

2016 OLA Presentation

POP-UP DISCOVERY PROGRAMMING @ BRAMPTON LIBRARY

When: Friday, Jan 29 | 11:20 am - 12:00 pm

Location:

Subjects: [Community Partnerships](#), [Creative Economy](#), and [Programming](#).

Description:

Program the space. Let's get out of those hidden program rooms and engage with the community on the library floor. Explore and discover. Engage and experience. Calling all hobbyists, amateurs, professionals, schools, and small businesses; expanding the Culture Days hands-on and interactive model, Brampton Library experiments with pop-up discovery programming fuelled by community volunteers.

Learning Outcomes

1. Develop an understanding of the Pop-up Discovery Programming Call for Application requirements and process
2. Develop an understanding of how to create and maintain relationships with non-traditional public library partners to support creative economy workers
3. Develop an understanding of the Pop-up Discovery Programming community engagement experience and outcomes

1. A title slide

CC - Thank you for joining us on this Friday morning. We hope we will be able to provide you with some new ideas to take back to your own locations and try out. We will begin with a 'disclaimer'. The title of the presentation says, POP UP. It is in fact more about community engagement activities that have been planned. The pop-up element is that they are not traditional library programs planned by the staff. There will be a marketing element to our activities.

Community Engagement Coordinator is our title and one of our roles at the library is to expand our community connections with the thought of including new activities in our programming. It is the most enjoyable part of

our job to meet and get to know members of the community and to help introduce them to the public.

So, we started our journey of using library space 'by the community and for the community' in showcasing their activities, with our pilot of Culture Days. We were not sure how it would go. Would customers complain about the noise? Would there be interest in the activities? We did have a few complaints about a rock band of young people we had but otherwise, everyone was excited, interested and wanting to know more about what was going on.

2) **Slide -Culture Days logo**

Founded in 2009, Culture Days is a non-profit organization dedicated to building a national network of cultural connections to provide Canadians with opportunities to participate in, and appreciate, all forms of arts and culture. Through an annual three-day national celebration each September, Canadians participate in free interactive and "behind the scenes" activities to discover their cultural spirit and passion.

The Community of Creative Economy is engaged - arts, cultural non-profits, creative businesses that produce and distribute cultural goods and services. This raises the profile of creative service providers to ensure further investment in the community, to collaborate with community partners and to raise the profile of the Library.

In 2015, Brampton Library in collaboration with the City of Brampton and the Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives showcased the talents of over 70 community artists, hobbyists, amateurs and small business owners.

For the first time ever, 34 of these activities were held in Brampton Library branches featuring hands-on, interactive experiences. Our lineup included:

3 slide In the Mix: Hip-Hop Dance and iPad Program that demonstrated fitness and movement through dance, **Campfire Sing-a-long** with the Brampton Folk Club engaging the audience through old and new songs., **Kinderflute**- A musical program that incorporated a wide variety of games, movements and fun activities.

4(Slides)Zentangle Essentials - an easy to learn way of creating beautiful images by drawing structured patterns.

5 Slides Fineart in Glass-demonstrated painting on glass,- Surita attended and Here is an example of what she made

6 Slide Community Art Quilt an activity that allowed participants to be a small part of a bigger, more colourful picture.

More than 680 people participated in the Library events over the 3 days.

We were able to reach the project goals that we had set such as:

7(slide)

- new Library membership activation;
- Participation in a National Program;
- Collaboration with community partners;
- Engaging the creative community in library spaces;

The first step set into motion was a call out to the community. Meetings were held at City Hall and interested participants attended sessions held by representatives from Culture Days. They were directed to the online form on the city website to sign up. Those interested were referred to the space most appropriate for their event.

We also sent emails to all our own contacts in the arts community.

Previously being on the Brampton Arts Council Board came in very handy.

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In moving forward with the project it was necessary to produce forms and marketing materials. In addition to email templates for the call out and confirmation, we produced schedules of activities happening. Here is an example that was posted on our website, social media and in the branches. Feedback sheets for staff, audience and participants were also developed. We also received poster boards supplied by the city and buttons, balloons and posters. from Culture Days. Some groups had their own flyers to distribute as well.

Some of the Outcomes of the event were:

- We discovered that Friday was a more difficult day to attract an audience. We had hoped to invite schools to attend but with work to rule this did not happen. Not being open evenings over the 3 days also cut down on available times we could offer spaces.
- We have now created a database of contacts that will be maintained and used to initiate year-round contact with community organizations and artists for upcoming community led projects and for 2016 Culture Days.

- We decided that we need to create on our own website a Culture Days page with sign up forms, detailed information and regular updates.
- The artistic community now recognizes the Library as a neighbourhood cultural hub to showcase their talents.

9(Slide) We received exceptionally positive and appreciative Feedback from customers, artists, and staff:

Zentangle

a customer said “When are you going to do this again?”

Brampton Folk Club

“I wish you had music all the time!” we heard from customers and staff

Community Art Quilt

and staff said “The kids let us know how much fun they had.”

Play Culture Days Video clip (3 min.)

With the success of the 2015 Culture Days weekend, we plan to expand next year. We hope to attract more performers as well as audience members. Brampton Library will begin to run the pilot project to test the feasibility of using the Culture Days model to provide community-led participatory experiences beginning in April. And here is Surita to tell you more about how this will proceed.

SD - Thank you Catherine.

