

Challenges / Issues

- Funding
 - County funding threatened
 - How to pay for new technology?
 - Struggling to offer fair pay and benefits to staff
- Demographics
 - Communities are changing:
 - shift in numbers of children (decrease) but not necessarily library use by children (increase)
 - more older adults
 - income levels increasing in some areas
 - High(er) expectations of new residents and weekenders, especially those from the NY metro area
 - Weekend hours
 - Issue of their being “non-voting taxpayers” – convincing them to vote up here is important to libraries
 - “Don’t understand why other library has something I don’t”
 - Will shop around for library service, are not loyal to local library
 - Impact on plans for new buildings?
- Facility
 - Space constraints for programming
 - Are less people using the library thanks to electronic resources available via Internet
- Collection
 - Circ of print materials is dropping
 - How to translate shifts in demographics for collection development
 - How to gauge local demand for materials
 - Local History
 - Struggling with proper storage solutions for local history collection that don’t block expedient access
 - How to store non-book items
 - Barriers to digitization; funds, staff know-how
 - These unique resources are an opportunity for libraries; could be a big draw to the library’s web site
- Reference
 - Genealogy vs. local history
 - High demand for genealogy assistance; how to work with historical societies
- Technology
 - Remote users of library services
 - Increase in number of remote users of library services; less use of the building?
 - How to track these “unseen” patrons? Demonstrating value.
 - High number of people using the library’s computers to access the Internet
 - Increase in the need for staff training on technology/electronic resources

- Wi-fi networks bring in non-traditional users; best practices for implementing this
- Technology advancements roll in fast – how to keep up with staff training and funding
- Old technologies not phasing out
- Need help with making decisions about technology implementation/purchase
- Programming
 - Need better mechanisms for registration for tracking and PR purposes
 - Increased demand for story hours / kids programming (especially toddler programs)
 - Burden on staff and budget
- PR/Marketing
 - How to talk about being “more than just books”
 - How to communicate/demonstrate value with/to “virtual patrons” (i.e. heavy remote users)

System Services

- Delivery & Millennium: #1
- Need staff training held more locally, more often – training needs to come to the library not the other way around
- Staff levels at libraries is stagnant, need help to deal with this trend
- Less need for rotating collection
- County based need for a professional lobbyist
- Important to work towards implementing new services (i.e. downloadable audiobooks) system-wide rather than by who can afford it / “universal implementation”
- Important to continue to offer knowledgeable staff that are available via phone/email
- Continued need for educational opportunities for directors, staff and trustees

How do you define quality service?

- Strive to be a truly democratic institution – serve all who need you with consistent customer service
- Good customer service
 - Do the best we can to provide patrons with the resource they need
 - Staff is well educated about library services and resources, comfortable with the technology offered in the library; have solid patron interview skills
 - Good communication to patron about our ability to meet their expectations
 - Staff is nice and helpful; “go the extra mile”; exceed patron expectations
 - Walk a patron to and through the resource they need; follow through and make sure they found everything they need
 - Help patron to take the next step, especially if you can’t find exactly what they’ve asked for
 - Staff is taken care of with fair pay, benefits, flexible schedules
- Trustees understand and respect staff’s working conditions; “be a circ clerk for a day”