

Strategic
Operating
Review

2010

Submitted by Michelle
Southam, Chief Librarian

2010 Operating Review

Because the Library had no funding for programming in 2010 we are embarked on creating the customer –driven library. Our goal was to be more successful by focusing on ways to attract customers and better satisfy their needs.

To begin the process I read the following books:

Librarians as Community Partners, edited by Carol Smallwood

Creating the Customer-Driven Library by Jeannette Woodward

Bite-Sized Marketing by Nancy Dowd

5-Starr Programming and Services for your 55+ Library Customers by Barbara Mates

Keeping Current, advanced Internet strategies to meet librarian and patron needs by Steven Cohen

Marketing experts have found that the first impression a store or business makes on its customers is vital to its success. Research shows that customers all have several basic needs and that all are impacted, to some degree by the physical environment:

- 1. Customers need to be informed. The first impression of the library must not seem confusing. Signage must be clear. Traffic patterns should be obvious with no need to navigate around shelving or seating.*
- 2. Customers need to be entertained. They will return more often to a place of business if they enjoy the experience. Therefore, the library should not appear boring. Customers should find things to do like listening to CDs, viewing art exhibits, using computers, browsing newspapers and magazines.*
- 3. Customers need a good buy. Consumers want to feel that they have made the right choices and gotten good value for their money. If the library is laid out in such a way that popular items are buried among thousands of infrequently circulated materials, then the customer is unlikely to satisfy that need.*
- 4. Customers need fast service.*
- 5. Customers need to feel special. This means that we want the library to have a space just for us, a niche where we can read without people bumping into us. Customers want to feel that this place is just right for them.*

To address the findings of the experts, in 2010 we:

- 1. Cleared out most of the paperback spinners at the front of the library, to reduce clutter, improve sight lines to the view windows, improve traffic flow, and reduce congestion around the service counter.*
- 2. Opened up the Large Print area and purchased firm seating with arms to assist to make the area feel more comfortable for its older clientele. Seniors can now sit and scan the book shelves, sit and peruse their choices, sit and wait for their rides...on seating that is firm, stable and with high arm and back support to assist in getting up and lowering themselves with confidence and security.*
- 3. With the support of the foundation we replaced the worn out seating with additional armchairs, now liberally distributed throughout the library creating many different niches for people to enjoy.*

4. Rid ourselves of the customer-unfriendly classifications in Travel and Cooking. We removed these sections from the Dewey classification system and organizing the books by [BISAC](#) headings. BISAC — for Book Industry Standards and Communications— comes from the bookselling world. [BISAC codes](#) are user-centric; they're designed to make it easy for customers to browse for books. The language is simple, the subcategories broad, and the main groupings are designed around user browsing and buying habits, such as "I'm looking for books about travelling in Italy". Dewey invented his Decimal System at a time when most libraries had closed stacks and library workers retrieved known items or conducted their own "browsing" on behalf of patrons. The Dewey system wasn't designed to be easy for casual users in a neighborhood library where the emphasis is on self-service; it was designed to be efficient for large collections organized and managed by knowledge workers.
5. We replaced unattractive display tables, visible as soon as customers entered the library, with attractive tables designed for book display.
6. As we have removed the travel and cooking sections from Dewey we choose to physically separate and highlight the sections for browsability. To this end, we shifted the entire non-fiction collection, the speculative fiction collection, the DVD collection, the video collection and the audiobook collection to relocate the two collections
7. The DVD section was re-located to higher shelving units to accommodate comfortable browsing and eliminate the need to bend to the floor and develop neck cricks in attempting to browse titles.
8. With the support of the Foundation, we purchased and installed a multi-CD listening station in a quiet corner of the library.
9. We purchased and installed several large overhead signs to assist customers in navigating the collection and the space and we re-did the signs at the end of the shelving rows.

To get our messages out without spending non-existent funds, this year we cultivated several Partners for Projects

- We are hosted artwork for a joint project with the Gibsons Art Gallery –part of the Words & Images venture.
- Our joint proposal with Capilano University for English as a Second Language Settlement Assistance Program in Gibsons was recommended for funding. Capilano University, in partnership with the Gibsons Public Library, will provide settlement-based ESL instruction to individuals in Gibsons and the neighbouring community of Robert's Creek.
- We contributed approx. \$100 worth of items to the Silent Auction of the Blackfish Pub Golf Tournament and in return, received a donation of \$2,000 to seed our "Book Club in a Bag" initiative.

