

# The Challenge of Delivering an Effective Interlending Service



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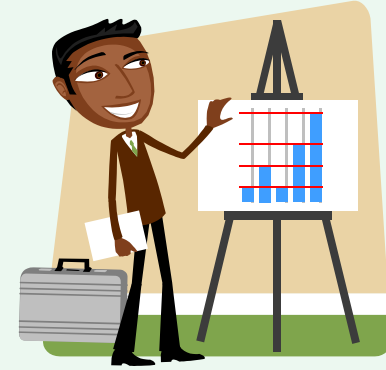
## Business as Usual?

- Review the current ILL environment
- Plenty of questions
  - What or whom are the internal and external influences?
  - The challenges and the opportunities
  - What is stopping us delivering on our services?
  - What are the actions we could be taking?
- ...hopefully suggest some answers too!



# The Darkness and the Light

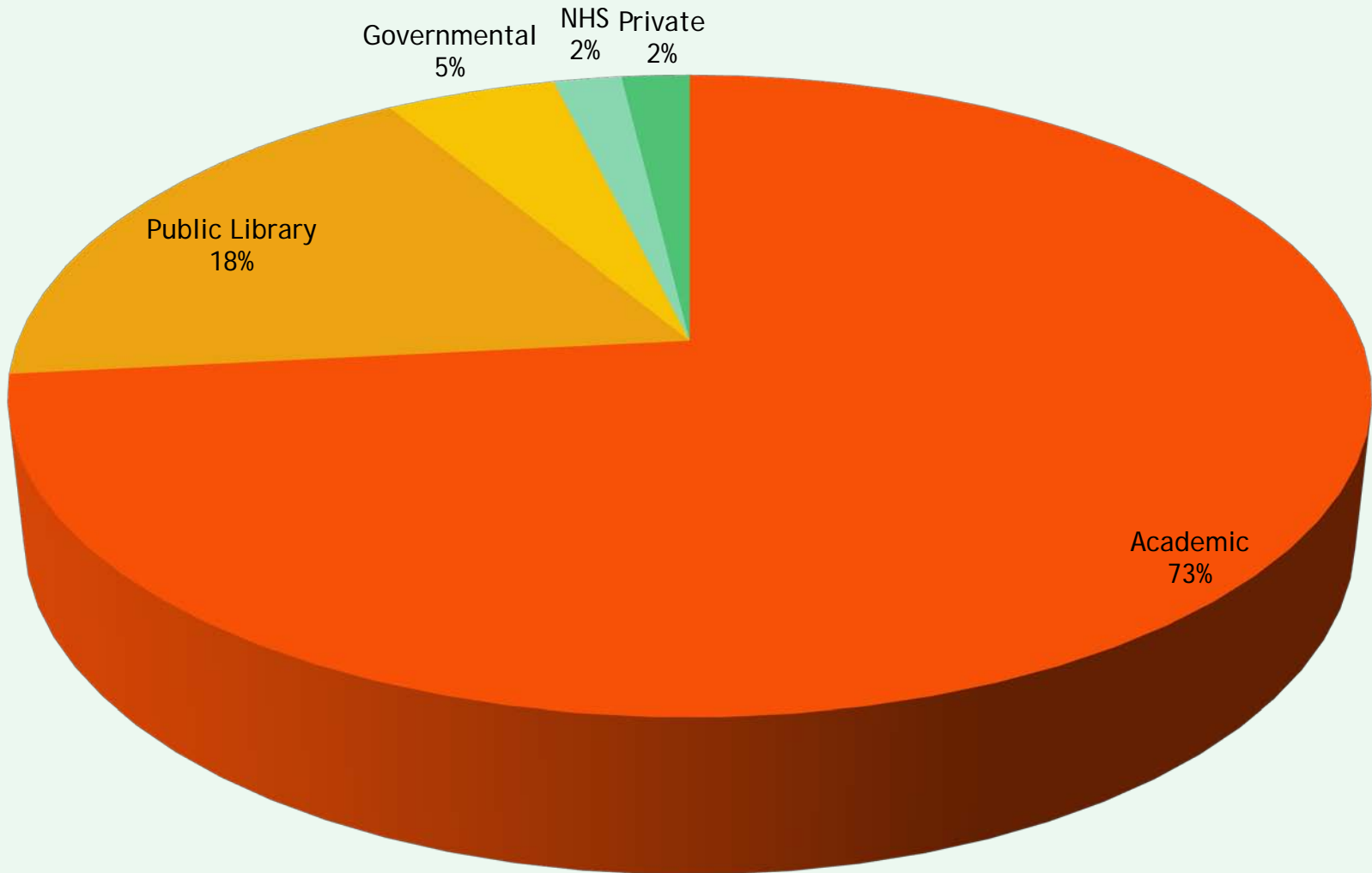
- Difficult times for libraries as well as ILL services
- Global and local financial budgetary issues
- Increasing patron demands for instant access
- Increasing electronic resource adding complexity
- Decrease in patron requests across the country
- BL service levels during refurbishment



