» "I think the health of our civilization, the depth of our awareness about the underpinning of our culture, and our concern for the future, can all be tested by how well we support our libraries." -CARL SAGAN

Strategic Library™

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Strategic Planning for Libraries

» If a library doesn't know where it wants to go, it may end up somewhere else.

BY DR. ROBERT BURGIN

A story about the famous physicist Albert Einstein makes a critical point about the importance of planning. Einstein, the story goes, was traveling from Princeton on a train when the conductor came down the aisle, punching the ticket of every passenger. When the conductor came to Einstein, the scientist searched everywhere but couldn't find his ticket.

Finally, the conductor said, "Dr. Einstein, I know who you are. We all know who you are. I'm sure you bought a ticket. Don't worry about it."

Einstein looked at the conductor and said, "Young man, I too know who I am. What I don't know is where I'm going."

Like Einstein, a library needs to know where it's going. This is especially true in uncertain, turbulent times like those libraries are currently experiencing. If a library doesn't know where it wants to go, it may end up in a place that the library and its staff doesn't like, where the library is undervalued, underused, and underfunded.

THE PURPOSE OF PLANNING

Strategic planning helps a library have a hand in inventing its future while providing value among the communities it serves, meaning it is heavily used and well funded. Value derives from the library focusing on the needs of specific communities and on the ways in which the library can best meet their needs.

Strategic planning should also help a library focus. Many libraries have no idea where they're going because they're attempting to go in too many directions. At

the heart of a good strategic plan is the idea that a library can't be all things to all people. Rather, a library has to focus on a few strategies that will have maximum effect on the communities it serves.

FROM STANDARDS TO UNIQUE STRATEGIC PLANS

Before 1980, most public libraries did not engage in strategic planning. Instead, they were concerned with meeting standards, which represented benchmarks that all public libraries were expected to meet.

One of the best-known standards, for example, was "two books per capita." Determining whether a library met that standard was simply a matter of dividing the number of books in its collection by the population it served. If the result was greater than two, the standard was met and library had achieved some level of success. If not, the library had some work to do.

But, as one library director used to say, "Which two books?" What would constitute a good book collection in a community with a large percentage of children would not necessarily meet the needs of a community with a large percentage of individuals 65 and over.

In 1980, the American Library Association published *A Planning Process for Public Libraries*.[1] Author Mary Jo Lynch, then director of the American Library Association Office for Research and Statistics, wrote the following in the book's foreword:

"Instead of standards to be applied nationally, this publication describes a planning process to be used by individual communities. Through the planning process outlined here, libraries will set up standards appropriate to the local conditions and needs; design strategies to reach them; and inaugurate a planning cycle which involves continuous monitoring of progress and regular adjustment of objectives as community conditions and needs change."[2]

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Over the years, the emphasis on what Lynch called "local conditions and needs" has manifested itself through an increased focus on community involvement. This focus can be seen clearly in Sandra Nelson's *Strategic Planning for Results*,[3] which is the basis for the Public Library Association's current planning process.

Nelson's approach involves the library identifying a team of community stakeholders that drives the strategic planning. The process requires libraries to identify the needs of the communities it serves and then select library services or areas of focus that help the library have a significant effect on those communities.

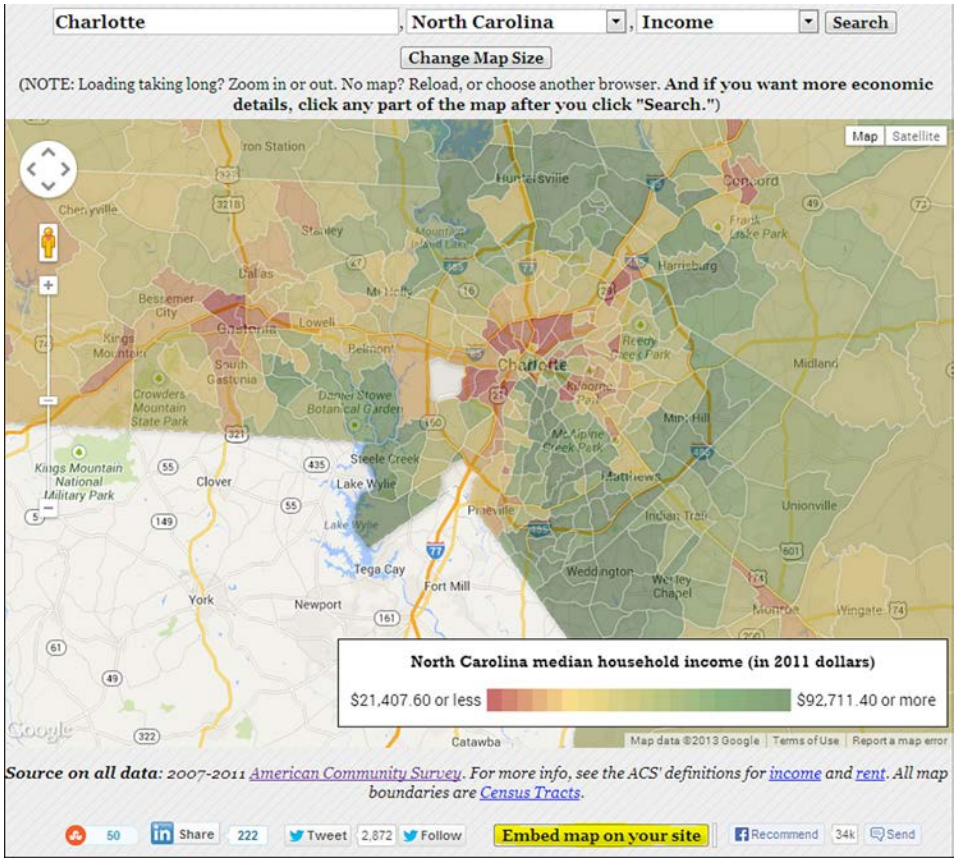

Figure 1: U. S. Census Bureau's "Rich Blocks, Poor Blocks" showing income levels at the Census Block Level for Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

Establishing a team of representatives from the various communities the library serves will help the library better understand their needs and wants. Without this input, the library staff is in danger assuming current practices are effective or guessing what should be added or changed. Having input from a community team provides a much-needed reality check.

A side benefit of having community input is that it also provides publicity for the library. While participating in the strategic planning process with the library staff, community team members often react with surprise when they learn about the library's resources and the services being provided currently or in various stages of development. They can then act as advocates for the library in community gatherings, particularly funding meetings.

DATA DRIVEN PLANNING

Another trend is the growing emphasis on using data in strategic planning. This process involves gathering data on the communities that the library is attempting to serve, surveying citizens, interviewing stakeholders, and gathering data on the library itself.

Community data. The growing availability of online demographic data has made it possible to access a range of statistics on the communities being served by a given library. The U.S. Census Bureau's Quick Facts Website (**http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html**) provides plenty of information to help a library better understand the communities it is serving.

For example, the site provides data on the percentage of a county's or state's population under 5 years of age, under 18 years of age, and 65 years of age and older. It also provides data on the percentage of a county's or state's population in poverty, the county or state median household income, and the county or state median home value.

The site includes county or state data on the percentage of persons by age groups with a high school degree or better and a bachelor's degree or better. All of these statistics are important in helping a library know the community that it is serving and respond with appropriate services.

More sophisticated tools, like the Census

Bureau's "Rich Blocks, Poor Blocks" site (http://www.richblockspoorblocks.com/), provide even more in-depth data at the census block level (**see Figure 1**). Data on the communities within a library's sphere of influence can then be compared with data for other communities or for the state as a whole to get a sense of what makes them unique.

For example, a client in North Carolina served a county where 22 percent of the population was Hispanic, the largest percentage of any county in the state. Providing library service to that population became an important area of the strategic focus for that library.

