Dark clouds and silver linings: what disasters teach us in the digital age

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Part 1
The disasters
VUW, we have a problem
Monday 14 November 2016

Normal entry

Post earthquake no-entry

Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand
ANU, we have a problem

Sunday 26 February 2018

Day 2 – view from the Library

Australian National University, Canberra, Australia
Part 2

The Immediate Impact
ANU

- Time of year (second week of semester 1)
- Library closed
- Print collections destroyed, Building damage
- Staff relocation
- Reputation
- Services relocated
VUW

- Time of year
- Business Continuity Plan
- Engineering challenges
- Print collections undamaged but unavailable
- NLNZ and Archives NZ also closed
- Generosity of networks
- Staff relocated...everywhere
- Temporary service point
- Work tools and personal items unavailable
- Reputation – stressed what was operating normally
Part 3
The strategies
ANU - Rebuild plan

Stage 1: Immediate replacement
- 2 day loan material
- Material required for courses
- Priority PhD and research material
- Note: purchases will need to be made from existing budget and material will be stored on level 2 of the Chifley Library

Stage 2: Medium replacement
- Material designated as must have on campus in semester 1 or 2 by academics
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- Note: purchases will need to be made from existing budget and material will be stored on level 2 of the Chifley Library
  - Academic advisory committee

Stage 3: Post insurance claim
- Material previously held and replaced - academic consultation
- Material replacing previous collection titles with more relevant/up to date versions - academic consultation
- Note: purchases will be post insurance claim and storage to be determined
- Donations will be welcome
ANU - What an opportunity

- Think holistically around a collection – previous practice delivered an inconsistent collection
- Ebooks mature
- Microfiche and microfilm
  - Much now available online
  - Can allow DTM and meet new needs
ANU - Realities

• All voices needed in collection building
• Academic Advisory committee of relevant discipline representatives for filtering and advice
• Engagement:
  – Social media
  – University media
  – email
ANU - Challenges

• Insurance – “like for like” means e possible, but the time and energy on the claim is huge

• Digital connection to other libraries – year 1:
  Acquisitions
  – print works (titles)  618
  – Electronic books - replacement and supplementary use
  – Ejournal  1
  – Videos/multimedia disc  3

Loans etc
  – Interlibrary loans 3,754 (up 28.7%)

• Future connections – Hathi Trust
VUW – One basement
Four silver linings
Part 4

Ten lessons learned
10. No disaster (and conditions) will be the same. Be prepared, ask what planning is in place

9. Size of disaster adds complexity, a standard Business Continuity Plan may not be enough

8. Rebuilding is slow, collaboration with academics & broader community is vital. All our other networks and relationships are also essential

7. Disasters are very expensive – short & long-term

6. Expert advice assists in tough decisions
5. Communication is *everything* and the more factual, honest and detailed the better.

4. Your staff are awesome, generous, flexible, creative and unbelievably patient...and they want to be at work, not “working from home”. Celebrate milestones and say thank-you – all the time

3. A *library* is more than a building

2. We are “contingency ninjas” and this is valued by the powers-that-be. Make the most of it
1. Print is dead, long live e!

University libraries can use disasters as a means to move to the digital world more quickly.
And now, it’s good afternoon from me.....