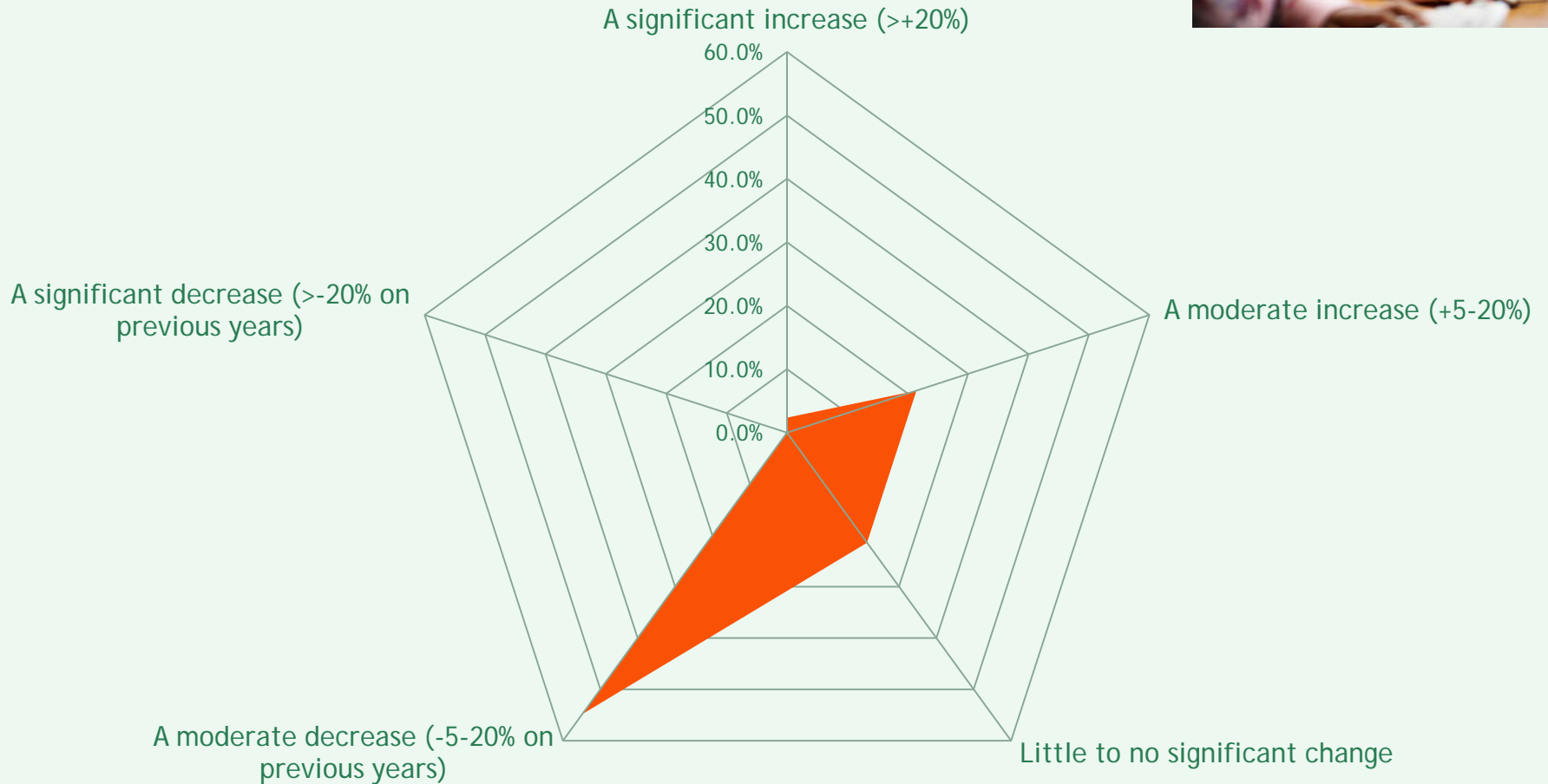
# Statistical Probabilities

- Poll of the interlending community
  - Not rigorous but substantive
  - Take the temperature of the community
- Views sought on current and future trends
  - What are requesting and lending levels?
  - How can we meet patron demands?
  - Are there opportunities as well as challenges?

