

***Guerilla Marketing of the  
Academic Library:  
Experiences from the Engineering Realm  
- OLA Superconference 4 Feb 2006 -***

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Presentation: <http://stlq.info/olafeb06.pdf>



# *Background Information*

- Science and Technology Library, U Alberta
- Serves three faculties:
  - Agriculture, Forestry and Home Economics
  - Engineering
  - Science
  - PLUS:
    - William C Wonders Map Collection
      - 550,000 maps, one million air photos
    - Canadian Circumpolar Library



## *Engineering clients served: 2005-06*

- 3,225 undergraduate students
  - 35% increase since 1995
- 1,060 graduate students
  - 140% increase since 1995
- 175 faculty
  - 41% increase since 1995
- Additional engineering clients include research associates, post-doctorates, NINT researchers (*nanotech*)



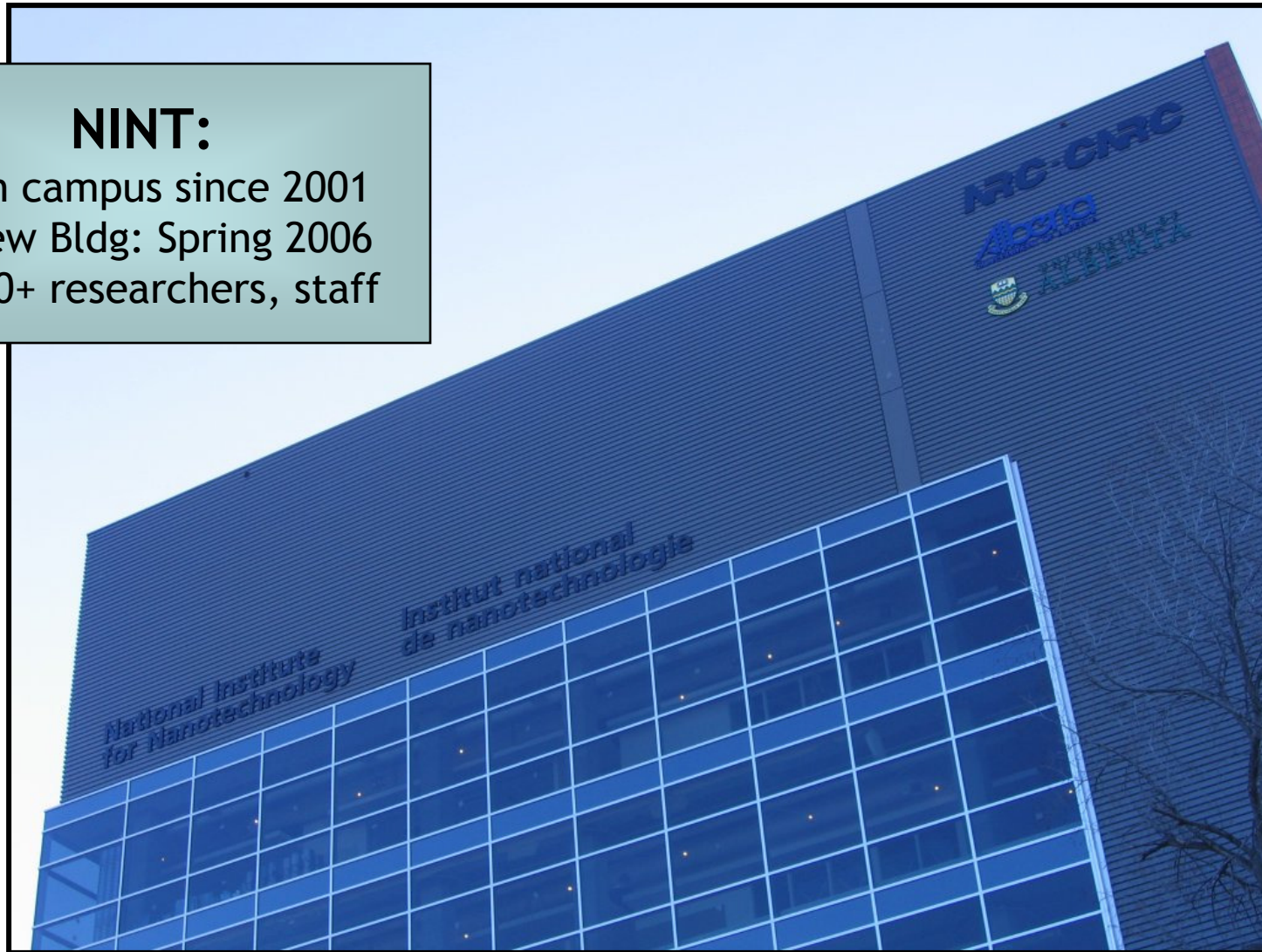
# *U Alberta: Faculty of Engineering*

- **Four large departments, one school:**
  - Chemical and Materials Engineering
  - Civil and Environmental Engineering
    - includes the School of Mining and Petroleum Engineering
  - Electrical and Computer Engineering
  - Mechanical Engineering
    - includes engineering management program
  - **National Institute for Nanotechnology (NINT)** -  
new bldg opening Spring 2006
- Each U of Alberta department assigns one faculty member to be the library liaison



## NINT:

- On campus since 2001
- New Bldg: Spring 2006
- 200+ researchers, staff



## *2000: Liaison Assignments Changed*

- In the previous century, librarians in the Science and Technology Library were assigned subject responsibilities that crossed multiple faculties
- My subject areas, 1983-2000: entomology, mathematics, statistics and applied probability, zoology, engineering: civil and environmental, mining and petroleum, chemical and materials - AGHH!
- In 2000, liaison assignments were restructured so as to align responsibilities by faculty
  - In January 2006, further changes: liaison and information services extended to NINT: one-year half-time secondment



# 2000: New Subject Responsibilities

- 2000: SciTech Librarians were assigned to departments with which they had not liaised before
  - Responsibilities include collection development, research and library skills instruction, in-depth reference and consulting; on-site information service (in 2003)
