The CARM2 Print Repository: from planning to operations

CAVAL is an Australian library consortium that provides a range of services to member libraries and other customers in the region. A key service is the management of the CARM (CAVAL Archival and Research Materials Centre), a purpose-built, high-density, environmentally controlled storage facility designed for the long-term storage and preservation of print materials. The initial module, CARM1, began operations in 1996 and filled to capacity over a ten year period. In 2007 a feasibility study projected future unmet demand from existing members of around 67 kilometres of high-density shelving space over a 20 year period. To meet this demand for the storage of low-use paper-based research storage, CAVAL has now built a second storage facility, CARM2, with a capacity of 62 linear kilometres of library like storage for a capital cost of $AUD14 million.

The planning for CARM2 commenced with a review that assessed options available to CAVAL member universities for the long term storage of print material. This review analysed alternative storage solutions (for low-use material) from the perspective of potential users (i.e. universities) to assess the financial and non-financial impacts associated with the options. The results provided an indicative evaluation of alternative storage options compared to CARM taking into consideration the quantitative, qualitative and risk implications of each option from the perspective of a potential user. A range of options were considered, including a Base Case of ‘Do nothing’; the option to digitise and discard all low use materials, options to build on-campus storage facilities and to contract a commercial storage provider. It was concluded that the CARM2 option is a competitive option for the storage of low-use research materials because a lower initial capital outlay is required compared to the purpose built options, with no additional library resources; the facility provides the qualitative needs for a user of a low-use storage facility and set-up and operational costs to the user appear to be minimised.

This paper will describe the development and implementation of the business model for CARM2, the impact on the design and funding model, the lessons learned from the management of the original CARM facility and the construction and commissioning of CARM2. It will also discuss the ongoing issues associated with the ownership and governance of the shared facility and the trends away from the shared collection model.

Author biography
Cathie Jilovsky is Chief Information Officer at CAVAL Limited, an Australian Library Consortium. She is an experienced library and business manager, with a technical background in library and information systems. Prior to joining CAVAL in 1992 she worked with a range of institutions in Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. At CAVAL she has undertaken a range of technical and managerial roles, including the management of several of CAVAL's resource sharing services, the implementation and management of a variety of library systems, and the collection and publication of library statistics. As Chief Information Officer she leads CAVAL's information technology team and the business units that provide hosting, installation, support, and help desk services for client libraries. As CARM2 Project Manager she oversaw the planning, construction and implementation of operations for the new facility. She is a regular conference presenter.

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