OPEN LIBRARIES, OPEN RESOURCES, OPEN TO CHANGE?: LIBRARY ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN TO IMPROVE AND SUPPORT THE CREATION AND OPEN PUBLICATION OF RESEARCH RESOURCES

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Abstract

This paper takes a holistic and broad look at introducing and managing change in libraries to improve support for the creation and open publication of digital research resources. It uses a case study approach – the example being Victoria University of Wellington Library, New Zealand – to explore in depth organisational development and design. The case study, supplemented by the literature and other library examples, focuses upon changes initiated at Victoria to create a new Library Strategy, culture and organisational structure. Specifically it highlights the changes required to improve access to open research resources and to ensure ongoing innovation in this space during a period of constraint. The changes illustrated in the paper, and reflections on the global research and educational context, lead to consideration as to whether these particular developments at one university illustrate the maturing of the model of digitisation from special project to digitisation and digital publication as core business.

Exploring this idea further the paper argues that the digitisation or creation of the research resource is only one isolated step. Improving access to open research resources requires integrated organisational development and design to ensure the provision and development of the full spectrum of enabling mechanisms and approaches; for example discovery (metadata) and access, supporting users (eg clear copyright, easy integration into learning objects), taking responsibility for long term access (preservation) and facilitating relationship development across library teams and between the library and Faculty. Finally, in considering future-proofing the organisation for further, ongoing and relentless change, the paper emphasises and explores approaches to innovation in this space, crucial if libraries are to remain flexible to meeting the requirements of researchers and students in the open access environment of tomorrow.

Introduction

This paper takes a holistic and broad look at introducing and managing change in libraries to improve support for the creation and open publication of digital research resources. It uses a case study approach – the example being Victoria University of Wellington Library, New Zealand – to explore in depth organisational development and design. The case study, supplemented by the literature and other library examples, focuses upon changes initiated at Victoria to create a new Library Strategy, culture and organisational structure. Specifically it highlights the changes required to improve access to open research resources and to ensure ongoing innovation in this space during a period of constraint. The changes illustrated in the paper, and reflections on the global research and educational context, lead to consideration as to whether these particular developments at one university illustrate the maturing of the model of digitisation from special project to digitisation and digital publication as core business.

Context: libraries, change and organisational development

Universities and libraries are operating in a rapidly changing information environment. In this context, libraries have been redefined as facilitators to a world of information far beyond physical collections, providing access to global information through online resources and

systems, and also creating their own digital content. Staff and student expectations are developing in line with these changes in the teaching, research and scholarly communication environment. Libraries need to take a strategic role in supporting academics and students within this technologically-rich and constantly evolving context. Digital collections and digital scholarship are now mainstream library activities, core to research and teaching. The technology environment will be constantly and rapidly changing, with the expectations and requirements of information users increasing, and with libraries needing to provide an excellent search and discovery experience for their customers. As access to mobile devices becomes ubiquitous, users will expect seamless access to information and services, provided anywhere, anytime.[1]

A review of the literature and international examples also reveal emerging trends in service delivery in academic libraries. The *SCONUL Vision for Academic Information Services in 2010* identified two key strategies: more personalized delivery of services rather than one size fits all; and a more joined up service culture, including the provision of access to academic support services. The aim of such approaches is to provide high efficiency and effective response rates, structured reporting and monitoring to inform improvements in the service, opportunities to provide a broad base of support, and opportunities to focus expert staff where they are really needed. As Dempsey[2] and Walker[3] both observe, a 'service turn' to look at the quality of services in support of research and learning as important markers of distinction is a clear trend in academic libraries; 'The research library must be distinguished by the scope and quality of its service programs in the same way it has long been by the breadth and depth of its locally-held collections.'[4]

As the literature illustrates, technology is not a separate strategic theme for libraries globally as it is viewed as an enabler that is an intrinsic part of library services to clients. A key strategic driver is the need to ensure a highly effective technology infrastructure for library developments, including efficient operations (interlinked with centralised IT services), specialist library technology-related skills and support, and proactive development of new services and resources. In addition, technology services for libraries must provide a high level of support for library staff in their day-to-day work, and work collaboratively with them to ensure that technology is used to best effect to meet client needs.

