Building Effective, Sustainable, and Practical Assessment During Challenging Times

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Library Assessment is More than Metrics

- Focuses on understanding customer needs and the services to meet those needs

- Collects, analyzes and uses quantitative and qualitative data for more effective management and decision-making

- Emphasizes ongoing communication with customers and stakeholders

- Seeks opportunities for collaboration and comparisons within the organization, institution and beyond

Why Assess?

- Accountability and justification

- Improve services

- Compare with others

- Identify changing user patterns

- Market and promote library resources and services

- Opportunity to tell our own story

- Demonstrate value of the library

- **Use data, not assumptions, to make decisions**

Why It's Even More Important in Challenging Times

- The pie is smaller (less money) with more competition
- Libraries are not direct revenue producers; part of common good
- Stakeholders and administrators want "simple" metrics to show accountability and success
- To counter the perception that:
  - Everything is available for free on the Web
  - Library facilities used only as "study hall"
  - Libraries don't contribute to student learning

The Challenge for Libraries

- **Traditional statistics are no longer sufficient**
  - Emphasize inputs/outputs – how big and how many
  - Do not tell the library's or customers' story
  - May not align with organizational goals and plans
  - Do not measure service quality or library impact

- **Need to demonstrate the value the library makes**
  - To the individual, community and the organization
  - Using qualitative and quantitative data

- **Need to be comfortable using evidence and data in decision-making**

Using Data in Decision Making
(From Pfeffer and Sutton, 2006)

What makes it hard to be evidence-based?

- There's too much evidence
- There's not enough good evidence
- Don't have the expertise to analyze the evidence
- The evidence doesn't quite apply
- People are trying to mislead you
- You are trying to mislead you

- Stories are more persuasive anyways

According to Which Homer?

He knew the things that were and the things that would be and the things that had been before

Oh, people can come up with statistics to prove anything. 14% of people know that

Words empty as the wind are best left unsaid

Facts are meaningless. You could use facts to prove any-thing that's even remotely true!

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Assessing the Library Contribution to the Institutional Mission

- The library's contribution to learning and research
  - Student learning outcomes
  - Successful faculty and student research
- Value of the library to the academic community
  - Information resources/collections
  - Library as place
  - Information and instructional services
- Changes in library and information use
- Organizational performance and effectiveness
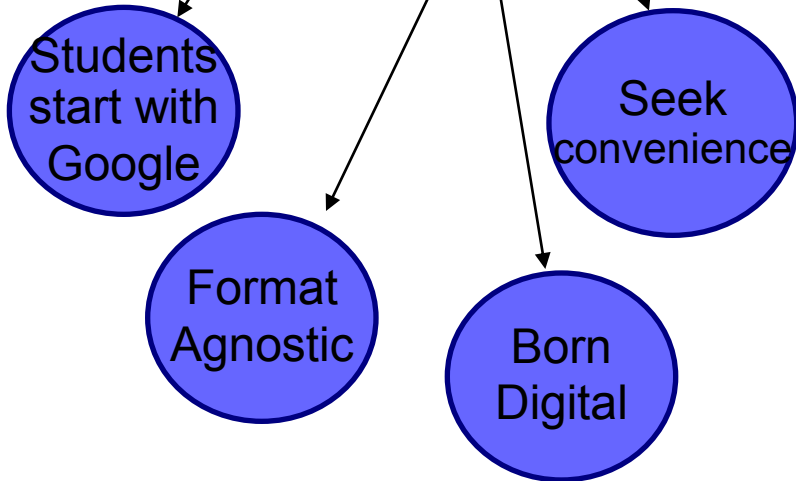- Collaborations

