



Learning Commons in Academic Libraries: Annotated Bibliography

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Scholarly Sources

Discussions of fee-based services:

Castell de, C. (2008). From loss to profit: Making fee-for-service successful: What does it take to turn a fee-for-service research division at a public library from barely break-even to profitable? *Information Outlook*, 12(9), 11-14.

With a focus on the Vancouver Public Library, Castell discusses the avenues for implementing successful and profitable fee-based services. Principles of marketing are discussed and shown via practical examples. Overall, Castell argues that a given library must prove their value before implementing fee-based services and while delivering them.

Cloutier, C. (2005). Setting up a fee-based information service in an academic library. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 31(4), 332-38.

This article reviews the planning and implementation of fee-based services at the University of Calgary Library. Cloutier primarily reports the challenges associated with this form of service from client expectations to administrative issues. At the end of the document, various forms of fee-based services used by the U of C when delivering services are featured. In the conclusion Cloutier notes that despite challenges, financial gain is possible.

Helfer, D.S. (2002). Academic entrepreneurship: The HBS Library takes a lesson from the school it serves. *Searcher*, 10(4), 70.

This article discusses the Harvard Business School's fee-based service for alumni. After surveying alumni, HBS developed a website that allowed alumni to do their own searching for an annual subscription fee. Through negotiations with various vendors, the HBS was able to provide access to databases that suited alumni needs.

Jenda, C. (2000). Fee-based services: A SPEC kit. *Association of Research Libraries*. Retrieved March 20, 2009 from <http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/spec259web.pdf>.

Compiled in 2000, this report features various universities' fee-based services (including McMaster, Western and Guelph). In order to gather data, a survey was distributed to 121 ARL libraries. Of the 121 libraries surveyed, 61% indicated that they provide fee-based services. Besides reviewing a few of the fee-based services offered by some of the universities surveyed (including business intelligence research services, though no further details are provided), recommendations are proposed and a list of references are noted. Only a portion of this report is offered online, however. I'm assuming that the Association of Research Libraries will need to be contacted if one desires the entire report.

Marfleet, J. (2006). Roadmap for the future-where to next? Future provision of business information services at the British Library. *Business Information Review*, 23(4), 258-263.

Marfleet discusses fee-based services provided by the "British Library Business and Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC)." BIPC offers workshops, an "Ask an Expert" service, consultation services, access to a dynamic collection and electronic resources, online inquiry service, liaising events, as well as a fee-based research service. Overall, this article provides a sweeping overview of some viable services for business clientele.

Richard Ye, L., et al. (2004). Fee-Based online services: Exploring consumers' willingness to pay. *Journal of International Technology and Information Management*, 13(2), 133-141.

This study explores consumer attitudes towards fee-based online services. The results of the study reveal that more consumers are willing to pay for services that are qualitatively better than free services. However, there is a strong belief that currently free services should remain free. Richard Ye et al. argue that businesses should reveal the actual cost of certain services so that consumers understand the value of certain fee-based services. See appendix for survey instrument.

Ward, S.M., et al. (2002). Library fee-based information services: financial considerations. *The Bottom Line: Managing Library Finances*, 15(1), 5-17.

Ward et al. highlight fee-based services offered at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Rice University and Purdue University. They also explore the major financial considerations involved in starting a new fee-based service, and examine internet opportunities and partnerships that could generate revenue. Fee-based services discussed include custom research (e.g., technical and competitive intelligence information, and in-depth literature reviews), and document delivery.

Discussions of learning commons more generally:

Beagle, D. (1999). Conceptualizing an information commons. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 25(2), 82.

A founding article, Beagle outlines the theoretical framework associated with information commons. Moreover, Beagle argues that academic libraries must consider providing services besides the traditional reference desk. He outlines the collaborative nature of information commons, and notes that services within an information commons environment must be amalgamated in academic libraries of the future.

Bennett, S. (2007). Designing for uncertainty: Three approaches. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 33(2), 165-179.

