

ITHAKA S+R

# ORGANIZING THE WORK OF THE RESEARCH LIBRARY

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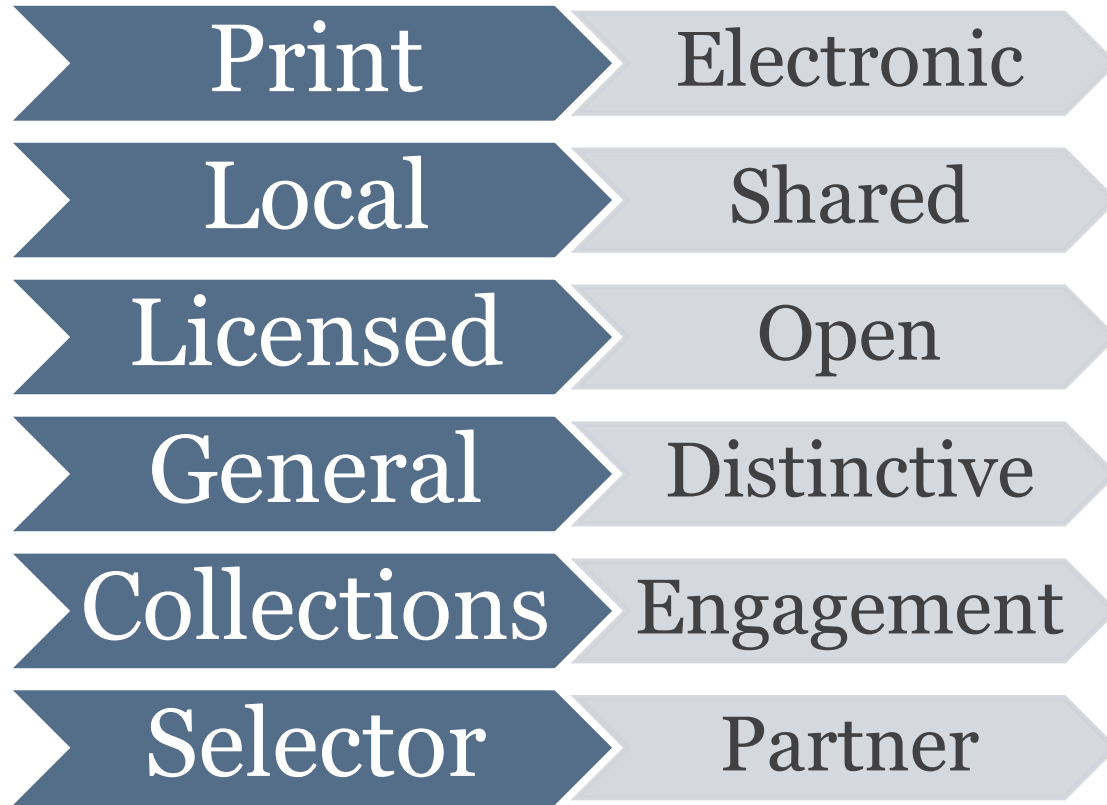


# ITHAKA S+R: LIBRARIES AND SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

## *Areas of research and consulting*

- Surveys of faculty members and students
- Qualitative and ethnographic studies for libraries
- Content and collections, discovery and access
- Organizational strategy and leadership

# RADICAL TRANSFORMATIONS



*The research library is today moving away from organizational structures and management practices centered around building and supporting the general collection.*

# WHY DOES STRUCTURE MATTER?

- Foster team relationships
- Establish accountability
- Organize budget
- Create incentives

# SCOPE AND APPROACH

Interviews with sitting and recently retired library directors

Emphasis on the largest research institutions

Selected for institutions and leaders believed to have been innovating organizational structure

# INTERVIEWEES

- Martha Bedard, University of Connecticut, previously University of New Mexico
- Jon Cawthorne, West Virginia University
- Carol Diedrichs, Ohio State University, previously University of Kentucky
- Charles Eckman, University of Miami, previously Simon Fraser University
- Geneva Henry, George Washington University
- Lorraine Haricombe, University of Texas Austin, previously University of Kansas
- Wendy Lougee, University of Minnesota
- Rick Luce, University of Oklahoma, previously Emory University, Los Alamos National Laboratory
- Brian Lym, Adelphi University
- James Neal, retired from Columbia University, previously Johns Hopkins University and Indiana University
- Sarah Pritchard, Northwestern University, previously University of California Santa Barbara and Smith College
- MacKenzie Smith, University of California Davis
- Carla Stoffle, retired from University of Arizona
- Gary Strong, retired from University of California Los Angeles, previously Queens Library
- Ed van Gemert, University of Wisconsin, Madison
- Kay Wall, retired from Clemson University, previously University of Southern Mississippi
- Karen Williams, University of Arizona
- Elizabeth (Betsy) Wilson, University of Washington