- **The challenge:** in what ways could we market our services to an existing (but to us - new) set of clients?
- What follows are initial marketing strategy suggestions, based on my experiences meeting new faculty in 2000:



## *Initial Marketing Strategy: “Meet and Greet”*

- When assigned a new department, “make the rounds”
  - Book time to go “door to door”; try to enlist the help of a current faculty member, preferably the existing library representative
- Introduce yourself to as many faculty as possible
- Bring clipboard, take notes, field questions
- Respond **quickly and thoroughly** to their concerns!
- Advantage: faculty is made aware of your library’s commitment to support their teaching and research, and of your specific commitment to their department





## *Establishing Long-Term Relationships (1)*

- Be aware of new departmental appointments
  - Establish contact with new faculty as soon as you can
  - Try to visit on their home turf - meet them in their building, their office
- “Get into their workflow”:
  - bring business card to first visit (virtual or otherwise)
  - get your address into their e-mail contact list
  - swap phone numbers, including mobile
  - match up to their communication style: is it IM, cell, e-mail, blog, telephone, meeting for coffee?



## *Establishing Long-Term Relationships (2)*

- Offer library presentations at:
  - seminars for new faculty
  - lecture series for grads and faculty
- Benefits of creating good working relationships:
  - faculty willing to participate in library-related projects
  - more open to suggestions for instruction input
  - level of trust and respect is established
  - collection development assistance readily offered
  - faculty more likely to direct their students to the library and to your services
    - in turn, this increases the library's validity and visibility with the students



## *Keeping Users in the “Loop”*

- Notify faculty/grads/researchers of
  - new book lists (edited for content if necessary!)
  - new product announcements (dbs, e-journal packages, online full-text resources, etc)
  - new services - chat ref, etc
- How? e-mail, blog, RSS feed, etc.
  - Bloglines is a good, basic newsreader for RSS feeds
  - U Alberta offers >[285 RSS feeds](#), such as new books
- Stay alert for items of interest in faculty and graduate student research areas




