

TRADING SPACES: Everyday Transformations



Mount Laurel
Library

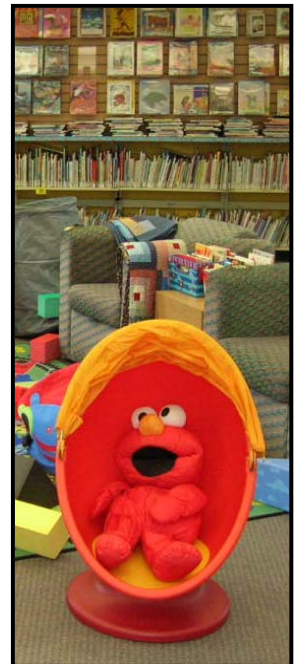
Maintain Merchandising Momentum @ Your Library

Public Library Association
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Mount Laurel Library, NJ



Trading Spaces Project



Brainchild

- Karen Hyman, South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative
- Norma Blake, New Jersey State Library

Reinvent library environments



- Create exciting and fun destinations
- Use retail strategies
- Allow food and drink in the library

Transform existing space



- Variety of low-cost techniques
- Market library's collections and services
- Change how the library is perceived

Trading Spaces Project

- Ideas to transform libraries immediately
- \$45,000 budget
- 9 month timeline



Slat wall

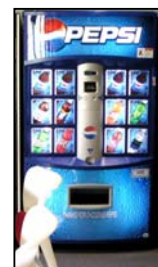
Fun

What happened: New zones

- Movies & Music
- Audiobook Avenue
- Marketplace
- Popular Nonfiction
- Internet Café
- Slatwall Shelf Ends
- Juvenile
- Living Room
- Family Room
- Young Adults

What happened: New services

- Vending machines
- Entertainment DVDs
- Circulate all magazines
- Disperse catalogs
- Wireless network
- Self checkout



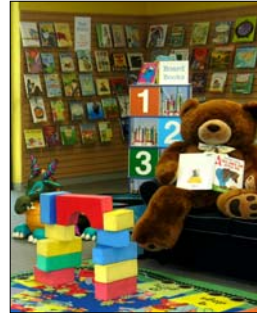
What happened: New staff roles

- All staff merchandise the collection
- All staff have public service roles

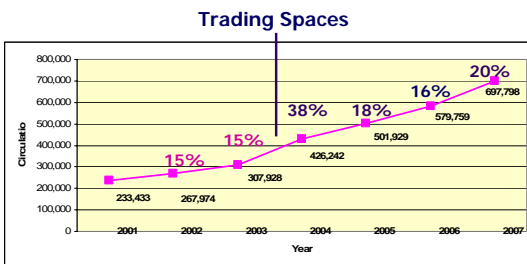


What didn't happen

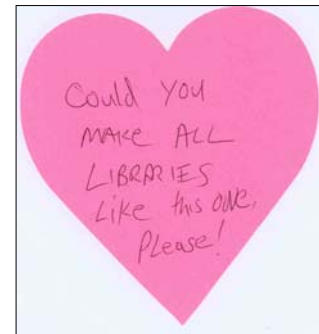
- No major construction
- No disruption in public service



Circulation zoomed



- Positive customer feedback



Library

Built in 1975
11,000 square ft.



Expanded in 1991
33,000 square ft.



Fast Facts about Mount Laurel

- Population: 42,000
- Building: 33,000 square feet
- Collection: 137,000 items (2007)
- Circulation: 698,000 (2007)
- Budget: \$2,100,000 (2007)
\$339,000 materials (2007)
- Staff: 22 full time equivalents
- Open: 67 hours per week
- Location: East of Philadelphia

Transforming staff

- Transforming space means transforming behavior

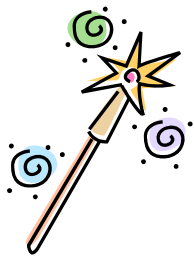


Transforming staff behavior

- You can't change everything and continue to act in the same ways



Everyday transformations



- New staff roles: Merchandiser Greeter
- Morning Briefing
- Talking Points
- Walk About

Merchandising success

- Keep displays full
- Mix of spines/covers
- No empty slat wall
- Everyone helps



Use retail fixtures



Gondola



CD Browser

Source: www.franklinfixtures.com

Use retail techniques

- Slat wall
- Display holders
- Signs
- Posters



Source for display holders: www.cleardisplays.com

Merchandising 101 training


- Who: Every one
- What/How: Keep displays looking full
- Where: Choose different areas
- When: Every day (self managed)
30 minutes daily (5 minutes each hour)
- Why: To better serve customers

Easy Merchandising Maintenance

- Face out on top
- Several deep for browsing
- Bottom shelf used to fill in display




Easy to refill displays



- List on back of sign

Easy Merchandising Maintenance



Two books deep Slide it over




Standards

- Tip sheets
- Email tips
- Recommended: Merchandising Strategies www.lvn.org



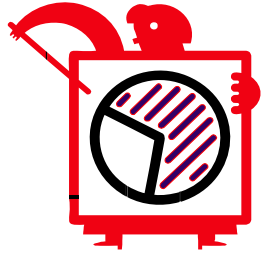
Greeters

- Mobile knowledgeable staff available to help customers




How we communicate

- Words 7%
- Voice 38%
- Body Language 55%



Greeters

- Involve all staff
- Rotating 1-hour shifts
- ASK ME buttons
- Tally clickers for statistics on the fly
- Promotes cross-training



We're much easier to approach when we're floating around where the customers are, rather than them coming to us.

