

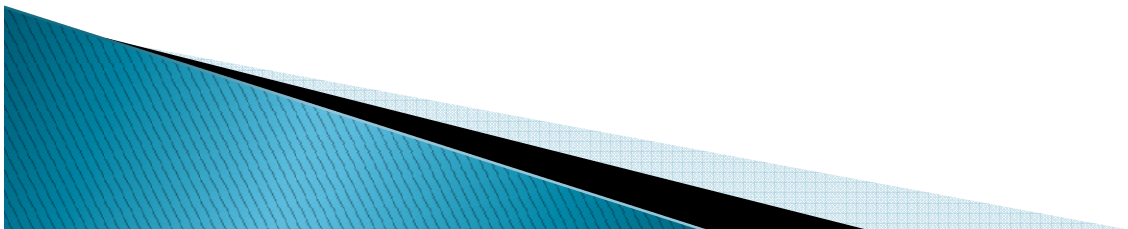
Information Commons: The Sheffield Experience

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Aims

- ▶ To trace the development of the concept of information commons;
- ▶ To describe samples of good practice focusing on the University of Sheffield experience of applying the concept to a facility of massive scale; and
- ▶ To draw up lessons to be learned in academic libraries in developing countries like the Philippines

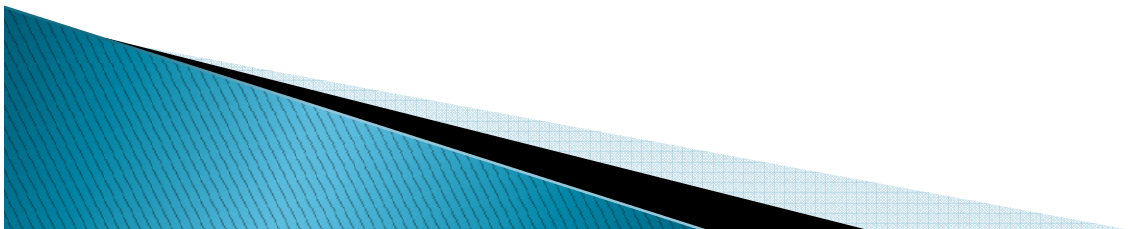


IC & Related concepts



Beagle (1999), Bradley (2004) & Balas (2007)

- ▶ “An **online environment** in which the widest possible variety of digital services can be accessed”
- ▶ “A new type of **physical facility** specifically designed to organize workspace and service delivery around an integrated digital environment”.



