# How to bring the general public back to the libraries.

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**Abstract.** With the advent of technology and other types of modern activities like video games, video chats and streaming apps, the use of the library in Brazil is becoming a little obsolete. As discovered throw research, many people from the general public think that nowadays the libraries are for students, researchers or older people. And a library is more then that. A library is a place of and for freedom of speech, fun activities and, of course, for study and research. It is a safe place. A place for getting knowledge and wisdom in any type or form. And, this exodus "fenomenal" has been happening through the years and we need to make it stop. We need to bring the general public back and show them how interesting and important is to have a library included on the regular activities of a person or the hole family. Throughout this presentation I am going to show and discuss what I think is a good way to do this and how I think I can manage to bring the general public back to the library and the thoughts and views of the local people that I gathered to respond some questions and participate in this research.

**Keywords.** Library, library science, tecnology, general public.

## 1. Introduction

In the past 20 or 30 years, the world saw many changes in terms of technology and the use of it on the daily bases. With this technology and advent of the internet, the way we comunicate and gather information has been quicker than years ago, making people habits change. And, because of this technology and globalization, lots of people buy and get things online, comunicate with friends and, sometimes, stangers, via internet and don't feel the need to leave the house to get, for example, a book. They can get it online. So, with all this amenities availables in the comfort of their couch, why a person should feel the need to go to a place to get the same things they can get from their home? Why a person should go to a library?

Well, for starters, people. With the use of technology, people have the tendency to stay more and more isolated from de outside world and, with that, they will not have encounters with people. In life, we have many encounters with all types of people, good and bad, and this encounters help with all kind of skills. When a person don't leave their house too much, they lost their people skills, making it more and more difficult to be around others. Unless a person decide to live in the woods forever, she will need people skills to get through life. And, in the library, she will see and coexist with all kinds of people, with many personalities and mannerisms.

Second, the library is a place for study and research of many subjects. Some libraries are bigger, some are smaller, but every library has it's use. And of coourse, not every library has every subject in the world available there, but you can find what you need. Just ask a librairan!

Thrid, the librarians. The librarians are very interesting people. They know how put the information out there, with different types of format and uses. They are trained to help people to get the information they need and more. The librarians know how to make a presentation that will blow peoples mind.

Last but not least, when a person go to a library, the world inside her opens up as the world outside. In general terms, all the knowledge avaluable in the world is just in front of her. The possibility to see the past, the present and get a glympse of the future is one of the most amazing things in this lifetime. All of that come in many forms as paper, video, audio etc. And, the amaziness of the library and the wonderfull world inside her is how I think we can manage to bring people back (even if it's virtually!).

## 2. The libraries reality

The library, as we know, suffered many chances through the years. The format of the archives, the type of public and how objects are storage contributed to those chances. But, did it changed enough?

With the internet and the busy life, people are more and more distant from the library. And, as part of the problem, many libraries in Brazil and in the world did not advanced in terms of renovation. They simply stopped in time. The lack of incentive from the governments does not help either. As a library science student I see that emptiness of the libraries close enough to think a way to bring people back. And, all of this, with the resources available at the moment.

Nowadays, it's difficult to compete with all the technology, all the social media and all of the virtual world. And that's why a library need to be ahead of it's time. A good library needs to bring some of this technology inside and show people that it can be as modern as the world around it. And all of that without losing it's purpose and identity. A good library and a good librarian need to know how to present the library content to the visitors. This presentations and expositions are the key to the conquer the visitors and make they wanting to be back.

### 2.1 Marketing and Communication

The goal of the present study is to show how to bring people back.

To start, know the surround. The surround of the library is very important. The knowledge of the neighborhood is crucial to see what kind of people that the library will reach. With that knowledge, it's easier to know the potential people that will attend the library. And, with that information, the librarian can prepare the material that will be displayed.

And of course, communication is the key. Not just communication, but the hole marketing idea. If the library does not put itself out there, there is no way people will know the activities or even the existence of the library. A good marketing and extended marketing will give people the knowledge of the calendar of the library and all of the general information.

The library needs to be more present in peoples lives, in peoples minds. And, for that, the librarian needs to create a good communication system, with emails, banners and all sorts of ways to reach the public.

