

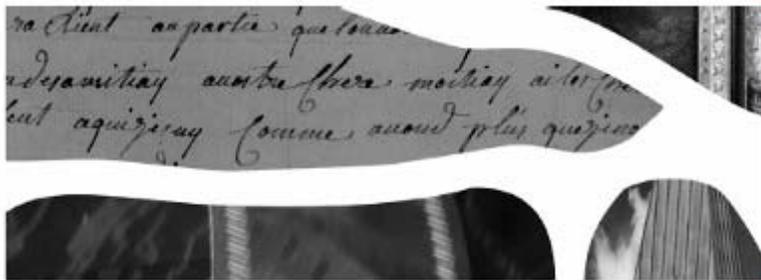


Library and Archives
Canada

Bibliothèque et Archives
Canada

Canada

Library and Archives Canada



Directions for Change

June 2006

Canada

Preamble to the Library and Archives of Canada Act

Whereas it is necessary that

(a) the documentary heritage of Canada be preserved for the benefit of present and future generations;

(b) Canada be served by an institution that is a source of enduring knowledge accessible to all, contributing to the cultural, social and economic advancement of Canada as a free and democratic society;

c) that institution facilitate in Canada cooperation among the communities involved in the acquisition, preservation and diffusion of knowledge; and

(d) that institution serve as the continuing memory of the government of Canada and its institutions;

Now, therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows: the Library and Archives of Canada Act.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Section I: What will Library and Archives Canada be?	2
Five key directions shape our vision of the future	
• A new kind of knowledge institution	2
• A truly national institution	5
• Working with others to strengthen the whole of Canada's documentary heritage	7
• A prime learning destination	8
• A lead institution in government information management	10
Section II: What will guide LAC?	12
Directions that will guide us in realising our vision	
• Access is our primary driver	12
• A clear focus on the client	14
• Effective stewardship through management of risk	16
• New approaches to describing Canada's documentary heritage	17
• Digital is mainstream	19
• Strengthened leadership and strategic focus	21
• Integrated and holistic approaches	22
Section III: What supporting strategies will enable us?	23
Internal strategies for the new institution	
• Being outcome-focused	23
• Embedding flexibility	25
• Fostering an open and learning culture	26
• Building new strengths in our workforce	27
• Being technology-enabled	28
• Providing a healthy and supportive work environment	29
Conclusion	31

Introduction

On October 2, 2002, the Minister of Canadian Heritage announced that the National Archives of Canada and the National Library of Canada would be drawn together to create a new knowledge institution for Canadians. The announcement of the new Library and Archives Canada (LAC) marked the beginning of a change process that was quickly recognized to be not merely a merger to take place overnight, nor a transition process to happen over months, but a deep *transformation* that would take several years to accomplish.

The first stage of the transformation process aimed to develop the vision for the new institution. All staff were asked to step out of their day-to-day work and think about what the new institution should be and the steps to be addressed to get there. Through the process, National Library and National Archives staff became acquainted, built a mutual understanding of the extraordinary potential of the new institution, and generated a wealth of creative ideas on how to achieve that rich potential. Subsequently, over the course of 2004, LAC conducted a range of consultations with users and stakeholders. Their input helped us refine our *Directions for Change*.

This document has three parts, describing three sets of change concepts. First, we describe five key directions that will shape and define the new institution. These directions set out our vision; they are *what* we want to achieve.

Second, we describe *how* we want to achieve our vision. These are the drivers that will guide our pursuit of opportunities and challenges within our business functions.

Last, we outline internal supporting strategies that will help us realize our vision for the future. These strategies will enable LAC to become a stronger and more effective organization, well equipped to deliver on its mandate for Canadians.

LAC believes that, taken together, these broad change concepts provide a compelling vision and an organizational philosophy for a vibrant, confident and highly relevant institution that contributes to the quality of life of Canadians and the effectiveness of the government of Canada. They are intended to guide LAC for years to come.

Section I:

What will Library and Archives Canada be?

Five key directions shape our vision of the future

A new kind of knowledge institution

Joining the functions, collections, services and expertise of the National Archives and the National Library affords unprecedented opportunities for helping Canadians learn about Canada and each other. Melding the roles of a national archive and a national library, with an added museum mandate, Library and Archives Canada (LAC) will better reach and serve Canadians, and will play a significant role in the government of Canada and within the library, archival, cultural heritage and learning communities in Canada.

The Government of Canada is committed to making history, culture and Canadian voices accessible to all Canadians and to encouraging research, discovery and the sharing of knowledge... The new agency will strengthen the visibility, relevance and accessibility of the collections and services of both the National Library and the National Archives.

Minister of Canadian Heritage
Sheila Copps, Oct. 2, 2002

Our
Collection

The new institution’s collection is vast, rich, and unparalleled in the country. It ranges from books and publications through to the official records of government; the papers of our writers and poets, politicians and business leaders; newspapers; the music collection; film; 1.5 million maps; photographs from the 1840s to the present; broadcast recordings; documentary art and portraits of over one million Canadians. It has impressive strengths: as a record of federal government activity; in documenting the historical development of Canadian society; and as a reflection of Canada’s developing strengths in literature, music and media. We safeguard essential records that support rights—citizenship, pension rights, land claims. Through our efforts, a citizen who publishes—whether a thesis, an article, a letter to the editor, or a book—is assured that their intellectual and creative output will be available for future use. We are stewards of a collection that is the keystone of Canada’s national documentary heritage, a collection of national scope and importance.

“One LAC
Collection”

We will continue to build its strength. LAC’s aim toward comprehensiveness in collecting published Canadiana is unique among libraries, and its focus on material of national significance and on the government of Canada records is unique among Canadian archives. The thrust of these collection development policies will continue. Nevertheless, we will critically examine current policies and practices to ensure that the LAC collection parts are viewed as a whole. Our acquisition efforts are collectively building the strongest collection possible for Canadians’ use.

We will think of our holdings as one collection, and we will organize it to optimize the linkages between its parts. As one strategy to achieve this, we will have one archivist or archival team process a mixed-media archival fonds, where formerly such a fonds would have been divided into its textual and media-based parts to be processed by different organizational areas.

Emphasis will also be placed on integrating access so that our diverse collection parts can be searched as one. Users should be able to globally search our resources or to zero in on specific kinds of resources according to their need.

In presenting the collection to users, and in all other areas of service, the new institution removes arbitrary barriers and distinctions that may, in the past, have prevented seamless research by our clients. The Canadian Genealogy Centre is a prime example of how we can bring together archival and library resources for better client service in a popular research area.

The new institution allows us to streamline and strengthen our provision of service, to integrate the access we provide, and to sharpen our focus on the client. It allows us to shift resources to new areas that will be critical for the future, such as effective management of digital information and better understanding of how people seek and use information in the digital age.

Our primary professional challenge will be to narrow the gap between what the user wants and their ability to find, use and understand our content for their unique purpose. Their interests range from broad to precise, and across events, issues, themes, persons, cultures, places, time, genres, media, professional topics, and so on. We must find new ways to organize and describe our extraordinary information resources, including an increasing body of digital content, for easier access and more widespread and wide-ranging use. It is by evaluating, describing and indexing, and disseminating content that we become a “knowledge institution,” and it is from that content that new knowledge will be created, contributing to a more successful Canadian society.

“Making known” is emphasized

The institution will not be a passive repository. Section 7 of our new Act provides us with the mission “to make that [documentary] heritage known to Canadians and to anyone with an interest in Canada and to facilitate access to it.” A focus on access, a capacity to interpret, and the provision of innovative services will encourage Canadians to learn, research, appreciate, and share knowledge and culture.

