GLOBAL VISION DISCUSSION

Report of the Standing Committee on Management & Marketing meeting
How a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future

June 26, 2017

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Introduction

On June 26, 2017, in 11 librarians participated in a conversation about how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future.

The group represented public, business, government, academic, state, and national libraries, as well as library associations.

The workshop was conducted via a Zoom call, as well as filled-out questionnaires.

A vision for libraries

Libraries enable literate, informed and participative societies. When we look at the future, according to the global debates, this means that libraries are the first port of call for accurate and accessible sources of information. They are important stakeholders involved in the transition of scholarly communication ecosystems from static and closed to dynamic and open. They are available to 25% more of the world's population with a global political and financial plan to increase coverage by 5% annually thereafter. Information will be digitized and driven by interactive programs to assist the customer. At the same time, physical library spaces will take on a contemporary, clean and highly digital look and feel; they will be dynamic and multi-purpose environments for learning and recreation.

The core values of libraries (Q4):

1. Free, unbiased and equitable access to information

2. Quality and up-to-date professional service

3. Organized information and knowledge expertise

4. Trust

5. Inspirational

Comments:

Libraries are exceptionally good at (Q5):

1. Advocacy

2. Team Building

3. Generating new knowledge

4. Going above and beyond for their client base

5. Delivering services on small budgets

Comments:

There was much discussion about how libraries/librarians are excellent at communicating with people and being willing to help and engage; also at promotion of lifelong learning

Libraries should do more of (Q6):

[LIST ANSWERS Q6: Remove text in italics]

1. Marketing/promoting their services and engagement with the community

2. Becoming more visible to users and decision makers

3. Thinking "big", developing bold strategies

4. Promoting literacy and reading skills

5. Partnering/collaborating with other agencies, school libraries, emerging businesses

Comments:

Participants also mentioned that libraries were good at developing digital resources and digital literacy

Libraries should do less of (Q7):

1. Requiring people to come physically to the library

2. Using too much technology and avoiding human transactions

3. Remaining silent when they need more financial and political support

4. Trying to be "everything for everybody," resulting in fragmented marketing

5. Nitpicking

Comments:

Challenges and solutions

The main challenges to society (Q8):

1. Freedom of speech/censorship even in the digital age

2. Limited access to resources

3. Equity of reading and learning

4. Growing divide between the poor and rich

5. Lack of financial support and political will to meet the basic needs of humans

Comments:

The main challenges to libraries (Q9):

1.	Combatting the overwhelming power of the Internet and social media
2.	Information literacy
3.	Conveying value to decision makers
4.	Rapidly changing environment and user demands
5.	Difficulty in recruiting qualified professional librarians with new skills

Comments:

Also reinventing and remaking ourselves

The main professional challenges (Q10):

1.	Keeping up with all ways that people get information
2.	Being noticed by users as professionals who can teach how to evaluate information
3.	Meeting the needs of increasingly diverse populations
4.	Clearer self-identity
5.	Training library workers in marketing and advocacy

Comments:

The group took funding cuts as a given affecting all professionals/libraries

How a united library field can make a difference

How should a united library field help meet the challenges identified (Q11)?

1.	Advocasy
2.	Consistent messaging regarding value of libraries in society
3.	Larger voice
4.	Strengthening networks
5.	Bombarding social media with positive messaging

Comments:

The characteristics of a united library field (Q12):

1.	Strong global network of librarians
2.	Global strategic plan
3.	Consistent value statements
4.	Support for one another
5.	Potential for partnerships, collaborations, and sharing resources

Comments:

The focus of a united library field (Q13):

1.	Advocacy
2.	Message marketing on world scale
3.	Networking
4.	Partnerships and collaboration
5.	Global strategic plan

Comments:

A global conversation

This report is created in a global interactive process, in on July 25, 2017. It is part of a global conversation initiated by IFLA on how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future.

Over the course of two years (2017-2018), IFLA will involve as many librarians and others as possible in this global conversation. Participants are encouraged to continue the conversation in their own networks and organization and share the results with IFLA. At the end of 2017, the first results of all the workshops and online discussions will be turned into a *Global Vision Report*, which in turn will be adapted into concrete strategies, processes and work programmes in 2018.

To learn more about the global conversation, and download supporting materials to support your own activities, visit globalvision.ifla.org.

Stay tuned for news about the IFLA Global Vision discussion following #iflaGlobalVision and make sure to cast your vote in August when the online voting platform is available on https://globalvision.ifla.org/.