As a result of the environment and challenges outlined above, academic libraries across the world have undergone significant structural and role changes in order to meet these demands, to create a flexible and skilled workforce and to become learning organisations. A number of academic libraries have developed workforce development plans and strategies, with a focus on staff skills development, to enable them to do this.[5] The most important qualities an information professional can posses are adaptability, resourcefulness, a habit of looking for better/easier/more efficient ways to do things, creativity, and a love for solving problems. Other trends include the development of human capital through employee involvement, competency frameworks and performance recognition. Staff must also take proactive responsibility for their own development.

The strategic drivers for change vary from institution to institution: from the need to reduce costs and the need to align services with the opportunities new building developments bring, to the need to create converged services, and the need to modernize and ensure flexibility for the future. All changes are usually driven – and certainly *should* be driven - by the need to align

[1] British Library (2010) *British Library 2020 Vision*, http://www.bl.uk/2020vision

[2] Dempsey, L. (2011) 'The service turn …' Lorcan Demspey's Weblog on Libraries, Services and Networks, http://orweblog.oclc.org/archives/002152.html

[3] Walker, S. (2011) 'Distinctive Signifiers of Excellence: Library Services and the Future of the Academic Library' *College and Research Libraries* Vol 72 No 1.

[4] Walker, ibid.
[5] Kealy, K. (2009) 'Do library staff have what it takes to be a librarian of the future?' *Library Management*, 30(8/9), pp.572-582.

library service delivery to learning, teaching and research requirements. Approaches to leading and managing organizations, and people, through change can also vary and can certainly result in differing degrees of success. The literature of change, a huge body of work, offers a myriad of advice and models; for example that 'change for change's sake' is sometimes desirable[6] and that the leadership of people is critical for successful change[7]. Clear vision, direction and leadership are often cited as the most critical in ensuring effective organizational and sustainable change. As Kotter[8] explains, what leaders really do in organizations is 'prepare [them] for change and help them cope as they struggle through it.'

Context: global trends in organisational development to support open access

This paper will now move from the macro to the micro context, exploring the global trends in organisational development to support open access initiatives. For the purposes of this discussion, open access encompasses both library support for born digital research outputs and the provision of access to digitised materials from within a library collection. When looking at organisational development to improve specific support for the creation and open publication of digital research resources we can identify two spurs to change. One is the broader 'service turn' discussed above. The second is the maturing of the model of digitisation. Combined with a general requirement for fiscal constraint these have created a model of organisational change which is identifiable in many of those universities who were engaged early in digitisation work. That is to embed what were once special units or a series of special projects within core library groups and as core library business.

Two international examples from the Universities of Virginia, USA and Sydney, Australia, will illustrate this trend and the case study of Victoria University of Wellington which follows will allow more detailed discussion of both the spurs to changes and the specifics of the organisational development.

At the **University of Virginia the EText Centre** was established in 1992 with the goal of 'building and maintaining an Internet- accessible collection of documents central to teaching and research in the humanities, and to nurture a user community adept at the creation and scholarly use of these materials'.[9] The Centre was part of the Library but sat outside the main Library structures. From 1992 to 2006 the staff of the Centre ran a substantial programme of digitisation producing thousands of digital editions of out of copyright works in the University Library's collections. The Centre published a series of born-digital journals[10] based on the work of academics at the University and provided support for a series of faculty and student digital humanities projects[11] primarily through the creation of content. At the same time in another part of the University Library, the Digital Initiatives Unit, was developing a prototype for a digital object repository management system that was intended to be the foundation of a digital library system. In 2003 a prototype digital collection search and delivery interface for searching and browsing image and electronic text collections was presented to the Library staff for review and went to alpha release in 2005[12]. This system in many ways duplicated the infrastructure in use at the EText Centre. Outside the Library there were massive digitisation projects underway globally – the Library of Congress's American Memory project, Project Gutenberg, the Million Book Project, the Universal Library and, in 2004, Google announced the Library Project to digitize the Oxford Bodleian Library's collection of more than one million 19th-century public

[6] Vermeulen, F., Puranam, P. and Gulati, R. (2010) 'Change for Change's Sake,' *Harvard Business Review*, June 2010.

[7] Cranwell-Ward, J. *Successful Change Leadership*, white paper, Henley Business School, http://henley.com

[8] Kotter, J. (2001) 'What Leaders Really Do,' *Best of HBR*.

[9] http://www2.lib.virginia.edu/etext/history.html
[10] http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/collections/journals/
[11] http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/collections/projects/
[12] http://www.lib.virginia.edu/digital/resndev/repository.html

domain books within three years[13]. Such activity and momentum at the national and international scale reduced both the impact and the perceived need of investment at an institution level in broad digitisation for public consumption.

