

MIT Libraries: Achieving a Desired Future State for 2015

I. Introduction

As the Libraries approach the end of its current strategic plan, we are focusing on what we need to be in the future to assure our continued success. Research libraries face extraordinary challenges, driven by both internal and external forces. These forces and their implications, some of the most significant which are listed below, are catalysts for change, and must be acknowledged appropriately if we are to succeed. A force of a different nature which will impact how we respond to these trends is the fiscal realities of the next several years. As always the Libraries will closely follow the priorities set by The Institute. Our goal is to determine a desired future state and associated strategic directions that will allow us to provide focused collections and services of excellence to the MIT community.

II. Forces Acting as Catalysts for Change

- User demands and expectations – users want and expect content to be digital, easy to discover, accessible 7x24 from anywhere in the world without mediation, and increasingly for content to be usable with mobile devices.
- Search and discovery – services such as Google, Amazon, WorldCat Local, YouTube, and Flickr are redefining traditional roles for discovery and metadata provision, and users are gravitating quickly to these systems.
- Content management – the increasing demand to digitize print, video, and other analog content is placing greater demand to curate and disseminate both born-digital and digitized collections.
- Content provisioning – the growing shift to digital books, journals, data, multi-media content and availability of related services, e.g., Print on Demand (POD), custom teaching collections, rich media production services, requires us to rethink traditional strategies for delivering content
- Collaboration – there is increased opportunity and necessity for external collaborations with other MIT units, other libraries, and dotcoms to leverage resources and expertise.
- Scholarly communication – the increased availability of research data, enhanced publications, along with the continued push to more Open Access, increases the need for data-mining and knowledge management.
- Interdisciplinarity – the trend toward more and more interdisciplinary research demands that we re-examine our current approach to disciplinary support.

- Pedagogy – there is increasing demand for technology to deliver teaching and course material (e.g., course management systems, rich media)
- Space – there is growing user demand for technology-rich learning and multipurpose spaces that are functional, comfortable, and aesthetic.

III. Proposed Desired Future State

The MIT Libraries will be an integral part of the research activities of the Institute and central to the educational experience. It will focus its efforts on knowledge management and content curation, especially MIT-created materials. The Libraries will be an agile, data and mission- driven organization that collaborates effectively to achieve its goals. It will:

- Enable seamless discovery and access to scholarly information sources.
- Collaborate in the teaching/learning/research life cycle.
- Provide consultation and training in finding, evaluating, and managing resources.
- Offer quality spaces for both reflective and collaborative work and study that leverages the Libraries' expertise and content.

IV. Proposed Mission

The mission of the MIT libraries is to create and sustain an intuitive, trusted information environment that enables learning and the advancement of knowledge at MIT. We are committed to developing strategies and systems that promote discovery, preserve knowledge, and facilitate worldwide scholarly communication. (Adopted 2003, revised January 2009)

V. Proposed Key Strategic Goals

- **Partner with Faculty, Students, and the MIT Community**
Continue to seek community input and build strategic alliances with constituencies we serve to remain relevant and define new services that meet their needs. Our success depends on deepening our engagement with teaching faculty and research staff; developing relationships that appropriately integrate Library services and collections into the teaching, learning, and research life cycle; embedding services where our users work; maximizing the productivity of faculty and students, and effectively promoting and communicating our services.
- **Improve Digital and Technical Infrastructure**
MIT's intellectual output is increasingly produced in digital form; similarly, we increasingly manage digital content that we acquire or digitize. It is essential that we identify and maintain infrastructures that ensure that we acquire, store, preserve, and provide access to these resources for the long term and in the most efficient way possible.
- **Re-think/Re-invent the Organization**

In order to be flexible and agile in response to evolving needs of the MIT community, we must re-align our organization to better enable the design and delivery of information services that are based on the needs of a broadly networked interdisciplinary community rather than on the requirements of a 50-year old geographical footprint.

- **Transform Library Space**
Key facets of this transformation include: providing quality spaces for both reflective and collaborative work, providing technology-rich collaborative tools, and expertise and specialist services to support them; and rethinking the role and location of tangible collections to support these realigned spaces and services.
- **Collaborate with Strategic Partners Outside the Libraries**
Expand and extend strategic partnerships with DUE, IS&T, Harvard, MIT research labs, OCW, Publishers, dotcoms, as well as enlist new partners, to leverage expertise, maximize resources, and provide infrastructural support and specialized services to our community.
- **Enhance Staff Capabilities**
Align and develop staff skills with our strategic directions to ensure success. Continue to recruit talented staff with strong and diverse backgrounds.