We will be both responsive to the information needs of Canadians with our services, and proactive in meeting their needs by furnishing a wealth of online content, developing new or enhanced research tools, and delivering strong online services and programs founded upon Canada’s documentary heritage.

The “one collection” concept within LAC consists of the promotion of transparency for the individuals accessing our collection; that from the perspective of the individual user there is a seamless approach to a single collection that reflects the diversity of Canadian culture and society over time.

Part of the vision proposed by the LAC Collection Development and Management Working Group

We will organize to serve the needs and special interests of Canadians, raising the profile of some of our most compelling content through programs such as the Portrait Gallery of Canada and an ongoing physical and virtual exhibition program. LAC will develop a range of information resources, services and public programs in areas that are of high value to diverse groups of users. We will ensure that there is cohesion between our acquisition activities and our programs to make known Canada's documentary heritage.

Evolving our professional traditions

A key resource is the intellectual capital of LAC's 1100 staff, and the new perspectives that will come to light with the close cooperation of the archival, library, and other information disciplines. We will have the courage, as we move toward integration, to examine our traditions critically, build on the best of our professions, and change.

Canada is a pioneer in melding so completely the roles of a national archive and a national library. In addition, the new institution has a museum mandate through its Portrait Gallery of Canada. This unprecedented convergence will uncover new possibilities for service to Canadians.

To be successful, we must build on the strengths of our collection, staff and services, and we must fully exploit the opportunities of digital information and new technologies. We will review all of our work processes, looking for opportunities to integrate, streamline, and modernize them. Reference and consultation services, description processes, access to government information services, and the management of rights compliance are some of the key areas to be examined.

LAC intends to become a more capable and innovative institution than simply the sum of its parts. The new institution will measure its success not by how many items it holds, but by how much it contributes to the continued cultural, social and economic success of Canadian society.

Our transformation is founded on the skills and commitment of our employees and involves the integration of our multi-media holdings, our services, systems, facilities and the harmonization of our work practices. The resulting institution, working closely with libraries and archives across the country, will provide the authoritative source documenting the Canadian experience and encouraging all Canadians to learn more about their country, their communities and themselves.
Ian E. Wilson,
Librarian and Archivist of Canada, from *Library and Archives Canada 2005-2006 Report on Plans and Priorities*

A truly national institution

Reflecting
Canadian
diversity

Canada's geographic, linguistic and cultural diversity is part of our identity as a nation. LAC resources must reflect this: they must be geographically, intellectually and culturally representative, and accessible to all Canadians of all ages from wherever they are.

Canadians must be able to find their own communities' heritage and culture within our collection, or to access it in others'. They must see themselves, their past, in what we hold. This will involve some shifts in collecting emphases to ensure Aboriginal and ethnocultural communities' documentary heritage, reflecting their experience within Canadian society, becomes better represented in our collection. At times, LAC may assist a community to document its heritage, at the same time assuring that it is collected, preserved and made accessible—whether locally or as part of the LAC collection.

To accomplish this effectively, we need to reflect Canada's diversity in LAC staff.

LAC is a gathering place, real and virtual, known and open to all and accessible from anywhere. Our collections, services, partnerships and programs strengthen and reflect the rich multicultural heritage of Canada and contribute to our sense of identity.

Vision proposed by the LAC Multicultural Working Group

National reach
and relevance

As an institution, LAC must become widely known, used, and valued by Canadians all across the country. Our location in the national capital region must be off-set by a constant and deliberate effort to achieve a pan-national presence, both virtual and physical. We will consciously aim to increase our visibility throughout Canada.

The new institution brings together a wealth of networks and partnerships that we can build upon to deliver our mandate. Our effort to connect Canadians with their documentary heritage should extend through Canada's 3600 public library service points across the country, its 800 archives, and its strong network of academic libraries.

A range of partnerships, many at the grassroots level in communities in other parts of the country, will be needed to achieve this national presence. We will look to partner with other agencies that have a distributed presence in Canada, and with local community groups, libraries and archives. Toward increasing our physical presence outside the capital region, activities such as decentralized exhibition and cultural programming will become part of a planned outreach strategy. We will examine whether we can make better use of the network of provincial archives and urban public libraries for increasing our ability to provide access and to make known Canada's documentary heritage.

Consider regional displays of your resources in local libraries.

LAC Stakeholder
Consultation

We would be interested in seeing LAC partnering with the library associations across the country, as one way to strengthen its relevance and usefulness to all of Canada.

Saskatchewan Library
Association response to the
LAC Stakeholder
Consultation

National Role

One of the challenges of being “truly national” will be to understand what is our essential role as a national institution and how best to play it in the Canadian context. The former National Library and National Archives had long recognized that some materials are more effectively acquired, made available, and used within a provincial and local setting, and have supported nationally the aggregation of access to these materials through national union catalogues (AMICUS and Archives Canada).

But there are several roles that can be more effectively played at the level of a national institution for the benefit of the whole country. Preservation research, standards development, international collaborations, and the development of national strategies are among such roles. A key role is to foster national commitment and approaches to common challenges such as long-term access to digital information.

Also, LAC must be an active and effective voice within the federal government for the contribution that the library and archival sector makes to the development of Canadian society. The network of Canadian knowledge institutions plays a vital role in Canadian government priorities relating to social cohesion, quality of life, and prosperity of Canada. Libraries and archives help ensure ubiquitous access to knowledge, integration and literacy for new Canadians, a level playing field in learning, and the use of knowledge and learning to foster innovation and economic development. Canada’s library network also serves as a key channel for disseminating government information and, increasingly, providing access to government services to Canadians. LAC must be visible and present within government, ensuring that government initiatives are taking advantage of this exceptional knowledge network infrastructure.

The *Library and Archives of Canada Act* enables LAC to provide financial, technical and professional support to build capacity and foster innovation in the library and archival communities. LAC will renew the archival contributions program, refining its parameters to better support the development of the archival system across Canada, and strengthening its governance to meet new accountability requirements for federal programs. We will also study, and discuss with the library community, how we can best partner to support the development of Canada as a learning society.

A national knowledge institution is expected to provide leadership and focus within the broader Canadian “information ecosystem,” but in a manner that strengthens the contributions of others as well. The ultimate goal is to promote conditions and infrastructure that will see the whole system work optimally for the benefit of Canadians.

Library and Archives Canada will 1) serve as a champion for the right of Canadians to access information freely in order to participate fully in the global information society 2) champion the value and benefit of the networks of libraries and archives in a civil society
LAC National and International Roles Working Group

LAC would increase its relevance by working with small institutions in promoting archival programs. [These], such as Aboriginal archives and religious archives may have influence in defining a significant portion of Canada’s documentary heritage and be in positions to define access policies governing vital components of our history.
Association of Canadian Archivists

LAC should strive to bridge the cultural gap between the library, archives and museums communities in order to harness their respective expertise. LAC should seek active collaboration with the research library community (amongst others) so that talent and expertise are mobilized on a national scale.
Canadian Association of Research Libraries submission to the LAC Stakeholder Consultation

Working with others to strengthen the whole of Canada's documentary heritage

Library and Archives Canada has stewardship of a collection of extraordinary range, depth and magnitude. It includes comprehensive collections of Canadian books, periodicals, newspapers, and government publications; manuscript collections of individuals and organizations of national significance; kilometres of government records; millions of visual artefacts: photographs, prints, drawings, portraits, plans, and maps; rich collections of broadcast and published audio, video and film; and more. The collection is both contemporary and historical. It sheds light on all subjects of Canadian endeavour—cultural, economic, social, and scientific.

[LAC will...] define and build a cohesive national collection through the strong collaboration [with] partners and provide unexcelled access to it and related services through a coordinated dynamic network. ...

