Sharing the Pain, Striving for Gain

John Cox
University Librarian, James Hardiman Library
UKSG Seminar, 18 November 2009
Overview

- Irish financial context
- Library implications/coping strategies
  - Staffing
  - Collections
  - Operations
Irish Financial Context

• 1996-2007: unprecedented years of plenty
  – High public spending
  – Strong job creation
  – Varied impact of spending
• 2008-?: sudden and steep downturn
  – Spending cuts
  – Job losses
  – Higher taxation
Public Expenditure Cuts

- Public sector targetted in McCarthy Report, July 2009
- €5 billion spending cuts *recommended* to address major deficit
- 17000 job cuts proposed, 7000 in education
- Higher education under the microscope:
  - Mergers/amalgamations
  - Cuts/discontinuations in research funding
  - Outsourcing encouraged
Employment Control Framework

- No filling of posts unless of strategic importance and by appeal
- No contract extensions
- No promotions
- No acting allowances
- Augmented by incentivised schemes to reduce headcount:
  - Early retirement
  - 3-year career break
  - Reduced working year
Taxation

- Pension levy has decreased public sector salaries by c8%
- New income levy by salary band
- Indirect tax increases, eg VAT/Social Welfare cuts
- Lots more pain to come in 9 December budget
Some General Implications

- Lower worker morale
- Uncertainty
- Greater realism
- Focus on efficiencies/value for money
- Drive towards local and national collaboration
- Shared services agenda
- Major managerial challenges
Library Implications: Staffing

• Every vacancy seen as part of headcount reduction exercise
• Min. 10% reduction expected
• NUI Galway Library: 6.71 FTE reduction in 2009 = c8%
• All grades impacted, from deputy to shelver
• No retention of contract posts
• Major focus on deployment/redeployment/process
• Increasingly painful!
Library Coping Strategies: Staffing

- Absorption, e.g. reduced budgets can mean less activity
- Redeployment
- Senior Management Team restructuring
  - key challenge and opportunity
  - focused on delivery of *clear* priority strategic objectives
Priorities

• Provide an excellent, high value-add customer experience
• Maximise the value of our staff asset
• Ensure that all Library services/activities are demonstrably and effectively contributing to NUI Galway’s objectives
• Develop an integrated marketing strategy
Previous Senior Management Team

Librarian

Deputy Librarian

Head of Library Systems

Head of Reader Services

Head of Information Services

Head of Bibliographic Services
New Senior Management Team

University Librarian

- Head of Organisational Development and Performance
- Head of Staff Development and Service Environment
- Head of Customer Focus and Research Services
- Head of Information Access and Learning Services
University Librarian

Strategy

The Library Regionally and Nationally

The Library On Campus

Library Performance Accountability

Library Staff

Winning Resources
Head of Customer Focus and Research Services

Customer Experience
- Team Leader, Customer Services
  - Customer Services Team
- Research Support Librarians
- Archivists/Special Collections Librarians
  - Archives/Special Collections Assistant

Marketing
- University Librarian
- Head of Customer Focus and Research Services
- Digitisation & Repository Librarian
- Service Promotion Librarian
Head of Information Access and Learning Services

User Interface
- Information Librarians
  - Information Assistants
- Electronic Resources Librarian
- Systems Technologist

University Librarian

Collection Development, Management and Use
- Collection Management & Cataloguing Librarians
  - Team Leader
  - Collection Management, Cataloguing, ILL Assistants
Early Days

• New structure announced 22 July and commenced 1 September
• Gains:
  – Knowledge distribution
  – New synergies, fewer silos
  – Focus on realistic strategic priorities and values
• Pains:
  – Major change management effort
  – Heavy individual workloads
  – Continuing staff losses
Library Implications: Collections

- Recent books/journals budget history
  - September 2008: 0%
  - October 2008: -7%
  - September 2009: -8%

- Major national dimension
  - IReL (Irish Research eLibrary)
  - Government-funded
  - Cuts imminent but extent unclear

- General uncertainty
Library Coping Strategies: Collections

- Absorption, e.g., book budgets not always spent
- Accelerated migration to e-only subscriptions
- Early cancellations: national and local
- Maximum protection of College/School budgets
- Consolidation of funds into larger units
- Significant reduction in top-sliced “general” funds, e.g.:
  - Librarian’s Discretionary; Archives/Special Collections
- Reduced backfile purchase
- Daily prayers for continued strength of euro
IReL: the National Dimension

