June 2008

End Users Speak Out: The Users Expectations! -- Bigger and Better Library Services

Adrian Y. Tinsley

College of Charleston, tinsleya@cofc.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>

Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Tinsley, Adrian Y. (2008) "End Users Speak Out: The Users Expectations! -- Bigger and Better Library Services," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 20: Iss. 3, Article 27.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.2419>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

It's surprising how few colleges across the country routinely schedule ongoing film festivals and series based on films from their collection that already have public performance rights. Need additional reasons to help secure your media budget? Schedule an ongoing film festival using the films you already own, bring in the crowds, and tout the many reasons why your budget should continue. Public librarians seem to understand this already, but the college media librarians need to come on board. If you don't have the time, then encourage student groups within your college or university community to do so. Remember, admission is not permitted and therefore it won't raise funds for the library or a special cause, but it will raise awareness and educate which is your primary purpose and role.

Where do you turn to figure out what interesting new titles you wish to acquire? There are lots of places aside from the tried and true to use. In a shameless self plug, try the **Ambassador Media Services** Website

(www.absbook.com). Each month I cull together a listing of selected new releases for both feature films and documentaries. This is not a listing of everything released. But it is a listing of what I think is the best and most relevant to a college or university media collection. The vast majority of the items listed are from distributors such as **First Run/Icarus Films**, **Films Media Group**, **Cinema Guild**, **Filmmakers Library** and **PBS** (not **PBS Home Video**), to name just a few. All provide public performance rights when you purchase them. Additionally, search **OneSource**, our online database manager, for thousands of titles that have been gathered together over the past decade. You'll find titles in a wide array of disciplines from anthropology, communications, business and management, various diversity studies and globalization, to nursing and guidance materials.

Another untapped source for selecting media materials is your own college bookstore. It can be quite useful to look through the aisles and see what books have been assigned for the students to purchase for their class readings. Additionally, you can read the course description guide for more clues about the

classes being taught at your institution. Both are great ways to beef up weak areas of your collection by matching up library holdings with what's actually taught in the classroom. If you do begin a film series or festival, then you can target experts on campus and invite them to introduce the film or lead a discussion following the screening.

Finally, use the **OCLC Online Union Catalog**, now better known as **WorldCat**. When a faculty member asks you for a title you don't already have, it should be the first place you turn to in order to find distributor information. But it's also useful for subject searching and helping to determine what old and new materials have been created in specific fields. The downside is that you are dependent on catalogers and cannot be absolutely certain that they've correctly identified the appropriate subject headings for the material. But that's a topic for another column.

So, in this election year of change, let's get moving and start to have film festivals and series across the nation. After all, beige may be a great neutral color but it's not very flattering. 🌱

End Users Speak Out: The Users Expectations!

Bigger and Better Library Services

by **Adrian Y. Tinsley** (Reference & Outreach Librarian, Addlestone Library, College of Charleston, 66 George St., Charleston, SC 29401; Phone: 843-953-8085) <tinsleya@cofc.edu>

The purpose of this column is to provide some insight as to how students perceive and expect the library to be in terms of services and structure of the library building. The intent is to provide an outlet which enables users to voice their opinions, concerns, and desires as to what they expect from an academic library. Each of these columns will strive to deliver something new and different from the users' expectations and point of view.

Academic libraries are constantly challenging themselves to discover new and innovative ways to attract and increase the number of students, faculty, and staff that utilize their facility and services. From virtual reference, library instruction, outreach, and in-house coffee shops and cafés, academic libraries are competing to stay afloat of the most hip and popular library trends. But one may ask, why are these trends so important, challenging, and at the same time, demanding? Mainly

because the only thing in life that remains constant is change. Change is one of the most important and consistent elements in the field of librarianship.

Librarians attend conferences, workshops, meetings and roundtables trying to determine what new services to offer their patrons and campus community. The one thing that all librarians have in common, regardless of whether they are public librarians, special librarians, or academic librarians: they are always challenging themselves to provide bigger and better library services to their users. There are many factors involved that cause these challenges to arise on a continuous basis. With the competition and new wave of **Google**, **Barnes & Noble**, and the **Millennial Generation**, it tends to be a daunting task for librarians and administrators to stay on top of their game. Librarians have to battle constantly with new ideas and creative ways to attract and reach their users.