We characterize this effort as "Being a Leader at Being a Partner" and our willingness and ability to facilitate the achievement of a network of partnerships, from which all participants derive benefit, is a critical part of our vision.

Part of the vision proposed by the LAC Collection Development and Management Working Group

Strengthening the network of documentary heritage

But Canada's documentary heritage collection extends well beyond LAC: it can be conceived as the collective body of Canadian textual, visual and audio-visual content found in institutions across the country. Here, our responsibility takes some different forms.

Building the strength of this broader collection; facilitating its coherent access, use and understanding; and preserving it over time—all are essential and require a network of effort. That effort involves archives and libraries of all types, cultural centres, other heritage institutions, and the communities of creators of Canadian cultural and documentary resources. LAC must assume a national leadership role in this broader landscape, fostering the creation of a more formalized network of decentralized activity based on purposeful partnerships, collaboration, and cooperative activity.

Better defining the network of responsibilities will allow LAC to more clearly define the scope of its own collection and the concept of "national significance." A national network for access, capitalizing on decentralized collecting and preservation responsibilities, will allow Canadians from all parts of Canada to access resources from other parts of the country. Reference services, providing an intermediary between users and information, can be fostered on a national basis through a digital reference network.

Due to the exponential increase in born digital materials, efforts by LAC need to be complemented by others who are involved in the same work. Again, this needs to be part of a national plan.

LAC cannot carry out its mandate without fellow stakeholders. Distributed responsibilities ("networks" and "partnerships") are a sensible and financially realistic response.

Canadiana.org submission to the LAC Stakeholder Consultation

Our goal, to which we must re-commit with many partners, is that Canadians can find and use documentary resources easily, and at the time, in the place, and in the form that is convenient to them. Working toward that aim is a complex, multi-partner effort. Partners must include similar institutions, our professional communities, and communities of information creators and information consumers.

A prime learning destination

Learners as a key audience for Canadian content

The preamble to our new legislation states that LAC will contribute to the cultural, social and economic development of Canada as a free and democratic society. A key way in which we will achieve this impact is by reaching and serving Canadians as they learn.

Our collection, services and interpretive capacity furnish LAC with an opportunity to provide a high quality learning experience to learners of all ages, from all cultural backgrounds, and in all parts of Canada. These may be school age or post-secondary students; they may be teachers or academics, guiding others' learning experience; or they may be ordinary Canadians autonomously pursuing a research passion or a casual subject interest.

A commitment to supporting learning requires that we understand the learning process and assess the knowledge requirements of learners, and that we evolve our content, programs, finding aids and services based on feedback from our engagement with learning and teaching communities. To succeed, we need to understand what constitutes a positive learning experience, particularly in the digital information environment, and build the resources we offer around that knowledge.

[LAC will...] be a gathering place (real and virtual), that will engage everyone to learn, create and reflect on the shared understanding of who we are as Canadians.
Vision proposed by the LAC Outreach and Public Programs Working Group

I am helping my son with a project and found that [your site] was an excellent way to obtain information right at home.
User comment received through the LAC website survey.

Content and programs to support school-age and life-long learning

One of the ways Library and Archives Canada will become a prime learning destination is by showcasing some of our most compelling holdings, and targeting interpretive and promotional programs, to kindergarten to grade 12 educators and learners. The collection is rich in primary documents, voices and stories—both familiar and unknown—that provide perspectives on the Canadian experience. We will package these in ways that allow school-age learners to enjoy and draw meaning from them, to understand their content and the context in which they were created.

As educational practices move to enquiry and project-based learning approaches, interaction with other learners, with our resources, and with our staff will be key to the learning experience we provide. We will find ways to allow online learners to select, use, interpret and package our primary sources for their own unique purpose.

How best to serve the adult learner needs to be critically examined. There is no curriculum against which to match life-long learning resources, there is less user research available for us to draw upon, and there is not a distinct market to tap. And yet demographics suggest that Canadians reaching retirement age are a growing body of leisure-time learners.

Thank you for all of the valuable things you have made accessible on this website. I have my students of social studies 10 use it.
User comment received through the LAC website survey.

Produce more information and electronic resources using primary sources for students. More educational resources for teachers to deliver directly in the classroom. Try to focus on curriculum requirements.
User comment received through the LAC website survey.

Learning and teaching resources will be an integral part of access initiatives such as the Canadian Genealogy Centre, the Portrait Gallery of Canada, and our other programs to make known and understood Canada’s documentary heritage. While the Web is our primary conduit to learners, we will complement this with onsite programming at our Ottawa-Gatineau venues to further the appeal of LAC as a learning destination. And we will develop travelling exhibitions and displays that can extend our reach beyond the National Capital Region, and physical classroom resources that will complement and strengthen the learning experience we provide via the Web.

Beyond entrenching LAC as a knowledge destination of choice for young Canadian minds, it is vitally important to expand the scope of the Learning Centre to encompass older age groups and different communities of interest. The institution’s mandate must foster learning as a life-long activity.

From the Outreach and Public Programming Working Group Report

Ensuring relevance, awareness and use

Increased focus will be placed on ensuring that educators, students, parents and life-long learners become aware of Canada’s documentary heritage as a learning resource. It is not enough to simply mount content on the Web or even to produce well-tailored teaching and learning resources; for these resources to be used to their full potential, LAC must brand itself as a learning destination, and proactively build relationships with other public and non-profit organizations in the field and with education ministry officials, classroom teachers, and academic programs across the country. The commitment of educators will result in repeat classroom use of our content. We will also look for ways in which we can show meaningful support to the key role that schools and public libraries play in fostering learning, supporting literacy and promoting a life-long love of reading.

Develop travelling exhibits, for both children and adults, to promote and to inform Canadians about LAC services and collections. In addition, learning tools and resources could be created to help teachers and teacher librarians educate their students about our regional and national documentary heritage.

Newfoundland & Labrador Library Association submission to the LAC Stakeholder Consultation

Finally, LAC will study what role it might play toward national aggregation of educational resources produced by others. As Canadian libraries and archives increasingly produce online educational content, we can encourage the adoption of common standards and best practices to support resource aggregation and interoperability on a national basis.

A lead institution in government information management

The effective and efficient management of government of Canada information is in the interest of all Canadians—as citizens, taxpayers, and beneficiaries of government programs and services. Information and knowledge management will play a key role in enabling the success of the government of Canada and Canadian society.

LAC has specific legislated roles with respect to government information management (IM). One is to facilitate the government's effective management of the range and massive volume of information that it both generates and acquires. In addition, LAC is to be the permanent repository of government publications and of ministerial and government records that are of historical or archival value. And finally, LAC is mandated to provide coordination and leadership to the network of federal libraries, helping to assure that the information resources and IM expertise required by government to function effectively are available to it.

Information is a valuable asset that the Government of Canada must manage as a public trust on behalf of Canadians.

Effective information management makes government program and service delivery more efficient, supports transparency, collaboration across organizations, and informed decision-making in government operations, and preserves historically valuable information.

From the preface to the Policy on the Management of Government Information, 2003

Strategic approaches to our mandate with government information

To be successful in these roles, LAC must work in close partnership with the Treasury Board Secretariat and Public Works and Government Services which have complementary mandates for IM in the government of Canada and adopt a strategic approach to government information management, providing assistance throughout all stages of the information life cycle. This, in turn, advances Government of Canada objectives such as service to citizens, informed decision-making, accountability and cost-efficiency, and transparency.

LAC is expected to provide IM leadership and guidance to government on life cycle stages including planning; creation, collection, and capture; organization; access, use and dissemination; maintenance, protection and preservation; disposition; and evaluation. We must therefore both nurture and share our expertise in areas such as metadata, records management, content management, long-term access and preservation, and information access technologies.

