

Friday, February 13, 2009, 9:30-11:00, Killian Hall

Desired Vision (comments/refinements)

- Is this forward-looking enough? These are things we are already doing – will it be enough in 2015?
- The innovations and new ideas are key
- This seems conservative. It should talk about being innovative, creative, a leader in utilizing new technologies and partnering with other leaders in the field
- Focus more on digital technology; for example, how will libraries be “portable” for users?
- Building relationships with faculty and students; being innovative
- There aren’t a lot of surprises here – I try to do most of these things in my job already
- There’s nothing incredibly innovative or drastic in this draft. Shouldn’t we be more forward thinking, trying to be on the forefront of trends, or even starting trends? We’re MIT!
- Include more specifics about user self-sufficiency; explicitly incorporate “innovation” into desired future state
- Provide consultation and training in finding, evaluating and managing resources – this statement is missing “using” – we help people with this part as well in GIS services regularly
- Also need to reflect the reality of the world outside the scholarly environment, e.g. national economy
- The discussion did point out some ways to improve the language but the main points are there
- Transforming space needs to include space for staff
- A few minor words on the bullets
- 3rd bullet – “Provide consultation...” – add “using” (or consuming or exploiting, etc.)
- We should include a slightly more explicit reference to the growing rate of multimedia in teaching and collaboration
- Tools that allow self-sufficiency could be emphasized; “knowledge management” isn’t a clear concept without following bullets – same for “content curation” – what is the audience and will the audience resonate with these terms; referring to MIT Libraries as “it” seems jarring – stopped me dead on first read; an editorial point
- I am reading “offer quality spaces for both reflective and collaborative work and study...” to also imply staff spaces
- Where is reference service? Where is subject expertise? Where is building the collections? Again, subject expertise is needed for that. User self-sufficiency has limitations
- Remember the print collections – not all digital get in all libraries
- Maybe more explicitly stated to maintain physical and electronic MIT created materials for future use; should it include statement about real needs for staff

assistance to researchers as some questions are more complex and need help to be answered?

- Subject expertise is not really clearly mentioned; one to one as front desk support available and known to users is not clear
- Very high-level, could be understood in many ways. Goal of curation could access management of MIT output suggests a model of the Library as publisher
- Space-planning must include staff as well as patrons. Change “data and mission” to “data – and mission – “ (add the first hyphen)
- “Provide” and “offer” – a little passive – there is an engagement opportunity in the space that supports all we do

Mission

- Glad you added “preserve knowledge”
- Data-driven – I assume this means collecting and utilizing assessment data, although this is vague
- Addition of “preserve knowledge” is great! Long overdue
- Glad to see “preserve knowledge” has been added – it suggests not only digital preservation but print material, too. Being involved with a request to have items (books) available in class for students to work with (in usable conditions) makes me pleased to see this

Wednesday, February 18, 2009, 9:30-11:00, 66-144

Desired Vision (comments/refinements)

- I'd like to see the words "innovation" and "experimentation" in there.
- We want to be cutting edge in our own right; we don't just want to be catching up to the Institute; we want the Institute to be catching up to us, as well
- If there were a change in how libraries had to conduct its business, it's not visible here. Maybe there won't be one, but if there was, is it on one of the points here? Are we devoted to evolution, or is there a revolutionary future?
- "Content curation" – what does this mean? Future state – no mention of preservation; no mention of service
- Find the first paragraph vague. Like the mission statement and bullets, the Libraries will continue to be (like that sentence otherwise)
- Yes. Aesthetics are important. You have mentioned "forces" like Google, YouTube, and Flickr – these are visual sources of information and I see virtually NO mention of design and visual culture as being important in this whole planning. Nobody is going to visit libraries anymore if we don't think about space, physical space that bodies occupy. I feel like the Libraries, with their funding and resources, should be more than just a place to serve the web. VISUAL CULTURE!
- We need to figure out how to get people back into the library before we can expect them to use the spaces. The more important goal is to enhance staff capabilities
- Where is preservation of past and current collections? How are we going to get faculty buy-in? Bullets 2&3 are too similar – need to be more distinctive
- The statement is necessarily "general," but I would like to see more specific mention of what distinguishes a library from, say, a bookstore (even an online bookstore). Will we continue to play a role in selecting and organizing "scholarly information sources," or will we be just another search box? I'm glad to see preserve knowledge in the mission, though
- It seems like there are some good ideas but what about the existing collections, library spaces and staff? What about reality of now as well as the future? The everyday business of the MIT Libraries must continue even as we move toward the future
- Pretty good – fairly vague, which I assume is deliberate. How will this all happen? What will we continue doing? What will we stop doing in order to take on new things?
- I would add a statement specifically about service – "provide exceptional service," or something like that. Experience of user!! Maybe also something about being "ahead of the curve"
- This statement still does not present an image of the organization we are trying to be. I don't see a mention of service or user experience. Why are knowledge management and content curation mentioned so close to the beginning? This document doesn't describe what the user experience will be in 2015
- Make "focus its efforts on knowledge management" a sub-bullet or move later. This statement is vague and jargon-ey