Responding to both the internal developments of overlapping structure for digital collections and external activities which seemed to be duplicating many of the digitisation aims of the Centre, the Library made changes in both organisation and focus. In 2006 the staff and services of EText Centre were joined with those of the Geospatial and Statistical Data Centre into a new "Scholars' Lab" which in turn formed part of a new Department of Digital Scholarship and Research in the Library. The focus on the Scholar's Lab is not on content but on delivering services. The stated goal is 'to support the digital research and scholarly analysis needs of faculty and advanced students in the humanities and social sciences' through expert assistant in project development, digital research, text encoding and qualitative analysis and research computing in the humanities. A Digitization Services unit within the Curation Services department of the Library is responsible for the transformation of the Library's rare and unique materials to digital formats but not for public access. In 2007 the University of Virginia Library announced it was joining the Google Library Project and the Google rather than the Library would undertake the large scale work to provide public access to the digital copies of work in the Library collections.

At the **University of Sydney the Scholarly Electronic Text and Image Service** (SETIS) was officially opened in September 1996. SETIS and its Coordinator were placed under the direct administrative control of the Library but the service operated with some independence from the departmental structure of the Library. [14] In 1997 the aim of the service was 'to initiate and support programs of electronic text creation within the Library and at the University more generally.' In 2006 the University of Sydney Library re-organise SETIS as one of a set of services for the University of Sydney, integrating the management of digital content with new forms of access and scholarly publication. As in the case at Virginia, this was an adaption to the increasing focus on digital scholarship and publishing responsibilities by Library over basic to text and image creation projects for public consumption. The newly created role of Director of Digital and Sydney eScholarship reports directly to the University Librarian and is responsible for Library Information Technology Services; Copyright and Intellectual Property; Web Services and Communication; Sydney eScholarship; Sydney University Press; Rare Books and Special Collections Development, Donors and Promotion. In 2009 this concentration on these as core Library activities is complimented by the existence of a 'Digital Innovation Unit' described a as a partnership between the Arts Faculty and the Library to promote 'escholarship in the humanities, arts and social sciences by providing a platform for information sharing, research support and technical innovation, and enabling new approaches to the use of digital methods in research.' This has recently been replaced by Arts eResearch[15] which is entirely independent of the Library and aims to 'assist staff and graduate students in incorporating digital methods at all stages of their research and teaching projects, from initial scoping and grant-writing through information collection, management, analysis and visualisation, to the design of sustainable web sites and the archiving of research materials in the Sydney eScholarship repository.'

Case Study: Victoria University of Wellington

Library Strategic Context

Victoria University of Wellington -Te Whare Wānanga o te Ūpoko o te Ika a Māui – is one of New Zealand's eight universities, and is situated in the country's capital city. For more than a century, the University has developed a tradition of strong international links in teaching and research and programmes of national significance and international quality. Any changes in the Library at Victoria University of Wellington must be driven by the need to respond to the changing environment within the University and across the tertiary sector in New Zealand. The University Strategic Plan for 2009-2014 outlines Victoria's values, the mission and the goals that

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[13] http://books.google.com/googlebooks/history.html
[14] http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue8/scholarly-electronic/
[15] http://sydney.edu.au/arts/eresearch/

define success over the next five years. Goals for research, teaching and learning, student experience, external relationships, capability, resources, public contribution and equity are articulated. Thematic strategies have been developed for research, internationalisation, teaching and learning, equity and diversity, and the student experience. These strategies provide a framework to ensure that Victoria's initiatives and actions help it to meet its goals as set out in the Strategic Plan 2009-2014. It is expected that these Strategies will be embedded in the operational unit plans of Faculties, Schools and Central Service Units. The Library has a key role to play in supporting all of Victoria's strategies, and particularly those relating to research, teaching and learning, the student experience and equity and diversity.

The Library needs to continue to contribute strategically and operationally to the full range of University strategic goals. It has done this so far in the following ways;

- developing research skills to enable academic success;
- close collaboration with academic areas and Central Service Units to develop holistic approaches to learning and teaching;
- proactive communication and liaison with its communities;
- developing collections for teaching and research; and through direct and tailored support for researchers;
- providing effective learning environments for students and contributing to an excellent student experience;
- ensuring that information and support is accessible and available to all (and particularly to groups such as disabled staff and students, Māori and Pasifika, as identified in the Equity Plan)

Victoria's Library Service comprises of 5 libraries across 5 locations, serving an academic community of 25,000 across a wide range of disciplines. The Library has approximately 120 staff, and holds 1.1 million printed volumes and spent approximately NZ$9million in 2009 on collections (books, periodicals, e-resources) across all subject areas. The Library currently provides access to 185,000 print and electronic serials (the vast majority being electronic) and over 250,000 e-books. During 2009 the total number of items loaned was approximately 480,000 and 1 million full text electronic articles were accessed by staff and students. The Library has had an institutional repository for research outputs since 2007.