## Employment Sector of Responses

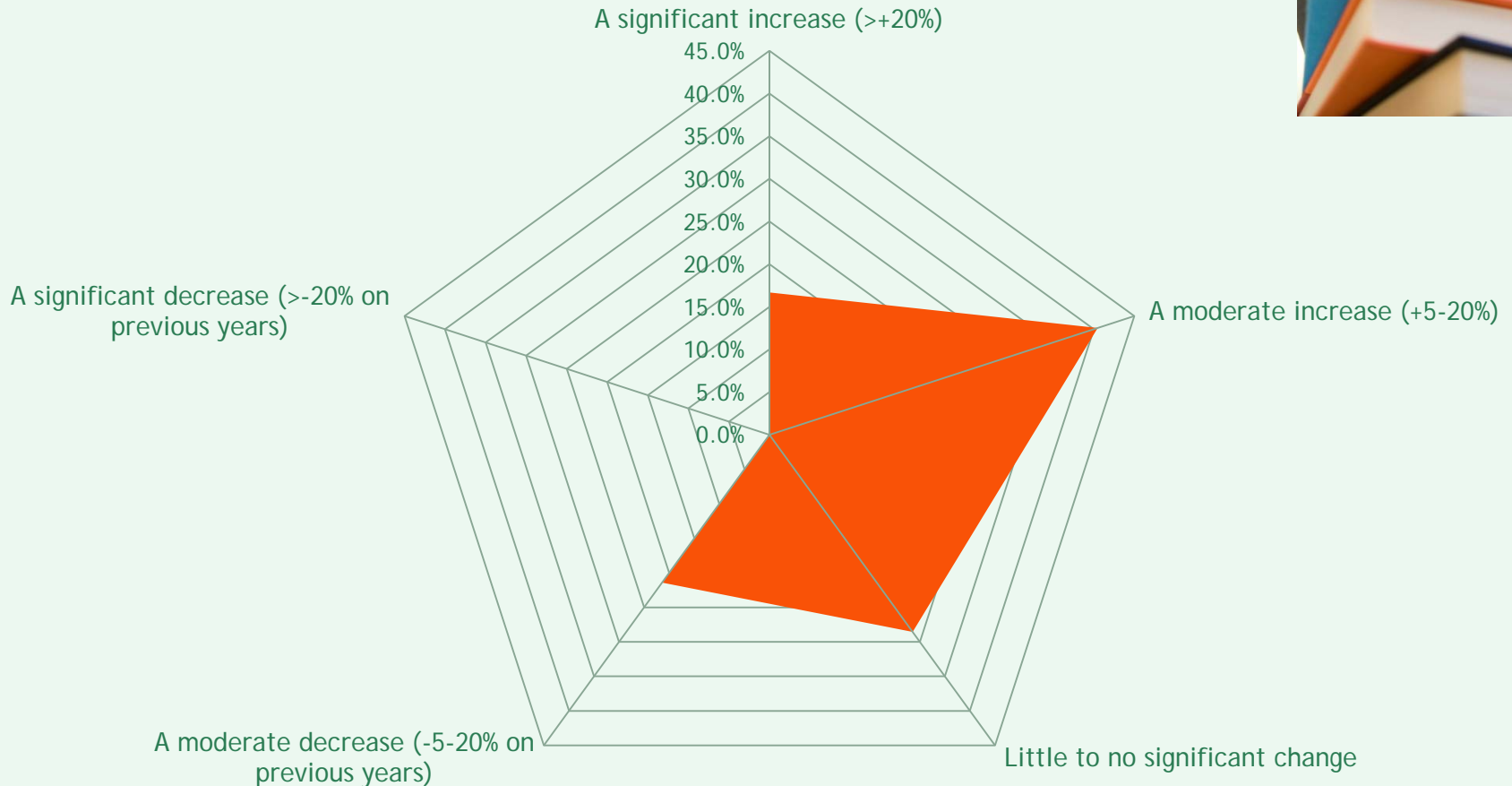


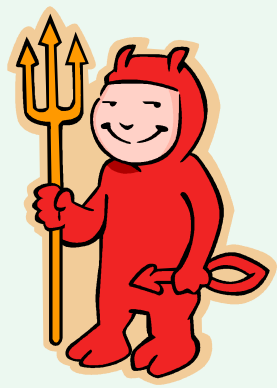
# Patron Request Levels





# Interlending Requests Levels (non-BL)

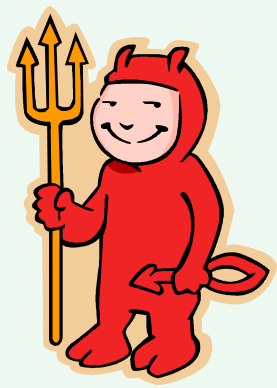




## Vox Pops

- *“With the general reduction in budgets across all sectors I see ILL departments becoming more marginalised. The service is already, in Public libraries, considered the poor relation”*
- *“Significant lost expertise following redundancies and early retirement in the public sector.”*





## By Inferno's Light

- Reducing interlending services and staff
  - Perceived as a soft target for “savings”?
  - Loss of key staff expertise overlooked
  - Loss of unique revenue recovery/generation
- Budgets reduction means acquisitions decrease
  - But this increases the need for interlending
- Introducing or raising patron charges for ILL
  - Increases cost recovery but harms service image
  - Unis charge much more than Public libraries



## Vox Pops

- *"The asbestos problem at BL is having the effect of causing a marked increase in outgoing loans and article supply."*
- *"Changes in the British Library procedures and the introduction of the next pricing model could make a significant impact on interlending in the next few years."*