Changing Demographics, Changing Needs

We changed the library's opening hours. Surprisingly our demographics have apparently changed so much that we have little call for evening hours – our only evening hours are on Wednesdays until 7:30pm.

Goal 1 Develop a vision for the library collection, its programs and services to reflect the interests of the community based on ongoing evaluation.

Goal 2 Enhance public awareness of library services.

Service Area	Objective	Output	Outcomes	Year End Result
Lending of materials	To increase the percent of the community who borrows materials at least once per year	Total number of items loaned per year. Circulation per capita Total memberships	Percent of the service area who borrows materials at least once per year Comparison to other provincial statistics.	201,082 physical materials use. Increase of 2,222 or 1.2% increase Total materials circulated: 204,983 Circulation per capita: 17.67 up from 17.3 Launched the first ever Adult Summer Reading Club in June Had a “push the library day” in July when we set up a table next to the water well and gave out lemonade and information to everyone who walked by
Increase traffic to GDPL Website	To increase the percent of the community who access on-line information at least once per year	Number of individuals who use electronic databases. Number of times electronic databases accessed. Number of GDPL website hits.	The percent of the community who accesses the databases or visits our website at least once per year.	Database searches 5,072 (down from 6,227 due to cuts to provincial database funding we had 8 of the 25 databases of 2009) Adult Book Download sessions 2,195 an increase of 1,129 or 106% increase Children’s Book Downloads 1,706 an increase of 1,075 or 170% increase
Children’ Services	To increase the percent of the community who uses Children’s services at least once per year	Total number of Juvenile items loaned per year. Membership statistics Event participation statistics	Cost-benefit ratio Percent of the service area who borrows materials at least once per year	36,169 items loaned increase of 4,464 or 14% 155 new Juvenile and Young Adult memberships from May. Two schools participated in the “School Reading Challenge” for grades 6 & 7 I November, we arranged for a “library bus” to pick up grade 3 students from our 3 area schools to visit the library for a tour and get library memberships.
Young Adult Services	To increase the percent of the community who uses YA services at least once per year	Total number of YA items loaned per year. Membership statistics.	Cost-benefit ratio Percent of the service area who borrows materials at least once per year	4,331 YA items loaned. Increase of 448 or 11.5%
Senior Services	To increase the percent of the community who uses Seniors services at least once per year	Total number of new senior memberships; Participation in senior’s events; Senior’s materials loaned.	Cost-benefit ratio Percent of the service area who borrows materials at least once per year.	124 new senior memberships from May. 3,109 Large Print items loaned. Increase of 859 or 38%

Goal 3

To foster the growth, development and morale of a library team comprised of staff, trustees and volunteers

Attributes	Tangible Output	Intangibles (Benefits)	Year End Result
Employee Satisfaction	Reputation of Staff Absenteeism rate Jobs Posted/Staff turnover	Staff Morale	Staff have a good reputation (based on informal customer comments) Low absenteeism (16 sick days used in total by 8 regular staff or 2 days per person per year average. No staff turnover in 2010
Library Volunteer Satisfaction	Volunteer positions posted.	Volunteer Morale	No volunteer positions needed re-filling in 2010
Staff Development and Training Opportunities	Number of Staff participating in opportunities.	Motivated, informed staff	All staff participated in a day-long workshop on "Improving Customer Service" in May 1 staff attended annual CUPE conference 2 staff attended "Supervising Employees" workshop 2 staff attended webinars
Effective Management	Staff completed management evaluation results.		Results indicate that staff support the work of the CL. and feel understood and supported by the CL. Identified for improvement were: need for better communication tools within the organization; need for more regular recognition of good work within the group context.

Goal 4 To maintain and improve our existing facility and infrastructure.

Service Area	Objective	Input	Outcomes	
Landscaping	To improve the appearance of the building's front entrance	Budget	Fewer complaints from staff and politicians	Tapestry Gardens performed a garden/ leaf clean up; weed all areas; cutback sword fern foliage; remove the two sections of grass at front of building and replace with mulch and plants; remove 4 smaller damaged magnolia's; prune remaining Magnolia's; prune azalea's to improve shape and health; light prune of Japanese Maple and Birch for health and better shape; fertilize all plants; leave grass beside driveway; remove and replant some of the shrubs and sword ferns in a more pleasing arrangement with new shrubs, grasses, hostas, daylilies and primula to give the garden year round color and texture interest
Building audit	Convince the SCRD to evaluate the building's long term maintenance requirements	SCRD willingness and timeframe	Future directions for building efficiency improvements based on a completed audit.	Building audits and inspections done in May and September.