

## **MIT Libraries, Session Four Notes**

### **Wednesday, December 3, 2008**

#### **Job Satisfaction:**

- Users are engaging
- Book variety, new and old preservation services
- Future of book conservation
- Physically treating MIT's items
- Looking at work with new eyes
- Always learning, changing
- Work with students
- What the faculty is teaching/students learning
- Large data renovation
- Space issues with physical library
- Envisioning ways to use technology
- Many library aspects
- Making a small difference in the community
- Changing scholarly publications
- Providing services for patrons worldwide
- Conversations with faculty
- Keeping on top of subjects
- Working with new materials
- The challenge
- Content; metadata
- Student workers – seeing how they develop
- Renovation, progressiveness (Dewey Library)
- Variety of people

#### **Example of Departments Represented:**

- Dewey, preservation services, special collections, aero, Rotch, circulation, reference, STS, science lab, Hayden, acquisitions and licensing, director's office, document services, engineering and sciences, humanities, monograph acquisitions, digital resources and acquisitions, architectural library

#### **Forces and Trends:**

- Vendors/information suppliers
- Increasing demand for fine-grained data
- Google Books settlement
- Providing new/more services with the same amount of staff

- No expectation for human interaction, but 24/7 expectation
- Increased demand for MIT special collections to be digitized
- Complexity/ambiguity not represented by the sound-bite
- Economic forces and constraints
- Opportunities to support faculty to produce data
- Social networking environments on the web
- Legal issues concerning access to materials
- Wireless information exchange; mobile devices
- Greater demand for digitized items
- Preservation and management of electronic records
- Shift in how space is used
- Support for students and faculty overseas
- Expectation of instant gratification
- Use of e-resources are greater (and growing) than print
- Increasing open access to scholarly materials
- Increasing demand for help with managing personal information/files
- Challenges with dealing with inter-institutional research collaboration
- Lack of awareness re: library services

**Strengths:**

- MIT itself – culture of innovation, location in Cambridge/Boston
- Library staff – professional, dedicated staff with breadth of expertise and strong leadership – enjoy the support from the department and institution
- Library resources – state-of-the-art technologies, unrivalled collections, consortium collaborations, open content alliance involvement

**Weaknesses:**

- Organizational – sufficient funding, space, personal/community ratio too low, vision to reach for innovation and services far exceeds grasp, slow hiring process
- External communications – services we provide that students and faculty are not aware of, consistency in services, local resources that apply to all Libraries
- Organizational communications – complicated and disjunct organizational structure, too many internal meetings take away from time with patrons, decision-making and exposure of decision-making process, poor lines of communication, difficulty envisioning and

getting valuable comments on innovative systems/services **before** they are built or prototyped

**Opportunities:**

- Take advantage of improved, developed technology – better ways to purchase products, empower “grass-roots” ideas
- Create inviting environment for collaboration and social interaction
- Build and improve tools for access and discovery of MIT produced and acquired licensed resources

**Threats:**

- Money – global financial crisis, power outages (energy crisis), free information, copyright, price inflation and outrageous vendor prices – can’t afford resources
- Competitors – rapid change, lack of technological resources vs. for-profit competitors/those with more money
- Lack of awareness of “next best thing”
- Not having a good sense of priorities and thus, not making good choices about using time well
- Not evolving with the needs of MIT
- Need to redefine role and image in order to be relevant

**Learning/Skill Needs:**

- Service related – recruiting to get best staff, fundraising, instruction skill, customer service/patience, marketing, conservation expertise for photography, video, audio, proactive presenting/selling of services
- Qualities/values of organization and people – cooperation, ability to keep the big picture in mind, visual literacy, willingness to change
- Technology related – technological comfort, software skills, picking the right technologies for the job
- Perspective – historical, institutional memory, age (older staff trying to understand younger students), understanding what others do

**Trends in relation to...**

**Technology:**

- Technology drives change and provides solutions – new demands and new opportunities, but harder to choose direction given the speed of change
- Frees from physical constraints, but leaves open how best to use space

- Advantages and burdens of fully embracing and using technology at MIT; unique position of being at University
- Increasing competition for library – like tools from for-profit world/outside Libraries

**Students:**

- Time and space – expectations increase for instant service and have changed dramatically regarding space – library/off-site, worldwide

**Faculty:**

- Instant gratification
  - Desktop delivery
  - Digitization/electronic access
- Support for data the faculty produces
  - Management plans and services

**University:**

- Space allocation/central funding
- Economic issues
- Legal issues – Libraries and University
- Change in research
  - International
  - Inter-institutional
  - Open access
  - 24/7 access
- Preservation of records

**Library:**

- Negotiating competing demands for resources, specifically space, staff, formats – digital vs. print
- Dealing with electronic resources (providing access, preserving)
- Demand for instruction, research help

**Desired Future State: (Vital Characteristics)**

**Staff Development:**

- Specialized subject knowledge
- Leadership in non-print resources
- Training of e-resource management
- Agility
- Assessment effectiveness of programs

**Organizational Structure:**

- Flexibility for collaboration between staff who are experts
- Better integration of e-resource management tools
- Organization of e-records
- Clarify relationship of archives
- Closer collaboration/integration with units (e.g. efficiency and solutions)
- Closer collaboration among subject specialists
- One library
- Excellent communication

**Space(s):**

- Student study/group space
- Better instructional spaces
- Flexibility

**Technology:**

- Open source/open access – collaboration
- Library as leader in the preservation of new media (staff)
- ERM tools
- Ability to manipulate visual materials
- Simple/user-friendly library system
- Virtual library; “library in a box”

**Other:**

- Diversity
- Experimental culture
- Visibility/promotion of services, resources, people
- Strong exhibition program – books as artifact
- Commitment to preservation of historical records
- Assessment (robust)
- Deep involvement with faculty, DLC’s