Public Services Advisory Committee
March 17, 2009
G62, Killam Library

Present: Jennifer Adams, Ann Barrett, James Boxall, Geoff Brown, Ian Colford, Marc Comeau,
Sharon Longard, Mike Moosberger, Fran Nowakowski, Gwyn Pace, Michelle Paon, Helen
Powell, Karen Smith, Tina Usmiani

Regrets: Bill Maes

1. Welcome to special visitor, Dwight Fischer, Assistant Vice President, Information Technology
    Services and Chief Information Officer
    - As Mr. Fischer had not yet arrived Jane proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

2. Meeting Overview - Goal of this meeting is to provide Mr. Fischer with an overview of the
    technology initiatives that each of us as Library leaders manage and use to provide access to
    our public services and collections. There will also be an opportunity throughout the agenda for
    PSAC members to provide ideas for further collaboration with ITS.

3. E-Science update and next steps
    - Jane proposed to the Committee that she turn the document "Model Principles for Research
       Library Roles in E-Science" into a narrative which will then be distributed to PSAC members
       for comment, additions, etc.

    Mr. Fischer arrived @ 9:35 and was introduced to the Committee by Jane. Jane then introduced
    Committee members to Mr. Fischer and provided him with an overview of the Committee's
    responsibilities. We then carried on with the agenda.

4. Learning Commons and Library Technology: Updates and Emerging Issues

    New Learning Commons Developments

    • Double sided printing as the default has been very popular with students. Aside from
      those petitioning for the change, Mick reports that many others were pleasantly
      surprised when the change was made.
        o Cost is 12¢ for the first side and 10¢ for the second side.
        o Double-sided printing is also available at the Kellogg and Sexton libraries but
           not yet available at the Law Library

    • LC @ a glance is working well and students are now seen regularly looking at the screen
      during busy periods. Have seen anecdotal usages that were not unintentional, though no
      less useful.
        o a summary version of LC @ a glance is available online and shows the three LC
           locations in the Killam and identifies how many machines are available at each
           location with an overall total of available machines

- new LC desktop design
    - o the design is almost ready to be deployed in the Killam Library and includes a LiveHelp Chat widget
    - o once the design is ready it will be deployed to only one of the Commons and feedback will be sought. Once the design is finalized it will be deployed to all of the Commons sites. So far feedback has been positive from those who have viewed the design.
    - o Jane asked Marc if this design could be "pushed" directly to Helen's, Ann's, and Jennifer's computers to make it easier for them to show their colleagues and get feedback – Marc will look into this.
    - o Fran asked Marc if it would be possible for staff to view the new design and provide feedback before it gets deployed – Marc thought this should be possible.

Ways we currently partner/interrelate with ITS

- Server room space for Library servers, occasional Systems Administration assistance (specifically when David is away)
- Bulk licensing
- Evergreen program
- Hardware Services and PCPC (e.g. Eurocom warranties handled by Hardware Services)
- Novell login/storage
- LITS staff and ITS staff work closely to resolve Library problems, one of the best department/ITS relationships I've heard of.
- A great deal of information shared both ways with regards to Windows lab imaging.

Where we're going now

- The Learning Commons are going to change. How? We're not 100% certain, but early indications are that students are continuing to seek out comfortable laptop space in increasing numbers.
- Move to more pervasive service models. Live Help has been an overwhelming success with NovaNet. As we work to trim down and expand services in the Learning Commons, these kinds of service models have becoming a necessity.
- Spread WorldCat Local through every reasonable venue we have (Web site, my.dal, integrate into Google Search Appliance).

Where we're going after

- Will cloud-like computing (e.g. Amazon Web Services) make sense for some of the things we do?
- Adaptable/customizable search using Luminus to leverage knowledge about degrees and programs.
- Our services offerings to departments are likely to revolve around providing access control.
- Probability of embedded systems here there and everywhere.
- Near-line storage is our biggest area of server growth and will remain a growth area for the foreseeable future.
- Data archiving strategies…

What it all means for ITS

- Wireless access is going to continue its rapid growth and will expand beyond 802.11 protocols. Wired connectivity will decrease rapidly amongst patrons.
- We expect that embedded devices will need connectivity. How? We don't know. That's half the fun.
- With GIS moving to working with live data, podcasts becoming a popular teaching tools and live help becoming a staple of our support offerings, bandwidth needs are expected to continue to increase.
- Ultimately, it means that networking flexibility will be important.
- We would each stand to benefit greatly working together on any future plans for remote help.
- We suspect that others on campus are equally in need of low-cost, near-line storage. This seems like a viable area to work together.
- Our access control needs could be serviced by a shibboleth implementation. This has apparently been explored in the past, revisiting this might be in order.
- As we shift what we offer in the Learning Commons, we will become a source of information for ITS with regards to its student labs.
- Sharing expertise on the policy and implementation facets of data archiving is an outstanding issue where we can partner effectively.