Bennett discusses the motivations behind designing student oriented learning spaces. Using recent survey results, Bennett argues that there are three different motivations that influence the creation of information commons: the service and instructional approach, the marketing approach and the mission-based approach. Bennett primarily argues that the design of an information commons should relate to the institution's overall goals and the results of surveying or reviewing users' needs. (Note: See Bennett's other article entitled "First Questions for Designing Higher Education Learning Spaces" in the January 2007 issue of the *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 33(1), 14-26. This particular article proposes six questions the library administrators should consider before designing, constructing and renovating a given space.)

Bouthillier, F. (2003). Access to information for small business managers: Examination of some strategies and values. *Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science (CAIS)*, 27(3), 126-138.

Bouthillier argues that Small Business managers are not a homogeneous user group: "their strategies for accessing information are eclectic, iterative and [do not follow] a specific pattern" (p.136). Although this study does not focus on information commons or university/college students, it is still a relevant article because the users of the Burlington campus will have different information needs based on their maturity and/or backgrounds.

Bryant, J. et al. (2009), Academic libraries and social and learning space. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 41(1), 7-18.

Bryant argues that libraries should be producing data on the reception and success of information commons. She also argues that this data will inform future developments and design projects. Thus, she reports the findings of an ethnographic case study executed at Loughborough University Library. The study primarily assessed intrusions and interruptions, the pervasiveness of technology, the diversity of users, and the spatial organization within learning commons. Refer to page 15 for a condensed list of observations.

Cataldo, T.T., et al. (2006), The info commons concept: Assessing user needs. *Public Services Quarterly*. 2(4), 23-46.

This article details the implementation of information commons within the University of Florida's Social Sciences and Humanities library. Before the actual construction began, a task force conducted site visits, surveys, focus groups, and interviews to determine the needs of their user group. At the end of the document, a list of recommendations is outlined based on the task force's reflections. Also, includes an applicable list of references.

Dewey, B.I. (2008). Social, intellectual and cultural spaces: Creating compelling library environments for the digital age. *Journal of Library Administration*, 48(1), 85-94.

Dewey argues that physical and virtual spaces should support the changing needs of twenty-first-century students and scholars. Although Dewey primarily uses the University of Tennessee Libraries' Commons as an example, she also discusses examples of emerging or new spaces that connect users with collections and services in an innovative manner. At the end of the paper, Dewey notes that graduates and faculty are not necessarily serviced by the undergraduate friendly learning commons, and that virtual commons are the latest initiative for academic libraries. Finally, indicators of success and next steps for library transformation in the digital age conclude the paper.

Library as place, rethinking roles, rethinking space. (February 2005). *Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR)*. Retrieved March 18, 2009, from <http://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub129/pub129.pdf>

There are six distinctive articles within this report. The contributors explore library space and design. Overall they argue that good design involves stakeholders, reflects library missions, and is adaptive (and often risky). There is also a further readings section that is quite extensive.

MacWhinnie, L.S. (2003). The information commons: The academic library of the future. *Libraries and the Academy*, 32(2), 241-57.

This article is an overview of several information commons in the United States and Canada. MacWhinnie argues that academic institutions have taken a different approach to designing, funding and staffing information commons. MacWhinnie also discusses challenges associated with implementing an information commons and the need for ongoing evaluation.

Makani, J. & WooShue, W. (2006). Information seeking behaviours of business students and the development of academic digital libraries. *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice*, 1(4), 30-45.

Although this article does not focus specifically on information commons, the results of this study, conducted by Dalhousie University, are still relevant. Considering the information seeking behaviour of Business students, in relation to online sources, will certainly influence the services provided by the Burlington campus. Also, Makani and WooShue report that 77% of students desired free access to resources based on the gathered survey results (p.37-38).

