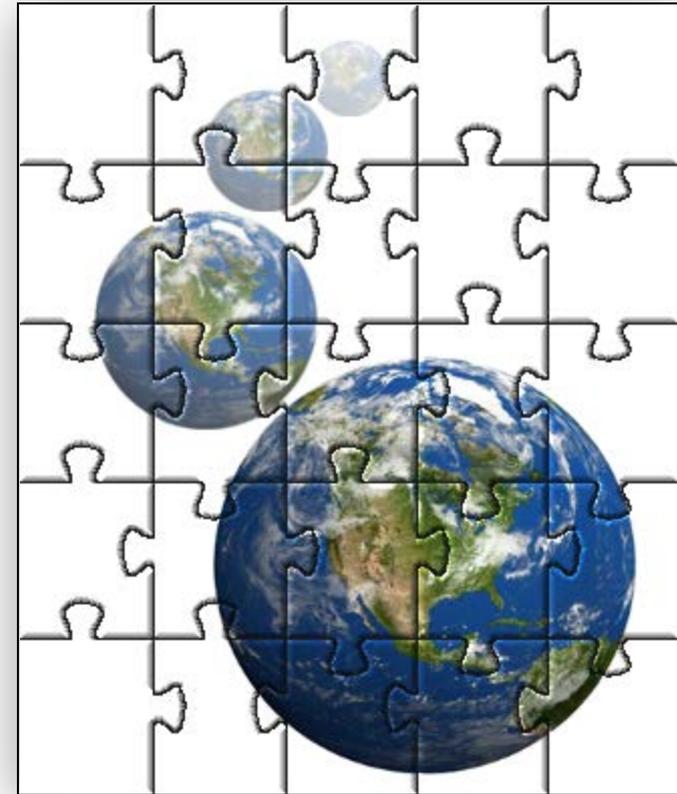


Mapping & Making the Future(s) of Archives

Anticipating & Preparing for Challenges & Opportunities



Chuck Thomas

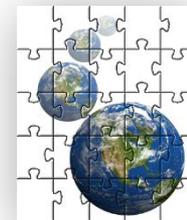
cthomas@usmd.edu

Challenges

“For all archives, developments in technologies and user expectations mean that delivering the same services in the same way as in the past is not an option.”

- UK National Archives. *Archives for the 21st century in action: refreshed 2012-15*

- **Tremendous potential value in archives & special collections but...**
- **Even maintaining status quo requires sustained funding**
- **Status quo is not sufficient**
 - ✓ Continuing shift to primarily digital modes of info production and use
 - ✓ Challenges of managing digital information
 - ✓ Rapidly evolving service expectations
 - ✓ User perspective = functional consolidation of information providers
- **Growing disconnects with users and other stakeholders**
- **New resources needed, but new \$ not likely for many**
- **How do we break this cycle?**



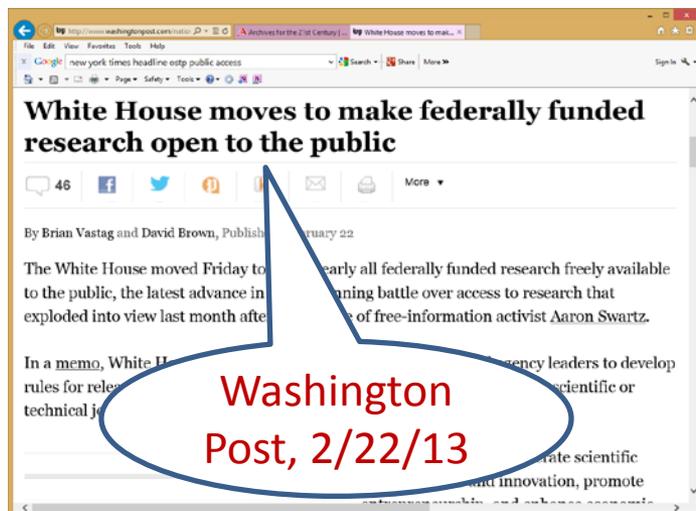
Challenges

PARADOX

Archives are loved, but are under-funded because “just in case” is not good enough justification for funders faced with hard choices – even for archives with mandates.

Other “just in case” services are funded (e.g. emergency response) because the alternative too costly.

Mandates for pres./access strategies are increasing in some broad sectors.



Meanwhile...ongoing research (Dryden, et al.) shows Disconnect between archives' mandate to make holdings available and attempts to control further uses. Onsite practices have been taken online without evaluating suitability for the digital environment Archives attempt to control uses of holdings for reasons other than copyright

“Archives can be sustained only by being flexible and innovative in response to challenges dictated by the economic climate.”

-Ibid.

