

SALISBURY UNIVERSITY

BLACKWELL LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY PLAN 2010/11 – 2014/15

Introduction

Libraries were early and remain ardent technology users. Long before enterprise systems supported financial and student services, the library's catalog and operations were online. Today, the library has a second generation integrated library system, ExLibris's Aleph system, which facilitates direct access to more than eight million items in the University System of Maryland and Affiliated Institutions (USMAI) libraries. On campus, the library provides the only publicly available accessibility workstations and software, including a portable NEMO reader. It also offers not only federating searching—the ability to search multiple databases simultaneously—but a link resolver (SFX) that makes full-text information immediately accessible. And students, faculty and staff can request interlibrary loan items directly, track their progress, and often receive electronic copies.

Yet this is Blackwell Library's first technology plan. While it incorporates elements of library department's three-year plans, the technology plan is being and will continue to be developed to coincide with the University's Information Technology Plan. The intent is broader than sharing information. It should also pave the way for future collaborations.

The Horizon

While technology presents a fluid landscape, librarians' working knowledge of trends, intimate understanding of student research habits and needs, and a number of ongoing national studies help to identify issues, concerns and potential directions. In addition to Pew Foundation, OCLC, and ARL studies, the annual *Horizon Report* is particularly important. A joint publication of The Educause Learning Initiative and The New Media Consortium, it pinpoints the technologies of greatest interest to education in the next five years. Based on studies and experience, the factors most likely to affect the library's technical landscape and planning include:

- use of mobile technologies for tasks PCs once performed;
- use of cloud computing, a boon for collaborative projects;
- expectation that a web experience will be personal and customizable;
- more precise access to information on the web, moving beyond tags to technologies that identify context (the semantic web);
- use of visual tools to enhance learning (gaming, media); and
- gap between students' perception of their research and technology skills and their actual understanding of how systems work and how to use them to do research effectively
- role of library in facilitating and creating new scholarly materials

Related to a more customizable web experience and the integration of Web 2.0 technologies is a mandate that: "New relationships must be formed with library users to support rapid shifts in research and teaching practices."¹

This plan acknowledges that advances in all areas may not be possible in five years, but outlines areas where definite growth is both possible and planned.

Goal 1: Provide a transparent, seamless landscape between the library's computing environment and the campus computing environment

In an age of rapid technological advancement and change, new information systems, and information overload, the library takes seriously the need to simplify that landscape for students on all levels. On the most basic of levels, this includes coordinating with campus Information Technology (IT) to ensure that basic PC configurations, hardware, and available software are the same in campus labs and in the library.

Accordingly, the key initiatives will be to

Maintain equipment and current technology with IT support

Coordinate equipment purchases & type of equipment supported with IT

Goal 2: Enhance access to research and information resources, including use of Web 2.0 technologies

Now more than ever, researchers need multiple levels of assistance to navigate what has become a challenging information landscape. While the library's traditional role of acquiring and developing these resources remains seminal, it is just as important to employ the technologies students rely on to help them connect in meaningful ways with those resources.

Accordingly, the key initiatives will be to

Evaluate and implement *WorldCatLocal*, which integrates searching for books, articles, and e-resources

Maintain and update a Delicious account and incorporate these into subject guides and other applications

Identify metadata sources for research collections on microform (*LEL*, *PCMI*, *SSM*, etc.) and load records into the online catalog

Explore the public relations and teaching effectiveness of *Facebook*

Customize *Iliad* interlibrary loan software to enhance resource delivery to students at distance learning sites

Promote and enhance chat research services

Promote, further develop and continue to evaluate the effectiveness of blogs on the library's home and on other web pages

Goal 3: Implement additional Aleph functionalities for greater staff efficiency and coordination with other campus units

Because the library's online system is shared by sixteen institutions in the University System of Maryland and Affiliated Institutions (USMAI), taking full benefit of the system capabilities requires coordination between multiple offices on campus with the Information Technology Department (ITD) at College Park, the host site for the shared system. Since all sixteen institutions compete for ITD resources, moving forward presents challenges. That notwithstanding, campus IT has always stepped up to the plate and plays a major role in advancing these functionalities.

Accordingly, the key initiatives will be to

- Implement EDI (e-invoicing of book orders) with Baker & Taylor

- Implement the Bursar extract report, which will electronically transfer all fines/fees unpaid after 30 days to the Business Office for payment

Goal 4: Provide Technology Support for Accessibility Services

Because the library provides the only publicly available accessibility workstations and software on campus, it is committed to maintaining the currency of available accessibility resources.

Accordingly, the key initiatives will be to

- Support Kurzweil & Nemo software and hardware

- Build ADA-accessible websites and web-based materials

- Monitor new technologies in the field for possible purchase

Goal 5: Provide Technology Support for Student Services

For the libraries, technology is a means to an end. The question is not what technologies to employ, but rather to identify which technologies and accompanying landscapes will have the greatest impact on students' ability to understand the information landscape and to do research effectively. As a result, technology support is interpreted broadly.

Accordingly, the key initiatives will be to

- Monitor usage of laptops in library to determine long-term support of program and other mobile devices as replacements for laptops

- Build services for increase in mobile technologies

- Coordinate with IT on Information Literacy/Technology Fluency requirements

Incorporate library services into *MyClasses* course management software

Take a lead in building and experimenting with collaborative, technology-rich working spaces

Monitor new discovery tools, including the evolution of open ILS

Goal 6: Provide Technology Support for Faculty Services

Apart from acquiring essential resources, the key to preparing students to become knowledgeable researchers is to collaborate with and support the faculty.

Accordingly, the key initiatives will be to

Support citation management software (*Zotero/EndNote*) & teach faculty to use it for personal research as well as for coursework

Incorporate library services into *MyClasses* course management software

Collaborate with faculty on web-based class/assignment guides and learning tools

¹ Lowry, Charles B., et.al. *Transformational Times: An Environmental Scan Prepared for the ARL Strategic Plan Review Task Force*. Washington, D.C.: Association of Research Libraries, February, 2009, p.6.