

Library Board of Trustees Special Meeting
Strategic Planning Retreat Day 1
August 19, 2015
APPROVED MINUTES

Anyone requiring these minutes in an alternate format, such as large type, Braille, or an audio recording, please contact WCLS at (360) 305-3600.

Location	Lynden Library, 216 – 4 th Street, Lynden, WA 98264. (Note: “Library refers to the Whatcom County Library System – WCLS.)
Attendance	<p>OrangeBoy, Inc.: Sandy Swanson, President; Nickie Harber-Frankart, Principal/Lead Consultant</p> <p>Trustees: Marvin Waschke, Chair; Fred Haslam, Vice Chair; Lori Jump, Secretary; and June Hahn</p> <p>Staff: Christine Perkins, Executive Director; Michael Cox, Deputy Director; Kyle Teeter, Director of Finance and Administration; Lisa Gresham, Collection Support Manager; Geoff Fitzpatrick, IT Services Manager; Christina Read, Human Resources Manager; Thom Barthelmess, Youth Services Manager; Lizz Roberts, Community Relations Coordinator; Jon McConnel, ILS Administrator; Debby Farmer, Blaine Branch Manager; Katrina Carabba, Deming Branch Manager; Dana Klootwyk, Administrative Associate</p> <p>Bellingham Public Library: Pam Kiesner, Library Director; Janice Keller, Communications, Community Relations and Programming Manager; and Trustees Tom Barrett, J. Gordon, Marilyn Mastor, Rachel Myers, and Rick Osen.</p>
Call to Order	The meeting began at 9:05 a.m.
Introduction	<p>Nickie and Sandy introduced themselves and stated that the day’s agenda would focus on sharing circulation data and information gathered from the customer and stakeholder surveys, whereas tomorrow’s activities will center on identifying themes and setting measurable goals.</p> <p>Nickie distributed a SWOTT questionnaire and asked the attendees to categorize data points as Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, or Trends.</p>
Whatcom County Overview: Library Service Regions	Two library systems serve Whatcom County: WCLS and BPL. WCLS’ service area covers the county excluding the city of Bellingham. In order to extrapolate circulation data unique to WCLS, OrangeBoy geocoded library cardholders by street address. Even so, the relationship is complex; the two systems share the same patron database and library catalog, and our customers perceive and use both systems as one unit. OrangeBoy’s experience is that the card-sharing relationship between WCLS and BPL is somewhat unique among library consortia.
Whatcom County Overview: Customer Population by Card Origin	<p>Overall, approximately 70% of patrons with a county address were issued a library card at a WCLS location. 30% of WCLS patrons got their library cards at a BPL location. In contrast, 95% of BPL customers received their library card at a BPL location. Customer survey responses confirmed circulation data; 33% of WCLS customers report regularly using BPL locations. Reasons for this include work patterns, and an assumption that BPL’s Central Library is the county’s main library. Card origination seems to be driven by where people want to check out materials, which is not necessarily the location nearest their homes.</p> <p>BPL and WCLS customers use both systems interchangeably and are unaware that they are doing so. A greater number of WCLS customers have BPL-issued cards and use BPL locations than BPL customers have WCLS-issued cards and use WCLS locations. However, more</p>

