



Innovation in (national) Libraries

Introduction

Hildelies Balk, 17 september 2013

In this presentation

- Background of the research
- What is innovation
- The Public Value Perspective
- New Concepts of innovation
- Enablers and Obstacles: some examples

Background of the Research

- National libraries faced with multiple challenges in dynamic environment
- → Innovate in response

- Not always successful: what works, what does not?
- → Research into factors that determine the capacity for innovation in a national library

Innovation: what it is not

Invention: new ideas and technical advances only become innovation when they are put into practice (new products, new ways of working) and change the organization, the market and/or society

Continuous improvement: the gradual 'fine-tuning' of products and processes may in the long run lead to the renewal of products and different ways of working, but innovation has a more disruptive aspect, a clear discontinuity with past practices within a short time

What is innovation

Classic definition: *'a process of creative destruction in which new combinations of existing resources are achieved'* (Schumpeter, 1947)

Translated to the organization: *the creation or adoption of an idea or behaviour new to the organization'* (Lam, 2006)

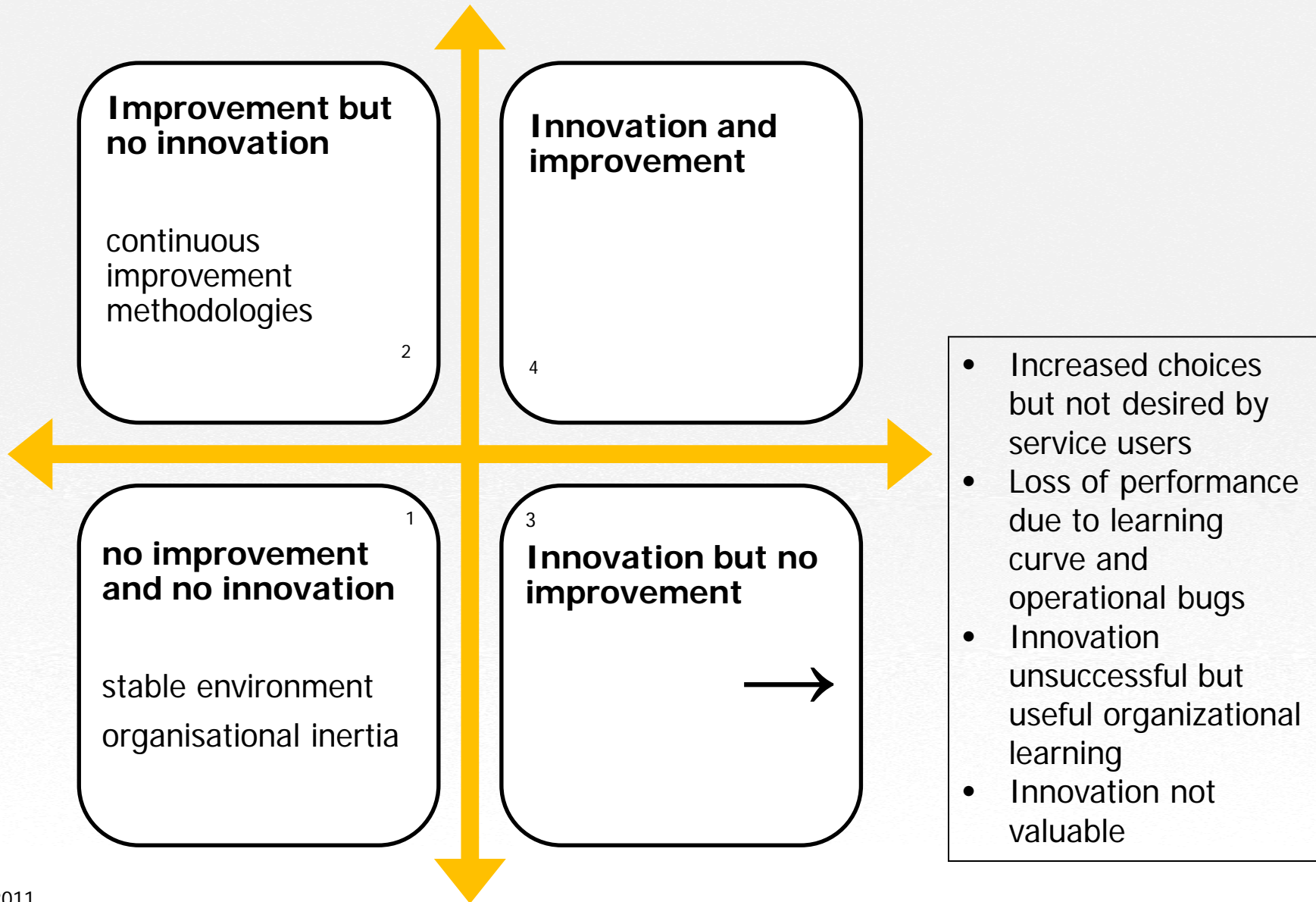
Why innovate?

Innovation in private sector → ensure competitive advantage

Innovation in public sector (national libraries) → ensure continued delivery of public value

The Public Value perspective

- Library does not work for profit but delivers *public value*
- Public Value (Moore 1995):
 - *What the public values*
 - *What adds value to the public sphere*
- Delivery of public value is dependent on legitimacy: users, stakeholders, public at large (*authorizing environment*)
- Changes in environment (national) library → need for innovation
- Innovation in a library should always add to public value!



Innovation concepts

- **'Classical'** innovation: focused on new product/service/market approach within single organization. New concepts :
- **Open Innovation** paradigm (Chesbrough 2003):
 - 'not all the smart people work for us' → emphasis on use of external knowledge to innovate
 - develop innovation in networks, spin out what you do not use
- **Innovation with users** and user communities (Von Hippel 2005: Democratizing Innovation) → e.g. open source communities, digital scholarship
- Public Value theory: corresponding concepts:
 - **co-production** with research and industry;
 - **partnerships**/networks/alliances
 - **co-creation** with users

Enablers and Obstacles: examples

- + Hybrid organisation e.g. 'skunkworks'
- + Cuts in fixed budget
- + 'Slack' resources
- + Tolerance to failure
- + 'Stretch'
- + Percentage of employees with graduate education

- 'Not invented here'
- High performance in the past

Questions, comments and feedback
welcome:

hildelies.balk@kb.nl

<http://libraryinnofactors.wordpress.com/>