

# YourLibrary is YourSpace...from a Designer's Viewpoint!

Sharon Rowlen, Group3 Planners LLC

ALA Conference, Anaheim, CA | June 30, 2008

**YOURLIBRARY IS YOURSPACE**


Using research methods to make our libraries people places  
*....a Designer's Viewpoint!*



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**Qualitative...**

- ⊗ Soft
- ⊗ Individual opinions
- ⊗ Elusive
- ⊗ Lacking foundation of data.



**Why pursue qualitative data?**

- ⊗ Illumination
- ⊗ Potential for revolutionary change
- ⊗ Behaviors vs. opinions
- ⊗ Beyond the expected
- ⊗ People cannot see beyond what they can see
- ⊗ Future vs. performance orientation
- ⊗ Change management.

**Qualitative data disguised as quantitative...**

Q - Which interior features of the library are most important ?

Selection
Quiet, comfortable area for reading or study
Adequate lighting
Separate enclosed children's story and program area
Study or research space for small groups
More better computer access to the internet
Individual study desks
Larger reference area
Area of the facility dedicated to local history
Meeting room available for public use
Gallery to showcase local arts
Other

*Qualitative data disguised as quantitative...*

Selection	Response	%
Quiet, comfortable area for reading or study	177	28%
Adequate lighting	88	14%
Separate enclosed children's story and program area	91	14%
Study or research space for small groups	29	5%
More better computer access to the internet	79	13%
Individual study desks	33	5%
Larger reference area	28	4%
Area of the facility dedicated to local history	16	3%
Meeting room available for public use	44	7%
Gallery to showcase local arts	30	5%
Other	15	2%
SUM	630	

*The underlying stats...*

Age Range	Qty	%
Under 18	13	5%
18-24	10	4%
25-34	33	14%
35-44	52	22%
45-64	95	40%
65 or Older	37	15%
SUM	240	

# of Children in Household	Qty	%
None	148	61%
One	39	16%
Two	41	17%
Three	10	4%
Four	3	1%
Five or more	1	1%
SUM	242	



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*This library will look like...*

- ⊗ Separate reading room
- ⊗ Children's library with doors and direct access to a story-telling space
- ⊗ More computers
- ⊗ Expanded or static reference materials
- ⊗ Individual study carrels
- ⊗ Study rooms.

## **Qualitative data disguised as quantitative...**

Q - Which exterior features of the library are most important?

Selection	Response	%
Adequate parking	180	27%
Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility	32	5%
Ease of vehicular/public transportation access	28	4%
Proximity to schools	23	3%
Exterior character appropriate to vicinity	51	8%
Energy efficiency	74	11%
Accessible book drop	170	26%
Easy to find location	96	14%
Other	11	2%
SUM	665	

## **The point is...**

Quantitative data looks AT what has happened or is happening today

- Evaluation of services and performance
- Evaluation of existing facility
- How we are doing.



## **The point is...**



Qualitative data looks FOR solutions to needs and what does not exist today.

- Envisioning services to fill tomorrow's needs
- Envision spaces to support those services
- What we should be doing?

## **In search of qualitative data..**

- ⊗ Visioning – to establish the focus
- ⊗ Scenarios – to bring substance to the vision
  - Process
  - Behaviors
  - Future-Think
- ⊗ Building Programming – to develop data from qualitative information.

## **Visioning & Scenarios**

- ⊗ Focus groups
- ⊗ Ask
  - What should be the library's major roles?
  - What is happening now?
  - What could happen?
  - How might that role dramatically change in the future?
  - How will the library building support that role?



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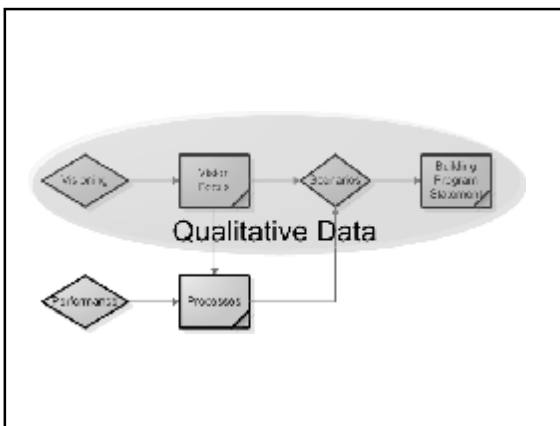
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Vision: Celebrate diversity, Connect to the Online World, Create Young Readers

