21ˢᵗ Century Librarians for 21ˢᵗ Century Libraries

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Our past is deeply rooted in stewardship of physical collections

Can we, librarians, embrace the future and while respecting institutional culture and institutional past make the leap to the 21st century?
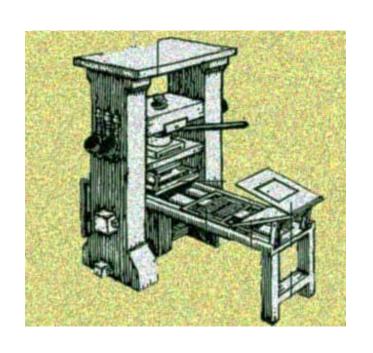
Inventions That Moved Forward Knowledge

- http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/history_knowledge/printpress.jpg

- **Writing**

- **Alphabet**

- **Gutenberg Printing Press**

- **Internet**

Libraries and Librarians in Transition:
Historical perspective
Early Years

- **Since their beginning, the libraries at Universities have been controlled by academics**

- **Expansion of institutions of higher education after 2nd World War lead to loss of exclusivity and control of libraries by academics.**

Libraries and Librarians in Transition:
Historical perspective
Period of early cooperation
1970-1980s

- **Beginning of computerisation in libraries;**
- **Cooperation and networking**
- **Membership organisations – OCLC, RLG contributed to facilitate reorganisation of academic libraries.**

Libraries and Librarians in Transition: Historical perspective
Period of consolidation
1990-2000

- **Expansion of sharing networks**

- **Beginning of full text e-journal, Science-Direct platform and 'big deals'**

- **Access vs. ownership**

Libraries and Librarians in Transition:
Seeking options
2000-2010

- **Open Access; Changes in Scholarly Publishing; Institutional repositories**
- **Special Collections preservation; Digitization projects; Digital Archiving**
- **Social media, Support of Online education**

Libraries and Librarians in Transition:
Current Challenges

- **What is a library?**
- **Questioning the relevancy of libraries**
- **Librarians: What are the skills librarians need today and in the future?**
- **Shrinking library budgets**

Who Are Our Users Today?

Students

- **Digital natives**
- **Believers that everything can be found on the Internet; Google is a starting point**
- **Users of laptops/tablets; smart phones; texting; use of social networks, etc.**

Who Are Our Users Today?

Academics and researchers

- **Digital migrants**
- **Possessing varied skills**
- **Set in their ways of using info resources**
- **Time is a precious commodity.**

What Do Our Users Want?

How do we find out?

- **Conducting short users' surveys and focus groups**
- **Using a variety of Web 2.0 tools**
- **Through direct engagement with our users**
- **Listening and talking to our users.**

What do our users want?

Convenience

Variety of social, collaborative, quiet workspaces to fit their lifestyle of multitasking and different learning styles.

Role of Libraries and Librarians at a University

- **The library's priority must be aligned with the strategic goals of the university**

- **The core activities of the University of Oxford are defined as education, research and wider engagement**

Outside of the Library Walls

- **Institutional culture and Institutional priorities**

- **Shrinking funding for research in developed countries**

- **Social and political landscape within a country and internationally**

How to Survive – How to Thrive
Our responsibilities are:

- **Define skills needed for engagement**

- **Invest in staff development and training**

- **Promote widespread awareness, knowledge and understanding of emerging issues that will enable more innovation and creativity from our staff**

How to Survive – How to Thrive
Our responsibilities are:

- **Create a library as a virtual store front or display case of arrays of resources and flawless self-services that allow readers access to information with minimal effort**

- **Support personalization of discovery**

21st Century Libraries and 21st Century Librarians need to:

- **Provide added value to the core activities of the University**

- **Be seen as a Unit of excellent services, high productivity and innovation.**

- **Can we do it? YES, WE CAN!**

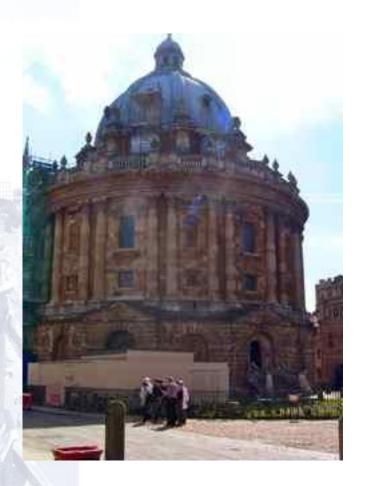# Renovation Moments from the Bodleian Libraries:

Awakening of the Sleeping Giant

The Oxford Experience 2008-2011

Managing readers' expectations at a time of substantial change

Number of projects at once

- Build new Book Storage Facility (153 miles of shelving)

- Barcode and move 7 million items to the BSF

- Select, purchase and migrate to new ILS

- Keep the libraries open

Managing readers' expectations at a time of substantial change

How did we manage this?

-Careful planning and executing a significant information campaign

-Keep community inform about plans, changes, progress

-Organize services to assist readers Just-In-Time project and Live Help chat service:

-Jitters and Chatters

How did we do?

On time and within the budget.

Thank You.