

PUBLIC SERVICES

“The future is made of the same stuff as the present.”

- Simone Weil

The MIT Libraries adopted its new five year strategic plan in December 2004. The plan articulates a future where faculty and students remain at the center of our work and can easily take advantage of the excellent environment for learning and research provided by the Libraries. Furthermore it provides a roadmap that enables the Libraries to shape the future to insure even more benefit for the MIT user community. This future will be built on a solid foundation. Our vital signs remain robust. Over three quarter of a million people walked through the doors of the MIT Libraries last year. The circulation of physical items involved more than four hundred thousand transactions. While hits on the Libraries' web site are difficult to measure and compare, we know that nearly a million and half accesses to licensed electronic journals, books, and databases were registered through the Libraries' proxy server alone, and that on average over one hundred thousand unique computing hosts visit our web site each month. Recent survey data from the Libraries core constituencies demonstrates the success and high regard the Libraries are held by faculty and students:

- The 2004 Faculty Survey placed the Libraries at the top of the list of services with which faculty were satisfied, as well as identifying the Libraries as one of the most important resources that MIT provides.
- The 2004 Graduate Student Survey also named the Libraries as the service most used and most important to graduate students.
- When asked about the quality of their academic experience in the 2004 Senior Survey, students were more satisfied with the overall quality of the Libraries than any other academic experience.

Maintaining this level of service will continue to require our best efforts. Public Service staff have been working energetically over the past few years to transform the library environment at MIT to meet the growing expectations of our clientele – to both provide robust networked access to resources and services, and to maintain a physical environment that enhances learning and community. Ongoing collaborations with faculty, students, other Libraries staff, staff across the Institute, and peers world-wide, insure that our path to the future is well-informed. Using the framework of the new strategic plan, this report highlights the activities, successes, and challenges of the past year.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION I: Focus on providing immediate, quantifiable benefits to faculty and students in the Libraries' domains of responsibility.

Today's world puts enormous demands on MIT faculty and students. Expectations are high, and competition is keen. Their success requires a combination of strategies from the Libraries that balances our teaching mission – to insure that they can navigate the complex information environment well – with a “just-in-time” service ethic that provides them the content and services they need when they need them.

Over the past decade the Libraries have made enormous strides in providing the teaching, learning, and research community with networked, remote access to a rich array of digital content that has transformed the way work is done. This information network has also added to the scholarly labyrinth a student or faculty member is required to decipher in order to do quality research. Public Service staff have embraced the Institute's charge to the Libraries to become more involved in teaching students the lifelong learning

skills necessary to locate, filter, evaluate, and use information effectively. Course-integrated and course-related instructional activities increased this past year 33% and 36% respectively. Each of the Divisional Libraries made substantive progress in developing detailed instructional plans (and in the case of Dewey Library, revising an already existing plan) that set realistic and sustainable goals for their specific communities, and will form a basis for future assessment. They provide a foundation for creating a system-wide plan this coming year that will insure that no gaps exist between the divisional approaches.

An important element of the Libraries' instruction program is to develop effective strategies to work with faculty to improve undergraduate awareness and abilities in the information arena. Staff met with faculty on the Task Force on the Undergraduate Educational Commons to inform them of current efforts, learn more about their goals, and explore ideas on how the Libraries can contribute to those goals. Librarian involvement in classes such as 1.018, 2.009, 5.32, 6.UAT, 9.00, 11.123, 12.000, 16.621, 17.871, 21.003, 21H.421, and HST S11 have demonstrated the positive impact of faculty/librarian collaboration in undergraduate teaching. In addition the Instruction Committee is working with faculty in the Writing Across the Curriculum Program to investigate how to strengthen our current collaboration, and continue focusing on strategies that leverage the opportunities inherent in undergraduate communication-intensive courses.