## And then...

Previous Selection	Focus Group Scenario
Quiet, comfortable area for reading or study	Seating in commons area to encourage gathering, places for laptops (individual and check-out)
Adequate lighting	Non-glare lighting for computer screens, varied lighting for different areas and especially young reader areas
Separate enclosed children's story and program area	Encourage interactive and innovative reading spaces in children's with appropriate noise containment
Study or research space for small groups	Provide a diversity of meeting/study spaces, both informal and formal with gaming and computer interactive spaces...for both adults and children
More better computer access to the internet	Support increased connectivity with check-out laptops, mobile laptop tables, outdoor spaces with connectivity, state-of-the-art meeting and communication spaces

Previous Selection	Focus Group Scenario
Individual study desks	Allow for individual study and group interaction in a variety of settings: cyber café, chairs with tablet arms, modular tables for reconfiguration
Larger reference area	Train patrons in use of online databases, electronically accessible information. Provide minimum of in-library reference materials.
Area of the facility dedicated to local history	Celebrate diversity through supportive collections and changing displays.
Meeting room available for public use	Design expanded community meeting, performance and event space to allow cultural activities and special learning events...with connectivity.
Gallery to showcase local arts	Extend the "gallery" to outside spaces with materials and images promoting diversity.
Other	...



## Case Study of "This Library"

<h3>Challenge</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Demand for services growing faster than resources</li> <li>⊗ Patrons want more popular materials ...sooner</li> <li>⊗ Patron changing expectations.</li> </ul>	<h3>Approach</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Create a new model for services and physical space</li> <li>⊗ Become responsive , flexible and maintain relevance</li> <li>⊗ Popular library component.</li> </ul>
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## Case Study

- ⊗ Olives vs. potatoes
- ⊗ Bird-watching
- ⊗ Door Knobs
- ⊗ Murphy's Airport
- ⊗ Instant Coffee Shop



**Staff Focus Groups**

## Case Study

**Marketing:**

- Targeting users
- Unique merchandising
- Incentives to bring in friends
- Personal service
- Freebies, special event coupons
- Signs that speak the brand, identify the concept
- Establish quality service, point of service
- Reader's advisory
- Use website
- Newsletter – mailings and online
- Contests, reading programs
- Polish up stock



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## Case Study

- Service:**
- Have what people want and address their needs (amenities beyond the collection)
  - Extended hours
  - Hi tech and mobile technology (wireless) (email notifications and information) (take charge cards) (website) (Internet access)
  - Knowledgeable, friendly staff and competent, individualized service
  - First contact – hit them @ the door with help
  - Use staff talents to enhance programming
  - Programs relative to current issues/needs (workshops)
  - Food
  - Predictable inventory

## Case Study

- Space:**
- Comfortable, inviting space, clean, orderly, attractive, good flow, good lighting, "a place you want to hang out in," not a warehouse, decorated and merchandized well, unique, interesting, cozy, lots of comfortable chairs, homey, welcoming, intuitive design, calm, good place to study, use multipurpose furniture to maximize the space. Homey, welcoming, lots of plants
  - Computers that link to local schools (& what they are currently studying.)
  - Soft music (just in living room?)
  - Center of community for activities, music, etc.
  - Teen area
  - Multiple service areas (checkin, circ, ref)
  - Drive through services
  - Electronic displays
  - Area to have games, play chess
  - Art displays
  - Food

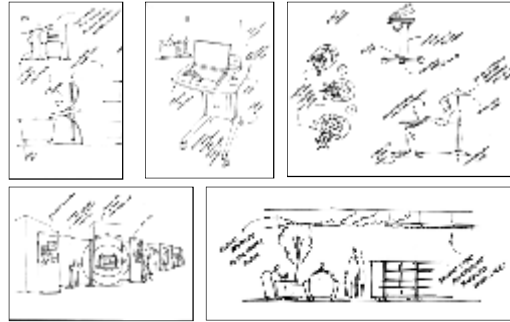
## Case Study

- Love the library!
- Great read/gathering spot
- Hot books, CDs DVD
- Technology is "big"
- Staff is the greatest asset



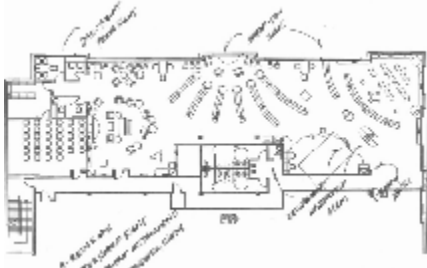
Patron  
Focus  
Groups

## Case Study



genesis, Denver, Colorado

## Case Study



## Case Study



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## Case Study



## Case Study



## Take it to the Limits!!



*Is the "sky"  
REALLY the  
limit?*

