

LibraryCrunch

Service for the Next Generation Library: A Library 2.0 Perspective by Michael Casey

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"Ask a stakeholder"

Helene Blowers over on [LibraryBytes](#) discusses her library's recent stakeholder meeting (part of [PLCMC's Imagine 2010](#) organizational redesign) in reference to Will Sherman's [33 Reasons Why Libraries and Librarians are Still Extremely Important](#):

Our value to our community goes far beyond just being an alternative to Google. We need to learn to voice our importance in terms of community value and impact; not merely services/products. And I think Harry Jones said it best when he said libraries are important because they help citizens "thrive and prosper." It's not what we do or offer that makes libraries & librarians important. It's how we improve quality of life and changes lives that matters most.

If given the time, I'd think it would be interesting to ask members of our community to come up with 33 reasons of their own. From the conversations this morning, I know one thing for sure... it definitely would look a whole lot different.

So here's a start at a new list of reasons that I gathered from what I heard...

1. A literate society is import for our community to prosper. Libraries provide vital services and resources that assist in the literacy development.
2. Our school and education systems are challenged and the need to raise our student's achievement levels is important to the entire community. Libraries are the most important community partner to achieving this goal and with stakes this high this is perhaps our greatest legacy.
3. Community demographics are changing fast and new citizens need a trusted institution that can assist them with navigating the territory. Libraries serve as a vital community resource in helping both "newcomers" and "lifers" find their way through the forest.
4. Workforce development is paramount to a thriving community. Libraries provide learning resources, computer skills training classes and access to online resources for job applications, resume creations and career development.
5. As a knowledge rich society, people need a place to exchange ideas. Libraries are community gathering places that encourage conversation, dialogue and the exchange of free ideas.
6. ... it's your turn

So how about it? I've started off the first five. What can you add to this list? Why not join me in asking a stakeholder in your community why libraries are important ... you just might be pleasantly surprised. :)

[Link to full post here.](#)

Posted by Michael on February 1, 2007 05:47 PM | [Permalink](#)

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