



20th Pan-Hellenic Academic Libraries Conference
Thessaloniki, 14- 15^o November 2011

Financial crisis and academic libraries: strategies for survival

Financial Crisis, Uncertainty and Change: How Digital Libraries can cope with all this and do better

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Two surveys in the US on economic crisis and its impact on libraries

- ❑ Two surveys conducted in the US (June-July 2009)
 - One gathered responses from the library community
 - The other collected responses from ARL library directors and deans
 - 295 responses

- ❑ Aimed to identify the key areas affected by the crisis and to find out about best practices about measures to take and plans for the future
 - Areas of study:
 - ❑ Type of library (89,15% Academic Libraries)
 - ❑ Budget cuts (58,64% of libraries were affected during fiscal year 2009)
 - ❑ Budget cuts and their impact on library operations (materials 61,41%, travel expenses 56,02%, supplies 49,79%)
 - ❑ Stress level (Marginal increase 51,19%)
 - ❑ Financial assistance received from other units and dept (No 85.7%,)
 - ❑ Best practices

- ❑ C.I Guarria and Zhonghong Wang. The economic crisis and its effect on libraries. "New Library World" vol.112 N.5/6 2011 pp.199-214

A survey on Italian academic libraries and economic crisis

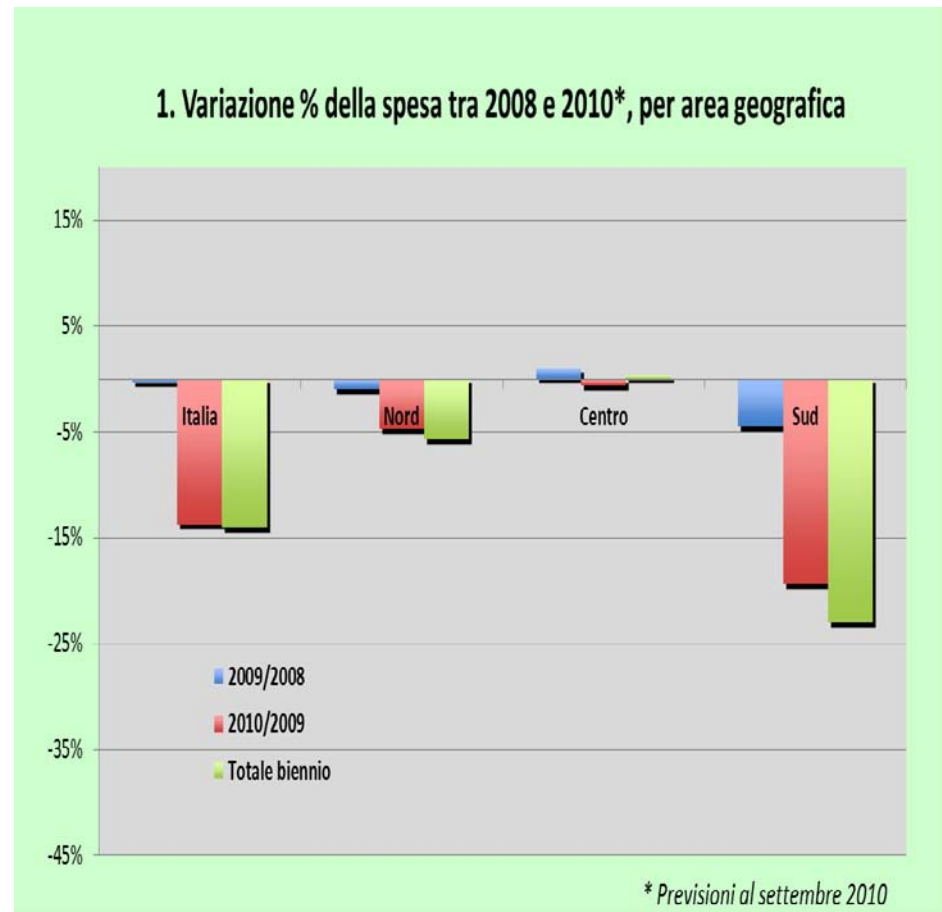
- ❑ Survey conducted by CARE (National Electronic Resources Cooperation Group)
- ❑ August – September 2010
 - 50 academic libraries out 72 responded
- ❑ Aimed to find out how the libraries were going to react to a prospective worse economic situation and its impact on library acquisition and services
- ❑ Area of study
 - Budget in fiscal years 2008-2010 (average-15% on library materials)
 - Expectations and measures in 2011 (average – 17%)
 - How and what to cut?
 - Measures (“informed” cuts, ILL, consultations with researchers)

