

The Future of Libraries - a view from a National Library

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The Future of Libraries - a view from a National Library

Today I will talk about:

The British Library today

Some History

Our Current Mission

Our Vision of the Future

A Good News Story

British Library – The World's Knowledge

National library of the UK.
Serves researchers, business, libraries, education & the general public

Collection includes over 2m sound recordings, 5m reports, theses and conference papers, the world's largest patents collection (c.50m)

On-line services allow remote access to the BL catalogue, a range of learning resources, 'virtual' editions of well-known treasures, and much more.



Helping people
advance knowledge to
enrich lives

The largest document supply service in the world. Secure e-delivery and 'just in time' digitisation enables desktop delivery within 2 hours

2 major exhibitions each year, and a number of permanent and small displays. A range of events support these.

3 main sites in London and Yorkshire. Circa 2,000 staff

British Library – Size of collections

We receive a copy of every publication produced in the UK and Ireland

The collection includes well over 150 million items, in most known languages & 3 million new items are added every year

**60 million patents
Over 260,000 journal titles
750 million pages of newsprint**

**Over 4 million maps
8 million stamps and other philatelic items**



**Helping people
advance knowledge to
enrich lives**

Material over 3,000 years old (Chinese oracle bones) - and today's newspapers

310,000 manuscript volumes: from Jane Austen to James Joyce; Handel to the Beatles

The Sound Archive keeps sound recordings from 19th-century cylinders to CD, DVD and MD recordings

All this requires over 625 km of shelves, and grows by 12 km every year

British Library – Mission and Vision

OUR PURPOSE

Advancing the world's knowledge



OUR VISION

- We are central to the world of research, providing a trusted source of content that opens minds, solves problems and creates opportunities
- We provide services to anyone who wants to do research. We aim to provide both physical and digital access to world-class information where and when people need it.
- We inspire people around the world with our outstanding content and expertise and we complement this by engaging the knowledge and expertise of others.
- By fulfilling our mission, the British Library plays a vital role in society and the economy, both today and for further generations.



The British Library – Some History

In 1972 The British Library Act was passed by Parliament, bringing the Library into operation with effect from 1 July 1973.

This brought together the libraries of the British Museum (which included the National Reference Library of Science and Invention), the National Central Library, and the National Lending Library for Science and Technology



The British Library – Some History

The Museum's Department of Printed Books was founded in 1753, the year of the foundation of the Museum itself. Over the intervening two hundred years, the library of the British Museum had grown into one of the largest in the world, sustained by its privilege of legal deposit whereby it was entitled to a copy of most items printed in the United Kingdom - not only books and periodicals, but newspapers, maps and printed music.



The British Library – Some History

As early as 1971 it was recognised that the British Museum library was seriously short of space and that rehousing the collections was a priority.

By the end of 1977 an elaborate scheme had been prepared by the architect Colin St John Wilson for the Library's new home on a site next to St Pancras Station.

The new British Library building was formally opened by HM The Queen in June 1998. Since then it has become firmly established as a major addition to London's library, intellectual and cultural scene.



The British Library – Our Current Mission

As a major international research library, in receipt of the UK legal deposit privilege our remit is to:

- preserve the intellectual memory of the nation,
- be a major player in the research ecosystem,
- support economic growth
- offer an essential treasure house of the history, technological development and culture of the world.

The British Library – Our Current Mission

The British Library connects with the past, the present and the future.

What matters to us is that we preserve the national memory and enable knowledge to be created both now and in the future.

Our role is a dynamic one of helping to grow the world's knowledge base through the stimulation of fresh ideas and applied insights.

The British Library – Our Vision of the Future

In 2010 the British Library carried out a piece of work to develop a vision for 2020 in order to remain a leader in the global networked information environment.

The Vision of the British Library is now:

In 2020 the British Library will be a leading hub in the global information network, advancing knowledge through our collections, expertise and partnerships, for the benefit of the economy and society and the enrichment of cultural life.

The British Library – Our Vision of the Future

Researchers will not just accommodate a physical space & work in isolation, the requirement will be to enter a virtual space to gather information in various forms then use social media sites to collaborate, discuss & jointly develop new opportunities. The service that makes this process convenient, reliable, trustworthy, quick & innovative will attract users.



