

James A. Gibson Library STRATEGIC PLAN

April 2009

INTRODUCTION

The James A. Gibson Library plays a unique role in the academic life of the University. It supports and enriches the University's mandate to foster innovative teaching and research by facilitating and enhancing the scholarly, creative, and professional pursuits of its students, faculty, and staff, as well as those of the community at large. The Library provides rich digital and print collections, individual and collaborative learning spaces, as well as expert instruction and research assistance to students and faculty. It promotes learning, encourages the development of life-long inquiry skills, and supports the quest for new insights and the creation of new knowledge.

This strategic plan will guide and inform decision-making, provide benchmarks to measure success and ensure that the Library's direction and initiatives are aligned with *Brock 2014*, the academic plan of the University.

VISION

As the intellectual crossroads of the University, the Library will be a leader in the integration of information, services, and technologies that are essential to teaching, learning, and the creation of knowledge. We will promote a culture of learning and innovation among our staff and our users, and will create a sense of place, both physical and virtual, to support reading and reflection, research, and the exploration and exchange of ideas.

MISSION

To advance research, teaching and learning at Brock by providing information resources and user-centred services of the highest possible quality, and by seeking continuously to exceed the expectations of our diverse user groups.

STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Library operates in a dynamic and rapidly changing environment with abundant opportunities and challenges. It is well positioned to take advantage of new opportunities by building on its current strengths. These include a knowledgeable and committed staff; the ability to expand its information offerings by participating in consortium agreements; its partnership in Scholars Portal, an innovative and evolving platform that allows for the delivery of a range of crucial services; a strong technology infrastructure; a well-established liaison model between the Library and faculty to provide enhanced support for teaching, learning and research; promising collaborative relationships with other units on campus to develop new initiatives in support of teaching, learning and research; and the opportunity to establish stronger ties with the community at large by promoting the Library's unique resources and services.

At the same time, the Library faces a number of significant challenges. Examples of these include: the need for ongoing base budget increases for collections so that the Library can provide the necessary scholarly resources to meet the increased needs of graduate programs and faculty research; additional professional staff to respond to the needs of interdisciplinary programs at all levels and to provide specialized support to graduate studies and scholarly research as the University evolves into a research intensive institution; the rapid rate of technological change and resulting early obsolescence; heightened user expectations for functionality, convenience and seamless access to information; the ongoing need to develop innovative new services; and the importance of reconfiguring physical and virtual spaces to support the many ways in which today's faculty and students pursue their activities.

Like academic libraries everywhere, the Brock Library functions in a social environment where the availability of information is widely taken for granted and assumed by many to be free. It will be critical for the Library to continue to seek innovative ways to respond to this challenge, and to deepen its understanding of user needs in order to promote and market its resources, services and particular strengths to its varied constituencies through traditional and emerging communication channels. The Library's Marketing Plan (see Appendix) is designed to enhance and focus its communication initiatives and ensure that they are consistent with the University brand

STRATEGIC PLANNING THEMES AND GOALS

The following five strategic planning themes and related goals reflect the Library's engagement as an active partner in the activities and strategic academic directions of the University.

1. INFORMATION RESOURCES

Acquire, manage, preserve and facilitate the discovery of information resources that support the diverse teaching, learning and research activities of the Brock community.

GOAL 1.1 Continue to increase the breadth, depth and variety of digital scholarly information resources and ensure ongoing perpetual access whenever possible.

- GOAL 1.2 Place particular emphasis on acquiring and expanding access to statistical, geospatial and health datasets as well as digital media.
- GOAL 1.3 Support the ongoing development of Scholars Portal to ensure that it continues to serve as a robust, innovative platform for the delivery of scholarly information.
- GOAL 1.4 Expand digitization initiatives to create searchable collections of selected unique resources to enhance their accessibility and increase their use in teaching, learning and research.
- GOAL 1.5 Apply current and emerging technologies to increase access, reduce complexity, and promote discovery of information resources.

2. TEACHING AND LEARNING

Partner with faculty to embed information resources and services into the teaching and learning activities of the University in order to engage students both inside and outside the classroom, to extend and develop students' critical thinking abilities, and to promote lifelong learning.

- GOAL 2.1 Broaden the scope of information literacy initiatives to include numeracy as it relates in particular to statistical, numeric and geospatial data.
- GOAL 2.2 Expand co-teaching activities with faculty, peer librarians, and Learning Commons partners for the development and delivery of effective library instruction.
- GOAL 2.3 Develop a broad array of instructional delivery approaches (e.g. in-person, online, distance, individual, group, interactive, guest lectures, synchronous, and asynchronous).
- GOAL 2.4 Seek to adapt, tailor and promote library instruction offerings to different disciplinary contexts and environments.
- GOAL 2.5 Support the enhancement of librarians' instructional skills and capabilities through the availability of professional development resources and opportunities.

3. RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Strengthen the integration of library resources and services with the University's research and graduate studies activities to foster an intellectual climate that promotes discovery, increases research productivity and enhances the success of graduate students.

- GOAL 3.1 Enable and support scholarly communication trends to facilitate open access initiatives and promote the dissemination of research and scholarship.
- GOAL 3.2 Provide services and resources to enhance support for individual, collaborative and interdisciplinary research environments for graduate students and faculty.

- GOAL 3.3 Assist graduate students to master subject-specific research methods and acquire disciplinary knowledge.
- GOAL 3.4 Partner with faculty in the production and dissemination of research.
- GOAL 3.5 Celebrate successful research and creative activities by faculty and graduate students.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Foster an inclusive environment of learning and innovation where staff provide outstanding service, support and engage in scholarship, and share a strong commitment to the Library's success.

