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CILIP Conference 2015

Bringing the information world together
From output to impact: How to demonstrate the value of your library

Masterclass – Demonstrating Value
Thursday, July 2
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Start with the end first...

What do we want to achieve – rather than what are we going to do?
Overview

WHAT is impact?
WHAT is value?
WHY demonstrate value?
  ➢ 2 case studies
HOW to measure impact and value?
  ➢ ISO 16439:2014
Masterclass plan

By the end of this session you will have:

• some understanding of how to demonstrate impact and why this is important
• begun to develop your own impact plan
• been introduced to ISO 16439:2014
'Without research ... we have no evidence – and without evidence, it’s difficult to claim victory.’  (Neuman, 2009).
4.1 Understanding research

Appreciating the nature and value of research, including practitioner research, and research carried out on behalf of clients.

4.5 Understanding research contexts

Assessing the needs of a service, organisation or client, and selecting appropriate research methods and ways of presenting results.

11.2 Communicating with stakeholders

Ensuring that all key stakeholders are identified, so that they can be communicated with and consulted. Ensuring that stakeholders support and engage with the service. Recognising the importance of communicating value and developing a marketing and communications plan, ensuring that the service is highly visible to all stakeholders.
Activity 1

Write down the ‘hat’ you will be wearing today for the sake of this activity:

Are you thinking strategically about:

- the full library service?
- a project or programme within that service?
- about yourself as a Chartership candidate?
Why measure impact?

- Strategic planning – decision making and resource management
- Quality management
- Determining impact over time
- Comparison with similar libraries
- Promotion of library’s role and value to stakeholders
- Inform political decisions
Activity 2

What is your priority at the moment?

What population are you trying to serve?
Output >>> Outcome >>> Impact >>> Value

Output: products of library processes
e.g. number of loans, downloads, reference questions

Outcome: effect of the output
e.g. user satisfaction

Impact: difference or change in an individual or group

Value: importance to stakeholders
(funding institutions, politicians, the public)
Context - Public Libraries

CILIP: Public libraries contribute to literacy, learning, health and wellbeing, and employment

ALIA (Australian Library and Information Association): Public libraries improve literacy and information literacy, contribute to economic prosperity, improve skills and life chances
But how do we PROVE it?
Economic value

- Arts Council England 2014 *Evidence review of the economic contribution of libraries*

- ALMA-UK 2014 *Economic impact toolkits for archives, libraries and museums*


- Australian Library and Information Association 2013 *National welfare & economic contributions of public libraries*
Measuring the Social Value of Public Libraries: Potential Outcomes and Impacts

(Rooney-Browne, 2011)
Activity 3

What are you hoping your project or activity or service will achieve?
Why evaluate? A case in point

“The love in the room”: Evaluating the National Year of Reading in an Australian public library
“The love in the room”…

Outcomes

“The love in the room was extraordinary”

“Feel really proud” “Quite incredible”

“Look at what we did, look at what we can do”

“All things to all people” “Life changing”

“It gave a lot to a small group of people … who will benefit from this in a massive way”

“We thought we were doing good reading things”

“It was such an amazing success”
“The love in the room”…
Evidence

“Conversational rather than on paper... over a long coffee”

“Such a hard thing to actually measure or put down in words”

“Ticked boxes tell you nothing”

“Just really wrecks the whole thing”

“It is hard to do”
“The love in the room”…
Impact?

“Our downfall because we have no evidence”
The demand for evidence
‘so what…?’

Capturing the Impact of Libraries final report

- Predominance of one-off evaluations of time limited programmes and pilot schemes over research on core services
- Lack of baselines against which to measure change
- Lack of qualitative in-depth research that analyses the specific nature of interactions that take place in libraries

(DCMS/BOP Consulting, 2009: 2)
The National Year of Reading 2008

Reading any thing, any time, any where
Stronger and Safer Communities

Tier 2 - Supporting cultural diversity and identity

One of our big successes is the manga. We’d had one before we last saw you now we’ve had three – we get a group of about 150 supposedly hard to reach people… some of those people come back, I see some of the men twice a week sitting on our sofa reading manga and I know they are from that event

We are doing a lot of great stuff, including breakthrough initiatives for some groups e.g. making materials for homeless people. We have never done that before.
What to do?

Input/Process/Output measures

- **INPUT**
  Funding, Staffing, Resources, Space, Equipment, Computers

- **PROCESS** Cataloguing, Lending, Reference service

- **OUTPUT** Number of users, User satisfaction
Activity 4

OUTPUT

What can you count?
ISO 16439:2014 Methods and procedures for assessing the impact of libraries

• Need for proof of ‘value’

• Value of libraries traditionally self-evident

Value can be identified through determining …

IMPACT:

• On individuals – changes in skills/behaviour/well being

• On institution/community – prestige/ranking, funding increase

• For stakeholders – funding bodies, public, politicians, staff
The standard in practice

Evidence can be:

- **Inferred** through output data - attendance at events, performance measures, usage statistics
- **Solicited** – questionnaires, interviews, surveys
- **Observed** – structured or informal

Mimics the process of qualitative research
Activity 5

What method/s would you consider using to gather opinions on impact?
The standard in practice

- Provides models and examples for data collection
- Reflects research methodologies
- Applies the formality of research design
- Helps to determine:
  - What is meant to be achieved?
  - What population is served?
  - Effect of outcomes related to overall goals and objectives
  - Definition of the impact sought
Difficulties

• Seeking to measure an intangible
• Identifying library impact from other impacts
• Varied impact on different groups
• Measuring longer term impact
• Relies on method of data collection and analysis
• Library staff may not be familiar with methods for determining impact
• Labour intensive planning
• Costly
Activity 6

What is the biggest positive factor in attempting to measure impact?
Activity 7

You will have to present some kind of report - how might you communicate to a variety of stakeholders?
Measuring impact

Generate impact indicators that will drive your data collection in areas that will provide you with the elusive evidence of impact that is vital to decision making and real service development.

Markless, S. and Streatfield, D 2013 Evaluating the impact of your library. London: Facet, 63
The questions ask about IMPACT, but are they really measuring impact?
‘Without research ... we have no evidence – and without evidence, it’s difficult to claim victory.’ (Neuman, 2009).
Thank you & Questions

Grant, Maria J., Sen, Barbara and Spring, Hannah 2013 *Research, Evaluation and Audit: Key steps in demonstrating your value*. London: Facet.


Neuman, Susan, B 2009 Changing the Odds for Children At Risk: Seven essential principles of educational programs that break the cycle of poverty. New York; Teachers College, Columbia University


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