The Library is undoubtedly in a period of change and development. 2010 saw the beginning of a major capital redevelopment programme to transform the central library and connect it (on 3 of the building's 10 levels) to a new Campus Hub facility. Changes in University strategy for research, teaching and learning, student experience and equity and diversity (as highlighted above), have also led to changes in Library focus, staff roles and emphasis.

Organisational redesign

As part of its organisational development strategy, the Library introduced a major change in 2010 to how it structured and delivered technology services. At the time of the proposed change, the Library had two separate teams with responsibility for different aspects of library technology services:
New Zealand Electronic Text Centre (NZETC)

The role of the NZETC was to create a sustainable, optimally usable, and free online library of New Zealand and Pacific Island texts and materials; to effectively partner with other parts of Victoria University Library, Schools and Faculties within the University, and external organisations, as a collaborator and as a service provider. The Centre had been established in 2002 as part of the School of English, Film, Theatre and Media Studies. It was designed on the model of the eText Centre at Virginia and, as at Virginia, the Centre operated with a large degree of autonomy with control over budget and collection development. In 2006 the Centre became part of the Library but was grafted on to the existing organisational structure which already contained a team responsible for Digital Services.

The NZETC was recognised for the quality and significance of its work both within and outside the University. Its activities were in the following areas –

- Digital Library - providing online, open access to New Zealand and Pacific Island documentary heritage for research and teaching
- Digital Publication – enabling online publication of new, born-digital work and research. Since 2007 this has included a role in the development and management of the VUW Research Repository
- Digital Humanities – collaborating with researchers to investigate the intersection of computing tools with documentary heritage
- Digital Projects Partner – undertaking external projects on a variety of digitisation and digital content projects. This work has fluctuated in amount and has varied in focus.

Digital Services

Digital Services administered, developed and managed all University Library information technology services and activities, ensuring that systems and support are appropriately provided and operated to meet the current and future needs of the University Library. Digital Services played a key role in ensuring that the Library was strategically positioned to deliver high quality and targeted electronic resources and is recognised for its development work and operational focus.

Digital Services responsibilities included: Library management system (Voyager), Library web presence, Library intranet, specialist technical and application support, Library server administration, digital projects and initiatives (for example, Archivists Toolkit, online exam papers).

Both teams had their strengths and had highly skilled and specialised staff in the area of library technology. Whilst there was some evidence of collaboration, the two teams did on the whole work separately as they had specific areas of responsibility. There was also confusion over responsibility for digital developments and projects, with some projects being managed by Digital Services (for example the Library website, the Library Management System, Archivist's toolkit) and others managed by the NZETC (for example the NZETC website, the Institutional Repository). This situation resulted in a lack of clarity for Library staff and customers, and could also be frustrating for the staff involved. Neither did this model harness all the staff skills sets and utilise them fully and flexibly. There was duplication and inconsistency of direction on digital projects. The change proposal provided an opportunity to reassess and reposition this aspect of the Library's work and strategic direction.

Underpinning the Change Proposal was a set of core principles that had to be met to ensure the delivery of the strategic objectives. These were critical to ensuring strategic alignment of any changes and to ensuring effective decision making:

- A co-ordinated, strategic and resourced approach to digital systems, developments and delivery for the Library and its community;

- Future focused, using available technology resources and expertise to move the Library forward in order to deliver innovative, evolving and relevant services to clients;

- Clear technology services with explicit standards to enable greater consistency to clients and strategic focus;

- Sustainable, ensuring efficiency and effectiveness of library technology services to ensure best value;
- Integrated with the wider University and other providers to ensure the best possible technology services;
- Focused upon the delivery of digital content, tool and services to meet the research, learning and teaching needs at Victoria.

