

**STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT OF THE INTEGRATED  
LIBRARY SYSTEM FOR LATE ADOPTERS:  
THE CASE OF AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY**

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**Formal topic**

**STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT OF THE INTEGRATED LIBRARY SYSTEM AT  
MAKERERE UNIVERSITY AS A CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR IN  
ACHIEVING THE UNIVERSITY STRATEGY**





Source: <http://kfm.co.ug/news/makerere-university-library-gets-shs-190-face-lift.html>



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## Presentation outline

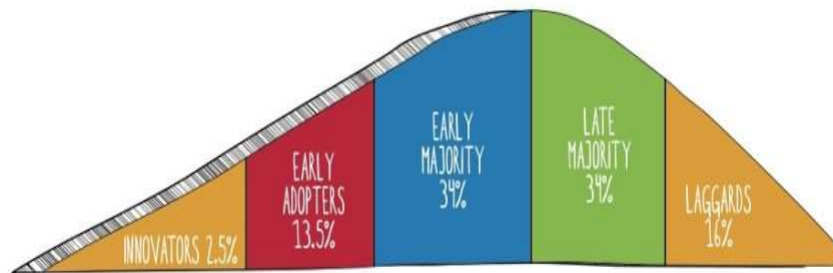
- Categories of innovation adopters
- Setting the scene
- Problem statement
- Methods
- Findings
- Conclusion
- Impact



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## Categories of technology adopters

### DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION MODEL



## Setting the scene: Part 1

- Rapid diffusion and use of technologies in Africa are challenging, given the state of its infrastructural facilities (Inyanda, 2016).
- The adoption of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has become a general trend in academic libraries (Ameen, 2011), but now more of a need.



## Setting the scene: Part 2

- Makerere University is one of the oldest and leading in Sub-Saharan Africa (approx. 38,000 students)
- In 2008 Makerere University published its 10-Year Strategic Plan, intended to span 2008/09 to 2018/19 (Makerere University, 2008).
- As of March 2019 (Developing another), the University will be launching successor strategic plan.
- In both plans two of the five core thematic areas in the plan include the need to boost the library infrastructure and to create an ICT-enabled environment.



## Problem statement

- An effective and elegant library can be said to be one of the core marks of quality in a university or academic unit.
- Today, technology has rapidly become one of the cornerstones of library services.
- It can be asserted that that if a library does not actively embrace and implement information technologies in the conduct of its routines and the execution of future strategy, its future is, beyond doubt, in jeopardy



## Problem statement-2

- However, as Joint (2009) observes, simply accumulating new technologies and related services as the opportunities arise may, in the end, be impractical and problematic
- Since the adoption of ILS at Makerere, there has been a notable lack of coherence between the library information systems with the rest of the university information systems and business needs.
- It is on this basis that the study was conducted to examine how the Integrated Library System is aligned to attain a strategic fit within the corporate environment of Makerere University and to achieve the corporate strategy.



## Objectives of the study

- **Main Objective:** To assess the strategic alignment of the Integrated Library Systems (ILS) in Makerere University Library to achieve strategic fit within the corporate environment of the University and achieve the institutional strategy.
- **Specific Objectives**
  1. To gain an understanding of the need for strategic alignment of integrated information systems within institutions.



## Objectives- 2

2. To identify and analyse the basic facets that comprise most integrated library systems in order to gain a better understanding of potential weak points within the Makerere University environment.
3. To identify and analyse the different facets in the integrated library system at Makerere University that need to be realigned to attain a strategic fit.
4. To propose changes that ought to be considered for future acquisitions and upgrades of integrated library systems at Makerere University.

