



“Surviving a Budget Tsunami”



Beverly Murphy, Assistant Director, Marketing and Publications; Richard A. Peterson, Deputy Director; Sarah Wardell, Assistant Director, Information Technology Services; and Patricia L. Thibodeau, Associate Dean for Library Services, Duke University Medical Center Library, Durham NC

While most libraries have developed disaster plans to handle crises caused by flooding, earthquakes or other natural phenomena, very few are prepared to handle a major budget tsunami on the magnitude of a 25% to 30% decrease in funds.

Budget Tsunami Survival

Step 1. Identified our current financial reality by analyzing allocations to personnel, collections, and operational expenses and trends in revenues and inflation.

Step 2. Decided exactly where the cuts would be taken over two to three years.

Step 3. Prepared library patrons for the big wave of change that was headed their way.

**tsu·na·mi (tsoo nä' mē),
n. large ocean waves
caused by an earthquake
or similar underwater
disturbance. These travel
at great speed and often
with sufficient force to
inundate the land.**

Seismic Event

1.1 Million Dollar Budget Cut
25% Decrease Over Three Year Period



~~~ Declining hospital revenue and clinical dollars ~~~  
~~~ Downturn in the economy ~~~  
~~~ Increasing healthcare costs ~~~  
~~~ Escalating journal prices ~~~

Staying Afloat

Staving Off the Impact While We Planned

~~~ Postponed journal cuts ~~~  
~~~ Reduced book fund by 50% ~~~  
~~~ Eliminated vacant staff positions ~~~  
~~~ Reallocated and centralized staff ~~~  
~~~ Collected data on library use ~~~  
~~~ Conducted Website survey on patron priorities ~~~  
~~~ Argued our case ~~~

~~~ Analyzed allocations ~~~

~~~ Determined budget cuts ~~~

## Crashing on Shore

Alerting the Patron Community

~~~ Fewer journals and electronic titles ~~~  
~~~ 60-70% fewer books ~~~  
~~~ Increased demand for interlibrary loans ~~~  
~~~ Slower service turnaround due to reduced staff ~~~  
~~~ Fewer hours ~~~  
~~~ Increased user fees ~~~  
~~~ Longer waits to access information ~~~

~~~ 34% actual decrease in operating expenses ~~~  
~~~ 41% loss in journal purchasing power ~~~

Turning the Tide

~~~ Establishing new partnerships  
~~~ Marketing and presentations  
~~~ Redesigning roles and services



Focusing on development work ~~~  
Leveraging staff expertise ~~~  
Sharing responsibilities across staff ~~~