CARL SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

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LORRAINE BUSBY
MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND
So what’s so special about special collections?
Well, frankly, everything!
Background

- Taking Our Pulse: The OCLC Research Survey of Special Collections and Archives (Oct. 2010)
- CARL survey of special collections at 27 member libraries (April 2012)
- Digitization of Special Collections and Archives: Legal and Contractual Issues (Jun. 2012)
Purpose of Survey

- To better understand the nature and operations of special collections in Canadian research libraries – now and in the future
- No recommendations at this point
- Survey starts a discussion about the future of special collections in Canada
Hidden Treasures

- Primary sources for scholarship
- Attracts the best researchers
- Engages communities
- Enhances reputations
- Enriches student learning

- Low use
- Not always valued by parent institutions
- Require substantial investments in
  - Space
  - Funding
  - Specialist staffing

Valuable assets?  Expensive & under utilized?
Today’s Goals

- To share results from the CARL survey
- To discuss challenges identified in the survey
- To seek your input and suggestions for projects, directions, solutions to the items identified
CARL Survey Highlights

- Significant physical and virtual space is needed
- Increasingly acquisition policies are narrowing and becoming more restrictive in scope
- There is no ‘best’ funding model
- There are no measures to demonstrate the return on investment
Additional investments of staff, particularly with skills in digitization and digital management knowledge, are predicted. Funding in-house digitization efforts remains elusive. Corollary investments are needed in access tools, computer storage capacity, and preservation mechanisms for perpetual access.
Challenges

- Need for long term solutions for physically & virtually storing special collections
- Need for policies to deal with the acquisition, access, and restrictions of various collections
- Need for meaningful measures to demonstrate ROI and impact
- Need to add & develop specialized staff skills in digitization, marketing, and promoting
Challenges (cont.)

- Need for more funding
  - Internal funding sources
  - Grants
  - Donors
  - Endowments

- Need for greater preservation

- Need to ensure perpetual access
Identified Priorities

- Contributing to a national strategy
- Facilitate information sharing
- Preservation support
- Coordination of digitization projects to reduce duplication & redundancies
CARL’s Role is to:

- Provide leadership
- Advocate
- Coordinate, and
- Facilitate
Today’s Discussions

- Your ideas, suggestions, and contributions re:
  - Changing patterns in use
  - Strategies to increase use
  - Strategies to measure & report ROI
FEEDBACK

http://bit.ly/10Y2kbQ
THANK YOU