Community Led programming is not a new concept. Many libraries are already participating with their community partners and each one of them have their own flavour. Pickering has had great success with How-to in 10. And Toronto Public Library invites program proposals from the community.

Are there any other Libraries that are partnering with their community?

The description of our session says: *Program the space. Let's get out of those hidden program rooms and engage with the community on the library floor. Explore and discover. Engage and experience.*

Now, what does that look like? What does it mean by engage the community on the Library floor?

Slide 10

For me, it is imagining the Dewey Decimal System in action right in your library. Which translates to a wide interest that various people have.

We often have people coming to the library asking for gardening books, **Slide 11** so why not have some local gardening clubs talk about balcony gardening, backyard gardening or just keeping those plants alive and getting rid of those weeds. **Slide 12**

As you know, finding information on health issues is always in-demand. **Slide 13**

Even though we have so much information online, people still come to the Library for health related books about healthy eating, **Slide 14** and mental illness. So, why not invite community health experts **Slide 15** and let them engage with the public. This can be enhanced with an inviting book displays. A great way to tie the community experts and our collection together - which triggers increase in circulation.

And there is always music! **Slide 16** It is a great opportunity for local and school bands and choirs to come to the library and showcase their talent. And customers can enjoy free music and support the young musicians.

The engagement and interaction with various community groups is extremely beneficial for the Library. The Library is no longer viewed as just an organization that still demands DVDS be returned on time and fines be paid in full. It is now a place where things are happening, and in this model, information is not given but experienced.

Brampton Library's Community Engagement programs are scheduled to begin in April, and I hope the following to do's help you to prepare if you decide to go that route.

One of the first decisions that had to be made was - who will the Presenters be? Who are we inviting to the Library and allowing to engage with the customers?

Slide 17 - vetting criteria for Presenters

Who are the Presenters? / The Presenters?

For now, we have decided to start with the NON PROFIT sector only - we are reaching out to local public services providers. The Library is not paying the presenters and they in turn can not charge any fee from the customers.

Some of the sectors we are focusing on, are:

- Services offered by the Region of Peel - Health expertise;
- Services offered by City of Brampton - Financial planning through City's Economic Development Unit;
- Local non-profit groups - Brampton Horticultural Society;
- Local hobbyists - Knitters and quilters;
- Local schools.

What Are They Presenting? Content?

It is important that there is clarity on what is being shared.

- The content has to be of public interest. A topic that engages people. It should be more general than specific. We are partial to programs for all ages, though sometimes sessions may be geared towards specific groups. e.g. Seniors on estate planning.

Where Can They Present? Space?

Where are they presenting?

- This is the big change - they have to hold them in open spaces - right on the library floor. (we have already experimented this during Culture Days) No more behind closed doors in a programming room. Open activities will attract the curiosity of the customers already in the Library. There is no registration required, it is purely: come and experience.
- We are also scheduling sessions during high traffic time to maximize customer engagement.

How Can They Present? **What would be the style of the presentations?**

Format?

- The preferred style is informal and interactive. However, sometimes, due to the nature of the topic, there may be a formal presentation. We would like these to be as brief as possible. It is most enriching if the customers can create, experience, and participate, and that can be anything such as dancing, painting or exercising at the library.

Why are They Presenting? Benefit?

- A key question is why would organizations come to the Library? Especially, when we are not paying them.

The main reason is promotion. Organizations or Hobbyists now have a wide audience to talk to about their services or what they like to do. Public services agencies can educate the public and the hobbyists can attract people to what they are passionate about. The result is: they are reaching out and capturing a new audience.

Library expenses

As with all libraries, whenever, we offer any programs, we have to ask ourselves, what is the cost to the Library.

- Well upfront, there is no direct cost. Only in-kind cost. Currently we are not purchasing any special equipment or furniture for the programs.
- the Library is offering the space, tables and chairs, promotion on our social media and signage at branches and word of mouth promotion. This is a very low cost initiative.

The differences between Brampton Library's Culture Days and All Year Community Engagement programs are:

- Culture Days is for the artistic community only.
*Community Engagement is open to a wider community and a wider interest.
- During Culture Days we are supporting the 'creative economy' - that is presenters are allowed to sell their creative items or promote directly. For example: a music school can register students for their classes or an art school can sell something they have created.

*In the new model, for now, it is limited to non-profit organizations. They are not selling anything directly - only promoting a service or showcasing topics that are of public interest.

- And of course, Culture Days is limited to a weekend
 - *Community Led programs are all year around. Currently we plan to host the sessions once a month at each branch. If we see high interest, we will increase the frequency of the sessions and may offer more than one activity in a branch at a time.

Slide 18

Conclusion -

So, how can we summarize Brampton Library's 'Community Engagement Strategy'?

In addition to all our current library programs, e.g. story time, computer classes, youth councils, senior meets, book clubs etc., we hope to engage the community by providing them a stage at the library to inform, demonstrate and interact with library customers and the community at large. The Library is already viewed as a safe and friendly space. We are open to all, warm during winter months and cool during summer. We attract a wide range of people, that are diverse in age, culture and interest.

So, the vision is: Library spaces will become venues for the community to celebrate and showcase their creativity and services through informal interactive sessions within the parameters of the Library's Strategic Plan - in the hope of increasing membership and activities at the Library.

I wish the best to all of you who are venturing into these new directions and please wish the best to us too, in our new adventure.

Slide 19

Thank you. We would be happy to answer easy questions only.