Using Statistical Data to Support Your Library

Presented by Thomas Ivie and Paige Bredenkamp

Who are we?
Thomas Ivie is the Research and Statistics Librarian at the Wyoming State Library. He manages the Annual Wyoming Public Library Survey and the Annual Wyoming School Library Survey, as well as the Wyoming Institutions Survey and Budget Surveys.

Paige Bredenkamp is the School Library Consultant at the Wyoming State Library. She helps coordinate the Annual Wyoming School Library Survey with Thomas and designs training presentations for school librarians.

Purpose of Webinar
Each year the Wyoming State Library collects data on school and public libraries in Wyoming. This data is available for use by those libraries, yet it can be very confusing to try to sort, analyze, and then put that data into a usable communication. We are here to help you tell your story with these pieces.
Why is data important?

Most organizations collect and analyze data about their operations and then use it to inform, convince, and make decisions.

Advocacy

To get the support of the community members, they need to know what they are supporting. Utilizing data shows snapshots of your organization’s value.

Make Your Case

Use data to make your case to library boards, administrators, potential funders, and anyone.
- Show how you are helping the community
- Show how library is not just a benefit to your community, but to society as a whole
- Show how your library is raising academic achievement in students
Improvement

Comparing different sets of data (e.g., circulation, staffing, budget, etc.) can help library staff evaluate their performance and services.

Data

The Wyoming State Library performs several statistical surveys that have data you can utilize. Ones with the most data are:

- School Library Survey
- Public Library Survey

In addition, there are several sources for national data.

http://library.wyo.gov/services/do/stats/
You have data...Now, what will you do with it?
Infographics

Infographics are visual representations of information that present that information quickly and clearly.

Numbers have an important story to tell. They rely on you to give them a clear and convincing voice. —Stephen Few

Stories are how numbers talk to people. - Thomas Davenport
Infographics

- An effective way to grab attention
- People interpret visual information better
- People are more likely to share information that is appealing and compelling vs plain content (think social media)
- Easy to link to website

Infographics

Avoid using too much data and text
- Makes it hard to focus on the point of the infographic
- Can turn off the intended target

Tell your story but keep it simple
- The story should be the focus of your art
- Keep the design clean and with space between data and text
- Use a simple color scheme

Infographics

Here are some examples of some infographics we have created at the Wyoming State Library.

http://library.wyo.gov/downloads/one.jpg
Here are a few FREE online infographic packages to get you started.

- Canva https://www.canva.com/
- Piktochart https://piktochart.com/
- Infogr.am https://infogr.am/

A few things to remember:

- Tell a story
- Keep it simple
- Make sharing easy
- Do it

The bottom line...
Put it out there!

- Add data to your webpage, newsletters, bookmarks, and other communications that will be viewed, even in your email signature. Change this up periodically so your community sees these snapshots.
- Create an annual report comparing your library’s data to the statewide data.

Put interesting library outcomes/facts on library tabletop signs, library posters, bulletin boards

Use data to bolster your requests

1. Instead of “I need this (new) material” try “This addition to the collection will support (grade, student population, discipline, activity, program).”

2. Instead of “We need more of” try “This addition will allow x more users or uses that support (test preparation, accelerated learning).”
More ways to use data

- Team with a classroom teacher to present a student success/outcomes presentation and/or workshop for a specific discipline using data.

- Feature library outcomes that mirror classroom teacher curriculum outcomes.

- Ask the principal to include library student success data into his/her school board presentation (or make your own slide presentation to add to it).

Thank You

For letting us share some data insights and practical uses of it to support your library.

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