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The End of Institutional Repositories and the Beginning of Social Academic Research Service: An Enhanced Role for Libraries

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Abstract

As more and more universities establish Institutional Repositories (IR), awareness is developing about the limitations of IRs in enhancing the academic research service. The concept of an IR needs to be expanded to include the integration of the processes that transform intellectual endeavor into a broadening array of academic and research support services which are fundamentally social. These include, but are not limited to –

(1) sharing institutionally developed intellectual product (traditional IR)

(2) informing others of the availability of this product with defined purpose

(3) collecting additional academically relevant materials in digital formats using IRs

(4) disseminating timely information about what has been collected to researchers

(5) creating an environment that encourages awareness and exchange of information

(6) and more….

In brief, information gathering, dissemination, and discussion in the form of library service must become a crucial part of researchers' networks. An IR cannot and should not be viewed as a stand alone endeavor. It needs to be viewed and used as a research and communication tool in an environment that synergizes all elements of the research process. If an IR does not create discussions between librarians (information specialists) and researchers, its potential is lost both to the academy and the library. The library and its librarians must be interactive with researchers and the institution served.

With the advent of digital acquisition that IRs started, a new vision of the role of librarians can be fulfilled. The foundational concepts behind this vision are found in my article: **The Library as an Agent of Change: Pushing the Client Institution Forward** Information Outlook (Journal of the Special Libraries Association), Vol. 3, No. 8, August 1999, pages 37-40.

The above is not theoretical. It is being practiced every day at the Martin P. Catherwood Library of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR) at Cornell University where I work. By combining the uses of an IR, known as the DigitalCommons@ILR – see http://www.digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu, with a discipline-based Internet news service, see -- http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/iws/news-bureau/index.html, supported with outstanding web content, technical support for both print and digital collecting, reference, referral, and teaching, a goal has been realized. The library is seamlessly integrated into the outreach, research and teaching of the institution it serves. The library is part of the social fabric and network of the school.

Keywords

institutional repositories, library, academic research, university, Martin P. Catherwood Library, ILR School

Comments

http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/conference/7/

THE END OF INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORIES & THE BEGINNING OF SOCIAL ACADEMIC RESEARCH SERVICE:
AN ENHANCED ROLE FOR LIBRARIES

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The concept of the institutional repository (IR) is too narrowly focused to develop the value that universities should be extracting from its existence. Is it not possible for IRs to serve as full-fledged electronic libraries and thereby serve the greater purpose of collecting, disseminating, analyzing and exchanging useful digital information for academic purposes? Should not the IR be coupled with the full range of academic and research support services that new technologies permit? In an era of social networking, why is the university not moving quickly to develop what I call a social academic research service that can enhance the role of libraries, librarians, and IT specialists in the academic endeavor? It is the assertion and questions above that I hope to address in this presentation. Many of the points will be made by using the example of the Catherwood Library of the ILR School (School of Industrial & Labor Relations) at Cornell University.

The basic issues that I will cover are as follows:
(1) How did IRs become so narrowly focused? – including a brief background on IR development.
(2) How marketplace developments in IR technology allowed for a broader conception of use for a library that did not lose sight of its core business.
(3) Using the new technology to reinvent academic and research support services.
(4) Developing new directions and possibilities for support of the academic endeavor.

(1) How did IRs become so narrowly focused?

Too often institutions and individuals are enamored with the changes and opportunities that new technology offers. This was evident during the "dot.com revolution" of the 1990s.[1] This was a time of great technological progress and prospect. The hype which drove a stock market boom ended in a bust, however. It should be noted that this was the same time that the concept of the institutional repository (IR) in academia was born. Unfortunately, the clarity of vision that a "bust" forces upon investors was never experienced by academics who did not have to respond to bottom-line realities. The investments in innovation were not constrained by the overriding question of, "What value are we (the universities) to gain from this investment?" As a result, the personal interests and agendas of researchers in fields

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[1] BusinessWeek [Online] MARCH 20, 2001
EMPLOYMENT TRENDS
Legacies of the Dot-Com Revolution
Net culture really has changed business. Organizational structure, management style, and -- yes -- office dress may never be the same
http://www.businessweek.com/careers/content/mar2001/ca20010320_628.htm

related to information technology were allowed to flourish often with great benefits for the world at large. But what benefits came to the processes of academic endeavor and inquiry? This question was rarely asked. After all, the academy is made up of brilliant individuals with personal research agendas that fit under the umbrellas of various disciplines and departments within the larger university and the world of academia in general. Whatever concerns there were about technological investments were guided more by individual interests rather than by institutional goals or the goals of the academy at large.