While instruction remains a core enterprise for the Libraries, efforts have also intensified both to simplify the user experience when it comes to finding the information they need when they need it, and to improve the user's productivity by providing better tools. There has been significant progress in these areas:

- The impact of electronic reserves grew dramatically. While the number of courses officially requesting Libraries' support for e-reserves remained constant over the past few years at three to four dozen, the functionality developed in collaboration with Academic and Media Production Services (AMPS) that allows faculty to take advantage of the fair-use provision of the copyright law has dramatically increased. Usage in spring 2005 jumped approximately 90% over the spring 2004 semester (see Table 2).
- RefWorks, a web-based resource designed to help organize references and create bibliographies, was tested during the spring. It makes it easier to write papers as well as post results to web pages by allowing faculty, students, and staff to search, retrieve relevant citations, and build bibliographies. Based on the success of the trial, a site license for the campus was purchased by the Libraries allowing anyone at MIT with an Athena account to create and maintain a RefWorks account. Accounts can be created for individual and group use.
- Collaboration with Google on their Google Scholar product now allows MIT users, either on or off campus, to connect directly to the Libraries' full text electronic journals via Google Scholar.
- A new version of SFX, the tool that links article databases to the full-text, was implemented. This enables the soon-to-be-released "citation linker" that will allow users to type in the citation and be directly linked to the electronic full-text if it is available from the Libraries.
- The popular Business Database Advisor, a self-service virtual database advisor, was revised to increase its functionality.
- Self service checkout in Hayden became very popular, jumping 205% over the previous year due to the redeployment of the machine to a more obvious location. A new machine will be activated in Dewey Library this summer.
- The application process for courtesy cards to the Harvard Medical School Countway Library was converted from a required in-person request at a library service desk to a web-based form. This success may be transferable to other application procedures, e.g., the Boston Library Consortium, during the next year.
- Staff from the Rotch Visual Collection, Rotch Library, and the Systems and Technology Services Department developed detailed user requirements for digitizing slides and providing a delivery tool

for classroom access. This work has led to the possibility of collaboration with Academic Computing to develop a pilot system during the new academic year.

Another core responsibility of the Libraries is to provide a physical environment that encourages learning and community, and enhances the intellectual curiosity and serendipitous nature of intellectual discovery. While work developing solutions to the Libraries' long term space requirements continues, current space limitations are severe. Despite present constraints, staff have been steadfast in developing and implementing creative strategies to maximize the space we have for the benefit of the community. Accomplishments in this arena over the past year included:

- Recommendations from a Library Signage Task Force on best practices for signage and terminology used in public spaces throughout the Libraries. Those recommendations are now being implemented to provide a more consistent and intuitive experience for the user community throughout the Libraries.
- A team of staff from both the Humanities and Science Libraries developed an ambitious proposal to create more and better space for collections growth through a combination of converting space to collection shelving, storing lesser used material in the Library Storage Annex, and deploying collections in the Hayden building in a more integrated and helpful manner. The "Haystacks" proposal was approved and, with the help of a CRSP-approved project to add shelving to the basement, the plan will be executed this year.
- The Humanities Library created two new, comfortable reading areas adjacent to its popular browsery collection, and installed some compact shelving on the second floor reading room to increase shelving capacity of highly used materials.
- Rotch Library made a successful CRSP proposal to double the size of its popular GIS Laboratory. These changes, to be implemented this summer, will make it easier for instruction and group work to happen in the lab.
- Barker Library was able to get CRSP funding to replace its aging rug and make needed improvements to its multi-media room this summer.

Another important initiative this past year contributed to enhancing community support. With a small grant from the Graduate Student Office the Libraries were able to establish a small World Literature Collection of popular adult and children's books in native languages common in our student community. This is an important contribution to nurturing MIT's growing diversity.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION II: Leverage the expertise of our staff, and the information resources we manage.