## Trials and Tribble-ations

- Knock on from BL asbestos work
  - Increased time for supply reducing service efficacy
  - Helps reinforce key organisational role of interlending
- British Library not immune to budget cuts
  - Strategic aims to do “more with less”
  - Cuts in acquisitions budgets
  - Seeking to increase revenue streams elsewhere
- New ILL Management (BLDSS)
  - Aiding supply or adding a workflow complexity?

## Vox Pops

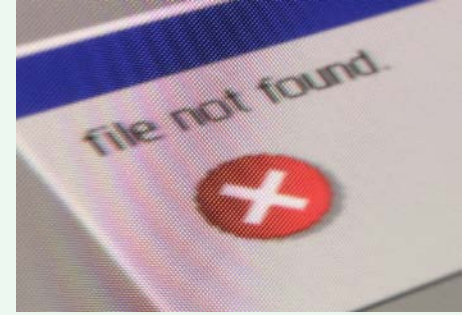


- *“ Might be forced to investigate or utilise alternative methods of document delivery, eg: pay-to-view. ”*
- *“At least one supplier allows you to buy credits and you can make these available to users to buy pay-to-view access - this being cheaper than subscribing to some expensive packages or titles.”*



# Rules of Acquisition

- Competition from Publishers and other Suppliers
  - Direct supply and cheaper than BL?
  - Should we be more canny consumers?
  - Is loaning within consortia more cost effective?
- Offsetting a portion of service costs
  - University of Edinburgh cost neutral for ILL
- Highlight rare or unusual collections
  - Local studies material and genealogical resources especially valuable
  - Interlending *should* be attractive for library services
  - But do senior managers see it in these terms?



