



Outdated? No way!

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Abstract

Due to innovative technology, libraries are increasingly becoming an afterthought to communities all around the world. All of the necessary resources are assumed to be able to be found on the internet. However, the scope of a library's impact goes beyond an academic platform. In an attempt to counteract the degresion of library participation, increased community involvement could be encouraged. After all, not only do libraries offer a harbor for literary and scholastic learning, but they also work to contribute towards the betterment of its local community. In the future, practical skills classes could be offered, partnerships between local businesses could be encouraged, and outreach programs could be implemented. With more local involvement, libraries can become the hearth of numerous communities.

Limitations

- Funds
 - Libraries have limited funds so it may restrict them from traveling to/hosting community events.
- Finding community events
 - In smaller towns, it may be more difficult to find events to partake in if there are not many to begin with.
- Short staffed
 - Smaller libraries may not have the amount of staff members needed to participate in community events and have the library open at the same time.
- Space
 - In smaller, older libraries, they may not have the space to host community events.

Introduction

Libraries have been dated back to 2600 BC. They started by housing tablets, but today are most known for their wide variety of novels, movies, and CD's. Over the past few years, public library usage has decreased due to the internet becoming more popular. In our Link to the Past, Gateway to the Future General Studies class, we have created an achievable plan to prevent public libraries from becoming extinct: more community involvement. This idea would go both ways; public libraries participating in more events in the community and hosting them as well.



Outreach programs can include mobile libraries.

Research

Many find that the lives of many libraries are coming to an end as community interest wanes. But the use of libraries goes beyond just the supplies of books.

- Libraries support the literacy of the homeless
- Provide spaces for community groups to gather
- Improve quality of life and are a good use of tax revenue
- Support productivity and cultural engagement
- Safe space for many people
- Provide technology to those who do not have access
- Create a healthy and involved community

Proposed Ideas

- Classes offered to the community that teach practical skills, challenge intellectual ideas, and introduce unique activities
 - These classes could include: fitness, digital literacy, job interview preparation, leadership building, and more.
- Partnerships between libraries and community businesses. An example could be a local bank hosting a money skills class
 - This will promote involvement among the community and in turn will increase library attendance and participation.
- Outreach programs that aid members of the local city
 - Mobile libraries could drive books to community members or to a collective location for those who cannot get to the library.
- Increased advertisements throughout the community
 - Getting the word out is crucial to informing the public about a library's happenings. Brochures at the grocery and posters in local restaurants are possible examples.

Trends that Impact Library Development

The technological age is causing people to lose interest in libraries. Ebooks are becoming more common and allowing readers to access books on their electronic devices. This is lowering the number of library users.

On the other hand, libraries are changing their focus to better fit the community. Libraries are starting to offer different classes and activities to unite the community they are in and further educate the citizens of the community. Community events include anything from advancing your artistic abilities to furthering your knowledge in the kitchen. Library activities include a wide range of interests for all different ages. These activities can include a weekly storytime for adolescents all the way to showing programs for veterans.

Another change libraries are making is the societal advances they are making. Libraries are allowing readers to do a self-checkout system. This allows library users to have a quick and efficient way to acquire books and return them. To slow things down, many libraries are inserting cafes and bakeries. This allows readers to enjoy their book along with a snack and refreshment.



Digital Literacy classes will benefit community members of all ages.

Conclusion

Libraries, in an era where technology and the internet is becoming a staple in many people's lives, are often not the center of attention for many communities. This has led to fears that libraries could begin to disappear over the next two decades. Community involvement with local libraries will help to counter this trend. Therefore we urge libraries to increase the amount of community based activities that are hosted by libraries, and at the same time, urge communities to increase their participation with libraries. In creating a mutually beneficial relationship between libraries and communities, we may increase the longevity of these facilities.



Community partnerships such as the fire department will promote both the library and local businesses.

Sources:



https://docs.google.com/document/d/14nRAMJk9Kv6AooMh6240J6ShuGMLo61LRsf6t_MY