Public Service staff have focused their efforts during the past few years to create a new service model for the provision of reference and information services that reflects the primary needs of faculty and students. Known as the Δ (Delta) Plan, its goals are to:

- Develop a tiered information service model.
- Develop a coordinated instruction program.
- Increase user self-sufficiency.
- Raise the communities' awareness of Library services and resources.
- Realign work to better support these goals.

Two key elements of the tiered information service model are the implementation of an integrated service point (ISP) in each of the Divisional Libraries, and the development of a virtual help service, Ask – Us.

Both of these initiatives have made great progress. The Engineering Library inaugurated its ISP in the summer of 2004, building on the experience provided by Rotch Library's previous success. The Service Desk Task Force developed a detailed set of core competencies for service desk staff, including students. Based on the group's recommendations two new task forces have begun work, one to create a customer service training program and the other to begin developing a strategy for creating and maintaining appropriate documentation and training in support of the core competencies for service desk workers. Intensive planning between the Humanities and Science Libraries this past year has laid the groundwork for implementing a combined ISP for the Humanities and Science Libraries within Hayden this coming fall.

The Libraries' Ask Us! service, providing virtual reference and information support via email, has improved both its accuracy and response time. A new, leaner staffing model was employed this past year resulting in more flexibility in implementing new procedures. The use of Request Tracker, an open source software system, as the underlying database manager has resulted in a higher degree of accuracy and a more reliable service.

This new tiered information service model enables our librarians and other technical staff to focus a greater amount of their expertise on activities that increase the Libraries' outreach and contribute to the development of user self-help tools. While many of those accomplishments are detailed in the previous section of this report, it's also important to recognize the ongoing efforts that are positioning the Libraries to fulfill its goal of leveraging staff expertise and library resources on behalf of the user community. These include in-depth reference consultations provided by subject specialists, careful review and selection of resources, both digital and print, that are provided to support faculty and students, detailed inventory control of resources to insure that users can accurately identify what they need and find it where it is supposed to be, and the continuous selection and processing of materials for storage due to campus space constraints.

Another important milestone this past year was the merger of Interlibrary Borrowing Services with Interlibrary Lending Services in the Document Services Department. This change will allow us to move forward with implementing the Illiad system for interlibrary borrowing, providing users with direct access to their borrowing request information. In addition, it positions us to better explore future improvements in document delivery options for the MIT community.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION III: Work to shape the future.

The efforts detailed above describe a number of significant efforts that are contributing to the Libraries' ability to meet the future needs of MIT faculty, students, and staff. They represent creative solutions and approaches that are shaping the evolution of library services. Additional activities this past year that will also improve our ability to design the future are:

- A librarian vacancy within the Engineering and Science Libraries (ESL) was reshaped into a new Computer Science Librarian position with explicit responsibility to work closely with the Digital Library Research Group and the Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory. Part of the position's focus is to examine new ideas and help put into operation and practice the library research being conducted by these groups when appropriate.
- The ESL created the "BTeam" to extend the Libraries' knowledge and to offer proposals for organizing efforts and expertise to support life sciences across all disciplines. Their work documented enormous overlap of interests among academic departments, and will help inform the Libraries' approach to best supporting this core area.

- The ESL also converted a processing position into a new Information Services Librarian to improve their ability to support interdisciplinary needs and focus additional effort on marketing and outreach. This was made possible by the development of an ESL-wide processing team under the leadership of one Processing Supervisor.
- With support from CMI, the Libraries undertook a study to better understand the issues involved in getting faculty to adopt DSpace. Working with faculty in Materials Science and Engineering, Mathematics, and Mechanical Engineering, this project will provide us with valuable information regarding marketing strategies and actual costs.
- The Data Services Librarian, working with faculty in SHASS and Sloan and other library colleagues, conducted a thorough review of MIT's partnership with the Harvard MIT Data Center to insure that MIT's needs for both access and storage of specialized social science data were being met. This review was received favorably by faculty, and will lead to the initiation of a service level agreement that will improve service and strengthen the partnership.

