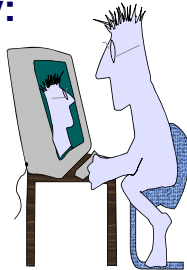


Reinventing Your Library for the 21st Century:

10 questions for 2008

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Question #1



**Do you think this is
OK?**

What makes a library great?

- Money?
- Size?
- Luck?
- Use?
- Staff
 - curiosity, creativity, friendliness.
- The customers!



**Great libraries believe
they could be better than
they are.**



If you are ...

- Satisfied with the status quo.
- “Better than these cretins deserve.”
- All you could be (considering your budget, town, etc, etc.).
- Still wishing that yesterday would get better.
...you're **not a great library** or you won't remain one long.



Great libraries

- Actively and persistently work to improve.
- Believe that things change.
- Believe that greatness is a continuing adventure (or a constant struggle depending on the day).



Question #2

How do you know something at the library needs to change?

How many things are you still doing the same way that you did 5 years ago?

- In your life?
- In your library?

[Organizations can] fall prey to **active inertia** — responding to even the most disruptive market shifts by accelerating activities that succeeded in the past.

When the world changes, organizations trapped in active inertia **do more of the same**.

Donald N. Sull, *Active inertia: Why good companies go bad*, Financial Times (3 October 2005)

To avoid active inertia, you can forget about...

- “Best practices” i.e. things that possibly worked somewhere else last year.
- The traditional long range plan with action steps i.e. things that might be good ideas if this year was like last year and next year was like this year.

The new “best practices”

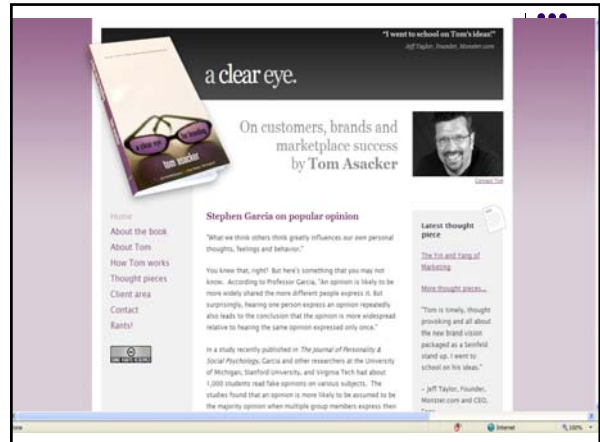
- Continually scanning the environment.
- Finding out what societal shifts impact on what your customers and potential customers may care about today.
- Looking for yourself in this picture.
- Putting your efforts into things that could matter to your customers and fit with those changes.
- Acquiring this year’s skills this year
- Staying flexible.

Today people might care about

- Saving money.
- Saving the planet.
- **Divesting themselves of too much stuff.**
- Convenience.
- Networking: from myspace to tripadvisor.
- Being part of a community.

Question #3

What's Your Brand?



A brand is an expectation of something delivering a certain feeling.

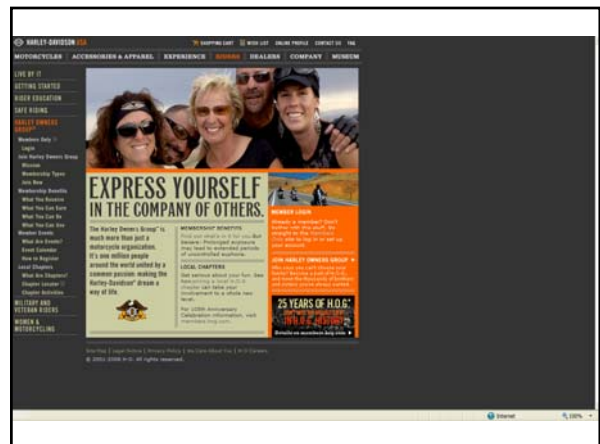
A brand is what people feel about themselves and their decisions in your presence.

At Harley-Davidson, what we sell...

- is the ability for a 43 year-old accountant to dress up in black leather
- ride through small towns
- and have people be afraid of him.

- Harley exec, quoted in *Results-based Leadership*

Slide concept from Tom Asacker www.acleareve.com



Where are we in this picture?

- Libraries and the Cowboy X school of branding: *Here's our name!*
- Libraries and expectations: *Don't have any!*
- Libraries and the brand message: *We're not the same old library!*

Question #4

How do people experience your library?

Like it or not,
every library is the experience library.

Some possibilities

People might feel

- Smart
 - Thrifty
 - Happy
 - Comforted
 - Trendy
 - Connected
 - Known
 - Useful
 - Safe
- When they're with you.