Increased capacity to provide guidance in digital information management

Information management challenges are compounded by the transition to a digital environment. LAC will focus on providing strategic leadership and solutions in all aspects of the management of digital information through policy and research capacity, technical expertise, identifying and adopting best practices, and providing new IM tools.

Effective information management facilitates knowledge management, which pertains to the drawing of meaning from information and assuring that such understanding is shared with others. Library, archival and records management disciplines have traditionally considered themselves custodians of information and codified knowledge, but less so as facilitators or transfer agents of knowledge. LAC will work with federal librarians, records managers and others in the IM community to explore ways that information professionals might contribute to knowledge gain within government that in turn will further Canada's development as a knowledge society.

While the primary focus of our IM role is federal government information, the expertise, standards, systems and tools, processes, and partnerships that we put in place could also assist other levels of government to better manage their information assets. Further, building greater IM capacity will strengthen LAC's ability to manage its own huge information resources, and allow LAC to assist other libraries and archives across the country, as well as other professionals in this burgeoning field, to benefit from emerging best practices in knowledge and information management.

Section II:

What will guide LAC?

Directions that will guide us in realizing our vision

Access is our primary driver

As a “source of enduring knowledge accessible to all,” Library and Archives Canada collects and preserves Canada’s documentary heritage for the express purpose of current and future *use*. The outcome that we must look toward—and which we must find ways to measure—is how this use and understanding makes an impact on the lives of Canadians, on the effectiveness of government, and ultimately, on the continued successful development of Canadian society.

Information about users’ actual and anticipated use of our resources must be explicitly brought to bear on all activities undertaken by the institution. The implications are profound. LAC will acquire for access, preserve for long-term access, describe for access, digitize for access, drive policy toward access, innovate with technology for access, and ensure that the ways in which we provide access effectively meet users’ needs. Everybody at LAC is in the access business.

Timely and equitable access

All Canadians should be able to access information in a timely, affordable and equitable manner. But for persons with disabilities, some forms of our documentary heritage are not accessible. LAC must continue to play a key role in assuring the accessibility of information, through mechanisms such as the Council on Access to Information for Print-Disabled Canadians, by ensuring its Website, content and services meet accessibility standards, and by exploring new partnerships and new technologies that may assist in meeting this challenge.

We must recognize that value to most users is derived primarily from the collection of intellectual content that we hold. Users are interested in what is on or in items in our collection. Items’ physical characteristics as objects may tell a user *how* to access an item but rarely *whether* to access the item, whether it is pertinent to them. We must be media savvy but content focused; our descriptive practices must facilitate access to the content of our holdings.

We are encouraged by the new direction for the Library and Archives described in your paper. Access to your collection by a broad number of Canadians is a worthy goal. The convenience of Internet access is very important to researchers of all kinds. Not everyone can afford to travel to Ottawa to do research and the digitization of material gives much greater access to your holdings by the public.
The Writers’ Union of Canada submission to LAC Stakeholder Consultation

Self-service
access

Access to the collection can be provided in a number of ways. First, we provide direct access to content, onsite or online. Often, this access is to a digital or physical surrogate; only a small percentage of users require, as a necessity for their purpose, access to the original. Second, we provide indirect access through finding tools of various kinds. And third, we provide interpretive products that select and explain content in anticipation of its use or based on the likelihood of its appreciation by many users over time. These three access models, provided they are well done, all support client self-service. Promoting autonomous use of LAC resources by clients enables us to serve unprecedented numbers of Canadians at minimum per-transaction cost, and enables clients to do their research on their own terms.

Mediated
access

A fourth way we provide access is through services such as reference, in which our staff act as intermediaries between the user with an information need and the information that will meet that need. We need to make certain that our services are timely, available through multiple channels (online, telephone, onsite, fax, mail) and responsive to the needs of users. We will rethink our reference service model to ensure that clients are directed in a timely manner to the most appropriate LAC staff for their needs. The new model will entail optimal use of our front-line general reference staff, of reference specialists who focus on a certain subject area or media type, and of content experts who have intimate knowledge of specific collections (such as the collecting archivists).

The more effectively we can filter demand through self-service access models, fostering client self-sufficiency, the better we will be able to provide custom, individual service to those who still need access to our staff expertise. LAC must consider its access goals and make strategic choices in how we distribute our resources across these different forms of access.

Lastly, we must recognize that increasingly the user wants—indeed, expects—content to be available to them online when they seek it. Digital content, whether “born digital” or converted, is the 21st century reality. Our challenges will be to provide enough of it, to keep it accessible over time, and to find ways to ensure that digital content is not in silos of diverse Websites and databases that are not sufficiently cross-searchable and linked.

A clear focus on the client

Library and Archives Canada collects and preserves Canada's documentary heritage for Canadians to use. They may use it for pleasure, for learning, or in the course of their jobs. They may encounter it casually, perhaps happening upon it on the Web; or they may seek it out deliberately, and often. There is no one "client" and there is no one use. We need a nuanced understanding of our actual and potential users, the nature of their uses, and the benefit they are deriving as a result of their use.

The [Results for Canadians] framework and agenda recognize that the federal government exists to serve Canadians and that a "citizen focus" must therefore be built into all government activities programs and services.

From the Introduction to *Results for Canadians: A Management Framework for the Government of Canada*
www.tbssct.gc.ca/res_can/rc_e.asp

New user groups

In addition to continuing to serve traditional user groups such as researchers, other cultural organizations, and genealogists, LAC will place increased emphasis on serving learners of all ages, particularly youth and educators in an educational setting, and currently under-served communities such as Aboriginal and cultural communities. Particular emphasis needs to be placed on ascertaining and being responsive to the needs of these target communities, which may differ substantially among themselves and from traditional user groups.

Understanding user needs and behaviours

To be a more effective disseminator requires a finely-tuned understanding of actual and potential users of documentary heritage resources. What are the characteristics of our target client groups—how large, how diverse, how distributed, of what ages, backgrounds, professions, education levels? How do they seek information? What do they seek, and for what purposes? What brings them to us? What are their subject interests, and their access and product preferences? How much market potential have we not yet reached, and why are non-users among target groups not using us? Are our current services and products serving target users well, being both heavily used and highly valued?

LAC will put in place ongoing mechanisms for gaining knowledge about, and deriving feedback and guidance from, users. We will foster lasting, two-way relationships, engaging communities in meaningful discussions about their needs and expectations. We will consciously, continually, test our assumptions and assess our success against an evaluation framework focused on outcomes and impact. And we will institute a clear commitment to follow-through, to evolve our programs based on what we learn from users.

Citizens' assessments of service quality are determined primarily by five factors: timeliness, knowledge and competence of staff, going the extra mile, fair treatment, and outcome.
 From *Citizens First 2000*
www.iccsisac.org/eng/cf-00.htm

Ease of use

Also key to being client-centric is to *make it simple*. The complexities inherent in our work must be hidden from clients. It must be simple for users to find, use, and understand our resources. We will use our metadata and tailor our interfaces so that we provide many lenses through which the collection can be viewed. The philatelist needs a very different view on the collection than the family historian, and both differ again from the needs of the high school student researching an essay or of the academic writing for publication.

Users' diverse approaches must be known and acknowledged, so that all routes lead to successful interactions—as defined by the user. Our clients should be able to tailor their experience of LAC to meet their unique need. There must be no “wrong” way in, and we must aim to maximize the consistency of client experience across the different access channels.

LAC will provide timely and responsive services that meet client expectations. Online users increasingly expect to conduct a variety of end-to-end transactions with us in real time. A usable website, structured for the client, will ensure that our large and growing body of online users are satisfied with their experience.

