Defending Technologies in Your Library

Netspeed Conference 2018

Shauna Darbyshire
I Have An Agenda (here it is!)

- Tons of Tech
- Why defending technologies?
- Practical information:
  1. Allocate
  2. Advocate
  3. Illuminate
  4. Demonstrate
Defend tech!?
When They Come For The IPads
But Their Kids Only Come IN for the IPads
“Ever since the kids’ IPad stations were added, all my kids want to do is play on them. I come to the library to read books. The IPads should be removed.”

Patron Comment Card
"Hello, I appreciate your hard work to improve the library, but I find putting the tablets in front of the door and without asking for it a little annoying. My 4 year old always goes straight to play with them before anything else. He used to go check books and play with cars, but he doesn't show any interest after experiencing the tablet games. I wish you can keep the tablets with reference desk librarian until the kid goes and asks for it. This way it is going to be controlled and hidden.

Thanks.

Patron Comment Card, 2018

"The computers & toys distract from the books. Canmore library has cushions & cuddly bears so that you can sit with your kids & read. My son spends his time whining about iPads & cars here. I have to LEAVE to read and honestly it's stressful and I don't like coming. In Canmore we went and read daily."

Patron Comment Card

"Since you so obviously hate technology, why did you put those new-fangled toys they do is play on those, they aren't learning anything, there's nothing educational to it. Pretty soon there will be no books, just computers!"

Patron In-Person Comment

"I have to say I am slightly disappointed to see iPads in the library. We have thoroughly enjoyed visiting the library for the last 4.5 years as a place to read and enjoy some quiet time. I feel that if iPads need to be a part of the library, they could maybe be signed out or in a separate room. It is much too distracting to have iPads & computers in the library."

Patron Comment Card
“The kids don’t need IPads. Every kid has at least one at home!”

...(staff response)

“Well, you say that, but I guarantee these kids all have IPads at home”.

Patron In-Person Comment
They All Have Technology At Home (In Their Dreams)

SURVEY: CANADIANS WITH INTERNET ACCESS AT HOME (STATISTICS CANADA SURVEY 2012)

- Have (82%)
- Don't Have (18%)

Top 10 devices owned.
- 76% Smart phone
- 71% Laptop or netbook
- 64% Tablet or e-reader
- 50% Desktop computer
- 48% Digital video camera or camera other than smartphone
- 41% GPS device (standalone/ portable or dash-mounted)
- 39% Video game console
- 33% Internet-enabled smart television
- 25% Set-top or USB device for accessing the Internet from a television
- 16% Non-smart cellular phone

86% of Canadians have a broadband internet connection at home.

Statistics Canada. Table 22-10-0110-01. Use of technology by age group and sex, Canada, provinces and regions

Canada’s Internet Factbook 2018, Canadian Internet Registration Authority
“In Canada, we need only look at the current headlines to see proof that there are pressing digital rights issues - existing and emerging - facing communities across the country.”

-Techsoup Canada, 2018

Sources: https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/erci-internet-essential-service-1.3906664
http://www.cbc.ca/news/opinion/broadband-basic-service-1.3913627

The Internet ranks among the greatest innovations in history. Yet in spite of continuing progress, four billion people around the world still remain offline, and some of them live in Canada.

The bulk of today's public discourse takes place online, so those who lack access to digital media are less likely to be politically engaged. The stakes are highest for indigenous people, whose deprivation limits their political participation.
The Digital Divide

• “the information work of libraries may change in its particulars, but library staff members are still in the business of providing access to materials and technologies that people cannot afford, and of making efficient pathways to informed browsing of selections of information.”

  ~ Neal Schuman, Library Technology Companion, p.12-13
Digital Literacy:

“The ability to **use technological tools to solve problems**, underpinned by the ability to **critically understand digital content and tools**.

This can include the more advanced ability to **create new technological tools, products, and services**.”

Source: *Levelling Up: The Quest for Digital Literacy*, Brookfield Institute, June 2018 (p.4-5, 16)
Digital Literacy (an alternate definition)

1. The ability to read and write with technology tools.
2. The ability to find, evaluate, utilize, share, and create content using information technologies and the internet.
3. The ability to use and manage technology proficiently.
4. The ability to comply with ethical and legal technology use.

