

**MIT Libraries, Session Three Notes**  
**Tuesday, December 2, 2008**

**Job Satisfaction:**

- Relationship with the music faculty
- Variety leads to motivating work environment
- Ability to share music with the undergraduates
- Boundaries of the units
- In the zone between the Libraries and the classroom
- Applying creativity
- Digitization projects
- Always experimenting
- “The great collections”
- Having priorities on collections
- Public speaking, teaching
- Access
- Answering questions
- The people
- No day is the same
- Problem-solving
- The detective work
- Working with processing
- Research and production projects

**Example of Departments Represented:**

- Preservation, music, special collections, electronic services, Rotch, humanities, gifts office, project services, access services, digital acquisitions, media specialist

**Forces and Trends:**

- Rising expectations for online material
- Digitization of material → remote access
- Heavily invested in back-files and ESL and now, humanities and social services
- Combining different technologies → new content
- Copyright/intellectual property
- Open-access publishing of serials
- In competition globally for students and faculty – services that can be used, but not yet available
- Move in digital world: new media/print

- Information sources closing down between electronic wall
- “Born digital generation” idea
- High online expectations – getting people **in** the library is still important – surround people with resources, target digital towards print
- Cloud computing
- Revolution in metadata – How do we manage?
- Constrained budgets

**Strengths:**

- MIT is about innovation
- MIT is a culture of openness and creativity; ability to adapt
- Rich, unique and broad collections in print and (almost) in digital formats
- Knowledgeable and technologically savvy staff – cohesiveness, creativity, good working relationships with faculty in fields
- Collaborate to develop research initiatives and partnerships
- Research – good at studying user needs, access to strong network of partner libraries

**Weaknesses:**

- Inaccessible content – no online/AV delivery, archives and special collections aren’t processed
- Online discovery – searching is not “Google box” simple, which patrons do expect
- Amazon is behind Google in providing “user-friendly” access
- Infrastructure – clunky computers, slow hardware, outdated facilities, physical collections in poor conditions (some areas)
- Organizational culture – reactive, not proactive
- Management policies – slow hiring practices, lack of in-house librarian scholars, outsourcing, cataloguing, digital collections work diffused throughout library – weak communication

**Opportunities:**

- User needs/assessment – work closely with new initiatives in DLC’s, find out what faculty needs to manage digital work/data (start day-to-day, make permanent), become support, do more ethnographic research, define what Libraries can be virtually to students, define virtual services for higher education

- Access – research knowledge and the ability to apply it, “social media” can enable collaboration, deliver services worldwide, help preserve MIT’s “openness” by supporting access to information created at MIT
- Digital – repository that meets all needs, leaders in digital preservation methods, use digital resources to free up space in units (store duplicate collections), digitize rare and unique library materials in public domain, create an infrastructure to help manage digitally created objects
- Library staff – “small is beautiful,” agile, use MIT name and reputation to recruit great talent, develop individual talents, step into current staff’s ideas and energy, lots of experimentation can lead to innovation based on real-world feedback

### **Threats:**

- Economic – budget cuts, decreasing endowments, cost of living in Boston area (losing talented staff to better geographic areas), Libraries don’t have the money to do technologically great things
- Image and user perceptions – dilapidated facilities, decaying physical materials, marginalization shrinking space and the improper utilization of that space, an uninformed student body, University administration and/or the student’s perception of the Library as being unnecessary or irrelevant
- Competition – rapidly changing technologies, Google Scholar, social networking can take technological leaps the Libraries can’t, mass digitization of freely available books, journals and scholarly content, erosion of unique mission (same services are elsewhere)

### **Trends in relation to...**

#### **Technology:**

- Digitization of material and preservation of digital content
- Increased and evolving user expectation of interfaces and online access – the way users like to access content vs. the way Libraries provide it
- Technology is required in order to be able to use digital content
- Making sure users and staff know how to use new technology
- Open source movement and compatibility of library hardware
- Organizing access to content e.g. ERM (electronic resource mgmt).
- Social software – how does library use it to interact with patrons?

- Curtailed budgets will curtail the ability to implement new technologies

### **Students:**

- More collections online
- Global competition to provide information to students
- E-versions of services (24/7 Web 2.0, social networking)
- Group work; spaces, virtual spaces
- Uncertainty of the quality of information – less impact
  - “Black box” back office issues
    - copyright/IP
    - metadata/content management
  - Implications of all this?

### **Faculty:**

- Technological impact between faculty and students
- Difference in tools available to different disciplines – need to note differences and adjust
- Challenges in managing new kinds of data
- Open access – scholarly trends, growth and understanding of IP rights
- Need of increased support of interdisciplinary work – support of the weaker discipline
- Globalization – 24 hour access to campus

### **Library:**

- “Library as place” changes
- Back files
- Digital reference materials
- Budget
- New services in Info. Commons
- Copyright/IP
- Instruction and curriculum development
- Abandonment of print as copy of record – digital preservation
- “Electronic wall” limits access
- Digital access is complex and changing

### **Desired Future State: (1<sup>st</sup> time Vital Characteristics were included)**

- To be more adaptable to change and better at flexibility
- To be a leader in networking globally
- Recruiting staff with more international experience

- Greater reliance on others; no “going at it alone”
- Greater student collaboration
- To be agile, adaptive, experimental → leverage talent and resources
- To be a digital repository of permanent records
- “Beef up” research endowments; attaining more purchasing power
- Remain relevant to students’ needs/know where they are going and meet them virtually
- Become a virtual services organization → metadata to meet the needs of the Library users
- Become a leaders in digital preservation
- Have Library manager assignments
- Methods for operationalizing research
- Will be managing all forms of context and provide access to IT
- Better physical space for user work and interaction
- Infrastructure for digital work
- Evaluate correct resources and services to identify needs/strengths
- Leverage student talent
- Be involved in improving copyright and OCW
- Become more integrated with teaching
- Bigger role in developing technologies
- Develop instruction/marketing program to heighten awareness and importance of Library
- E-versions of services need to be as good as the physical
- Abandonment of print as copy of record
- Evaluation of online content
- Need to accommodate group work, spaces
- Need to support/increase instructional activity
- Information overload
- Growing amount of research data needing preservation

**Session Feedback:**

- Having 2 scribes
- SWOT – switching groups – worked well, important to see different opinions and thoughts of other groups