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Assessing the Strategic Credibility of Special Collections and Archives Departments

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Assessing the Strategic Credibility of Special Collections and Archives

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Strategic Credibility

Definition:
“Strategic credibility is defined as how others view the company’s overall corporate strategy and its strategic planning capability.”

Benefits:
- Improved relations with stakeholders
- Better morale of employees
- More goal focused employees
- Attracting talented people motivated by the strategy

Higgins and Diffenbach (1989)

Strategic Credibility Factors

- Demonstrated performance
- Capability to strategize
- Communication to stakeholders
- Credibility of organizational leadership

Higgins (2002)

Methodology

- Examined members of the Orbis Cascade Alliance college/university mission statements for themes
- Examined Orbis Cascade Alliance members’ Special Collections/Archives mission statements
- Negotiated common themes (how well aligned)
- Judged position, access to mission statements on each website

Key Findings and Highlights

- Demonstrated performance
  - No Special Collections/Archives shared annual reports, impact stories, statistics, or assessment information online.

- Capability to Strategize
  - 65% of Special Collections/Archives do not have easily accessible mission statements online.
  - Often missions are indirectly linked and thus “hidden” from stakeholders in Collection Policy, About pages, or within PDF documents.

- Communication to Stakeholders
  - Most Special Collections/Archives state WHAT they do (collect, preserve) but not WHY (learning, research).
  - Choice of language not clear to stakeholders (canned, repository, types of value)

Common Aligned Themes in Mission Comparisons

College/University Mission Statements
- Special Collections/Archives Mission Statements

42% - No alignment (13)
29% - 1 common theme (9)
13% - 2 common themes (4)
10% - 3 common themes (3)
6% - 4+ common themes (2)

Top Aligned Themes:
Research (7) | Collecting Scope (7) | Audience (6)
Teaching (4) | Faith/Religion (4) | Learning (3)

Special Collections/Archives Common Mission Themes

"Are academic libraries presenting their mission statements online? - Kuchi (2006)

73% 18% 0% 65%
Within 1 click of Archives main page
Within 2 clicks of Archives main page
Within 3 clicks of Archives main page
Archives directly linked from the library main page
Mission statement directly stated on Archives main page

ORRIS CASCADE ALLIANCE

37 Orbis Cascade Libraries
31 Libraries with Special Collections/Archives
11 Special Collections/Archives mission statements linked from

Other types of value communicated through websites

Instructional Services
- Aligns with university teaching missions
- Example: Willamette, UW, UO

Targeting Stakeholders
- Alumni, student groups
- Example: WWU, Whitman, OHSU

Advancing Institutional Mission
- Land grant, university, library
- Example: OSU, WSU

Types of Learning
- Emphasis on experiential
- Example: OSU, Linfield