As a result, the library added a goal that all non-English speakers in the county would have the information resources necessary to function in their daily lives. They used four measurable objectives gathered from surveys to determine the number of non-English speakers using the library. Ultimately, they increased the number of non-English speakers using the library, increased the number of non-English books in the library's collection, encouraged staff to take Spanish classes, and translated items related to county services into Spanish.

Surveying citizens. Statistics on the demographics of a library's communities do not reveal how residents feel about the library's efforts to serve them. Consequently, surveying citizens on the library's services is a crucial way to get feedback on the job that the library is—or could be—doing.

Surveys do not need to be elaborate to be effective. A good rule of thumb is that a survey should fit on two typed pages or a single sheet, front and back. Respondents can simply be asked a few key questions: What role do you think the library should play in the community? How satisfied are you with the library's resources and services? How would you rate the library's customer service?

Online tools such as Survey Monkey make it easy to gather data, but may skew the results towards individuals who are tech savvy. Paper surveys are still preferred by many individuals, so it is best for a library to provide both options.

A growing trend in library surveys is to solicit participation from individuals who do not currently use the library. Typically, the vast majority of respondents to any library survey will be individuals who already use the library's services and who are already satisfied with its resources. But if the library is interested in expanding its customer base, it needs to hear from non-users to determine why they don't use the library.

Getting non-users to respond to a library's inquiries requires staff to get creative and move the survey process outside the library. Survey tables can be set up in malls. Surveys can be published in local newspapers or distributed through the human resources departments of local businesses. Incentives can be used to encourage participation. Walmart and Amazon.com gift cards make very attractive incentives; a few respondents can be selected at random to receive these awards.

No matter how the surveys are designed, distributed, and counted, the goal is to reach as many citizens as possible to gauge the library's current effectiveness and provide actionable goals for its strategic plan.

Interviewing stakeholders. While statistical data and surveys can paint a compelling picture of the communities being served by the library, nothing can replace talking with individuals who represent these communities to fill in the details. These stakeholders may range from local government officials to typical library users. Interviews can be one-on-one or be conducted through focus groups (where participants are invited to attend) or open forums (where anyone may attend).

A few years ago, I worked with a library that had, for many years, gathered information on community organizations and printed a booklet with this information. The staff had grown tired of publishing this booklet and didn't believe that the community valued it any more. At a community forum, however, we found out differently. The community representatives sang the praises of the publication and urged the library staff to continue printing and distributing it. The staff saw that their work was valued and decided to continue the publication.

In one county, almost all of the stakeholders that I interviewed mentioned the need for more space to accommodate the children's Summer Reading Program at one county library. The program was so popular that it had to be held at the local civic center because attendance exceeded the number that could legally occupy the library. Others noted that "some folks don't like the noise and chaos, but we can't separate it in this building." Others pointed out the lack of parking.

As a result of these interviews, the library's top strategic goal became acquiring a facility that would be adequate to support its programs, services, and resources.

Library data. A growing range of statistical data is available on the performance of libraries themselves. Much of these data are reported to state library agencies and eventually to the Institute of Museum and Library Services, which provides a tool for comparing public libraries (http://harvester.census.gov/imls/compare/index.asp). As with community data, a library can compare its performance with libraries in the same state or region of the country as well as with other libraries across the United States.

Library data can be a powerful indicator for local officials of where the library stands in comparison to its peers. One of my clients in North Carolina turned out to rank next to last in its state in local funding per capita. When the library director presented that information to local commissioners, they were surprised and appalled and promised to do what they could to improve the library's funding. The commissioners then increased the library's funding by 14 percent, an impressive result in a year when local funding for county libraries in that state was reduced by an average of 3 percent.

Another client found that the number of computers its county library provided for users was far below the state average, especially in its headquarters library, and made increasing the number of public computers a major goal. Another found that its headquarters library was the smallest among North Carolina's county libraries and made expanding that facility the top goal in its plan.

Yet another library found that while it ranked at the top of the state in terms of books per capita, it ranked near the bottom in terms of circulations per book. This library added goals to promote its books more vigorously and to weed unused books. And, because the library also determined that the percentage of books represented by children's books was far below the percentage of book circulations represented by children's books, it included purchasing a greater percentage of children's books in its goals.

MARKETING THE PLAN

Another trend in how libraries use their strategic plan is how they incorporate it into marketing initiatives. Librarians are becoming more sophisticated when it comes to marketing their libraries partly because software is now available that makes it easy for them to create and print attractive brochures and flyers.

Figure 2: Greensboro Public Library's Strategic Plan, 2007—2010

I first experienced this when working with the staff of the Greensboro (NC) Public Library to create a strategic plan. The staff was impressed with what the Chicago Public Library had done with its plan—both the way in which that library had organized its twenty goals into four areas of strength and its bright, colorful presentation with lots of photos. The result was a colorful brochure that captured the details of their own plan (**see Figure 2**).

The Greensboro Public Library's plan included seventeen goals in four areas of continued investment: support children's learning and the joys of reading; continue current, diverse, and popular collections; implement innovative programming; and emphasize culture and community. The plan included an additional nineteen goals in four areas of new strategic opportunity: provide welcoming and safe library facilities with a positive image in the community; expand information access, ease of retrieval, education, and knowledge; increase the awareness and use of the library's resources; and expand partnership opportunities and enhance partnership relationships.

That 2007 plan was the result of a modified Public Library Association planning process that included a team of community stakeholders and a team of staff members. The plan was most recently updated in 2010, and the library staff continually monitors their progress towards meeting the goals and objectives of the plan.

A side benefit of the planning process is that it gives the library an opportunity to tell its story. Involving local individuals in community teams, surveying citizens, and interviewing stakeholders puts the library in the spotlight. When those involved can see the results of their input in the library's published plan, they become strategic partners in helping the library market its efforts.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Of course, strategic plans don't implement themselves. Often the difference between a successful planning process and one that sputters is getting the library staff to make a strong commitment to implementing the plan. As Margaret Thatcher is credited with saying, "Plan your work, then work your plan."

One way to envision "working the plan" is through the Plan Do Check Act cycle[4] (**see Figure 3**). Note that the Plan part of the cycle represents just one quarter of the full cycle. After the planning process is completed, the library has to implement the plan (Do), measure its progress towards meeting the objectives spelled out in the plan (Check), and make adjustments based on what it has learned (Act).

The need to complete the full cycle is precisely why having measurable objectives in the strategic plan is so important. It is one thing to say that the library will provide more services to children in the communities being served. It is quite another thing to say that the library will offer 100 pre-school story times each year over the next five years. The latter measurable and more specific objective focuses the staff on a specific way of serving children and gives them a target against which to measure their progress and, if necessary, to make adjustments.

CONTINUOUS PLANNING

Strategic planning in libraries has changed greatly from the days when planning meant figuring out how to meet common standards like two books per capita. When libraries embrace a well-defined process—developing individualized strategic plans based on the needs of the communities being served, increasing community involvement, using data to a greater degree, marketing the plan, and focusing on how to implement the plan—they will do a better job of knowing where they're going. ■

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FOOTNOTES:

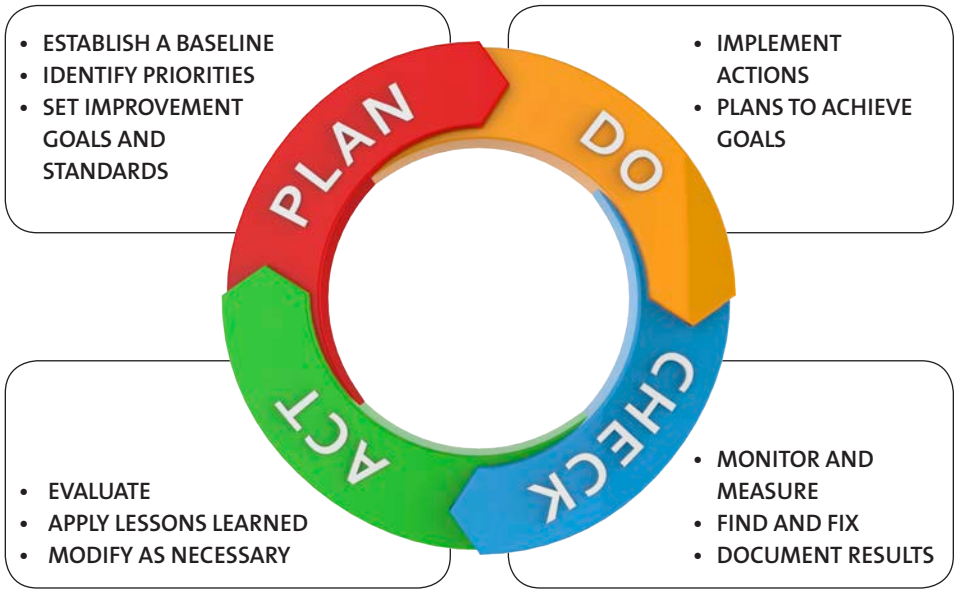
[1] Vernon Palmour, Marcia Bellassai, and Nancy DeWath. A Planning Process for Public Libraries. (Chicago: American Library Association, 1980)

[2] "Public Library Standards," URL: http://wikis.ala.org/professionaltips/index.php/Public_Library_Standards

[3] Sandra Nelson. Strategic Planning for Results. (Chicago: American Library Association, 2008)

[4] ISO 14001 Certification, "Plan Do Check Act." URL: http://iso14001certification.com/plan-check-act/

Figure 3: The "Plan Do Check Act" Cycle



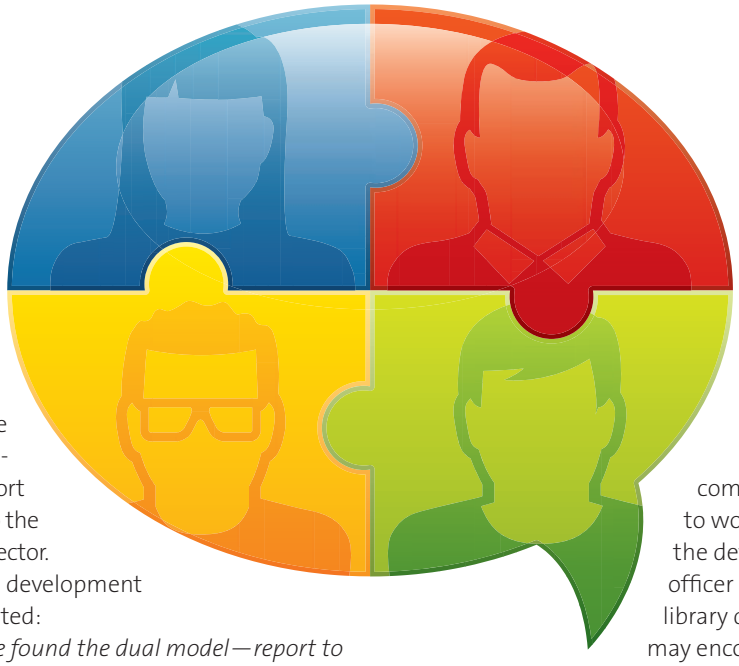
Who's Your Boss?

» In the world of academic libraries, a decentralized university development operation and a dual reporting model offer strategic advantages for successful fundraising.*

BY SUSAN MODDER

To remain relevant and of value, academic libraries are transforming not only their library buildings, service models, and organizational structures but also the ways people interact with each other to accomplish their work. Development programs in academic libraries are no different. They also require effective structures so that development officers can achieve their goal of raising significant funds for the library.

Several models of structure and reporting for development programs in academic libraries should be considered. The insights offered in this article are drawn from a survey of 22 library development professionals across the United States, primarily those who participate in the Academic Library Development and Advancement Network (ALADN).[1]



REPORTING MODELS

University development operations generally fall under either a centralized or decentralized structure. In the centralized model, development officers responsible for raising funds for campus units—schools, colleges, libraries, and athletics—are located in the central development office. In a decentralized or unit-assigned model, development officers are located in their various units. In this scenario, the library's development officer is in the library.

At most universities, the development staff will have a dual reporting model, that is, a solid line relationship to a central development supervisor and a dotted line relationship to the unit administrator.[2]

The solid line relationship is to the supervisor who hires, fires, and decides on compensation and promotion. A dotted-line depicts responsibilities to and a close working relationship with another supervisor, in this case, the library director or dean. The reporting structure for 13 of the 22 survey participants falls within this dual reporting model. Only five report solely to the central development office. Even fewer report the opposite: just four of the 22 respondents report directly to the library director.

As one development officer noted:

"I have found the dual model—report to the central office, live in the library, and work closely with the library dean—offers the best of both worlds."

Drawing from the business environment, the decision about solid and dotted line reporting depends on operational strategy. The solid line is to the supervisor involved with moving the needle on achieving the priority goals,[3] or, in fundraising parlance, raising the most money!

ADDRESSING CHALLENGES

A dual reporting model, in some cases, can be challenging, as one development officer noted:

"I rely on my boss (the central office director of advancement) to help navigate challenges in the reporting structure. When tensions or differences in priorities arise between the library director and the vice president of development, I usually walk the middle way. If necessary, I simply put the two in direct contact. They have a lot of mutual respect and will come to terms."

Another challenge is differences in management style. For example, the director of advancement may demand total commitment to work from the development officer while the library director may encourage a more balanced life.

The major downside of dual reporting is potential confusion: "Which one is my boss?" One development officer shared this view:

"My main challenge is my director of advancement. Despite the Library paying 50 percent of my salary, the director of advancement considers himself my one and only boss. He repeatedly has made comments about how 'I report to him.' I have to be very careful when I interact with him to 'play along' with this perception, which is hard. My library dean is wonderful, supportive, and a great manager and leader. He is the one I'd go to the ends of the earth for."

MEETING OBJECTIVES

Despite challenges, a decentralized university development operation, or a dual reporting model, offer strategic advantages for successful fundraising. Library development officers stationed in the library are more closely aligned with the library director's vision, which is critical when shaping fundraising efforts to support new directions. Formal and informal communication is more frequent, and these interactions offer valuable insights into helping the develop-

ment officer meet the library's needs.

Most survey respondents report meeting with the library director once or twice a month. But one observed:

"I see the library dean almost every day. She is easily accessible and provides a tremendous amount of information about the library's initiatives and directions."

Having the library development officer located in the library provides ready access for brainstorming with librarians, which can facilitate agility in adopting new fundraising strategies. For example, an ALADN colleague recently said that during a casual conversation the head instructional support librarian cited a report, which noted that students involved with research will ask their parents first about what to do rather than ask librarians.

Raising funds from parents was part of this development officer's portfolio. A conversation with that librarian on-the-spot led to a stewardship strategy to address this unusual dynamic. Subsequently, a package was sent to parents with a letter thanking them for their support along with an attractive refrigerator magnet with a message to encourage parents to advise their student researcher to connect with a librarian.

Finally, by having the development officer in the library, there are more opportunities to develop trust-based relationships with library professionals as well as support and student staff—all vital partnerships when executing fundraising campaigns. Working as a cohesive team promotes collaboration and a greater understanding of philanthropy throughout the library.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

Not every development officer stationed in the library finds that this reporting model works in their favor. Some report feeling isolated and without support from other fundraising professionals who understand their work.

This challenge can be mitigated by creating shared working spaces at the central advancement office to encourage all development officers to spend extended time in close proximity to others conducting similar fundraising initiatives. Also, informal team- building opportunities for development officers can be established by holding periodic coffees or get-togethers.

Other challenges arise when the development officer's role is expanded to meet critical needs in the library. As one survey respondent noted:

"My challenge is that I am both the development and communication director, and while the library director sees the value of the communication work, my central development boss sometimes forgets the responsibilities of the position and expects the same level of activity as a full-time development officer."

