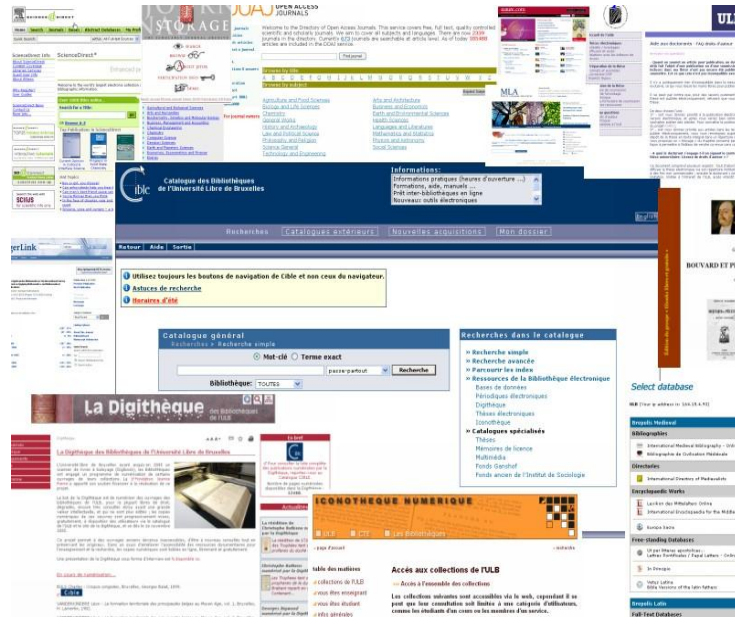


Matching services to user needs: Librarians meet scholars

UNICA Scholarly Communication Seminar
26 november 2012



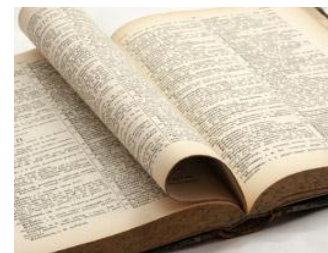
Google
Scholar BETA

Search

Stand on the shoulders of giants

[About Google Scholar](#) - [Google Home](#)

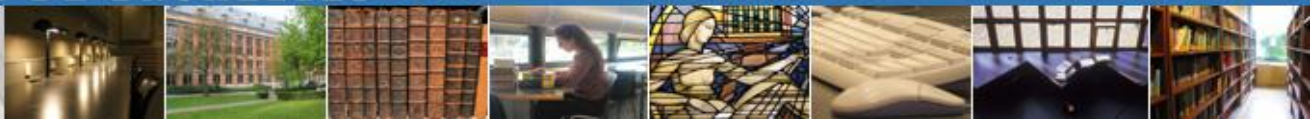
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Insight on the presentation

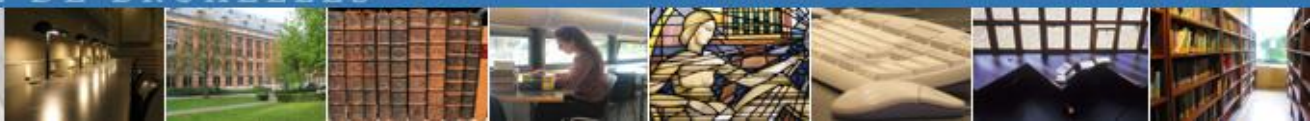
- Introduction
- Context and preliminary assumptions
- Organisation
- Outcomes and Findings
- Perspectives



Introduction

- In many disciplines researchers don't come anymore to the academic library as place
- However they use resources and services of it
- They know less and less about us
- It is more and more difficult to get in contact with them
- We don't know which is the image they have of the academic library





Introduction

- So let's take an initiative to resume relationships between librarians and scholars
- That is what we did: we organised meetings between researchers and librarians in order to know each other better
- This is a short presentation of this experiment