Through a coherent, integrated and user-centred approach, LAC will provide Canadians and those interested in Canada an unprecedented access to the collective memory and documentary resources of this country.

Vision proposed by the
Digital Content and Access
Working Group

Effective stewardship through management of risk

In the past, both the National Archives and the National Library tended to be risk averse, to try to do everything, to manage all our holdings as equal, and to make decisions on an ad hoc basis. We had an inadequate understanding of the impacts of our decisions to take (or not to take) an action because we did not fully understand or assess risk.

Risk management as a basis for decisionmaking

A risk management framework developed and implemented corporately, will be integrated into every step in the information life cycle process. Risk assessment will inform if, how and when we acquire material, preserve our holdings, develop systems, and implement new services. It will help us understand at the outset what the impacts will be of our accommodation, collection management, financial, and human resource decisions. Managers will be trained to apply risk management concepts, techniques and tools.

Two activities are key to protecting cultural heritage. The first, known as identification and selection, involves determining what merits conservation. ... The other activity, known as conservation, involves maintaining, preserving and restoring the selected cultural heritage when needed. ... Poor management of these two activities may mean ... that ultimately reference to our history is lost.
 2003 Report of the Auditor General, Chapter 6.

Managing risk for responsible stewardship

While risk management applies to all areas of decision-making, it holds particular importance for LAC with regard to the collection. LAC has stewardship responsibility for the largest, most valuable set of information assets within the federal government, and one of the richest cultural collections in the country. We have always been conscientious in that role, but are having to come to terms with the reality that comprehensive preservation is an unattainable goal. So for the collection, we need to assess risks actively and continually so that we can prioritize our preservation activities. Knowing risks, we will also be able to put in place risk mitigation strategies and preventive conservation measures.

Ensuring that Canada's documentary heritage is accessible for as long as needed implies that the collection is adequately housed, a risk management framework has been implemented, ... and we have recruited and developed the best conservation experts in the field.
 Vision proposed by LAC

Increasing our understanding and use of tools such as the total cost of ownership methodology and an integrated risk management framework will allow us to document, project and contain the costs associated with the ever-growing collection of Canada's documentary heritage. By taking a holistic view of the relative value of, and risks to, the various parts of our collection, we will be able to identify immediate preservation and accommodation priorities, and to take measures for adequate housing and care of our entire collection to support its accessibility over the long-term.

LAC is committed to maintaining its collection in all locations based on a risk management framework that ensures optimum care and control in order to provide ready access.
 Vision proposed by the LAC Collection Maintenance Working Group

Preservation is part of access

We must view preservation activities as an integral part of our commitment to provide Canadians with continued access to our collection. Preservation and access are not polarities between which we must choose; preservation activities are essential for the collection's long-term availability, and as such, preservation is of concern to everyone at LAC.

New approaches to describing Canada's documentary heritage

Metadata—information that describes information resources—are key to our ability to manage, preserve and provide access to our digital and non-digital holdings, as well as to the documentary heritage resources residing elsewhere in Canada. To users, metadata can be key to resource discovery and a means to manage, focus and reduce search results, understand the meaning and context of the content, and know in what ways they are permitted to use it.

There are many forms of metadata including descriptive, preservation, administrative, rights management, and technical metadata, as well as unique identifiers. In the library world, descriptive metadata has traditionally been captured in the MARC format following the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2)*. Archives have adopted MARC or the Encoded Archival Description (EAD) format, and their descriptive practices are increasingly standardized according to the fonds, series and file level hierarchies prescribed in the *Rules for Archival Description (RAD)*.

The library, archival and government information management communities expect LAC to build strong expertise in metadata and to work cooperatively with others. However, at the present time, our metadata efforts are fragmented, the systems in which metadata reside are not interoperable, and our understanding of the key challenges is uneven.

The LAC vision for metadata is that application by knowledge creators of a set of common metadata standards, developed in partnership with many other members of our information community, and based on legal and policy requirements and the ways in which users will conduct research, will cut across the boundaries of form or location, and allow users with different research skills and interests to locate the information resources that they want.

Report of the LAC
Collection Development
and Management Working
Group

Metadata
standards
work

For LAC to play a lead role in creating an interoperable network of Canada's documentary heritage, and a central agency role with respect to information management in government, we must continue to contribute to the development of common metadata standards and to drive their application within Canada's information environment. LAC has recently made significant headway in assuming joint leadership with Treasury Board Secretariat in aligning government descriptive metadata efforts. We will need to pay equal attention to educational metadata, preservation metadata, and rights management metadata. We must work with others to develop approaches that will work for the whole of Canada's documentary heritage.

Assessing
current
descriptive
practices

LAC must take a new look at its practices and standards related to description. We need to be clear in our purpose and certain that our methods achieve that goal. What is the level of granularity and detail in description required to support access and contextual understanding? How can we increasingly adopt layered approaches, prioritizing the level of description provided for collections and for items according to use-driven priorities? How can we make better use of technology? How do we weigh the trade-offs between the quantity and timeliness of the descriptive records we make available and the quality of those records? We will continue to study our standards, systems and workflows to ensure optimal efficiency for this part of LAC's operations.

Alternatives to in-house metadata

Alternative approaches to metadata creation will also be sought. Powerful automated indexing tools exist not only for digital text but show increasing success with indexing images, audio and video. We must better understand whether, or when, full-text indexing usefully complements or replaces the use of structured metadata to provide access to resources for information seekers. Search engines such as Google have demonstrated that content-based retrieval can be extremely powerful and highly effective.

Metadata created elsewhere in the information environment, for example, by publishers, government departments, copyright collectives, or users such as genealogists can be adapted for our purposes. (Likewise, our metadata should be available for reuse by them.) We will look increasingly to adopt or adapt, through automated processes, metadata developed by others. Ideally, useful metadata will be created once, preferably at the time of content creation or publication, then enhanced, tailored, repackaged and reused in a variety of ways as its use over time requires.

Understanding the environment

The current national metadata repositories for documentary heritage holdings (AMICUS national union catalogue and Archives Canada), as well as LAC’s local catalogues, must evolve to have continued relevance and impact in the rapidly-changing information environment. As we look to integrate access to our holdings, we will also seek to modernize and improve both our “back-end” metadata work processes and “front-end” user interfaces.

To change, we must understand the potential of emerging metadata standards, of mapping schema to one another, and of metadata harvesting protocols. An R&D program will point the way in the use of innovative technologies that effectively connect information resources with client needs. We need to better understand the ways in which clients seek information, how and when they use metadata, and which elements they use. Clients should not have to adjust their search practices or vocabularies to suit our information systems and metadata. LAC needs to strengthen its expertise in the broader, fundamental theories of information (particularly digital information) use and organization, and understand how it fits with current and emerging metadata standards and practice. Partnerships or complementary activity are foreseen with scholarly communities, government departments, others in the archival and library network, and private sector companies who are also engaged in this field of research.

We need a fully resourced Research and Development program to lead the way in the use of technologies and intellectual techniques, in the understanding of client needs, and in connecting the two. Research is needed in the ways in which clients seek information, how they approach metadata, which elements they use.
 Report of the LAC Collection Development and Management Working Group Sub-group on Organizing and Describing

Digital is mainstream

Information
production is
digital

The information environment has been irrevocably transformed by digital information and the Internet. The rapid move to digital has changed publishing, government, research, learning, culture, our professions—everything that our mandate touches. Within a few years, the preferred, authoritative record of government will be digital, and there is already a policy in place requiring web-based versions of all print publications. The publishing industry is intrinsically digital now. Photography and audio-visual production are rapidly transforming to digital. Much tangible evidence of Canada's business and economic activity, political environment, government content, current affairs commentary, research output, and community information is found in the newest of publishing vehicles: websites.