SERVICE TRENDS

Circulation and Reserves

Traditional use of the collections showed a modest decline of 4% (see Table 1). While regular loan activity dropped only 1%, reserves dropped a more dramatic 31% across the system (though two branches, Aero and Lindgren, showed increases in reserve activity of 10% and 26% respectively). The overall decline in traditional reserve activity can be attributed to the growing use of the fair use copyright provision within the Stellar system (see Table 2). For example nearly all Music faculty placed their listening assignments online, a dramatic change from the previous year resulting in 62% drop in reserve activity in the Lewis Music Library. Surprisingly, the number of items placed on traditional reserve increased 34% (see Table 3). BookPage requests increased 52%, requests from the RSC increased 6%, and requests for book searches decreased 17% (see Table 3).

Table 1. Regular Circulation and Reserve Activity (Loans, Renewals, and Holds)

Library	2004	2005	Change FY03/04
Aero			
Regular	5,381	4,739	-12%
Reserves	577	632	+10%
Total	5,958	5,371	-10%
Barker			
Regular	41,567	34,428	-17%
Reserves	1,297	1,228	-5%
Total	42,864	35,656	-17%
Dewey			
Regular	49,936	43,916	-12%
Reserves	6,530	5,067	-22%
Total	56,466	48,983	-13%
Hayden			
Regular	98,666	97,627	-1%
Reserves	12,445	10,815	-13%
Total	111,111	108,442	-2%
Lewis Music			
Regular	29,574	26,154	-11%

Reserves	7,526	2,879	-62%
Total	37,100	29,033	-22%
Lindgren			
Regular	6,303	5,455	-13%
Reserves	527	665	+26%
Total	6,830	6,120	-10%
Rotch			
Regular	41,727	38,627	-7%
Reserves	5,047	3,890	-23%
Total	46,774	42,517	-9%
Rotch Visual Col.			
Regular	16,309	11,773	-28%
Reserves	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	16,309	11,553	-28%
RSC			
Regular	4,520	3,709	-18%
Reserves	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	4,520	3,709	-18%
Schering-Plough			
Regular	3,624	N/A	N/A
Reserves	195	N/A	N/A
Total	3,819	N/A	N/A
“Your Account”			
Total	135,575	146,917	+8%
Total Regular	419,118	413,345	-1%
Total Reserves	36,372	25,176	-31%
Total	455,490	438,521	-4%

Table 2. Use of Fair-Use Copyright Functionality in Stellar*

	Spring 2004	Fall 2004	Spring 2005	Change Spring04/Spring05
No. of Courses Using Feature	128	181	217	+70%
Items “Copyright Flagged”	3,295	4,644	6,104	+85%
No. of Accesses	60,152	114,002	116,090	+93%

*Includes both courses supported by the Libraries’ Ereserves service and those self-supported by faculty

Table 3. Other Key Indicators of Circulation and Reserve Activity, Print

Activity	2004	2005	Change FY04/05
Items Processed for Reserves	5,043	6,741	+34%
In-House Use of Material	195,913	156,315	-20%

Reshelving Loaned Items	301,898	284,228	-6%
BookPage Requests	1,165	1,770	+52%
Book Searches	7,532	6,230	-17%
RSC Requests`	7,399	7,827	+6%

Occupancy

Use of Library facilities dropped system-wide 12%. Some of this drop may be attributable to a 10% reduction in hours across the system due to budget cuts and the closing of Schering-Plough Library. A notable exception is Rotch Library which saw a 5% increase. The use of the 24-hour study area in Hayden also increased 82%, jumping to 10,043 this year (numbers are included in Hayden figures).

