CHAPTER 1

Managing the Transformation to a Library for Today: Bringing a Vision to Reality

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Abstract. *The Roland G. Parrish Library of Management & Economics at Purdue University underwent a 4 year 3 phase renovation into a cutting edge, student centered learning and collaborative space. It was transformed into a 21st Century library space that has impacted the university in a number of ways.*

Keywords: Academic Library, Business Library, Renovation, Collaborative Space, Student-centered

1. Introduction

In a climate where peer institutions were closing business libraries, our goal in creating what would become the Roland G. Parrish Library of Management and Economics was to transform a traditional library into a space that reflects today's students' expectations, facilitates new teaching pedagogies and supports a variety of learning styles. The design and services of the new library would also be influenced by the ever-increasing amount of information and variety of means by which it is disseminated. Before renovation, the two floors, 31,500 sq. ft., Management and Economics Library (MEL) housed a large print collection including bound journals, books and government documents; study tables; and a circulation/reference service desk that stood at the entrance.

2. Strategic Planning

We initiated the project that would span from 2008 until 2012 by meeting with the deans and head of the School of Management to learn what each faculty member was working on and how our collections and space could best support their needs. We also held discussions with Library staff, conducted benchmark studies with other peer libraries, administered student and alumni surveys, and ran faculty and student focus groups in order to determine how our user groups would want to use the space. The responses to our inquiries and a desire to support the University and Library's strategic goals guided our vision of a student/learner-focused renovation strategy. We had also learned from our stakeholders that a multi-functional space would best suit their needs as they would like to use the space for both collaborative and individual study, relaxing, and group meetings. These quotes from the student focus groups summarize their attitude toward the existing library and make obvious the dramatic change we came to realize would be needed:

> "*Like I'll go up there if the drawing room is pretty crowded . . .*"
> "*I use MEL [the management library] for a lot of studying, not so much for information*".
> "*For me, zero [use]. I don't really like it*".

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We began the strategic planning of the renovation by creating a task force comprised of Libraries and management school faculty. This group created a white paper calling for a user-centered 21st century library and stressed the importance of the management library working as a dynamic partner with its constituents. The new library would foster information literacy by providing access to and delivery of information to its constituents, regardless of location or time, while providing training and guidance to its users in the access and use of all information sources. These goals were based on what we had learned from the student surveys as well as student and faculty focus groups and visits to recent library renovations at Ohio State and Penn State. Doan and Kirkwood had directly participated in the Libraries strategic planning process giving them a clear understanding of the Libraries future direction. We strengthened our knowledge and understanding of effective and innovative space design by attending the Maya Design's User Interfaces for Physical Spaces and the *Library Journal* 1st Annual *Design Institute*: The Changing Design Landscape for Libraries. The strategic plan states that the Libraries envision themselves as *". . .leading in innovative and creative solutions for access to and management and dissemination of scholarly information resources, and for the provision of information literacy and the creation of leading edge learning spaces, both physical and virtual*". Learning remained of strategic importance. In the Library's annual newsletter, Kirkwood explains that the library "*is no longer just a repository of information, but a place where learning, exploration and knowledge creation takes place*". (Kirkwood, 2012). We communicated our vision through grant applications, donor visits, fundraising, tours, and presentations to the Library Dean's Advisory Council and to the Undergraduate Libraries Council.

3. Process Management: Focus on our Customers

We knew that to support the Libraries' strategic goal of establishing relationships with cross campus units, effective collaboration among a number of diverse entities would be necessary for the success of our project. Sometimes breaking down departmental silos was necessary. In order, for example, to provide all of the technologies included in the renovation, it was necessary to bring together for the first time three separate groups involved in campus technology: University Information Technology (ITAP), School of Management Information Technology (KCC) and Libraries Information Technology (ITD). In addition to working with contractors and architects throughout the entire four year process we had to work with University entities, including the University Project Manager and University Purchasing, to make sure these external parties followed the University building and budget requirements and procedures.

