Making information and services available in new and virtual environments: research support in ODL environments

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Content

• Introduction
• Context
• Response of the academy
• UNISA experiences
• Conclusion
“The library is the heart of the university”
C.W. Eliot president of Harvard University, 1869

“In a digital age what is the value of investing in a library infrastructure?” 2006 and 2011
Evolution (revolution) of libraries
Scholarship environments
MIT Research

• Collaboration

Two students work on a laptop at the African Leadership Academy in Honeydew, Johannesburg, South Africa. Photograph: Per-Anders Pettersson/Getty Images
Worldmapper: Science Research

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RESPONSE OF THE ACADEMY
Research Strategy

• Establishing RS
• Alignment with
  – International Research agenda
  – National research strategy
• Resources and investment
• Restructuring institutions
Infrastructure

- **VLE**
  - Teaching and learning
  - Resources
  - Social media tools

- **VRE**
  - Research
  - Supporting research cycle:
    - Research administration
    - Discovery, collection and analysis
    - Communication
    - Scholarly publishing
How will libraries respond?
UNISA EXPERIENCES
Strategic alignment

- UNISA 2015 Revisited
- Located in IOP 2010-2012
- LOP expression institutional goals
- Services informed by LOP
- Services standards set
Online support

- myUnisa
  - Departmental websites (academic staff & researchers)
  - College websites (M and D students)

- Unisa Library
myUnisa Departmental websites

• Announcements regarding training, library events, etc.
• Budget allocations, IR information, Alerting and SDI services, etc.
• RSS Feeds from various tools
• Additional features such as blogs, scientific websites, etc.
myUnisa College websites

• M and D support
  – Content includes: information bibliographic referencing tools, how to use the library as a M and D student, using ILL, how to set up alerts, plagiarism, research skills presentation, etc.
SBL eds – links to relevant library information, guidelines and tutorials relevant to the SBL’s MBL / MBA Programme

Each of these contain further content

Allows for answering queries or participating in discussions
One click within myUnisa takes the academic straight to the journal selected.
The “one click” principle also applies to the other resources listed, for example subject specific case studies.
E-content

• Over 65,000 e-book titles, including e-reference sources, now a permanent collection assets for the Library.

• Total of 69,867 unique e-journal titles
Archival Material & Special Collections on IR

- Inventories available online
- Digitisation project
  - Correspondence
  - Art work
  - Posters

Letter by MK Gandhi (January 1909)  The work of Jeanne Kotze Louw
OPEN ACCESS: INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORY
Unisa Institutional Repository

• An open digital archive of scholarly intellectual and research outputs of Unisa
Videos, papers, records, inaugural lectures, photos, etc.
RESEARCH SUPPORT VIA MOBILE TECHNOLOGY
AirPAC

• Students can request, view, renew, etc, books & articles via AirPAC
• The smartphone version of AirPAC was launched in 2011
sms notifications to acknowledge requests & progress
Satisfaction surveys & Needs studies

• Via SurveyMonkey and mobile phone
SERVICE TO PRINT CHALLENGED
Students with visual impairment

• Conversion:
  – print to e-format for blind students using EyePal and Plustek Book Reader to make material accessible.
  – PDF into audio, txt, rtf, etc, using EasyConverter for blind and other students upon request.
Assistive technology on the move

• Items that can be requested
Students with dyslexia

• Students with dyslexia can request the ClassMate Audio Book Reader, a device designed to improve reading skills, developing and understanding vocabulary, while promoting phonetic recognition and fluency.
FINALLY......
Setting the direction....
Impact

• Performance targets and measured annually
• SSI
• Peer review regularly
Concluding remarks

• Great times for information professionals as they embark on a shared journey as partners
• Alignment with Teaching and Learning, and Research Strategy critical
• Impact of services
• Leadership in own area of expertise
Thank you for your attention... and questions

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