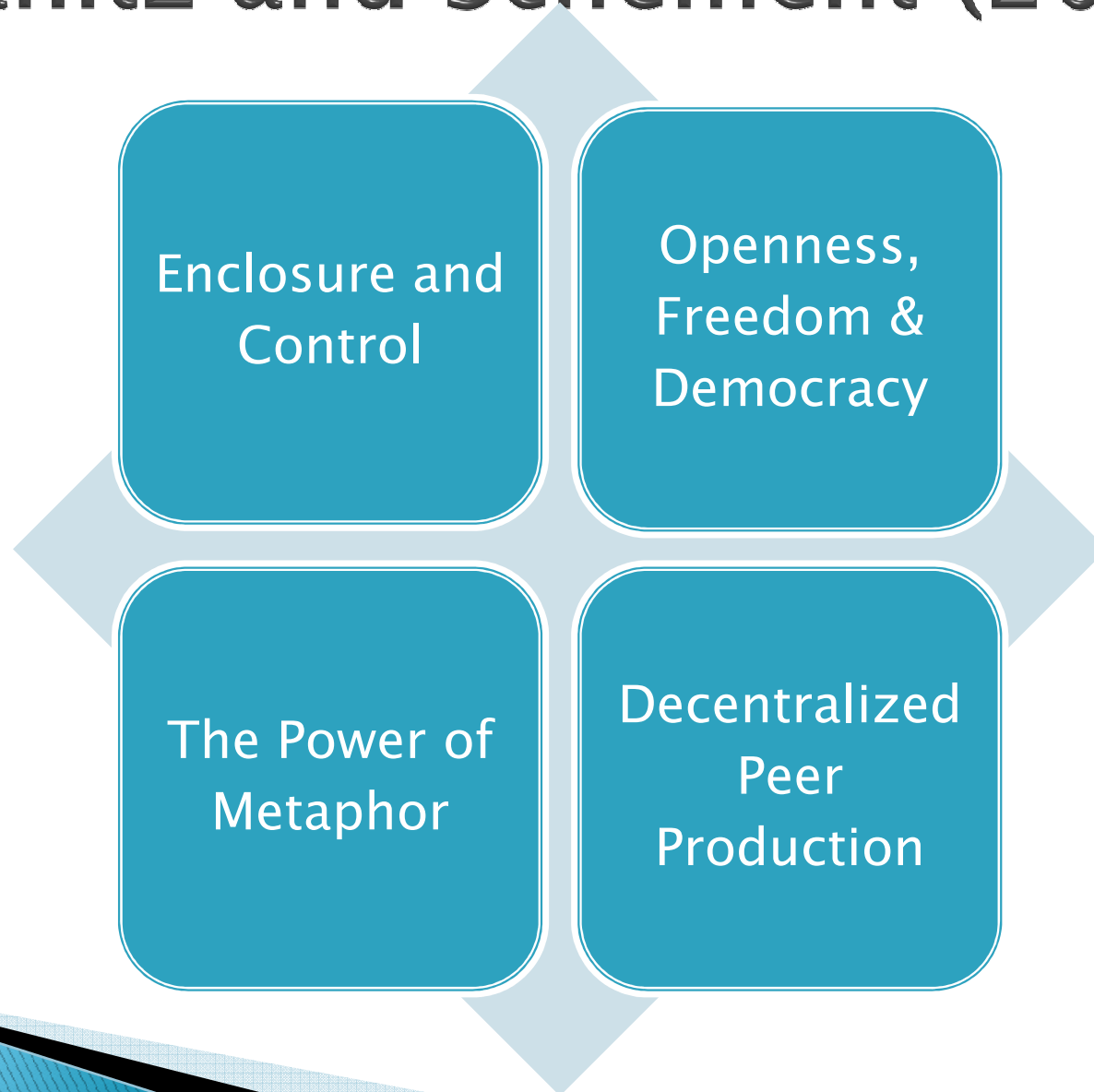
Beagle, D. (2004)

- ▶ Library + Computer laboratory
- ▶ From print to integration and coordination of information technology resources for students
- ▶ Isolated change in terms of additional 'media authoring tools' with coordinated in-library staff support designed to carry the user through a continuum of information production.
- ▶ A far reaching change in terms of coordination with other unit(s) and integration of library electronic resources and virtual reference services to campus-wide management system.
- ▶ Identified with transformative change involving an enriched suite of services and toolsets geared towards 'the needs of faculty as course authors, knowledge creators, learning coaches, and scholarly communicators'.

Information Commons

Learning Commons

Kranitz and Schement (2005)



3 Elements of IC

(Association of Research Libraries
cited in Spencer, 2006)