Some possibilities

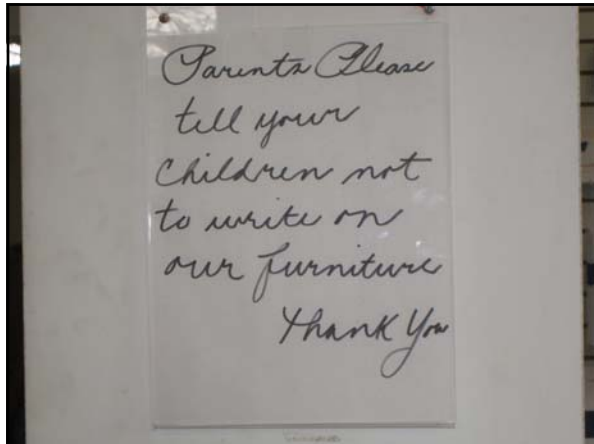
People might feel

- Bored
 - Confused
 - Annoyed
 - Ignored
 - Unwelcome
 - Angry
 - Depressed
 - Insulted
- When they're with you.

If how people feel (and expect to feel) is our brand, shouldn't we...

- Choose and deliver a clear, consistent and targeted message?
- Offer a consistently pleasant experience?
- Have fewer stupid rules?
- Have a bonfire the signs?
- Be nicer?






Question #5

Why are you so mean?

I just want people to be nice...

Your library is as friendly as your least friendly public service employee.

Would you be mean to this little girl?



Research shows the answer is yes.

Question #6

Is your space holding you back?

Probably.

Change Your Look

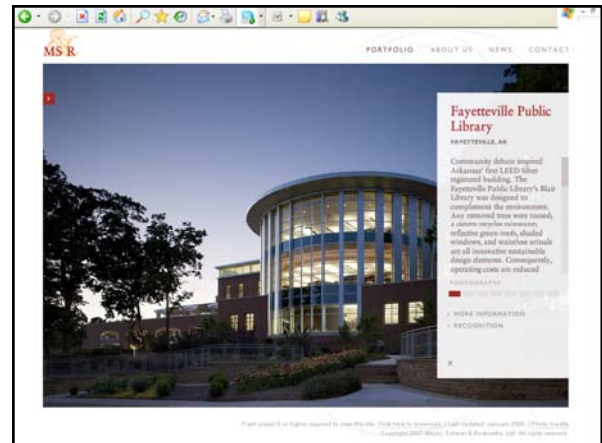
Nothing overcomes the drag of unattractive, outdated, crowded, poorly designed space.

- Break new ground
- Reconfigure to fit their needs
- Merchandize
- Weed

Do you have space...

- Where people have a choice of noise level and activity?
- That is energy efficient?
- That makes the most of views and daylight?
- That offers the option to change on the fly?
- That is tailored to your community?

Is your library green?



Fayetteville (AR) Public Library*

- Green roof.
- Natural lighting that significantly reduces power use.
- Rainwater collection in underground cisterns.
- Cork floors.
- Serves a a model for the community.

*LJ 2005 Library of the Year

Question #7

In a world supersaturated with obligations and choice... why would someone pick you?



In a world supersaturated with obligations and choice... why would someone pick you?

The key is...

- Having an answer.
- Having an answer that relates to them.
- Having an answer that could conceivably be true.
- Having an answer that changes.

Question #8

How do you serve kids?

Serve Kids

- Echo boomers will outnumber boomers by 2010.
- Kids are a growth market.



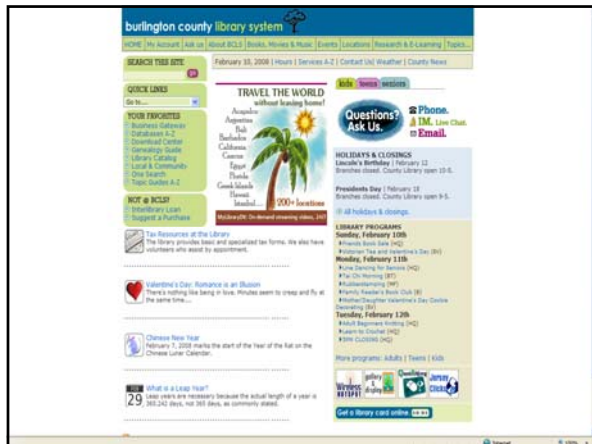


Question #10

What's the most fun thing you've done lately?

- ## Be fun
- Third place?
 - Fine Free Fridays
 - Eating and Drinking
 - Concerts
 - Dance lessons
 - Drive In movies





Slouching toward transformation

- The next level
- The 10-fold path
- The good will bank

5 things you can start today

1. Look for societal shifts that impact on what your customers and potential customers may care about today. Put yourself in that picture.
2. Tailor your message and provide a look and experience that matches the library you want to be.

5 things you can start today

3. Look for easy and elegant solution that you're missing right now and try a few.
4. Remember that marketing is always about THEM. Is yours?
5. Believe that greatness is a possibility and a continuing adventure. Have fun while you are looking for it.