The digital environment, characterized by decreasing storage costs and an insatiable user base, is increasingly one of content abundance. Vast quantities of both current and retrospective content are being put online by all types of information providers—publishers, record and film companies, broadcasters, software or search engine companies, as well as cultural memory institutions.

Information
consumption
is digital

Paramount in pointing to the need to change is the fact that an increasing majority of users seek, as their first and often only choice, web-based information. They do this at a convenient computer at their home, school, office or library. Their primary search tool is currently likely to be Google. If they don't find what they seek on the first screen or two resulting from their simple 1- or 2-word search, they may try another term, but more likely will assume it doesn't exist. Their searching is not methodical and their research paths are not linear; comfortable and confident, they will jump freely around and across resources. And they are usually satisfied with what they easily find.

84 percent of Internet users have used search engines. Some 92 percent of those who surf the Web are satisfied with their search skills, with 87 percent reporting that they garner successful results most of the time.

Pew Internet & American Life Project Report on Search Engine Users, 2005

These users will bypass print resources; they will bypass online catalogues; they will bypass inter-library loan and reference assistance; and they will bypass physical libraries and archives. But they may very well be seeking resources that we have. Our current online survey shows that this is particularly true for young people engaged in learning, one of our key strategic audiences. Genealogists, another key client group, are likewise voracious consumers of online content.

All our collections, all our functions, all our services, and all our clients are affected. Yet to date, LAC digital initiatives have typically been specially funded with no guarantee of sustainability. Our many databases remain opaque to search engines. It has been challenging to embrace digital when production of print publications and records has not abated.

Viewing digital as a priority and an opportunity

LAC must consciously, proactively seek to understand the impact of digital and adapt itself to the new reality. Digital acquisitions, digital preservation, digital collection management, digital content delivery, digital reference—all are part of that reality. While content is what users seek, online is where they increasingly seek it. Digital is core to our business, and will be pursued as an over-arching strategic priority.

LAC will view digital as an opportunity. Our content, once locked in vaults, has proved to be valued and used in cyberspace; we must continue to put it there. Through technology, we can make our collection accessible as never before. We can provide more timely and convenient services to the user through online transactions. We can reach Canadians where they are. And we can exploit emerging technologies to transform the way we work.

Digital must be viewed as mainstream business because digital content is the expectation of the 21st century user. But also, the digital world is where information-related research and development, innovation, and funding is now concentrated. To adapt to the digital environment, Canadian libraries and archives need guidance, well-conceived funding programs, and concerted effort. As part of its national role, LAC can make a vital difference in helping to frame and advance a collaborative national digital strategy for Canada.

Acquisition or creation of digital resources is counterproductive if efforts to ensure their long-term preservation are not pursued seriously. LAC could play a leading role.
Canadian Association for the Conservation of Cultural Property submission to the LAC Stakeholder Consultation

Strengthened leadership and strategic focus

During a consultation in 2003, a participant observed that the former National Library and National Archives had been too inwardly and operationally focused, and that as a consequence they had “left a smaller footprint than other institutions with ‘national’ in their name.”

The keys to achieving your vision lie in the complementary strategies of collaboration and focus.
Canadian Library Association submission to the LAC Stakeholder Consultation

Library and Archives Canada must exert effective influence within government and Canadian society if it is to contribute to the social, economic and cultural development of Canada and to our country’s participation in the global knowledge economy. It must influence nationally and play its role internationally. In broad policy areas such as learning, literacy, equitable access to information, intellectual property, culture policy, and heritage policy, LAC must be a credible and effective player at the table. In some areas, such as digital content and access, metadata standards development, preservation, and government information management, LAC should provide leadership.

Strengthened
policy
capacity

LAC has been largely absent as a policy voice, even in highly specialized areas within its mandate. LAC must become known as an institution that knows how to use its capacity strategically to effect positive change on a national scale. We must build strategic capacity that will define the areas in which we must influence, the directions toward which we will influence, and the means through which we will influence. High quality policy capacity will allow LAC to meet its and the government’s broader objectives pertaining to knowledge, culture and information management.

Environmental
awareness

Being aware of what is going on around us—with our users, our partners, the private sector, our international counterparts, or on the technology front—is vital to our capacity to be a policy player and be innovative within our own programs. It is important that staff go out to learn (and sometimes teach) within their broader professional environments, so that they stay informed, up-to-date and motivated to bring the best ideas back to LAC. We must also undertake a concerted effort to ensure continuous environmental scanning and information sharing in areas of particular importance to the organization.

R & D

As a national institution, a modest investment in research and development will help us to innovate, to provide the required leadership to government, and to guide our professional communities’ evolution in the changing information environment. Our R&D scope will be grounded in our core functions such as digital information management and preservation.

We aim to be a confident institution—one that is clear as to its vision and purpose; that knows its desired outcomes and how to measure them; that understands how to contribute to government policy goals such as social cohesion, quality of life and prosperity for Canadian society; that engages in purposeful partnerships; and that takes measured risks and openly shares its successes and failures as part of its learning.

Increased strategic capacity at LAC will pay off in a highly relevant and vital Canadian knowledge institution.

Integrated and holistic approaches

Integrated
functions

Silos and fragmented work processes cannot yield the kind of results we are expecting from our new knowledge institution. Fractured approaches will preclude our achievement of seamless access to our information for our clients and of effective stewardship of Canada's documentary heritage. To realize its vision, LAC will consciously adopt approaches that lead to appropriate integration across the functional areas of the new organization.

Holistic
approaches to
work
processes

Library and Archives Canada will adopt an integrated life cycle approach to the development and management of its collection. The life cycle approach is broadly defined to ensure that the collection, regardless of media or format, is managed efficiently and effectively throughout the stages of planning, collecting, organizing, disseminating, protecting and preserving, and evaluation.

*Library and Archives
Canada, in partnership with
Aboriginal communities and
related organizations,
sustains a holistic and
integrated approach in the
development, preservation,
promotion, and sharing of
Aboriginal heritage
and knowledge.*

Vision proposed by the
Aboriginal Heritage and
Knowledge Working Group

In our work processes, our holistic view will be evident in the way we:

- Conceive of our collection and our services from the client's perspective;
- Use a life-cycle approach for the management of the collection;
- Conceive of one collection of Canadian documentary heritage, held at LAC as well as distributed across the country;
- Plan for the total cost of ownership of our collection and new parts of that collection that we acquire;
- Adopt, where feasible, a "one fonds, one archivist" approach instead of fragmenting archival practice by media;
- Adopt common standards and work toward a common business and information architecture;
- Present LAC as one institution with many faces; and
- Organize ourselves to best serve Canadians and maximize our use and impact within Canadian society.

Section III:

What supporting strategies will enable us?

Internal strategies for the new institution

To successfully achieve its vision, Library and Archives Canada must ensure that its internal systems, services and processes are aligned. We need our internal management mechanisms to enable the realization of our new directions, and to set a work environment and structures that will help us succeed.

Internal support services include strategic policy and planning, human resources services (HR), communications and public relations, finance, information technology (IT), audit and evaluation, learning support programs, accommodation, and administrative services. These functions exist in most organizations. They are not unique to LAC or specific to our mandate, but tailoring them to our needs and using them strategically is key to delivering on our mandate effectively.

Being outcome-focused

LAC aims to be an institution that is clear about its vision and purpose, and that knows its desired outcomes and how to measure them. We will strengthen our strategic and performance measurement capacity.