The development of the IR [see the BACKGROUND section bellow] reflects well the pattern described above. Indeed, the IR attracted researchers to develop robust technologies that would be interoperable. These researchers were, however, more interested in the technology questions than in the sustainability and value questions that should have been of interest to their institutions. They came up with competing systems that often required their own institutions to invest heavily in their areas of inquiry with the promise that the IR would serve the interests of their fellow faculty members throughout the university. This was an assertion that was true but short sighted. The IR was developed and sold to universities as a way to extend the reach of the intellectual products that were being developed at the university as a whole. In brief, this rationalized the role of the IR for a campus but with a focus on the personal faculty agendas of the IR developers and the needs of their fellow faculty to self-promote and by extension promote the usefulness of the universities they all serve. This appeared to be a "win-win" situation. In many respects it was. The larger question should have been, "Is that all the value that we can extract from an IR?" Apparently this was enough for Harvard.[2] However, from my perspective and those of my colleagues at the Catherwood Library of the ILR School (School of Industrial & Labor Relations) at Cornell University, this is not nearly enough.

Background on IR development

The institutional repository (IR) concept was born out of competition for who was going to be responsible for dissemination of an institution's intellectual product via the Internet. Individual institutions felt that the competitor in this instance was the e-print archive movement controlled by several well-funded or subscription-based groups, associations, and institutions serving a variety of disciplines. The key word that was used at the time was *interoperability*. This meant that a technical mechanism should be created and "designed to facilitate the discovery of content stored in distributed e-print archives" using an open archive architecture.[3] The issues of concern were mainly technology, access (which should be free), and control of intellectual product. The IR was perceived to be an end unto itself. Every institution or a consortium of institutions would enter their e-prints into an IR and share useful academic and research products to enhance and stimulate study. The details of this

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[2] The Chronicle of Higher Education
News Blog
February 12, 2008
Harvard Faculty Adopts Open-Access Requirement
http://chronicle.com/news/article/3943/harvard-faculty-adopts-open-access-requirement

[3] **The Santa Fe Convention of the Open Archives Initiative,**
D-Lib Magazine, February 2000, Volume 6 Number 2
by Herbert Van de Sompel and Carl Lagoze
http://www.dlib.org/dlib/february00/vandesompel-oai/02vandesompel-oai.html

process were much more complex than this description reveals. Copyright issues, institutional branding, peer review, faculty compliance and other challenges made the implementation difficult and costly.

Libraries were perceived to be appropriate locations for these IRs since "information management" and the application of metadata were considered instrumental for successful implementation. Libraries welcomed this attention since they were fearful of being marginalized in light of web developments and the use of the Internet for information gathering. The IR would help the library maintain an important role in academic life in this time of disruptive technological change.

Unfortunately the focus on technology made most academic institutions and their libraries lose sight of the fundamental roles and interplay of universities, faculty, and librarians in the pursuit of knowledge. In addition, all three are now dependent on information technologists to support their functions. Moreover, information technologists are encouraged to offer innovative ideas for teaching, research and study. They are now a fourth party in the academic endeavor – a new development for the academy.

(2) How marketplace developments in IR technology allowed for a broader conception of use for a library that did not lose sight of its core business.

While the focus of IRs remained narrow during the "dot.com revolution", some concerns were developing about costs and sustainability. A clear example was the development of the partnership between the California Digital Library (CDL) and Berkeley Electronic Press (Bepress). [4] The ensuing result of this partnership was the creation of the Digital Commons which started with the use of Bepress's institutional repository software in 2002 for the California Digital Library's eScholarship Repository.[5] The cost issue was the main driver of this development. Sharing a single platform that would be used in common by several campuses would reduce costs. A business model was developed that reduced costs for each individual campus while standardizing several services. Nevertheless, a broader vision of the uses of an IR was not developing although some experimentation by individual schools and libraries was going on mainly in the area of capturing non-copyrighted materials produced primarily by U.S. government agencies and placing them in a few IRs.