Source: Library Technology and Digital Resources: An Introduction for Support Staff by Marie Keen Shaw (p.18)
Have you ever needed to defend or justify your tech choices?

- Yes. Some parents don’t understand the tech component and want only programs with books and reading for their kids, but we invite them to see that digital literacy is also important! Technology is just another tool in the toolbox.
Technology can no longer be viewed as a learning enhancer; it must be viewed as a foundational piece of living in the 21st century.

-Justin Tarte, Educator
@justintarte
OK, so providing technology access IS important for libraries and IS **worth defending**.

But how do we ensure we make good tech decisions for our libraries?
Allocate!

Allocate Selectively:
Choose Wisely!

***It’s difficult to defend something when it wasn’t a thoughtful, informed choice to begin with!

Daniel, I know YOU love DDR, but do you really think this is the best use of our entire tech budget?
Allocation Considerations

***before you buy!
COST

- Technology can be **EXPENSIVE**. Will you get bang for your buck?
- Are there different price points to consider (memory, processing power, accessories, etc.)?
- Does your library have access to funding and partnership options that might help secure this technology?

“Although well-allocated money can be a fast track to improving your tech offerings, libraries of all sizes and budgets share a passion for great technology services.”

-Nick D Taylor, *Raising the Tech Bar at Your Library*
Is there anything you wish staff and patrons more fully understood about technology in your library?

- **Funding** is key. When we don’t have enough funding it’s hard for us to keep up with the newest tech. As such, the **partnerships** we seek out might be partly determined by things like “Oh, XYZ group has VR sets they are willing to lend us”.

Talking Tech With

Sheri, Community Services Manager
Emerging Technology Stakeholder Buy In Checklist

- What technologies do you want to implement?
- Why do you want to implement these technologies?
- Who are your stakeholders and what are their backgrounds?
- Why should your stakeholders support your technology initiatives?
- What is your budget for your technology initiatives?
- What training is needed to support these initiatives?
- Who will provide the training and what are the costs?
- How will you market these technology initiatives?
- What are the marketing costs?
- Did you perform a cost-benefit analysis for these technology initiatives?
- Are there legal fees? If so, what are they?
- What are the risks?
- What are the returns on investment (ROI)?
- What strategic partnerships can you establish?
- What is your timeline for implementing these technology initiatives?

Source: Emerging Library Technologies: It’s Not Just for Geeks by Ida Arlene Joiner, p. 175
AGE & EVOLVEABILITY

• Technology changes rapidly. Will the tech be capable of updating and evolving?
• Will this be a lasting investment, or become obsolete too fast?
• Does this technology accommodate additional assistive and adaptive technologies for use?
Talking Tech With
Regina, Collection Development and Technical Services Manager

Is there anything you wish staff and patrons more fully understood about technology in your library?

[In technical services] we make decisions to **balance providing what is popular with justifying the costs**… technology changes every six months. When we introduced video games it was all about the Wii and PS3. Now we’re phasing those games out for Switch and PS4. Soon there will be PS5.

A few patrons have asked for 4K Ultra HD discs, but we have to look at how many patrons we would be serving with that material- right now most don’t have the technology to use it, so it would be harder to justify that cost in our budget.
MAKE & MODEL

• Are there many different versions & brands of this type of technology? Compare and try before you buy.

• What are the pros and cons of each?
Consider: suitability, durability, price, maintenance, learning curve, newness

• Which is best for your library?
Have you ever needed to defend or justify your choice or implementation of technology?

I use the Plan of Service in developing our Tech plans. It’s a weighing of budget, needs vs. wants, and looking at the lifespan of equipment, some of which is running 24/7.

We used to follow a sort of 3 year plan where we would replace our technology every 3 years regardless, but now we’ll go right until it dies- the current Lenovo Thinkstation E31 computers we have are powerful and not one has died on us yet, so we haven’t had to replace them.

Mark, Information Technology Manager
COMMUNITY NEED

• Are there any **problems that need to be solved** in your community?

• What is your library’s strategic plan? Do your **staff** have the **technology resources** they need to best serve the community?

• Do you know what kinds of **technologies your patrons want and need**?

