Becoming Trusted Research Partners Through InfoExpress at The University of Toronto:
(Re)Connecting Researchers to the Library

Manda Vrkljan

iD https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5844-0904
University of St. Michael's College, The University of Toronto, Canada

Adrienne Findley-Jones
University of Trinity College, The University of Toronto, Canada

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This case study discusses the importance of building initial trust in the relationship between researcher and academic library. Primary coverage serves the experience of two small humanities-based colleges serving approximately 125 faculty members within a larger university campus by providing the personal document delivery service of InfoExpress. The trust built through this initial research support service creates avenues for further support from the library and the wider university library system. As every relationship has challenges, the ones occurring here are opportunities to improve the relationship in favour of the researcher and library. If the researcher is unaware of what support the library provides, establishing a personal relationship will immediately provide productive research time and create an opportunity for future support through additional personalized services. The researcher, their research, and their library benefit by this trusted partnership.

INTRODUCTION

In the 1992 animated Disney movie *Aladdin,* the title character Aladdin, newly introduced as Prince Ali of the fictitious land Ababwa, offers the Princess Jasmine a magic carpet ride. The Princess is understandably reluctant as she just met Prince Ali. Stretching his hand out to her, Prince Ali asks her if she

trusts him. At first, she is shocked by his bold question. After he asks for the second time, the Princess recognizes him as the boy thief Aladdin from the market whom she met earlier, and who had posed her the same question to save them both from trouble. Having recognized him, she agrees to go on the ride.

So much like this scene in life, trust must be built, established, and maintained. When providing research support it is no different. Research support services offered by academic libraries work best in an environment of trust: faculty and other university researchers must trust their academic library and its staff to supply them with the necessary materials to not only make their classes efficient but also their research publishable and rewarding. However, if that trust is not present, the library may experience resistance in forming a relationship with the very people the library mandates itself to support. The faculty may believe library support is limited to student research and support, not their own. The library, like Aladdin/Prince Ali, must present itself as a trustworthy partner in the research journey to success.

This case study chapter will examine how two smaller humanities-based college libraries, that are within a mixed decentralized centralized larger university, can impact academic research by providing a personalized document delivery service. The InfoExpress Service supports the goal of its three institutions by providing excellence in research and teaching. InfoExpress is a document delivery service that is designed to assist with the research and writing process for tenured and non-tenured faculty, sessional instructors, as well as graduate students, providing them with the materials and items they need to begin, continue, and finish their academic and professional work. In order for this service to be successful, there must be a long-term trusted commitment on the part of the library and researchers to see each other as partners in their workflow. The initial anxiety over trust is expected, and the library research support staff must work diligently to make the service work efficiently from the beginning, becoming – to continue the Aladdin metaphor – like the Genie of the Lamp. The staff must produce requested material quickly and accurately from the very beginning to build the relationship. Like the Genie, who is bound to the Lamp, the staff are bound by university library policies, college policies, and copyright laws, thus requiring them to balance the requests and actual results.

This case study chapter will draw its information from two InfoExpress Services; one is well established and the second is relatively newer. Both offer the same core service and similar extended research support within their respective libraries. The literature review focuses on faculty-library relationship as it pertains to document delivery services, which will support this examination on how smaller humanities-based libraries can impact academic research. Background on the organizational structure will provide an understanding of the mixed decentralized-centralized system in which the two colleges operate. In order to examine the variables of this question, a discussion on the issues, controversies, and problems will be followed by a full description of the service. The section on recommendations and solutions discusses how smaller libraries can utilize this service to develop trusted relationships with their faculty to impact university research. The chapter concludes with future directions for the service.

LITERATURE REVIEW

When examining the literature for research support services in academic libraries, it is best to narrow the range of topics; literature examining the intersection of relationship, trust, and research is of primary importance. One challenge in conducting such a literature review is where personalization is lacking: the description of faculty relationship with their academic library, where the library is seen as a trustworthy research partner rather than a service provider, is missing. While there is literature that discusses how a

26 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/becoming-trusted-research-partners-through-infoexpress-at-the-university-of-toronto/260638

Related Content

Examining the Validity and Reliability of the Arabic Vocabulary Achievement Instrument to Evaluate a Digital Storytelling-Based Application

Nurul Azni Mhd Alkasirah, Mariam Mohamad, Mageswaran Sanmugam, Girija Ramdasand Khairulnisak Mohamad Zaini (2024). *Embracing Cutting-Edge Technology in Modern Educational Settings (pp. 264-284).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/examining-the-validity-and-reliability-of-the-arabic-vocabulary-achievement-instrument-to-evaluate-a-digital-storytelling-based-application/336199

Ensemble Data Mining Methods

Nikunj C. Oza (2009). *Encyclopedia of Data Warehousing and Mining, Second Edition (pp. 770-776).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/ensemble-data-mining-methods/10907

Modeling Quantiles

Claudia Perlich, Saharon Rossetand Bianca Zadrozny (2009). *Encyclopedia of Data Warehousing and Mining, Second Edition (pp. 1324-1329).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/modeling-quantiles/10993

Data Mining in Security Applications

Aleksandar Lazarevic (2009). *Encyclopedia of Data Warehousing and Mining, Second Edition (pp. 479-485).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/data-mining-security-applications/10863

Bitmap Join Indexes vs. Data Partitioning

Ladjel Bellatreche (2009). *Encyclopedia of Data Warehousing and Mining, Second Edition (pp. 171-177).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/bitmap-join-indexes-data-partitioning/10816