Pomerantz, J. (2008). A user-centered evaluation of the North Carolina State University Libraries learning commons. *University of North Carolina School of Information and Library Science Theses and Dissertations*. Retrieved March 20, 2009, from <http://etd.ils.unc.edu:8080/dspace/handle/1901/540?mode=full>

Pomerantz investigates students' perceptions of the North Carolina State University Libraries Learning Commons. Using online and print surveys, input was gathered from students directly. Overall, the study revealed that students value the relaxed nature of the learning commons, the technological services offered, and the working areas. The level of noise and the availability of computers and seating were reported as issues.

Schmidt, N. & Kaufman, J. (2005). Learning commons: Bridging the academic and student affairs divide to enhance learning across campus. *Research Strategies*, 20(4), 242-56.

Schmidt and Kaufman discuss the theoretical and practical outcomes of implementing a learning commons at the University of Guelph. They specifically outline the models that inform service in this learning commons. They also note evaluation practices for assessing the commons and the challenges associated with its implementation.

Somerville, M.M. & Collins, L. (2008). Collaborative design: A learner-centered library planning approach. *Electronic Library*. 26(6), 803-20.

Somerville and Collins report that the San Jose State University involved stakeholders in a collaborative manner before implementing their learning commons. According to the authors, collaborative design (co-design) is a user-centric method that produces products, applications and environments that reflect the users' needs. They argue that collaborative design establishes a sustained interaction with beneficiaries and stakeholders during redesigns.

Spencer, M.E. Evolving a new model: The information commons. *Reference Services Review*, 34(2), 242-247.

This article aims to provide a historical context for the information commons model in college and university libraries, reviewing trends in reference services, user expectations, technology and facilities planning. It suggests future directions for expansion of the information commons model, provides URLs for notable information commons, and highlights some key questions that libraries should consider before implementing an information commons.

Whitchurch, M. & Belliston, C.J. & Baer, W. (2006). Information commons at Brigham Young University: Past, present, future. *Reference Services Review*. 34(2), 261-278.

This paper discusses the process and experience of the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University, including concept development, acceptance and implementation. In addition, the first 18 months of operation and future plans contained herein. One of the major themes of the paper is that change in an information commons is inevitable.

Websites

Examples of fee-based services & innovative ideas:

British Library Board. (n. d.). Document supply services. Retrieved March 27, 2009, from <http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/atyourdesk/docsupply/productsservices/researchservice/>

This website provides information about fee-based research services offered to customers who typically include people from corporate, small, and start-up businesses. They include: document delivery; literature searches; briefing reports; a current awareness service whereby updates on a given topic are regularly passed on to a customer; and training on research techniques. (These services could conceivably address the needs of business students in a similar manner.)

Harold B. Lee Library. (2009). Information Commons. Retrieved March 23, 2009, from <http://net.lib.byu.edu/gen/ic/>

This integrative technology facility in Provo, UT, provides students, faculty, teaching assistants and tutors with one central location where they can collaborate and assist one another. It includes individual and collaborative learning stations, creative learning rooms (i.e. technology enhanced group study rooms), and a multimedia area with a variety of digital technologies that can be checked out by patrons. They also offer free courses on a variety of computer software applications (see: <http://net.lib.byu.edu/courses/courses/courses.html>).

Harvard Business School. (2008). Alumni research support. Retrieved March 27, 2009, from <http://www.alumni.hbs.edu/pdf/Alum%20Research%20Supportfinal100808.pdf>

Knowledge and Library Services at HBS offer their graduates a number of services to support their on-going career research. These include research assistance by phone and email, as well as free, remote access to a handful of business databases (ABI/Inform, CareerSearch, Vault, and Factiva). Alumni can also purchase discounted subscriptions of OneSource for \$249/yr.

Indiana University-Bloomington. (2008). Information Commons/ Undergraduate Library Services home page. Retrieved March 24, 2009, from <http://www.libraries.iub.edu/index.php?pageId=310/>

This information commons offers undergraduates research consultations by appointment or at an “Ask Here” desk. They also offer individual and group workstations, IT help, computer consultants, free software classes, and technological support for students with disabilities.

