

## 10–Second Bites

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- For every \$1 spent on your library, the city sees a \$4 return on their investment.
- Publicly–run libraries are transparent to their communities.
- The Library loaned \_\_\_\_ items and had \_\_\_\_ visitors last year.
- Did you know you can learn a foreign language for free?
- Libraries offer free computer classes with a retail value of \$629 million per year.
- U.S. public libraries offered career assistance to 13,000 patrons in 2010. (Compare that to the 3,000 people who received assistance at the U.S. Department of Labor’s one–stop career centers.)



## Questions to Ask Your Governing Body

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- How will a private company maintain or increase the level of service to the community and still make a profit?
- Will a private company be receptive to community feedback about the library?
- Will policy remain under local control? What is the role of the board of trustees?
- What is the company’s profit margin, and how does this impact library service?
- Will the company adhere to policies such as protection of user privacy?
- Will Friends, Foundations, and other bodies continue to raise funds? Will any these funds go to the for–profit company?

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## Keeping Public Libraries Public

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OLA Conference

Thursday,

April 26, 2012

4:00pm –

5:30pm

## Strategies for Advocacy

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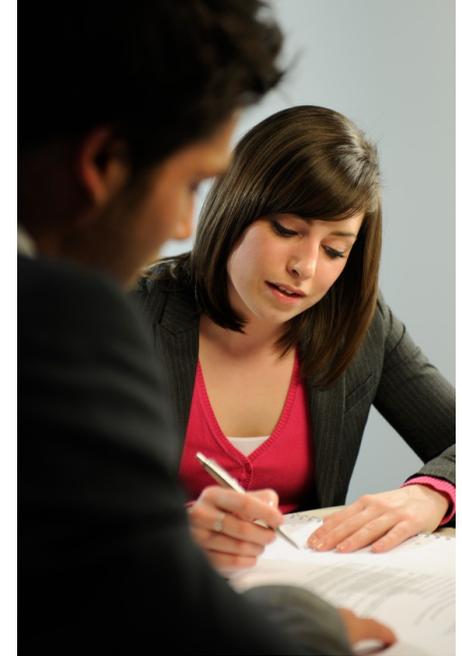
- Prepare a strategic plan involving all stakeholders and adopted by your governing body.
- Engage Advisory Commissioners, Trustees, Friends of the Library and Foundations when implementing your strategic plan.
- Educate all stakeholders on your mission, vision and budget to prepare them to speak as advocates for public library services and programs.
- Create partnerships within your organization. Example: Teach computer classes for your IT Department.
- Develop one new partnership every six months.
- Stay informed on current legislation.
- Share talking points with stakeholders.
- Read OCLC's "How Libraries Stack Up" every year.



## Checklist for Telling the Library Story

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- Public libraries are accountable to the public for the money they spend. Private companies answer to the need to make a profit.
- A resident can see exactly how much money is spent on public library services. Private companies often shield their profits from public view.
- Public libraries are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. This same level of accountability is not required in privately held firms.
- Public libraries require a professional standard of quality in their staff. Private companies interested in keeping costs low may hire workers who lack the necessary training or experience needed to provide quality service.



- Public officials make decisions about library operations in public meetings open to everyone. Privatization may close the door on public meetings and shut the public out of decision-making.
- Public librarians view the control of public assets as a trust that must be managed for the long-term interests of the community, not driven by private commercial interests.