Ivy Plus Libraries
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Sustaining Archived Collections

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Ivy Plus Libraries Director of Collections Initiatives
“The Ivy Plus libraries embrace a vision for collection development and management which recognizes our preeminent academic research and special collections as one great collection in support of the teaching, research and public missions of our respective institutions and the global scholarly community.”
Overview And History

BorrowDirect is an unmediated library resource sharing partnership encompassing twelve Ivies Plus academic institutions supplying over 250,000 books, music scores, and other returnable library items per year. BorrowDirect went live in the fall of 1999 after a four year planning and development period during which the three founding institutions, Columbia, Penn, and Yale, partnered with the Research Libraries Group (RLG) for project management and assessment. The BorrowDirect Partnership expanded to seven member libraries in 2002 with the addition of Brown, Cornell, Dartmouth, and Princeton. In 2004, the Partnership exceeded 100,000 transactions for the first time. The Partnership grew to include Harvard and MIT in 2011. BorrowDirect added one library a year starting in 2013 with the University of Chicago followed by Johns Hopkins and Duke University. Since its inception, BorrowDirect has successfully filled over 1.8 million user requests and counting.

How It Works

BorrowDirect offers library users the ability to search and request research material from a federated union catalog of approximately 70 million volumes. Real time shelf status and a load leveling algorithm distribute requests evenly across the Partnership, and expedited delivery ensures a 3-5 day turnaround for all requests. Making use of NISO standards, BorrowDirect integrates with the disparate library systems to provide local circulation of borrowed material and integrated resource management throughout the lifecycle of the transaction.

http://www.borrowdirect.org/
“We know that you will all be contributing your time to helping these plans for collaboration mature, and we recognize that this constitutes an additional priority for people who already have overflowing plates. Yet we are convinced that the time is right to move our discussions, and the reality of our shared programs, from the margins of our collecting activity to the center. If we channel our efforts and resources to areas where there will be high impact, we can demonstrate to our home institutions the benefits of enlightened collaboration and we can serve as leaders for other institutions and groups.”

- Ivy Plus Libraries University Librarians
  October 2014
Definition of SUSTAINING

1: serving to sustain collections

2: aiding in the support of an organization through a special fee <a sustaining member>
Good morning! Thank you, Marie for the invitation to participate this morning and thank you Matthew for your help with slides and logistics. It’s a pleasure to be here with Emily and Margaret and talk about what is happening with Ivy Plus Libraries and sustaining archived collections.

Before looking forward to the topic of sustaining archived collections; I’d like to take a brief look back and to share a bit more about what is The Ivy Plus Libraries -- it is a cooperative of 13 academic and research libraries; the partners are Brown, Chicago, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Duke, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, MIT, Princeton, University of Pennsylvania, Stanford, and Yale.

I joined Ivy Plus Libraries 7 months ago as the first Ivy Plus Libraries position dedicated solely to the work of collective collections development and management.

The vision of the Ivy Plus Libraries Collections Development Group is:

“... embrace a vision for collection development and management which recognizes our preeminent academic research and special collections as one great collection in support of the teaching, research, and public missions of our respective institutions and the global scholarly community.”
respective institutions and the global scholarly community.”

Looking further back, here’s a bit more just more about how Ivy Plus Libraries – and my position – came to be...

In the late 90’s, with a nod to the founding institutions – Columbia, Penn, and Yale – the unmediated resource sharing service that is now BorrowDirect, was first known as COPY.

This service went live after four years of planning and development. Today, Borrow Direct remains the resource sharing network service that is the Ivy Plus Libraries’ first cooperative initiative. One could say: Ivy Plus Libraries, the partnership brought to you by Borrow Direct.

From the quite successful Borrow Direct resource sharing service questions emerge such as:

- What does our scholars’ use of Borrow Direct tell us about our general collections as an ecosystem of information?
- How does scholars’ use of Borrow Direct inform and evolve management of our collections?

Striving to explore and answer these questions, in fall 2014, the AULs of collections at the Borrow Direct participating institutions sent a proposal to their University Librarians that - based on the success of Borrow Direct as well as the collaborative work of this group of AULs going back to 2008 - sought support to expand work on collaborative, collective collections.

The result was that the University Librarians asked the AULs of collections to draft a business plan for their initiatives and vision.
The University Librarians also put forth a new name for the group: Ivy Plus Libraries.

In their letter to the group, the UL’s noted:

“We know that you will all be contributing your time to helping these plans for collaboration mature, and we recognize that this constitutes an additional priority for people who already have overflowing plates. Yet we are convinced that the time is right to move our discussions, and the reality of our shared programs, from the margins of our collecting activity to the center. If we channel our efforts and resources to areas where there will be high impact, we can demonstrate to our home institutions the benefits of enlightened collaboration and we can serve as leaders for other institutions and groups.”

In the business plan, the Collections Group noted that the need for a shared, jointly-funded position – the Director of Collections Initiatives - to serve as “the principal planner, project manager, and negotiator for initiatives that promise substantial positive impacts in the development, management, and use of collections in any format.”

When considering this position, it was great to see that these 13 institutions were committed enough to sustaining collaborative work as to a. recognize that
ongoing, lasting collaborations extend beyond the capacity of volunteers contributing in addition to their full-time positions, or the resources of a limited-term grant, and b. that they were willing to invest in a position to help fulfill their vision.