- What does this mean we will not be doing or doing less? It might be helpful to be explicit about that (if not here, somewhere in the final document?); related, when it says, “especially MIT-created materials,” what scale are we talking about? What services will we provide for those materials that are different for non-MIT? I’m sure you don’t yet know the answer, but it’s very uncertain
- “Knowledge management” is a specific term in the field and I’m not sure you mean this here; maybe “information management?”
- Concern with 2nd sentence – focus on knowledge management and content curation? That’s the only focus mentioned. I like the bullet points – they are broader and cover more ground. Focus on especially MIT-created materials – sounds like a much bigger focus on preservation than all the points below it. I’d ditch the sentence!
- This is all about us – would be nice to see a vision of what a typical user would encounter/experience; how our users would interact with us – people, space, resources
- What will the typical user experience look like in 2015? This might be a more appropriate and meaningful place to start. The mission is all about us and says very little about the user
- Parts of it are very jargon-ey – hard to know what it means (“content curation?”)
- Love the word “agile.” That’s really the key for both staffing and physical space. Allow for more staff development opportunities, so that staff can be more agile and move into whatever job fills the needs of our users. Needs more user-centered words. Are we doing what we think a library should do, or what users want us to do? Also, we need to effectively market services, so that users know what we do and what to expect
- Make a statement reflecting the organization’s “self-awareness” – what do we acknowledge to be so now?
- 10,000 view is difficult to see any problems
- Move “knowledge management and content curation, especially MIT-created” to bulleted list
- Split space and expertise into two bullets
- This statement describes a desirable future state, but it doesn’t indicate the difference between the current and future states – which goals are continued, which are new? What is “seamless discovery?” Do we do this now?
- It isn’t clear where collection management/development fits
- “Seamless” is an unattainable ideal; specify more about how “content” is created or acquired – what about the building of collections; what does “institute” really mean?
- Bullets don’t refer to collections or content. Will we continue to build collections, or will we increasingly be the middle-man? If the former, then add a bullet; if the latter then articulate this change in our role. The opening sentences are fine
- I give a high score to the phrase “MIT-created content” and am glad that it is included
- A little more emphasis on meeting user expectations

- “Seamless discovery” is a little confusing – perhaps it should be phrased differently
- Like the inclusion of MIT-created content; does not say we will improve our management of content; what is different about the desired future state from what we are doing now?
- Need to be more specific about our commitment to the management of our content
- The language is too abstract for me to understand - to quote my nephew - “clouds of words.” For example, under rethink/reinvent the organization: what does this mean? Reorganize the shelves? More points to plug in a laptop? Or close all the libraries except for Hayden? Where is service in this future state? Where are the members of the staff? Are we still here, or is this going to be self-service?
- It would be more helpful to describe the future state from the perspective of a patron and an employee – more concrete. “A patron will be able to...” “A circ worker will help by...”
- There seems to be a lack of mention of both what kind of collections and services we will provide
- The need for libraries to provide an intellectual connection to the library materials. This is either assumed or de-emphasized. Librarians are knowledgeable and are expected to be
- With digital access more prevalent, why is it the responsibility of the libraries (rather than the university as a whole) to provide space, say, for people to use laptops?
- Much of the language implies staff functions that aren’t stated explicitly – that bothers a lot of people
- New model for survey system for staff
- General notes: how are we going to include content management and dissemination for MIT-created content; does it fit into collaboration – the Institute has a huge scholarly output that needs to be managed. Though it is highlighted in the desired future state, it isn’t explicit in the strategic goals; we need to improve our staff capabilities, yes, but we also need to give staff the opportunity to train and then use the skill – while we encourage staff to seek training, we don’t always give it focus/purpose
- Good: articulated focus on MIT-created content; what does “seamless” really mean? (Article delivery, book delivery, adaptive technology, also, search and discovery UI); what is different about this from where we are today? Maybe the agility?
- Change “leverages” to “leverage” in last bullet
- Doesn’t really say anything about integrating ourselves into the tools our users already use, like Google and other discovery tools, or bib. management tools. Maybe this is too specific – I guess there is a line about “embedding services where our users work” but that almost sounds physical
- I feel like people aren’t mentioned enough in this document – either our users or our staff. It sounds very abstract