**Needs assessment:**

☐ local demographics

☐ Surveys, interviews, comment cards

☐ door-to-door canvassing

*as big or as small as you want to make it

*gather information from outside of the library as well as inside it

“The receptiveness of our communities to new technologies will continue to shape libraries in the future” - Neal Schuman, *Library Technology Companion*, p.12

**Sample Questions:**

• Do you own a personal computer?

• Does your home have wi-fi or other internet access?

• Have you used the library for technology help? If not, would you like to?

• Have you paid for technology help in the past year? Where?

• Have you taken a computer class at the library? What topics would you like to learn?

*Raising the Tech Bar at Your Library* by Nick D. Taylor (p.16)
ACCESS

• Is this technology offered anywhere else in the community?
• If so, is duplication of services warranted or not?

Consider things like:
- popularity
- price point for patrons
- ease of access
- locations and proximity
Do you have physical space in your library for these items? Consider things like:

- **Room size & layout**: lighting, furniture, ergonomics, accessibility
- **Room temperature & ventilation**: tech loves cool, dry spaces!
- **Room Usage**: Line of sight, age of users, frequency of tech related questions, noise levels
- **Room Readiness**: Wi-Fi stability, network cable wiring, number of power outlets & their placement
JIMINY CRICKET,
IS THIS A LIBRARY
OR AN ARCADE!?!?
EXTRAS & ACCESSORIES

Does this tech require necessary **add-ons for usage**? Consider the **costs and other concerns** with things like:

- Headphones
- Dark rooms
- Soundproofing
- Green screens
- Cords
- Tablet pens & styluses
- Charging docks
- Batteries
- Printing cartridges
- Game controllers
- Security software
TRAINING & IMPLEMENTATION

- **Staffing:** Adequate number? Tech experts? Dedicated IT staff?
- **Installation:** Who will be installing the hardware & software?
- **Assistance:** What level of help? Boundaries?
- **Training**
- **Marketing**
- **Evaluation & Assessment**
What challenges do you and your department face with regards to technology?

- Sometimes new tech is introduced very quickly- the Reference team handles a lot of public service interactions, so being a part of the planning, setting up, and training before the tech makes its way onto the floor would greatly enhance the Ref team’s ability to utilize and demonstrate tech for patrons.
UPKEEP

• Will additional funds be required down the road to maintain, upgrade, and fix the tech as required?

• Does your library have the staffing to do this yourselves, or will you need to outsource?
What challenges does your department face with regards to technology at WBRL?

• **99% of what we do [in Technical Services] is online now** - acquisitions, ordering… so when there is a technology issue internally (internet connection, etc.) or externally (vendor sites, etc.) we are forced to grind to a halt.
Talking Tech With
Dawn, Marketing & Fund Development Manager

How does technology come into play in your role at the library?

- **I use my computer for everything** (funding requests, webinars, research, purchasing, planning, scheduling, presentations, invites)...

If the computer goes down it’s like “well, I guess I can tidy my desk!”
Advocate!

Advocate Proactively:
Prepare the people!

I know it looks scary Marjorie, but it won't hurt you, I promise!
Advocate

Tech is here! No need to fear!
Advocate

Start with Staff (Training)

- Train and prepare relevant policies before the tech is unveiled
- Don’t assume a department will not have any involvement with the tech
- Ensure all staff know basics, and that some staff have broader knowledge
- ***Training is never over- always refresh and re-visit!

Gee whiz, that’s some great tech.
Is there anything you wish staff and patrons more fully understood about technology in your library?

- **Staffing** is a consideration; we’ve found that with programs like Appy Hour everyone wants to explore a different app and you almost need a staff member for every 2 people to keep up. On that note, when hiring we look for people with at least some baseline tech-savvy skills, and we have regular training so staff members aren’t stressed when dealing with different tech.
Advocate

- ***Your technology choices involve all staff, not just your IT department 😊

Photo source: The IT Crowd (TV series, Universal Studios Home Entertainment, 2006-2013)
Do you have any memorable anecdotes regarding technology in the library?

• One time we were working with an external group and they needed tech setup for an online meeting with our staff- with 45 minutes notice. They only had FaceTime, which is Mac, and we only had one iPad at the time. We had to figure out how to stream the FaceTime video through our iPad and connect it to Apple TV so that a room full of people could see it AND the external group had to be able to hear us, but the iPad was making lots of feedback noise, so we hooked up the phones for a separate communication line… it was crazy, but we made it work. Now I use that scenario in IT job interview situations!
Advocate

Marketing to Patrons, Stakeholders

• Build excitement
• Brief explanation of best features
• Promote at programs & by word of mouth
• Include in newsletters & other marketing
• Gather swag (if applicable)
• Ensure your tech goals reflect your plan of service

Learn a New Language with Pronunciator!

