehouse

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### Online access to outputs

- Research outputs need to be stored, accessible and conserved
- Libraries should manage open access repositories in support
  - Maximise access to research outputs
  - Maximise impact of university's research
  - Measure uptake

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### Preservation of outputs

The current challenge is research data:

- Data is produced as part of research
- It can appear in all kinds of formats
- It should be retained and re-used
- Researchers not keen to share

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### Research libraries' development

- Strategy (Vision)
- Staff
- Services
  - Shared services
- Visibility

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### Strategy (Vision)

Strategic vision for libraries must acknowledge:

- Pace of change – be **nimble**
- Need to actively support research – be **aware**
- Modern version of "collections" – be **distinctive**
- Innovation – be **proactive**

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### Staff

Staff like services must move out beyond the library walls:

- Recruit staff for new roles with different expertise
- Encourage development of existing staff
- Personal / Embedded librarians

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### Services

Be aware of what research currently entails:

- Digital library infrastructure is key
- Leverage unique special collections
- Develop repository - incentivise deposit

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### Services (2)

Add new services to library portfolio:

- Pre-research bid support
- Procure access to new materials
- Curate research data
- Bibliometrics
- Publishing

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### Shared services

Cooperate with other libraries to enhance research support

Examples of different types of sharing:

- UK Research Reserve (UKRR) - [www.ukrr.ac.uk](http://www.ukrr.ac.uk)
- Hathi Trust - [www.hathitrust.org](http://www.hathitrust.org)
- Europeana - [www.europeana.eu](http://www.europeana.eu)

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### Visibility

Services beyond the library walls lead to visibility:

- Provide services which clearly show library label
- Staff visible in research spaces
- Seize new opportunities to support research
- Work with students = researchers of the future

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### Conclusions

The traditional role of the research library is rapidly diminishing

Research libraries need to mitigate the challenge by:

- Recognising the constraints and opportunities of modern research methods
- Devising and implementing services to suit researchers

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### Background reading

- Michalko, James, Malpas, C and Arcolio, A.,  
Research libraries, risk and systemic change;  
*OCLC Research*, 2010;  
<http://www.oclc.org/research/publications/library/2010/2010-03.pdf>
- Research Information Network (RIN)  
Challenges for academic libraries in difficult economic times;  
*RIN*, 2010;  
<http://www.rin.ac.uk/system/files/attachments/challenges-for-libraries-FINAL-March10.pdf>

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