

Roundtable Discussion: Reference Librarians Sharing Space with Information
Technology: Five Ways to Ensure Success

Track: Managing Reference Services

Presenter: Susan P. Lieberthal, Head of Interlibrary Loan and Business Librarian, Stony
Brook University Libraries, Stony Brook, NY

It has come to the attention of university administrators that libraries are a hub with large public spaces, usually in a central location on campus. With the need for more collaborative space for group study that is the identifying characteristic of the NetGen student, administrators are involved in redistributing this space to maximize use and benefit students. Additionally, students on most campuses today obtain assignments and submit assignments online using a content management system. This increases the need for students to have access to computers and printing facilities. Reference libraries and reading rooms are being transformed into Information Commons – type spaces. This new model of collaborative space requires additional staffing to manage the computing and printing issues as well as the traditional library help desk, circulation desk and/or reference desk. With the number of computers and group work spaces increasing at an accelerated pace, libraries are now collaborating extensively with their campus information technology departments. In order to ensure the success of this transformation, the library and reference department, in partnership with the information technology department need to examine five ways to provide a positive and successful transition to this collaborative space. These elements can be used on a continuous basis to guarantee success for both departments and for their users. The five elements are: technology, architecture, workflow, policies and personnel.

The presenter will introduce each of the five elements one at a time and open the floor to discussion of each element. All opinions and suggestions will be noted and added to the final PowerPoint from this discussion.