

GROUP 3 PLANNERS LLC

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3 Things in this issue:

The Times They Are A-Changin' 1

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3 more tidbits....

- LRS statistics are invaluable in understanding your library's relative performance. For more information on academic, public and school libraries, click [here](#).
- We are social! Check us out on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter in addition to Flickr, where you will find great pictures of great libraries!
- Want more information about retail performance measures? Click [here](#).

Flash: Last Newsletter!!

Newsletter to be replaced by G3P blog.
See page 2 for more details.

just 3 things...

1— The Times They Are A-Changin'

*Come gather 'round people wherever you roam and admit that the waters around you have grown
And accept it that soon you'll be drenched to the bone.
If your time to you is worth savin', Then you better start swimmin' or you'll sink like a stone
For the times they are a-changin'.*

Have you looked at your library lately? I mean really looked at it from the perspective of all the changes that have taken place in just the past couple of years? As Bob Dylan sang in the 1960's, the times they are a changing. His words are a remarkable call to action for libraries today.

Libraries have evolved a great deal since their humble beginnings as women's club book repositories. The sweeping changes following the card catalog's replacement by the online computer catalog led the way to many personalized services unheard of earlier. Access to movies has evolved from 16mm films to video cassettes, DVDs and Blu-rays, and now to downloading through the Internet. With each new challenge, libraries have changed their collections, services and the way the library itself is built and arranged.

Libraries are now in the midst of another big evolution. In the past few years the economy has wreaked havoc with library funding and the public's perception of how libraries serve them personally. The Internet has provided students and researchers direct access to an incredible amount of information. With the advent of e-books and online book publishing we hear more and more that libraries may no longer be necessary.

Today's librarians serve a very diverse public - students whose first "go-to" tool is the computer, families who want quick, immediate access to information and seniors who are learning to use Facebook to communicate with families and friends.

Yes, we are facing challenging times just as we have in the past. But this time, it may be fatal to our library's existence if we just wait and watch. Borders bookstores were faulted by some critics who said they waited too long for change and were no longer useful. Libraries across the nation, including Colorado, are closing their doors permanently, or reducing library hours.

It's time to assess how well our libraries are performing, not to justify excellent service, but to get a better idea of how every aspect of our library service is making a positive impact on our customers. It may be time to take a risk and try something different.

"The digital age is creating an information and communications renaissance. But it is not serving all Americans and their local communities equally. It is not yet serving democracy fully. How we react, individually and collectively, to this democratic shortfall will affect the quality of our lives and the very nature of our communities." - from *Informing Communities: Sustaining Democracy in the Digital Age* by the Knight Commission as found on the cover of the *Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study 2010-2011*

How will you accept the challenge? Will you be willing to risk change and confidently move forward?

Beth Hager, G3P Professional Member



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Last Newsletter!

G3P is discontinuing the newsletter format, making this the last issue. This and other back issues will continue to be available on the G3P web site.

All newsletter subscribers will automatically receive the Group3 Planners' blog e-mail notification, sharing the same type of information more often in smaller "byte-size" communications.

Thank You!!
 for Another
 Great Year

2011 Highlights

CAL Library of the Year:
 Green Valley Ranch Library
 Denver Public Library

Library Journal's
 Landmark Libraries:
 Wright Farms Anythink Library
 Rangeview Library District



Libraries are Terrific!!

2—Library Space Performance

The LRS (Library Research Service) offers a wealth of information and statistics about Colorado libraries. Most importantly, it offers the opportunity to compare between libraries on such measures as volumes per capita, circulation per capita, turnover rate, visits per capita and other measures which reflect the performance of libraries. While the square footage of the library is also listed as information, it is not used as part of any performance measure. Yet, the physical library is one of the key factors in library performance...how it welcomes and delights patrons, how materials are displayed, how different activities are accommodated...basically how it meets the needs of the community and staff in providing library services.

How can we tell if a library's space is performing well?

In 2010, Group3 Planners was hired by the Poudre Valley Library District (Fort Collins, CO) to do a workshop for the staff designed to stimulate creative thinking about the libraries.

The first task was to decide how the library space was actually performing. Often only the total circulation of a library is used to assess success: the higher the circulation, the more successful the library (and its space, supposedly). By this standard, the Downtown Main Library was out-performing the other two libraries.

However, when considering the circulation per public square foot, the Downtown Main Library actually ranked a distant second place.