	<p>WCLS-purchased items are borrowed by BPL patrons than BPL-purchased items are borrowed by WCLS customers. Sixteen percent of BPL's circulated material is owned by WCLS, and WCLS' collection budget is 2.6 times as large as BPL's.</p> <p>OrangeBoy's findings confirm the experience of attendees. There was some discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of our remarkable interconnectedness. The apparent seamlessness of the two systems is a positive for patrons, unless there are funding challenges, which in a worst-case scenario could lead to border wars and a bunker mentality.</p> <p>Pam suggested that OrangeBoy's data could be used to help support and refine the formulae used for balancing the cost-sharing of materials and patrons between the two systems. Christine agreed; now would be a good time to quantify how materials purchases may offset in-person library use. Our mission is ultimately to make spending decisions that improve both organizations and enhance the lives of all Whatcom County residents.</p> <p>The attendees discussed collaboration on collection development, which is ongoing. For example, WCLS purchases many TV series on DVD, which are heavily used by BPL patrons. Rachel suggested that programming draws attendance based on interest rather than geography. Lori would like to see WCLS events marketed at BPL so that patrons who work in Bellingham and pick up holds at a BPL location will know what is going on at their home/weekend WCLS library.</p>
Market Analysis: Service Area	<p>OrangeBoy presented some general demographics related to Bellingham and Whatcom County, but these numbers were determined using zip codes, some of which represent non-Bellingham street addresses. Results were therefore not accurate so we chose to ignore this data.</p> <p>OrangeBoy presented graphs comparing the population by age range to active cardholders by age range; the distributions are similar. Another chart showed the age distribution of all cardholders compared to active cardholders. WCLS' use statistics mirror those of library systems nationwide. Library usage tends to dip around age 18, peak around age 25, and significantly taper off after age 68.</p> <p>Sandy noted that there is an un-measurable segment known as phantom patrons. They use library services off the radar of barcode tracking, such as attending programs or browsing/reading/working in the library without checking out materials.</p> <p>WCLS's market penetration is estimated at 40-45% of households in the county, excluding city of Bellingham, with at least one active¹ library card. The national median market penetration of library systems is 41%. Sandy commented that in the context of consumer goods, 40-45% is a coveted statistic, indicating a powerful reach. Nickie commented that re-engaging inactive patrons is a fairly simple way to further increase market penetration.</p>
Market Analysis: Branch Service Areas	<p>Nickie explained that Areas of Dominant Influence, or ADIs are specific segments of a larger service area used to measure the audience reached. ADIs help make demographic comparisons within a larger service area, and precede in-depth customer analysis.</p>

¹ "Active" is defined as used within the past twelve months.

OrangeBoy presented a chart of Areas of Dominant Influence by Zip code. Kyle suggested that reworking the ADIs based on census blocks would give more accurate results, as Whatcom County Zip codes are not a reliable mode of delineation. Even so, it is clear that WCLS serves wide variety of customer markets.

Nickie stated that knowing about the many demographic variables and differences in communities helps to allocate resources.

According to the OrangeBoy's current calculations, the Blaine ADI, which includes Birch Bay, has the highest projected growth. Lummi Island has the highest median age and median household income. The percentage of households with children is highest in Everson and Sumas. East county locations such as Deming, Everson, North Fork and Sumas all have 16-17% of the population for whom English is a second language.

Nickie stated that in any library service area, approximately 30% of the population will always be non-library users. Sandy explained that these non-users tend to fall into four groups:

1. Those who don't like to read and/or don't need access to a public computer
2. Those who use a competing library system
3. Those who prefer to purchase books and materials
4. Those who do not have children

Nickie explained that the Youth Risk Index is a set of demographic indicators that predict the level of risk that children will fail to meet third-grade reading proficiency. The three indexes are:

1. Female head of household
2. Poverty
3. English not spoken at home

In Whatcom County, the overall risk is low to moderate, with North Fork, Point Roberts, and Sumas demonstrating the highest risk with an index of 37 to 41.

While Youth Risk Index can be a valuable tool in helping libraries allocate Early Learning resources, there are complicating factors. Often, demand for Early Learning programming is highest in areas with the lowest Youth Risk Index, because of parental engagement and value of literacy. Christine commented that our Early Learning resource allocation can sometimes be limited by the constraints of various facilities. Rachel commented that BPL is working to address youth risk by taking service out of the library locations and into the highest risk schools.

Customer Clusters

OrangeBoy calculates customer clusters based on a rolling 12-week analysis of customer behavior tracked in Savannah, and informed by customer survey responses. In general, customers can move between clusters, but belong to only one group at a time. This analysis includes only customers living outside Bellingham city limits, and does not include Inactives.