Also, development officers based outside the central office can often be assigned tasks that are not primarily development related, such as producing promotional materials and managing volunteers.

These conflicts are mitigated in a centralized structure, where the development officer is more accountable to function solely in this role.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES

The advantages of having an on-site development officer is perhaps most apparent when the library is expanding. Building or renovation campaigns are ideally a collaborative effort driven by the library director's vision but fully involving the insights of the library development officer, the expertise of the director of advancement, and the resources of the central development office.

During a library building or renovation fundraising campaign, being on-site and gaining an insider's view of the project and its complexities makes it easier for the development officer to build a fundraising case and communicate a dynamic vision to prospective donors. The goal of channeling that vision into dollars begins with arranging the first on-site visits of prospective donors. From strategic and logistic perspectives, working within the library assists with this process.

The library-based development officer can more readily serve as an effective liaison, helping to communicate among internal and external stakeholders: library administration, central development, and key campaign components--prospects, donors, volunteer leadership, alumni, and campus allies.

Finally, on-site development officers can experience the excitement and momentum created when a building or renovation project transforms the library's physical spaces and creates a new concept of what a university library can be for current and future students, faculty, researchers, and the public.

They can share in the "ah-ha" moments: realizing that walls once thought of as load-bearing actually are not, so the renovation's footprint can be doubled for more computer stations and classrooms; working with the library professionals to organize the campaign's first wall-breaking event; and joining the jubilant celebration when the successful campaign funds a new learning commons.

WHAT WORKS

Consistent communication among the library director, the central office director of advancement and the development officer will assist in establishing clear fundraising goals. A dual reporting relationship for the development officer can facilitate this process. Experience shows, however, that building trust-based relationships between the development officer and the library staff is more readily accomplished if the development officer is located in the library.

In this collaborative team environment, issues can be discussed and synergy can evolve among the library director, central office director of advancement, and development officer. Essentially the team becomes stronger than the sum of the individuals.[4]

One final perspective on the question of "Who's Your Boss?" came from a vice chancellor for development and alumni relations. When asked, her immediate response was... "The donor, of course!" ■

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Susan E. Modder is the senior development director for the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries. She can be reached at 414-229-2811 or semodder@uwm.edu. Special acknowledgement and thanks to all ALADN and UWM colleagues who participated in the survey cited in this article.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] The Academic Library Advancement and Development Network (ALADN) provides professionals involved in development for academic and research libraries with networking and problem solving opportunities through annual conferences, electronic list servs, and personal contacts (http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/aladn/).

[2] Optimizing Development at Large Research Universities. Education Advisory Board, Washington, D.C., 2010. Retrieved June 12, 2013 from the Organizational Structure Insight Center, www.eab.com.

[3] Collier, Nathan S. (2011) Matrix Reporting Relationships Explained (aka Dotted-Line Responsibility) NSCBLOG ON PERSONAL LEADERSHIP. Retrieved June 10, 2013 from http://www.nscblog.com.

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A Killer Good Time

» How to plan and host a murder mystery for all ages.

BY AUDREY BARBAKOFF

Imagine your library as the hottest destination in town on a Friday night. Children, 20-somethings, middle-aged adults, and seniors have all marked their calendars for your event weeks or months in advance. They tell their friends. They come in a few days ahead of time to tell your librarians how excited they are. You are trendy, exciting, at the center of attention—and still true to your mission.

Now stop imagining, because this is a very achievable reality. Murder mystery events have allowed me to accomplish this scenario three times so far at Kitsap Regional Library, Bainbridge Island, WA. The unique appeal of an after-hours, interactive, social event has drawn in large numbers of people and generated community-wide buzz.

Searching for Clues

People are excited to live the events they often read about in books. They can't wait to come to the library, meet others from their community, and use their minds. Patrons often talk to me excitedly about the experience, even months later.

I have created three successful murder mystery events for my library, *Dying for Love, Shot through the Heart,* and *Sour Grapes*. Here's how you can do the same.

THE IDEA

I settled on the idea of creating adult library murder mysteries in an indirect way. A colleague and I were lamenting the lack of alcohol-free, not overly-saccharine Valentine's Day activities for adults. We began brainstorming ways the library could provide an interesting alternative. A chocolate tasting? Some kind of craft?

Maybe an anti-Valentine's event, such as the ones popular with teens, would fit the bill. While we liked the idea of something not drenched in romance, something where singles would feel as welcome as couples, we were uncomfortable with the negativity of an anti-Valentine's theme.

Then we thought: how about a murder mystery? *Dying for Love,* as I titled that first mystery, was a tongue-in-cheek nod to Valentine's Day. The idea felt wry without crossing the line into negativity, and the event would be an excellent date activity for couples while still being completely welcoming to singles, children, and anyone looking for a unique event.

There was only one problem: I had absolutely no idea how to put on a murder mystery.

THE RESEARCH

When I worked as a youth librarian, I observed a few versions of library murder mysteries for teens. I had never put one on myself, but I thought back to those events for mental models of how an adult event might look. However, none of them thrilled me exactly as they were.

Some teen murder mysteries are essentially readers' theatre, with participants sitting around the table and each reading a part. Though that is an interesting way to build reading skills in youth, I was looking for something more interactive.

Others use pre-purchased kits, which seemed like it would be the simplest option. However, I quickly developed concerns as I researched kits available on the market. Few were aimed at adults, and those that were often assumed that the participants would be at a closed, private event. This type of kit is interactive and fun but requires a specific, small number of attendees.

Some kits felt like they were on the right track; they cast all participants as detectives, searching for clues that implicated a list of fictional suspects. Unfortunately, kits in this style were often juvenile, poorly

Participants search for clues around the library.

written, expensive, or some combination of the three.

The closest models in my research were murder mysteries held on college campuses, usually used as a clever orientation to the library. Following the clues led the students through interactions with a variety of library resources and spaces. These versions are interactive, fun, and designed for adults. They are highly structured, however, designed to accommodate multiple groups of students working towards a specific learning objective in a large space with many staff present. As a time-pressed public librarian with limited resources, this seemed like an unrealistic commitment for me.

At that point, I turned to the 2009 ALA publication by Elizabeth M. Karle, *Hosting a Library Mystery: A Programming Guide*. Though the book contains several sample scripts, the piece I found the most valuable was being able to examine the composition of different types of mystery programs. I realized that I could pick and choose the elements I liked from each model to create something right for my library. I had a wonderful time writing my own script and loved being able to tailor it precisely for my library and community.

RUNNING A MURDER MYSTERY

Murder mystery events cast the participants in the role of detectives to solve a crime. The easiest way to understand how they work is to walk through the process I use for my first murder mystery, *Dying for Love*.

The event begins at 7 pm on a Friday. I host it after-hours for several reasons. First, we can take over the entire library, filling it with props and sets and being as loud as we like. Second, even adults enjoy that tingle of illicit pleasure when they come into the library after it is closed.

Participants are ushered into the library's meeting room as they arrive. Seats are set up auditorium-style, facing a projector hooked up to a laptop, which will be used later in the evening. Participants mill about, waiting for the event to start.

When we are ready to begin, I welcome everybody to an event that was supposed to happen that night: a theatrical production of *Dying for Love*. Unfortunately, I continue, the play has been cancelled—because one of the cast members was just found dead!

"Austin Jane, the beloved star of tonight's performance, was found stabbed through the heart right in the middle of the stage!"

I announce that the police have taken all the suspects away for questioning, but since they know that library patrons are the smartest people in town, they have asked all of us to search for clues. I share any parts of the library that are off limits: "Police have already thoroughly searched the staff areas, so we know no clues are hidden there." and ground rules: "Please replace clues the way you found them, so other sleuths can solve the puzzle."

The next step is to provide a framework for the suspects. I hand out a "program" supposedly created for the faux event, the playbill for Dying for Love. The cast includes six characters: one victim and five suspects. This number has proven to be enough suspects to keep the evening interesting, but not so many so that it is difficult to keep track of who's involved.