# *The Personal Touch and Beyond*

- On-site services - bring the library and its resources to the department/faculty
  - Wireless technology is nice! ☺
- Maintain regular contact of any sort!
- Try to join curriculum committees where and if appropriate
- Schmooze when you get the chance

- Regularly scan university newspapers, faculty and departmental websites
  - Send congratulatory e-mails when accomplishments of a faculty member, researcher, etc., is mentioned
  - Remind them that your services are available to them when they need it



# *A Cautionary Tale!*

- Use **discretion** when sending e-mail! - don't contribute to information overload!
  - example (“actual” e-mail from a professor):
    - **RANDY, PLEASE TAKE ME OFF YOUR MAILING LIST IMMEDIATELY.**
  - 99% OF THE MATERIAL YOU SEND IS NOT RELEVANT TO ME. I GET MORE EMAIL FROM YOU IN A WEEK THAN ANY OTHER PERSON, AND I AM TIRED OF DELETING IT.**
- No e-mails sent since ... 



# *Remember the Undergrads!*

- Do not forget the undergraduate students when considering ways to market your services
- Essential to market the library's services to them as well
- How?
  - instruction sessions in appropriate classes
    - in engineering, this includes design classes
    - other disciplines might include report writing, research projects, etc
  - personalized information service
    - by e-mail, IM, blog
  - assist with blog creation where appropriate
  - providing articles for their publications. Example:



## Sessions and Services of Cameron Science & Technology Library

Randy Reichardt  
Information Services Librarian

Engineering Research Assistance: Need help with your research paper, library assignment, design project? Looking for a chemical price or articles on slope stability or computational fluid dynamics? Still deciding what online database or full-text resource to use? Jerry Kowalyk and Randy Reichardt, the U of A engineering librarians, are here to help with the Library's available electronic information resources as well as with traditional Library support (Inter-Library Loan requests, place online holds, renew borrowed materials online). Librarian On-Site returns to ETLC on Wednesday, September 28th. The service is designed to bring the information and research services of the Cameron Science & Technology Library to the engineering students, on your home turf. This is the second year of the LOS service to engineering students offered twice a week in ETLC E2-006. Details:

Service: Engineering Research Assistance

Location: ETLC E2-006

Times: Every Wednesday from 1300-1500 hrs; Every Thursday from 1200-1400 hrs.

Beginning: Wednesday, September 28, 1300 hrs.

If you have any questions, please contact Jerry at [jerry.kowalyk@ualberta.ca](mailto:jerry.kowalyk@ualberta.ca) (492-7905) or Randy at [randy.reichardt@ualberta.ca](mailto:randy.reichardt@ualberta.ca) (492-7911). ☺



*Brief articles on library resources and information services are submitted to “**The Bridge**” on a regular basis.*

# THE BRIDGE

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<http://www.ess.ualberta.ca/bridge>



# *Instruction as a Marketing Tool*

- **The Obvious:** when teaching in classes, you are marketing to *existing clients*: students
- Consider marketing to ***clients who do not yet exist***: many of the students you are teaching will be working in their fields after graduation
- **How:** encourage them to return to the library for help after they are working in their fields
- **Enticement:** offer examples of how gaining and maintaining expertise in library and research skills will benefit their employer
  - Example from engineering...





## “Industry Expectations of the New Engineer”

- Article by **Ronald J Rodriguez** (*Agilent Technologies Laboratory, Palo Alto CA*)
- Summarizes why an engineer will need information gathering and management skills in the field
- Ideal time for developing these skills is during their engineering education
  - **Rodrigues, Ronald J.** “Industry expectations of the new engineer.” *Science and Technology Libraries*, v19 n3/4, 2001, pp 179-188
  - article is discussed in class, and copies distributed to students



## *Marketing in Place: U of A's Librarian On-Site Service*

- field of engineering a leader in conversion of research material to e-format;
  - most major research tools and resources now available on desktop
- by early 2005, all engineering departments were located at western edge of campus
- in 2003, we anticipated a reduction in engineering clientele in the SciTech Library