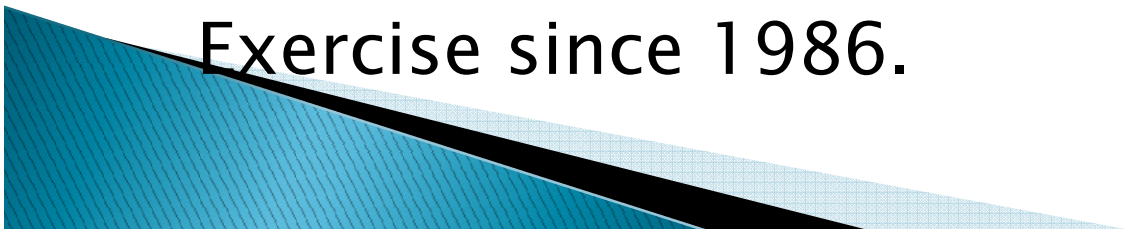


The University of Sheffield Information Commons



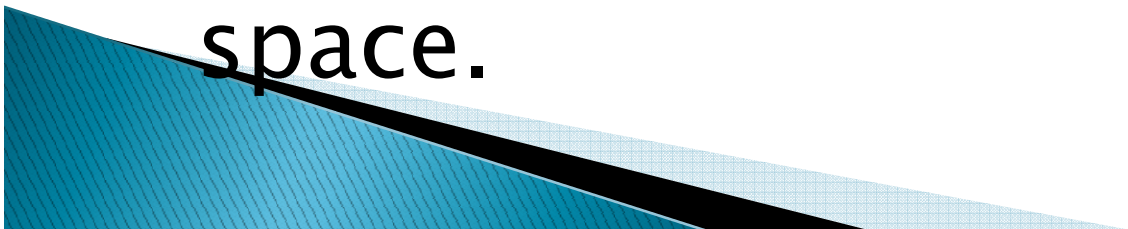
University of Sheffield Profile

- ▶ One of the 'red-brick universities' in the UK.
- ▶ Founded in 1905 in Sheffield, the *Steel City* of UK
- ▶ Top ten in the Russell Group, the association of leading UK research-intensive universities.
- ▶ Ranks 9th in the UK, 18th in Europe and 70th worldwide.
- ▶ Caters to 25,000 students
- ▶ Funded through the HEFCE
- ▶ Department of Information Studies, now called the Information School, consistently ranked No. 1 in the Research Assessment Exercise since 1986.



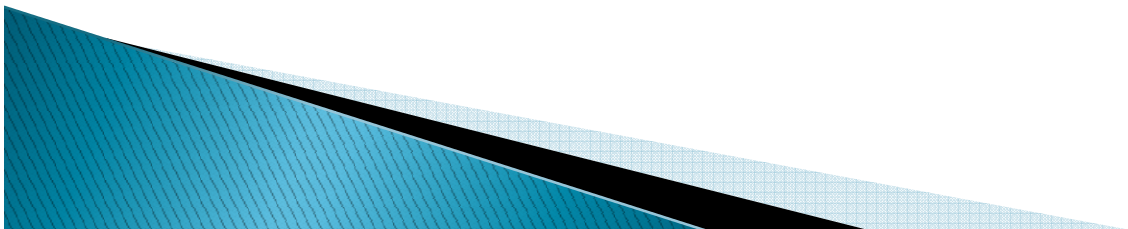
The Drivers of IC

- ▶ Shortage and poor quality of study spaces
- ▶ At the bottom of Russell Group in terms of seats per user.
- ▶ The original University Library, the Western Bank Library, was built in 1959 and its architectural design made it difficult to extend the space.



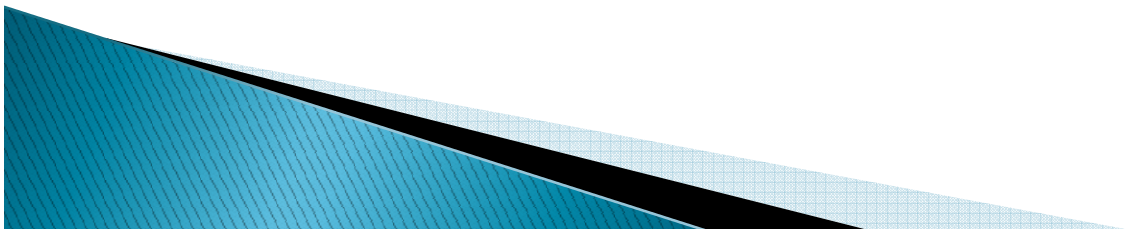
The Drivers of IC

- ▶ The University Library and the Corporate Information and Computing Services (CiCS) are distinct departments in the university
- ▶ Spatial separation of the library and IT provision.
- ▶ Temperature control



The major *raison d'être*

- ▶ To “provide an integrated learning environment – bringing print and electronic resources together, accommodating a range of learning styles – within a research-led university... it should meet the study and learning needs of today's students and as far as possible those of the future – without being constrained by the vocabularies of existing academic buildings (JISC InfoNet, 2009).