When the Bepress IR software was being developed in 2002, the Catherwood Library of the ILR School at Cornell University (henceforth Catherwood Library) was looking for a way to serve better its faculty, researchers, students and world-wide audience.[6] The concern was to capture not only the intellectual product of the school, but to provide the full range of services that the library envisioned for a modern

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[4] Berkeley Electronic Press, Press Release, Thursday, Oct. 4, 2001
California Digital Library and Berkeley Electronic Press Announce Partnership for Scholarly Communication Initiatives
http://www.bepress.com/press100401.html

[5] BePress web page on
Customers Using the Digital Commons Platform
http://www.bepress.com/ir/customers.html
(date: 29 April 2009)

[6] **About Catherwood Library**
http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/library/about/

electronic library service (exclusive of the library online catalog). This included capturing digitally born information, digitizing useful print materials for broader dissemination, creating electronic collections of workplace related material, providing awareness of recently gathered information and more. In brief, the question that was raised was essentially, "Can we use an IR type technology to be an electronic bookshelf?" This library, through my own efforts, had been struggling with this problem since 1994 when it started placing the U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission materials on its web site.[7] Awareness of Bepress success was already evident at the Cornell Law Library which was using the Bepress run NELLCO (New England Law Library Consortium) Legal Scholarship Repository for its own purposes.[8] That awareness led me to suggest that we use Bepress (which would be bought out by Proquest – later to revert back to Bepress) and its IR software for this purpose. However, it was not until 2004 that Catherwood Library would commit to what was then the Proquest/Bepress Digital Commons.[9]

While the above paragraph provides a chronology of actions, it was the culture of the Catherwood Library that would eventually to lead to the success of the IR and expand its usefulness into what I call a "social academic research service" (to be explained in the following paragraphs). In fact, the foundations of a successful IR had been built years earlier.

Since 1946, when the Catherwood Library was established[10], it was viewed as an integral part of the research and outreach endeavor as the provider of information in support of those functions. The library was in partnership with the school and its faculty to fulfill the broad mission that it was assigned by the State of New York. In order to be effective, the library went beyond the normal standards of providing good service. In its early years, it created a thesaurus to compensate for the inadequacy of Library of Congress subject headings as they related to industrial and labor relations and workplace issues in general so that added entries could be made in the catalog that would make material easier to find. In addition, articles from journals not adequately covered by journal indexing services were cataloged for the use of faculty, researchers, students, and the public. Strong linkages between faculty and those responsible for collection development and reference services were also developed. Faculty often discussed their issues and concerns with the librarians. In fact, faculty often went to lunch with the librarians including them in their network of academic endeavor. These are but a few examples of

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[7] Cornell Chronicle, Vol. 27, Number 17, January 18, 1996
Library-government partnership will aid access
Stuart M. Basefsky, a reference librarian for the School of Industrial and Labor Relations' Catherwood Library, shows off the Catherwood Electronic Archive, which he directs.
By Darryl Geddes
http://www.news.cornell.edu/Chronicle/96/1.18.96/ILRarchive.html

[8] **NELLCO Legal Scholarship Repository**
http://lsr.nellco.org/

[9] Berkeley Electronic Press, Press Release. June 25, 2004
Berkeley Electronic Press and ProQuest Announce New Institutional Repository Service
Bepress technology gives new digital offering a powerful combination of features and affordability
http://www.bepress.com/press062504.html

[10] **Martin P. Catherwood Library**
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (Redirected from Catherwood Library)
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catherwood_Library

making extraordinary efforts to distinguish not only the library as an excellent service provider but the school that it served as a pre-eminent institution in its field. Hence, a culture of cooperation was long present. In brief, the Catherwood Library was part of the social fabric of the institution it served.

