

10–Second Bites

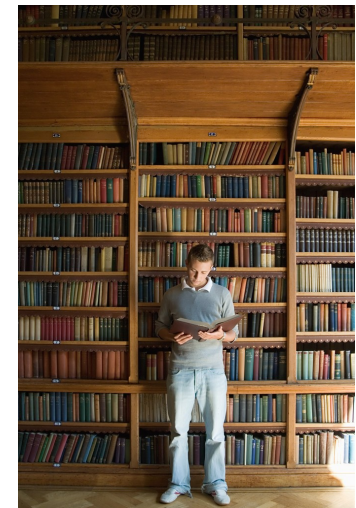
- For every \$1 spent on your library, the city sees a \$4 return on their investment.
- Publicly–run libraries are transparent to their communities.
- The Library loaned ____ items and had ____ visitors last year.
- Did you know you can learn a foreign language for free?
- Libraries offer free computer 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

- 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?

Keeping Public Libraries Public



OLA Conference

Thursday,

April 26, 2012

4:00pm –

5:30pm

Strategies for Advocacy

- 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

- 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.