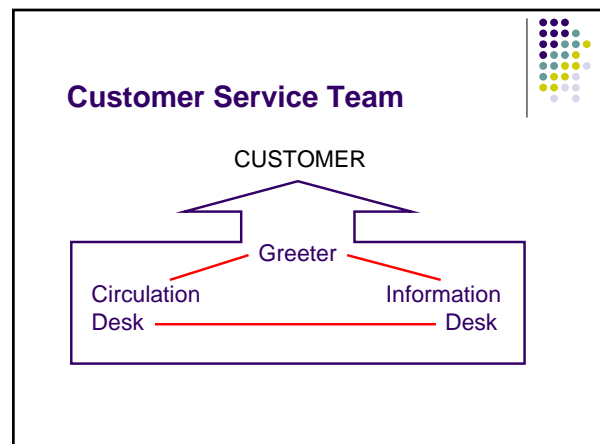
Being a greeter affords the "behind the scenes" staff the opportunity to interact with the public.

How to hand off a question

? Accompany customer to staff

S Summarize their question

K Keep staff informed about what you've done
(for example, catalog search terms)



Morning briefings



Morning briefings

- 15 minutes before opening
- Who's out?
- What's happening?



Morning briefings



- Gather in different areas of the library
- Greeter & Meeting Room schedules
- Follow-up email to all staff

Morning briefings

- Mini-training opportunities
- Rotating responsibility among departments



It's become our every morning wake-up call!

It's such a great way for all of us to stay informed about each other's projects, achievements, announcements, new haircuts...

Talking Points

- Audience: staff and customers
- Short, positive message
- States the library point of view
- Repeat often

Our Talking Points

1. Community asked us for this
2. It makes the best use of resources
3. We'll make adjustments as needed
4. It's just a makeover... we're still a library
5. Merchandising is part of our job

Merchandise everything! Holds



Friends Book Sales



Friends Book Sales



Reference



Expect continual change



Bumps on the way


- Merchandising takes more shelf space
- Weeding is essential



Bumps along the way



Create zones for noise and quiet



Phone Zone


Cell phones calls & conversation are welcome in the

- Lobby
- Internet Café
- Children's & Young Adult Areas

Other areas are Quiet Zones

Thanks for your consideration

Quiet Zone



Cell phones calls & conversation are welcome in the Lobby, Internet Café and Children's Area

Bumps along the way



- Expanding popular media collections


Bumps along the way

- Crowding fixtures
- Lost sightlines
- Is this display worthy?




Bumps on the way

- What looks "good"
- What's my job?



Walk-About

- Walk through library before morning briefing
- Twice a week
- Rotate responsibility among staff

Taking a Walk-About 

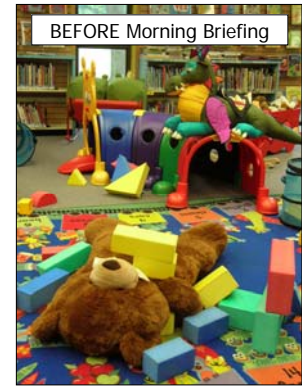
1. What area of the library looks the best from a merchandising point of view?
All the Briefing! Everyone contributes for keeping it great!

2. What area of the library needs immediate attention to merchandising?
Most in that area for today's morning briefing. At the briefing, ask staff to work on it in that area immediately after the briefing.

3. What area of the library we need to be aware of for further merchandising, today or tomorrow?
This is an area that we'll need to attend to next.

Walk-About

- What looks best (*thank staff*)
- Needs help now (*meet there tidy after briefing*)
- Needs help next




Unexpected delights


- Staff feels more like a team
- Board, staff and customers have renewed pride in the library
- Friends permanent book sale... inside and out
- Positive selling point in recruiting new staff and interns



Be Inviting



Be Exciting



Be Comfortable



Be Involving




Be Approachable



Make an impact: Take your pick

- “You can’t leap the chasm taking baby steps.
Baby steps will kill you.”

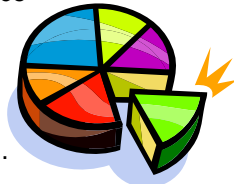
--Dave Genesys



Make an impact: Take your pick

If you can't do it all at once

take it one piece
at a time,
do that really well,
and then keep going ...



www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces



Mount Laurel
Library

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For more information, resources and listserv:
www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces

About the Trading Spaces Project

The Trading Spaces Project was an initial creation of the South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative and the New Jersey State Library. The goal of the project was to reinvent a library environment through use of retail merchandising practices. The \$45,000 budget for the project was a three-way split from the State Library, SJRLC, and the Mount Laurel Library.

SJRLC used additional funds to retain the services of Dave Genesy, Director of the Redwood City (CA) Public Library and the premier library merchandising consultant in the US, as consultant to the project. In addition, the Mount Laurel Library redirected local funds for new collections and services to support the project.

About the Trading Spaces Project

"The Mount Laurel Library has succeeded beyond our wildest dreams with the Trading Spaces Project," says Karen Hyman, Executive Director of the South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative. "We are anxious to see the full impact on use and satisfaction of their customers and transformation of more libraries in NJ."

To further the goals of the project, SJRLC Assistant Director, Peter Bromberg, has developed a Trading Spaces Resource Page at www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces.