

**LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
2008-2012**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The libraries at Lakehead University operate in an unprecedented period of online information growth with 161 exabytes of digital information created and copied in 2006. According to IDC, the amount of information created and copied in 2010 will surge more than six fold to 988 exabytes, a compounded annual growth rate of 57% (Gantz, 2007). The central mission of the libraries involves aiding students and faculty to access, navigate and interpret this changing information world. The Internet has inflated user expectations regarding the breadth, depth and ease of access to information and the Lakehead University library staff must anticipate and address these expectations in a proactive and efficient manner.

The Lakehead University Library system consists of The Chancellor Paterson Library and the Education Library in Thunder Bay and now the Orillia Campus Library which opened in September 2006. Library collections encompass both traditional library material and virtual collections. Staff continually seek new and innovative ways to deliver information to library users and to introduce students to new formats and delivery mechanisms for the books, articles and other information they need to achieve success at the university. The library website operates at the level of a fourth library with an average of 89,000+ pages accessed per month and an average of one million hits logged per month. The library is not only a source of information but also serves as a quiet haven for individual study and a central meeting point for groups who share lively discussions and prepare class presentations.

In the past year the Lakehead University Library staff were charged with the task of producing this strategic plan which will lay out future directions for the Library. Consultation included a SWOT analysis, meetings with all library staff, and solicitation of input from the Senate Library Committee, departmental library representatives and the university community at large. Based on this input, considering existing documents such as Lakehead University's Strategic Plan (2005-2010), the Library Plan (2004-2008) and the Library Information Technology Plan (April 2005) as well as results from the LibQUAL Canada 2007 Survey, these six areas were identified:

Strategic Direction 1: People and Organizational Culture: Recognize staff as the Library's most important resource in supporting research and learning.

Strategic Direction 2: Information Resources: Provide information resources that support the University's teaching and research priorities.

Strategic Direction 3: Learning, Teaching and Research: Provide services and programs that strengthen our role as partners in the teaching and research objectives of the university.

Strategic Direction 4: Awareness and Communication: Increase the visibility of the Library and strengthen awareness of its resources, services, facilities and support available to all of the Libraries' constituencies.

Strategic Direction 5: Places and Technology: Develop the Library as an intellectual and collaborative centre by creating inviting, accessible physical spaces and a technological environment designed for working, exploration, study and the exchange of ideas.

Strategic Direction 6: Collaborative Relations: Establish, reinforce and sustain partnerships with key internal and external stakeholders to optimize services, collections and financial resources.

The following document builds on these directions to create a comprehensive and wide-ranging plan to take the library forward into the coming years.

Central to any long term library planning initiative is a sufficient complement of library staff. The library staff is essential for the future role of the library as it is their combined effort, knowledge and vision that will ensure that the library's strategic directions are followed. It is important to note that these strategic directions may not be accomplished without sufficient professional library staff.

## **VISION**

The Library will strive for excellence in support of the learning, teaching and research mission of the university by:

- providing a student-centered learning environment that delivers information and services to its users where and when they need it;
- promoting creative and critical thinking through information literacy;
- empowering users to locate, evaluate and use information available in a variety of innovative and traditional formats;
- developing and maintaining collections in support of the academic pursuits of the university;
- fostering a work-place culture where Library staff are valued for their knowledge and contributions and are both forward-looking and responsive to the university community's needs in the rapidly changing information environment; and,
- developing partnerships within and beyond the university.

## **MISSION**

Lakehead University is committed to excellence and innovation in undergraduate and graduate teaching, service, research and other scholarly activities. The Library supports this commitment by:

- providing high-quality services that meet and exceed the expectations of a diverse user community;
- using technology innovatively for the flexible delivery of services and resources to users regardless of location;
- selecting, acquiring, organizing, preserving and providing access to Library materials and resources;
- participating in consortial opportunities;
- supporting professional development and training opportunities for Library staff;
- providing the facilities that enhance the learning and research environment;
- creating a climate where staff are approachable and users receive individual attention and a positive learning experience; and,
- collaborating with university, Library and community partners.

The Library is committed to providing users with the tools required for independent critical thinking and life-long learning.

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**

### **People and Organizational Culture**

Recognize staff as the Library's most important resource in supporting research and learning.

Goals:

1. Ensure staff are provided with opportunities to update and improve their skills to reflect the changing Library environment and are provided with the necessary resources to perform their jobs effectively.
  - Set up a committee with a mandate to investigate staff training needs and establish a training program.
2. Foster awareness among staff of library issues, trends and best practices.
  - Schedule regular library-wide meetings with staff to discuss library issues, changes, plans, etc.
  - Offer "brown bag" sessions which are library-wide or departmental
  - Involve support staff in professional development initiatives in the Library and at partner libraries
  - Share professional development experiences – reports, presentations, training with library staff
  - Encourage use of the library staff intranet to share library information
3. Ensure an organization with an effective mix of professional and support staff for optimum Library service.
  - Review organizational structure to evaluate user service needs, staffing complement and workflow
  - Review all library positions and responsibilities
  - Explore the opportunity for temporary exchange of positions among staff
  - Utilize resources such as student helpers, university classes, co-operative students to assist with projects (surveys, marketing, etc.)

### **Information Resources**

Provide information resources that support the University's teaching and research priorities.

