The International Ticer School: Getting Inspired to Shape your Library of the Future

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TILBURG UNIVERSITY AND TICER

Tilburg University in the Netherlands was the first university in Europe to develop a strategic vision of the digital library (Wieërs, 1989 and 1990). This strategy focussed on electronic access to information from the users' desktops. In 1992, the library managed initially to implement these ideas with a new library building, 450 desktop computers for students in the library, and integrated access to various electronic information sources for all university staff and students (Dijkstra, 1994; Geleijnse & Roes, 1996).

From 1992 to 1996, more than 9,000 visitors from 33 different countries visited the library to see and discuss these developments and to get inspiration for the development of their own digital library. From these visits we learnt that there was a great need for the exchange of experiences and for re-education. In 1995, due to increased market demand, the library and computer centre started a private company: Ticer (Tilburg Innovation Centre for Electronic Resources). The key activities included consultancy, courses and seminars.

The private company Ticer was 100% owned by the university and was in operation until the end of 2006. It had a modest turnover and profits were exclusively used for new innovations within the university.

On 1 January 2007, three departments: the Library, IT Services, and the Audiovisual department at Tilburg University were converged in one department: Library and IT Services. It was decided that Ticer should be included in this new service department. The private company was discontinued, and the Ticer manager now reports directly to the director of Library and IT Services. The services Ticer provides will remain the same. Ticer will continue to organise high-quality international courses and provide consultancy and programming/development services.

SET UP

Ticer became known for its annual International Summer School on the Digital Library, the first of which was organized at Tilburg University in August 1996. It was a two-week course that attracted a total of 57 participants. The course covered a wide set of issues related to the digital library, including strategic planning, human resources management, IT, publishing, digital content, knowledge navigation, etc. In 1999, an article on the first four summer schools was published in *D-Lib Magazine* (Prinsen & Geleijnse, 1999).

The set-up of the summer school changed drastically in 2000, when the two-week set-up was abandoned and Ticer management chose one-week or even 2- to 3-day courses. With the expertise and experience worldwide in digital libraries growing, it was no longer necessary to offer the kind of broad, introductory courses we started with in 1996. Instead, Ticer management decided to cover specific themes, e.g.:

- change management
- electronic publishing
- libraries supporting teaching and learning
- return on investment
- visions for the library of the future

Also, Ticer started organising customised courses:

- seminar for library directors, deputy librarians and administrators of Dutch universities, in cooperation with Pica, SURF/IWI and the OCLC Institute (2000)

- seminar on the library's role in education for Avans University (2001)

- three courses for Japanese and Korean librarians by order of Elsevier (2002)

- course at CERN in Geneva on digital libraries in science and technology (2002)

- seminar on university libraries for Elsevier account managers (2003)

- course at CERN in Geneva on digital libraries in science, technology and medicine (2004)

We even left our original field to organise a highly successful course on security and legal issues for IT managers (2004).

Over time, we had good and bad years, since educational activities are highly influenced by economic recessions. Especially in the years 2000, and 2002-2004 we experienced a lower number of applications. Through market research it was discovered that not only the economic recession was the reason. Library managers indicated that they had less time to be away from the office and alumni did not return to attend a second or third course because the programmes looked so much alike.

From 2005 onwards, we have been offering modular courses, with one-day modules around themes. This set-up enables participants to pick and choose and be away from home for a shorter time. Themes until now include:

- trends and strategic issues for libraries

- technological developments: threats and opportunities for libraries

- library 2.0 technologies to reach out to the customer (hands-on module)

- libraries supporting research and Open Access

- Open Access and institutional repositories

- libraries and teaching and learning

- library consortia and licensing

Also, we now have a policy to not re-invite the same speakers for years in a row, thus making sure that the programmes of successive courses look less alike. This set-up has turned out to be very popular.

All these changes also affected the social character of the Ticer courses. Participants attending the two-week course (until 2000) developed a real bond, which resulted in yearlong international contacts between the alumni after the course. Of course, the bonding decreased when the courses became shorter.