# *Librarian On-Site - Proposal Fall 2003*

- Provide library service on site in Engineering Teaching and Learning Complex (ETLC)
- 4 hours per week; 1300-1500 hrs, Wed and Thus
- Location: 65-seat student computer lab in ETLC
- Why do this?
  - to maintain and build upon excellent working relationship between SciTech Library and Faculty of Engineering
  - keep the Library's profile strong among engineering clientele
  - golden opportunity to market the library's services on the clients' home turf! (mostly undergrads)
- Renamed "**Engineering Research Assistance**" in the fall of 2005



# *Librarian On-Site Service - Outcomes for Engineering Users*

- Increased awareness and use of online engineering resources.
- Increased awareness of services provided by the Science & Technology Library, and the engineering librarians
- Savings of time and money through increased access to and use of information resources purchased by the library
- Strengthening awareness among library staff of the changing needs of the Faculty of Engineering



## *Librarian On-Site - Outcomes for the SciTech Library*

- Increased visibility of the UA Libraries for all users in the Faculty of Engineering
- Increased use of the Libraries' services, particularly the online resources
- More one-on-one and small group library and research skills instruction delivered
- Ongoing development and strengthening of liaison relationship with the Faculty



## *Librarian On-Site - Experience to Date*

- librarian works at front console in 65 seat lab
- average 2-4 questions in a two-hour period
- questions are more detailed, often involve group design projects, research papers
- repeat customers
- one-on-one reference allows for in-depth instruction and explanation of many resources
- less pressure to answer a question quickly, unless others are waiting

## *Librarian On-Site - Sample Feedback*

In response to questions re: *why did you choose the service*, and would *you like to see it continued*:

- “it makes accessing information much easier. I really appreciated the help I received this year (on 4-5 occasions)”
- “...this service is excellent. I wish I would have had access to this service in my earlier years
- “it’s helpful and we don’t have to go to Cameron”
- “I learn best with one-on-one, and then I also remember it better for next time”
- “extremely convenient and good for students who are unfamiliar with the library”
- “makes it accessible to us and we are more likely to learn what resources the library has to offer”

Most common request from students: **increase the hours of service**





# *The Shape of Things to Come?*

- an increase in virtual presence
  - e.g. using IM (Instant Messaging) for reference service
  - see Amanda Etches-Johnson's session following this one in Room IC Ontario!
- maintain an open mind to new ideas
- recognize the flexibility of new technologies, and accept that some may be outdated quickly (who still uses zip discs?)
- experiment, try new things; not all will work



## Students armed with BlackBerries

### The Edmonton Journal

Published: Wednesday, February 01, 2006

EDMONTON - The University of Alberta School of Business is arming its Management Information Systems students with wireless power and speed. The pilot program, the first of its kind in Canada, includes 50 BlackBerry 7520 devices from Research in Motion and a Telus business subscription for the course duration.

"This is a great partnership with two outstanding Canadian companies," said Dean Mike Percy, himself an avid BlackBerry user, adding the unique program will bring the very best into the classroom and help students be successful in the market place.

BlackBerries feature instant e-mail, Internet and synchronization with contact and calendar information between the office and the hand-held device.

The devices allow groups to talk to each other more conveniently on speaker phone or in private, in walkie-talkie mode. The school plans to try new programs on the BlackBerries beyond e-mail such as sending course alerts to students and adding paper and labour-saving functionality.

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U of A students find their BlackBerry 7520s are handy for more than just educational purposes. Clockwise from top left, Evelyn Lukaszewski loves being able to outbid others on EBay; Drew Forward likes to keep in touch with fellow students during class; and Robin Mwesigye likes the constant Internet access, while Marina Shih enjoys using instant text messaging across campus.

Photograph by : Steve Makris, The Journal

# *Questions, Comments?*

- Thank you!
- Randy Reichardt
  - Science and Technology Library
  - University of Alberta
  - [randy.reichardt@ualberta.ca](mailto:randy.reichardt@ualberta.ca)
- Presentation (w/o video) available at:  
<http://stlq.info/olafeb06.pdf>