WBRL is happy to introduce our newest online resource, Pronunciator! Learn a new language with one of the largest ESL curriculums on the planet, with courses taught in 51 non-English languages! Features include live online teaching sessions, mobile apps, ProFlix World Cinema, and more! Try out Pronunciator today with your free library card here.
What challenges do you and your department face with regards to technology?

• It’s good to be mindful that **social media online has a limited audience**- we can make a Facebook or Twitter post about our public computers being down, but if someone is coming in to use those computers they might not have access to see that communication!

Nicole, Marketing Coordinator
Advocate

Advocate Before Change

- When possible, anticipate questions and concerns when something tech-related is changing, and be proactive about addressing it
Have you ever needed to defend tech in the library?

- Absolutely. **From the very beginning, the self-checkouts were a back & forth.** Originally they were to be called “express checkouts” but staff (including myself) thought that name missed the point- the self-checkouts aren’t faster than staff. What they DO accomplish is that they free up staff so that they have availability to help patrons with more complex questions, and to have a more personal one-on-one time. Self-checkouts also provide additional privacy for patrons who might prefer them for checking out sensitive materials.
Illuminate!

Illuminate Responsively:
Enlighten the people!
Illuminate

Are books under attack by technology?
“Did not like the idea of having tablets installed for kids- my daughter used to come library for reading books. But now she wants to use the tabs the whole time. That definitely has reduced our library visits. Thanks.”

Patron Comment Card
Illuminate

Won't somebody PLEASE think of the BOOKS?!?
Screen Time vs. Real Time

- Technology is here, bigger and better and more ubiquitous than ever, whether we like it or not. The **digital divide** is also ever-present.

- **DON’T DO THIS**: do not remove technologies from your offerings (or make them harder to access) because they are TOO popular

- **DO THIS**: encourage and support your patrons in seeking BALANCE between **screen time** and **real time**
Screen Time vs. Real Time
RECOMMENDATIONS

To promote child health and development in a digital world, physicians and other health care providers should counsel parents and caregivers of young children on the appropriate use of screen time. Specific recommendations include the following:

Minimize screen time:

- Screen time for children younger than 2 years is not recommended.
- For children 2 to 5 years, limit routine or regular screen time to less than 1 hour per day.
- Ensure that sedentary screen time is not a routine part of child care for children younger than 5 years.
- Maintain daily ‘screen-free’ times, especially for family meals and book-sharing.
- Avoid screens for at least 1 hour before bedtime, given the potential for melatonin-suppressing effects.

Mitigate (reduce) the risks associated with screen time:

- Be present and engaged when screens are used and, whenever possible, co-view with children.
- Be aware of content and prioritize educational, age-appropriate and interactive programming.
- Use parenting strategies that teach self-regulation, calming and limit-setting.

As a family, be mindful about the use of screen time:

- Conduct a self-assessment of current screen habits and develop a family media plan for when, how and where screens may (and may not) be used.
- Help children recognize and question advertising messages, stereotyping and other problematic content.
- Remember: too much screen time means lost opportunities for teaching and learning.
- Be reassured that there is no evidence to support introducing technology at an early age.

Adults should model healthy screen use:

- Choose healthy alternatives, such as reading, outdoor play and creative, hands-on activities.
- Turn off their devices at home during family time.
- Turn off screens when not in use and avoid background TV.
Illuminate Tips

Assure those concerned about library technology choices that:

• New technology is an **ADDITION** to libraries, NOT a **SUBTRACTION**

• As with print materials, it is the **prerogative of the parent or guardian** to choose whether to set limits and to supervise what children have access to and when/how long

• The library has **security and privacy measures** in place to protect patrons using our tech (Make sure you actually *do!*)

• Their **concerns are being heard** and will be given due thought and consideration (Consider: is this a valid concern? Are there changes or compromises you could consider making to your tech policies and implementation?)
Is there anything you wish staff, patrons, or stakeholders knew about tech decisions in your library?

