

Can You Hear Me Now?
Great Titles You Never
Knew We Had
DVDs (etc.)

Ben Malczewski - Ypsilanti District Library

Adult Services Librarian

ben@ypsilibrary.org

734-482-4110 ext. 1323



Customer Service and the User Experience

What is Customer Service? A "customer" and employee relational model. A specification of service to customers before, during and after a purchase, manifested by a series of activities designed to enhance the level of customer satisfaction - that is, the feeling that a product or service has met the customer's expectation.

What is User Experience (UX)? Having its roots in "human factors" and ergonomics, it's "all" the user cares about. It is more wholistic. **The total experience is the product.** Do they enjoy themselves, do they accomplish what they need to do, and do they manage to do it the way they want - with simplicity? In this, Customer Service would be an contributive part of the UX whole.

The Quality of your External Presentation Begins with Internal Communication

- Top to Bottom Interdepartmental Knowledge of Your Products and Services (AKA: Internal Marketing)

Alternatives to Staff In-Services or Cross-Training Sessions:

- "Did You Know?" Sheets
- Department Cheat Sheets
- Selector Assignments
- Weekly Program Listing Emails
- Intranet
- Explore other methods that work best in your context

Get to know your community again:

Rethink your Library's Conventions - Is this a relationship on *our* terms, or is it mutual?

Collection Development

What do they want? Word-of-Mouth

- Go Beyond Demographics - Talk to those in the know.
- In Building Your Collection, Provide the Patron with the Didactic Opportunity to Evolve as a Viewer (By directors, actors, writers, genre, movement, etc.) and round out the viewers anticipated oeuvre. Plan a "curriculum."
- In rounding out genres, there should be a reason/purpose - however loose - for every title in your collection. It should be connected to another title, or fulfill/represent a subject area.

Collection Development (cont.):

• "How do I select titles?" (beyond Amazon, Entertainment Weekly, and People Magazine)

-Video Librarian - <http://www.videolibrarian.com/>

-Film Comment - <http://www.filmlinc.com/fcm/fcm.htm>

-Cineaste - <http://cineaste.com/>

-Ain't It Cool News - <http://www.aintitcool.com/>

-IMDB - <http://www.imdb.com/>

-Rotten Tomatoes - <http://www.rottentomatoes.com/>

-The New Yorker Film File -

<http://www.newyorker.com/arts/reviews/film/index>

-VideoETA - <http://www.videoeta.com/>

-Facets Multimedia - <http://www.facets.org/>

-NYPL>Best of the Web>Performing Arts>Film -

<http://www.nypl.org/links/index.cfm?Trg=1&d1=130&d3=Film>

-Season Previews - NYTimes and local newspapers

Getting the Word Out

What methods of communication are the best fit for your library?

PROMOTING INSIDE THE LIBRARY

THE STRUCTURE:

What are its gifts? How best to celebrate them?

Think of every square foot of your library as valuable real estate, and in as much, it must have a function and purpose. Take a walk through your library and explore the "lines of sight" from the main paths - every empty sight-line encountered is an opportunity.

- Does it feel ergonomic? Are there dead-ends or a lot of Right Angles?
- Is the layout intuitive? Are things where they "should" be? Could you find things *if you didn't* work there? (existential) Test non-users.

Displays:
Round-off dead-ends:



End caps - Instead of a having a blank wall, use the space.



"Power Walls": outwardly facing and displaying goods most in demand as customers enter, behind the register, or positioned at the back of the store so that they are led past other goods that may catch their eye. Ex. Concept originally devised to promote tobacco, candy, or magazines in convenience stores. A variation on "the impulse buy."



Islands: A display unit that is accessible from all sides and directions.



Little things:

- Scatter book holders and interfile media on displays
- "Face" titles within the stacks
- "The shelving cart phenomenon"

Then, after everything else:

Take a walk through retail stores - it doesn't even have to be a book store - and see what effectively catches your eye. Where are certain items located and why? You can borrow their ideas while leaving their "style" - thus maintaining the library's dignity. Don't be ashamed to show-off your wonderful items.



PROMOTING OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY

- Through your website and on-line journals
- Staff reviews and picks -on-line, in print, or on laminated cards to accompany the title.

Through programming:

- Have film nights - a great way for families to get out during economically stressed times and promote other *free* library services in the process.
- Host film presentations and discussions led by staff or area university or media specialists > try book/film combo programs
- Have a teen film fest (with a jury and prizes - and "Oscar" party or awards ceremony)
- Promote any related materials at all programs. Look for any opportunity to make a recommendation and literally "put it in the person's hand."

Look for Opportunities to Change Public Misconceptions

Word-of-mouth is essential, but say it even louder

- Local newspapers and reporters are always looking for a story, and on slow news days, they have to find/create them. Do the work for them, come up with your own ready-made angle - EX. "Library's Free Family Film Night Softens Budget Blows"
- Spotlight your collection vocally and through in-house advertising
- Promote programs in newspaper calendars, in classrooms (call teachers - get supplemental materials for them), and to community groups (knitters, chess groups, fitness classes, senior centers)

BOTTOM LINE

Use your resources (collection and facility) to get people in the door and use your time with them advantageously - have displays stocked and ready, topically appropriate materials in the room of the program before they get there. If you are "opening" a program, take the chance to talk about similarly themed library programs or materials - bring them with you, put them out within easy reach.





