Innovation Management in and for Libraries

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Starting Point – Background

- Current and fundamental technical developments have direct and indirect influence on libraries
- Radical innovations change the way how information is used and spread
- These developments lead to a change of user behavior and expectations
- Developments can not be overviewed
- Libraries have no influence on these developments
- Consequences for libraries can not be foreseen
- Libraries are in the eye of the hurricane
Gartner Hype Cycle 2011

http://www.gartner.com/technology/research/methodologies/hype-cycle.jsp
Example: development of mobile communication

- Mobile phones are used to access internet more and more
- Users are permanently online and use internet mobile (from anywhere at anytime)
- This has an impact on the requirements for the library’s online services:
  - Reduction of complexity (fewer content, simpler interface)
  - Higher performance, reduction of data
  - GPS allows local based services – and users want to get them also from the library
  - Apps and WebApps replace the traditional websites
  - Users want a library app with the most important services
  - ...to be continued
What can libraries do?
It’s really simple (in principle)...

- Tweet from University Library Bremen:
- „Good innovation management means to give your staff time and let them try out – that’s it!“
What can we do? Innovation management!

- Profit companies are under competitive pressure and therefore forced to develop new products and to optimize existing products
- There is a long tradition of innovation management, known as Research & Development (R&D)
- In service oriented companies and especially in nonprofit sector innovation management is less known
- For libraries it means more or less unknown territory
Goals of innovation management

- Less coincidence, more consequence
- Targeted development and improvement of products
- Successful implementation of product ideas
- Lower costs
- Reduction of redundancy and failed products
- Tracking of technical developments and trends
- Integration of know-how of staff and clients
Example for incremental innovation

- Example: ETH-Bibliothek (Library of Swiss Institute of Technology), www.library.ethz.ch
- „Innovative is a product or a service, if this is new in this form, in Switzerland oder in library sector in general.“
- This means:
  - Technologies from other branches can be introduced as a new service at the library
  - Business models from other branches can be adapted
  - Services that are already introduced in other countries can be adapted
  - Also improvement of existing services is an innovation

- ETH-Bibliothek is an Early Adopter
Example for radical innovation

- Definition of innovation at Bayerische Staatsbibliothek
  (www.bsb-muenchen.de)
- Innovation means at BSB:
  - Worldwide first and unique products and services
  - Wow-effect
  - 2-3 years ahead of state of the art
  - Implemented with many resources
  - Ideas usually come from the board (top-down)

- BSB as an inventor
7 Steps to introduce an Innovation Management
Step 1: Create an Organizational Framework

- Create a unit or post responsible for innovation management
  - Building up and organizing of innovation management can be the first task of this person/unit
- There are several models possible:
  - Staff unit – one person responsible to the director
    - example: TU Munich, University Library Bern
  - Dedicated unit (department/group)
    - Example: ETH-Bibliothek, Zentralbibliothek Wirtschaft Kiel, ZB MED
  - Project position in matrix organisation
    - Example Staatsbibliothek Hamburg

But don’t delegate innovation to one person!
Step 2: Define the innovation process

- Innovation process is one of the management processes of a library
- Main tasks:
  - Define the workflow (from idea to product)
  - Define the responsibilities
    - Integration of the board
    - Integration of staff
  - Develop criteria to evaluate new ideas
  - Established method: stage gate process
Stage-Gate-Process® according to Cooper

http://www.stage-gate.com/knowledge_pipwhat.php
## Innovation process in a library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Market screening</td>
<td>Staff, innovation manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit Ideas</td>
<td>Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare ideas for discussion</td>
<td>Innovation manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluate ideas</td>
<td>Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feasibility study (project)</td>
<td>Staff, innovation manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Validate project</td>
<td>Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop product (project)</td>
<td>Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Validate product</td>
<td>Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Launch of product</td>
<td>Marketing (or others...)</td>
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Step 3: Introduce an Idea Management

