

Telling the Library Story

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1990

A campaign of

SHAME

1996

We keep our promises.

Hypothesis

- *1. Voting results correlate with percentage of households with active library card.*
- *2. Precinct results do, too.*
- ***THEREFORE:***
Grow market penetration, win elections.



DCL Direct
Call. Click. Connect.
303-791-READ
DouglasCountyLibraries.org

UNREACHABLES
5% of population?

**ANSWER THE
COMMUNITY
REFERENCE QUESTION**
Leave the building!
Solving problems together
5-15% of population

MARKETING
2-way communications
Surveys/focus groups/change
5-15 % of population

PUBLIC RELATIONS
1-way communications
Professional publicity/promotion
5-15% of population

OPEN THE DOORS
Circulation, reference, children's,
programs, technology, meeting rooms
30-50% of population

2006

- 84% households with active library cards
- 27 circs per capita
- No debt
- Clear need for space
- Hennen ranking (from worst in state to best in nation)
= *Invest in the best*

AND OF COURSE

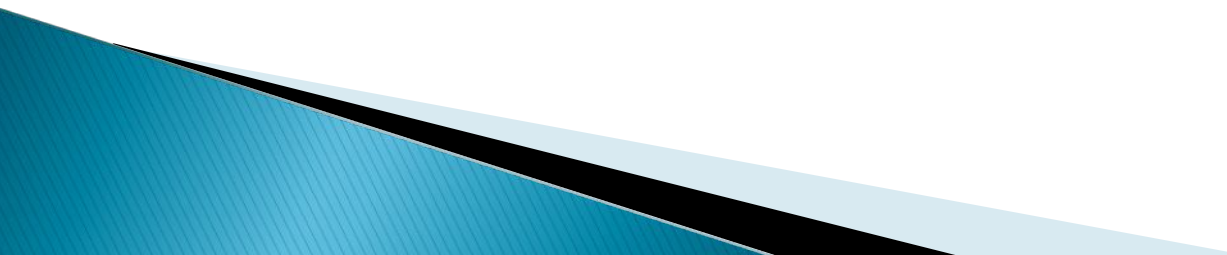


OCLC Research

- Library funding support is only marginally related to library visitation.
- Perceptions of librarians are an important predictor of library funding support.
- Voters who see the library as a 'transformational' force as opposed to an 'informational' source are more likely to increase taxes in its support.

www.oclc.org/ca/en/reports/funding/default.htm

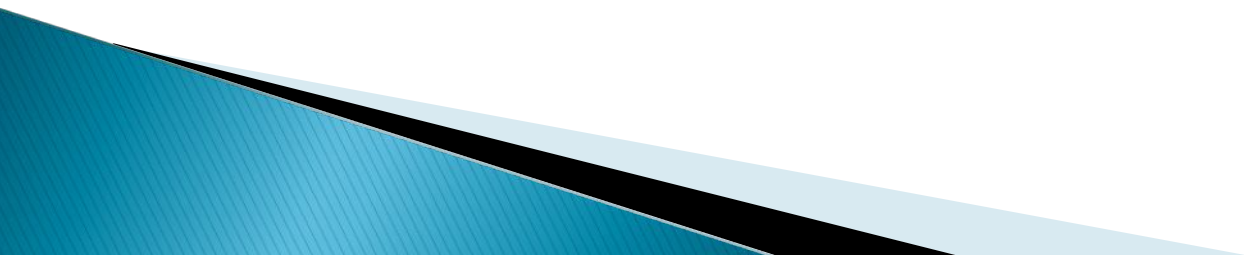
Readings on the brain

- *The Happiness Hypothesis*, by Jonathan Haidt
 - *We are not rational.*
 - *How We Decide*, by Jonathan Lehrer
 - *But emotions are deeply empirical.*
 - *My Stroke of Insight*, by Jill Bolte Taylor
 - *We tell stories to ourselves.*
 - *Being Wrong*, by Kathryn Schulz
 - *We can change our minds.*
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Problem statements

- 1. Fewer libraries are making it to the ballot, or winning when they do. *Public support for public libraries is declining*
- 2. Now, in many locations around the country, public use is declining.

Caiden



The library story

- A real person => Caiden was 3 years old
- A problem => He stuttered.
- Library action => Read to dog program.
- Happy ending => He doesn't stutter.

- ONE fact => A specific #
-
- Tagline => Libraries transform lives.

Structure =>

Particular

Four Messages

- Libraries transform lives.
- Libraries transform communities.
- Librarians are passionate advocates for lifelong learning.
- Libraries are a smart investment.

Practice

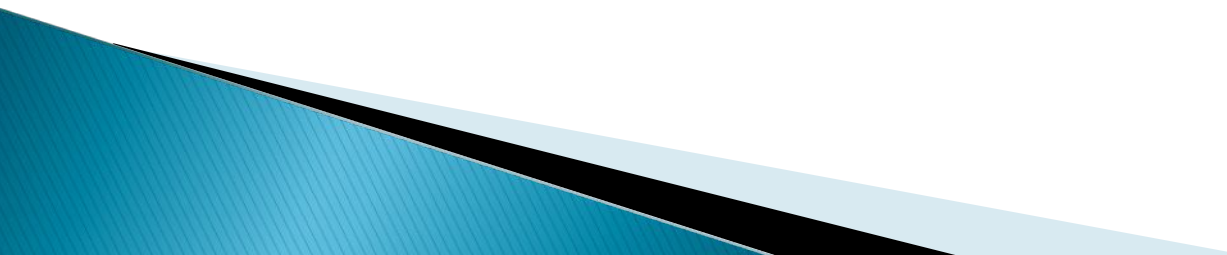
The story

- A real person
- A problem.
- A library action.
- Happy ending.
- One fact.
- The phrase that pays.

The Messages

- Libraries transform lives.
- Libraries transform communities.
- Librarians are passionate advocates for lifelong learning.
- Libraries are a smart investment.

Parting thoughts

- We don't have to invent new messages. We have them.
 - Advocacy is not the work of a season. It is the work of a generation.
 - Our business is not information.
 - It is stories.
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Additional readings (free downloads from Maine)

“Library Storytelling Team Guidebook,” deals with the organizational aspects of doing a long-term storytelling in order to shift the public discussion from “tax burden” to ‘libraries are a smart investment.’ It’s available at.

https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/extension_business/4

The second guidebook, entitled "Reporting Library Advocacy Stories to Increase Funding: Guidebook for Story Reporters," provides tips from other references that compliment yours. For example, how can a person reporting a story make it authentic. The entire paper is organized around your 2018 paper plus the rationale and method of adding public value statement. This paper also includes empirical evidence that the ‘hero’s journey’ approach you used is effective in increasing funding. It’s available at:

https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/extension_business/3

Questions?

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