As the technology was changing the world of libraries and the habits of information seekers, this culture allowed the Catherwood Library to embrace changes to further enhance the special "social role" it had developed with its primary clientele. In fact, numerous discussions within the library had taken place about how we could maintain our already influential position within our institution. As a consequence, a variety of experiments were undertaken. I wrote about many of these and presented our library's developing view (my view in particular) of the new roles that a library could undertake on behalf of its institution. [11] Moreover, having recognized the trends and developments that were changing the way libraries would have to operate in order to maintain their effectiveness and utility, I set in motion a conceptual framework of how to operate in this new environment outlined in an article entitled, *"The Library as an Agent of Change: Pushing the Client Institution Forward."[12]*

As a result, when the "dot.com revolution" was ending the monopoly on information long held by libraries, the Catherwood Library was prepared to incorporate new technologies to enhance its role and function within the school that it served. In fact my colleagues at the time, Constance Finlay and John Goddard, created a website in 1994 not only for the library, but for the school itself. This ultimately became the ILR School's web site of which the Catherwood Library is now only a part. [13] From the outset of creating a web site, we began collecting not only our faculty's intellectual product for viewing and dissemination, but non-copyrighted material that was relevant to our field. [14] Alas, these early efforts

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[11] Cornell University Library Professional Development Week, Inaugural Year, May 18-21, 1999
https://confluence.cornell.edu/display/prodev/PD+Week+Archive#PDWeekArchive-PDWeek1999
Wednesday, May 19, 1999, Mann Conference Room 2:00-4:00pm
Stuart Basefsky, **The Influential Library and Librarian: Practice and Research Agenda for the 21st Century.**
Introduction
https://confluence.cornell.edu/download/attachments/39878673/basefsky_99_intro.doc?version=1
Presentation
https://confluence.cornell.edu/download/attachments/39878673/basefsky_99.doc?version=1
Handout entitled, **"Prescriptions for libraries seeking influential positions"**
By Stuart Basefsky, 12/98
https://confluence.cornell.edu/download/attachments/39878673/basefsky_99_3.doc?version=1

[12] Basefsky, S. (1999). **The library as an agent of change: Pushing the client institution forward.** Information Outlook, 3, 37-40.
Available online as
Basefsky, S. (1999). **The library as an agent of change: Pushing the client institution forward.** Retrieved [insert date] from Cornell University, ILR School site: http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/articles/189/

[13] **ILR School web site**
http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/

[14] See -- **Internet Archive (Wayback Machine)**
School of Industrial and Labor Relations web site
November 6, 1996
http://web.archive.org/web/19961106150649/http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/

came upon a technical ceiling – the size and cost of digital storage. This forced us to be on the lookout for new and developing technologies to better serve our school.

It was at this point, that we had a long wait before IR developments became robust enough and reasonably priced for us to consider using them for our long hoped for electronic library. However, once this materialized, our library's culture and its long maintained focus on socially integrating ourselves into the academic endeavors of our faculty made the introduction of an IR a relatively simple transition compared to other libraries and schools as explained by Suzanne Cohen (current colleague) and Deborah Schmidle (former colleague now working at Cornell's central library).[15]

The Catherwood Library made the commitment to use the Digital Commons in 2004.[16] Our usage statistics are extraordinary compared to other libraries and schools as a result of holding onto our social relationships with the school that we serve.[17] Faculty give us their material willingly so much so that we are on occasion overwhelmed with their insistence on incorporating their materials both current and historical into our IR. However, this IR is not viewed as an IR by our school. This IR has become a communications vehicle useful to our scholars on numerous levels. It is not used simply for self or institutional aggrandizement. It is an interdisciplinary research and outreach tool focused on workplace issues.

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[15] Cohen, S. & Schmidle, D. (2007). **Creating a multipurpose digital institutional repository**. 4 OCLC Systems & Services, 23(3),287-296.
Available online as
Cohen, S. A. & Schmidle, D. J. (2007). **Creating a multipurpose digital institutional repository**. Retrieved [insert date], from Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations site:
http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/articles/118
and a shorter piece at--
DigitalCommons@ILR: Beyond the Traditional Institutional Repository (2006)
http://www.library.cornell.edu/insidecul/200605/digitalcommons.html

