



A Confession

FeL is a concept, not a reality

We believe FeL will provide value

Need considerable support from senior managers and partner libraries to prove that value

Starting from the middle, not the beginning

Federal libraries do have extensive electronic collections but are not coordinated horizontally

Stories of successful library consortia arrangements, even our own, inspire us but we have not yet found the way to inspire senior managers, who watch the bottom line and may consider that everything is free on the internet.

Our Context

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- **Federal Government of Canada**
- **Over 70 departments and agencies that have libraries**
- **Libraries of various sizes**
 - Largest is a national network of over 20 libraries
 - Smallest is a two person operation
 - Majority are in-between



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Our Situation

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- Libraries funded separately by departments
- Libraries vary in size and budget
- Two official languages (English and French)
- 300 services points across the country
- Over 30 sites
- Subject specific to the department e.g.
 - Agriculture and Agri-food Canada
 - National Film Board
 - Supreme Court of Canada
 - Immigration and Refugee Board



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Our Challenge

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Our challenge is how to work together cooperatively to leverage our investment in electronic resources to deliver the best possible service to our clients and ensure value for money for the Canadian taxpayer.



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The FeL – Why?

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- Escalating costs
- Potential for service improvement
- Changing clients, changing demands
- Evolving staff competencies



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Our Approach

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- The Players
 - Federal Libraries Coordination Secretariat (LAC)
 - Federal Libraries Consortium
 - Strategic Alliance of Science and Technology Libraries
 - Canadian Institute of Scientific and Technological Information
 - Deputy Ministers Task Force on Record Keeping



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Federal Science eLibrary A Proven Concept

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- Collaboration of CISTI and Strategic Alliance
- Feasibility study September 2003
- Business case 2005
- Pilot project 2006
- Negotiations committee 2008
- What's next?



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FeL Concept

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- Addresses government accountability goals and objectives
- Provides timely access to the high quality, authoritative published information needed
- Delivers seamless and equitable access to the desktops of all federal government knowledge workers
- Sponsored by Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information CISTI)
- Lead by federal libraries

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contribute to the ability of the Government of Canada to meet its goals and objectives in an accountability framework

assuring that all government employees have timely access to the high quality, authoritative published information they need to design, implement and continuously improve innovative programs and services that meet the needs of Canadians.

will deliver seamless and equitable access to key electronic information resources in the sciences, social sciences and humanities

to the desktops of all federal government knowledge workers -- researchers, policy analysts and decision makers.

sponsored by Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information CISTI) and lead by a Consortium of federal departmental librariesHorizontal organization for which there has been no precedents in the federal library community, so far.

Some interesting models in Australia and New Zealand (also commonwealth governments with relatively similar structures)

Draft Vision Statement

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- All government employees have equitable timely access to the high quality, authoritative published information they need to design, implement and continuously improve innovative programs and services that meet the needs of Canadians



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Challenge #1

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- **Departments organized differently**
 - Different funding criteria
 - Different reporting structures



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Challenge #2

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- **Government departments are very specialized so departmental libraries are very specialized**
 - Primary Research Group's 2007 publication Survey of Library Database Licensing Practices



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International survey conducted in 2007, suggests that government libraries tend to collect more specialized content than academic libraries which reduces the opportunities and benefits for buying through a consortium

Libraries with large e-resources budgets are more likely to participate in consortial buying and the majority of federal librarians would be considered small to medium-sized.

Challenge #3

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- Even collectively, we are small
- Need leverage
- What could FeL offer vendors that would make dealing with us collectively attractive?



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Challenge #4

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- **Complex environment for procurement in federal government context**
- **Many players**
 - Government procurement agency
 - Internal departmental procurement staff
 - libraries



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See procurement problem briefing note re: agents involved in negotiating licenses, procurement process in federal government

Two Pilot Projects

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- E-Library Readiness
 - Experience based research through case studies collecting information on providing access to electronic information resources
- Improved Government of Canada Access to Key Electronic Information Resources
 - Factiva
 - 6 month pilot project involving over 20 departments



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What we have learned so far

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- Need for coordinated action
- Skepticism about potential value
- Organizational change is necessary
- Print is still important
- Need for a champion



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Next Steps

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- Finish pilot projects
- Address procurement problems
- Investigate collective licensing
- Work with FSeL
- Consider other subject clusters



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