With this being the case, how do librarians and administrators know what their users and patrons want? Is it by attending the annual and midwinter conferences and roundtables, the traditional weekly and monthly staff meetings, or, is it a set of end-user focus groups put into place to survey the client base?

Truth of the matter is that librarians and administrators have done all of the above and more to try to satisfy their users. Being an Outreach & Reference Librarian, I have the opportunity to interact one-on-one with many students of all classes, sexes, and races. They all have one major common request of the library, **24-hour access!** When randomly asked "what is the one thing that you would like to see the **Addlestone Library** improve on?," the **College of Charleston** student population (indeed every student asked) answered the question: "stay open 24 hours."

So, the next big question is: "why 24-hour access?" The library currently stays open until 2 AM Sunday through Thursday during the fall and spring semesters and 24/7 during the peek periods of finals for 2 ½ weeks at the end of each semester. In addition to those hours, the library actively participates in several different forms of virtual reference — Text a Librarian, IM a Librarian and Email a Librarian — providing students with additional outlets to contact librarians for research help and questions. But students argue that's not enough! It's not the issue of contacting and communicating with a librarian, it's an issue of having limited hours of access to the

continued on page 75

ALL GREAT MEDICAL DISCOVERIES BEGIN WITH A MOUSE.

RITTENHOUSE

R₂

DIGITAL
LIBRARY

The R2 Digital Library is an electronic book platform that offers a unique business model for digital content. It enables the purchase of individual resources from multiple publishers, on one platform. The R2 Digital Library offers access to more than 400 searchable health science titles from 25 health science publishers.

www.R2Library.com

SIGN UP TODAY FOR A FREE 30-DAY TRIAL.

End Users Speak Out from page 74

building, resources, computers, and the overall collections. Students want to have the ability to utilize the library building at their leisure, without any time restrictions or constraints. I think many of the students believe the library is not only a place to study and do homework, but it's also a neutral, safe meeting place for students to congregate and relax. It's quite interesting to hear the rhyme and reasoning as to why so many students on campus would like to have 24-hour access to the **Addlestone Library**. Many of the students simply made the innocent assumption that all college librar-

ies stayed open 24 hours. Other students feel that it would be a nice accommodation for the library to remain open 24/7.

With all the requests for 24/7 access to the **Addlestone Library**, will the deans, administrators, and librarians comply? Fortunately, students don't expect this change to happen overnight. There are too many logistics and politics that come into play when planning and preparing for 24/7 access. The need for additional staffing, budgeting, security, and safety issues are just some of the minimum concerns. The staff must make sure the library building is as safe as possible at all times for students.

So, is this an idea that students should accept as never becoming a reality? Only time

and patience will determine the answer to that question. As for students speaking out on what they want and expect from the library, many of their requests and demands will become an immediate reality, whereas other requests will require a little more planning and patience.

All of us librarians love getting feedback and input from our users, and we strive to deliver the best services and resources possible. So please stay tuned, as I plan to meet with more students to see what else our users would like to see happen here at the **Marlene & Nathan Addlestone Library**. And I would welcome all of your comments and input as I continue my quest. Thank you! 🍌

Little Red Herrings — How Do You Like Your Librarianship: Straight-up or Blended?

by **Mark Y. Herring** (Dean of Library Services, Dacus Library, Winthrop University) <herringm@winthrop.edu>

For, oh, the last 100-plus years, academic librarianship has changed very little. Yes, I know, there is such a thing as **Google**, and we do have that thing called the Web. I'm not dismissing — or dissing — those facets of our work. But for the better

part of the last 100+/- years, academic librarianship hasn't changed all that much: we've just added new chores to the same old routines. For most of our history, we have been as siloistic as the professoriate in which we serve and work: reference,

cataloging, monographs, serials. Even though it has begun to change, if **Dewey** — **Melville**, of course, not **John** — were to read many of today's job titles, I doubt he'd be very surprised, or even puzzled. As far as the structure goes, it's pretty much librarianship served straight-up or neat, as it were.

Maybe we need not be too hard on our profes-

continued on page 76