The Indispensable Librarian

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Warning: “Command and Control” Will Not Make You Indispensable
Indispensable Attribute #1: 24/7 Convenience
Full Service Web Site
Podcast Programs/Training
Pop-Up Spaces
Indispensable Attribute #2: Self-Directed Service
Simplified Wayfinding

- Reduced clutter
- Consolidated desks
- “Situational” directions
- Natural language catalog
- Prepackaged tips, shortcuts, FAQs
- All staff capable of assisting with basic navigation and end-user tools
Roving Support Staff + Wireless
Touch Screens (Again)
“Bookends” Service

- Get me started
- Check my work when I’m done
Indispensable Attribute #3: Services for Hunter-Gatherers
Disaggregation –
The “Least Publishable Unit”
Library Toolbar
User-Supplied Interfaces
Life Caching and Mashups
Indispensable Attribute #4: Participation in the “Real” Virtual Community
Blogs, Vlogs, Wikis
Library Service via Social Networks

Wikipedia

- English
  The Free Encyclopedia
  3,511,000+ articles
- Deutsch
  Die freie Enzyklopädie
  250,000+ Artikel
- Français
  L’encyclopédie libre
  1,000,000+ articles
- Svenska
  Den fria Encyklopedin
  500,000+ artiklar
- Polski
  Wolna Encyklopedia
  78,000+ entries
- Español
  La Enciclopedia Libre
  50,000+ artículos
- Italiano
  L’enciclopedia libera
  52,000+ articoli

social bookmarks

del.icio.us

myspace
a place for friends
“Other people who found this useful also recommend…”

http://movielens.umn.edu
Continuous Partial Attention
Indispensable Attribute #5: User-Driven Priorities
The Library Brand

1. Books
2. (see #1)
Serious Negatives

- Poor signage
- Ininhospitable surroundings
- Lack of parking
- Dirt, wear, shabbiness
- Hard-to-use systems
- Inconvenient hours
- Inflexible policies
Libraries Are Better than Search Engines (Google, etc.) for Nada
The End of Traditional Reference
Reference Alternatives

- Proactive reference
- Virtual reference
- Social network reference
- Extreme Googling
- Reference by appointment
- Librarians on call instead of on desk
Don’t Forget Why You’re Doing This