

Reaching Out to Business Communities: Best Practices for Libraries

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Origin of Book Project

- Presented about Business Community Outreach
 - Reference Renaissance Conference: August 2010
- Approached by Managing Editor of Libraries Unlimited
 - Asked to submit proposal for a book
- Proposal accepted and book contract signed

Nature of Book Project

- Practical handbook for business community outreach
 - for academic and public librarians
- Incorporate experiences and practices of librarians
 - from a variety of libraries

Benefits of Business Outreach

- Promotes value of library in a community
- Increases awareness of library services in a community
- Provides opportunities for external fundraising
- Connects library to other community agencies
- Increases library awareness of community services
- Provides opportunities for programming activities

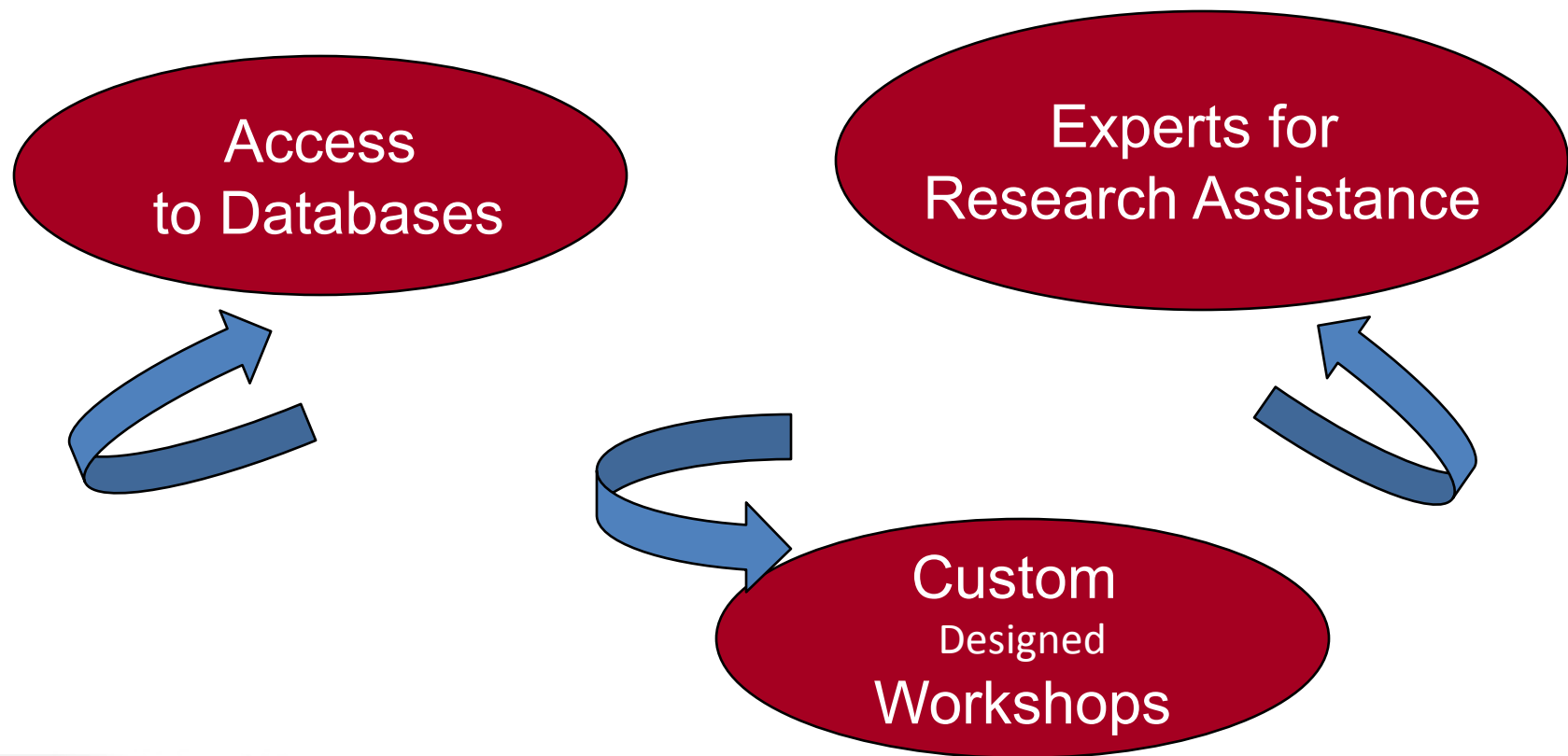
Challenges of Business Outreach

- Licensed database restrictions on commercial use
- Clients accustomed to having research done for them
- Working around timeframe of busy professionals
- Resource sufficiency for meeting research needs
- Requires staff with specialized skills and high availability
- Stakes of research extremely high
- Providing reference services without expert advice



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inspire, celebrate, explore innovate, discover, achieve, reach,
create, learn, inspire, celebrate, explore, innovate, discover,

Library Outreach Services



Going Out to the Business Community

- Visit meetings of local business groups
- Visit Rotary Club meetings
- Visit Chamber of Commerce meetings
- Visit Small Business Development classes

Bringing the Business Community in the Library

- Library Business Research Workshops
 - Entrepreneurship & business expansion
 - Opportunity for networking
 - Branding is key
- Expert Speakers from the Local Business Community
 - Library provides a forum for learning
 - Opportunity for libraries to learn about local business community

Common Information Needs

- New venture creation
 - Information for business plans & funding sources
 - Assistance with patenting a product or service
- Business expansion
 - New product/service or entry into new markets
- Grant funding
- Company newsletters/continuing education sources
 - Keeping up with current trends
- Career assistance
- Personal investment research



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Best Practice

Scenario Based Outreach Presentations

- Herb wants to open a comic book and gaming store
 - Where? Reno vs. Las Vegas
 - How will he convince a bank that there are enough customers out there for him to pay off his loan?



Best Practice

Business Reference Strategy

- Identify patron's primary need/purpose/ objective
 - Start a business venture
 - Make an investment decision (Buy or Sell)
 - Develop a marketing plan
- Match need/purpose/objective with appropriate categorical list of resources
 - Bibliography of resources—readily available
 - Subject guide—readily available

Best Practices Referrals

- Develop a list of community organizations that support business start up & expansion
- Include community organizations in resources guide for business community
- Refer to experts who can provide guidance with business plans, business financing or professional investment advice

Supporting Infrastructure

- Special access privileges-business user account
- Professional collaborative spaces
- Professional business research guides
- Guide of relevant free government resources
- Grant/foundation funding resources
- Career research resources
- Clearly articulated database licensing & other access restrictions (minimizing negative language)

Database Licensing Restrictions

- Commercial use restrictions
- Remote access to EBSCO's databases is permitted to patrons of subscribing institutions accessing from remote locations for personal, **non-commercial use**. However, remote access to EBSCO's databases from non-subscribing institutions is not allowed if the purpose of the **use** is for **commercial** gain through cost reduction or avoidance for a non-subscribing institution.

Following Up & Closing the Loop

- Tell the library story in interactions
 - Have information packets available at the ready
- Include business community patrons in mailing lists
 - To send updates, newsletters and other communiqués
 - To send fundraising materials
- Ask them to share their library experiences

Demonstrating the Value of Business Community Outreach Services

- Track interactions (anonymously) to provide an account of outreach activities to administrators
- Publicize initiatives (newsletters, newspapers)
 - Emphasize impact on business community
 - Include personal accounts of patrons
- Encourage patrons to share experiences with library stakeholders