The program has proven to be a great place for people to keep their notes. It contains a picture of each character and a few sentences that explain their identity, their relationship to the victim, and a clue or two about their personality. For example:

> **Bea Goode, director and producer.** The glamorous wife of our esteemed star, Austin Jane, is sadly directing her last production with us! Her favorite book is *Divorce & Money: How to Make the Best Financial Decisions During Divorce* by Violet Woodhouse.

I use puns and a campy tone to keep the event light, but a more serious perspective works as well.

SEARCHING FOR CLUES

Armed with an understanding of the scenario and the suspects, the participants head into the main library. For *Dying for Love,* I set up three scenes around the library that can be searched: the performance space, backstage, and the actors' dressing room. Clues implicating the various suspects are hidden in each scene, usually three to five clues per scene. I also hide clues in the stacks, inside some of the characters' favorite books as listed in the program.

Creating authentic, well-stocked scenes is key to making this event successful. The more props and sets, the easier it is for participants to buy into the story. I never purchase any props; staff members loan inexpensive or rarely used items from their basements, attics, and closets. I am also always surprised by how many useful things are already in the library. I ask the children and teen librarians for supplies and look in our storage spaces for unused furniture, rugs, or signage. The transformation of the library is always incredible.

Now the real fun begins! Searching lasts between 45 minutes and an hour. Participants work alone, in pairs, and in groups. Although most team up with the people with whom they arrived, these groups usually adopt any solo par-

Suspects give their statements and alibis.

The true killer is revealed!

ticipants. The teams form and dissolve temporary alliances while they search, strategically sharing information.

As people work through the puzzle, they share theories and discoveries across generations and with previous strangers. My favorite moments, though, are always hearing people's enthusiasm for using the catalog to find the clues in the stacks. Some turn to the library's catalog computers, while others pull out their smart phones and use our mobile site. It is wonderful to see gaggles of teens crammed around the catalog with an enthusiasm unimaginable during the library's regular hours, triumphantly yelling "I found the call number!"

SOLVING THE CRIME

After searching for clues, the players reassemble in the meeting room. I announce that the suspects have given their statements to the police, and will now share them with us.

I pre-recorded short videos—about one to two minutes—with each suspect. The characters are generally played by library staff or community volunteers. Each suspect gives his or her side of the story. Most characters are hiding or lying about something, but the killer is concealing a particularly large, complex, and serious secret. Each suspect also accuses someone else [video at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLfOppaZLbQ&feature=share&list=PL29D6D89D3701DB4D&index=3]

After all of the videos have been shown, I hand out simple answer slips. Players have about ten minutes to decide "whodunit" and write their solutions. I collect the answers, and then show a second set of videos. Again, each character gives a short statement—30 seconds to one minute—confessing the truth. The final video is the killer, who admits guilt and explains why and how the crime was committed [video at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wJnT92UOLI&feature=share&list=PL60732FE38A4E6753&index=1]

While the videos play, I sort through the slips for the correct answers. After the killer has been revealed, I raffle off prizes from the pool of those with the right answer. We spend no money on the prizes; they are books or items donated by the Friends of the Library.

RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

Murder mysteries are resource-heavy programs. However, their strong attendance and high interest create a significant impact in the community. Investing the time just once or twice a year creates an ongoing buzz that lasts well beyond the event.

Monetary costs can be minimal; my only expense is refreshments. The primary cost is staff time. I write my own scripts, which takes three to five hours. Filming takes another hour of my time, and requires six other people to volunteer to be characters, and they each contribute about fifteen minutes for filming.

Acquiring props and scenery is a collective staff effort and takes another few hours. Putting together the materials—fabricating the clues, editing the films, creating the handouts—adds an additional two to three hours.

The night of the event, we have 90 minutes between the time the library closes and the event starts. In addition to myself, three to four staff members and one to three volunteers set up the scenes and conceal the clues. Two staff members stay to run the event, which lasts two hours, plus another hour for cleanup.

Currently, I do not work with any community partners on these events; however, there is significant potential for partnerships that could increase the impact of the event or reduce the cost. Would a local restaurant provide food or wine? Might a local author agree to write the script, or a local theatre group handle the acting and filming? Many exciting possibilities can be explored.

WHY DO IT?

Murder mysteries are a high-interest way to engage a variety of community members with the library. Best of all, their fun happens in the service of the library's essential mission.

Mystery programs bring to life one of the most popular genres in our collections. They exercise critical thinking skills. They encourage interaction across generations and among strangers. They generate excitement about library books and resources. In essence, they use fun and play to encourage serious, mission-driven ends related to education and community building.

I encourage you to celebrate mystery books, your community, and the library itself with a murder mystery. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Audrey Barbakoff is the Adult Services Librarian at the Kitsap Regional Library, Bainbridge, WA. For more information on the murder mysteries she has mounted or for related materials, please contact her at abarbakoff@krl.org.

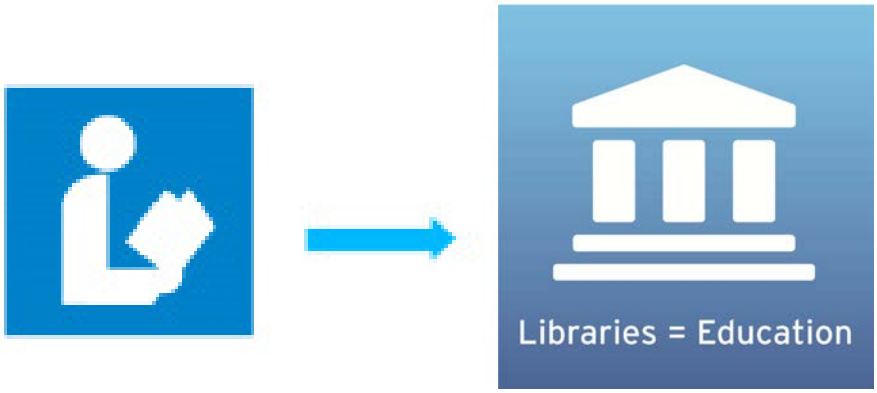
Libraries Are a Part of America's Education Enterprise

» Simple shifts in language can usher in a new era for all libraries.

BY VALERIE J. GROSS

Imagine everyone in your customer base understanding your library's precise worth. Envision you and your library being viewed as indispensable, receiving primary consideration for funding. Picture being automatically included in the definition of the term when your mayor, governor, and president declare in the next economic downturn that they are cutting everything except education.

For a growing number of libraries, this best-of-all-possible-worlds is now!



Imagining the national library symbol, refreshed.

REPOSITIONING THE LIBRARY

A powerful movement is afoot in libraries, and it's gaining momentum. Recognizing that fully one-third of America still does not understand what they do,1 a growing number of forward-thinking libraries are ushering in this new era.

How are they accomplishing this change? They are embracing a new approach that repositions their libraries as a key component of the education enterprise—alongside schools, colleges, and universities. And the results are astonishing.

As public, academic, and school libraries across the United States and Canada begin implementing this concept, they are finding that their inherent value is no longer questioned. They no longer need to constantly explain why they are essential. No one looks at them anymore with a puzzled look, asking, "Tell me again what you do?"

Instead, these library systems enjoy heightened perceived value and increased respect. They are seeing their statistics (visits, items borrowed, research assistance interactions, and attendance at classes and events) soar. Most importantly, they are receiving corresponding increases in their budgets and staffing levels.

For library staff, trustees, friends, foundations, board members, and volunteers, aligning with this vision establishes a distinctive purpose, instilling great pride in themselves, their work, and the library profession.

What explains this phenomenon? By repositioning the library mission as education, the community assigns these libraries with the same sense of worth that is assigned to schools, colleges, and universities. And the concepts apply to all types of libraries.

