

Trading Spaces

How to change the world in a hurry
with the money you have right now

*Anatomy of a Successful Project:
View from Mount Laurel Library*

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What "Trading Spaces" meant to Mount Laurel Library

- Not *what* we did
- *How* we managed the project



Fast Facts about Mount Laurel

- Population: 42,000
- Library Building: 33,000 square feet
- Collection: 114,000 items (2005)
- Circulation: 496,000 (2005)
- Budget: \$1,700,000 (2005)
\$213,000 materials
- Staff: 22 full time equivalents
- Open: 67 hours per week

Library built in 1975

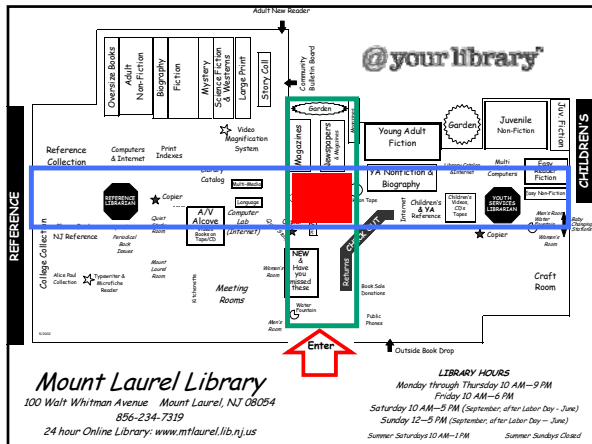


Expanded in 1991



From strategic plan focus groups:

*"Think of the library as
Mount Laurel's Main Street.
A place for community meetings,
music, books, computers, events,
etc..."*



Trading Spaces

- Variety of techniques
- Different cost levels
- Ideas that could help transform libraries immediately

Slat wall
Fun

What happened: New areas in the library

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

What happened: New services

- Entertainment DVDs
- Circulate all magazines
- Public catalogs through building
- Vending machines
- Wireless network installed
- Self checkout

What happened: New staff roles


- All staff merchandise the collection
- All staff have a public service role as Greeter

What we learned: Each audience has unique needs

- Customers
- Staff
- Board
- Library community
- Funding partners


Customers want...

- Collections, comfort, convenience
- Spaces designed to fit their needs




Listen to your customers

- Focus groups were asked...
"What would an amazing library look like to you?"



Listen to your customers

- Ask for feedback from customers in many ways
- Act on great suggestions
- Use positive quotes

May we quote you?

May we share your comments about our library, along with pictures and books, with others?

Sharing your comments on this sheet gives the Mount Laurel Library permission to quote you, including your name and town. For example, we might use quotes for our newsletter, in support of grant applications, or in articles about the library.

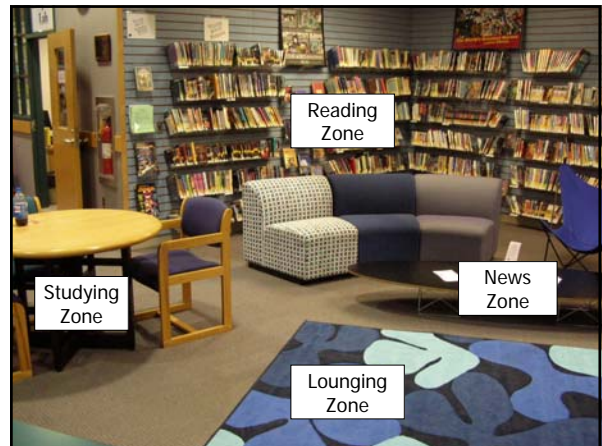
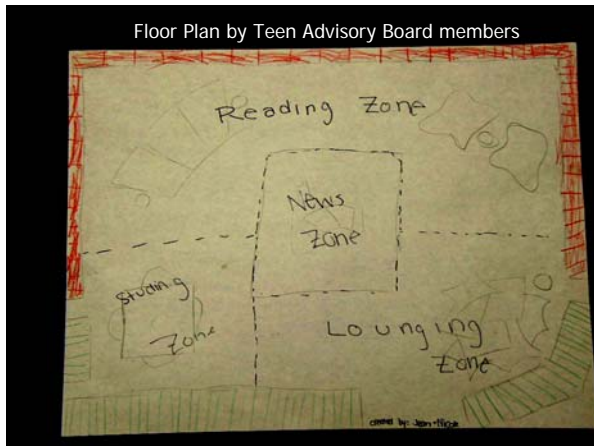
Thanks for your help!

Name _____

Phone _____

Program _____ Are you a library member? Yes! No

Date _____



Staff want to...

- Feel included
- Be kept informed
- Have their opinion heard
- Be trained



Listen to your staff

- Walk-throughs library with staff:
 - What makes it hard or easy to find your way in the library?
 - What's on your Wish List?
 - What changes would you like to see?