- Phrasing of “especially MIT-created materials” is problematic to me...what % of collection is “MIT-created?”
- Do not force a university library into a business mold. It will not fit our model – we will never independently make the Institute money, so the mold will break us
- Drop the top, double-spaced paragraph. It comes off as meaningless, business-speak and feels like it lacks content. The bullets are much more direct, and the single-spaced paragraph at the end [mission] reads much more realistically and inspirationally; P.S. please switch 7x24 to the much more acceptable and understandable 24x7
- I feel the phrase “agile, data and mission driven” and “knowledge management and content curation” are a little broad and vague, although the bullet points hit more concretely on the goals for the future state

Mission

- Service and the user are missing from mission; we are committed to developing strategies and systems is vague and weak; will we be a SERVICE organization in 2015; too much focus on systems. Sentence “1” is good, “2” needs major work
- 2nd sentence of mission – “committed to developing...” – weak language. Why a commitment to strategies? Where is service? “We are committed to enabling...” or “preserving...” etc. Lose the extra, weak words, and say what we will do. The systems and strategies are part of the implementation; I like the 1st sentence – love the word “trusted” – very important
- “Trusted” is great – that’s a key phrase. “Committed to developing strategies and systems” is a little vague. Again, what do we want the user experience to be in an ideal world?
- Add “user-centered”
- Training should be a priority, an encouraged part of culture. We need our personal skills evolution to be part of the mission. Reinforcing a culture of collective approach would also be beneficial, helping users better understand the scope of services available
- Should include something about educating users in making judgments about what is “trustworthy”
- The phrase “trusted information environment” – it’s not always our role to determine trusted information; our role is to train people to analyze the information
- Is this, or how is this different from what the libraries already do?
- Communication! We need to become proactive communicators with our constituency. Provide more opportunities for the user to learn about us – this is part of bringing our services to where they work, study, learn

Wednesday, February 18, 2009, 1:00-2:30, Killian Hall

Desired Vision (comments/refinements)

- Not sure how I feel about our efforts being “focus[ed]” on “knowledge management and content curation, especially MIT-created materials”; students and researchers still need us to acquire material from outside MIT on which they base their studies and work; with whom are we collaborating; would like to hear more about people, users, customer service, outreach
- Elaborate what you mean by “knowledge management”
- The focus on “MIT-created” materials in the desired future state draft is interesting to me, but I’m not sure I fully get it. Is the idea to more fully integrate the Libraries with the academic work/research being performed by students/faculty? Is the traditional model of the library as simply a place to do research being replaced by a model of an entity that is managing data sets/information produced by MIT academic research?
- Lack of mention of users and how we can help people
- People and/or personal side is missing – do we want it to be? Maybe, maybe not. If people (meaning staff) are our greatest asset (and I’m sure that point can be debated) it seems that you may want to mention them in some way. I’m not talking about a “we are wonderful” thing – it just seems that the “inspired” people are missing from the “desired future state.” Maybe it isn’t appropriate for this type of thing – and if not, so be it. But it stood out to me. Rereading it again, perhaps the people are embodied in the “Libraries expertise.” Do we – as a staff – have something truly unique to offer? It is a balance between being too unique vs. too generic. And where is the creativity!!! It is with the people
- What’s the teaching/learning/research life cycle mean to someone outside the Libraries; one interesting group comment was that the first three bullets could be IS&T or any other technology-driven organization; last bullet is a little awkward; physical spaces allow groups to use Libraries’ expertise?
- The desired future state refers to content curation, and it seems that the following bullet points further define this statement. However, it doesn’t seem like any of the bullet point goals include developing content in any format (print, electronic purchasing, digitization, etc); what does “content curation” mean in the future state? The bullet points don’t seem to match the sentences about them
- Is this desired future state a vision statement; I don’t see anything about why we’re doing this. To ensure MIT grads are ready to face the world, to support the research, etc? Does knowledge management mean we will shift focus from “traditional” library collections and services to teaching people how to organize their own intellectual output? The opening paragraph is all about content. What about services?
- Need collections first, then how do we disseminate what we have access to?
- I don’t think we are a data-driven organization; I think we want to be, but are not there yet; I like: agile, seamless, all the bullets; doesn’t have: “where are we going?”
- The vision doesn’t say anything about collecting scholarly literature to support the community

