

Margery C Ramsay Scholarship 2008
Revitalising Libraries for the Self Serve Generation



The future of Customer Service for Australian & NZ Libraries

Joanne Smith
Library Services Co-ordinator
Hobsons Bay Libraries

**Libraries are sleepwalking to
disaster: It's time they woke up.**

Charles Leadbetter, 2003

<http://www.demos.co.uk/publications//overdue>

How can we service customers better in this self serve age?



Survey comments... about their favourite retailers

- They need more and larger signs
- I need more space as I often have a pram
- Discount bins make moving around the floor difficult
- Shelves are often messy
- Staff are knowledgeable
- Staff are helpful but not intrusive
- Staff are sometimes hard to find

Location



Survey comments...

about the location of their local library

- On a main road , easy to find
- Handy to where I live
- Walking distance, fantastic
- Close to transport
- Handy at shopping centre, lots of parking
- Visible on a corner, close to main shopping strip
- Close to everyday/necessary shops

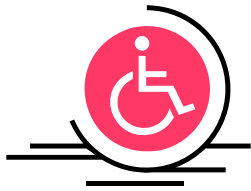
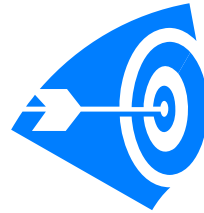
Co-location & Community hub





Opening hours should reflect the needs of the community

Services should be well signposted and promoted within the community



Facilities should be accessible to customers of all abilities

The Physical Space



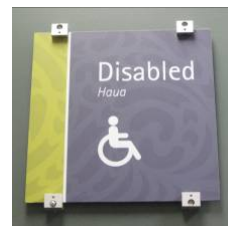
“What can libraries learn from supermarkets? Quite simply, creating a clearer layout requires observing customer traffic flow, identifying hot spots and deciding what stock offers good ‘impulse loan potential’ in your hot spots”

Hennah, Kevin. “Library layout and display essentials”
InCite (Nov 2007): p29-30

Survey comments... about the layout of retailers

- Cramped
- Logical, common sense, grouped
- Clear and easy to move around except in aisles
- Attractive and appealing
- Well organised
- Good layout with seats to sit and look at books
- Café on the top floor and cashiers on both levels
- Room to move, lots to look at

Clear Signage



A Feeling of Space



A Flexible Environment



“It is what I call a ‘third place,’ a setting beyond home and work (the ‘first’ and ‘second’ placed respectively) in which people relax in good company and do so on a regular basis”

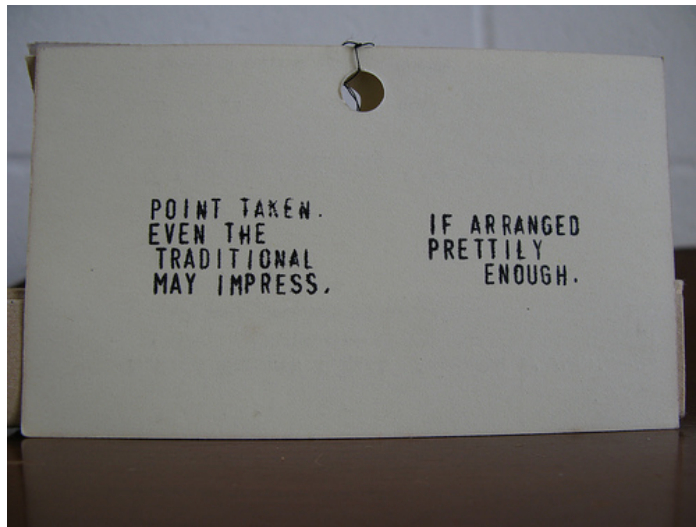
Oldenburg, Ray. Celebrating the Third Place (2001) : p2

Community Lounge



Collections and Stock Display





<http://www.flickr.com/photos/moirabot/2356636451/>





Technology



“The challenge for libraries of the future is to understand their role in an environment where access to information is diverse and increasingly remotely accessible”

Wilson, Hamilton. “An Evolution in Library Planning “ InCite (Nov 2007): p36



Staffing



Survey comments...

about the service of retailers

- Helpful, friendly, casual
- Friendly, knowledgeable, will seek further assistance if they don't know the answer
- Cool, minimalist, friendly
- Never enough!
- Sometime hard to find
- Mostly friendly, some more knowledgeable than others
- Attentive when asked
- Staffing is the bit that isn't goo about my favourite store!

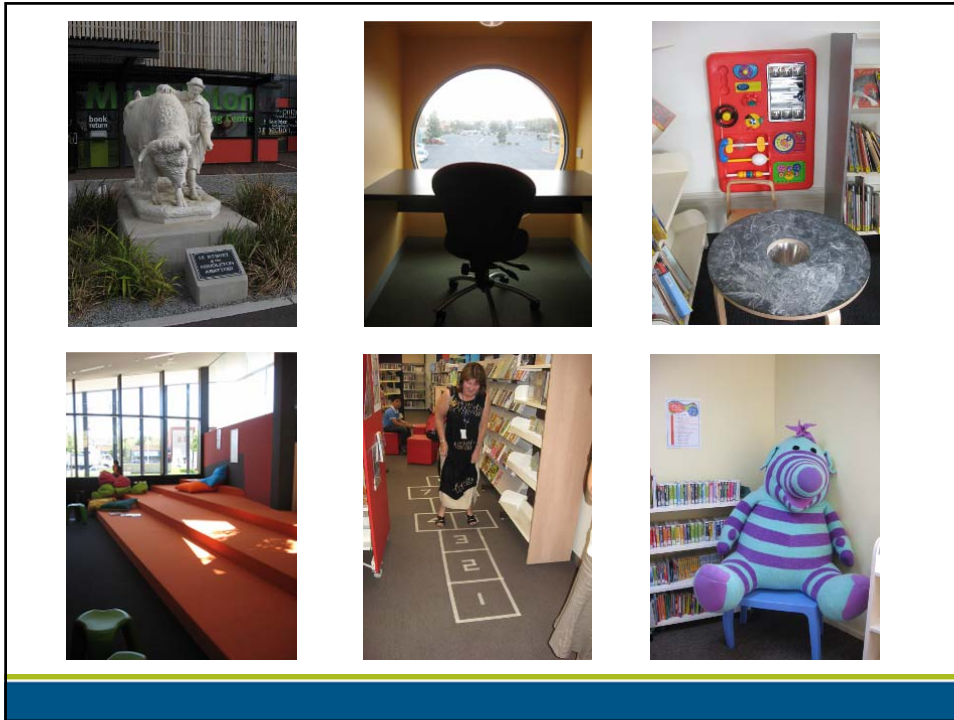
Staff Support

- Positive recruitment
- Ongoing performance management
- Helping staff keep up to date with technology & comfortable with library equipment
- Using technology to make interaction between customers and staff better, not using technology as a replacement for staff
- Ensuring clear guidelines/instructions in a variety of formats
- Training is key to supporting staff through changes, with training in advance and ongoing support after the roll out
- Finding ways to motivate that works for your team!
- Celebrate successes!!



Something that is just yours...

A feature that makes your library quirky
or memorable (other than the staff!)



*Margery C Ramsay Scholarship 2008
Revitalising Libraries for the Self Serve Generation*



BLOG: <http://www.mcrs08.blogspot.com/>

EMAIL: jsmith@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au



Joanne Smith
Library Services Co-ordinator
Hobsons Bay Libraries