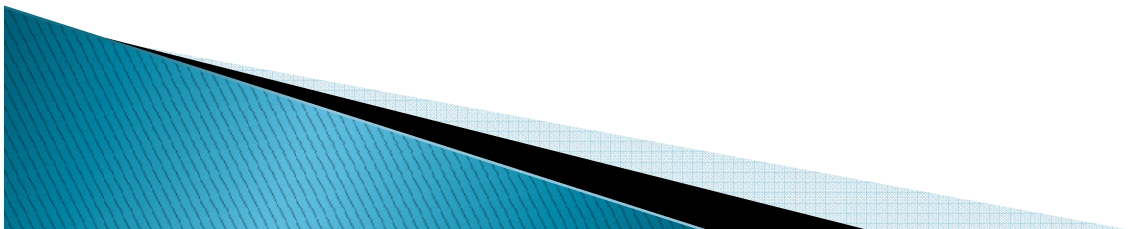
The Features of the Partnership

- Pro-active working with academic departments on all issues of information resource provision
- Strategic involvement with learning and teaching policy
- Holistic view of resource provision



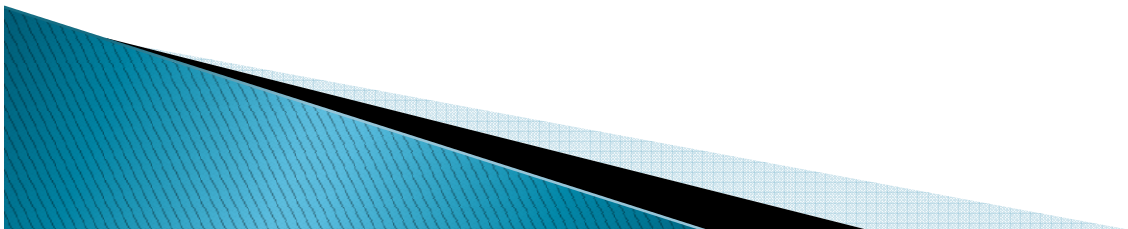
The Cost

- ▶ A Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) funded Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL).
- ▶ The project was a two-stage design and build process.
 - The first project was £350,000 capital funding
 - The second was £1.83 million capital funding



The Learning Spaces

- ▶ The building is separated into three zones:
 - Zone 1 North Lights
 - Zone 2 The Void
 - Zone 3 The Pavilion



Features of IC

► Sustainable

- A rainwater recycling system (grey water) below the entrance plaza to flush toilets.
- Construction that uses a number of recyclable materials.
- North lights that reduce glare, solar heat gain and the need for artificial light.
- Motion sensors that activate shelf-edge lighting only when an area is in use.
- Recycling bins for paper, cans and plastic bottles.
- Users are offered a wide range of learning environments within the same building.



Features of IC

- Soft seating areas
- Study rooms of different sizes can be booked in advance for group work.
- Quiet areas
- 'Flexi space' area on Level 4
- Shower facility
- The café area with computer kiosk
- Optimized 24/7 operation
 - including motion sensors for lights,
 - self-service return and issue machines
 - self-service photocopying and printing facilities.



Security features :

RFID (radio frequency identification)





Soft seating
areas

The café area with computer kiosk



Among several computer kiosks,
wifi throughout



Optimized 24/7 operation:
Self-service return and issue machines
self-service photocopying and printing facilities.