<u>Cluster Name</u>	<u>Behaviors</u>	<u>WCLS %</u>
Bedtime Stories	Access children's materials, attend programs, borrow adult materials	7%
Rising Stars	Children aged 12 and under who use the library	13%

	independently with their own cards.	
Bright Future	Teens aged 13-17 who visit the library to work or study	5%
New Cardholders	Signed up for library card within past three months	6%
Staying Connected	Use library computers and Wi-Fi, borrow materials	4%
Digitarians	Access eContent, browse materials online	4%
Occasionals	Infrequent users	39%
Audiophiles	Borrow audiobooks, browse materials online	1%
Dependables	Borrow print and A/V materials, browse online, place holds	4%
Transitionals	Borrow print and A/V materials, but try eContent.	1%
Double Feature	Borrow A/V materials	2%
Page Turners	Borrow adult print materials	13%
		<hr/> 99%
Inactives	Have not used library card for one year	
	<p>For this snapshot in time, 65% of WCLS customers fall into Occasional, Rising Stars, and Page Turners clusters. Twenty-five percent of our customer behavior is youth-focused. Five percent of our patrons' experiences are primarily virtual.</p> <p>Survey responses add depth to circulation data, giving insight into what customers want and need. The response rate for emailed customer surveys was 8.1%. The response rate for emailed stakeholder surveys was 52.4%.</p> <p>Nickie presented a series of graphs showing survey responses sorted by customer clusters.</p>	
	<u>Library Behavior or Desire for Library Enhancement</u>	<u>Top Clusters or Customer Percentages</u>
	1. Visit the Library in person	Digitarians, Staying Connected, New Cardholders, Audiophiles
	2. Access the Library website	Audiophiles, Digitarians, Double Features, Staying Connected
	3. Use a smart phone	New Cardholders, Bright Futures, Bedtime Stories, Inactives, Double Features, Audiophiles, Rising Stars, Digitarians, Occasionals, Page Turners
	4. Care for a child younger than 18	Bright Future, Double Feature, Digitarian
	5. Use the internet and mobile devices	92% of respondents have reliable internet at home, with 85% reporting high speed. As information has become increasingly digitized, 61% report that library use has remained the same.
	6. Would like reduced wait times for holds	17%
	7. Would like more convenient service hours	14.8%
	7. Would like simplified access to digital media	14.7%
	8. Would like extended borrowing periods	14.7%
	Customer responses differed significantly from stakeholder values in some areas. For	

	<p>example, 19.3% of stakeholders value eliminating overdue fines, whereas only 7.5% of customers expressed that desire. Almost 6% of customers would like to see updated library facilities, compared with 21.4% of stakeholders. The percentages of customers who desire more convenient hours of operation was almost double that of stakeholders. Stakeholders believe that the top three roles of the library are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing a safe, comfortable space for community members to work, read, and meet 2. Provide a shared collection of books and materials for every interest 3. Be destination for interesting and free classes, events, and programs. <p>The group discussed the concept of “customer loyalty.” June explained that the question “Would you recommend this to a friend,” is an industry standard, an expression of intent, a good predictor of behavior, and a default loyalty measure. The attendees agreed that frequency of use is not a reliable indicator of loyalty. High use/low loyalty experiences often stem from service barriers in markets with few other options.</p> <p>Nickie stated that the “Net Promoter Score (NPS),” is based on a one-question measure of customer loyalty. Customers are categorized into three groups, depending on how they answer on a 1-10 scale. The Net Promoter score is calculated by subtracting the percentage of detractors from the percentage of promoters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoters are happy supporters (9,10) • Passives are satisfied, but likely to stray (7,8) • Detractors are dissatisfied and critical (0-6) <p>Thriving companies have an NPS of 50 to 80. Average companies have a relatively equal number of promoters and detractors, with an NPS of 5-10. A failing company will have an NPS of 0 or less.</p> <p>In Libraries, customers with limited engagement patterns are more likely to cause lower NPSs. Clusters with a below-average NPS are likely picking and choosing a few familiar resources from the library. Customers with an average NPS include both new and inactive customers, highlighting key opportunities for engagement. Clusters with a high NPS include Bedtime Stories, Digitalians, and traditional users. WCLS’ overall customer NPS is 68.5.</p>
Lunch and Group Discussion	The attendees broke into smaller groups and discussed the data and analysis over a working lunch.
Announcements & Adjourn	Christine reminded the attendees that Day 2 of the Strategic Planning Retreat is scheduled for August 20 at Deming Library, from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Nickie and Sandy will review Day One Key Concepts and Findings, discuss SWOTT Analysis, and facilitate goal-setting. The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Signed by Marvin Waschke for
Lori Jump, Secretary

September 15, 2015
Date

Signed by Dana Klootwyk
Dana Klootwyk, Meeting Secretary