Evaluating Library & Research Services: Meaningful Measures & Measuring Impact

Library & Research Services for Parliaments
Management Workshop
Paris, August 2014

Jane Dysart, Dysart & Jones Associates, Canada
Agenda

- Meaningful measures
- Why the struggle to define & capture measures?
- Successful measurers
- Types of measures
- Measure frameworks
- Communicating impact
- Resources
- Challenges/exercises
Why Is It a Struggle?

1. Libraries do not set targets for their measures.
2. Not enough understanding of stakeholders’ value measures.
3. Measures not an integral element of services or programs.
4. Value measures are not differentiated from operating measures; outcomes are confused with outputs, which confuses everyone.
5. No clear responsibility for managing measures.

Are clear on:
- their purpose
- the culture in which they operate
- what’s important & of value to their stakeholders
- not what the people in their communities or campuses or companies need, but rather what they need to do
- how library services expedite or enhance people’s ability to do what they want to or need to do

Successful measurers
Three types of measures

Value

Operational

Satisfaction
Operational/Usage Measures

- We’ve long tracked “how much”
- We also need to look at differences:
  - Peaks? Dips? Switches?
- What are these statistics really telling us? Or, not?
- Who needs to see these statistics?
- Are they telling a story that you want to tell?
Customer Satisfaction Measures

- Tends to focus on existing products and/or services
- Usually measured through surveys
- Are we also measuring importance?
- Survey burnout, plus the expectation is to score all “excellent” or “10 out of 10”
The VALUE proposition...Measures?

- Are we adding value?
- What difference are we making?
- What is the impact of our services and/or programs?
- How are we contributing to the success of...?
Meaningful measures

- Matter to you AND your stakeholders
- Are conveyed in the stakeholders’ language
- More effective when defined using all three types of measures
- Demonstrate that your programs and services add value
  - Focus attention on what is most important for the organization
  - Are critical for managing, planning & decision-making
  - Are organization-dependent
if our presence can't add value to their lives, our absence will make no difference.
It’s logical that:

INPUT
OUTPUT
OUTCOME
IMPACT

resource perspective
operational perspective
user perspective
stakeholder perspective
Communicating Impact

- Language of stakeholders
- Data visualization
- Infographics
Libraries provide an essential link between government and citizens.

- 88.8%: Libraries help people understand and use government websites.
- 78.7%: Libraries help people apply for E-government services.
- 63.3%: Libraries help people complete E-government forms.
- 82.4%: Libraries report it is very important to provide access to government information.
Message 1: The Economic Impact of TPL

City of Toronto
Total Economic Impact $1 billion

- Total Direct Tangible Benefits $580.6M
- Total Indirect Tangible Benefits $141.9M
- Collection Use $512.1M (including in-library use)
- per Household $955
- per Capita $358

$1 invested = $5.63 of economic impact
Resources

- Overcoming our habits & learning to measure impact, Rebecca Jones & Moe Hosseini-Ara
- Measuring what matters, Bonnie Gratch Lindauer
- Impact: A practical guide to evaluating community information projects
- Joe Matthews : The Bottom Line: Determining & Communicating the Value of the Special Library; Score Cards for Results; Evaluation & Measurement of Library Services
Step 1: Describe Your Project and Identify Your Target Audience
Step 2: Identify the Evaluation’s Purpose and Key Questions
Step 3: Design the Evaluation Using Effective Methods
   - Website Analytics
   - Social Media Analysis
   - Surveys
   - Interviews
Step 4: Communicate & Report the Evaluation Findings

It’s logical that:

INPUT  OUTPUT  OUTCOME  IMPACT

resource perspective  operational perspective  user perspective  stakeholder perspective
Framework for Influencing Stakeholders

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT: IN YOUR ENVIRONMENT, HOW IS VALUE DEFINED, MEASURED AND COMMUNICATED?

Key stakeholders who need to understand our value are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Title/Role</th>
<th>Indicators used to measure their progress</th>
<th>Their goals &amp; objectives</th>
<th>What do we know about them? (What type of stakeholder are they? Financial, operational, support, influencer, etc.)</th>
<th>What do they know about us/our services?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What problems do people face? What are their pains? What pain relievers can we best provide? What are the desired outcomes & impacts? How well are we allocating our resources to achieve those?

The real questions
Questions? Comments? Other things to explore?
Slides at www.dysartjones.com

Jane Dysart, Dysart & Jones Associates
jane@dysartjones.com

THANKS!