What’s the Big Idea?

Perceptions and expectations of the public library brand: an international perspective

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American, UK & Canadian public library brand concepts

Case studies: cautionary tales of brand decline in American public library systems

Case study: United Kingdom ‘Idea Stores’ and the impact on the public library brand

The Canadian experience: delivering the brand promise of community builder
Provocative questions...

What does the public library brand promise its customers?

Does the public library brand deliver on that promise?

What happens when the promise and the perception no longer match?
...and final thoughts.

The 7 signs of healthy brands…and 7 signs of brands in decline

Beyond books: implications of the OCLC report *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*

Take it from us (significant ‘ah ha’ moments at the Hamilton Public Library)
The Branding Primer

Why invest in expensive marketing courses?
Here’s what you really need to know…
Branding: an executive summary

A brand is:

A tattoo commonly shaped like an ‘X’ that ranchers apply to the backside of cows...
Branding revisited

According to the American Marketing Association, a brand is:

– a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.

In the simplest possible terms, a brand is a promise and an expectation.
The Value Equation

Value = \frac{\text{Benefits}}{\text{Costs}}

= \frac{\text{Functional + emotional benefits}}{\text{Monetary costs + time costs + energy costs + psychic costs}}
The choice is yours
When the brand is over-extended
Spot the fake

1. Ben-Gay Aspirin: Pain Relief That Comes with a Warm Glow

2. Burberry Baby Stroller: For Discriminating Newborns

3. Smith & Wesson Mountain Bikes: Ride without Fear

4. Pond’s Toothpaste: Reduces the Appearance of Fine Wines

5. Frito-Lay Lemonade: A Tangy, Crunchy Thirst Quencher
Beyond the bean

“…the company's brand name, which has long been centered around the Third Place concept favored by Schultz, sees Starbucks stores as a space away from home and work where people can be comfortable.”

Now playing at a Starbucks near you:
– Movies, music, WiFi, comfortable seating, quality coffee…

and now books.
“If you plopped a library down, 30 years from now, there would be cobwebs growing everywhere because people would look at it and wouldn't think of it as a legitimate institution because it would be so far behind.”

- Experienced library user
“Americans continue to have a love affair with their libraries, but they have difficulty figuring out where libraries fit in the new digital world…”

“…and many Americans would just as soon turn their local libraries into museums and recruit retirees to staff them…”

- Executive Summary
What can happen when a brand is not protected?
Catalog closed – see staff for assistance
Budget news

“...circulation reached record-breaking highs in 2003. Year-to-date circulation is up 7%, in-library computer usage is up 24% and materials shipped among libraries is up almost 12%…”

Brand perception does not match brand reality.

Buffalo To Close Only 16 Branches

System will cut hours and staff and start charging for holds

Thanks to the willingness of four rural towns to contribute local money for support, the board of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, NY, has announced the closure of 16, not 20, branches of the cash-strapped system (see News, LJ 9/1/05, p. 16ff.). Still, the board has announced other cuts to save money.

Officials in Alden, Boston, Eden, and Marilla agreed to supplement county funds with local funds. Previously, two communities, Cheektowaga and Tonawanda, had announced they would close a total of four branch libraries, anticipating budget cuts.

At its meeting September 1, the board acknowledging that the library was requesting $21.7 million in county support, some $7 million less than in 2004—stated that 100 employees, nearly one-third of the full-time work force, would be laid off. “Every library that survives this unfortunate process must do much more with far less next year,” said library director Michael Maloney.

Certain subject departments of the central library will be closed one day during the week. As of October 1, the library will institute new fees for holds: $1 for DVDs or VHS tapes and 25¢ for print or audio materials; juvenile items are excluded. The library hopes to gain $100,000 from these new measures.—Norman Oder
What happened?

• What happens when more than 50% don’t support a library?