- GOAL 4.1 Strengthen staff development, expand training and mentoring programs and promote awareness of trends and best practices.
- GOAL 4.2 Develop a multi-year staffing plan that is consistent with the Library's priorities and the University's strategic goals.
- GOAL 4.3 Develop a robust culture of assessment to support the ongoing review and renewal of library activities, measure their impact and demonstrate the value of the Library to the University community.

5. LEARNING SPACES

Develop the Library as a centre of learning by creating vibrant and inviting physical and virtual spaces that promote collaboration, social networking, as well as private study and reflection.

- GOAL 5.1 Increase the number and quality of study spaces throughout the Library to support multiple uses, users, and learning styles.
- GOAL 5.2 Collaborate with Learning Commons partners to promote experimentation and the creation of an academic environment that is conducive to social learning, the exchange of ideas and individual reflection.
- GOAL 5.3 Develop a space management plan that addresses the longer term needs for learning and teaching spaces as well as physical collections.
- GOAL 5.4 Continue to develop and renew the information technology infrastructure in order to promote innovation and facilitate the customization of resources and services in response to user expectations and at the point of user need.



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APPENDIX

James A. Gibson Library Marketing Plan 2008-2010

I. a) Marketing Libraries: Issues and Implications

Research libraries are in the midst of a period of swift and significant transformation. The growth in electronic information has shifted the way in which research is conducted in academe, and has created both challenges and opportunities for academic libraries. Communicating a library's resources and services to diverse groups of users, many of whom lack awareness and may never physically enter the library building, is essential. It is also an exciting time to market libraries, as channels of communication have developed in compelling ways.

Beyond changes in technology, libraries have also struggled in communicating a clear message about what it is they provide to users. Lynne Brindley, CEO of the British Library, articulated the importance of establishing a clear message in 2006: "It is imperative that we, as the custodians of the world's knowledge create our own vision and contribution to this desired future by re-defining the library to be relevant for this and future generations."

b) **Brock University: Context**

The environment at Brock University is also changing; the new academic plan "Brock 2014: Knowledge, Engagement, Transformation" places an increased emphasis on research, graduate studies, interdisciplinary approaches, and community engagement. In addition, Brock will have a unique brand identity in the higher education marketplace, based on a branding process to be completed during 2008.

In this evolving environment, the James A. Gibson Library is in a strong position to advance teaching, learning, and research at Brock University. By providing unique and extensive information resources, diverse learning spaces, and user-centred services of the highest

¹ Brindley, L. Re-defining the Library (Keynote address to the Bielefeld Conference 2006) *Library Hi Tech, 24,* 484-495

² http://www.brocku.ca/secretariat/senate/agendae/2008-01-23/ACADEMICPLAN.pdf

possible quality, the Library will be an integral part of the research, teaching and learning at Brock University.

c) Purpose of the Marketing Plan

Moving forward, the Library will strive to be recognized as a vital and integral partner in research, teaching and learning at Brock University. The broad goals and strategies set out in this plan will provide focus and direction to the Library's Communication and Marketing Working Group for the next three years. Detailed action plans, based on the goals and strategies outlined in the marketing plan, will be developed each spring for the upcoming academic year.

II. Marketing the James A. Gibson Library

a) Audience

The Library exists to benefit a diverse set of people. The primary clientele are members of the Brock community: current students (graduate & undergraduate), faculty members, and staff. Promotion of our services and resources to Brock students, faculty, and staff is ongoing and includes (but is not limited to) contact through liaison librarians and other library staff, the Library's website, print publications (e.g. *Library News*), and communication through campus-wide publications (e.g. *Brock News*).

Potential exists for marketing to groups beyond the Library's primary clientele, but the main focus for the three-year plan will be on the Brock community.

b) Goals and Objectives

> Define key messages to position the Library in support of the Brock brand

- Involve library staff in the development of the messages and key proof points (and encourage use of the message in communication with users)
- Ensure the message is recognized by and resonates with the Brock community
- Create strategic, professional marketing materials that reflect the Library's position statement and key messages (e.g. brochures, web communications.)

➤ Increase the visibility of the Library in the Brock community

- Expand upon existing liaison activities with academic departments on campus through increased visibility of liaison librarians and a multifaceted presence (inperson visits, course management-system, etc.)
- Partner with University Communications to link library marketing with relevant campus events and initiatives
- Create marketing materials and exploit complimentary vendor tools to promote collections

> Expand upon existing channels of communication and explore new methods of reaching users

- Enhance the Library's website, consistent with the Brock brand, to promote the discovery of resources and services
- Examine new tools for marketing (e.g. social networking, peer to peer, flickr, podcasting)
- Concentrate on promoting word of mouth marketing to communicate information about the Library's resources and services

➤ Generate positive public relations for the Library

- Pursue continued assessment and feedback from our users, using new techniques for soliciting feedback
- Share positive stories about the Library user testimonials, initiatives, staff research
- · Align the Library with the concepts of life-long learning and love of reading

Measuring Success

The success of marketing initiatives may be difficult to measure in quantitative terms, but is essential to consider. Depending on the initiative and the audience, the Communications and Marketing Working Group might examine/measure: website statistics, database usage, library comments (web, paper, anecdotal), focus groups, and/or media (on campus & beyond).

Establishing a library advisory group would provide an opportunity for immediate feedback on marketing initiatives. Each marketing initiative that is developed will include one or more measures to assess impact and success.

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