During Phase 2, we opened up a dialog with the Undergraduate Management Advising Office to provide space within the Parrish Library for their leadership Communication Center. We made a conscious decision to try to become more integrated into the lives of the Management student and the culture of the school. This has been a tremendous success for both parties by providing a new premium space for the Center and for driving a different stream of traffic into the Parrish Library.

We determined that the sweeping transformation that the goals established for the renovation would require could best be managed through budget reconsiderations and collection management strategies. The easy, anytime access that our respondents requested could be addressed by increasing the digitalization of Libraries resources which would render unnecessary the large floor space of the present library. To help generate the funds that would increase the usability of the retained library space, a portion of the original floor space was allocated to the School of Management for its undergraduate advising offices and to the Department of Agricultural Economics for study space and graduate student offices. Budget concerns also made impractical the renovation of the entire management library at one time. We believed that a phased approach would alleviate the immediate cost while allowing our vision to have a physical reality that could serve as a model for all to see and would also allow us to analyze the space for its successes and problems before designing the next phases. As we hoped, phase one of the project attracted the interest of donors, and, Roland G. Parrish, a Purdue Krannert School of Management alumnus, did in deed step forward and earned the privilege of having his name attached to the exciting new space. Doan chronicles in an article for *The Bottom Line* the year long relationship she and the Libraries dean had with Parrish (Doan 2012). Following Parrish's acknowledgement of the importance the library had to him during his academic career, he was given a tour of the completed phase one. In *American Libraries Journal* Pamela Goodes says of the library, "*It is the first major Purdue entity named in honor of an African-American alumnus. Parrish, president, CEO, and owner of Parrish McDonald's Restaurant LTD, a chain of 25*

stores in north Texas, provided a $2 *million leadership gift to support the* $4.2 *million renovation project*" (Goodes, 2012).

The LearnLab, included in phase one, was the perfect classroom for new pedagogical styles. It contains a work station for each student, large monitors and dry-erase white boards for collaborative work. A digital copy camera enables students to take pictures and thus save their work on the white boards and an instructor's podium allows for control of the room's three large multi-projection SmartBoards. Parrish faculty librarians and staff provide instructional training and support to departmental faculty utilizing the LearnLab. In keeping with the strategic goal of maximizing access to library resources, an electronic sign hanging outside the doors shows when a class isn't scheduled and it may be used for individual study. The LearnLab was made available to all schools and departments on campus for scheduling classes and other instructional sessions. As a result, an increasing number of departments and courses from across campus utilize the space, from entry level courses such as General Studies 175 to upper level management courses (MGMT 415). Organizational leadership, technology and nursing are also among the disciplines represented.

4. Information and Analysis

The increasing availability and demand for digital resources allowed us to downsize the print collection. After determining the research and curriculum needs of the Schools of Management, Department of Agricultural Economics, Hospitality and Tourism Management and Consumer Science and Retailing, some of the print collection was deselected and the little used and quickly dated reference collection eliminated. Based on usage and demand, much of the collection was transferred to a nearby compact storage area in the School of Management while more highly circulated items remained in the library. To insure that the needs of our users were quickly met, a twice daily delivery service for requesting printed materials located in compact storage was implemented. The needs of our user groups were also addressed by incorporating meeting rooms into our plans. Phase 1 has a Financial Conference Room with a large corporate style table, ergonomic chairs and technology that allows for easy video conferencing. Phase 3 includes the Hollister meeting room that accommodates smaller, more intimate classes such as those on the PhD level.