Outcomes as
the basis for
corporate
decisionmaking

LAC will recognize that our performance and value must be assessed not on the bases of inputs, activities, and outputs, but on the results we achieve—the impacts for our clients and partners, the positive societal outcomes we achieve for Canadians. We must be able to demonstrate that every activity we do, every partnership we enter into, every program we develop or service we provide, is contributing in a measurable way to the achievement of a specific purpose linked to our mandate and beneficial to Canadian society.

To achieve this, philosophies must be collaborative: we must share “turf,” share ownership of issues, and share leadership in finding, resourcing, and implementing solutions. Management Board will be supported by a governance structure that will foster integrated and horizontal approaches to planning, policy and decision-making.

Sound
management
information

We will build and nurture our capacity to read the environment and define directions for the new institution. We will also put in place the tools and data-gathering mechanisms to ensure that decisions are informed by reliable management information of all kinds—financial, human resource, environmental and performance-based. Our priorities will be determined by their relevance to LAC’s mission and vision; we will make strategic investment based on a long term view, in order to generate value for Canadians.

Public and private sector organizations that measure and evaluate the results of their work find that this information transforms and empowers them. It allows them to reward success, to learn from experience and to build public confidence. Being able to measure and evaluate results is a prerequisite to delivering the quality programs, services and policies that Canadians deserve.
From *Results for Canadians*
www.tbssct.gc.ca/res_can/rc_1_e.asp

Effective
management
practices

Frameworks to facilitate sound management practices, including risk management, accountability and integrated performance measurement, will be implemented across the organization. LAC will ensure that all areas of the organization are aware of modern management practices, and that they have the tools, training, and capacity to act on their responsibility. Management Board, as the key decision-making body of LAC, will focus on strategic corporate outcomes.

We will change our culture from one that sees itself as chronically resource deficient to one that sees itself as able to invest the resources it has where it will achieve the greatest impact. Like all public organizations, we must set priorities and make sound, strategic choices that are in the public interest.

Embedding flexibility

The environment in which we operate will change in the coming years in ways that we cannot fully anticipate. Our clients' needs will evolve as technology opens up new possibilities. New partnerships will be possible. We therefore need to be a nimble organization so that we have the capacity to deliver on our mandate in the most effective way at any point in time.

By embedding HR planning into strategic business planning... in combination with the development of core competencies, LAC could establish more strategic recruitment, career, and learning and development strategies and plans. This is an important step in developing an organization that is flexible and able to adapt to the changes in direction that it envisions.

From the Human Resources Working Group Report

Flexibility must be built into all our systems—whether organizational or technological—to better respond to changing priorities and to deploy and re-deploy our human, financial and technological resources to optimal effect.

HR flexibility

As a professional organization, our most important resource is our employees' expertise and creativity. Salaries are by far the greatest portion of our budgets. We must build flexibility into our organizational design and into our approach to human resource management. We will implement human resource policies and practices that allow an easy and timely reallocation of staff to new priorities. We will analyze our human resource needs and formulate competency profiles and recruitment strategies. We will look to build breadth and flexibility into positions through generic work descriptions, and place increased emphasis on transferable skills and competencies.

Effective organizations use a variety of work models to bring diverse expertise and perspectives together. The organization of some of our work will be modular, matrix, or project-based. Innovation requires collaboration, so we will foster team-based approaches, and develop a corporate-wide management philosophy and a set of HR policies and practices that support staff mobility.

The process of generating, assessing and implementing a transformative innovation is simply beyond the capacity of any single person.

Quoted in Report of Committee on Innovation Teams, from *Knowledge Matters: Canada's Innovation Strategy, February 2002* www.innovationstrategy.gc.ca

Financial flexibility

Likewise, our approach to financial management, guided by a more responsive set of financial services, will furnish the latitude to manage our financial resources on a corporate basis, and shift funds toward corporate priorities on an ongoing basis. Reliable management information will be available to support corporate financial decision-making.

Lastly, the dynamic organization we envisage will also require flexibility in our accommodations, so that staff can come together readily to work on new initiatives.

Fostering an open and learning culture

LAC intends to be an innovative knowledge organization and a prime learning destination for Canadians. To accomplish that requires our own strong commitment to openness and learning.

Permeability

We must be a permeable organization: we will need a constant flow of information, people, and ideas in to, and out from, LAC. Our human resource strategies, processes and practices must be adapted to foster such permeability. For example, we will develop mechanisms that encourage students, researchers and professionals to undertake work-terms, professional visits and fellowships at LAC. Likewise, we will develop mechanisms that encourage LAC staff to broaden their professional experience, skills and perspectives by seeking temporary assignments in other institutions. In both cases, gains accrue to our staff and to our institution.

The competent, energized and dedicated employees of LAC would move out into the broader work force and contribute to the government of Canada, our country and the world. This in turn creates opportunities for new recruits to experience the growth and reward of joining LAC.
From the Human Resources Working Group Report

Sources of learning

The sources of our learning will be multiple: our clients, our partners and networks, the information professions and environment worldwide, other areas of government, the high technology sector, and our peer institutions internationally. We will learn from the performance information that we gather, using it to continually improve our service delivery.

Knowledge management

We will also learn from each other. We will strengthen our internal communications to build a culture of open, respectful information sharing. More formal channels include the Intranet and email; less formal channels will emerge with an increased emphasis on working in multidisciplinary teams. Since, like most institutions, LAC expects a high staff turnover (due in large part to retirements) in the next few years, it is critical that we develop a range of mechanisms to ensure the effective management and transfer of staff knowledge.

As a knowledge institution, we are recognized for our learning culture. Continuous learning is a day-to-day reality, and strengthens our ability to serve Canadians and to realize our organizational mandate.
Part of the vision proposed by the LAC Learning and Development Working Group

Our future is multidisciplinary. The complex tasks of building a diverse collection and making it widely accessible in this digital age require more professions, more interactions among the professions, and more people with hybrid or multiple forms of expertise (e.g. individuals who combine subject, professional and technical expertise). We must harness a variety of skills, both internal and imported, and organize ourselves to work horizontally. Organizational silos operating from a single professional perspective will compromise our ability to deliver our mandate. We must ensure that professional training is an asset for LAC and does not impede the necessary evolution of practices.

LAC will continue to invest strategically in our organizational learning, by fostering coaching and mentoring and by encouraging staff to build their skills and knowledge and to share what they learn to benefit the whole organization.

Building new strengths in our workforce

To realize our vision of the new institution, we will need to build some new capacity into our workforce.

New
capacities

We will need strategic capacity to articulate our policy direction and provide more effective leadership in our national role. We will need enhanced management capacity. We will also need to build capacity in communication, partnering, teamwork, organizational awareness, and innovation. We will need to ensure that LAC has the required expertise for sound implementation of outcome-based performance and risk management.

With our new mandate increasing our emphasis on making Canada's documentary heritage known, we will need to strengthen our pedagogical and interpretive capacity. We will also need broad technological understanding and technical skills across the institution to ensure that we fully comprehend and embrace the possibilities of the digital information environment.

It is the employees of our new institution that will fulfill [our new] mandate. ... The workplace nurtures and rewards the flexible, creative and diverse talents that we bring as individuals and dynamic teams. People working at Library and Archives are representative of Canadian society and constantly work to ensure the relevance and quality of our collection and our services to the public.

From the Human Resources Working Group Report

Increased
diversity

As we move to strengthen our relationship and relevance to ethno-cultural and Aboriginal communities, we must build greater cultural and linguistic diversity into our workforce. Without the requisite diversity in staff, we will fail in our mission to document the Canadian experience and become a prime learning destination for all Canadians. We will also continue to build official languages capacity, both for our service to the public and to assure a high level of bilingualism in the workplace.

