



## **Chapter X**

# **The Integration of Library, Telecommunications, and Computing Services in a University**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

*Today many IS departments and individuals are attempting to transform from technical groups and specialists to user oriented functions and customer support personnel. The major responsibility of the traditional IS department has evolved from the development, operation, and support of technology to the management of information. In the university environment, managers of information have traditionally been librarians. Librarians have increasingly become users of electronic information resources. A merger of the library with computing and telecommunications brings together technical expertise with information management skills. This case study describes the process of integrating the library, computing and telecommunications services in a university. Within the last two years, a new manager in the newly created position of Chief Information Officer merged these diverse organizations. We will describe the techniques used during the first year to foster communication, develop new strategic direction, and create and implement a new organizational structure. We will focus on establishing leadership, the organizational change and operational planning process, and the initial implementation of the new organizational structure. We will describe some of*

*the problems and obstacles that needed to be addressed, including new management's establishment of trust and control, creating an environment for change, managing change amid strong time pressures, human resource issues, and resource constraints. It is expected that many of the issues that arose during this merger will be addressed by organizations in other industries as they attempt to evolve from technical IS groups to more customer oriented organizations. Today it is imperative that IS functions provide client support, which requires different types of skills from those traditionally nurtured among technical experts in traditional IS departments.*

## BACKGROUND

The University is an independent, coeducational institution located in northeastern United States. Approximately 5000 undergraduate and 1500 graduate students are enrolled in programs in the arts and humanities, business, education, engineering, natural and social sciences. The University employs approximately 1400 faculty and staff.

The University's mission is to advance learning through the integration of teaching, research and service to others. It is committed to integrated learning, promoting the discovery, integration, and communication of knowledge. The University's mission statement embraces a commitment to the intellectual, physical, social, ethical, and spiritual development of all members of the academic community.

To support the discovery and integration of knowledge, the University built extensive library resources, including a collection of over 1 million volumes. The advent of the campus wide network enabled the library to supply all users with electronic as well as traditional services. In 1995 the University library staff numbered approximately 60, having just been significantly reduced from 75. The organization of the libraries in June 1995 is shown in Appendix A.

The University also built extensive computer and communications resources to support its mission. The computing center served the needs of students, instructors, researchers, and administrative users. A total of approximately 90 people worked in this department, whose structure is shown in Appendix A.

## SETTING THE STAGE

The library and computing center at this university, as at most universities, evolved separately, with different roots and cultures. We describe here the evolution of these two groups, similar integration efforts at other schools, and the University's decision to integrate these functions.

### **Library Services vs. Computing and Communication Services: Evolutionary Differences**

Historically the library's primary function has been to provide information to faculty and students who are in the pursuit of knowledge. Initially when computers were introduced into universities, their primary purpose was the storage and dissemination

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