EDUCATION DEFINED

To understand this new vision, library professionals need to first understand what it is not. It is not "We support education" or "We play a role in education" or "We are an educational resource." For public libraries, these statements convey only that we collaborate with the schools.

While we absolutely must partner with school and academic library counterparts to leverage funding and expertise, the educational equation for libraries is far stronger than merely playing a supporting role.

To be crystal clear, the vision is: "We are education." Libraries are educational institutions in their own right.

The concept becomes even more self-evident when we look at the definition of education, which includes:

- Information about a subject matter.
- Knowledge acquired by learning.
- Activities of educating, instructing, or teaching.
- The process of acquiring knowledge.
- An enlightening experience.

Indeed, everything libraries and library professionals do falls within these parameters of education.

EMBRACING A NEW STRATEGY

Implementing this powerful approach is simple. It does not require changing anything we do—only what we say.

By harnessing the power of language, we can dispel, permanently, all misperceptions about libraries and be fully valued.

Carefully designed, the philosophy has taken shape over the past decade, incorporating feedback and ideas from thousands of library professionals throughout the United States and Canada, as well as countries around the world, including Argentina, Australia, Columbia, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Italy, Romania, and Turkey.

In a nutshell, the strategy repositions libraries as the provider of what the world values most: education. It classifies library staff as educators. And it categorizes all that libraries do under the following Three Pillars (see visual):

I. Self-Directed Education—using our diverse collections.
II. Research Assistance and Instruction—including classes, seminars, and workshops for all ages taught by library instructors.
III. Instructive & Enlightening Experiences – encompassing cultural and community center concepts, events, and partnerships.

Most importantly, the strategy replaces traditional terminology and jargon with strategic language that people outside of the field immediately understand. For example, "education," "instruction," and "research" replace terms like "information" and "reference." The word "class" takes the place of "story time" and "program." And "curriculum" replaces the non-descript phrase "programs and services."

Embracing this Three Pillars approach is a great way to shatter the misguided notion that the only thing libraries do is loan books. This simple definition has never been the case. Although loaning books is a major component of our overall curriculum, the Three Pillars visual readily conveys the three categories of a library's mission, each of which is critically important.

Speaking in these terms eliminates all speculation about the future of the library, because the pillars are timeless.

THE LANGUAGE OF EDUCATION

Positioning libraries as educational institutions involves modifying the manner in which those in the library profession speak. Phrases such as the following communicate the education message effectively:

- We are a major component of [your county/city/state/school's] strong education system.
- We deliver equal opportunity in education for everyone.
- We deliver public education for all.
- We deliver excellence in education.
- We provide equal access to world-class education for all.
- We are a pillar of education.
- We are partners in education.
- Line of work? Education.

This wording articulates the purpose of libraries and library professionals in impressive terms our customer's value.

REMAIN RELEVANT...REALLY?

But we must begin by valuing ourselves. Peruse almost any library publication and you'll see something relating to our being undervalued and underappreciated, along the lines of:

- Our future is uncertain.
- Nobody values our jobs.
- No one knows what we do.
- People think the public library has no value.
- The library's relevance is shrinking.
- We might be extinct in 20 years.

We must remember that investors—including decision makers who fund us—flee from uncertainty. Would you invest in a company whose goal was to "remain relevant?"

So let's strike negativity from our lexicon, replacing the above phrases with positive, upbeat and optimistic assertions:

- We deliver high-quality public education for all through a curriculum that comprises Three Pillars, and we continually aspire to reach new heights.
- We design and deliver a first-rate curriculum for the benefit of our diverse customer base.

EQUAL FOOTING WITH SCHOOLS

The main benefit of aligning ourselves with education is optimal funding. Contrast the views of these four elected officials. Can you guess in which locales the Three Pillars approach has been implemented?

"We are getting back to basics: police, fire, and education. We will not try to be all things to all people. Libraries are not essential services."[2] Bridgeport (CT) Mayor Bill Finch.

"The age of the library is probably ending."[3] Miami-Dade (FL) Mayor Carlos Gimenez as he proposed closing nearly half of the Miami Dade Library branches.

". . . everything is on the table except Medicaid and education, and within the umbrella of education is public libraries. This cannot involve a cut to library funding. I will work to reverse that."[4] Michigan State Representative for the 38th District, Hugh Crawford.

"This budget provides record funding for Howard County's Educational partnership, which includes the Howard County Public School System, Howard Community College, and Howard County Library System. Education is at the heart of our community's success today and into the future."[5] Howard County (MD) Executive Ken Ulman.

The Three Pillars strategy has the power to effect change at the national level as well. In his first inauguration address, President Barack Obama said, " ...And we will transform our schools and colleges and universities to meet the demands of a new age."

Will public libraries be included next time? Yes, if we move from the nebulous "we help people" and "we do good work" to "we deliver equal opportunity in education."

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Everyone can recognize the true value of libraries from the very words we use. All libraries—public, school, academic, and specialized—are key components of the education enterprise. We are education—a timeless, economic imperative that merits immense respect and maximized funding.

The tremendous power, effectiveness, and simplicity of the Three Pillars premise is that the very words we use convey the true value of our jobs, work, and profession. It renders us indispensable—today, tomorrow, and a century from now.

Education is a given. It's what the world values most, and it is timeless.

So are libraries. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: An educator and attorney for thirty years, Valerie J. Gross is President & CEO of the Howard County Library System (MD), which was named the 2013 Library JournalGale Cengage Library of the Year. She can be reached at valerie.gross@hclibrary.org or by calling 410/313-7772.

Ms. Gross is the author of Transforming our Image, Building Our Brand: The Education Advantage (Libraries Unlimited/ABC-CLIO, 2013), which explains this philosophy in detail and provides implementation guidance. She recently presented the vision at the Gale Cengage Learning Conference for Chicagoland Library Directors on January 16, 2014 (Chicago, IL) and at the PLA 2014 Conference on March 14-15, 2014 (Indianapolis, IN). For a full list of her presentations, see www.valeriegross.com

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Pew Research Center, December 2013, "How Americans value public libraries in their communities." http://libraries.pewinternet.org/files/legacy-pdf/PIP_Libraries%20in%20communities.pdf

[2] "Economic Crisis Hits Libraries Nationwide," American Libraries, June/July 2008, p.26.

[3] "Miami Dade Library To Close Nearly Half its Branches," by Meredith Schwartz, Library Journal, July 18, 2013, http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2013/07/budgets-funding/miami-dade-library-to-close-nearly-half-its-branches/

[4] Candidate Meet & Greet, Salem-South Lyon District Library, Michigan, September 23, 2010, http://vimeo.com/15289219.

[5] FY 2013 Howard County Proposed Operating Budget, Howard County (MD) Executive Ken Ulman, April 20, 1012, p. x.

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How to Sabotage an Automated Materials Handling Implementation

» A lack of leadership and strategic planning can doom an AMH installation before it handles any books.

BY LORI BOWEN AYRE

If you are designing a new library building, you shouldn't be considering automated materials handling (AMH)—you should be planning for it!

Discussions about AMH usually refer to two components: a self-check-in machine and a sorter, which are available in various sizes and configurations. Each of the self-check-in units accepts material that is conveyed to the sorter. There can be 3 bins or 150 bins on the sorter. With prices well under $30,000 to purchase a 3-bin AMH unit, nearly every library can afford one—budget-wise and space-wise. They cost less than one full time employee (FTE) and can take up as little as an 8-foot by 10-foot floor space. And the AMH unit will never have any ergonomic injuries no matter how many returns it checks in every hour.

A 3-bin AMH is the smallest size that makes sense. It allows items to be checked in immediately—which patrons really appreciate. And it separates the material that needs staff attention from material that can go right back on the shelves—which staff really appreciates. I usually recommend that the third bin be used for sorting out the returns that need to be re-shelved so they can easily be moved to delivery bins.