[16] Mary Newhart (former colleague) was instrumental in managing the new technology and articulating why the Digital Commons was our IR of choice. See -
ILR Review Presentation - Charleston Conference
Mary Newhart, Cornell University
Abstract
Presented by Mary Newhart, Web and Digital Projects Manager, Catherwood Library, School of Industrial and Labor Relations Cornell University. As part of the panel on The Confluence of Open Access and Licensed Content, 2005 Charleston Conference: Issues in Book and Serial Acquisition, November 2-5, 2005.
http://works.bepress.com/mary_newhart/1/
and
DigitalCommons@ILR Collection Development Policy
Mary Newhart
November 2005
http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/dc_information/4/

[17] **DigitalCommons@ILR**
8,796 papers (as of 5 May 2009)
1,527,592 full-text downloads (as of 5 May 2009)
643,366 downloads in the past year (as of 5 May 2009)
http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/

Is the Catherwood Library an exception? Are there other libraries similarly situated with this kind of potential?

Skeptics might think that the social networking that exists at the ILR School is not applicable to large academic research libraries. However, they are incorrect. The model for creating socially integrated libraries in research institutions is the foundation of what exists (or should exist) in professional schools in the USA such as law schools or medical schools. Other specialized libraries in engineering, business, hotel, agriculture, and more can point to similar dynamics. The problem, from my perspective, is that large academic research libraries have neglected to think of themselves as the "special library" of their institution – the university. In fact, the Catherwood Library has tried to set an example for how large institutions can leverage their expertise to train not just faculty and students, but administrators and their staff so that they might operate more efficiently and become more competitive. Is it not possible to harness the expertise of librarians to target the special priorities of a university or key faculty research endeavors? The Catherwood Library made specific efforts to train the human resource personnel at Cornell University to enhance the performance and productivity of that staff. This is something that I have written about [18]and others have noted.[19] Certainly one would think that library institutional outreach could be improved with an eye toward developing the social academic research services outlined above.

If this is not taking place, perhaps there are other factors that impede these developments. For example, the majority of large academic research libraries are run by persons primarily with a technical services background. Their personal experiences do not include extensive contacts with faculty and researchers. They may be more comfortable using technology in providing access and other passive services rather than exerting pro-active services which engage users in intellectual give and take. Passive services and pro-active services need to be properly balanced. One should not dominate the other. If these leaders are not comfortable reaching out, they should simply ask for assistance in doing so.

The key difference in providing service in new technological environments is that clientele should not be expected to come to the library. They may choose to and this should be encouraged. The library needs to use technology effectively in reaching out to users. In the academy, this means bringing innovation to our thinking.

(3) Using the new technology to reinvent academic and research support services.

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[18] Stuart Basefsky. (2000, February). **The other client : Information training for administrators pays dividends for the library,** College & Research Libraries News, 61(2), 100-101.

[19] Hurst, Leslie
Academic Library as Special Library: A Model of Library Orientation for Campus Employees
College and Undergraduate Libraries
Vol. 10, 1, 2003, p. 75-88
and
Hurst, Leslie
The Special Library on Campus: A Model for Library Orientations Aimed at Academic Administration, Faculty, and Support Staff
The Journal of Academic Librarianship
Volume 29, Issue 4, July 2003, Pages 231-236

Too many libraries take the attitude that "if they build it, they [users] will come." The questions that should be asked, however, are: Build what? For whom? Why? In building IRs, the evidence is clear that their mere existence does not translate into use. Hence the necessity to come up with Harvard-like mandates to force compliance of faculty. The social, academic foundation for cooperation and active participation in IR efforts was overlooked. However, a lesson can be learned from these failings: choose technologies that fit the culture of your organization so that participation by faculty, researchers, students, administrators, and staff will be more likely to take place. If a library does not know or perceive what its role (or perhaps developing role) is in helping the institution it serves, it can become an ineffective follower of the crowd or at worst a counter-productive cost center. So how does one choose proper technologies?