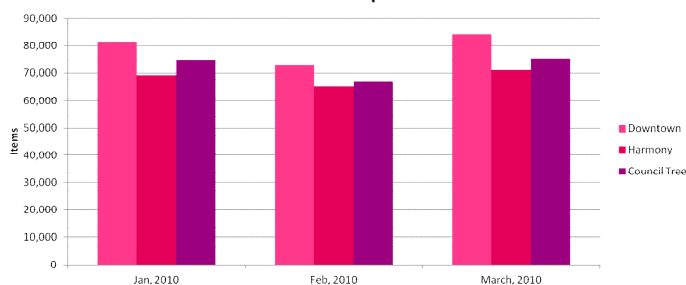
What is the meaning of circulation per public square foot? This is a measure of how well the quantity of space is "selling" its product. In this case, the Downtown Library was under-performing and the Council Tree Library was leading the way in performance.

This measure is not unlike the measures that commercial enterprises use when evaluating the performance of a retail store. Just recently, the King Soopers grocery store near where I live was renovated, increasing the square footage significantly to include sales areas for furniture, bedding, toys, baby furniture and clothes...areas not usually included in a grocery store. Though this store traditionally has been one of the top performing (read "top-profit") stores in the Denver metro area, you can be sure that management will be watching the effect of this additional space commitment and its performance as revenue per square foot. Additional space also means additional overhead over and above the cost of the real estate: floor staff, ordering/admin staff, fixtures, heating and cooling, staging (making the product enticing to generate sales).

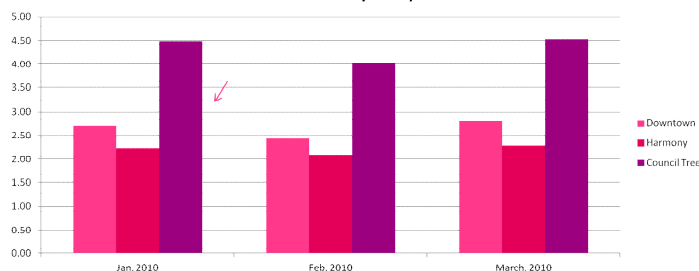
We have been experimenting with other measures that reveal the performance of library space. Each measure should assess the space in terms of the library's unique mission.

- Visits per square foot per hour
- Public square feet to Staff square feet

Items Circulated per Branch



Items Circulated per Square Foot





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Some of G3P's Projects In-Progress!

Idaho Springs Public Library
Idaho Springs, CO

Estes Valley Library
Estes Park, CO

Stapleton & West Side Libraries
Denver Public Library, Denver, CO

Carbondale Public Library

What New at G3P for 2012?

Musical Chairs!!

Mary Gulash is the new
Principal of Group3 Planners
and Interior Designer

Sharon Rowlen will continue
Planning and Space Planning

Beth Hager will continue
Planning and Collection Services

Same team, different chairs!

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by G3P blog.
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3—Shopping at the Library



So much has been written lately about branding and marketing. I've just finished several books on these topics and all of the information can make my head spin. None of these books were written with libraries in mind, but for stores like supermarkets, general retail and supercenters. I've been trying to digest it down to a few guidelines that will help in the planning of libraries. Not that I think the subjects are simple, they are not, but I wanted some guidelines as a starting point.

So here is what I have come up with. The language is more generic than what we usually use when talking about libraries, but the concepts are the same.

3 types of Shoppers

Quick- Short amount of time, covers a small area, slow walk, high-spending speed, very efficient

Fill in- Medium amount of time, covers medium area, slow walk, average spending speed, modestly efficient

Stock up- Long time, large area, fast walk, low-spending speed, lowest efficiency

Migration patterns—or how the average person moves through a space.

- Trips always start at the entrance and end at the checkout. (One good reason not to combine the checkout with other activities - creates bottleneck!)
- After pausing at the entrance, shoppers tend to move to the back of the store, especially if that pathway is broad and attractive.
- Once at the back, shoppers will tend to turn left, counterclockwise, and immediately begin to exhibit exit behavior.
- The appearance of a checkout stand on their left, at the front of the store, will attract many to move there.
- Several extra-wide aisles will hasten the growing rush to exit the store.

Interesting tidbits

- As a shopper's trip progresses, it takes less time for the shopper to make a selection.
- Most shoppers leave with just one item and half of all shopping trips results in purchasing 5 items or less.
- Eye focus level is 3-5 feet.
- Shoppers read very little, but respond to colors, shapes and images.
- Shoppers scan horizontally more than vertically.

It's not a big leap to see how these concepts can be applied to a library. We have all observed the different types of patrons that work their way through the library, now we have a way to catalog them and understand their needs. The migration patterns are not new, but several books reinforced these patterns and concluded that you can change the way we naturally want to move through a space. Finally, we need to make things easy for the patrons with simple signage at eye level and grouping of items for multiple selections.

By Mary Gulash, G3P Principal