J. Murrey Atkins Library. (2009). Information Commons. Retrieved March 19, 2009, from <http://library.uncc.edu/infocommons/>

The J. Murrey Atkins Library Information Commons offers typical features such as an information desk and reference services. In addition, they offer “Presentation support services,” where staff are available to assist with audiovisual and multimedia equipment in classrooms and study rooms. They also have support staff available to help with machine-readable data services.

Manchester Business School. (2006). Eddie Davis Library. Retrieved March 20, 2009, from <http://www.mbs.ac.uk/corporate/libraryservices/index.aspx>

This satellite library primarily services business faculty and postgraduate students. Among their services, they offer postal delivery for a small fee whereby students can obtain materials without having to come to the library itself. They also provide a number of free “enquiry services,” which include one-on-one consultations, information skills training sessions, interactive database user guides and an extensive online FAQ on business research to assist students 24/7.

University of Arizona Outreach College. (2008). Professional development. Retrieved March 20, 2009, from <http://www.ceao.arizona.edu/comped/>

The University of Arizona’s Outreach College offers a variety of fee-based professional development opportunities. Though these are not led by the library, it is conceivable that these could offer ideas for library-led (or facilitated) initiatives. Non-credit and certificate courses lasting between one and five days train participants in such things as Office 2007, Adobe Photoshop, web design, time management, business writing, and means of building a successful business using the Internet.

University of Auckland Library. (2009). Business Information Centre. Retrieved March 19, 2009, from <http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/subjects/bus/bic/>

The Business Information Centre is designed to assist postgraduates and staff of the University of Auckland Business School. On their website, they provide detailed information on how to arrange for research consultations with business and economics subject librarians. They also have a [Business Databases Room](#) where, in addition to offering spaces for quiet study, they hold workshops on such things as searching business databases, finding statistics, and using bibliographic management software. (They have also constructed a very dynamic, interactive online tutorial about business resources entitled [Business Information Skills Online](#).)

University of Southern California. (2009). CLiCC. Retrieved March 24, 2009, from <http://www.clicc.ucla.edu/>.

UCLA's College Library Instructional Computer Commons offers a number of computer labs and technologies for students and faculty. These include laptop carts, technologically enhanced classrooms, portable projector kits, and external hard drives.

University of Guelph. (2009). The Learning Commons. Retrieved March 24, 2009, from <http://www.learningcommons.uoguelph.ca/>

This learning commons provides students and faculty with a variety of notable programs. For instance, they facilitate a Supported Learning Groups program where students assist fellow peer with challenging course materials. As well, the Learning Commons is where you will find the Centre for Students with Disabilities, which offers specific software, services and technologies. For more information on the many learning services offered to students and faculty, refer here: http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/assistance/learning_services/

Yale University. (2007). Teaching and Learning Experimental Space. Retrieved March 24, 2009, from <http://www.library.yale.edu/cclexp/>

Offers students and faculty self-service equipment allowing them to reformat, create and incorporate digital materials into their teaching and studying. The experimental space may be used by small groups of students or faculty, where they can explore means of developing flexible learning environments through the positioning of furniture, the integration of various technologies, and trying various pedagogical strategies. Teaching services, language services, library and IT staff are available to assist and offer feedback.

Relevant online presentation:

Jorstad, J. A. (2007). Centers of excellence - creating innovative learning environments. Educause Connect. Retrieved March 18, 2009, from <http://connect.educause.edu/Library/Abstract/CentersofExcellenceCreati/48222>.

This video presentation by James Jorstad (Director of Educational Technologies, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse) underlines the significant correlation between learning space, learning process, and technology in innovative learning environments (aka “centers of excellence”). He emphasizes how students learn 24/7; as such, library spaces and technology needs to cater to this. In the first half of his talk he shows numerous examples of ways university libraries are making learning spaces more effective. These examples (from, for instance, Stanford, Kent State and UNLV) include creating effective spaces for group work using movable furniture, and adding a café. Notably, he refers to London Metropolitan University’s Graduate Centre. Here they feature a “learning studio,” much like a computer lab, where the computer monitors fold down into the table tops to create a more flexible workspace.