PARTICIPANTS

Since Ticer's start in 1996, over 1,000 individuals from 59 different countries have attended one or more Ticer courses. Alumni do return to attend other courses, so the total number of participants is even higher. Some 20% of our participants are alumni. Also, some 20% of participants are colleagues of alumni.

Countries best represented include the following.

Country	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
Netherlands	384	38%
Greece	71	7%
Japan	63	6%
Switzerland	60	6%
United Kingdom	58	6%
Finland	51	5%
South Korea	43	4%
Italy	41	4%
Norway	30	3%
Denmark	25	2%
Sweden	20	2%
Belgium	19	2%
South Africa	14	1%
United States	14	1%
Rest	113	11%

Table 1: Participants' countries of origin

The high number from the Netherlands can, of course, largely be attributed to the fact that Ticer courses are generally held in the Netherlands. The same applies for Greece, Japan, Switzerland, South Korea, and Italy. In all of these countries, two or more Ticer courses were held.

I cannot resist also mentioning the participation of some more unusual countries: Qatar, Chile, Bangladesh, Cyprus, Israel, Poland, Trinidad en Tobago, Estonia, Mexico, Mozambique, Serbia, Tanzania, Zambia, Lithuania, Oman, Moldavia, Brazil, Sri Lanka, and Uganda.

European countries that have been surprisingly underrepresented over the years include Austria, France, and Germany.

If we look to the continents, it is not surprisingly that the majority of our participants are from Europe, followed by Asia. What maybe is surprising is that over the years we've had more participants from Africa than from the United States and Canada.

Continent	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
Europe	799	79%
Asia	142	14%
Africa	24	2%
North America	19	2%
South America	13	1%
Australia / Pacific	9	1%

Table 2: Participants' continents of origin

Since the Ticer courses are mainly targeted at academic and research libraries, it is no surprise that 67 % of the participants originate from these libraries. This is an increase compared to the first 4 years, when this percentage was around 50 %. The increase is, however, explicable. In our marketing and programming, we are stricter in stressing that our point of departure is the academic/research library environment.

Organisation	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
University libraries and libraries at institutes for professional education	633	63%
Corporate libraries (including research libraries in companies)	92	9%
Publishing companies	71	7%
Research libraries	44	4%
Government libraries	43	4%
National libraries	42	4%
Consortia, library associations, library organisations	20	2%
Library automation and consultancy companies	16	2%
Libraries in international organisations	14	1%
Various	31	3%

Table 3: Participants' affiliation

We can only tell a little about participants' jobs, because in many cases a job title (like, e.g., 'librarian') is difficult to interpret. However, at least 38 % of the participants are senior or middle managers. Reference librarians represent at least 12 % of our participants. In both cases, the actual percentages might be higher if the job title 'librarian' is used for 'library manager' or for 'reference librarian' respectively.

Job titles	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
Library manager, library director, deputy librarian, chief librarian, head, division manager, team leader, coordinator, etc.	391	39%
Reference librarian, information specialist, documentalist, faculty librarian, subject librarian, subject specialist, etc.	124	12%
IT specialist, programmer, systems manager, systems librarian, etc.	75	7%
Unclear (e.g., 'librarian') or unknown	416	41%

Table 4: Participants' job titles

From my contacts with alumni I learnt that in many cases attending a Ticer course was a turning point in the career of participants. Many of them set up digital library projects, became project managers, switched jobs, or were promoted within their own organisation. I cannot, however, substantiate this with numbers.

