

Rapid Prototype Project

LIS 650: Management of Libraries and Information Centers Summer 2007

A longtime donor to the Hawaii Public Library is considering withdrawing her support. Her main complaint is that the generous donations she has made in the past “just disappear into the system,” and that her main interest, outreach to people on Oahu who can’t or won’t come to physical libraries, is being ignored.

As a class, your task is to *design a mobile library service*, and present your proposal on the last day of class. Your proposed mobile library service can be as traditional or innovative as you can imagine. It can be based on one large vehicle, a fleet of small ones, or any combination, but your goal is to convince the library donor that your proposed mobile library service supports and extends her interests, the mission of the Hawaii Public Library, and the professional goals and standards of librarianship as a whole. Your budget for the purchase of the vehicle(s), as well as outfitting, staffing and operating it/them on Oahu for one year, is one million dollars.

Important questions to address include:

- What Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats do you envision?
- Who will use the mobile library service, and why?
- What services and technologies will it provide?
- What items will be in the collection?
- Will your service duplicate or complement existing HPL services and collection items?
- Will your service partner with any non-HPL (or non-library) organizations?
- What will the physical layout of the mobile library service be?
- Where will the mobile library service go, and when?
- Who will staff it?
- How will you allocate costs and resources?
- How will you market it to the public?
- How will the collection evolve after the initial year?
- Who will pay to maintain the service after the initial year?
- How will you evaluate the mobile library service's success?
- How will your mobile library service reflect the distinctive culture of HPL, and Hawaii as a whole?

All of your decisions should be grounded in some way, either by making reference to course readings, lectures and discussions, or your own research. In addition to library research, this will require some competitive intelligence about mobile library services currently offered in Hawaii and elsewhere. It may require informal conversations with HPL employees and patrons, investigating city policies and ordinances, and will definitely require a solid understanding of current mobile information technologies.

The process of this project is as important as the product. You may adopt any organizational structure and divide tasks however you wish, as long as everyone’s work is represented in the final product. Feel free to emphasize, de-emphasize or add to any of the above bullet points in order to allow individual students to work on the aspects of the rapid prototype they find most interesting.

Your presentation should be about 45 minutes long, but spend most of that time communicating your ideas instead of referencing literature. Turn in an electronic version of your presentation that includes formal references to your sources and any data gathering instruments you used on the last day of class. Discuss and evaluate your experience with the rapid prototype project, and link it with course concepts, in your individual assessment papers.