Table 4. Library Occupancy

Library	2004	2005	Change FY03/04
Aero	27,463	23,002	-16%
Barker	122,251	84,063	-31%
Dewey	145,848	128,330	-12%
Hayden	357,301	343,690	-5%
Institute Archives	2,622	2,181	-17%
Lewis Music	50,512	39,627	-22%
Lindgren	21,009	20,606	-2%
Rotch	120,170	125,690	+5%
Rotch Visual Col.	N/A	N/A	N/A
RSC	229	224	-2%
Schering-Plough	20,958	N/A	N/A
Total	873,870	767,413	-12%

Instruction

Instructional activity remains healthy (see Table 5). While there was an overall decrease of approximately 5% in both the number of overall sessions and number of participants, efforts to focus on the curriculum paid off with increases of a third in the number of students involved in course-integrated and course-related instruction.

Table 5. Instructional Activity

Category	2004 Sessions	2004 Attendees	2005 Sessions	2005 Attendees	Change FY04/05 Sessions	Change FY04/05 Attendees
Course-integrated	34	134	43	199	+26%	+33%
Course-related	80	914	85	1,436	+6%	+36%
Independent seminar	21	345	27	237	+29%	-46%
Orientation	74	2,158	50	2,335	-32%	+8%

/ Tour						
Special event	25	1,861	32	1,110	+28%	-68%
Special workshop	79	766	56	564	-29%	-36%
Total	313	6,178	293	5,881	-6%	-5%

Reference

Reference and other staff-mediated help requests remain in high demand, but the downward trend in reference questions at public service desks continued (see Table 6). A change in the tool used for collecting reference statistics at service desks may have been a factor contributing to this 16% decrease and will bear continued monitoring going forward.

Table 6. Help Requests (Reference and Other)

	2004	2005	Change FY04/05
Reference Questions at Public Service Desks	31,323	26,225	-16%
Reference Questions Away from Public Service Desks	12,493	12,365	-1%
Total Reference Questions	43,816	38,950	-12%
Other Help Questions at Public Service Desks	20,833	19,196	-8%
Total Help Requests	64,649	57,786	-11%

Use of E-resources and Services

Use of electronic resources and services is heavy. In an attempt to better document the use of the tens of thousands of electronic journals, books, and databases the library subscribes to, an e-metrics tool was developed and put in place this past year. While it is only able to measure the number of sessions routed through the Libraries' proxy server and thus provides a very incomplete picture of the total use of these e-resources, it documents 1,434,541 sessions across these e-resources with 53% of the use coming on-campus and 47% of the use from off-campus. Tables 7, 8, and 9 also show the ongoing use of the Libraries' web site, Vera home page, and Barton.

Table 7. Unique Hosts Served by MIT Libraries Web Site, Monthly Average

	2004	2005	Change FY04/05
No. of Hosts Served	102,708	104,055	+1%

Table 8. Unique Hosts Served by Vera Home Page, Monthly Average

	2004	2005	Change FY04/05
No. of Hosts Served	42,484	42,946	+1%

Table 9. Use of Barton

	2004	2005	Change FY04/05
No. of Sessions	757,325	1,453,634	+92%
No. of Searches	1,800,478	1,571,127	-13%

Interlibrary Borrowing

Requests to borrow material from other libraries dropped 6% this past year. This decline is almost entirely due to the budget-driven decision to stop acquiring dissertations. The 24% increase in requests for material that were actually found at MIT is worth further analysis. Does it demonstrate a lack of awareness on how to use Barton and Vera productively? Or does it represent a desire by users to have someone else do the work of finding information and delivering it to them?