- The condition for good innovations is a large number of ideas, so that the best ideas can be chosen out of them.
- If the input into the stage gate process is small, the risk rises to miss the best ideas.
- You may then choose only the second or third best solution.
- Out of this reason not only staff but also customers are involved in generation ideas (open innovation).
Step 4: Involve Staff

- Activate the potential of your staff
- Integrate staff in the process and communicate clearly
- Higher motivation with reward (?) or competition
  - ETH-Bibliothek: idea of the year
- Promote a culture of innovation
  - Is also a culture of allowing failed projects
- Offer an easy way to give input to all staff members
- Internal Blogs or Wikis may be appropriate tools for idea management
- Another possibility: innovation circles
  - May be a better way to really involve staff: personal contact, discussions
Fault Tolerance: MIT Libraries with Beta Graveyard

- MIT Betas and Widgets: http://libguides.mit.edu/betas
- Beta graveyard: no more supported services and tools
Innovation Circle or Team

- Informal meetings
  - Staff members open to innovation meet and discuss together, coordinated by one dedicated person (innovation manager/coordinator)
  - Coordinator reports results to the board
  - Example: UB Vienna

- Innovation Teams
  - Members from different departments as innovation ambassadors
  - Matrix organisation (innovation as a project)
  - Members give input to their teams
  - Project leader reports results to the board
  - Example: TU Munich
Step 5: Involve Customers (Open Innovation)

- Involving customers broadens the basis for ideas
- Customers have another perspective
- Many customers are ready to contribute (10-40%)
  - Motivation can be raised with competitions
- Usage of web 2.0 technologies
  - For example Facebook for customer feedback
  - Professional tools like UserVoice or neurovation
    - UserVoice (PaperC): [http://feedback.paperc.de/forums/7110-feedback-paperc-de](http://feedback.paperc.de/forums/7110-feedback-paperc-de)
    - neurovation (ZBW): [http://zbw.neurovation.net](http://zbw.neurovation.net)
User Feedback: UserVoice

User can vote and evaluate

Institution gives public answer

Users can submit ideas
Step 6: Search systematically for Ideas

- Background: ideas by employees and suggestions by customers are usually random
- How can we search more systematically?
- How can we define potential for innovation?

- Possible solutions:
  - Follow and evaluate trend reports
  - Define search fields from your strategy
  - Manage your product portfolio
Step 7: Cultivate your Product Portfolio

- The development of new products and running of new services must take place with existing resources
- It is not possible to launch new products and keep all the old products
- Keep the running of the services in mind, that binds more resources than a terminated project
- Check regularly your product portfolio
- And dare to give up products with a low and decreasing demand
Manage your Product Portfolio

- Current cooperation between HTW Chur and ETH-Bibliothek:
- Product managers of ETH-Bibliothek discuss current trends with expert
- The impact of general trends on the library is evaluated, topics are prioritized
- In a next step the impact of these trends to the products of the library is discussed in smaller groups
  - How can existing products be improved?
  - Which new products are desirable?
  - Which products are no more needed?
Some university libraries in German speaking countries have already introduced an innovation management.

Most of them created the post of an innovation manager.

Switzerland: ETH-Bibliothek, Swiss National Library, University Library Berne

Germany: Hamburg, TU Munich, TU Hamburg/Harburg, TIB Hannover, UB Erlangen-Nürnberg, ZB Wirtschaft, ZB MED

Austria: University Library Vienna

We may discuss the situation in Scandinavian libraries afterwards.
Next steps

- At HTW Chur we start a research project about innovation in libraries
- Goal is to create a tool for benchmarking and to offer a maturity check to libraries
And if it’s all too complicated:

SuUB Bremen
@elibbremen

Gutes Innovationsmanagement bedeutet Mitarbeitern Zeit geben und sie ausprobieren lassen – das ist es, ganz einfach! #icamp12

„Good innovation management means to give your staff time and let them try out – that’s it!“
Conclusion

- Most important is a culture, a spirit of innovation
- Organization and management can't replace this spirit
- It is decisive that this spirit is lived by the library’s management
- Innovation Management should give the framework, in which this culture can grow and live
Thank you for your attention

Questions?

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