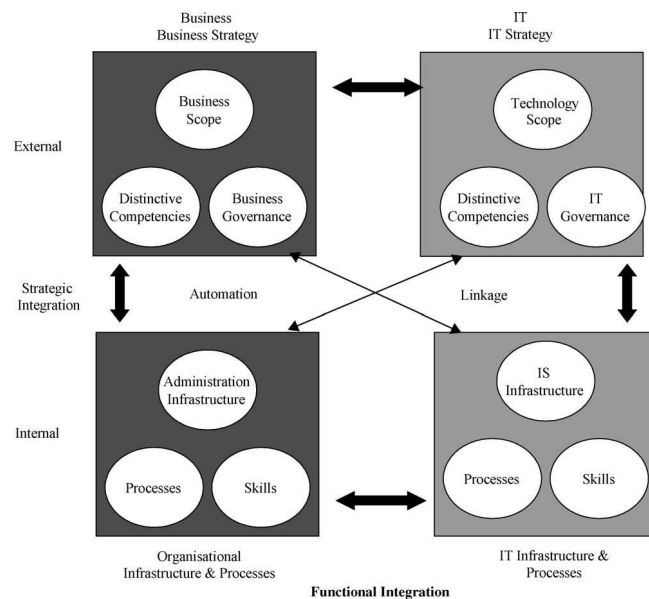


## Research Questions

- What can the Makerere University Library do to attain a strategic fit of its Integrated library system to the corporate strategy of the institution?



## The Strategic Alignment Model (SAM)



(Adapted from Henderson and Venkantraman (1991) in Smaczny (2001))



## Methods: Research philosophy

- The was conducted using a qualitative research paradigm.
- In adopting the qualitative research paradigm, case study design.



## Methods-2: Population

- Population
  - University Librarian
  - Systems Librarian
  - Director of ICT
- Purposive sampling



## Methods-3: Data collection

- Primary data was collected using the interview method and the observation method.
- Secondary data from documentation (Strategic plans and ICT plans)





## Findings: 1

- Virtua integrated library system from Vital Technology Library Solutions (VTLS), USA (Ownership has changed though).
- This is proprietary software unlike many Universities in Uganda that have adopted Koha ILS.
- Initial adoption was in 2004 (a late adopter but a pioneer among academic institutions)



## Findings-2

The three-tier nature of Virtua ILS incorporates a

- **client platform-** supports the user interfaces for both the library staff and the library users
- a **server platform** and supports the networking functions of the system
- a **database platform-** supports the data storage capabilities of the system



## Findings-3 Rationale for Virtua

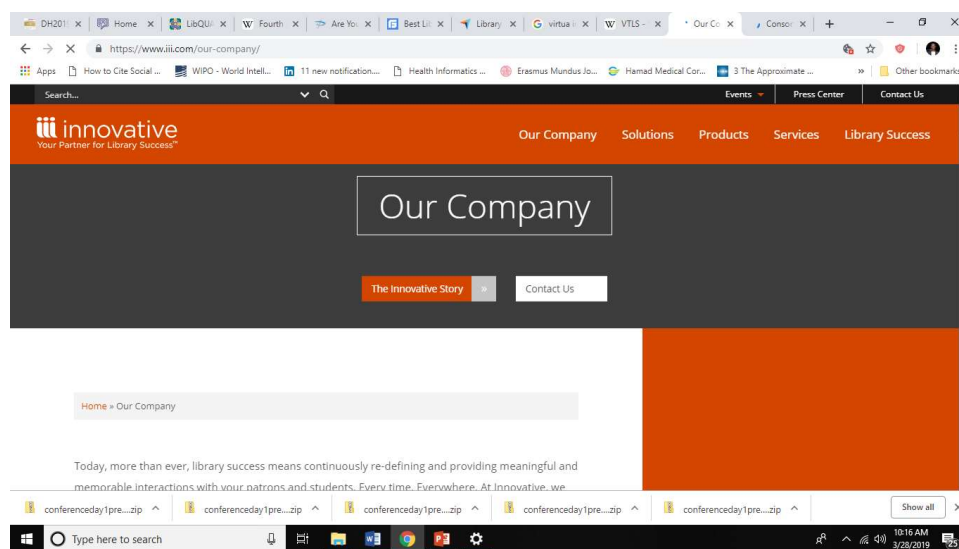
- Language of design (English)
- Promise of technical support
- Compatibility with existing OS
- Cost acceptable by donors (Donor's Choice- SIDA)
- Built based on LIS standards e.g. MARC



