The Two Spaces of a Modern Library:
Using Business Library Collection as Outreach and Community Engagement
2013 MLA The Library as Place - Novi Public Library

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About Kresge Library

• Kresge Library: Independent Library at University of Michigan - Ross School of Business (3700 FTE)
• Staff of 21 FT people (8 librarians, 13 staff) with 4.5 FTE of temporary staff
• Open 108.5 service hours a week
• http://tinyurl.com/KresgeLibrary
• We offer over 90 electronic resources primarily focused on business – but they are licensed at the academic rate and purpose

The Two Spaces of a Modern Library

• How do people see the library?
• How do people see the space?
• How do people see the collections?
• How do people see the services?
• Does anyone fully grasp what a modern library collection is?

The Two Spaces of a Modern Library

• There are two distinct spaces that a modern library operates in:
  ~ The Physical Space
  ~ The Ethereal Space
• Both are critical for our work and for academic libraries everywhere.
• Both are critical for considering outreach activities with our collections (esp. in business).

The Library as Place - Physical Space

• The Physical space of the library is used for quiet study and contemplation.
The Library as Place - Physical Space

- The Physical space of the library is used for quiet study and contemplation.

- The Physical space of the library is used for managing printed collections...
- Which ARE STILL RELEVANT and USEFUL!
- ILL request from a Law Library in Virginia.

The Library as Place - Physical Space

- The Physical space of the library is used for access to certain stand-alone databases and public access.

The Library as Place - Ethereal Space

- This is where we connect with users.
- This is where we provide outreach.
- This is where our value is revealed.
- This is where we are like the “Shell Answer Man!”
- This is where we SHINE!

The Library as Place - Ethereal Space

- The Ethereal Space is boundaryless
  ~ 12 Natural Laws of Building a Great Business
  ~ #9 – Success Means You Get Better Problems (p.54)
- As Gershwin said well – with ethereal space – “They Can’t Take That Away from Me”

Kresge Library Resources and Services

- Reference Services at Kresge
  ~ Walk-in Use at Kresge Library (Ann Arbor)
  ~ Email Reference
  ~ Phone Reference
  ~ IM Chat Service
- All are available to everyone – but Ross Community is Job 1 & UM Community is Job 2
- While non-Michigan Community is Job 3 – we still aspire to assist them.
- We help in any capacity we can given licensing restrictions.
Kresge Library Resources and Services

IM Chat Service – People all over contact us this way!

- Many resources at Kresge are available for walk-in users.
- Some are restricted to current Michigan or Ross students (licensing considerations are huge).
- We have 10 public use PCs that do not require a login – these include 2 Bloomberg terminals.
- Can write to flash-drive or email – but printing is not available for guests.

The Library as Place - Ethereal Space

- In business libraries, the questions asked by students and community members are fundamentally more similar.
- Looking at new business spaces.
- Trying to find answers that are not as easily found as they anticipated.
- They often need help reframing the question to the available data.

The Library as Place - Ethereal Space

- We benefit by being a “business library.”
- Students are often more upfront for what they are looking for.
- Some business users are more coy and secretive about what they are looking for – which makes it harder to glean!
- We have definite busy times of the year that most community users do not recognize.

Business Information for Michigan Residents
http://tinyurl.com/MichBiz

- Focus on MeL databases and other resources freely available on the Internet.
- Will expand MeL offerings when the new resources come online.
- Started to identify state-wide libraries with key business collections.
- Freely Available Business Resources
http://tinyurl.com/MichBiz2

The Library as Place - Ethereal Space

- Moving over to LibGuides (like everyone else) this summer.
- We will continue to provide as many links as is relevant.
- MeL databases allow us to help anyone in the state – this is good for outreach and community support from Ross.
- Good for Kresge, Good for Ross and Good for Michigan businesses.
The Library as Place - Ethereal Space

• We can talk about information literacy – but it is the reference interview that I believe our users are seeking.
• We have so many people who do not know how to frame the question.
• The assumption or desire is that the work is already compiled – but if it were, the space would not be entrepreneurial.

Questions Most Commonly Asked by guests:
~ Size of a particular geographic market
~ Demographics and generational marketing
~ Historical company information (stock prices and directory information)
~ Industry information
~ Company research (market saturation and competitors)
~ Many come from other librarians – this is OK!

The Library as Place - Ethereal Space

• We can provide clarity (what resources do they have access to vs. those that cost).
• We often have a better sense of the value of resources than our users.
• We can provide directed guidance for specific questions.
• We can provide referrals to regional libraries and other centers that can assist.

ExporTech (March 2010)
Livingston County FastTrac (Fall 2011)
Support given to these users:
~ Helping these small business owners learn the landscape of business information.
~ Provide more detailed support and directions.
~ Greater ability to help these users because of our focus on business issues.

The Library as Place - Ethereal Space

#9 – Success Means You Get Better Problems (p.54)
Questions from Lakeland Correctional Facility (Coldwater, MI).
Typed letters from inmates asking about business information to get a clean start in life.
Answered both letters (in December and January).
Modest effort on our part, big returns on their end (we hope).

Thank You

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Kresge Business Administration Library
http://www.bus.umich.edu/kresgelibrary/