- Established in 2004
- Government-funded
- Focused on research community
- Accessible at 7 Irish universities, RCSI, partially at IoTs
- Initially STM but now covers most disciplines
- c. 110 “products”
- 22000+ e-journals
- 40000+ e-books
- Images, reference data, primary docs

http://www.irelibrary.ie/
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IReL Content: STM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACM Digital Library</td>
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<td>ACS Journals</td>
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<td>AMA Journals</td>
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<td>AIP Journals</td>
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<td>APS Journals</td>
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# IReL Content: AHSS

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<th>Blackwell Synergy HSS</th>
<th>Historical Abstracts</th>
<th>Oxford DNB</th>
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<td>MLA International Bibliography</td>
<td>Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy</td>
<td>World Development Indicators</td>
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IREL Coping Strategies

• Anticipate cuts
• Cancellations sub-group reporting to Steering Group
• Close connectivity with local implications
• Focus on usage levels/costs/disciplines
• Maximising data from Monitoring Group:
  – Annual usage reports
  – Impact surveys
### Usage Reports: Value for Money

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<tr>
<th>E-Resource</th>
<th>Product Type</th>
<th>Cost Per Download/Search 2007</th>
<th>Number of Downloads/Searches 2007</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
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<tr>
<td>MathSciNe (Searches)</td>
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<td>0.20</td>
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# Usage Reports: Annual Comparisons

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<tr>
<td>E-Journals</td>
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<td>76,089</td>
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<td>E-Journals</td>
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<td>E-Journals</td>
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<td>13,474</td>
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<tr>
<td>Database</td>
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<td>11,581</td>
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<td>E-Journals</td>
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<td>35,136</td>
<td>42,569</td>
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<td>E-Books/Ref</td>
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<td>7,476</td>
<td>4,311</td>
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The provision of access to electronic resources via IReL has impacted on my research as follows (please select all that apply):

- **Ease of access to research information**: 88.2%
- **Access to wider range of research literature**: 82%
- **Speed of access to research information**: 81.4%
- **Better current awareness of research literature**: 69.2%
- **Improved research quality**: 64.4%
- **Increased research productivity**: 58.3%
- **New areas of research now possible**: 39.3%
- **Other**: 2.4%

*IReL Impact Survey, March-April 2009*
IReL has Contributed to Increased Irish Research Competitiveness

IReL Impact Survey, March-April 2009

James Hardiman Library
IReL has Contributed to Increased Irish Research Competitiveness

“Having access to all the same information as our competitors means that we have caught up with and in many cases overtaken them. With the resources issue gone, it’s just a question of who has the best ideas.”

“When recruiting research staff, IReL is one factor that can really impress.”
“A large number of countries do not offer the level of access that IReL provides - it gives Ireland a competitive edge”

“IReL is by far the wisest and most important funding decision taken in Ireland for the third level sector. It truly enables research in Ireland.”

IReL Impact Survey, March-April 2009
Collections: Gains/Pains

• Gains:
  – Realism (even from some publishers...)
  – Value for money focus
  – Focus on space usage

• Pains:
  – Loss of valued resources
  – Vulnerability of IReL
  – Worse to come
Library Implications: Operations

- Recent budget history
  - September 2008: 0%
  - October 2008: -7%
  - September 2009: -8%

- Research Building threatened
- IT investment limited
- Operations impacted by staffing cuts
- Tighter university-wide scrutiny
- Shared services expectation
Library Coping Strategies: Operations

• Spread budgetary pain but preserve:
  – Staff development; Marketing
• Research Building: integrate closely with academic mission
• IT: consolidate; maximise central infrastructure and vendor support
• Collaborate with service audit/benchmarking exercises
• Emphasise evidence-based decision-making
• Prove our worth through effective processes, performance, PR
• Maximise national collaborations, shared services
In Conclusion

• Radically changed environment in last 15 months
• Major managerial challenges/headaches
• New climate affords new opportunities/ways of thinking
• Losses vary in impact but bite harder cumulatively
• Only certainty is more cuts, more challenges
• Duration of present budgetary regime will decide pain:gain ratio