5. Digitization initiatives and challenges arising with their preservation and long term storage

Mike
- Archives has a dual role to document and collect material produced by the University and to acquire archival materials that can be used to support the teaching and research needs of the University. More and more of these materials are being created and kept exclusively in digital form which requires the Archives to acquire them in that form as well.
Challenges:
  - how to handle digital material being created by both the University, its faculty and staff as well as individuals and organizations external to the University whose archival records we acquire? Capacity? Migration strategies?
  - University needs to develop a comprehensive digital preservation policy with administrative, preservation and technology frameworks
  - there are administrative and legal issues surrounding the collection of digital material that need to be addressed, e.g. privacy issues, ownership, etc.
  - records management could assist in the systematic selection, retention and disposition of digital information created by the University
  - the Archives has a role in ensuring that this digital material is preserved and that future access can be provided but a strategy needs to be developed on how to handle this process which will involve the creators of these materials as well as ITS.
  - near-line storage is a critical part of our current digital initiatives as it serves as a repository for the raw images and data made available through our digital collections and DalSpace
  - we are starting to get requests from non-University agencies for advice on digital initiatives
  - need to figure out how do we deal with these requests – a University policy is needed
  - the Archives is encouraging departments on campus to provide material in digital form only (e.g. theses) but policies are needed to assist in formalizing the process

Dwight Fischer
- raised the point of the number of times digital material will need to be transferred to new media as technology changes over the years.
- ITS is working on a new wireless proposal for the campus
- data storage is relatively cheap
- ITS working on a strategic plan for the University on how to deal with storage issues
- University is looking at the possibility of out-sourcing student e-mail to Microsoft. If this happens it will alleviate the strain on Dalhousie's e-mail system for staff.
- Mr. Fischer asked the Committee how people felt about the re-location of the Help Desk from the basement to the South Learning Commons. Everyone is in agreement that this move will be a very positive step towards assisting students with their needs.

6. Web-based Dalhousie Services

Gwyn Pace
- Problems with Dalhousie's e-mail system lately have presented major problems for both Document Delivery and Circulation Department
  - Document Delivery material which gets delivered to us electronically from other institutions is posted to a web site and the link to the site is then sent to the appropriate student by e-mail.
  - Document Delivery works consortially (Relais) with other institutions and the use of e-mail for this is critical.
  - Circulation sends e-mail notifications to students re overdue books, fines, etc.
- Circulation – the relationship between Banner and the library system. It would be very nice if the Banner system could be linked to the library system so students wouldn't have to register with Banner as well as the library.

Fran Nowakowski
- works with instructional services to assist students with help in using the Library
- has created online tutorials
- over the last year has switched to Libcasts which can be downloaded to Ipods, etc. and has been using the streaming server for this
- moved into subject guides created for students by librarians (LibGuides)
  - these LibGuides have been very successful with the students
  - LibGuides has social networking capabilities, e.g. Facebook, RSS feeds, etc.
- Google Analytics is very useful for statistics gathering
- also working with Blackboard
  - online reading lists
  - would like to see template that has library link/tab

Sharon Longard
- LiveHelp – online chat-based service offered by Novanet libraries and is intended for quick reference questions
- an icon for this service was placed on our desktops in 2008 and in the last year the demand on the LiveHelp service has increased five-fold
- this icon will not be able to be added to WorldCat Local

Dwight Fischer
- Dalhousie web site being revitalized (re-structured and new organization)
- the intention is to improve the first image

- need to do strategic planning this year with many groups and Library should be involved

Mr. Fischer left the meeting at approximately 10:30

7. Regional Library Services – Ann Barrett
   - Ann advised the Committee that the configuration form for WorldCat Local would be submitted later this week and we should have a URL for the Dalhousie site within a couple of weeks
   - Relais is still not working with WorldCat Local but this problem continues to be worked on
   - once the URL is received staff testing will take place for the first 3 or 4 weeks before releasing it on our web site
   - we need to decide how it will take the place of Aleph
   - we will probably want to have a search box icon embedded in our web page

8. Library Outreach Update – Tina Usmiani
   - Tina reported that we now have a template for a News blog (Tina has named the blog Libvine) for all the libraries. The blog has been broken down by discipline, e.g. Health Sciences, Law, Architecture & Engineering, Arts & Science. Anyone interested in subscribing to the blog can subscribe to the entire blog or to one particular discipline.
   - Challenges:
     - explosion of communications tools and the need to use as many as possible
     - need to push information to people – we can't expect them to come to us
     - need to stay on top of all new "fads" – e.g. Facebook, Twitter, e-mail subscription services, etc.
   - Tina has been recruited (by Bill Maes) to do a marketing plan for LiveHelp. Tina will work on this with Bill Slauenwhite at the Novanet Office and Elaine MacInnis, Chair of the LiveHelp Committee over the next few months. She intends to create a downloadable kit for all Novanet libraries which will consist of a poster, print ad, tent card, press release and short promotional video using actual chat transcripts.

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Next meeting: May 19th