- Statements are not concise enough. How about: “The Libraries will be integral to the research at MIT and central to the education of all MIT students”; and why are “Libraries” referred to in the singular (“it”) in second sentence?
- I think the four bullets cover quite well the forces catalyzing change; I’m not sure what data-driven organization means
- Knowledge management is a general term
- To a large degree, this future state describes what we are already doing albeit on a smaller scale than perhaps we would hope; we need to reword these bullet points to be more loftier, more future-oriented
- “Seamless” – good; need more adjectives to describe our expectations for our future state vs. the present state; Suggestions: “Become a vital participant in the teaching/learning...,” “Provide customized consultation...,” “Offer quality, technology-enabled spaces...”; knowledge management is jargon with varying connotations (maybe change to “information management?”)
- Opening paragraph reflects commitment/focus on MIT-related research. Bullet 1 includes access to outside sources like Elsevier journals, society pubs, etc. I think the first bullet needs more dialog with opening paragraph; need to add goal of adapting technologies to preserve content
- Build on “knowledge management” to emphasize seamless discovery and access
- Maybe something about the use of technology or being on the “cutting edge” technology is part of the goals, but something that implies we’re looking ahead/forward-thinking could be added
- I like the strengths of the first sentence about our place in the Institute; what the statement doesn’t do is show our aspirations or give us something to use to discriminate between options going forward; it largely describes what we do today
- Take out “agile, data and mission-drive” and create a separate core values list; put statements in terms of stretch goals/end results; 2nd bullet idea – every student that graduates will effectively find and use information in their discipline
- I’m not sure how deeply involved, from what’s currently articulated, in “collaborating in the research life cycle”; “collaboration” is a word that’s used throughout these materials, but never seems to be talking about collaboration among research peers across institutions; how does this affect content provisioning, archiving, discovery, communications, etc.?
- Hyphen after “data” in “data and mission-driven organization”
- It’s a bit dry and non-inspirational. I think it would be good to make it more far-reaching and extreme...it sounds very similar to what we already do – not where we want to be in 5 years; we should make it a bit more specific...tell a story. Needs to include: innovation, creativity, studying and understanding the needs of our community; advocating for open access; collaborate both inside and outside MIT, be more specific about how we would collaborate; flexible work practices; cycles of feedback and assessment; need a picture of what we’re aiming for; specific outcomes; separately develop our “core values” – separate document
- Needs to mention technology and adaptability more; “agile” just doesn’t really seem to cut it here

- The MIT Libraries will fulfill our integral role in research conducted at the Institute as well as provide essential support and complement the educational experience; enable profound discovery and seamless access; intimately collaborate; life cycle; there seems to be a place here for more “poetic, lofty” language
- How encompassing is “content curation?” I like the phrase “especially MIT-created materials” but for unique material we need tools, ability to preserve, more than only to direct access; evaluate, appraise and preserve unique MIT-created material in all formats, or some future-sounding version of the above; first 3 bullets could be IS&T – what makes us different?
- I may be misinterpreting the intent, but “focus its efforts on knowledge management and content curation: seems to leave out collecting/acquiring information that our users need. Selection of materials is significant – we’ll still need to do this within our budgets

Mission

- How about something about the Libraries being a compelling place for students and researchers to seek information and knowledge – or even a needed or necessary service?
- The mission is great
- Preserve whose knowledge? All? Are we a trusted archive?
- Intuitive? Why this word?
- Somewhat passive
- Mention our users