Most libraries try to benchmark what others in their field are doing. This can be informative. However it may not be creative or useful for the library seeking the information. In addition, it may not translate into providing effective leadership. "Following benchmarks and best practices that are not a good fit for your [university] or its culture can be counterproductive. The most effective way of using benchmarks and best practices is as a creative mechanism for raising questions about your own [situation]. Following what others do is rarely a form of good leadership."[20]

Assuming that a library does know its environment well, what can it do with the endless variety of communications technologies that can be incorporated into IRs or otherwise support information needs? The choices are enormous: discussion boards, blogs, rss feeds, interactive data sets, web pages, chat rooms, podcasts, and many more. However, a good reference librarian always tries to discern the "needs" of the user before seeking the appropriate answer. A good library should do the same. In my opinion, this is where one should start. There is a general tendency to focus on "user behavior" -- the technologies currently fashionable among young adults and researchers. This can be instructive and it should lead to some experimentation. But the fundamental three questions remain: Build what? For whom? Why?

While I cannot speak for others, the Catherwood Library has made the following reasoned choices in reinventing the academic and research support services. Many of these choices come from accepting the current and future reality that Internet-based information, as made available via Google and other search engines, provides significant primary research material far exceeding anything that can be collected by a university or school. Given the temporary nature of the Internet, however, it is necessary to collect, disseminate, and retain key information necessary to a field or discipline for future users. Efforts to compete with Google or other search engines in creating an academic search portal should not be undertaken. However, an academic research portal that makes it easy to find and access the endless variety of formats that a research library must collect and retain whether purchased or acquired freely is a necessity. As a consequence, the Catherwood Library has become an ambidextrous library – providing both traditional and innovative services.[21]

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[20] LLRX.com
Leadership & The Role of Information: Making The Creatively Informed Questioner
By Stuart Basefsky, Published on October 29, 2008
http://www.llrx.com/features/leadershipandroleofinformation.htm

[21] **The Ambidextrous Organization: A model for driving sustainable innovation within a mature business**
http://www.innovation-point.com/Ambidextrous.htm

(a) Push E-Mail Services

A concerted effort to monitor, capture, and disseminate key information released daily via the Internet is made. At the ILR School this is called the IWS Documented News Service.[22] Its intended purpose is "to solve a key public policy issue: how to disseminate workplace-related studies, reports, and data issued by government bodies (international, federal, state, and local) so that they reach interested faculty, researchers, practitioners, students, journalists, and the general public while the content is still current [and much more]"[23]

Reasons:

Speed -- Historically in the print world libraries would collect information as quickly as they could and incorporate it into a catalog. It was widely understood that academic inquiry on the subject matter would probably be delayed from a few months to a couple of years. For digitally born information available via the Internet, academic inquiry begins within a few minutes and may be delayed as much as a few days or weeks. Hence, it is necessary to collect and disseminate immediately. However, collection is at least a two step process. In this instance, the first collection takes place by an information specialist (Stuart Basefsky) who then disseminates the information via e-mail. One of the e-mail addresses places the e-mail directly and automatically into at least one of three **blogs.**[24]

Library Synergies -- Once initially identified above, the information is also e-mailed to the collection development librarian who may decide to collect a print equivalent, if available, or seek permission to incorporate the material into the IR for long-term access. The reference librarians also receive the e-mail which can help them keep current as well and permit them to answer inquiries with more current information. The reference librarians keep copies of each e-mail in a **searchable mailbox**. They use this as a **ready-reference database**.

Research Synergies – Many faculty do the same as the reference librarians. The service provides them with the possibility to keep only those items that interest them in a ready-reference database of their own making. Faculty share this information with their colleagues world-wide.

Note: This push e-mail service started in 1994, when I realized that with the Internet fewer people were going to come to the reference desk. I decided that if they were not going to come with questions, I was going to go to them with information that I knew from experience was

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[22] **IWS Documented News Service**
http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/iws/news-bureau/index.html

[23] **FAQ for IWS Documented News Service**
http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/iws/news-bureau/faq.html

[24] **Daily Postings**
http://iwsdocumentednewsdaily.blogspot.com/
International
http://iwsdninternational.blogspot.com/
Weekly Bulletin
http://iwsdocumentednews.blogspot.com/

useful. In other words, I was going to create my own questions and answers on their behalf and share it with them by creating a pro-active, continually updated bibliography (webliography). It was shocking at first. One faculty member said, "I knew that I needed to update a chapter of my book. Thanks to you, it arrived at my desktop unsolicited." The side effect was to train the faculty on how useful the Internet could be to their research.