CARE- Indagine sulla crisi. Sintesi delle risposte al questionario/Survey on the crisis. Summary of responses, January 2011

<http://www.cru-i-care.it>

A survey on Italian academic libraries and economic crisis (2)

- *In Italy in 2010 academic library expenditure on resources decreased on average about 15%*
- *In the South it was much higher and it started in in 2009*



Alberto Sdrilevich . La crisi economica e i sistemi bibliotecari:
un'indagine CARE/ The economic crisis and the library system : a CARE survey
– June 2011

Financial crisis and academic libraries

- Budgetary cuts
 - Key areas affected
 - Collection Materials
 - Personell and hours of operation
 - Supplies/Equipment
 - Professional Development and Travel
- In practice it means keep service strong with less money, less staff and often reduced hours
 - This is pretty hard!

Financial Crisis and academic libraries (2)

■ *How to respond?*

- Evaluate workflow to increase efficiency
- Conduct internal strategic planning through data analysis
- Prioritize projects and programmes
- Renegotiate electronic resources economic conditions
- Cancel databases when there is overlapping content
- Increase outreach/ marketing, fundraising
- Take environmental initiatives

The case of University of Macerata in Italy

- Medium- Small size University in Central
 - Focus on Humanities and Social Sciences

- University budget cut : 70% in 2010

- Library budget cut 16% in 2009
 - Monographs budget cut was 26% in 2008
 - Staff hiring frozen

University of Macerata: strategies to survive

- Reorganization of library system structure and services
- Fund raising strategies
- Merge of services with another institutions
University of Camerino in the same geographic
(same size, covering science disciplines)

University of Macerata : reorganization of library system

- Centralization of personell and acquisition/ cataloging services
 - reduction of number of libraries
 - merge of collection services and activities

- Committee on strategic reorganization plan and fund rasing
- Reorganization brought several advantages: no reduction of operating hours,improvement in workload distribution,library cataloging backlog was reduced
- 29 K Eur savings (students contracts -17K and journals acquisition – 12K)
- A single acquisition dept was a real success, services improved greatly in terms of efficiency and performance

Fund raising activities

- ❑ Advertisement allowed in the Library and on the library website (Google maps and local shops)
- ❑ OPAC and agreements signed with online bookstores (e.g Deastore, BOL and Amazon.it)
- ❑ Renting library space to external people
- ❑ Library Membership (based on a fee offered to associations, local firms) to use library services and resources

Fund raising activities (2)

- Honour gifts
 - Donations for book acquisitions in honour of a retirement, a PhD etc

- Library training programmes open to other institutions on a fee based

- Licensed Electronic resources extension to other users

Merge of services with University of Camerino

- sharing library digital infrastructure
 - Primo and Primo Central

- Licensing resources as a single institution

Financial Crisis and academic libraries (3)

■ *How to respond?*

- *Cut non-essential services*
- *Cost sharing with other departments of the university*
- *Focus on quality of the service and its relevance to university students, researchers/professors*
- *Stronger collaboration among library staff, teaching staff, students to in order to find practical, creative and innovative solutions*

Is this enough?

