The Future of Libraries
7 Questions Librarians Need to Answer

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“Tweckle (twek’ul) vt. To abuse a speaker to Twitter followers in the audience while he/she is speaking.”
we need a tshirt, "I survived the keynote disaster of 09"

it's awesome in the "I don't want to turn away from the accident because I might see a severed head" way

too bad they took my utensils away w/ my plate. I could have jammed the butter knife into my temple.

The big questions

1. What’s the future of knowledge?
2. What’s the future of pathways to knowledge (reference expertise)?
3. What’s the future of public technology and community anchor institutions?
4. What’s the future of learning “spaces”?
5. What’s the future of attention (and its structural holes)?
6. What’s the franchise?
Q7: Where do you fit on the dashboard?

ALA’s “Confronting the Future”

Totally physical (facilities and media) ————> Totally virtual (facilities and media)

Individual focus ———> Community focus

Collection library (physical and virtual) ———> Creation library (social, maker space)

Portal ———> Archive

Everything for everyone ———> Specialized niche
5 big reasons your foundation is solid
1) Libraries are appreciated

91% say libraries are important to their communities

76% say libraries are important to them and their families

Robert Dawson photography - Library Road Trip
http://www.robertdawson.com/pages/1/Public%20Library%20An%20American%20Commons/Public%20Library%20An%20American%20Commons/
If your local public library CLOSED, would that have a MAJOR impact, MINOR impact or NO IMPACT on ...

- **Your community as a whole**
  - Major impact: 27
  - Minor impact: 7
  - No impact: 7

- **You and your family**
  - Major impact: 38
  - Minor impact: 32
  - No impact: 7
Agree / disagree questions
Public libraries provide many services people would have a hard time finding elsewhere.

Because it provides free access to materials and resources, the public library plays an important role in giving everyone a chance

Having a public library improves the quality of life in a community.

Public libraries are important because they promote literacy and a love of reading.
People do NOT need public libraries as much as they used to because they can find most information on their own.

Public libraries have NOT done a good job keeping up with new technologies.
2) Libraries stack up well vs. others

How confident?  How important?

Library to community

- The military: 43% Great deal, 32% Quite a lot
- Small business: 30% Great deal, 33% Quite a lot
- The police: 26% Great deal, 30% Quite a lot
- The church or organized religion: 25% Great deal, 19% Quite a lot
- The medical system: 20% Great deal, 21% Quite a lot
- The presidency: 17% Great deal, 20% Quite a lot
- The U.S. Supreme Court: 15% Great deal, 22% Quite a lot
- The public schools: 11% Great deal, 18% Quite a lot
- The criminal justice system: 11% Great deal, 18% Quite a lot
- Newspapers: 10% Great deal, 15% Quite a lot
- Television news: 11% Great deal, 10% Quite a lot
- Organized labor: 11% Great deal, 10% Quite a lot
- Banks: 9% Great deal, 12% Quite a lot
- Big business: 9% Great deal, 12% Quite a lot
- Health maintenance organizations (HMOs): 8% Great deal, 11% Quite a lot
- Congress: 6% Great deal, 7% Quite a lot

June 7-10, 2012
3) People like librarians

98% of “ever” library visitors say interactions are “very positive”
81% of library visitors say librarians are “very helpful”
50% of “last year” visitors got help from a librarian
4) Libraries have rebranded themselves as tech hubs

80% of Americans say borrowing books is a “very important” service libraries provide

80% say reference librarians are a “very important” service

77% say free access to computers and the internet is a “very important” service

76% say quiet study spaces are a “very important” service
5) Reading is alive and well

81% of those ages 16 and older read a book in the previous year, including **28%** who read an e-book.

13 is the mean/average number of books read in past 12 months and median/midpoint is 5.

24 is mean/average for e-book readers.

30% of e-content consumers are reading more now because e-content is available on new devices -- **41%** for tablet owners.

8% of those 16+ have borrowed an e-book from a library – and they are book buyers, too!
Now, back to the big questions

1. What’s the future of knowledge?
2. What’s the future of pathways to knowledge (reference expertise)?
3. What’s the future of public technology and community anchor institutions?
4. What’s the future of learning “spaces”?
5. What’s the future of attention (and its structural holes)?
6. What’s the franchise?
7. Where do you fit on the dashboard?
Q1: What is the future of knowledge?
• **How is it created?** New scientific method (and citizen scientists) ... Big data ... Niches and argument ... Simulations and models

• **What are its interfaces?** New displays ... Networked data/info ... Gamified environments

• **How is it disseminated?** Social networks and media ... Flipped schools ... Learning as a process
Q2: What is the future of pathways to knowledge (reference expertise)?
• How do you search for information? Bigger, better search for everything ... New interfaces ... “Semantic web” ... Bots ... Predictive analytics

