Restructuring a Popular Magazine Collection: Using Microassessment Strategies to Keep Rolling with the Times

Weis, Faith; Look, Helen; MacKintosh, Pamela

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INTRODUCTION

The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor has 28,983 enrolled undergraduate students in 2016-17. These students are the target population served by the Shapiro Undergraduate Library.

The Popular Magazine Collection is a physical, circulating collection of 115 titles, located on the second floor of the Shapiro Undergraduate Library.

In FY2014, scholarly journals were cancelled, and the collection focus shifted to primarily popular magazines.

Most new subscriptions started around January 2014.

Time to evaluate the use of the current magazines, to see if any changes need to be made!

MICROASSESSMENTS

A microassessment refers to an assessment tool or technique that is:
- Focused on a small, discrete area (service, resource, etc.) and/or
- Quick and easy with minimal resources needed to design, implement, analyze, and inform decision making

Our approach is to learn more about how and when microassessments can be used to improve library services as part of a broader assessment strategy.

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Circulation Data:  
- Analyzed information from 07/2014 to 07/2016  
- Used to calculate overall usage for titles and average use per issue

Welcome Week Event:  
- “What did you read this summer?” activity at Party for Your Mind  
- 1,000 students over 2 hours  
- 312 total responses  
- 11 magazine responses

Online Polling:  
- Used Poll Everywhere  
- Two multiple choice poll questions displayed on screens in Shapiro Library lobby  
- 1 response to 2 questions that were up for 1 week  
- Less return on investment

Physical Inventory:  
- Recorded earliest and most recent issue, how many issues, and state of shelf organization  
- Determined need to reduce retention periods and need for more signage

Tabling:  
- Same two poll questions as used for online polling  
- 164 total responses over 8.5 hours of tabling in the Shapiro Library lobby  
- Used candy as incentive  
- Asked student for their class year

LESSONS LEARNED

- Keep it simple  
- Flexibility and adaptability  
- Iterative design  
- Encourage collaboration and review of the data gathered

- Tailor assessments to the environment and existing resources and skills  
- Include different types of employees (full-time, students, interns, etc.) in assessment activities  
- Leverage existing opportunities for student engagement in assessment activities

NEXT STEPS

Additional surveys  
- Include more questions and use the Learning Management System

Focus Group  
- Collaborate with team of undergraduate Library Ambassadors and student employees to formulate questions and priorities

Expand to other parts of the collection  
- Browsing Collection assessment already in progress

Faith Weis
Pam MacKintosh
Helen Look