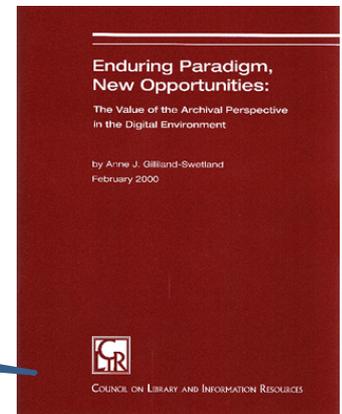


Challenges

Important to acknowledge past collective work by COSA, SAA, & others, but...

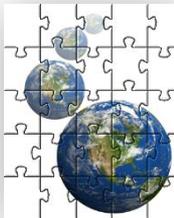
- Landscape is changing around us very quickly.
- Time to embrace the access function more intentionally.
- Time to not try new ways to solve the digital problem – but not by ourselves
- Look to past for a general “mission statement”

... long-term preservation of information in digital form requires ... building of a new culture that values and supports the survival of bits over time. This requires that a diverse community of experts. —Lyman and Besser (1998)



Chuck Thomas @chas_thomas

#sfa2013 Archives have to make some tough choices. True or False?



How?

Innovation – What Is It?

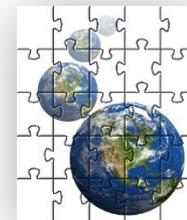
- Significant, non-incremental improvements in products, services, internal processes
- “Turning knowledge into value”
 - ✓ Market value – most commonly used definition of value/innovation
 - ✓ Quality of life

Innovation – What does it look like?

- Creative (new idea or borrowed from another domain)
- Based on a need – tied to organizational or user needs
- Replicable – not too esoteric
- Measurable – Clear indicators, measurements to help evaluate impact

Innovation – Where to start?

- Watch the “watchers” – leverage work of others who scan environments
- Note trends/opportunities
- Intentionally ask how this affects your organizations, users, other actors
- Scenario planning → Gap analysis between now and possible future(s)



How?

Combine Scenario Thinking & Environmental Scanning

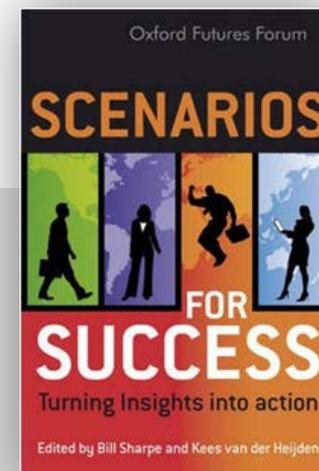
“Future Mapping” (provenance?) = combining many partial visions into a shared, discussed collection of possible scenarios, and preparing for them

“Scenario thinking has stood the test of time as an approach to organizing thinking about the future...that can be built up into a repeatable practice.”

Three keys to success (paraphrased):

- Understand relationships may change, and desire to prepare for it.
- Follow through with design & testing new models with changed relationships, agents.
- Strong involvement of leadership – changing dominant practice.

Sharpe & van der Heijden, 2007. *Scenarios for Success: Turning Insights Into Action*. NY: Wiley & Sons, Inc.



Watching The Watchers

Things To Watch

- Collect data from multiple primary and secondary sources
- Attention to potential disruptors, assets, stakeholders, impacts
- Attention to emerging policy issues
- Attention to emerging practices
- Attention to new funded initiatives
- Attention to new agents, competitors and relationships

Watch Known Agents Within Your Known Environment

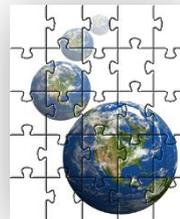
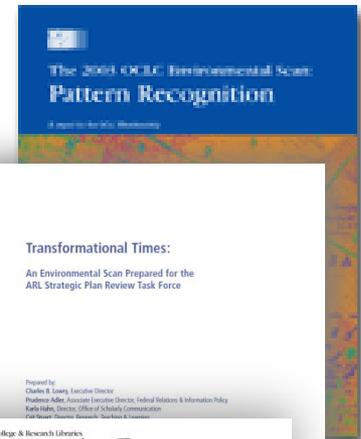
- SAA, NEH, IMLS, NHPRC, ALA, OCLC, ARL, ACRL, CRL, CNI, etc.
- Research organizations & literature for archives

Watch Agents Outside Your Known Environment

- EDUCAUSE, New Media Consortium, Pew, EDUCAUSE, etc.