Working within the principles stated above, it was proposed, and following consultation agreed, that one team be established to deliver Library technology services. The enhancements and changes in focus can be highlighted as:

- ***The establishment of one team with strategic and operational responsibilities for Library technology services and support.*** The team provide technology support and services for Library staff, and work collaboratively with Library teams to ensure technology is used effectively to deliver services and resources to the University; they provide services to University clients in Faculties and Schools and do this in collaboration with other Library teams and other services, in particular IT Services.
- ***The bringing together of scarce specialist staff to maximise the expertise and resource base.*** By bringing specialist staff together this provides opportunities for staff development, increased capacity and flexibility.
- ***Emphasis on emerging technologies and how they can be best used to meet the Library's strategic goals and clients' needs***. The developmental aspect of the new team's work is emphasised with research into and assessment of emerging technologies for libraries as a key deliverable for the team.
- ***The focus for the new team is upon delivering services, support and resources to support University research, teaching and learning***. This is delivered through underpinning support for core Library business, projects and new developments, and through collaboration with Library teams and the wider University community. Externally funded projects are no longer sought as a source of revenue due to their unpredictability and the shift in focus highlighted in the Library Strategic Plan. The Library continues to welcome opportunities to collaborate with academic colleagues on research grant funded projects.

Through the focus and enhancements highlighted above the Library continues to strengthen its commitment to the digitization and delivery of digital content to meet research, teaching and learning needs, and specifically content unique to Victoria and New Zealand. In the New Zealand context the influence of global projects in reducing academic institutional engagement in digitisation for public consumption is less than, for example, at the University of Virginia because the scope of New Zealand's documentary heritage is not big enough to have attracted the attentions of the Google Library project. The change proposal acknowledged that University libraries do have a role to play in a digital New Zealand but that the focus had to be first and foremost upon supporting the research and teaching of their own institution. Current digital collections made available through the NZETC would continue to be made available and accessible.

The digitisation work is now covered by the same Library wide collection development and preservation policies that govern all other acquisition and resource management decisions in the Library. That is to say that the principles which guide these decisions are format neutral. The selection criteria for acquisition through the purchase of physical books, or acquisition through digitisation or ingest of born-digital material are the same: does the acquisition of the resource support the teaching, learning or research at the university. Responsibility for the nomination of materials to be digitised and for promotion of library services to store and publish born-digital research outputs rests with the Subject Librarians and Special Collections Librarian. The Digital Initiatives Co-orindator works closely with these staff members to work through a scoping process for possible projects which covers access to physical copies to digitise, copyright and cost estimates. Nominations are then considered and funding approved where appropriate by the Library Resources Advisory Committee.

It is important to emphasise that that the digitisation or creation of the research resource is only one isolated step. Improving access to open research resources requires integrated organisational development and design to ensure the provision and development of the full spectrum of enabling mechanisms and approaches; for example discovery (metadata) and access, supporting users (eg clear copyright, easy integration into learning objects), taking responsibility for long term access (preservation) and facilitating relationship development across library teams and between the library and Faculty.

Checklist for organisational development

Each library context is different, each University community and their needs are different. Each change initiative for organisational development (whatever its focus) must be cognisant of the specific context, what would be supported, what would present the most opportunities, what would work. There are a number of points – lessons learnt – from the Victoria University of Wellington example explored here that we present below as a checklist or a prompt for thinking around change:

1. Clearly articulate the vision and goals for the change – what will it achieve
2. Have guiding principles to ensure effective and aligned decision-making
3. Given the constantly changing technology environment, don't let organisational decisions be strongly shaped by technological considerations when they should be shaped by institutional priorities
4. Consider the timing, socialising of ideas and creating champions and critical mass
5. Don't just design organisational change for the immediate situation and context; build in the flexibility to adapt to ongoing change

Kotter's[16] eight steps to transforming your organisation provide an extremely useful summary for any change leader in any context, highlighting the need to establish a sense of urgency, creating and communicating a vision, empowering others to act on the vision and creating short-term wins.

Conclusions: Future proofing the organisation

Improving access to open research resources requires integrated organisational development and design to ensure the provision and development of the full spectrum of enabling mechanisms and approaches. This paper has argued that the embedding of discrete services and projects into core business is crucial for future sustainability and for transformational change of libraries. Organisational design to ensure flexibility for further change is also critical; more importantly, library staff, whatever their roles and expertise, must develop attitudinal and behavioural approaches that embrace ongoing change and that enable them to see their work in the holistic context of library services. Finally, in considering future-proofing the organisation for further, ongoing and relentless change we must emphasise ongoing innovation and experimentation.

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[16] Kotter, J. (2001) 'Leading Change: why transformation efforts fail', *Harvard Business Review,* January 2007.