The British Library – Our Vision of the Future

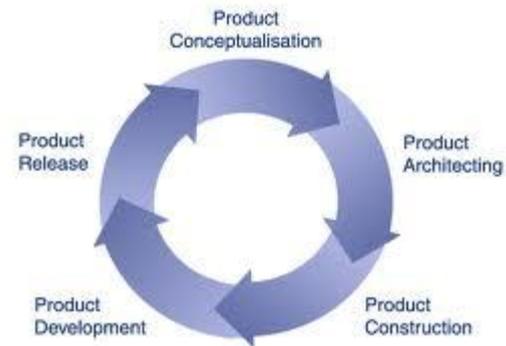
Driving Search, Discovery & Delivery are the rapid developments around digital content, how it's created, stored, delivered & accessed. For sure in 2020 99.9% of new content will be digital, but there will still be a requirement to access print according to the subject type and therefore a need for a hybrid service proposition.



The British Library – Our Vision of the Future

Strong partnerships, digital scholarship skills and a blend of public service and commercial activities will be critical to achieving this vision.

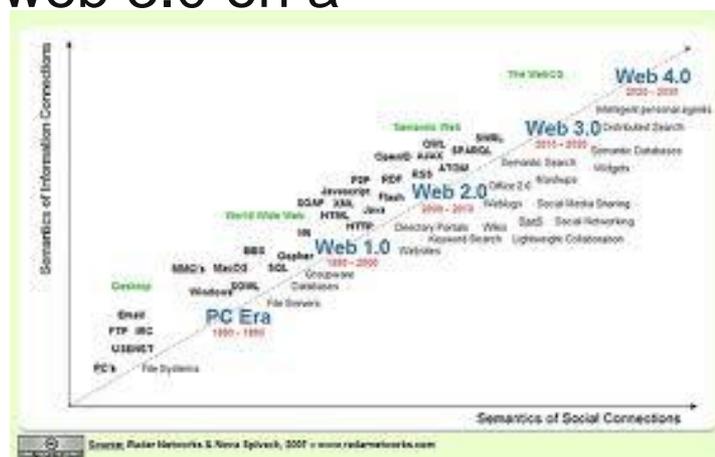
We will couple British Library content and expertise with the rapid product development skills of commercial providers, and the engagement of the research communities we serve, for the benefit of research, the economy and society.



The British Library – Our Vision of the Future

Successful Search will require good quality metadata to complement library catalogues.

Discovery will need links to related sites, cross domain links & in the future, machine search options together with other web 2.0 functionality evolving to web 3.0 on a continuum.



The British Library – Our Vision of the Future

In 2020 the British Library will be an enabling force in the global networked environment of users, libraries, archives, research institutions and information providers from the public and private sectors.

We will create the links which bring these institutions together, facilitating the transition beyond the project environment to long-term sustainable business models.

Inter-disciplinary research will grow in popularity because of commonalities between disciplines and an interest in using different methods



The British Library – Our Vision of the Future

Free availability will be expected therefore the business models to be developed must sit alongside Open Access & dovetail according to the business drivers of Quality, Cost & Delivery, together with convenience & trustworthiness.

Access will be required “on the move” utilising either mobile domains &/or hand held devices with appropriate applications together.



And Finally - A Good News Story for Libraries

Visitors soar as borough invests £4m in libraries



This is the £14 million [Canada](#) Water library, which is due to open at the end of November.

The four-storey inverted pyramid will replace Rotherhithe library. The new centre, built at a time of massive cuts to library services in London, will house 40,000 books, 2,500 films and CDs, a waterside café and a theatre - and offer free wi-fi as well as up to 100 computers.

In Conclusion

National Libraries are still the guardians of the intellectual memory of the nation

New technology is changing the way people access knowledge

Libraries must keep up with these changes and continue to be at the heart of the information environment

We will continue to lead and collaborate in growing the world's knowledge base and providing access to the rich collections in the physical and digital world

Thank
You

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<http://www.bl.uk/>