CONTENT

If we compare the content of the Ticer courses since 1997, we can see an evolution.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
environment											
worldwide changes				1	1	1	1		1	1	1
information chain, scholarly communication		1	1	1	1	1	1	1			
future role of libraries	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
libraries supporting teaching and learning											
library's role in teaching and learning				1	1	1	1		1	1	1
electronic course readings, electronic reserve	1				1	1					
cooperative course design					1	1					
virtual learning environments					1	1					
information literacy					1	1		1		1	
digital portfolios					1	1					
gaming										1	1

libraries supporting research

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
library's role in research					1					1	1
e-science, cyber infrastructure						1				1	1
virtual research environments										1	1
self-publishing, open access, institutional repositories	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
open access to data											1

library management

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
visioning and strategic planning	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				
change management		1	1	1		1					
financial management, costing and pricing		1		1	1	1	1		1		
project management	1	1	1								
human resources management	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				
convergence libraries / computer centres	1	1	1								
library buildings, learning spaces		1			1	1				1	
measuring and accountability, ROI, assessment	1	1				1		1	1	1	1
marketing, PR, communications	1	1		1	1	1	1	1			
collection development, e-collections									1		1
digital archiving and preservation					1	1	1				

technology

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
IT developments, digital library research	1	1	1			1				1	1
hardware, servers, cd-roms, ICT infrastructure	1	1			1	1		1		1	
internet, intranet	1	1	1	1							
knowledge navigation, information agents	1	1									
search									1	1	1

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
innovative OPACs											1
reference linking, OAI-MHP		1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	
metadata, encoding	1	1			1	1	1	1			1
security, access management, trust federations									1		1
open source software											1
library 2.0											
wikis, blogs, rss, instant messaging, social software									1	1	1
legal issues and consortia											
copyright	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				
licensing	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1		
consortia		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
negotiating				1	1	1	1	1	1		
information industry											
publishing industry	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
library vendors	1	1	1	1							
aggregators, intermediaries, I&A services	1	1	1	1		1					

Table 5: Evolution of topics covered during Ticer courses (1997-2007)

Environment

Not surprisingly, in all courses there were lectures on the subject of the future role of libraries in general. Special attention for the future role of libraries in teaching and learning started in 1999, followed by special attention for the role in research from 2002 onwards.

Libraries supporting teaching and learning

In the area of libraries supporting teaching and learning, information literacy has been present since 2001; gaming is clearly a newcomer.

Libraries supporting research

The attention to scholarly communication shifted from general lectures about scholarly communication to lectures more specific on Open Access, eScience and virtual research environments. Although this cannot be deduced from the above

table, within the field of self-publishing, the accent shifted from setting up electronic journals, via Open Access, to institutional repositories. In 2007, we will cover open access to research data for the first time.

Library management

Up until 2003, considerable attention was paid to visioning/strategic planning and change management. In 2004, the change management course had to be cancelled due to insufficient applications. Since then, we haven't picked the subject up again. One of the reasons behind that decision is that in 2005 we started with the 1-day modules and this subject is difficult to cover in one day. It is interesting to see that project management hasn't been covered since 1999. We decided that specialised project management courses could better cover this subject. The interest in the convergence of libraries and computer centres has ceased since 2000. We covered archiving and preservation from 2001-2003, but because this was increasingly considered a task of national libraries and not of university libraries, we abandoned the subject. Now that universities manage more and more institutional repositories, the subject will become relevant again.

Technology

Throughout the years, we have included overview lectures on IT, generally neither the library director's expertise nor his/her favourite subject, but always recognized as a very important topic for library managers. In the first few years, we presented lectures on internet/intranet and knowledge navigation. In recent years, we see a shift to lectures on search/search engines and innovations in OPACs. Reference linking has been an important topic in all Ticer courses, and this topic has evolved over the years from interlinking and searching heterogeneous databases, via CrossRef, OAI-MHP, and OpenURL to cross-repository functionality. In all years, this topic was evaluated as very important and we were lucky to have a lecturer who was able to explain this important, but technical, subject to library managers.

Library 2.0

Clearly a new topic, first covered in our 2005 courses. In 2006, we even decided to change the learning method on these subjects from lectures to hands-on sessions.

Legal issues and consortia

Attention moved from copyright and licensing, via consortia to negotiation. Many negotiations with information providers are currently no longer done by individual libraries, but by consortia. Because of this, the interest for these topics diminished and we decided to abandon them.