In addition to using circulation statistics to help determine where print materials would best be located, data analysis informed other decisions made during the process. We designed the ensuing two phases of the project to accommodate the students' need, as indicated in the surveys, for 24 hour access to the library space. In "*Solving the Information Workflow Tracking Dilemma*", Doan describes the necessity of using concrete data in making service decisions (Doan, 2006). MEL utilized FootPrints database to help determine library usage. Data from the existing library showed that libraries services were little used after midnight—what was wanted after this time was primarily a place to study and meet with groups—so services were curtailed at this time. To meet the challenge of keeping the space open without staff present, lockable covers were installed on the general collection and reserve book shelves. Large, lockable drawers at the service desk make it easy to store laptops and other library materials, and pull down gates installed in the ceiling made it possible to close off designated areas. A 24 hour, unstaffed space also presented a security issue. We worked with campus police toward a unique resolution. Members of the student security patrol, trained by campus police, would watch over the space after library services ended. These students carry two way radios to communicate vandalism and other types of information to the police.

We also used student data in selecting furniture styles for the renovated space. The surveys and focus group told us that students wanted to use the space in a variety of ways and wanted it to support the many current technologies they would be using. Kirkwood describes the importance of technology to library space design, "*Technology changes the way students learn and the way teachers teach, which is why learning spaces are changing to meet new curricula and the way today's students learn and want to learn*". (Kirkwood, 2012). In response to student requests and in recognition of the importance of technologies, we chose furniture styles that best served these purposes. Plugs for laptops were scattered throughout the space as well as a laptop locker for storage and recharging. In another area of the first phase, MediaScapes (large monitors) are located at D-shaped tables with laptop plug in's to facilitate peer to peer sharing and collaborative study. High stools and tall tables were placed near the café area for relaxing, checking email and having a snack. Instead of traditional enclosed study rooms, high-backed, u-shaped bench seating was placed around moveable tables to provide a degree of privacy in the open space and facilitate collaborative study. Quick stop, stand up computer

stations were installed near the library's entrance where students could do a fast check of email or the Library's catalog. Once the project was underway, we continued to solicit student input by placing an array of furniture options in the library for students to actually test and rate. Their responses guided our discussions with the furniture manufacturer who was willing to work with us in designing furniture that suited the students' needs.

5. Human Resource Focus

Along with the goal of serving our users' needs, we wanted a space that would best allow both Libraries faculty and staff to carry out their strategic roles. We used FootPrints to track the number and type of question that came in at the service desk. The collected data not only showed that libraries services were little used after midnight but that most questions were directional or required only basic reference skills. Doan and Kirkwood explain why in "*The Learning Commons as a Locus for Information Literacy*" the traditional, one-shot instructional session is no longer the best way to introduce library resources: "*It is more effective to use the library's time and resources in embedded librarianship, information literacy for-credit courses, partnership in curriculum development to create appropriate assignments using resources, and co-teaching class sessions*" (Doan and Kirkwood, 2010). To free up faculty to serve as embedded librarians in specific courses and provide business information literacy instruction, we determined that they didn't need to be physically at the desk as they had been in the old model of customer service. Instead of library faculty spending time at the desk waiting for users with questions who may or may not show up, we implemented a reference triage system. The staff and graduate assistants, who work at the new service desk, called the *iDesk*, have reference training and are trained to direct those with more complex questions to the subject faculty librarian who can best assist them.

Staff member's job responsibilities and operational roles as well as the changing faculty roles were also considered in the renovation. Rather than enclosed offices, desks were located in an open area to facilitate collaboration. Break out rooms with large monitors were installed adjacent to the faculty work area to allow for small group meetings. The staff duties that had been associated with the large print collection were replaced by the responsibilities that were appropriate for the transformed library. These included supporting users of the LearnLab and meeting rooms by scheduling these rooms, assisting with the technologies in the rooms, and cleaning the now more frequented space. Following the attrition of some staff members, position descriptions were rewritten to better reflect the technology and service skills required in the new library. Acknowledging the importance to our users of the Libraries virtual presence, a digital reference queue dedicated to the Parrish Library allowing users to email, instant message, or text message their questions was purchased. Support staff members as well as faculty provide DigRef service.