Table 10. Interlibrary Borrowing Requests

	2004	2005	Change FY04/05
Photocopies Requested	8,596	8,360	-3%
Originals Requested	4,009	3,083	-23%
Found at MIT	1,579	1,957	+24%
Unfilled	383	241	-37%
Total	14,567	13,641	-6%

RECOGNIZING STAFF

None of the tremendous accomplishments described in this report could have been accomplished without the remarkable staff who make up the Libraries. Staff at all levels – professional, administrative, and support – take enormous pride in their work, and collaborate effectively cross-organizationally in support of service excellence to the MIT community. Particularly worthy of recognition within Public Services are the recipients of the Libraries Infinite Mile Awards this past year:

- Margaret dePopolo – Margaret was recognized in the category of community for the extraordinary work she has done in contributing to the development of learning community at MIT during her thirty-four year career. Margaret retired on June 30, 2005. She will be missed.
- Maria Rodrigues – Maria was recognized in the category of results, outcome, and productivity for her efforts on a variety of fronts including her leadership in merging the processing staff in ESL, her contributions to the development of the local processing procedures and documentation website, and her work in coordinating the training for the recent Aleph upgrade.
- Johanna Woll – Johanna was recognized in the category of innovation and creativity for her work in reorganizing the Rotch Visual Collection’s Aga Khan visual archives into a well-respected and accessible teaching collection.
- Service Desk Task Force – Jennifer Harter, Michael Leininger, Amanda Powers, Andrew Shea, and Kevin Sheehan were recognized in the category of innovation and creativity for identifying core competencies for staff and students working at public service desks.
- Hayden Circulation Staff – Dan Holland, Harolyn Hylton, Georgiana McReynolds, Denise O’Malley, Gregory Padilla, Pat Page, Alan Rostoff, Kevin Sheehan, and Matthew Van Sleet were recognized in the category of results, outcome, and productivity for their work in processing and redeploying materials within Hayden Library to accommodate the integration of the collections from a

decommissioned library, achieve better inventory control, and provide growth space for new acquisitions.

- Committee Without a Name – Jim Eggleston and Jennifer Harter were recognized in the category of community for their work in breaking down the barriers within Hayden Library and bringing people from many different work units – Humanities, Science, Hayden Circulation, Lewis Music, Lindgren, and, at the time, ILB – together.

We continue to be successful recruiting bright and energetic staff. New additions to the staff this past year were:

- Laura Andersen, Collections Assistant, Humanities Library
- Elissa Derby, Circulation Assistant, Dewey Library
- Jacqueline Gaston, Customer Services Assistant, Document Services
- Kathryn Harris, Interlibrary Borrowing Assistant, Document Services
- Melanie Howell, Library Technology Expert, Rotch Library
- Oliver Mentken, Administrative Assistant, Humanities Library
- Gregory Padilla, Circulation Assistant, Hayden Circulation
- Samuel Sadow, Visual Resource Cataloger, Rotch Visual Collection
- Mathew Willmott, Branch Assistant, Aeronautics and Astronautics Library

A number of other vacancies were filled from within:

- Millicent Gaskell, Head, Dewey Library
- Tracy Gabridge, Associate Head, Barker Library
- Kevin Sheehan, Circulation Supervisor, Rotch Library
- Denise O'Malley, Circulation and Access Services Supervisor, Barker Library
- Gregory Padilla, Evening and Weekends Circulation Assistant, Hayden Circulation

Promotions that occurred this past year were:

- Lisa Horowitz, Librarian II to Librarian III
- Erja Kajosalu, Librarian II to Librarian III
- Kate McNeill-Harman, Librarian I to Librarian II

Finally, two job changes occurred:

- Stephanie Hartman, Information Services Librarian, Engineering and Science Libraries
- Maria Rodrigues, Processing Supervisor, Engineering and Science Libraries

CONCLUSION

The breadth of activities undertaken by the Libraries' Public Service staff to support the research and educational efforts of MIT faculty, students, and staff is a wonder to behold. It is my privilege to work with a talented group of colleagues to meet the current and future challenges that lie before us. Because of our focus on the MIT community, we will be successful in delivering and designing services that effectively contribute to MIT's mission of advancing knowledge and educating students. Our

collaborations across the Institute and beyond will insure that we will contribute to shaping the future of library and information services. As I believe this report details, the future is now.

Steve Gass
Associate Director for Public Services