Quiet Areas



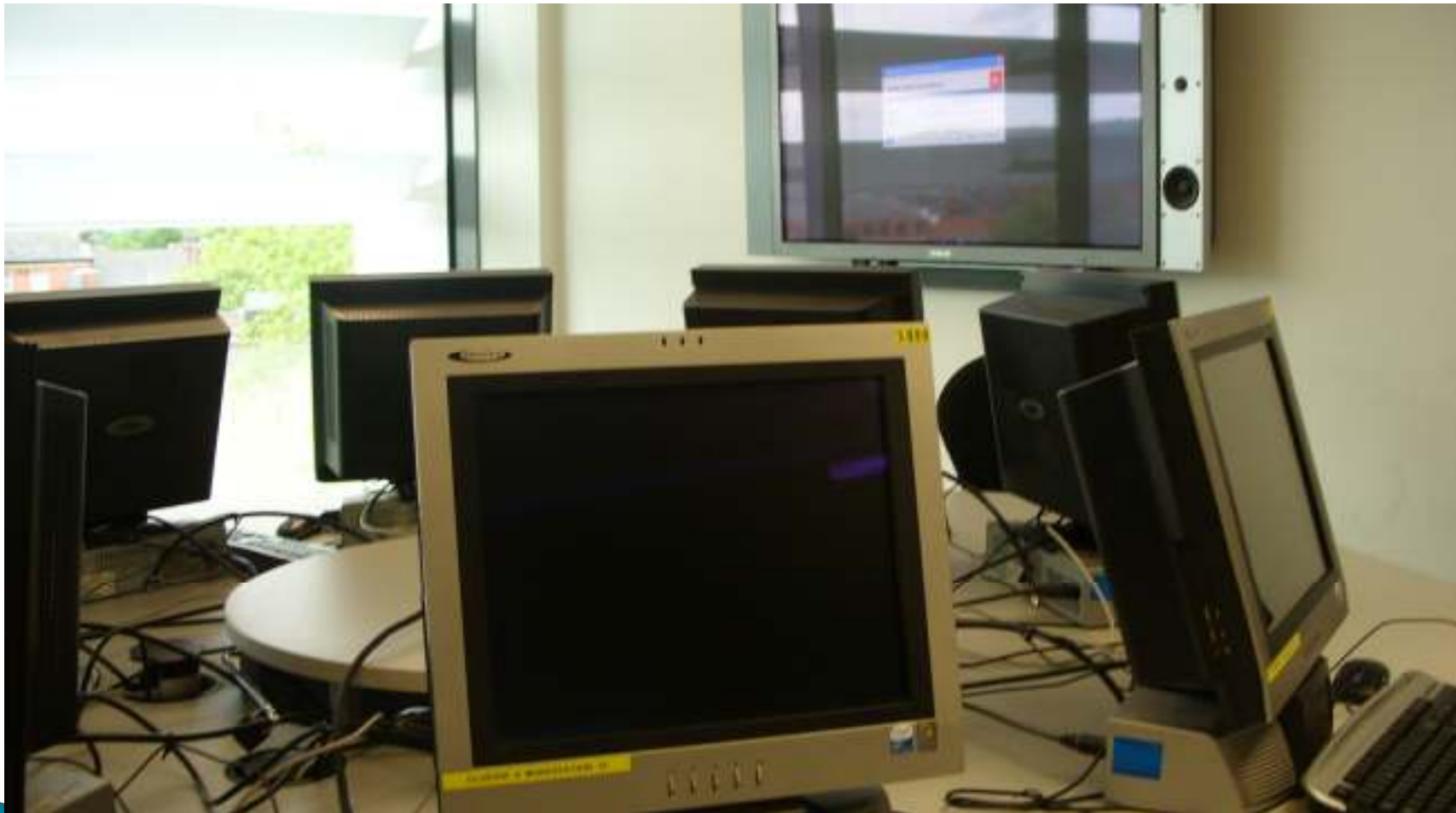
Group study area



Group study area/ computer kiosks/Wifi capability



Seminar rooms



Work space comfortable for left or right handed/Motion sensors for lights

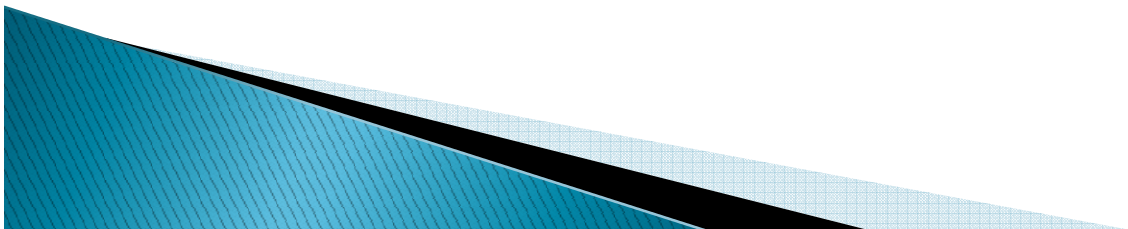


Flexi space



The technology

- ▶ The laboratories are equipped with state-of-the-art technology including:
 - Access Grid videoconferencing,
 - symposium,
 - copy cams
 - Huddleboards
 - a range of fixed desktop and laptop computers.