- Concerned patrons may be happy to know that the games, sites and apps on the Children’s Computers and iPads were chosen in consultation with our local school boards.
Thank you for your feedback regarding our Krayon Kiosk Ipad Stations. We have created a self serve "Technology" area to the left in the Children's Library including this iPad station. A big thank you to Cenovus for the generous donation of the Krayon Kiosks which house the 7 iPads available for our youngest patrons to enjoy. This station is very popular. Many children in our community enjoy the access to technology provided here at the Library, as all children do not have access to these types of technologies at home. We consulted the local school boards when choosing the games, sites and apps we use. We at the WBRL strive to provide engaging activities and equitable access for all children, reaching a variety of learning styles through our programs, educational toys, technology, books and other resources. Based on staff interaction and patron feedback regarding the location of the iPad kiosks over the last few months, we have relocated the iPads at the front of the library. The kiosks are now in close proximity to soft seating to allow caregivers to sit comfortably while observing and interacting with their children at the iPads, and small tables on which children may elect to play board games and puzzles (which are available at the Reference Desk). The location of the children's iPads makes it a consistent space flowing out of the ComputerWorks area for adults at the front of the library. Based on patron feedback we have created a technology-free dedicated reading space at the back of the children's library. The space at the back of the Children's Library has soft seating, rugs and a selection of board books and read aloud selections that are perfect for reading to your child. We hope your family continues to visit the library and to enjoy all the resources our space has to offer.
A Note About Illumination…

• Be prepared that sometimes your patrons will illuminate YOU!
• Patrons may have tips, tricks, suggestions and concerns regarding your technologies that your library hadn’t considered. Listen to them. 😊
Demonstrate!

- Demonstrate Assistively: Teach the people & assert value! (ongoing)

Ready to order? How would you like your information today?
What challenges do you and your department face with regards to technology?

• Sheri: Our mobile staff may rely on internet access and if it isn’t working properly they can have issues while out and about.

• Jessie: Yes. Even IN the library, sometimes you will depend on wireless and it doesn’t work when you need it.

• Sheri: We run a lot of fun programs on evenings and weekends when there may not be as many staff around to assist if we have IT issues.

• Jessie: It can also be a challenge keeping up with ever-changing tech.
Demonstrate

- Demonstrate with your **staff** through showing and encouraging use of the tech! (programming, job duties and research, personal use, etc.)
- Demonstrate with your **patrons** through suggestions, social media, one on one help, and programming
- Demonstrate with your **stakeholders** through diligent statistic keeping and recordkeeping
Ongoing Promotion: How might the technology tie in with what’s currently going on in the community and the library?
Tech is for Everyone

Gran, 80, spends holiday cash on virtual reality headset and ‘visits’ dream destinations from her living room

Dorothy Hayward, described by Facebook billionaire Mark Zuckerberg as “awesome”, became known as virtual cruise after selling out £60 in the VR headset.

https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/gran-80-spends-holiday-cash-11338170
Do you have any memorable or otherwise remarkable anecdotes regarding technology in libraries?

- One of our former staff shared a patron story from Tech S.O.S. It was a program aimed at helping seniors use technology and a patron had went to the store, and bought a brand new iPad to bring to the library for the program. The patron had shared that they always wanted to learn how to use an iPad and Facebook but were intimidated by the device and using the app, so never bothered until that moment when they had someone at the library who could physically help them.
Senior Social: Appie Hour
Do you have any memorable or otherwise anecdotes regarding technology in the library?

- The first time we tried Appie Hour, the seniors didn’t understand why we were bringing out iPads and laptops… they understood the appetizer part! But it ended up being a popular program.
Gaming
ELL: Heart Math
Ancestry.com
Book a Librarian
Demonstrate Every Day
Still having problems defending your tech?

Reflect:

• Did you miss one of the above steps (Allocate, advocate, illuminate, demonstrate?)
• Have the needs of your communities changed since your tech was unveiled?
• Could you make changes in your tech policies and/or procedures to better serve your communities?
• Consider reaching out to other libraries, schools or organizations who have been successful with similar technologies to get suggestions and feedback.
Questions? Comments? Take-Aways?
Resources

References and resource lists are provided with this presentation on The Library Toolshed https://librarytoolshed.ca/
Get in Touch With me!

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