The most common sorters sizes fall in the 5-bin to 9-bin range. It turns out that there is a point of diminishing returns when it comes to sorter sizes, and 5-bin to 9-bin sorters hit some kind of sweet spot. They are available for under $200,000 and can do the work of two or three FTEs. They eliminate numerous steps from the materials handling workflow and improve services to customers (instant check-in, better turnaround of library material).

Every new library being built should assume they'll have an AMH unit, and libraries that don't have them now, should be looking into buying them. In fact, many libraries are getting AMH systems; vendors report they are installing three to four systems per month.

But something is going wrong with many of these installations, and I don't think it is the AMH equipment that is at fault. It has everything to do with whether the librarian and the staff are on the same page with the reason an AMH system has been introduced into the mix, and have effectively planned for the changes that are required to leverage the new technology.

So, what's going wrong?

To help identify the pitfalls, I've developed a list of the six best ways to sabotage your AMH implementation. Whether the purchase involves a 3-bin system for a single library branch, or a roll-out of 3-bin, 5-bin, and 7-bin systems to all branches, there are some sure-fire ways for your implementation to go south fast.

SABOTAGE 1: KEEP THINGS THE SAME.

The point of adding an AMH system is to shake things up. It's an opportunity to re-assign back room staff to new library initiatives. Most libraries only need one person in the back room tending to the sorter. Maybe one of those check-in clerks can become the new public computer Help Desk person! Introducing an AMH system is the time to rethink staff assignments.

It's also a time to shake up expectations. Performance measures need to be challenged. Why should it take more than 24 hours to get a book request from one library to another? Why should it take more than two hours to get incoming delivery up on the shelves? Set some targets and see what the technology can do to help you get there.

I've seen libraries add AMH systems and then report that they have the same number of people doing the same work as before and that it takes just as long to do each task. If that's the case, something didn't get changed that needed to be changed. You have to redeploy staff, redefine position descriptions, and set new performance measures. Otherwise, you will undoubtedly succeed in sabotaging your project.

SABOTAGE 2: SURPRISE YOUR STAFF

Some staff will see automation as just another way to keep them away from library patrons: "Our patrons WANT to come to the circulation desk to check out their

books!" It may be true that some patrons feel that way, but other configurations can ensure that staff will have opportunities to engage with patrons. However, it may not be immediately obvious how and where that interaction will happen when the big circulation desk is gone and service points are redefined. Once again, leadership and planning can allay unwarranted concerns.

Another fear often expressed by staff is that more self-service and automation is just a way to get rid of personnel. These fears take time to address. More importantly, they take a plan for introducing new ways to use existing staff. To be effective, librarians need to involve the people affected by the changes in helping to plan the new service points. Waiting until the sorter is in the middle of the workroom is not the time to decide what everyone is going to be doing with material, with the machine, and most importantly, with customers.

SABOTAGE 3: RELY ON THE VENDOR'S METRICS

When hired do an AMH procurement for a library, I ask the vendors to provide a return-on-investment analysis, which they are more than willing to do. However, I generally find that the numbers they come up with reflect a much shorter payback than I can show. But that doesn't mean their numbers are not useful; they can be a target. If you cannot reach that target, you should establish your own targets and define the metrics that will help you track whether you are getting closer to your goal. Equally important, those targets need to be intimately tied to your service goals: What will we improve for customers? What metric will tell us if we are moving in the right direction?

Tracking turnaround times provides meaningful numbers to gauge progress: returns to shelves, hold requests to hold shelves, library to library delivery, receipt of delivery to checked in and shelved. All of these metrics should dramatically improve with AMH, and they result in making more of the collection available to patrons more of the time.

SABOTAGE 4: ASSUME USER INTERFACE IS INTUITIVE

As much as vendors try to create intuitive user interfaces, they really can't. Or maybe they could, but only if good plans are in place: all circulation policies support self-check-in, the error messages are tweaked so that patrons will know what to do when something doesn't work as planned, signage leads patrons to start at the right spot, and a staff member is nearby to help patrons through the process the first time or two.

Just like staff, patrons need training and hand-holding when a new AMH system is rolled out. They may not immediately see the benefit of getting their items checked in quickly ("That's it! Everything's checked in and here's your receipt!"), or they may be intimidated by the machine ("Let me show you how it works"). Unless your patrons are all 11 years old or younger, they will need a little hand-holding the first couple of times they use the new system.

SABOTAGE 5: DESIGN WORKFLOWS AROUND EXCEPTIONS

Some individuals are going to be ornery about the changes even with the most intuitive user interface; the most useful and obvious signage; an enthusiastic, supportive staff; and instantly better service. A small percentage of staff and patrons (often vocal) are never happy with change. But that doesn't mean that workflows should be developed around their needs.

The way to change their thinking is through leadership: help them through the changes, and help them connect to the services they need ("Let's talk about our new Service Desk."). But don't make decisions that will whittle away at the benefits of AMH to placate a small group of dissenters.

I see this happen with library policies. Policies designed to address that one patron who abuses a service can have unintended consequences at the self-check machines. Instead of catching and prosecuting the patron who is stealing DVDs, the library installs a $200,000 disc dispenser or security system. Of course, these issues must be addressed, but the system should not be designed around the exceptions. Instead, design the system around the other 80 percent to 90 percent of patrons who will eagerly embrace the new services.

SABOTAGE 6: ONCE INSTALLED, DON'T CHANGE ANYTHING

All systems have default settings. This applies to computer systems, human systems, and definitely AMH systems. The installer will do his or her best to set up your AMH system to suit your needs. But, to really optimize its operation, you are going to have to take ownership of it. This means learning what settings can be changed by you, what settings can be changed by the vendor, and what behavior indicates there's a problem. There are also plenty of knobs and switches that the library staff can, and should, be comfortable using.

I have walked into too many library backrooms and have seen equipment that has failed to function as advertised yet the staff hasn't taken action by contacting the company or submitting a support ticket. For example, every sorter has a sort plan—the algorithm that determines what gets sorted where. These sort plans often need tweaking so that the load is balanced across the bins or the fastest filling bin is the one closest to the exit—that sort of thing.

A dedicated staff member needs to adopt the AMH system and keep it in excellent working order by doing the required maintenance (cleaning the belts and sensors), establishing good relationship with the vendor support team, and experimenting with configurations that better fit the library's needs.

DON'T GIVE UP!

By avoiding these six pitfalls when installing AMH equipment, libraries will be well on their way to providing staff and customers with a high-quality experience. AMH systems allow libraries to make better use of staff resources, save money, and, when used right, save space. But to accomplish these worthy goals, librarians have to work with staff to strategically plan the implementation: identify goals in customer service, identify the metrics needed to measure success, and train staff and patrons on their new roles.

With these plans in place, everyone in the library community will come on board with the changes and make the investment very worthwhile. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Lori Bowen Ayre is the principal consultant at The Galecia Group. She is a nationally recognized expert in library RFID and automated materials handling and is committed to the strategic use of library technology. The Galecia Group has worked with a variety of public libraries and consortia on many projects including RFID, automated materials handling, self-service technology, delivery, workflow optimization, library system and resource sharing software selection, and Drupal website development. Lori can be reached at lori.ayre@galecia.com.

Publisher's Note

Research Defines and Guides Libraries

» Researchers zero in on the challenges and opportunities facing libraries today.

BY MARY ALICE DAVIDSON

Library leaders throughout the United States depend on research to uncover ways to satisfy funding resources, community leaders, academic deans, and their own strategic visions. To that end, two recent reports provide important details that can help librarians show how they are affecting their internal and external constituents.

Other, ongoing research also adds important layers that can assist library professionals in defining the current and future roles of their libraries.

WHO USES LIBRARIES?

In March 2014, the Pew Research Internet Project released "From Distant Admirers to Library Lovers—and beyond," a typology of public library engagement in America. The report sheds light on the relationship between technology, libraries, and information resources in the United States. It serves as a capstone to three years of research by the Pew Research Center on public libraries' changing role in the lives of Americans and their communities. The goal of that research has been to set the stage for discussions of what libraries should be in the future.

