PLANNING FROM THE INSIDE OUT

“Planning Your Library Furniture”
Presented by Jay Malise

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It is time for a new library

1900’s Library

1960’s Library

2014’s Library
Why Thinking About Tomorrow Is Important Today.

• Another important considerations to keep in mind is that furnishing a home or private office usually is for a five to ten year cycle. Personal tastes or needs changes and furnishings are replaced. For a library a twenty five to thirty year cycle will be coincident with the need to replace much of the furniture and is realistic because of the unlikelihood of obtaining funding for replacement any sooner than this time span. (Gerald McCabe PG 42)"
Building A Library

• It does not cost anything to think way in advance about furnishings. You are never too early to do so.

• If you are to the point you are considering getting an architect on board then start talking to a Library Furnishing Specialist to be part of your team.
Teamwork Means Success!!

• Today’s library is not what it once was and will never be again. You have to be prepared to lead the team you assemble.
  – You have the education in library science who would know better than you.
  – You know your clientele
  – You know your libraries functional needs
Assembling Your Team

• Today’s library must be designed by a team.
  – Architect
  – Library Furnishings Specialist
  – Interior Designer
  – Construction Manager
  – Library Consultant
  – Engineer (Possible)
  – Collection Moving Consultant
  – IT Consultant
  – Electric Consultant

GET THE RIGHT PEOPLE ON THE BUS!!!!!!
Architect

- They are a crucial piece of the team because they set the tone for the other pieces to do their parts.
  - What to insist from your architect?
    - They provide you with a rectangle shaped building.
    - They work as part of a team. While the vision of the architecture is theirs no person is an expert on all parts of making your project a success.
Library Furniture Specialist

What to ask?

– What major lines do you represent?
– What is the make up of your organization; i.e. do you have project managers on staff, installers, etc?
– What projects of this scope have you done in the past and who can we speak to? Always, always check references
– Ask for credit references
– Do you do library moves?
Library Furniture Specialist

• Do you require a down payment?
• What happens if my building is running late on construction?
• Are you on a competitively bid contract?
  — (This will be addressed later as it is important)
Library Furniture Specialist

• What is your company’s policy on unforseen problems?
  – Example: The floor plan show 30 ft but in reality it is 29 ft 11 in.
    • Whose problem is this?
    • Are you skilled enough to modify things that may arise in the field?
    • Do your products lend to allowing modifications to be done?
Library Furniture Specialist

• Is this person just a consultant on the project or will you be purchasing the furniture from them?

• You will have to decide how you are going to be purchasing your furniture.
  – Ways to purchase furniture:
    • Competitive Bid
    • Purchasing of a competitively bid contract
Competitive Bidding

• Some libraries insist on bidding their projects.
• Pros: The project is openly bid
• Cons: You must have someone write specifications. This has a cost. You lose control over what manufacturer you may get because you are going to have to allow for substitutions. Are they comparable? You may not get a discount. In a bid situation there are really no rules other than get the most you can and still be the lowest price.
Competitively Bid Contracts

• The alternative to bidding is taking advantage of competitively bid contracts.
• Find library furniture specialist firms and interview them to see who you feel will do the best job for you.
• Purchase the products you want off of contract. I.E. Pennsylvania State Contract or Costars Contract.
Jay, Why can we do this?

- Answer: The bidding has already been done by the state. They have worked out a good discount for you from the manufacturers and dealers. Many agencies today are finding the state contract pricing better than bidding.
- They allow you to work with a starting point for your furnishings.
  - Just because the state worked out a great discount it is sometimes the best price for 1 section of shelving or 1 chair but since you may need 200 the state will allow deeper discounts. The manufacturer can not give lesser discounts. So if the state says the discount is 39% off list. You can possibly get 42% off but not 38%.
Conclusion

• My opinion is that it is in the best interest to the library community to buy off contract because they can get what they want exactly. They do not have the cost to have to have specs written. They can work with who they feel comfortable to do the work for them.

