

Designing a **Media Commons** in an Era of Increasingly-Rapid Change

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Library Media Services Today



Media Commons Task Force

Charge:

Develop the framework to create a “Media Commons” environment that incorporates Library Media Services into other services offered by the Libraries.

The Challenge



1973

Nonprint Media Services, one of the first video-centric media centers in any research institution, opens



28 years



2001

University of Maryland creates one of North America's first academic Video On Demand services



?



12 years



2013

Name changed to Library Media Services + creation of Media Commons Task Force

Eight Essential Elements

- Innovation
- Flexible
- Audio, visual, digital
- Networking, outreach, partnerships: intra- and inter-campus
- Creation and use
- Integrating media into teaching and learning
- Support services
- Physical and virtual spaces

Report Highlights

Services That Will Be Offered:

- Services tailored to faculty and student needs
- Connecting library users, both physically and intellectually, with other units and people across campus is essential to the service model

Staffing Needs:

- All media commons staff will be trained to threshold levels in access services for physical and virtual media collections, core (those services provided by all commons) information commons assistance, and advanced media production and support, but the media commons will also recruit and/or train staff for knowledge, skills, and abilities in areas of specialization

Report Highlights

Space Plan:

- Hire a professional designer to ensure that we create a media commons which is both visually and stylistically inspiring (creativity does not happen in a vacuum) and fully functional
- Fluidity and flexibility in all aspects of the design is paramount: the media commons should be adaptable to whatever need occurs to the user of the space
- Envision an open “floor” space geared toward collaboration surrounded by specialized rooms along the periphery of the media commons, including:
 - Multimedia production labs
 - Classrooms and viewing/sharing rooms
 - “One-Button Studios”
 - Gaming labs
 - Prototyping/”sandbox” labs
 - “Pop-up” spaces
 - Exhibition spaces

Report Highlights

Partnerships:

- Partnerships should be built around skills and programming instead of being limited to shared equipment
- Envision a media commons which is part of a larger network of Libraries commons, each providing the same core set of services and equipment, but also having its own unique identity with specialized spaces, technology and experts

Communications and Marketing:

- Communications and marketing will focus on interpreting the purpose and function of the media commons environment and its value to the teaching and learning goals of faculty, staff, and students
- A media commons with its own, unique brand and an umbrella brand for all commons spaces within the Libraries

Implementation Strategy

Phase One

- Create a Prototype Multimedia Production Lab and use it to experiment with assessment and marketing strategies for the media commons to come and as a focal point for fundraising efforts and to generate excitement
- Conduct a comprehensive survey of multimedia production equipment, spaces, services, and expertise available at the University of Maryland and create public directories of such resources
- Develop campus-wide multimedia competencies for faculty and students and build a library instruction program around them

Implementation Strategy

Phase Two:

- Hire and begin working with a designer
- Plan and prepare for renovation: ensure that multimedia production equipment and services remain accessible throughout the entire project
- Hire new media commons staff and re-train existing staff as necessary to ensure desired level of service, create a web presence for the media commons, and develop a brand for the media commons specifically and an umbrella brand for all of the Libraries commons

Implementation Strategy

Phases Three + Four:

- Launch a multi-stage renovation project beginning with the floor of the media commons and moving outward to the spaces on the periphery, placing an emphasis on usability studies and beta testing
- Proactively market media commons to the University of Maryland community to ensure a healthy level of use when the space is launched
- Engage in continual assessment of spaces, equipment, and services in the media commons and add, subtract, and redesign as necessary to meet the actual and anticipated needs of users

Contact

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