Documenting Library Performance and Impact

- **Traditional library assessment methods**
  - Surveys (satisfaction, needs, importance)
  - Usage and other library statistics
  - Qualitative information (interviews, focus groups, etc.)
- **Statistics**
  - Institutional
  - Comparator (Similar libraries, peer groups, customized)
  - Government
- **Collaborations focused on outcomes**
  - Lib-Value
  - ACRL Value of Academic Libraries
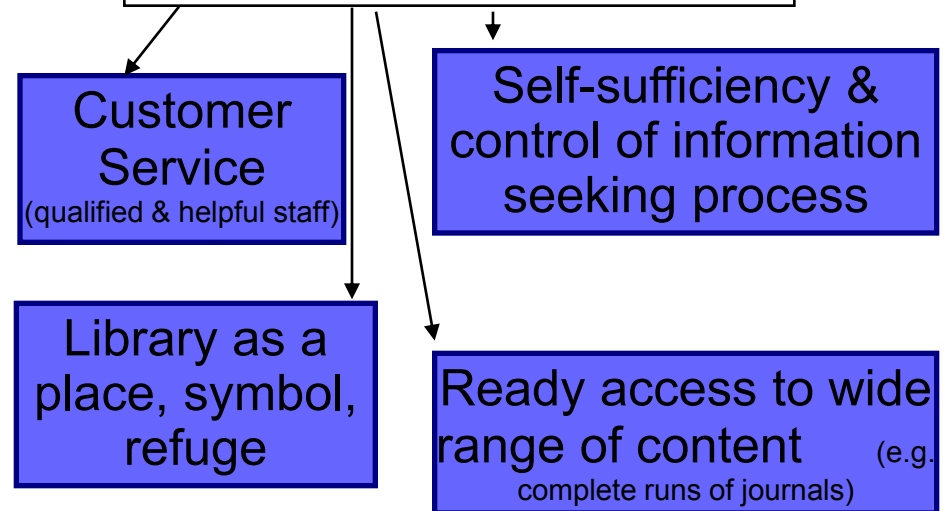
Charting User Change

User Behavior

Wide Array of User Studies Now Available

- Students start with Google
- Format Agnostic
- Born Digital
- Seek convenience

User Expectations

LibQUAL+ Findings

- Customer Service (qualified & helpful staff)
- Self-sufficiency & control of information seeking process
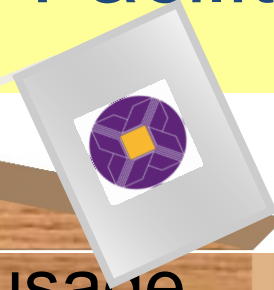- Library as a place, symbol, refuge
- Ready access to wide range of content (e.g. complete runs of journals)

Re-conceptualizing Library Facilities

Changing nature of library usage

Re-configuring library facilities:

Learning commons

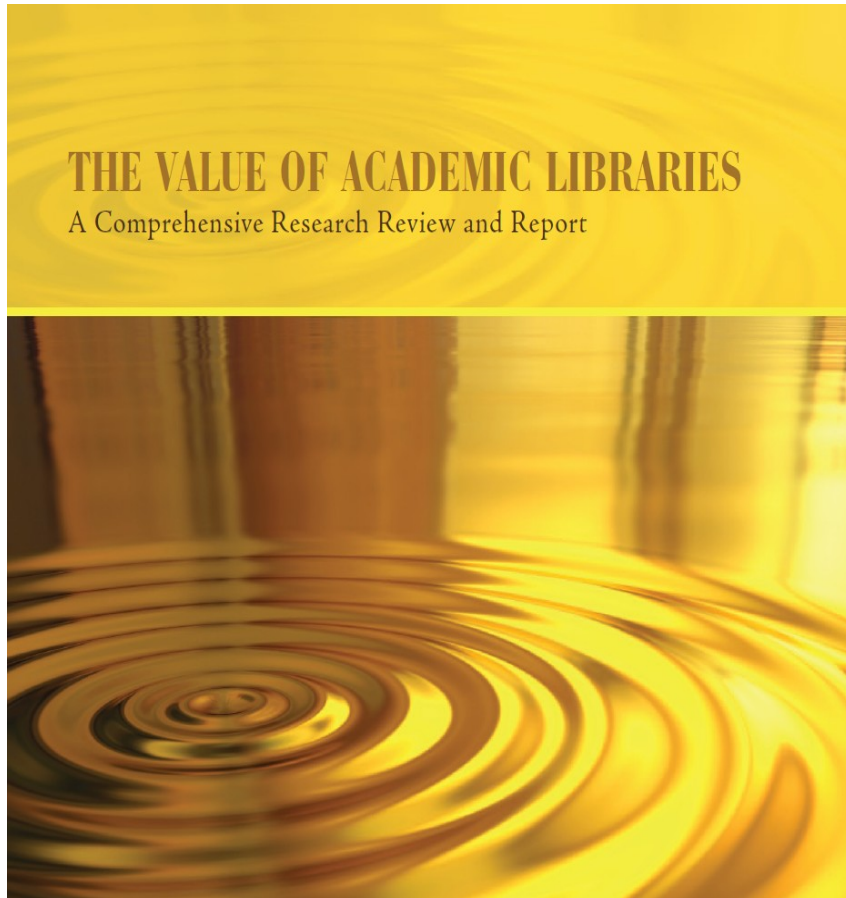Collaborative study

Social and intellectual center

Secondary Storage

Showcase for recruitment

Library as physical place, intellectual space, and community center

Association of College and Research Libraries Value of Academic Libraries

THE VALUE OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES
A Comprehensive Research Review and Report

Purpose:

- Current state of literature on the value of libraries

- Suggestions for immediate next steps in demonstrating academic library value

- Research agenda for articulating library value

- Focus on defining outcomes

Prepared by Megan Oakleaf, Sept. 2010
http://www.acrl.ala.org/value/

Value of Academic Libraries Research Agenda

- **How does the library contribute to:**
  - Student enrollment
  - Student retention and graduation rates
  - Student success
  - Student achievement
  - Student learning
  - The student experience
  - Faculty research productivity
  - Faculty grant proposals and funding
  - Faculty teaching
  - Overall institutional reputation and prestige

Association of College and Research Libraries
Demonstrating Library Value
ACRL Value Summits November 29-December 1, 2011

- **What data do libraries need to demonstrate value?**
  - Academic administrators, library directors, and institutional research directors from 22 institutions
- **What strategies do libraries need to communicate value?**
  - Library directors only

LIBvalue
Value, Outcomes, and Return on Investment of Academic Libraries

Home

LIB-VALUE

» **Lib-Value Project**

» **Bibliographic Database**

» **Publications and**

  Presentations

» **JISC Project**

» **Suggestions / Comments**

ROI IN THE GRANTS PROCESS

To learn more about ROI in

ROI & Value DATABASE

Search our free **Bibliographic Database** or explore resources using the **Subject Area Citation Map**

ISSOME KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY CAROL TENOPIR

Date:

Wednesday, August 24, 2011 (All day)

www.arl.org

Lib-Value: Multiple institutions using multiple methods to measure multiple values for multiple stakeholders

In the information context, economist Machlup described two types of value:

1.purchase or exchange value: what one is willing to pay for information in money and/or time, and

2. use value: the favorable consequences derived from reading and using the information.

Library Return on Investment and Value:

**Purchase and Exchange Value
+ Use Value =
Total LIBRARY VALUE**

Comprehensive Library Value Study

- ## Economic (private)
  - What is the value to an individual to use the library resources?

- ## Social (public)
  - What is the value to the institution of the library?

- ## Environmental (externality)
  - What is the value of the environmental savings of library provision of electronic resources?
  - Have libraries gone green without knowing it?