6. Service Results

With its blending of formal and informal learning spaces and support of information literacy and current technologies, the completed Parrish Library has become a prototype for redesign of library space across campus. The LearnLab has served as prototype classroom and impetus for IMPACT (Instruction Matters: Purdue Academic Course Transformation), a cross campus movement that has as its goal to redesign foundational courses based on student-centered pedagogy (www.purdue.edu/impact). Doan summarizes the meaning that the Parrish Library has had for Purdue University in VOLUMe: "*Libraries' spaces, designed in collaboration with campus partners, are serving as incubators to pilot new active learning experiences and environments*" (Doan, 2013).

The rapid growth of IMPACT courses has led to some of them being scheduled in the LearnLab while the space at the large and popular Hicks Undergraduate Library has been being repurposed to include IMPACT classrooms. Results of a survey of students who had taken a course in one of the new style classrooms indicates their view that the innovative design and technologies in the classroom addressed their learning needs and encouraged their engagement in the course. (See Appendix) An Active Learning Center, which also blends library and classroom spaces, is being planned for the center of campus. The cross campus popularity of the Parrish Library has unexpectedly led to its being sought out as a site to hold events. The LearnLab has naturally become an often requested location for instructional purposes, but the more formal Corporate Study room, designed for quiet individual study, has tables and counter space for serving that have made it a popular event location. A sampling of the events that have been held at Parrish illustrates the diversity

of groups from both campus and community that the space serves: Entrepreneurship Boot Camp for Veterans Workshop, Science Bound Freshmen, PU Parents Committee, and Society of Minority Managers.

In a 2011 article Doan and Kirkwood cite the results of student surveys that demonstrate the popularity of the LearnLab and the positive effect that this type of classroom environment has on learning:

Preliminary assessment of students who have taken classes in the LearnLab has been extremely positive. Surveying over seventy-five students produced the following reaction to the LearnLab space:

- 91 percent felt that it was different from any class they have been in.
- 80 percent considered it an exciting room to learn in.
- 79 percent believed the room allows for more collaboration
- 89 percent considered it an environment conducive to learning
- 89 percent considered it an environment conducive to learning
- 95 percent would like other courses in the LearnLab.

A student focal group participant, when asked what the new library would have to offer in order to compete with other, larger libraries on campus, responded, "*. . . the library's got to be really out there. It's got to be this awesome looking place where everything is there*". The visual appeal of the completed Parrish Library fulfills this student's vision. [Insert image]In contrast to the enclosed spaces of the original library, the space is open and filled with light. Rather than the clutter of signage, color is used to demarcate the usage zones—a vibrant red glass tiled column leads the visitor to the service desk while bright green highlights the café area. While the space is impressive, perhaps the most convincing proof of its success is that the renovated library has more than doubled the user rate of the original.

The April 2012 dedication of the Roland G. Parrish Library of Management & Economics culminated a long but rewarding process that began with the 2005 white paper: Customer Derived Vision for the Management and Economics Library. We learned much about management as we addressed the complexities of conceptualizing the project and bringing that vision to fruition. To summarize the innovative ways we solved problems and met our goals for the space:

> **Addressed budget difficulties** by developing a three-part phased approach to the project, relinquishing library space to generate funding and cultivating relationships with donors.
>
> **Overcame the obstacles inherent in making resources readily accessible** by moving away from print to digital resources, eliminating entrance security and replacing with pull down gates to allow for 24/5 access to the space**;**
>
> **Created new workflows** freeing faculty from the service desk, revising staff job descriptions and training staff to support the learning-centered space.