**Getting Staff Buy-in:
Developing your team**

- All staff levels, departments (many voices, many ears)
- Use sub-teams to bring others on board
- Develop talking points for staff to use with the public



- ### Key messages for staff
- Customers asked us for this
 - It makes the best use of our tax dollars, our collection, our space and our staff
 - It's a makeover ... we're still a library

- ### The Board likes ...
- \$2 matched to every local \$1
 - Meeting goals of strategic plan
 - Positive community reaction
 - Demonstrating library leadership and innovation

Customers say:

I just love the displays of the books and tapes

It's nice to know we are evolving with new ideas, creativity and decorative ideas to invite more visitors and readership

I think this is the coolest library ever!



- ### Library Community wants...
- Ideas to use in *my library ... with the money I have*
 - To see new service models in action
 - To know: How can I get *my staff* to do this?
 - To ask someone who's had practical experience




Sharing practical experience

- Demonstration project
- Workshops
- Tours, Staff Day site
- Project Web site
- Training materials
- Local/state/national programs
- Articles

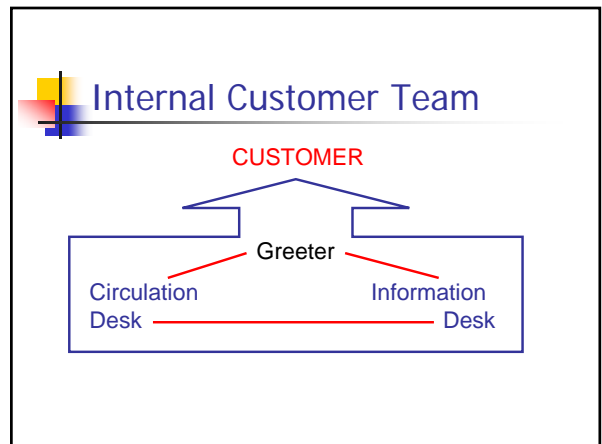
What we learned:
Physical drives the behavioral

- To practice pro-active customer service
- To bring staff to customers, rather than make customers come to staff



What we learned:
Physical drives the behavioral

- Create mobile staff roles, such as the Greeter
- It's easy to buy furniture
It's harder to change behavior



New staff role


Greeter

- Mobile, knowledgeable staff available to help customers



Greeters

- Involves all staff
- Rotating 1-hour shifts
- ASK ME buttons
- Part of customer service team with Circulation and Info Desk staff



Merchandising and Greeters

Training handouts and PowerPoint available online:

www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces




www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces



Funding partners want...


- To see results
- Success stories
- Information they can use



What does success look like?

- Impact on circulation and customer satisfaction
- Before and after photos
- Success stories, positive quotes
- Impact on other libraries

Our circulation zoomed



- First year: 39% rise
 - 17% DVDs
 - 2% Magazines
 - 20% Increase from Merchandising
- Second year: 18% increase

DVDs on slat wall

Impact on other libraries

- 90% made a change
- 74% created displays
- 51% added new media formats



Princeton Public Library created **displays with street appeal** to "catch the eye of passers-by and perhaps **lure them into the library.**"




Camden County Library: Vogelson Branch **created a new Teen Zone**

Collect success stories

- Know what makes your funding partners look good
- Supply them with usable material throughout (and after) the project
- Share all stories, quotes, pictures, media coverage and emails with them

Impact on librarians

Pam Collins, MLS
--Former Account Executive for Reference USA



Thanks again for spending time and showing me around your library. You had more of an impact on me than you can imagine!

Impact on Pam Collins, MLS

I left your library and cried in my car
I was so inspired by what you are doing.
You helped me realize how passionate I felt
about libraries and how much I missed them.

Thank you for inspiring me to get back into libraries.
I start Oct. 4, 2004 as the Director of the Scott
County Library System in Iowa. I am so excited to be
getting back to my field.

Celebrate Success

- Celebrate milestones through emails, meetings, staff and public events



One year anniversary



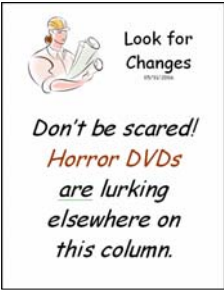
Celebrate with Staff!

Communications Tips


- All communications are marketing opportunities
- Think publications, rather than reports
- Acknowledge funding partners *on everything*

Communication Tips

- Common graphic alerts customers and staff as areas transform



Give people a WOW experience




If you do a Trading Spaces project in your area...

- Create partnerships through shared funding
- Develop expertise to share with others
- Do a project website
- Acknowledge it's an ongoing effort

Leap the chasm!

- "You can't leap the chasm taking baby steps. Baby steps will kill you."

--Dave Genesy



Credit where credit's due...

- Mount Laurel Library Board of Trustees
- Dave Genesy, consultant
- South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative
Karen Hyman, Executive Director
Peter Bromberg, Program Coordinator
- New Jersey State Library
Norma Blake, State Librarian

Mount Laurel Library Team



Thank you!

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

More 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.



More 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 Program Coordinator, Peter Bromberg, has developed a Trading Spaces Resource Page at www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces.