

Future roles for public libraries & librarians

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Dedicated to a better Brisbane From Vision to Reality - Perth, 25 October 2005

Vital statistics for 2004/5

Brisbane Libraries for a world class city that thrives on information, learning, recreation & culture

■ Population	958,000 (1220 km ²)
■ Circulation	10.1 M (+3.24%)
■ Visitors	5.64 M (+6%)
■ Reference enquiries	400,000
■ Membership	407,111
■ Events attendance	127,000 people (+8%)
■ No of items	1.34M (1.4 items/capita)
■ No of Libraries	32 + 1 Mobile
■ Staff	275 FTE (375 people)
■ Customer Satisfaction	91%



Social Drivers

- Growing level of IT access, ownership & mobility
- Globalisation & localisation
- Integrated devices & instant gratification
- Expectations of convenience, personalised service 24/7
- Downshifting
- DIY & Self Service & Home Services
- Increasing range of work options
- Loss of community cohesion eg culture of complaint, rampant individualism (NIMBY), Reality TV
- Increasing use of 'divides' to create meaning
- Social pressure from increased homelessness, cultural diversity, population growth and ageing population.



Organisational Drivers

- Customer focused service
- Channel Management: One-stop-shop, collocation/integration, F2F, online, phone, DIY, external providers Controlling labour costs
- Pressure on critical infrastructure and services due to population change and environment issues
- Increased aggregation for economies of scale
- Cost avoidance / cost savings through standardisation
- Modern workforce – agile, multi-skilled, outcome focused.
- Sensitive to cost shifting



The key strategic directions for public libraries:

- Libraries which are vibrant and inclusive community places for information, learning, recreation and culture.
- Equitable and convenient access to products & services.
- Growing a love of reading, a culture of writing and an enthusiasm for culture, local history and ideas.
- Creating opportunities for community engagement and building social inclusion through programs.
- Supporting the community to learn for life - from cradle to grave.
- Libraries for a stronger Council



The Enablers

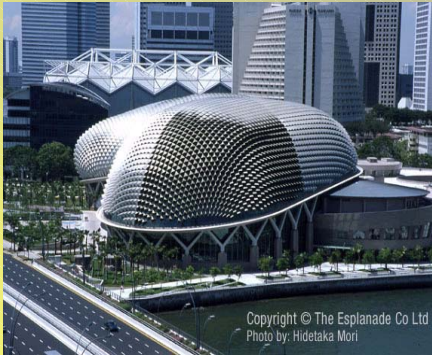
- Buildings & Facilities
- Programs
- Service Delivery Frameworks
- Collection Management
- IT
- Staff





Buildings & Facilities

- Iconic
- Community Hubs – synergy of services
- Themed / boutique libraries
- Focus on the visit as an experience
- Mix of specific & multi-purpose spaces
- Retail approaches to layout & design
- A place to see and be seen
- Relaxed about food & drink
- Greater emphasis on security
- Environmentally sustainable



The programs

Library Development

- Information literacy and IT literacy training
- Children's language and literacy programs
- Reading and writing programs, author visits, book launches
- Outreach to schools, childcare, business groups, festivals
- Events & displays linking the collection and community
- Library, Council and Community information & news

Community Development

- Rediscovered value of the library as a neutral institution
- The library as a multiplier of community capability
- Place for community activities and education programs: health, jobs, art & culture, community groups, new technologies
- Place for community consultation & planning information



Programs



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Service Delivery Frameworks

- Libraries as or in Community Hubs
- Partnerships: shared risk and reward, ↑capability, ↑scale
- Programs which have strategic alignment
- Channel management for sustainable service delivery
 - The right mix of service: counters, phone, online, self-service
 - Staff have a critical role in managing customer expectations
 - Self-service simple transactions, use staff for the high value work
 - Opportunities for associated efficiencies eg automated booksorting
 - Service at the point of need: mobile, fixed point, virtual 24/7
 - User education to develop competent and independent users
 - Co-location/integration with other council services - One-stop-shop
 - Personalised & targeted - moving away from 'one size fits all'
 - The online branch - 24/7 access to reliable information content, transactions and staffed services.



Collection Management

- The library collection is the most used library facility
- Greater range of information in modern formats
- Boutique collections e.g. Helsinki's new 'Library10' has 30,000 CDs & no bookstock.
- Retail merchandising principles applied to positioning and presenting the collection.
- Consortium/aggregated purchasing of content
- Collection managed to an Asset Strategic Plan
- Supplier selection and delivery of shelf-ready materials – ie library staff focus on customer facing services, proactive management such as profiling and quality assurance, monitoring usage, deselection, developing staff.



IT



- Discrete, simple & small – mobile/portable to support delivery of roving services
- Wireless and/or cable
- BYO broadband wireless Internet eg Unwired & iBurst
- Information in modern formats eg Audioread, Podcasting
- Multifunctional & secure PCs; Integrated AV equipment
- Providing high-end equipment & facilities requires expertise on the floor and in support
- Self Service: check out & check in linked to booksorting, bookings, renewals & holds, payments etc
- RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) - ↓ cost of tags

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Items

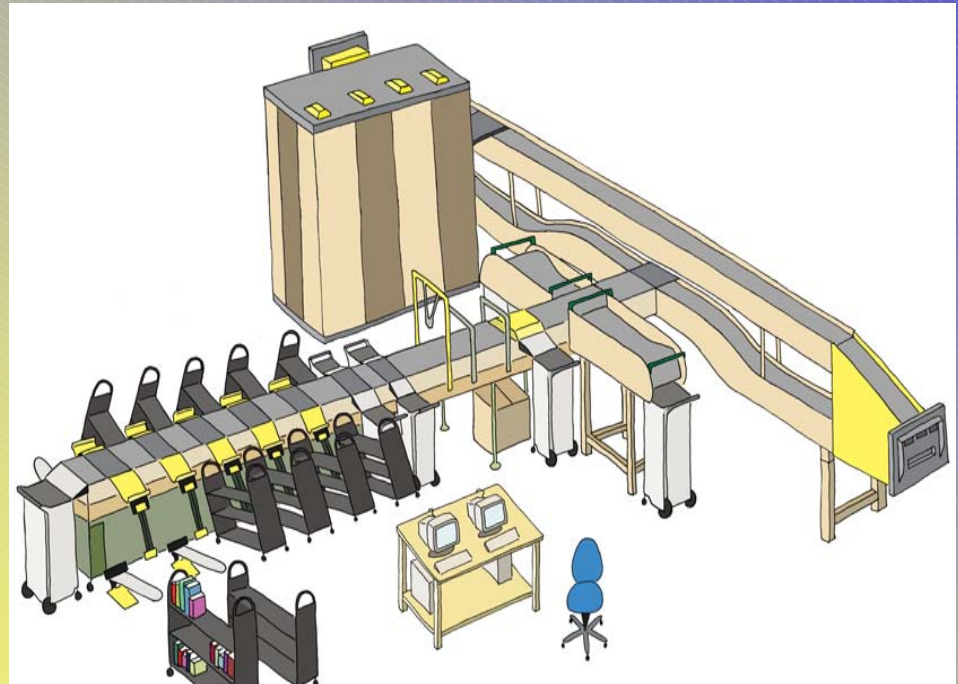
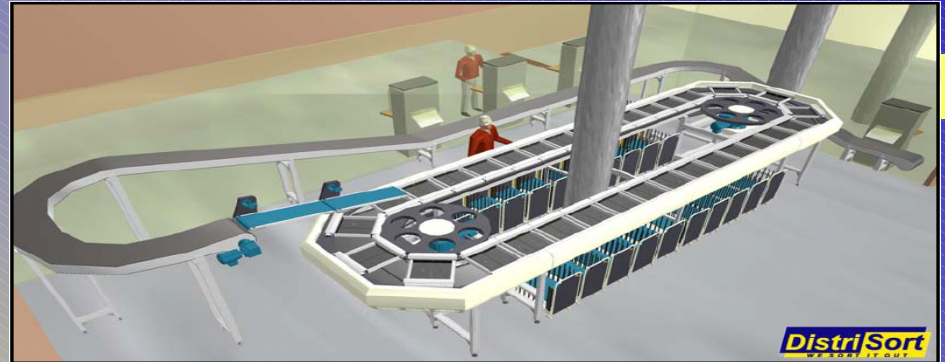
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33201000731039	4/23/200...

Next OK Cancel

Items Users Miscellaneous



Automated Materials Handling



Staff

- Transition from transaction work & back-of-house collections & tech services work to high value customer-facing services
- Information & readers advisory services and IT & AV support
- Content production – for the library and to support customers needs
- Deliver selected Council services – esp. as cash payments decline
- Channel managers – engage customers in self service, provide roving services at the point of need, deliver online – voice, video, text chat
- Seek and develop high value partnerships - locally and globally
- Run events and programs to support library and community development: working with a wide generational and cultural mix in the library and out in the community. Staff deliver training, train the communities' trainers, facilitate group and individual events.
- Present the library and the collection to maximise exposure.
- Promote & customise products and services to customers' needs
- Collections staff are asset managers and are skilled in strategic procurement and contract negotiation & management.



Strategies for Learning & Development - skills, knowledge & attributes

Skills

- Readers Advisory
- Community Liaison
- Merchandising
- Reference & Information
- Local History

Knowledge:

- Information Literate
- Products & Services
- Community and generations



Strategies for Learning & Development - skills, knowledge & attributes

Attributes

- Problem solver
- Decision maker
- Lead from any position
- Creative & innovative
- Communicator
- Channel manager
- Understands self & others
- Team skills
- People person
- Responsible for own learning
- Committed to service excellence
- Committed to safety and wellness of self and others
- Passion for reading
- Business literate
- Aligned with vision & values



Conclusion

- Channel management & migration will require objective business analysis & staff alignment to succeed.
- Programs need to be strategically aligned and staff will require a broad range of skills, knowledge & attributes.
- Customer demand for sophisticated IT & AV facilities comes with expectations that staff will provide support
- Critical 5 year plans:
 - Buildings – ASP
 - Collection - ASP
 - IT plan
 - Workforce plan

