



Provocative Statements

(as of January 2009)

All statements are prefaced by "Within the next five years..."

1. ... all librarians will be expected to take personal responsibility for their own professional development; each of us will evolve or die. Budget pressures will force administrators to confront the "psychological shadow" cast by tenure and pseudo-tenure that has inhibited them from taking necessary personnel actions. Librarians who cannot evolve will be reassigned or fired.
2. ... collection development as we now know it will cease to exist as selection of library materials will be entirely patron-driven. Ownership of materials will be limited to what is actively used. The only collection development activities involving librarians will be competition over special collections and archives.
3. ... Google will meet virtually all information needs for both students and researchers. Publishers will use Google as a portal to an increasing array of content and services that disintermediate libraries. All bibliographic data, excepting what libraries create for local special collections, will be produced and consumed at the network level.
4. ... knowledge management will be identified as a critical need on campus and will be defined much more broadly than libraries have defined it. The front door for all information inquiries will be at the university level. Libraries will have a small information service role and will be responsible mainly for archiving digital content.
5. ... libraries will have given up on the "outreach librarian" model after faculty persistently show no interest in it. Successful libraries will have inserted themselves into the instructional technology space as a viable point of engagement with students and faculty.
6. ... libraries will provide no in-person services. All services (reference, circulation, instruction, etc.) will be unmediated and supported by technology.
7. ... library budgets will be reallocated from support of a greatly downsized facility, collections and staffing towards discovery and access of information at the network level. Local unique collection purchases will be funded primarily by donor contributions; projects will be funded primarily by grants.
8. ... library buildings will no longer house collections and will become campus community centers that function as part of the student services sector. Campus business offices will manage license and acquisition of digital content. These changes will lead campus administrators to align libraries with the administrative rather than the academic side of the organization.
9. ... the library community will recognize the decreasing value proposition of membership organizations (e.g., CRL, DLF, CNI, SPARC, ARL). All collaboration of significance will be centered around either individual entrepreneurial libraries (HathiTrust), regional consortia, or OCLC.
10. ... 20% of the ARL library directors will have retired, and there will be a shortage of senior library leaders ready and willing to take their places. Universities will begin to hire leaders from other parts of the academy (student services, academic computing, faculty) leading to a major realignment of library within the university infrastructure.