

Towards Library 2.0: building the library of the future

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Introduction

Higher education has seen a huge increase in student numbers over the last 20 years, to the point that some libraries have had to change substantially in the way that they operate. Libraries face increased competition and are no longer seen as the single source of research and learning resources. Social and technical trends have changed the global context for information and resources as users create, own and manage their own content and systems. Librarians and information professionals need to understand some of the major strategic challenges that their institutions are facing and to think creatively about how they can best plan to support the core learning, teaching and research needs of their users. This analysis and planning should be carried out across the whole institution in order to cross the traditional boundaries and take an institution-wide approach. National shared services and the potential of cloud computing¹ can offer opportunities, but must be considered carefully.

The context for change

We are at a point in time where people need to think differently about academic libraries. Libraries are faced with the challenges of reduced resources, and ever-growing expectations from end-users, in a world where the ubiquitous search engines have created an impression that all content is available at the click of a mouse, instantly and for free. Global