Information industry

Clearly, this topic has been abandoned in the past years, the aggregators being the first, following by the vendors and then the publishers. We still invite speakers from the industry, but, unlike the early years, they do not lecture on their company or line of industry, but rather on worldwide developments, showing that a certain convergence has taken place in the industry.

LECTURERS

Over the years, Ticer has been able to attract renowned speakers. Although I do some 200 speakers wrong by not mentioning them, I would like to list a very small selection of speakers, in alphabetical order:

- Lynne Brindley (Chief Executive The British Library)

- Jonathan Clark (Executive Vice President Technology, Elsevier)

- Roland Dietz (President and CEO, Endeavor Information Systems, Inc.)

- Carl Grant, MLS (President & COO, VTLS, Inc.)

- Derk Haank (Chief Executive Officer, Springer Science + Business Media)

- Rick Johnson (SPARC Enterprise Director)

- Donald W. King (Research Professor, University of Pittsburgh, School of Information Sciences)

- Jenny Levine (Internet Development Specialist and Strategy Guide, American Library Association)

- Rick Luce (Vice Provost and Director of Libraries, Emory University)

- Clifford Lynch (Executive Director Coalition for Networked Information)

- Peter Suber (Open Access Project Director, Public Knowledge)

- Alma Swan (Director, Key Perspectives Ltd)

- Carol Tenopir (Professor of Information Sciences, University of Tennessee, School of Information Sciences, College of Communication and Information)

- Herbert Van de Sompel (Digital Library Research & Prototyping Team Leader, Los Alamos National Laboratory)

- Jan Wilkinson (Head of Higher Education, The British Library)

Over the past ten years our experience has been that identifying and locating experts and speakers has become easier. What is happening in the (international) academic library scene has become more visible with the increasing use of the web, blogs and other electronic resources. Also, since 2005 Ticer has used programme committees, which means that we get input from more people.

We are lucky to find that many of the speakers we approach feel honoured to be invited to the International Ticer School. In spite of that, being able to get potential speakers' confirmation and finish the programme in time has become more difficult. This has internal and external causes.

- The best speakers have busier schedules than ever.

- More and more, our invitations threaten to get lost in an increasing amount of other incoming mail or even spam filters.

- We changed our policy and decided not to invite the same speakers several years in a row (with some exceptions). This means that we have to introduce and prove ourselves to every speaker instead of falling back on existing contacts.

- In the recent years we have no longer limited our search for speakers to the library environment, but have tried to interest, for example, strategists or futurologists to lecture at our school. In these cases, the unfamiliarity with Ticer and the Ticer courses of potential speakers from outside the library environment is a big disadvantage.

At the end of a Ticer course speakers are generally very pleased with the result. Many of them arrive earlier or do not leave after their presentation and stay a couple of days or even a whole week. This is greatly appreciated by participants, Ticer and the lecturers themselves. Participants thus get an opportunity to talk to lecturers in an informal setting. Discussion sessions usually become more interesting and sometimes evolve towards panel sessions. Lecturers can get a flavour of the atmosphere prior to their own lecture. They can also link to other lectures and to adapt their presentation on the basis of what happened during previous sessions.

THE 2007 TICER COURSE

Ticer will again organise a summer course in 2007. "Digital Libraries à la Carte 2007" will be held at Tilburg University, the Netherlands, from the evening of Sunday 26 August up to and including the evening of Friday 31 August. The course director is Norbert Lossau, Director of the Goettingen State and University Library in Germany.

This year, our international programme committee consists of

- Michael Breaks, University Librarian of Heriot-Watt University, United Kingdom

- Joan Lippincott, Associate Executive Director of the Coalition for Networked Information (CNI), United States

- Thomas W. Place, Manager Innovation and Internationalisation, Tilburg University Library and IT Services, the Netherlands

- Jola Prinsen, Manager Ticer, Tilburg University, Library and IT Services, the Netherlands

- Hans Roes, Director of Information Resources and Multimedia at the Jacobs University Bremen gGmbH, Germany.

