

## Supply and Demand In Academic Library and Information Service Environment

Business Case – Academic Libraries in the Knowledge Management Value Chain.

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## The Value Chain

- Global Economy
- South Africa Incorporated (SA Inc)
- Productivity/Service Provision
- Knowledge management/Skills demand
- Academic Institutions
- Library and Information Services
- Supply and Demand

## Academic Libraries in Value Chain

- Positioning?
- Image Challenges :
- Perception/Reality
- Academic: “Scholarly to the point of being impractical or unaware of the outside world;” “merely theoretical; speculative”
- Cost centre/Profit Centre
- ROI? Demonstrate value-add role

## Role of AL's In Value Chain

- In rapidly changing economic environment, political landscapes and social spaces; and in a world without borders, AL's must learn to adapt or die! Customers are more demanding and will “buy” only what suits their needs.
- To remain relevant, productive and “profitable” AL's must be seen to be valuable to the bottom-line of the institution and SA economy. This is the ROI that funders need to see.

## Demonstrate Value Add of AL's

- How can AL's continuously adapt their information processes to meet the ever-changing user-population with ever-changing philosophies on access to information?
- R & D is one answer: renovate, innovate, re-invent
- Benchmark against the best
- Self-differentiate

## How Can This Be Achieved?

- Apply the "Law of the Loophole" - (With thanks to Olakunle Soriyan)
- No process or system in the world is perfect
- Find "the loophole" and plug it!
- Strive for continuous improvement – to stay ahead of the competition
- (Sasol; Mercedes Benz; Lexus)

## Shall the twain ever meet?

- Supply and Demand: Should the twain ever meet?
- The simple answer from a business perspective is "Never!" In the sense that there should not be equilibrium between supply and demand in the LR environment. Demand should always be ahead of supply in a viable business environment. What some have characterised as "splendid imbalance"

## Conclusion

- There is no doubt in my mind that a very strong business case can be made for AL's.
- Some (PR) work needs to be done to burnish the image of AL's as important value-adders to the economic value chain; to claim their rightful status in the greater scheme of things
- Don't be coy! Take that space!