## Vox Pops

- *“Because of the strict DRM rules on most of the documents, patrons are unable to work with them as electronic docs”*
- *Someone has carefully gone through all of our e-journal licences...a surprising number of licences do permit supply [to other libraries]. “*



## Broken Link

- DRM – one of the biggest pains for end users
  - Software woes and time limits use for patrons
  - FileOpen an improvement for electronic documents
  - eReader and mDevices want to access documents
- Increasing eBook and journal acquisition
  - Digital objects not readily loanable
  - Confusion over licenses and rights
  - Use of ERM or local databases but nothing central
- Frustration over lack of supply from interlenders
  - Encouragement to check licenses and loan

# Vox Pops



- *“Overhauling copyright laws for the new digital world is desperately needed to aid ILLs. As is better electronic delivery, sans DRM.”*





# Inter Arma Enim Silent Leges

- Galloping technology and lumbering legislation
- Copyright rules are being reviewed
  - But aim is to help business grow
  - Enhancement of interlending not a priority
  - Lobbying role for professional organisations?
- Digital signatures for document supply
  - Policy and technology challenges
  - Major boost to end users satisfaction

# Vox Pops



- *“ Institutional repositories and the BL's Ethos service provide alternative, often free, access to PhD theses and journal articles. We make use of these where possible to supply our requesters.”*



## Second Sight

- EThOS a curate's egg of a service(?)
  - Increasing theses availability but reducing ILL work
  - Future sustainability and evolution
  - Whither Oxbridge?
- Open access repositories and journals
  - Locating items for free supply to a reader benefit
  - Speed and ease of access advantage
  - Are these used by patrons or interlenders for supply?
  - Patron concerns over content versions
  - A competitor or complimentary service?



## Vox Pops

- *"ILL is the only area within the library world where I feel there is a great camaraderie as we have a national and international willingness to help and share resources with our colleagues and are always delighted to assist."*



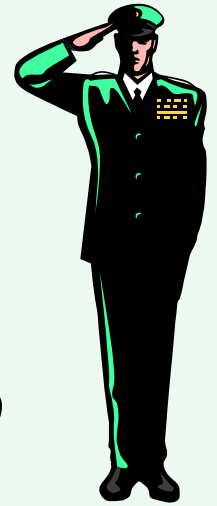
# Far Beyond the Stars

- Role in support and exchange of best practice
  - Outside of “public” or “educational” silos
  - What others do can impact and influence us
- Lobbying & advocacy to senior decision makers
  - An external voice can be a powerful persuader
  - Conarls, FIL, BL etc can all provide input
- The power of the IFLA scheme to supply
  - Global reach and remind of ILL services
  - Local collaborations agreements to reduce costs
- Provision of benchmarks and standards
  - Your organisation must have these services because...



## In the Pale Moonlight

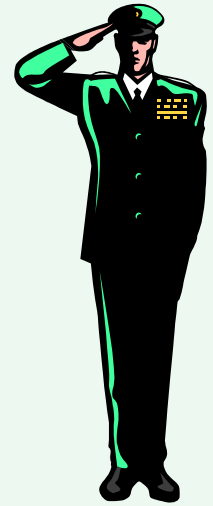
- There are major challenges to overcome
  - Embrace challenges as an opportunities to evolve
  - Doing nothing or more of the same not a viable option
- Must be honest about our limitations
  - Revisiting tired/redundant workflows or procedures
  - If it isn't essential why are you still doing it?
- Able to demonstrate ROI/VFM ILL offers
  - We deliver what your local collections can't afford
  - Facts and figures to prove the value of interlending
- Interlending community is a major resource
  - Training and experience sharing is crucial
  - Reduce costs through collaboration



## A Time to Stand?

- *"[There is] pressure to provide evidence to support work practices so there are great opportunities for the library to show that we can get just about anything."*
- *"Surrender is not an option"*
  - *Benjamin Lafayette Sisko*





## For the Uniform

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