Success factors

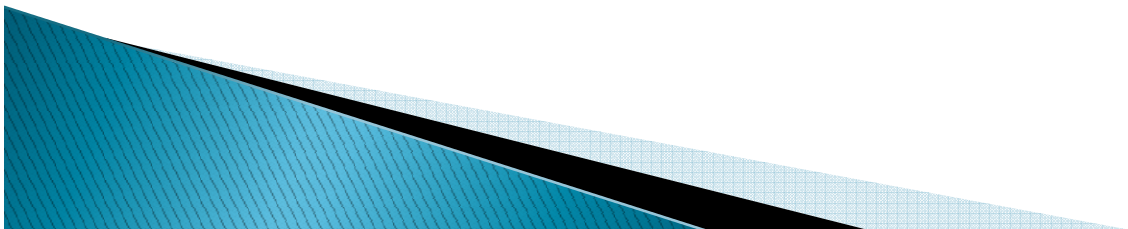
- ▶ Exemplary partnership of the library and CICS
 - ▶ Flexibility (Faulkner–Brown, 1999).
 - ▶ Accessibility. Accessibility as one of the qualities in the requirements of a library building (Faulkner–Brown, 1999; MacDonald, 2000).
 - ▶ The provision of collaboratories. Food, drink and mobile phones are allowed in the CILASS spaces.
 - ▶ The provision of varied and zoned study accommodation and social space supports the students differing learning styles and the IT provision enable them access to networked resources.
 - ▶ The sense of ownership among the students.
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Lessons learned

- ▶ Good cost control but was less satisfactory from the viewpoint of client/architect communication.
 - ▶ The provision of power. The original aspiration had been to have power available near to all soft seating units in the form of in-floor power boxes. However, the in-floor boxes that have been installed do not have easy access to the power sockets.. Insufficient service power sockets (for cleaning appliances) have been installed and cleaners have reverted to using power supplied through the floor boxes which results in fuse failure and power outages. Some retrospective work was being carried out to improve this issue.
 - ▶ Tidiness of the place as a result of long opening hours and reduced staffing levels over large chunks of those times.
 - ▶ There was also an issue about the shelving of the books in the building. The books are RFID tagged and loanable copies can be self-issued and self-returned.
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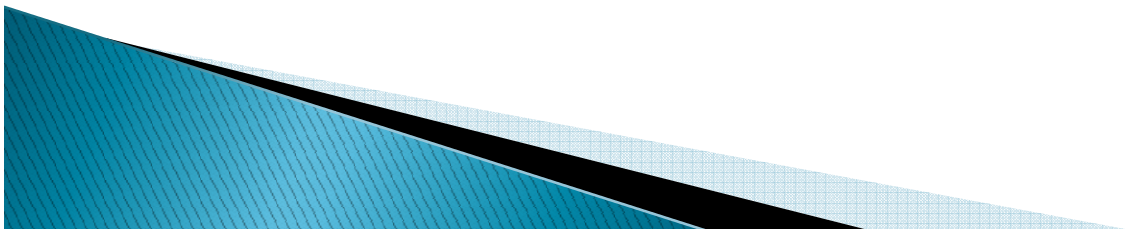
Findings

- ▶ Whilst the concept of information commons embodies the modern features of academic libraries and information centres,
- ▶ The University of Sheffield stressed that the Information Commons ‘would not be constrained by the vocabularies of existing academic buildings’
- ▶ and that ‘it is primarily about student learning and the resources and study spaces that support it, rather than about the technology or collection that it houses.’



Conclusion

- ▶ ‘Ultimately information commons offer the promise of paradox:
 - to share without owning;
 - to own without enclosing;
 - to take by sharing’.(Kranitz and Schement, 2005)



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