Goals:

1. Evaluate, build, manage and ensure access to collections that are responsive to the university's teaching and research programs through local initiatives and consortial partnerships.
  - Solicit input from the Lakehead University community for developing the Library's collections in support of teaching and research.
  - Continue to develop a program for the ongoing evaluation of the Library's collections.
  - As new academic programs (particularly at the graduate level) are proposed, identify new library resources which will be required to support the programs and request the necessary funding.
  - Continue to participate in consortial partnerships at the provincial and national levels for electronic product purchases and subscriptions.
  
2. Digitize and provide perpetual access to selected collections unique to Lakehead.
  - Develop and implement an electronic theses repository.
  - Perform retrospective scanning and digitizing of print theses already in the Lakehead collection.
  - Investigate the establishment of an institutional repository for faculty papers and electronic university documents.
  - Complete pilot project to digitize a selection of photographs from the Thunder Bay Finnish Canadian Historical Collection.
  - Develop a schedule for digitizing other archival collections including audio and video recordings and consider digitizing rare and out-of-copyright materials, particularly those of a regional nature.

## **Learning, Teaching and Research**

Provide services and programs that strengthen our role as partners in the teaching and research objectives of the university.

Goals:

1. Strengthen and expand the Library's information literacy program to ensure that it is responsive to student and faculty needs, and is focused on learning outcomes.
  - Promote information literacy standards to all university faculty and administrators
  - Develop a formalized approach to integrating information literacy standards into Library instruction and university program/course curriculum.
  
2. Develop services to support graduate students and faculty.
  - Expand the existing library liaison program to enhance faculty/library communication and collaboration

- Develop one-on-one consultation services to address faculty teaching and research needs
3. Promote the potential benefits of the learning and information commons concept within the Lakehead University context.
- Establish a Learning Commons Working Group within the Library.

## **Awareness and Communication**

Increase the visibility of the Library and strengthen awareness of its resources, services, facilities and support available to all of the Libraries' constituencies.

Goals:

1. Consult with users on issues related to resources and services and seek their input and feedback.
  - Continue to develop and administer regular library surveys and other assessment tools that focus on specific areas within the Libraries.
  - Develop a method for coordinating assessment initiatives within the Library and in the university community.
  - Develop a plan for the timely reporting of assessment results and appropriate actions.
2. Develop a library-wide comprehensive communications plan to promote new and existing resources.
  - Establish a Library Marketing/Communications Committee.
3. Recognize the Library's web presence as being as important as the physical buildings.
  - Continue with usability testing and redesign of the website
  - Work towards a website that provides efficient navigation and access to a vast amount of information resources and services
  - Review the role of the Library Website Committee.
  - Assess library website usage.

## **Places and Technology**

Develop the Library as an intellectual and collaborative centre by creating inviting, accessible physical spaces and a technological environment designed for work, exploration, study and the exchange of ideas.

Goals:

1. Review space, furniture and infrastructure on a regular basis and ensure that it is utilized effectively to provide a student-centered learning environment.
  - Reconfigure current study spaces to better suit student needs by designating areas for quiet study and group study.
  - Replace old furniture with new up-to-date units that will suit the needs of all students and faculty.
  - Create a plan for both offsite storage and onsite library storage; size and access policies to be determined.
  - Ensure that all staff have workstations that are ergonomically suited for their individual needs.
  - Identify areas of concern such as painting, broken windows, water leaks, electrical, lighting, etc. and report to the appropriate university department.
  - Recommend solutions to address the cleanliness issues in The Chancellor Paterson Library as articulated by students, faculty and staff.
  - Recommend a program for updating the flooring in the libraries.
  
2. Provide state-of-the-art information technology for all staff and users.
  - Improve public network connections throughout the libraries
  - Review the use, functionality and location of computers and printers throughout the libraries to ensure the needs of staff and students are met.
  - Provide new hardware for student use i.e.: DVDs, scanners, iPods, Laptops, etc to accommodate new information formats
  - Replace the thin-client server system by 2008
  
3. Explore new technology and media for innovative delivery of services and resources.
  - Formalize the e-journal hosting service for faculty
  - Explore Library 2.0 technologies
  - Investigate federated searching and discovery products
  - Investigate streaming media sources for video and audio recordings
  - Acquire a content management system for the organization of electronic resources.
  - Replace the current integrated library system.
  
4. Ensure that optimal access to the library facilities and services is achieved
  - Review access for individuals with special needs.
  - Improve Library hours and departmental service hours.
  - Review and update all library signage.

## **Collaborative Relations**

Establish, reinforce and sustain partnerships with key internal and external stakeholders to optimize services, collections and financial resources.

Goals:

1. Expand campus, regional and national collaboration and consortial participation to broaden access to information resources, services and professional development opportunities.
  - Continue to participate in consortial purchasing and collaborative projects to manage and provide access to digitized information.
  - Explore opportunities with local institutions such as the City of Thunder Bay, and Confederation College of Applied Arts and Technology for the sharing of services and/or professional development opportunities.
  - Investigate further opportunities with other libraries and centres on campus including the Map Library, the Music Library, the Gender Issues Centre and Dr. Serafina (Penny) Petrone Health Information Resource Centre at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine.
  
2. Explore all funding opportunities.
  - Collaborate with the Office of University Advancement to develop philanthropic opportunities for the Library such as a targeted campaign for the proposed Learning Commons.
  - Identify external and internal sources of funding and prepare grant proposals where appropriate.

Gantz, John F. *The Expanding Digital Universe: A Forecast of Worldwide Information Growth through 2010*. Massachusetts: IDC, 2007.