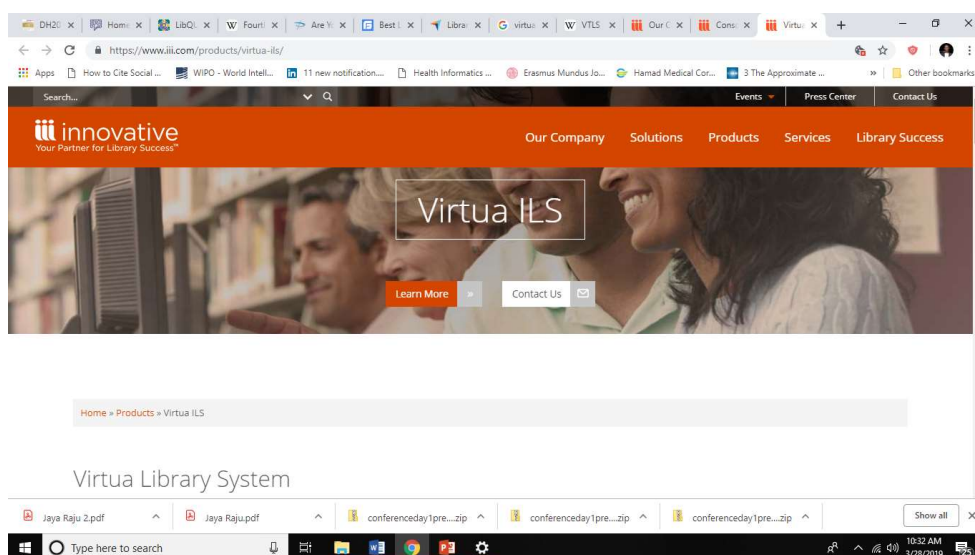
## Findings-4 Challenges

- VTLS has produced different versions of the system. Makerere University had not been able to upgrade to every latest available version over the years.
- Cost is high to sustain
- Data exchange with other systems (HURIS, FINIS and ARIS built by ITS, and Moodle). So the system seems a stand alone
- Virtua is a company whose strategy is always changing (In 2014 acquired by Innovative Interfaces)