*Does structure  
enable strategy?*



# THE ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR

## Variations

- Titles and responsibilities
- Vision and facilitation
- Areas of functional focus
- Trust



# LEADERSHIP TEAM

## Organizational leaders, not unit managers

- Inheriting vs building
- Lowering the management burden
- Managing towards a strategy
- The unit and the organization
- Leadership throughout the organization
- Reaching deeper
- Hierarchies vs. teams



# RETHINKING COLLECTIONS

## Reduce licensing, increase distinctiveness

- Linked with scholarly communications or materials processing?
- A budget manager or a people manager?
- Combine special and general collections to empower a strategic shift?
- Separate curatorial functions from bulk acquisitions?
- Cross-institutional collaboration?



# REIMAGINING OUTREACH

## Innovating new services

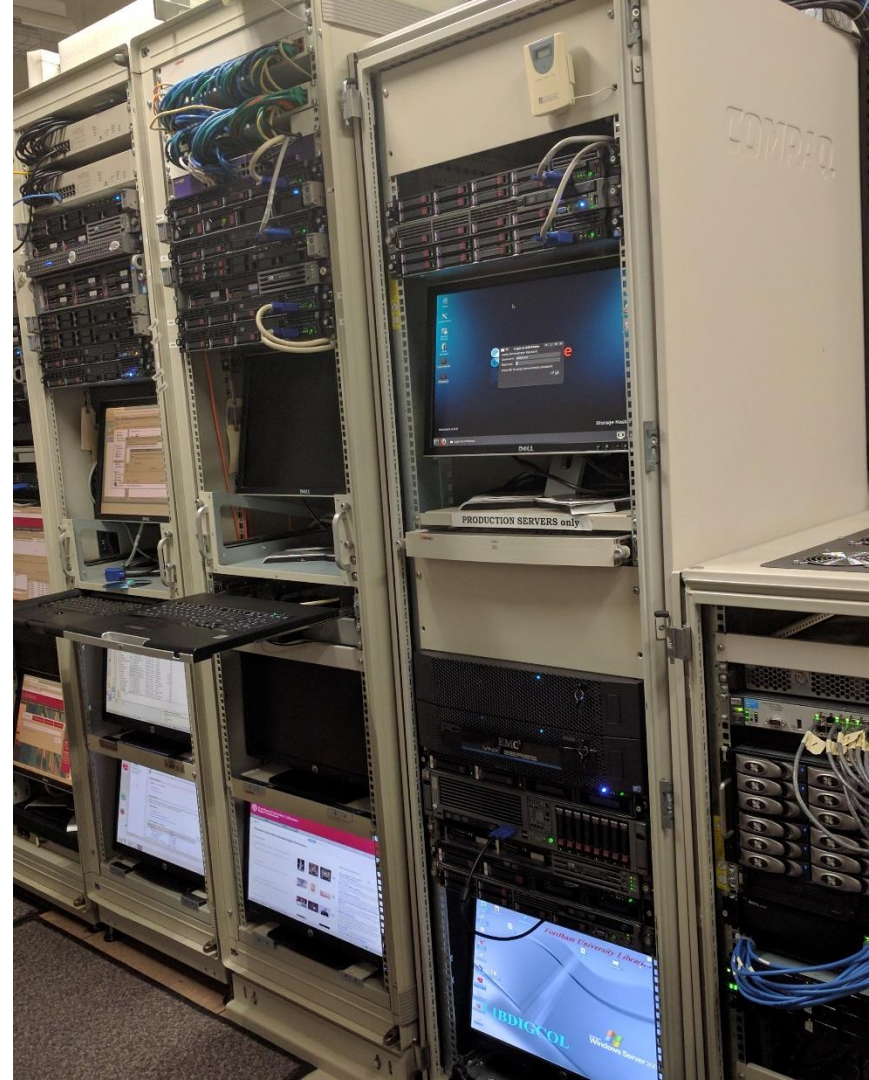
- As place-based outreach fades, disconnects grow?
- Discipline-based common, but limitations of the liaison model
- Community-based a different approach



# REDESIGNING TECHNOLOGY

A “black box” or the strategic heart of the organization?

- Own vs outsource
- Scope of the role - from systems to omnibus
- Product organization and Agile



# RESTRUCTURING

## Structure is contingent, not enduring

- Big Bang vs. regular realignment
- Inclusive process vs leadership vision
- Collective agreements, tenure, and other work rules can be seen as impediments



# REFLECTIONS

- Clear strategy yields smart structure.
  - Articulating strategic objectives with a high level of clarity is vital
- Empower employees across the organization
  - Not just culture but also structure
- Technology is giving way to technology-enabled services
  - Organization and management is catching up
- Universities are driven by research excellence and/or student success
  - Realigning the library is essential

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*THANK YOU*

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