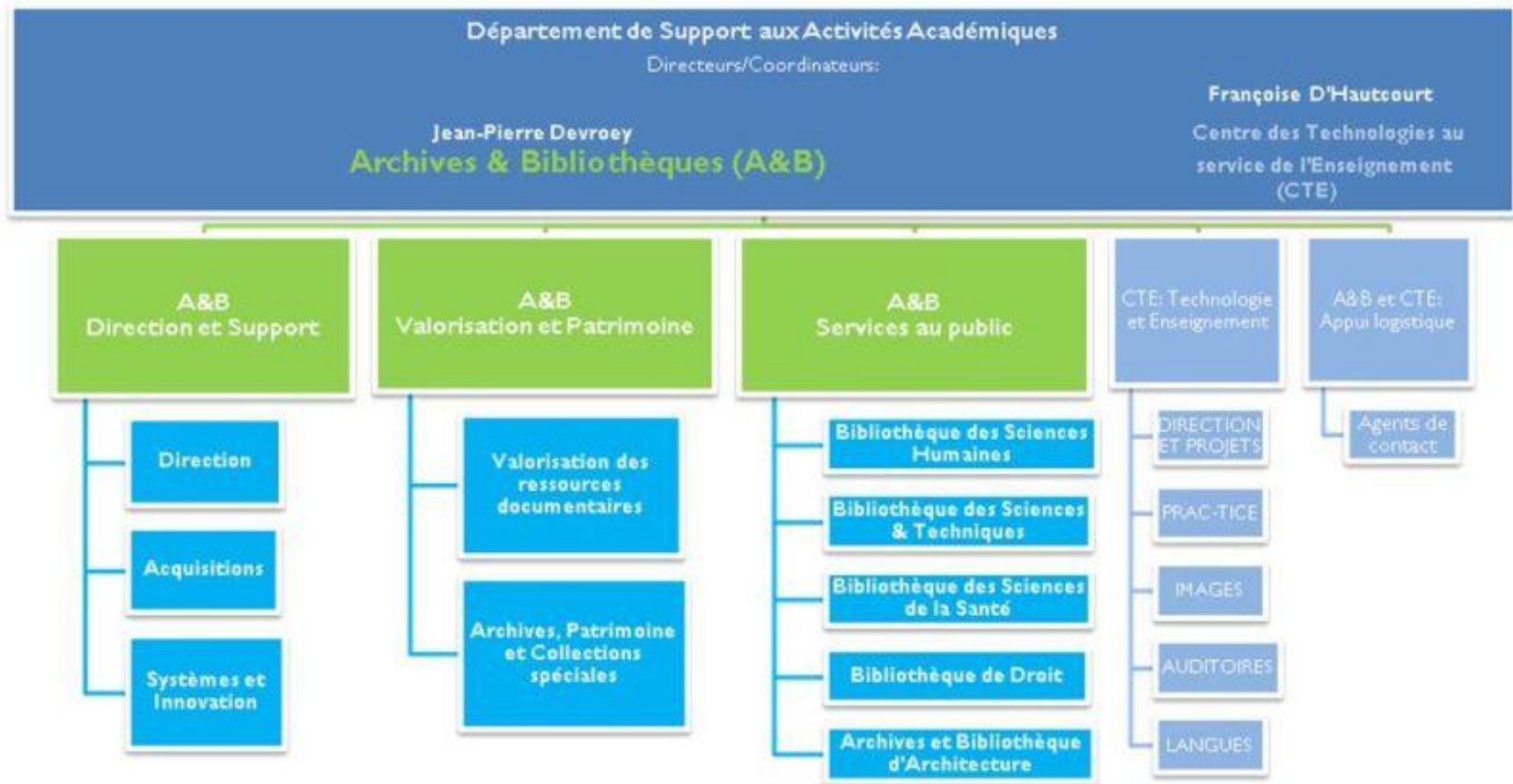




Context

- ULB: University covering nearly all disciplines
- Library Network of ULB
 - Central Services: Direction, Acquisitions, Computer service and Research/Development
 - « Valorisation » (catalogue and electronic library) and patrimonial collections
 - Public service Libraries: Science and Techniques, Health Sciences, Law, Architecture, Humanities and Social Sciences
- Part of greater whole: Department for supporting academic activities

Les Bibliothèques de l'ULB





Humanities and Social Sciences Library

- Which Faculties?
 - Philosophy and Literature: including History, History of Art, Archaeology, Information sciences
 - Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management
 - Social and Political Sciences
 - Psychology and Education Sciences
- = a wide range of disciplines and research areas



A few figures about the library

- Surface: 18000 m²
- Collection in open stacks: 270000 volumes
- Work places: 2250
- Staff: 27 FTE
- Entries: between 5000 and 10000 per day
- Loans: about 140000 per year



Preliminary assumptions

- Segmentation of the researchers public
 - The best way to segment the public is a subject division
 - In each area a scholarly community has its own habits and procedures
 - On the contrary it is interesting to join in the same meetings senior researchers and beginners, even if practices are quite different



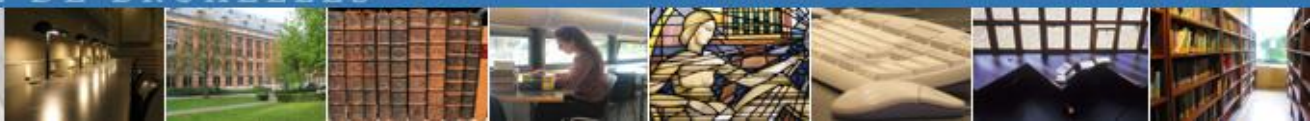
Preliminary assumptions

- Future of Librarian Job
 - Librarian job has always been to act as intermediary between users and the information they need
 - It is still so but the ways to do that have changed dramatically
 - Many services and skills have developed
 - The future is in the relationship between a librarian and a scholarly community