The Library in 2020

fewer books

smaller space

students and faculty purchase info resources on their own

fewer e-resources

open access publishing

fewer staff

research easier:
no need for reference

Source : Gathering storm. How cloud Computing will blow away existing assumptions in high ed information service.
Mark Dahl, Lewis & Clark College

The Library

in 2020

complex environment

mixed formats

higher expectations
for research

highly skilled,
smaller staff

building collections
as learning

digital
curation

British Library 2020 vision



- 5 Key themes
 1. Guarantee access for future generations
 2. Enable access to everyone who want to do research
 3. Support research communities in the key areas for social and economic benefit
 4. Enrich the cultural life of a nation
 5. Lead and collaborate in growing world's knowledge base

Demonstrate our value

A revolution is taking its course

- ❑ Academic Library identity
- ❑ Physical Space
- ❑ Organization and management of services
- ❑ Scholarly Communication Changes and Open Access
- ❑ E-learning
- ❑ Scholarship 2.0
- ❑ E-Science

Academic Library Identity

- Reconfiguring Library System/ Diffuse Library
 - Libraries are still too much self-centered
 - Main focus should be: researchers and students workflows
 - Gather, create, share
 - Virtual learning and research environment
 - Instruction activities
 - Library expertise and the academic evaluation process and E-science

- Multidimension collaboration
 - Inter- institutional
 - Regional
 - National
 - Global

- not for profit/for profit institutional/disciplinary partnership

Library system environment

- ❑ Deeper integration of management workflows across material types (e.g discovery tools)
- ❑ Library resources integration with other environments (e.g course management, research offices)
- ❑ Users multiple points of access and authentication/authorization issues

Physical Space

- Different use of space : fewer and fewer printed books and journals, more social spaces for students
- More space available for learning and research activities
- Space made available for external people or institutions

Organization and management of services

- Cloud computing
 - Outsourcing servers, software, services
 - Questions: how, when, what

- Sharing services with other libraries
 - Library Digital Infrastructure
 - Sharing ILS, discovery services, OA repository etc
 - Digital Reference Services
 - Shared Print Archives

Scholarly Communication and OA

- Scholarly Communication system is going through a radical change

- Library contribution in this process
 - Transition is hard and costly
 - Role in building, managing, populating OA repositories, converting/creating OA journals
 - Awareness and lobbying activities on OA (mandatory policies, copyright issues, funding issues)

Scholarship 2.0

- Researchers use tools that help them work in a collaborative way (Google docs, Google Calendar, Connotea, Zotero Mendeley, My Experiment, Skype, Twitter, Wikipedia...)
 - Two recent studies:
 - RIN, *If you build it will they come? How researchers perceive and use the Web 2.0* (July 2010)
 - Emerald/UCL, *The research workflow revolution: the impact on Web 2.0 and the emerging networking tools on research workflows*, April 2011
- Web 2.0 and scholarship
 - Facilitate new and more effective forms of research collaboration,
 - Improve research productivity (faster dissemination of ideas and feedback)
 - Enhance knowledge transfer
 - Boost researchers' reputation

Scholarship 2.0 and role of libraries

- ❑ as reference librarians, IR managers, electronic resources specialists support the adoption of Web 2.0 tools
- ❑ help disseminate good practices in the use of Web 2.0 tools
- ❑ support publishers, universities and scholars in the adoption of interoperable protocols and open APIs and bibliographic data
- ❑ Open Bibliographic Principles (Open Knowledge Foundation)

E-Science

- Internet, technological developments made Science more collaborative
- Research is much more data intensive in several disciplines
- Constant increase of research data: how to make them available, public
 - Open data, open linked data
- Role of the libraries
 - Metadata/tagging
 - Curation
 - Access, Discovery

Conclusions

- ❑ A serious economic downturn in a transitional period gives a great opportunity to rethink the role and functions of the academic library
- ❑ Short term and medium term provisions are necessary and often hard to take
- ❑ Devote time, energy and creativity in forging the future is a must



Wej-ji Chinese Word for crisis consists of two characters : *danger* and *opportunity*

Let's face both

References

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