

Library 10 & Meetingpoint

Published On: 10 June 2014

Organisation: Helsinki City Library

Country: Finland

Level of government: Local government

Sector: Education

Type: Digital, Public Service

Launched in: 2005

Link to the innovation's website

Like this innovation

0 persons like this innovation

Description

As a public library, Library 10 supports user interest and activity in music and other cultural pursuits. The library provides equipment, tools, and premises for independent production and presentation of cultural works. Library 10 serves as a testing and development facility for new library services.

Library 10 functions as learning environment which offers up-to-date equipment and space for independent study and work. It also aims to assist customers with the questions and problems that often accompany the new technologies. Musicians that are novices with respect to recording equipment are encouraged to attend the audio editing courses that are offered by Library 10 free of charge.

Meetingpoint is a specialised IT and media information desk that tests and develops new service concepts with different partners and customers. At Meetingpoint, city residents receive advice on digital services, entrepreneurship, and job-seeking free of charge. The services provided at Meetingpoint are carried out in cooperation with other businesses and organisations.

Meetingpoint's Urban Office is an office and meeting space that is open for everyone to use in the lobby of Lasipalatsi. Urban Office offers free wireless connections, work desks, and certain office supplies for short meetings or other work sessions.

Why the innovation was developed

The traditional function of libraries is changing dramatically in Finland, as it is with other Nordic countries. Walking between shelves and browsing the library's collections now happens via the library's online collections catalogue. Subsequently, it is these people that spend more time in the library than those that just check out and return items. Particularly among younger users, the library is becoming more a place to work or study as opposed to being a place to hang about.

Objectives

Improve access, Improve service quality, Improve user satisfaction

- Providing services customers do not expect from a library (e.g. rehearsal and recording studios, audio and video editing rooms, music instruments for loan, multimedia peripherals and comic workshops).
 - Economically efficient library operations.
 - Customer oriented approach.
-

Main beneficiaries

Civil Society, General population, Students, Young people

- Library users.
- Cultural producers.
- Event organisers.
- Small entrepreneurs.
- Freelancers.
- Associations.
- Tourists.

Results

Efficiency

Library 10's operations are very economically efficient:

- The cost of each loan is EUR 2.16 (entire library system EUR 3.29).
 - One visit costs EUR 2.11 (entire library system EUR 4.78).
-

Service quality

Other:

- In 2008, Library 10 was one of two bodies that shared the coveted "Quality Innovation of the Year" award in the public sector awarded by the Excellence Finland organisation. The panel detailed its decision by stating that the library has perceived the changing world and has answered this challenge with very modern methods to achieve excellent results in its work.
 - In 2012 the Meetingpoint that works alongside Library 10 received the American Library Association reward for "Best foreign innovation."
-

User satisfaction

- The arithmetic mean of customer satisfaction 2011: (on scale 1-5):
 - 3,88 (Helsinki City Library 3,77).
- The functioning of the work community and leadership 2011: 3,70 (Helsinki City Library 3,66).

Development

Design

The actual idea was born in 1994, when the Helsinki City Library decided to try and set up a new library at the old Nokia cable factory. The Cable Book Library was the first library in the world where customers were able to connect to the Internet. After this, the Cable Book activity went through many moves and steps. The Cable Book Library developed into Library 10, whose task is to evolve into the Central Library.

The library develops its services by continuously reacting to the changing needs of the customers. There are important development tools are customer feedback, questionnaires, interviews, and the dialogue with customers.

Testing

The library has always intended to be up with the times, preferably even a little ahead of the times. In particular regarding the technical applications and space solutions, the Cable Book Library and Library 10 have served as pilot libraries, whose experience has been monitored and used in libraries around the world. Library 10 is the official testing bed of Helsinki City Library for testing new library services.

Library 10's current actions are the result of long-term developments, which have often been systematic, but also very often creative and at times rambling in different directions in search of new paths to develop.

Implementation

Tools used:

- New services are developed and evaluated on an incremental basis as a reaction to the services customers are interested in.
- For any activity the question "What do customers do and how do they do things?" is posed. Thus the materials for loan as well as the technology available for customers evolve and are constantly being updated to reflect the wishes of customers.

Resources used:

- When Library 10 was founded, a grant of EUR 200 000 was given by Helsinki City to meet the costs of opening a new library. Otherwise the yearly expenses are included in the Helsinki City Library's yearly budget, which is EUR 35 million. Out of this, Library 10 has a yearly budget of EUR 1.4 million.
 - Indirect costs are approximately EUR 900 000 per year. The sum is comprised of centralised services and general costs of governing.
 - Library 10 is the most popular venue for activities in Helsinki City Library. 80% of the activities are organised by voluntary participants, societies and other partners.
-

Diffusion

Involving the customers in developing the services has broadened to all the library services. Library 10 was a catalyst for thinking of learning environments in a whole new way.

Since its opening, Library 10 has had broad media exposure exemplifying its new library services and innovative use of the city's public space. Library 10's popularity and activity are one of the strong justifications driving the plans for a new Central Library in the heart of Helsinki.

The concept of Library 10 has been presented in several international conferences.

Library 10 is the most visited library in the capital's metropolitan area. Each year hundreds of domestic and foreign cultural and library professionals, architects, politicians, IT-professionals, and other visitors come to acquaint themselves to what Library 10 is doing. If we are to believe the messages relayed to us by these various visitors, then Library 10's functional model and individual solutions are currently being copied by dozens of cultural and library premises around Europe.

Parts of the service have already been copied in several different libraries and cultural institutions around the world. In Helsinki City Libraries, the "Myllypuro Media Library" was created on the model of Library 10 and Meetingpoint.

Challenges and solutions

The transition of what tomorrow's customers do and need from the library requires new skills from the staff. It is not sufficient that the library merely offers the tools and premises for producing and presenting. At least a portion of the staff must be proficient with the audio and video editing equipment, as well as the sound reproduction and lighting equipment. Presenting concerts and other events require specialised skills as well. We have had positive experiences working with interns who are studying those fields. We are currently schooling new employees that will receive education in both the library and media fields.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- If possible, the planning of the library space could have been more flexible. Libraries are in the middle of a great change and customer's needs to use the space change continuously. The library space, technology and the furnishing should be such that the space could be modified daily according to the situation.
 - Try, test and do not fear making mistakes. A library is not a hospital, the mistakes are not lethal. Observe the customers; observe their behaviour, discussions and the general vibes. React quickly to wishes and develop solutions for needs that customers can't even expect the library to satisfy.
-

Conditions for success

- Positive atmosphere towards innovation by organisation.
 - No fear of making mistakes.
 - Persistence in adversity.
 - Customer participation.
 - Staff participation.
 - The staff together should have multiple skills.
-

Copyright OECD. All rights reserved.