THE WELL-READ LIBRARIAN: 
LIBRARY PARTNERSHIPS 

by Rita Barsun

PARTNERSHIP FUNDAMENTALS


Two approaches to libraries’ sharing of collections: a combined “virtual” catalog using the Z39.50 search-and-retrieval software, and a union catalog using a single automation system. Advantages and disadvantages of each.


Case studies of successful public library joint ventures, including how to develop, evaluate, and promote partnerships.


Three areas in which resource sharing or partnerships place stress on staff (education, attitude, and skills) and suggestions for addressing each. Impact of partnerships on the working relationship between professional and support staff. Topics to be included in training programs.

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES & THE COMMUNITY
Gilbert, Gail R. “New Approaches to Funding and Community Support: Forming Partnerships to Serve All at the University of Louisville.” College and Research Libraries News 60, no. 5 1999): 358-359, 364, 381.

Formation of an Information Advisory Council by an urban university library to assist with a goal of expanding partnerships with businesses in the community. Qualifications and expectations for members of the council.


Examples of collaboration among academic libraries through professional organizations and “cross-institutional” partnerships of academic libraries with other types of libraries. Suggestions about how administrators can and should promote and encourage collaborative efforts by their support, advocacy, and leadership.


Good introduction to the topic of partnerships, including this definition: “those relationships, usually formal in nature, entered into by two more or less equal parties who have a mutual interest in accomplishing something and a mutual agreement to bear the costs of its accomplishments....”

Different kinds of partnerships, from consortia and
cooperative cataloging among libraries to fee-based arrangements with the private sector. Management issues to be aware of and suggested techniques for dealing with them.

**ACADEMIC LIBRARIES & PUBLIC LIBRARIES**


The two-year discussion and planning process that culminated in 2003 in an operating agreement for the library shared by the San Jose (California) Public Library and San Jose State University. Description of the shadowing project and the surveys used to resolve differences about the design and delivery of reference services, and the resulting recommendations.


Additional details of the San Jose joint-use library planning and development process, including financial issues and how opposition from both campus and community was addressed. Summary of lessons learned.


The benefits of the partnership between the Broward County (Florida) and Nova Southeastern University and the process that led to completion of the project.

**PUBLIC LIBRARIES & COMMUNITIES**


The many partnerships between the Chicago Public Library and the city’s cultural and educational institutions; e.g., the botanical garden, museums, the Ravinia Music Festival, schools. Describes four elements needed to make such partnerships successful.


Six examples of public libraries that house programs to help low-income and underserved members of the community learn about opportunities for them in continuing their education at the postsecondary level. Need for collaboration with area colleges or universities and with area schools, for sufficient funding sources, and for broad-based community support.

**SCHOOL LIBRARIES & PUBLIC LIBRARIES**


Titles of the articles include “Get it in Writing!,” “What One Community Says about Joint Use,” “Timberland’s Big Adventure,” “The Devil Is in the Details,” and “Double Your Fun with a Combination Public-high School Library.”


Articles include “Is This a Real Library?,” “The Three Cs of a Successful Joint Library Project,” “Don’t Do It!” and “Partnerships: The Wave of Today.”


Brief history of school-public library partnerships and studies about such efforts. Barriers to success, such as staffing and resources. Recommendations for successful cooperation.


Sample chapter headings and subheadings illustrate the value of this text:

- Everyday Practice: A How-to Guide – Initiating Contact, Working Together for the First Time, Continuing Contact
- Grants – Sources of Grants, Collaboration for Grant Efforts, Resources for Grant Seekers
- Sharing Resources – General Protocol for Teachers and Librarians,
- Homework Tips for Teachers (to make students’ trips to the public library more rewarding), Alternatives to Assignment Alerts
PARTNERSHIPS IN SUPPORT OF YOUTH LITERACY & LIBRARY USE


An “inventory” of ways to build relationships. Steps to effect coalition building and a model of a coalition made up of school, public, academic (including community college), and special libraries.


A summer program to provide job and social skills to challenged youth. Details of the program, including work assignments in the library, social activities, Web scavenging experiences, and the development by students of an Internet “yearbook.” Benefits to students as well as to the library. The 1999 yearbook: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/you/gperciak/youbook99/youbook99pm/youbook.htm


Helpful, detailed recounting of the planning for and implementation of a program designed to address the influx of neighborhood youth into an academic library.


A brief article with information about a pilot information literacy project between an academic library and two nearby high schools. The planning process, staff development workshops, feedback from participants, and a summary of the important steps in the process.

WEB RESOURCES

The ALA Community Partnership Toolkit.
http://library.austincc.edu/staff/lnavarro/CommunityPartnerships/Toolkit.html

An outstanding online guide for any librarian considering a partnership.

Examples of the FAQs include necessary components of good partnerships, guidelines for partnerships among libraries and with other entities, steps to follow, examples and scenarios.


Tips for establishing programs to foster international relations among libraries. Several examples of successful sister library programs.


Case studies of partnerships in environmental information.


Includes an Indiana art teaching project, Indiana Teachers Redraw Lesson Plans with Art Databases.


Helpful information applicable to a broad range of partnerships, not just those entered into by scientific-technical libraries. Three examples of such partnerships. Nice broadly topical bibliography, including online resources.

Madison Gas and Electronic. “Library Partnerships.”

Interesting example of a relationship between a community energy company and public libraries.


Helpful section titled “Areas to Consider” includes mission statements, collection development, censorship, general policies, boundaries, security, library design, administration, staffing, hours of operation, annual evaluation, and advantages/disadvantages.

Links to a document with a guide for forming new partnerships, criteria for reviewing partnerships, and a form for a proposal.


Lengthy document providing information on the “legality and desirability” of combined school-public libraries. Addresses topics such as the legal basis, missions, issues to be considered, alternatives for improving services, a feasibility checklist, and a sample master agreement.

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