In addition to the Ivy Plus Libraries Collections Development Group, there are 14 Ivy Plus Libraries Groups that convene in a variety of manners for the purposes of information sharing and/or collaborative projects.

So, how is the Collections Development Group working to sustain collections, and the management of collections?

Presently, the Collections Development Group is working on:
- Shared web collecting
- Exploring an e-book pilot
- Developing a collective collections analysis framework

Each of these initiatives is managed by a working group and shared by the partners; though not all partners participate in all of the initiatives.

Beyond the Ivy Plus Collections Development Group, there are shared collection development activities happening; for example: In Latin American Studies - Brazilian monographs; In Music - scores of contemporary composers.
But, beyond these specific initiatives and in the context of what I’ve observed in the past 7 months with Ivy Plus Libraries, what does sustaining collections look like?

Looking at the word “sustaining” it’s important to note that -- there’s action involved and it’s not one-time investment.

From the context of this work the past seven months with Ivy Plus Libraries, here’s my perspective on what collaborative work to sustain archived collections and all collections at Ivy Plus Libraries. I suspect that my observations will be familiar to all of you working on sustaining shared collaborative projects and initiatives.

Like a vegetable garden, sustaining collections is not solely the action of planting the seeds, and then waiting expectantly for something magically to happen.

A garden requires a space and structure. In this instance, we have the structure of the Ivy Plus Libraries partnership.

Then for things to grow, it takes soil rich with nutrients. It takes time and dedication for the soil to be turned over, and have all the lumps raked smooth.

In the Ivy Plus CD Group, preparing the soil is analogous to the time that the group has spent talking, planning, getting to know one another, and developing trust with each other, and then establishing a governance structure for the group.
Once the soil is ready, or concurrently with the soils preparation, is the planning – what will be planted?

For the CD group, this means the aforementioned business plan, and a strategic visioning exercise last May.

Planning also means considering what others are planting to support complementary planting efforts; for the CD Group this includes the work of HathiTrust, CRL, NERL, the Rosemount Group, WEST, EAST, Big 10, MI-SPI, and other great initiatives underway.

Even with planning, and after seeds have been planted, environmental conditions may mean that some ideas germinate and grow, while others don’t, and of those that do sprout beyond an initial idea...

There’s the next step of thinning the seedlings -- evaluating the strongest initiatives from all that germinated – If we try to do it all, every single plant will be weaker and the likelihood of survival for all lessons significantly. This step of thinning is challenging for our profession yet critical.

Thus, over the summer, each institutional representative on the IPCDG completed a strategic actions survey ranking the priority, impact, and time commitment of 11 possible actions. The results of the survey enabled the group to first consider those actions with the highest priority and impact overall.
Then comes transplanting the strongest seedlings of initiatives so that they can grow, test their viability.

For the CD group, this means creating detailed charge template so that all charges include the scope of an initiative, concrete outcomes, timelines, and importantly too, explicitly what is *not* part of an initiative.

Once transplanted, comes the weeding and also recognizing when a volunteer might suddenly start thriving in the garden.

I think of weeds as scope creep, and volunteers as timely opportunities that need to be considered, and if viable taken on with the understanding that they too will take time and nourishment to keep growing. Such volunteers are great opportunity for a group to reaffirm what is their mission and goal.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Image 78x590 to 295x720</th>
<th>To sustain growth, there’s water, ongoing weeding of scope creep and acceptance or rejection of volunteers. This is all an ongoing cycle.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Image 78x151 to 300x411</td>
<td>When necessary, there’s also fertilizing and considering if what we are putting into the initiatives good for the current initiatives as well as future ones?</td>
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This is a tremendously exciting time where I see terrific momentum and convergence towards sustaining collections of all kinds and enhancing collaborative, coordinated, and cooperative endeavors.

In our excitement and urgency, let us also remember all parts necessary for a successful garden: especially of ensuring rich soil ripe for growth and an abundant harvest – that is the time for relationships to be built and trust to grow between people involved and then the establishment of frameworks and governance structures.
At Ithaka’s The Next Wave 2016 conference, John Wilkin, Dean of Libraries and University Librarian at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, noted that governance and communication are imperative collaborations to work, but that these can also be the most challenging.

Dr. Roger C. Mayer, Professor of Management, Innovation & Entrepreneurship at North Carolina State University, and a leading researcher on trust in organizations documents how when there is trust between people in an organization, the organization as a whole is healthier – in the business world, this equates with higher profits. In our world, I’d like to think that this equates with healthy models for the collections management lifecycle including preservation and archiving.

For when we have a well-established garden not only can we grow plants, but we can care for an entire forest.

I had previously thought that trees in a forest competed for survival. Yet, listening to the Ted Radio Hour on Networks recently, I learned of Ecologist Suzanne Simard. Dr. Simard and her colleagues at the University of British Columbia study the symbiotic relationship between underground fungi and forest trees, and how the fungi connect trees and plants – think internet of the forest – and allows them to share resources and information with one another. Her research has shown that, unlike previous thought that trees in a forest compete with one another, that they instead help each other thrive.

For example, how do we all share retention commitment models so that dependencies upon one another are clear and understood so that retention models complement one
another rather than compete or leave ominous gaps.

Through our work together – communicating, working on governance and trust, modifying when needed, being willing to invest long-term in the needed resources such as positions, etc., and being willing to thin our seedlings of wonderful ideas to the few strongest ones, we have the ability to sustain not only a garden, but a great forest of archived collections.