Preliminary assumptions

- Ways to communicate properly with users are better when informal
- It is worth taking time to speak and explain



Organisation

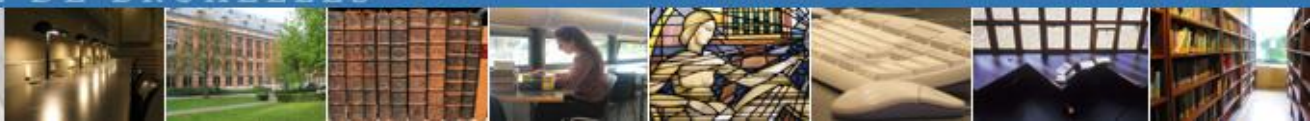
- Invitation to all members of Research Centres
- One meeting by Research Centre
- Sandwiches-lunch meeting
- Presentation of the results of the 2009 LIBQUAL+ Survey
- Meetings centred on documentation but services and tools are also discussed





Organisation

- From the library, participation of
 - Research assistant of the library (who made the job of organising and of presenting the LIBQUAL+ results)
 - librarian(s) in charge of collections in the subject area of the research centre
 - Reference Librarian
 - Librarian in charge of trainings in information literacy
 - Librarian in charge of institutional repository
 - When possible, the Director of the library



Organisation

- 15 meetings organised between October 2011 and June 2012
- Attendance from Research Centres: from 3 to 20 people





Outcomes and Findings

- Main outcome:

The image and visibility of the library

- For which reasons?

- The simple fact of inviting users is a sign that the library takes care of them
- The informal style of the meetings helps participants to speak freely
- For that purpose it is necessary that librarians show themselves ready to listen even if it is not to hear congratulations



Outcomes and Findings

- More reasons:
 - We got an occasion to explain some topics about how an academic library works (librarians sometimes forget that behalf them nobody knows that)
 - We got an occasion to inform scholars about services and possibilities they ignored
 - We got an occasion to get informed about scholars concerns



Examples of scholar concerns

- Purchase of print documents
 - Some scholars are not happy with their book collections
 - In ULB the initiative of acquisition is in the hand of the scholars (librarians develop collections also, but in a more general way):

Is it a paradox?



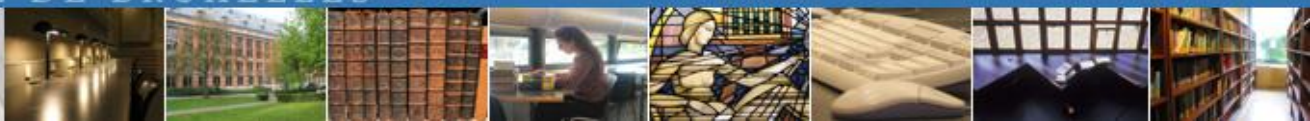
Examples of scholar concerns

- Some kinds of explanations:
 - many scholars ignore that they are allowed to order books, especially among young researchers, or they assume that the books they need are too specialised for the library
 - Other scholars don't rely on the library to provide books: they have special subsidies to buy books for themselves
 - They use online bookshops like Amazon: order delay is very short, much shorter than the one we can offer in the library



Examples of scholar concerns

- How can we respond to this situation?
 - Working on the workflow of ordering and cataloguing books (online form to order books)
 - Cooperating tightly with scholars to build collections: it won't work with everybody but if we identify a few of them by discipline, we can work efficiently together
 - Prompting librarians to order and to assess use of collections



Examples of scholar concerns

- Subscription to electronic periodicals
 - Many scholars need electronic periodicals which are not subscribed (especially in political and social sciences and in psychology)
 - They don't understand why it is so
 - It doesn't contribute to a good image of the library and its services
 - We got the occasion to explain (briefly) the difficulties we have because of the scholarly communication market (bundles and big deals)





Examples of scholar concerns

- We explained also the budget policy of the university and the library
- We proposed solutions like examining short lists of essential periodicals
- Of course, we got the occasion to prove the necessity of open access and the importance of the institutional repository



Other information and tips

- Among other topics we gave information about some tips to use better our tools:
 - How to use Google Scholar via our Proxy in order to get access directly to subscribed resources
 - How to use a reference manager with our catalogue
 - Some more tips in the use of the institutional repository





Conclusion and perspectives

- The operation presented is a first step
- The main outcome is the image and the visibility of the library
- We learned quite a lot about the needs of researchers
- We gave also much information about the library and its services to scholars
- In sum we dialogued





Conclusion and perspectives

- Many things still to be done
 - Maintaining and developing the dialogue with scholars, at a subject level with identified librarians
 - Working up permanent and formal channels of information
 - Working up a training program for scholars