Questions

- *What scenarios might emerge?*
- *Would existing relationships/roles change among stakeholders?*
- *Impact on our organization and users?*



Example 1

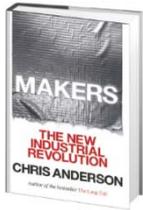


New Media Consortium, 2013.
NMC Horizon Project Short List: Higher Education Edition

New Media Consortium, 2012.
NMC Horizon Project Short List: Museum Edition

- Flipped Concept of Learning
 - Lecture(r) is no longer primary driver of learning
- Spread of MOOCs/Informal/ Self-Directed Learning
 - Need new types services & content presentation
- Mobile Apps, Tablet Computing, Natural Interfaces
 - Preference for using personal devices & tools
- Augmented Reality
 - New connections real world & networked info
- Games-Based Learning
 - Collab./comm., critical thinking, problem solving
- Internet of things
 - Ambient networks of sensors/objects
- Learning Analytics
 - Ability to customize instruction
- Super-rich Online Repositories
 - Content, metadata, collaboration spaces
- **They missed one:**

Did you see these?





Example 2

ARL, 2009. *Transformational Times: An Environmental Scan*

- Budget cuts continue
- Information environment (content, creators, users) grows increasingly complex
- IHEs seek greater ownership and dissemination rights to academy's products
- Library digital services growing increasingly diverse
- Funders encouraging more shareable cyberinfrastructure and data
- Increasing difficulty balancing privacy, access, robust and customized functionality
- Accountability and assessment growing more important
- Big shifts in research practices (digital humanities, e-science, etc.)
- Libraries repurposing content, services, tools to meet new demands
- Changes in pedagogy
- Incremental library change not enough to keep pace with new demands

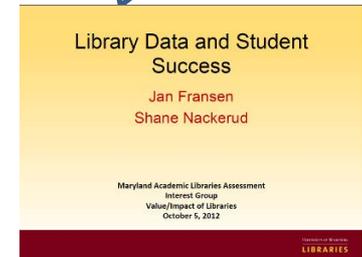
- “Libraries need to change their practices for managing traditional content and develop new capabilities for dealing with digital materials of all types...”
- “Accountability and assessment are essential...”
- “Radical reconfiguration of research library organizations and services is needed...”
- “New relationships must be formed with users...”



Example 3

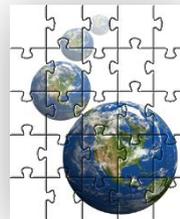


ACRL, 2012. 2012 Top Ten Trends In Academic Libraries. *C&RL News*, 73(6), 311-320



(forthcoming article April 2013)

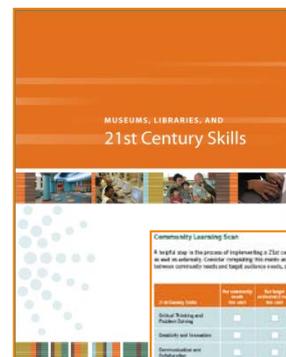
- Communicating Value
- Data Curation
- Digital Preservation
- Higher Education – “Disrupting College”
- IT – gaming, social media, etc. challenge library capabilities
- Mobile environments
- Patron Driven Acquisitions of e-books
- Library-based scholarly publishing (community of practice)
- Staffing – demand for skills in digital mgmt, research assistance, student instruction
- Convenient, immediate access trumps other considerations



Measuring

Archives may need to reconceive the ways they report performance and accountability, and tie it to how well they are supporting parent organizational goals.

- What value is being produced?
- Which functions/services can be most easily tied to funder mission & goals?
- Which functions/services are harder to tie and measure?
- Are there roles/functions our archive should relinquish to free up resources for other work?



**MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES, AND
21st Century Skills**

Community Learning Scan

A helpful step in the process of implementing a 21st century skills action plan is to align your institution's efforts internally as well as externally. Consider comparing the results in a table of assessing the community's learning system, understanding between community needs and target audience needs, and locating the role of the library/museum within this perspective.

21st Century Skills	Do community needs align with the target audience's needs?	Do you have the resources to meet the target audience's needs?	Do you have the expertise to meet the target audience's needs?	Do you have the infrastructure to meet the target audience's needs?	Do you have the staff to meet the target audience's needs?
Adult Training and Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collection and Information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication and Outreach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities and Physical Access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities/Physical Access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book Libraries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community, Media, and Technology Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life and Career Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning Resources, Research, and Engagement Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open Access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check you have completed the table, you should have a helpful snapshot of which skills are needed for your community and your institution, and a list of potential partners. Each table, you can better understand which areas should be focused upon immediately and subsequently for your overall 21st century skills efforts.



Summary

- Multiple tipping points on the horizons for archives
- Archives under enormous pressure to change, but new resources are scarce
- Key to successful response is anticipating and preparing for changes:
 - Understand and desire to prepare for it.
 - Design & test new models with changed relationships, agents.
 - Strong involvement of leadership – changing dominant practice.
- Time is right for re-examination of traditional conceptions of archive's role.
- Much already exists to draw upon, mine, exploit, build upon...conversations could begin today
- Innovation – try new things.



Thank You.

Questions?