• How do you aggregate / curate it? Key attribute of a helpful network “node” ... “Do what you do best and link to the rest”

• What new literacies are required to understand it? Searching ... Evaluating ... Pattern recognition and critical thinking ... Coding and media production skills
Q3: What is the future of public technology and community anchor institutions?
• What ‘s the future of knowledge access points? Pervasive … Perpetual … Secure … On call

• Where does local fit in? Huge for libraries

• What divides persist / emerge? Access … competence … Quality of your network

• What access models are enabled in new era of property / sharing? Subscription … Freemium … Platform for performance and discovery (local authors / creators) … Maker spaces
Q4: What is the future of learning spaces?
• What fosters collaboration? Creativity? Problem solving? In person ... Electronically ... Participatory ... Experiential

• What’s the future of literacy? New networking and technology skills

• What is the role of solitude and quiet spaces? Help with personal balance

• What allies can help you provide key information to your community? Social networking strategy for the institution
Q5: What is the future of attention?
• Multitasking
• Deep diving
• Snacking
• What gaps can we fill?
  – Efficiencies we can offer in a world of changing abundance and scarcity
  – Personal needs – skills upgrading
  – Community needs
  – Time use
Q6: What’s the franchise?

• What’s the commodity?

Homework: *The Innovators Dilemma*

*The Innovators Solution*

Clayton Christensen, Michael Raynor
Examples of market and cultural shortcomings librarians are (and could) address

1) Technology non-users - skills training in new literacies
2) Pre-school programs
3) After school activities
4) English as a second language courses
5) Lifelong learning opportunities / credentialing competency
6) Fill gaps in local media ecosystem – community and civic information/curation
7) Help for small business / entrepreneurs / non-profits
8) Serendipity agents of discovery
1 big PR problem that is not hard to fix
Answer the Marvin Gaye question

- 22% say that they know all or most of the services their libraries offer
- 46% say they know some of what their libraries offer
- 31% said they know not much or nothing at all of what their libraries offer
What they want you to do
Coordinate more closely with local schools in providing resources to kids

Offer free early literacy programs to help young children prepare for school
More comfortable spaces for reading, working, relaxing

Offer a broader selection of e-books

Separate spaces for different services
Offer more interactive learning experiences similar to museums

- Should definitely do: 38%
- Should maybe do: 12%
- Should definitely not do: 38%

Help users digitize material such as family photos / historical documents

- Should definitely do: 39%
- Should maybe do: 14%
- Should definitely not do: 14%

Move most library services online so users can access them without having to visit library

- Should definitely do: 34%
- Should maybe do: 19%
- Should definitely not do: 19%

Make most services automated, so people can find what they need and check out material on their own without help from staff

- Should definitely do: 36%
- Should maybe do: 20%
- Should definitely not do: 20%
Move some print books and stacks out of public locations to **free up more space** for things such as tech centers, reading rooms, meetings rooms, and cultural events.

- **Should definitely do**
- **Should maybe do**
- **Should definitely not do**

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Less active library users, men, Af-Amer, Latinos, teens, less education, lower income HH, no computer</td>
<td>39%</td>
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<td>18-29 yr olds, smartphone owners, know less about libraries, whites</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<td>Internet users, more active / knowledgeable patrons, whites, those over 50, higher income HH, full time workers, parents of tweens, computer owners, heavier book readers (including e-book readers)</td>
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What they say they’d use
Online research service — “ask a librarian”

- Very likely: 36%
- Somewhat likely: 26%
- Not too likely or not at all likely: 26%

Cell app to use to access library services

- Very likely: 28%
- Somewhat likely: 35%
- Not too likely or not at all likely: 35%

A tech “petting zoo” to try out new stuff

- Very likely: 34%
- Somewhat likely: 29%
- Not too likely or not at all likely: 29%

Cell GPS app to navigate library

- Very likely: 28%
- Somewhat likely: 36%
- Not too likely or not at all likely: 36%

Kiosks (“Redbox”) around town for lib. checkouts

- Very likely: 30%
- Somewhat likely: 35%
- Not too likely or not at all likely: 35%
Personalize, Amazon-style recommendations

- Very likely: 35%
- Somewhat likely: 34%
- Not too likely or not at all likely: 34%

Classes on how to download e-books

- Very likely: 29%
- Somewhat likely: 41%
- Not too likely or not at all likely: 41%

Pre-loaded e-book readers

- Very likely: 32%
- Somewhat likely: 39%
- Not too likely or not at all likely: 39%

Digital media lab to digitize personal material

- Very likely: 32%
- Somewhat likely: 40%
- Not too likely or not at all likely: 40%

Instruction on how to use e-reading devices

- Very likely: 28%
- Somewhat likely: 48%
- Not too likely or not at all likely: 48%
People
Platform
Be not afraid