• The critical group between 50% of library card holders and 80% of library supporters tip the balance.
“Due to years of delayed maintenance, the physical condition of many city facilities now prevents them from hosting the full range of traditional and new technologically oriented services that all residents demand…”

2002 - 2004 Strategic Plan
Public concern continues

Four branches are closed…
Ralph Nader founds the DC Library Renaissance Project in 2003.
May, 2005
All four branches are still closed and no renovation have started.
There is no promised bookmobile service.
Benning residents rally.

October, 2005
Benning residents receive bookmobile service

Fall, 2006
DCPL announces that bookmobile services will soon start in the other former branch locations.
DCPL starts to build an Interim location for one branch.
October 2006

“The good news from the Board of Library Trustees meeting last night is that all the burned out light bulbs in the lobby of Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library have been replaced. Granted, that may be just the minimum performance we expect, but it is still good news.

“For one thing, minimum standards for maintenance at MLK have not been met in decades…”
“Maintenance, as has been widely reported, was the first concern of citizens across the city who attended the library listening sessions last winter. They wondered how DCPL's buildings could have been allowed to fall into such dire disrepair. And they wondered why they should expect things to be any different with the new buildings Mayor Williams and the Trustees are proposing as the basis for library system transformation.”

The citizens produce a counter report called “A Blueprint for Cynicism.”
So, what’s the Big Idea?

Mayor’s Task Force on the Future of the DC Public Library System suggests Idea Stores may be the way forward.
Lessons learned

The term “library” cannot extended to include services other than the circulation of books when there is little public trust in the brand.
Faint praise indeed

“Overall, the survey showed that libraries are a highly valued local service. Despite recognising the excellent effort of staff on behalf of residents, customers were dissatisfied with the quality, location and nature of the service they were getting.”
More in store than ever before

Sorry for the wait! In the meantime, use your public library...
Lessons learned

Successful brands endure and extend their reach to meet changing customer needs.

UK libraries were defined, in legislation, as book repositories.
2003 OCLC Environmental Scan: Pattern Recognition

A user’s view of the “infosphere”

Published content

Open Web

Special collections

Institutional content
Libraries’ space within the user’s “infosphere”
Potential role of libraries in the “infosphere”
The 7 deadly signs of a public library brand in decline

- Low public support
- Disenfranchised staff, volunteers and Board
- Poor use of existing resources
- Disengaged stakeholders
- Narrow mandate
- Isolation
- Ineffective advocacy
The 7 brand attributes of successful public libraries

- High public support
- Energetic staff, volunteers and Board
- Creative use of existing resources
- Engaged stakeholders
- Integrated services
- Broad community mandate
- Effective advocacy
Search Results for 'ancaster library'

These are the results of your search

Filter Results Show All Results

More than 10 results returned, showing items 1 - 10, sorted by Relevance.

Ancaster Municipal Building and Public Library moving Friday, February 3, 2006
in preparation of planned renovations to the
Ancaster branch.
http://www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/chn/2006-02-01v.htm - 32 KB

Ancaster Branch
Information on the Ancaster Branch including directions, hours and location.
http://www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/librarieservices/aboutthelibrary/locationsand... - 32 KB

Temporary Ancaster Branch at 305 Woodworth Drive
The renovation and expansion of the Ancaster Branch, Hamilton Public Library, the Municipal Service Centre and other services at 300 Wilson Street East began the weekend of...
http://www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/librarieservices/hottopics/ancasterrenovation... - 31 KB

HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY - Ancaster Branch
This resource is maintained by the Ancaster Branch [ ] Record #: HAM0547 Last Modified: 01 Aug 2006
Last Full Update: 08 Feb 2006 Loc...
The brand in action
Perception = Reality
Extending the brand beyond bricks and mortar
The name game
With apologies to Woody Guthrie

This brand is your brand,
This brand is my brand,
From Caledonia to the Thousand Islands
From the Northern Forests to the Toronto Islands,

This brand was made for you and me
The final word

We each have an important role to play as public library ambassadors – the brand extends far beyond our books, our buildings and our borders.
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