Leveraging the Information into Academic Partnerships – Over time the news service picked up a reputation for disseminating the intellectual product of key research institutes and government offices. In exchange for bringing global attention to their academic and/or research contributions on an ongoing basis, these organizations were willing to take student interns and faculty exchanges. In fact, the news service is written into several Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs).[25] This kind of news service is one way to create institutional relationships. Too often university partnerships are dependent on individual faculty relations. The faculty are sometimes more concerned about their personal agenda than the institutional concerns. The library, through these kinds of services, can turn individual relations into institutional relations and sustain them.

(b) **Web-based Guides**
These are quite common and need little explanation. However, the web guides produced by the Catherwood Library are quite extensive and worth looking at. They can be found at –
http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/library/research/

Reasons:
Select Key Resources by Topic – Members of the university community need both proprietary information as well as free information. These guides can combine both and refer to information that will never get cataloged by the library.

Highlight Key Resources for Classes – Working with faculty, special guides to help with class projects and assignments are created regularly.

(c) **Blog Use**
Typically blog postings are intended to be of interest to patrons and feature new resources and services. At the Catherwood Library this kind of blog can be found at -
Catherwood Libary @ ILR
http://blogs.cornell.edu/catherwood/

Reasons:
Friendly Communications Tool – Blogs do not have to be bland. Creativity can be used to informally communicate with faculty and students. If desired, comments can be permitted (these would need monitoring, however).

RSS Feed Possible – Most blogs can be made to provide RSS access. Truly interest faculty and students can keep themselves current by using this feature.

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[25] See – **Global Partners**
http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/international/servicelearning/globalPartners/

(d) IR Alerts

Information residing in the IR can be organized by category. These categories or even keywords can be set to push out alerts of newly added information of interest to researchers and others. At the Catherwood Library, the **DigitalCommons@ILR** serves as our IR (and more). The alert service is found at –
http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/notification.html

(e) Summations of News Stories for Current Awareness

Free alert services, providing abstracts and links to discipline-related news stories covered in the major media can be produced and maintained by students if they are properly trained. These can be configured so that a database archive can be searched of previously gathered stories. At the Catherwood Library this service is called **Workplace Issues Today (WIT)** found at –
http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/library/research/worldofWorkNews/wit/

(f) Capturing [and Archiving] Key Web Sites for Research

Web sites are now the "new books" in that they bind the intellectual product of entire organizations into one identifiable element. These "archived web sites" can be placed in an IR and retained for research purposes long into the future. The Catherwood Library has now archived the entire **International Labour Organization (ILO) web site as it existed on 31 January 2006.** This can be viewed at – http://ecommons2.library.cornell.edu/ilo/ [This is still a work in progress]

(g) Filtering and Highlighting Important Information

Implied by some of the examples above is the explicit need to provide filtering and highlighting of important information useful to researchers. As Sasha Skenderija pointed out at a previous CASLIN conference, "The urgent challenge to all information professionals is no longer availability and direct provision of resources, but rather the filtering and highlighting of the ubiquitous Infosphere."[26] Whether this filtering is done by using new technologies or by direct human intervention, it is a necessity. At the Catherwood Library, the reference and collection development librarians monitor the Internet for current information and couple this with technology that also grabs important reports from key information centers as they are placed on web pages – for example, using www.watchthatpage.com. Not enough of this is being done, although it is has been advocated by many. It is a fundamental issue for managing libraries in the future.[27]

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[26] **Law Library 2.0: New Roles for Law Librarians in the Information Overload Era**
Sasha Skenderija
Presented at the CASLIN conference, June 2007.
http://lsr.nellco.org/cornell/clsops/papers/36/

[27] LLRX.com
Legal Information Management in a Global and Digital Age: Revolution and Tradition
By Claire M. Germain, Published on August 27, 2007
http://www.llrx.com/features/legalinformationmanagement.htm

(h) MORE….?
There are now too many possibilities available. Using them wisely becomes an issue. One must also keep in mind the adage, "You better know what you want, because you might get it." How does a library sustain a service that it creates? As we add and subtract some of these services at Catherwood, likely to appear or disappear on our Outreach pages at - http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/library/outreach/ , concerns for efficient use of time and resources will be mitigated by technological developments it is hoped.

At the Catherwood Library emphasis is placed on maintaining intellectual relationships with faculty and students. Sometimes this is done via technology as listed above or by teaching classes or sessions of classes. The goal remains to be engaged with faculty and students in the academic endeavor. Whatever it is that we build, we know that it has to be viewed as being built *together* with all members of our community and for all members of the community. Building an IR, for example, without social academic underpinnings will not necessarily fail. It is likely to be less useful than anticipated, however. Too little value will be extracted relative to the cost and human efforts that go into it.

(4) Developing new directions and possibilities for support of the academic endeavor.

This brings up the notion of where libraries are heading. Clearly they will be marginalized if they do not create their own futures and define the roles that they wish to play. It is now too easy for university administrators to view libraries as cost centers rather than value centers.[28] To my way of thinking, the only choice is to go back to the future.

Libraries were successful when they monopolized the print world. Unfortunately monopolies never have to explain themselves. Libraries, because of their monopoly, never had to articulate their roles in the academy even to themselves. They lost sight of the essential role that they played. I call this role the "social academic research service."

The easiest way to explain a "social academic research service" is to think of it as blending the library and its services into the networks that faculty and researchers create for themselves in order to progress and succeed in their fields of inquiry and research. Libraries must become part and parcel of the organizations they serve. They must be so intertwined as to be viewed as part of the whole that makes up a university. In brief, libraries need to learn what they have been trying to teach their users for millennia – quality and timely information is as important to an academic's network as their colleagues and others with whom they socialize. [29]

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[28] Basefsky, S. (2006). **Mis-information at the heart of the university: Why administrators should take libraries more seriously**. Information Outlook, 10 (8), 15-19.
Available online at
Basefsky, S. (2006). **Mis-information at the heart of the university: Why administrators should take libraries more seriously**. Retrieved [insert date], from Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations site: http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/articles/87/

[29] LLRX.com
Proactive Leadership & The Role of Information: Identifying Strategic Networks of Information
By Stuart Basefsky, Published on April 12, 2009

There is a problem in perception of libraries that comes from the fact that the university thinks of the library as a "thing" or a "place" rather than a set of services run by skilled and learned individuals. Libraries are, in fact, less important than the librarians and information technologists who through their learning and skills bring collected and organized and even chaotic information into play. The abilities that enable these specialists to "enhance serendipity" (my definition of librarianship) are what make these professionals true academics worthy of academic standing. To make it possible for faculty and researchers to discover useful information that they do not initially seek is the miracle work of librarians (and now information technologists). This has always been true.

The challenge, as I see it, is to keep librarians from undermining themselves. Libraries cannot afford to hide behind technology by creating passive services that emphasize access over real contact with real researchers. Technology permits the kind of contacts that create and enhance social networks of which the librarian and information technologist must be a part. However, creative contacts must include working with real people in clever ways. For example, in order to attract and retain top faculty some librarians and/or information technologists could be assigned to these targeted individuals and even written into their employment contracts as their "personal information trainers."[30] Rather than being viewed as part of the infrastructure, librarians and IT personnel could become an employee benefit.

In any event, new technologies such as those designed to create IRs can be utilized in far more creative ways to enhance the research endeavor. I hope, therefore, to see the end of institutional repositories as we know them and the beginnings of a social academic research service. If done properly, there will be an enhanced role for libraries and a bright future for them as well.

Note: There is an irony in that by fostering a "social academic research service," libraries will be making IRs more useful and attractive inadvertently as seen in the Catherwood Library example. As a result, the universities will get greater value out of their investment. Libraries will then be seen as agents of change, pushing their institutions forward.[31]

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http://www.llrx.com/features/proactiveleadership.htm

[30] Basefsky, S. (2007). The personal information trainer. Information Outlook, 11(11), 10-17.
Available online at
Basefsky, S. (2007). The personal information trainer. Retrieved [insert date], from Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations site: http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/articles/126

[31] Basefsky, S. (1999). **The library as an agent of change: Pushing the client institution forward**. Information Outlook, 3, 37-40.
Available online at
Basefsky, S. (1999). **The library as an agent of change: Pushing the client institution forward**. Retrieved [insert date] from Cornell University, ILR School site: http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/articles/189/