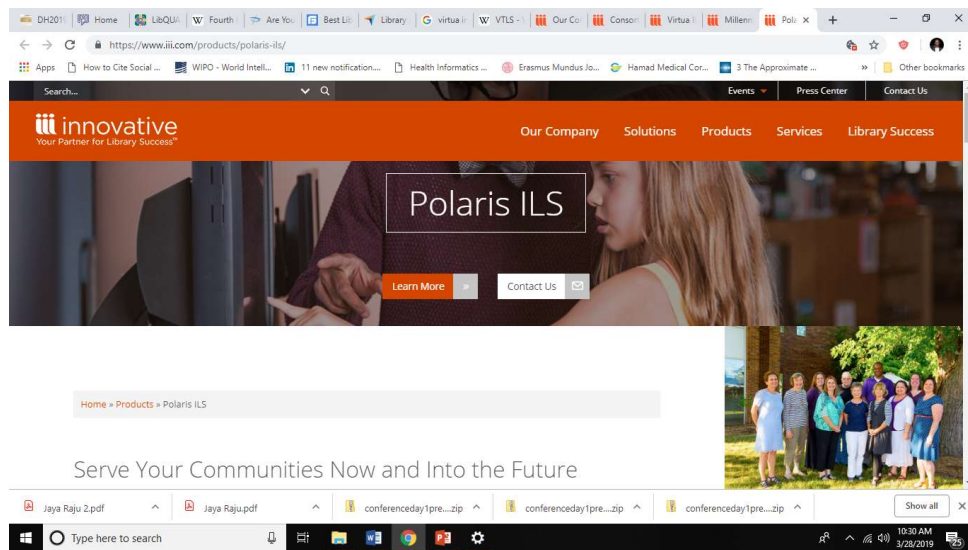


<https://www.iii.com/our-company/>

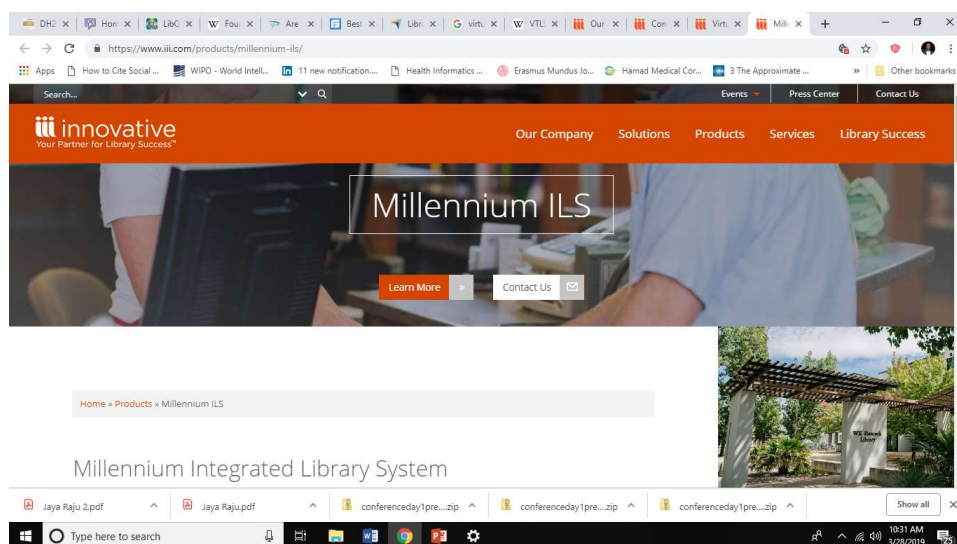


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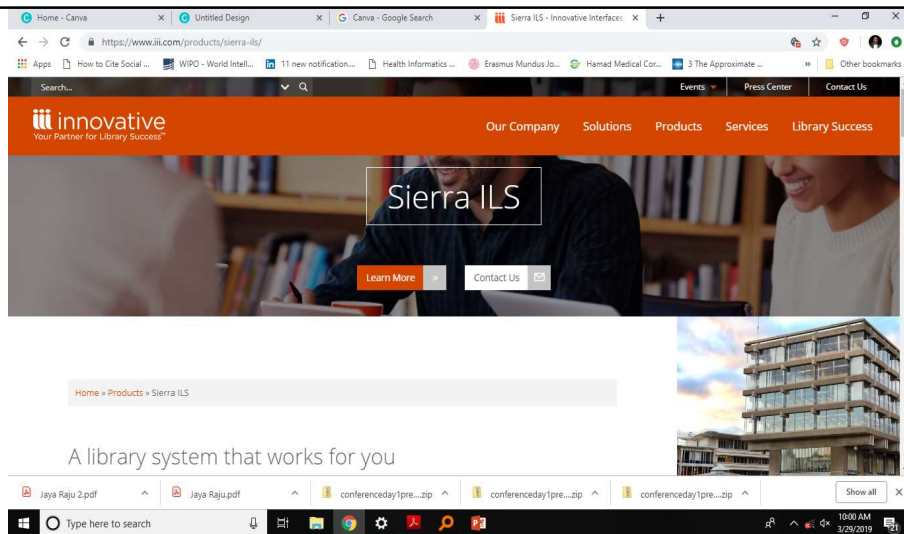


<https://www.iii.com/products/polaris-ils/>



<https://www.iii.com/products/millennium-ils/>





<https://www.iii.com/products/sierra-ils/>



## Findings-5 Challenges

- System seemed to exclude some branch libraries.
  - More centralized in put of information
- Unclear Library strategy (Not explicit)
- Donor driven initiatives
- University politics (Affect budgets)



## The tragedy of 2019

- Owing to the cost, there is a loud consensus that Virtua be replaced with an Open Source Option (Koha)



## Conclusion 1

- Halverson (2010) observes that there is a shift in what counts as literacy artifacts.
- Universities must reinvent themselves and embrace technology to boost their delivery of training experiences.
- Main causes of IT (ILS) misalignment are mostly related to institutional frameworks such as funding, attitudes, planning and staff deficiencies and not necessarily relating to the technology itself.



## Conclusion 2

- The Makerere University Library can only be described informally as a 'new kid on the block' when it comes to the establishment of information systems.
- Adopting information systems in a library may as such be viewed as a preserve for the affluent universities of the world.
- Despite this, evidence exists that there is active investment in the University Library as it marches towards the attainment of its strategy.
- Perhaps ILS in the Makerere University Library and the University as a whole can only be described as a work in progress.



## Conclusion 3

- What can the Makerere University Library do to attain a strategic fit of its Integrated library system to the corporate strategy of the institution?

University strategy---→

<----- Library strategy

IT strategy -----→

←--- Library ILS (IT) choices





## Impact

- Advisory to
  - YMCA in their deployment of ILS
  - Uganda Law Society Resource Centre
  - Curriculum development for the MSc LIS programme at UCU

Ongoing advisory to

- Compliance Africa and Finance Trust Bank (Deployment of an Integrated solution for operational records of the Bank)
- St. Andrew Kaggwa Gombe High School (Library development, Network advisory)
- Curriculum review at Makerere University



## Selected References

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- Iyanda, O. A. (2016). Innovation Diffusion of Smartphone in Nigeria. *Walden University*.





**Thank you**

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