When this article was written, the programme had not yet been finalized and it was not yet certain in what way module 4b would become part of the programme. You will, however, find up-to-date information on the course website 'Digital libraries à la Carte 2007', which will be available from March 2007.

Module 1: Strategic developments and library management

- Science Commons and the Library (John Wilbanks, Executive Director, Science Commons, USA)

- Collection Development in an Age of Ongoing Digitization (Ronald Milne, Director of Scholarship and Collections, The British Library, UK)

- Libraries Think They Have a Role in the New Information Society – Do Users Agree? (Birte Christensen-Dalsgaard, Director of Development, State and University Library, Aarhus, Denmark)

- Performance Measurement and Accountability (J. Stephen Town, Director of Knowledge Services, Cranfield University, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, UK)

Module 2: Technological Developments: Threats and Opportunities for Libraries

- Strategic Introduction to the State-of-Technology (Robin Murray, Managing Director, OCLC PICA, UK)

- Search Engines and Innovations in Catalogues (Peter Binkley, Digital Initiatives Technology Librarian, University of Alberta, Canada)

- Library Chatbots in Electronic Reference (Anne Christensen, Web Services Librarian, State and University Library Hamburg, Germany)

- Trust Federations (Dr. Ton Verschuren, Manager Middleware Services, SURFnet, The Netherlands)

Module 3: Hands-on Open Source Software and XML

- Open Source Software in Libraries (Eric Lease Morgan, Head of the Digital Access and Information Architecture Department, University Libraries of Notre Dame, USA)

- Getting Started with XML (Eric Lease Morgan, Head of the Digital Access and Information Architecture Department, University Libraries of Notre Dame, USA)

Module 4a: Libraries Supporting Research and Open Access

- Libraries Supporting eScience (Pauline Simpson, Consultant, Digital Repositories, University of Southampton, National Oceanography Centre, UK)

- Sakai as a Virtual Research Environment (Chuck Severance, Sakai Executive Director, University of Michigan, USA)

- Open Access to Data Sets (Dr. Peter Doorn, Director, Data Archiving and Networked Services (DANS), the Netherlands)

- Services Based on Open Access Repositories (John MacColl, Sub-Librarian, Digital Library Division, University of Edinburgh, UK)

Module 4b: Hands-on Library 2.0

- Podcasting/Vodcasting in Academic Libraries (David Free, Public Services Librarian, Georgia Perimeter College, USA)

- Social Networking and Virtual Worlds in Academic Libraries (Lisa Hinchliffe, Head, Undergraduate Library and Coordinator for Information Literacy Services and Instruction, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA)

Module 5: Libraries Supporting Teaching and Learning

- Are We Ready to Rethink Libraries for Net Gen Students? (Joan Lippincott, Associate Executive Director Coalition for Networked Information (CNI), USA)

- Changing Learning, Changing Roles: Collaboration in Support of Course Redesign (Patricia Iannuzzi, Dean of University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, USA)

- Ptolemy or Copernicus? Implications for Learning Space Design & its Impact on the Changing Role of the Library (Anne E. Bell, University Librarian, University of Warwick, UK)

- Gaming (Dr. Igor S. Mayer, Associate Professor Public Management & Director CPS, Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands)

Like in previous years, each module has its own target groups and it is possible to attend one or more modules.

CONCLUSION

I have been involved with Ticer since 1995 and have organised close to twenty Ticer courses since then. I also attended most of them. The most important thing the courses give me is inspiration. Both participants and lecturers confirm this. I sincerely hope that Ticer can continue doing this in the years to come.

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WEB SITES REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT

Digital libraries à la Carte 2007. http://www.tilburguniversity.nl/services/lis/ticer/07carte/index.html

Ticer - Tilburg Innovation Centre for Electronic Resources. http://www.tilburguniversity.nl/services/lis/ticer/