The first stage studied the growing role of ebooks and their affect the reading habits of Americans. The second stage explored the full universe of library services, including what library services Americans value and what they want from libraries in the future.

The third and final stage of the research is a typology, a statistical analysis that clusters individuals into groups based on certain attributes. It examines four broad levels of library engagement and includes nine subcategories (see chart). The high, medium, and low engagement groups include Americans who have used a public library at some point in their lives, but the fourth, non-engagement group includes Americans who have never used a public library in person or online.

The report provides a detailed analysis of each of these categories through an overview as well as a definition of who they are, their lifestyle, and their relationship with libraries.

The full report can be accessed at http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2014/03/13/typology.

WHERE ARE LIBRARIES HEADED?

In conjunction with National Library Week, April 13th to April 19th, the *American Library Association* (ALA) released the "2014 State of America's Libraries Report." According to the report, libraries continue to transform to meet society's changing needs. And more than 95 percent of the respondents to the Pew Research Center's 2013 Internet and American Life Project said that libraries are important to the community.

While more than 90 percent of traditional public schools have a school library, according to the report, these libraries continue to feel the pressures of recession-driven financial tightening and federal neglect. School libraries in some districts and states still face elimination or cut-backs in their professional programs, and professional staffing has been targeted for cuts nationwide.

Other key trends detailed in the 2014 State of America's Libraries Report include the following:

- Public libraries are using web technologies more frequently, including websites, online account access, blogs, rich site summary (RSS) feeds, catalog search boxes, sharing interfaces, Facebook, and Twitter.
- The economic downturn is continuing at most institutions of higher learning, and academic librarians are working to transform programs and services by re-purposing space and redeploying staff into digital resources.
- President Obama signed a $1.1 trillion spending bill in January 2014, that will fund the federal government through September and partially restore funding to the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), the primary source of annual funding for libraries in the federal budget, which was dramatically cut in the 2013 fiscal year under sequestration.
- Ebooks continue to make gains among reading Americans—but few readers have completely replaced print with digital editions, according to the Pew Research Center. The rise in digital also brings with it a rising tide of legal issues involving publishers and libraries, but 2013 ended with all the major publishers participating in the library ebook market in some fashion.
- In November 2013, after eight years of litigation, a federal court upheld the fair use doctrine when it dismissed Authors Guild v. Google, et al., a case that questioned the legality of Google's searchable book database. The decision protects the Google database, which allows the public to search more than 20 million books.
- The overall job outlook for librarians remains slower than average, with a projected growth of 7 percent over the next decade. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that there will be an increase of 10,800 library jobs by 2020, but that the new total might include 40,600 jobs that open because of retirements or career changes.
- In June 2013, the World Intellectual Property Organization finalized a treaty for the blind, which creates a copyright exception and allows nations to share or make accessible copies for the print-disabled in other countries, who more often than not have little access to reading materials.
- With a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the ALA began work on establishing a Center for the Future of Libraries. The goal of the center is to provide library planners and community leaders with information resources and tools that will help them

better understand the trends reshaping their libraries and communities.

The full text of the 2014 State of America's Libraries report is available at http://www.ala.org/news/state-americas-libraries-report-2014.

SEMINAL RESEARCH

The following reports are a sample of other organizations and researchers who gather information useful to library administrators as they craft and refresh their strategic visions.

The Edge Initiative (http://www.libraryedge.org) was developed by a national coalition of leading library and local government organizations, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and lead by the Urban Libraries Council. It was created with the vision that all people should have opportunities to enrich and improve their lives through open access to information, communication, and technology services provided by public libraries. Edge is a management and leadership tool, helping libraries create a path for the continuous growth and development of their public technology services.

A series of eleven Edge benchmarks are organized into three main categories:

- Community Value: Libraries provide programs and services that enable people to get value from their use of technology;
- Engaging the Community: Libraries are a valuable community resource and a strategic partner in helping people and communities improve their quality of life; and
- Organizational Management: Libraries manage resources so that members of the community who need or want access can get it regardless of ability, skill, personal technology, or available time.

Also, through a suite of tools, Edge supports libraries in making strategic decisions and identifying areas for improvement. The Edge Toolkit helps libraries assess how their community is using technology and how best practices can be put in place to align future growth and services with community priorities.

The Trend Report, from the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (http://trends.ifla.org/), identifies five high-level trends shaping how patrons access, use, and benefit from an increasingly hyper-connected world. The following trends are discussed:

- New technologies will both expand and limit who has access to information;
- Online education will democratize and disrupt global learning;
- The boundaries of privacy and data protection will be redefined;
- Hyper-connected societies will listen to and empower new voices and groups; and
- The global information environment will be transformed by new technologies.

Its findings reflect a year's consultation with a range of experts and stakeholders from different disciplines to map broader societal changes occurring, or likely to occur, in the information environment. The report consists of a selection of resources to help libraries understand where they fit into a changing society.

The Impact Survey (http://impactsurvey.org) resulted from a research initiative from the University of Washington (UW) with the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. In 2009, the UW Information School conducted "Opportunity for All: How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries," which investigated the ways American library patrons use computers and the Internet at public libraries, why they use it, and how it affects their lives. The study included a national online survey that yielded more than 45,000 responses and four library case studies. It also piloted a local library survey for individual communities.

Because the patron survey was successful, the UW Information School has extended the benefits of "The Opportunity for All" web survey by making the tested and validated survey available to all U. S. Public libraries. The free, online survey tool allows libraries to ask their community members about the technology services they use and need. The results are intended to assist library decision makers in the following ways:

- Learn about library patrons' digital needs;
- Make smart decisions about internal strategies and resource allocation;
- Effectively advocate for support and funding for library technology services; and
- Provide high-quality technology services to patrons and improve digital inclusion in the community. ■

Public library engagement typology: Group overviews

Level of engagement with public libraries	Group name	% of U.S. population ages 16+	Major characteristics
High engagement ~80% used a public library in the past year	**Library Lovers**	10%	Members of this group report frequent personal use of public libraries, along with high levels of household library use. This group includes many parents, students, and job seekers; members tend to be younger, with higher levels of education.
	Information Omnivores	20%	This group has the highest rates of technology use, as well as the highest levels of education, employment, and household income. They have high levels of personal and household library use, but their visits to library are less frequent than Library Lovers.
Medium engagement ~50% used a public library in the past year	**Solid Center**	30%	Centered in smaller towns, this group is similar to the general U.S. population in most measures. About half have used a public library in the past year; most view libraries positively.
	Print Traditionalists	9%	This group contains the highest proportion of rural, Southern, or white respondents. It is similar to Solid Center in many measures, except that its members tend to live farther away from libraries. They also have positive views about libraries' roles in communities.
Low engagement ~30% used a public library in the past year	**Not For Me**	4%	This group is distinguished from other low engagement groups by its members' strikingly negative views of libraries. In particular, they are far *less* likely than most other groups to say public libraries are important to their communities.
	Young & Restless	7%	This is a relatively young group, and few of its members have lived in their neighborhoods for very long. Their most striking feature is that only 15% know where the nearest public library is located.
	Rooted & Roadblocked	7%	This group generally views public libraries positively, but many face hurdles in their lives that may prevent them from engaging with libraries. They tend to be older, and many are living with disability or have experienced a recent illness in their family.
None Have never personally used a public library	**Distant Admirers**	10%	Though members of this group have never personally used a public library, they view libraries quite positively—perhaps because many say other family members use them. Many also say that various library services are important to them and their families. They tend to be older and are often living in lower-income households.
	Off the Grid	4%	Members of this group tend to be disengaged from their communities and social life in many ways. Many live in rural areas, and just 56% use the internet. Most have very low household incomes, as well as low levels of education—only one in ten has graduated from college.

Source: Pew Research Center's Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans 16 & older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013.

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