Current Projects

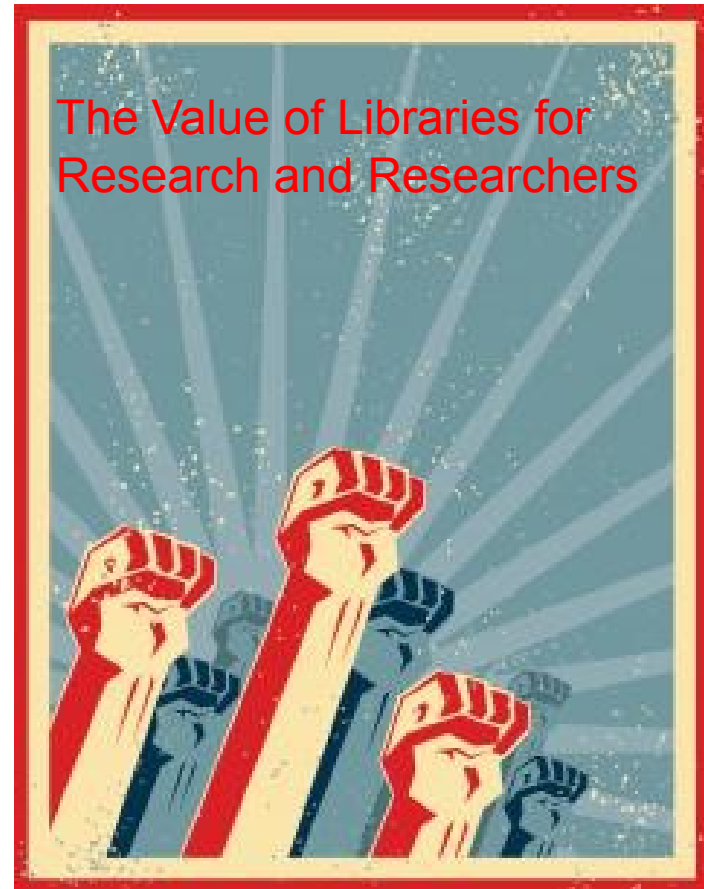|		
Ebooks	Special Collections	Information Commons
Journal Collections	Value and ROI	Teaching and Learning
Reading and Scholarship	Tools	Website and Value Bibliography

... for Research and Researchers

ARL Profiles:
Research Libraries
2010

William Gray Potter, University of Georgia

Colleen Cook, McGill University

Martha Kyrillidou, Association of Research Libraries

With Contributions from
Jennifer Rutner, Columbia University
Michael Maciel, Texas A&M University
David Green, Association of Research Libraries
Sarah Lippincott, Association of Research Libraries
Yolanda Glass, Association of Research Libraries
Nicholas Woolf, Woolf Consulting Inc.

April 2011
Association of Research Libraries

The Value of Libraries for
Research and Researchers
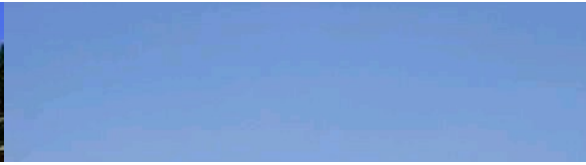
http://www.arl.org/stats/index/profiles/index.shtml

http://www.rin.ac.uk/our-work/using-and-accessing-information-resources/value-libraries-research-and-researchers

Building A Community of Practice:
The Library Assessment Conference
http://libraryassessment.org/

Charlottesville, Virginia 2006   **Seattle, Washington 2008**   **Baltimore, Maryland 2010**

Conference Goals
Nurture an active learning community for assessment
Focus on practitioners
Provide a forum for presentations on effective, practical and sustainable assessment
Encourage informal interaction among participants,
Build the knowledge base of participants
Make it fun   **LEARN SHARE CONNECT**

UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA LIBRARY   ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH LIBRARIES   UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

Library Assessment Conference Basics

	2006 Charlottesville, VA	2008 Seattle, WA	2010 Baltimore, MD
Registrants "Assessment" in job title	217 15	377 32	460 61
Presentations (papers) Poster sessions Workshops	44 20 3 (half day, offered 2x)	60 40 6 (half-day)	68 80 2 (full-day) 4 (half-day)
Conference Proceedings	452 pages	552 pages	788 pages

2012 Library Assessment Conference
Charlottesville, Virginia
October 29-31, 2012

In Conclusion
Can You Answer These Questions?

- What do we know about our communities to provide services and resources to make them successful?

- How do we measure the effectiveness of our services, programs and resources from the user perspective?

- What do our university administrators need to know to provide the resources for a successful library?