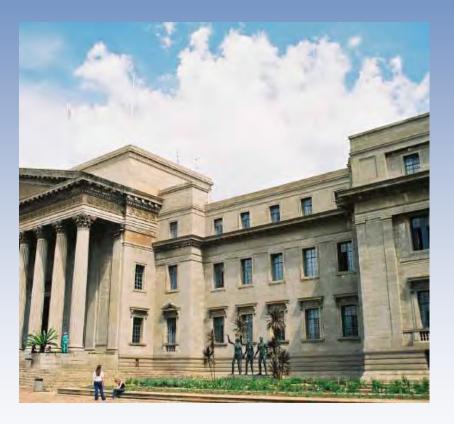
e-Learning Seminar, University of Pretoria 8-9 June 011

e-Books at the University of the Witwatersrand

Jo-Anne King
University of the Witwatersrand

Wits at a Glance

- Residential university
- Multidisciplinary
- Strong STM focus
- 27 934 students (2010)
 - 69% undergraduate
 - 32% postgraduate



http://www.wits.ac.za/files/res4bbc614b78144623a77ee44bb0243156.pdf

Background

- Pre-2007: ad hoc purchases of e-books
- 2008: surplus funds available
- Decision to purchase
 - Space saving
 - 24/7 availability; remote access
 - No physical processing
 - Once off expenditure; access in perpetuity
- Opportunity to establish multidisciplinary core collection
 - Unlimited user license
 - Total >7 000 titles
- Subsequent purchases reference and literary collections
- Scope to explore textbook opportunities

Technological Readiness

- Good bandwidth on campus
- Wireless hotspots
- Libraries
- Computer labs
- Computer access in residences
- Users with own devices
- Wits Business School iPads in 2012

User experience

- Seamless access
 - Library catalogue
 - Publishers' platforms
 - Research portal
- Remote authentication
- Integration with other research resources
- Cross-searching
- Challenges for disabled users particularly the blind
 - Online searching and navigation
 - Limitations of text-to-voice software

Access Management

- Not 'plug-'n-play'
- Technological and bibliographic skill
- Population and maintenance of multiple systems silos
 - Library catalogues; MARC record
 - Administrator modules of publisher platforms
 - Resource discovery tools
 - Central knowledge bases
 - Resource linking open URL resolvers
 - A-Z Lists
- Hidden costs
 - Human Resources
 - Investment in technology
 - Time

New developments to consider

- Web-scale management services
 - OCLC
 - ProQuest SUMMON
- Cloud computing
- Movement away from multiple silos
- Focus on datasets with peripheral applications
- Integration of services

Implications for the future

- Renaissance of the catalogue?
- Re-engineering of technical services departments
- Development of staff with good bibliographic skills
- Caveat: putting all your eggs in one basket