Mechanisms

First, LAC will take a critical look at the skills and competencies we need to fulfill our mandate and strategic directions. There are then several ways to address our gaps, but recruitment and staff development are two key mechanisms. LAC will examine its competency profiles for the type of work we do, and ensure its recruitment and promotion practices focus on competencies that LAC will most need for the future. It will increase its commitment to staff learning and development, sharpening the focus of this investment to ensure this training is honed to our new organizational needs. In our commitment to building a diverse management and staff, we will implement an Employment Equity and Diversity Action Plan, recruit the best talent from across Canadian society, ensure that all staffing actions are fair and merit-based, and ensure that we are perceived as an employer of choice by graduates from various professional fields.

Being technology-enabled

Technology is essential to achieve our vision. Effective use of technology will enable us to acquire, manage, preserve, and access digital and non-digital content into the future, while creative use of technology will permit delivery of innovative services to Canadians anywhere, anytime.

To meet its ambitious access goals, LAC must ensure that its strategic systems for access are robust: that its system architecture is both flexible enough to seize new technological opportunities and with the capacity to hold a high volume and wide variety of [content and descriptions].

From the Service Delivery Models Sub-Working Group Report

Our technology needs are more complex than those of many organizations because our business is collecting, organizing and disseminating information. Our investment in technology will continue to be significant. The rapidly changing information environment is creating new needs, new uses for our information, an unprecedented volume of information, a need for new work processes, and complex security, authentication and digital rights management requirements.

Agile systems We will need agile and scalable systems to keep pace. We must seek to increase flexibility, foster reuse of both systems components and data, and reduce development costs.

Integrated architecture Our systems and information architecture must enable us to present library and archival resources as an integrated whole, and allow us to integrate work functions to acquire, manage, describe, preserve, and interpret the collection. We must also integrate with systems of the government of Canada, and within national networks. To achieve the integration we need, our systems must be interoperable. For this, we will look to common standards, interoperability protocols, and platform independence.

Managing digital content We will invest significantly in virtual programs and services. Our information technology must be Web-enabled, focused on facilitating the delivery and management of digital content and services. We must also have all the technologies necessary to support a large-scale digitization program, as that is essential to both our preservation and content delivery goals.

Supporting daily operations Like most organizations, technology also serves our day-to-day operations. Our employees depend on reliable access to email, Intranet, Internet and desktop systems as the foundation for operations. For our corporate support systems, we will look to corporate standards and to leverage government-wide common services to the extent possible.

We want our information technology to be agile, scalable interoperable and web-oriented so that it enables achievement of our goals. Our first step will be to define an integrated information and technology architecture that will inform IT decisions and shape IT development for the next few years.

Providing a healthy and supportive work environment

The key resource and strength of LAC will always be its people—their expertise, professionalism, motivation, creativity and dedication to serving Canadians. With 71% of our total budget in salaries, our performance in delivering on our mandate depends mostly on the capacity of our workforce and the quality of work environment that we provide to support it.

Inclusiveness,
respect and
trust

As a medium-sized agency, with an expert workforce and a strong mission to acquire and make known our country's rich documentary heritage, LAC has the potential to be a highly attractive workplace, able to attract and retain the best talent. It will do so by being a healthy workplace, with a pervasive culture of inclusiveness, respect and trust.

Our goal is to provide a workplace in which diversity and differences are valued, and discrimination, including all forms of harassment, is never tolerated. We must provide an environment where employees can work in the official language of their choice. LAC employees must know that their workplace concerns are heard, that disputes will be fairly resolved, and that they share in the governance of policies that affect them. Our challenge will be to provide an environment where employees feel they are fairly remunerated, and are supported in continuous learning, career advancement, and balancing work and personal life. We want each employee to feel that he or she contributes to the overall success of the organization.

Measures to
achieve this

LAC has begun to take measures to live up to these goals. We have a very active Employment Equity and Diversity Working Group reporting directly to the Head of the institution and working closely with Human Resources to reach our goals. An Employment Equity and Diversity Action Plan is being implemented that should result in a significant increase in diversity and enhanced management practices. An Office of Internal Disclosure has been created to help employees report workplace wrongdoing in a safe and constructive manner, and to ensure that responsible investigations of allegations take place. An effective conflict resolution mechanism is in place. LAC has committed to an official languages policy that includes a language training and development component to meet the needs of the institution and its employees. And we are seeking ways to foster open dialogue on values and ethics in the workplace.

While contributing to a healthy workplace is everyone's responsibility, we also recognize that our managers must have the required competencies to foster such an environment. We need to emphasize "people skills" such as communication, interpersonal relations, and coaching skills. We want the legacy of our transformation to be an irreversible norm of open dialogue within the organization.

People values include courage, decency, responsibility and humanity. In a well-performing workplace they show themselves in respect, civility, fairness and caring. Values-driven organizations support learning and are led through participation, openness, communication and a respect for diversity.
Extract from *Results for Canadians*
www.tbsct.gc.ca/res_can/rc_1_e.asp

We must ensure that the workplace we provide is fully accessible to all its employees. Physical accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities will be built in to all current and future LAC physical infrastructure plans. To assure people-friendly workspaces that are optimally designed for the tasks LAC staff do, we will involve staff in the process of workplace design.

LAC's senior management is committed to go beyond the promise, the words, of "a healthy workplace" to the reality of clear improvement. The new institution needs—and is strongly committed to achieve—a motivated and fulfilled workforce.

Conclusion

Our ability to deliver on our vision rests, as it always has, on our staff and on the collection. Covering Canada's textual, visual, audio-visual and electronic heritage, the combined collection is vast, rich and diverse. The richness and relevancy of its content are the core strength upon which our ability to deliver value to Canadians rests, and we will continue to build its strength. Yet it is the expertise and creativity of our staff that allows us to build that collection, to manage it well, and to deliver it back to Canadians through services and programs.

LAC is a new institution, and it will need to grow into its future. To define its best contribution to the social, economic and cultural development of Canada as a free and democratic society, is a long-term endeavour and one that will involve continual reflection and constant change.

Our initial reflections have pointed us in certain directions. We know better now what we want, and need, to become.

We want to be a new kind of knowledge institution, finding opportunities through the synergies of being a single institution to be better than we were separately in the past. We want to have a national presence and impact, to contribute meaningfully to the quality of life of Canadians of all ages, from all cultures and regions. We want to work with other institutions to build a strong, cohesive national documentary heritage collection, framing ourselves as only one part of the whole. We want to lead, within government and within our professional communities, in our area of expertise in information and knowledge management. We want to be an important learning destination so that Canadians may better understand Canada's heritage, knowledge, and culture. Through these means, we believe that we will contribute significantly to the success of Canadian society.

We will place Canadians at the centre and view their access, use and understanding of our resources as our primary driver. We will embrace the opportunities that digital information and technologies afford us. We will understand that we are stewards of our collection on behalf of Canadians who are the real owners, and that managing our resources involves managing risks. We will question our professional traditions related to description, and think strategically about how metadata will help us achieve our goals of serving Canadians effectively. We will look to do more steering than in the past by understanding our roles as a national institution and increasing our leadership and strategic focus. And we will view our organization, its roles, and its processes holistically—as the intricately integrated system that LAC is, rather than as separately mandated areas of discrete activities competing for resources.

We have also identified the strategic internal approaches to help us reach this vision. These are directions that will guide the changes we make in how we go about our business; they are our *internal ways and means*. There are some key concepts that recur in these strategies—terms like diversity, flexibility, mobility, accountability, multidisciplinary teamwork, permeability, and learning. These are the underpinnings of the kind of organization we want to be.