One of the ways to use the marketing and communication in favor of the library is to use the same internet and social media that is moving away it's visitors. Making a profile online and posting the library, the activities and the materials is a good start to bring people back.

With the research that will be presented below, it's clear that the lack of marketing is harmful to the library existence. Many people did not know that they could enter any library and that actually there is still public libraries in their cities.

## 3. Digital Libraries

Nowadays, people from around the globe are more and more conected. The use of the internet is becoming more available and common. It's hard to see a person that does not have a smartphone. And, with that, the libraries should be more modern and advanced. Bring this online and virtual public to the library.

The ultimate role of a library is to be a place of knowledge, wisdom, dissemination of information and the insert of the community in their activities and work. And, with that said, a library should be open to all kinds of people, even for those who can't or do not want to go out of their home.

When a library provides their material in a digital form, it opens up to people from affar. Besides the local public that can't be phisically there, the library can be reach people from all over the world, and it's role of dissemination of information will be more complete or, perhaps, more open and wide.

So, with that, is also important to open the library to the digital world so it can reach as many people as possible and fulfill it role and purpose.

## 4. The research with the general public

As part of this presentation, a research was made with 113 subjects and their answers were crucial understand what kind of enterteniment a library could do and be.
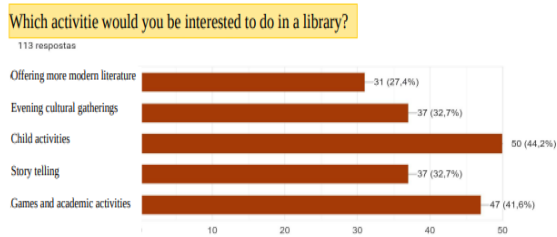
**Fig. 1** – The answers

As it shows above, people were open to all types of activities, such as evening meeting, kids activities and games and academics.

The general public was very interested to see more of the potential of the library, and were open to new and fun ideas.

Most of the people think that the library is a place that only students and older people go, but they are wrong. A library is a magical place. Is a place where people can find themselves, find others and find new worlds. A library is a safe place and should be treated that way. All visitors must feel at home, must feel safe and welcomed.

### 4.1 Metodology

The population of this research was build by 113 people, from 20 to 60 years old, from middle and upper class, such as housewives, workers from private coompanies, students, and it placed at Google Forms in 2023.

### 4.2 Results and discussion

The data colected from the research showed that 74,3% of the community still has a interest to read something, maybe some books, magazines or newspaper, but, 25,7% doesn't read a thing. For those who like to read, the themes were novels and biographies, but, 95,6% of them said that they don't have a favorite place to read. Although, 90,1% of the community showed interest in participating in activities inside the library, in case there was any public invite to the general public.

## 5. Project in pratice

With the present study and with my knowledge in the field, as a student, it's clear that the library needs to be more present in peoples lives, it needs to show that it still exist.

One way of that happening is to bring the libraries to the 21 first century. The libraries need to be acessible to all kinds of people and it means that it needs to be more modern. The library need to get into social media, show the public the types of activities they have and that everyone is welcome.

The social media profile is a good marketing tool and it's not use very often. To bring the old users and find new users of the library, it needs to be timeless and quick, like the world is right now. The information chances very quicly and a goos library and a good librarian are on point with that new information.

Another way of bringing people back to the library is promoting fun activities like, table reading or games. People of all ages can be reached with this. And, it's good for the hole family, as it brings them closer. And brings the community closer.

Another good activity that can be happening in a library (or in front of it) is a good baking sale. Disclosing books that have some sort of recipe but it's not a cook book it's a delicious way to get peoples attention.

The dissemination of the information can have many types and forms, the librarians and the hole team needs to get together and bring new ideas. And, another way of finding what want is asking them. Making a quiz is a fast way of discovering what people really want or expect.

## 6. Conclusion

As the results of this study, the need of modernization of the library is important to maintain and restore the users and, perhaps, find new ones.

Besides the modernization, a good library needs to be in contact with the present, needs to find it's place in the modern times and with that, it will find a language to speak with it's public.

A library is a magical place. Is a place where people can find themselves, find others and find new worlds. A library is a safe place and should be treated that way. All visitors must feel at home, must feel safe and welcomed. That's the main role of one of the most ancient institution in the world.

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