Our leadership in designing the Parrish renovation has been acknowledged across campus. The learning space was so well received by the Provost office that it is being used as a model for future classrooms. Doan was invited to participate in the redesign and development of those spaces and serves as a member of the campus wide IMPACT steering committee. Kirkwood and Doan have provided leadership in the library field through scholarly articles and presentations on learning spaces during the duration of the project, which are included in the references below. Quotes from our users, posted on a bulletin board in the Parrish Library, vividly show the success of our renovation project:

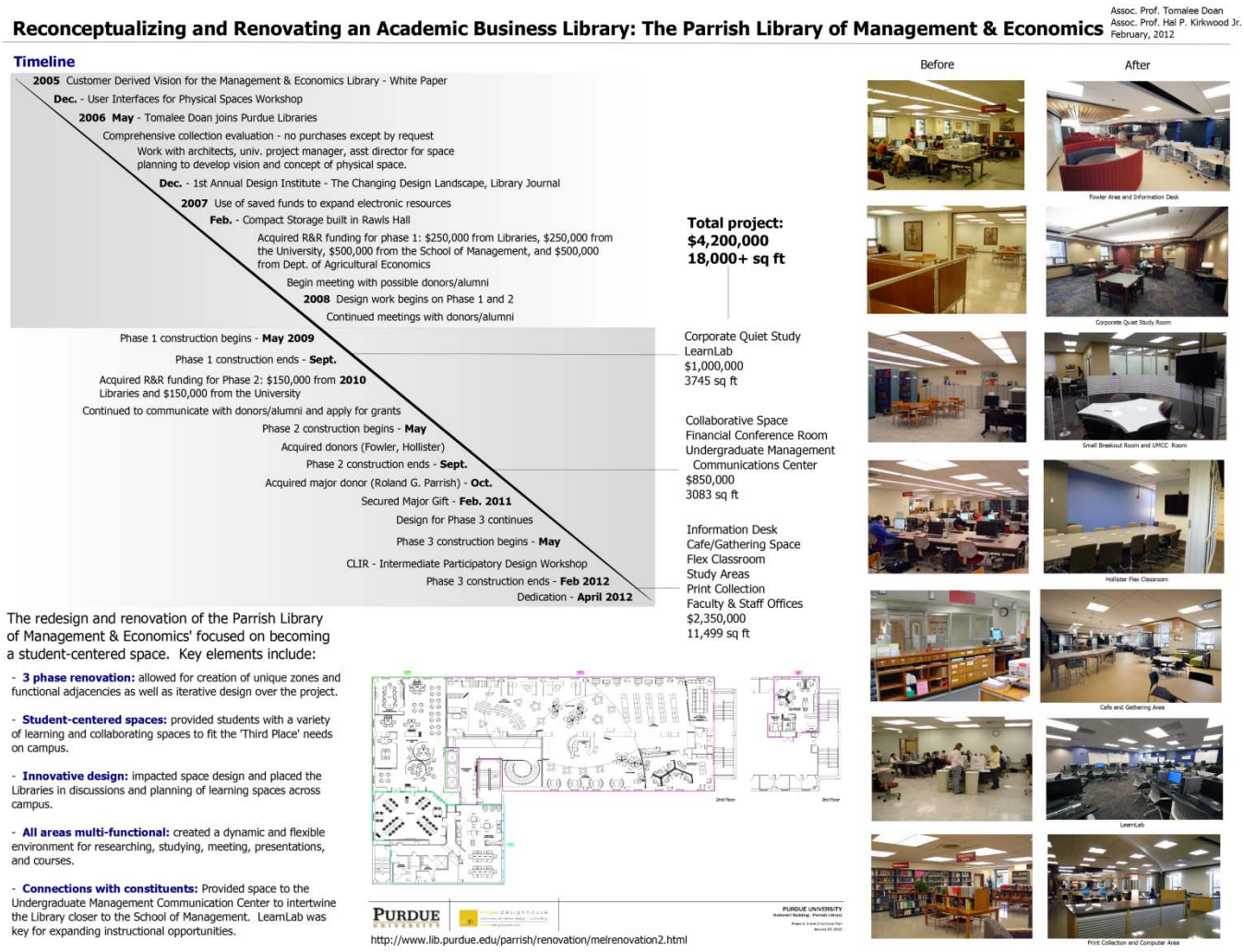
"*Awesome new space*"

"*Futuristic . . . love it*!!!

"*I think I found my new favorite place to study*".

"*Looks like an Apple store at night*"

7. Appendix



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