• I would suggest that you consider interviewing three qualified library furniture firms and see who you like best.
COUPLE OF QUALIFIED LIBRARY FURNITURE FIRMS

J.P. Jay & Associates, Inc.

Brodart

Library Interiors, Inc.

Liberty Systems, Inc.
Interior Designer

• Make sure they know who the library furniture manufacturers are.
• Have them show you other libraries they have designed
• Ask other librarians you trust for references
• Ask your library furniture specialist or consultant for references
You May Have To Educate

• Odds are your designer or architect may not have heard of any of those manufacturers.
  – If they have not it is up to you to insist that they use them.

• Many libraries have been using office furniture because control has been given to people unfamiliar with library furniture manufacturers and don’t know the difference between library furniture and office furniture.
  – There are instances where failure in office furniture is occurring after 3 or so years.
  – Failure is not because of the quality of product but application it is being used. Office furniture such as Hon, Herman Miller, Steel Case is designed to be used by one person for 8 hours a day. It is like using a the saw on a swiss army knife to cut down a tree.
Who Builds Library Furniture
Library Furniture

• In the world of libraries you should never sacrifice quality for cost. With library furniture you sacrifice looks never quality.

• Make sure the furniture meet with the ALA Technology Reports.
  – Questions to ask: Do they use metal to metal connections or are tops just wood screwed on?
  – What types of adhesives are used to join pieces together
  – Is the product tested by an outside testing such as Bifma.
Library Consultant

• They may have been helping with your feasibility study and are willing to continue

• Until recently the need for one has not been as great from a furniture standpoint. However the ever changing library has made them more valuable then ever.
  – Insist they are librarians themselves with current library experience
  – Ask for references:
Electric and IT Consultants

• Today’s Libraries are not book warehouses and your IT is more important than ever.

• No matter how far technology comes it goes nowhere without electricity. It is important that you get as much electricity in your library as is humanly possible.
The architect has done the drawings and it is time to space plan your library.

- Who is going to do your space planning?
  - Architect
  - Library Consultant
  - Library Furniture Consultant

- There are pros and cons to each doing it
The Architect

• Pros:
  – Experienced in CAD
  – Expert in ADA
  – Has the vision for the library overall

• Cons:
  – Many times has the least experience in library science
  – May not have experience with shelving types
  – Going to charge you for the work
The Library Consultant

• Pros:
  – Experienced librarian
  – Has success in marketing for libraries
  – Knows any crazy rules for libraries
    • I.E. If you need a certain number of volumes per person in an area.

• Cons:
  – May not be Auto Cad Proficient
  – Will probably charge you extra for this service
  – May not have experience in shelving systems
Library Furniture Specialist

• Pros:
  – Is probably Auto Cad Proficient
  – Has ADA experience
  – Understands collections and shelving systems

• Cons
  – Will not be able to advise on how many books you need for browsing
  – May have to wait a little longer for layouts to be done
  – Does not know intricacies of libraries in true detail
SPACE PLANNING

• Regardless of who does your layouts expect 5-6 meetings and revisions
  – No one is perfect and hits anything perfectly the first time. If they do you are probably being too kind.
  – Do not spare the persons feeling. Speak your mind and tell them what you like and what you do not like
  – Feel free to question the reason why!!!!
Space Planning

• It is this phase where you start to think about the type of library you want to have.
  – Keep in mind today’s libraries are ever evolving
  – They are no longer book warehouses
  – Do you want to keep your entire collection on the floor utilizing potential space for something else.
  – Do you want your shelving on casters
  – How is each space going to be used?
  – What is the marketing plan?
Space Planning

• Shelving:
  – Your collection is important to address
    • If all the books will not fit in the library what do you?
    • How tall shelving do you want?
      – Are sight lines important to you?
      – Do you want to face out most of your collection?
      – How much growth do you want over the next 30 years?
TYPES OF SHELVING

- Wood Shelving
  - Most inflexible and most expensive
  - Do get a wood look
- Welded Frame
  - Most economical
  - Takes up valuable real estate
  - Designed in the 60’s and 70’s
- **Brace Built Single Slot**
  - M J industries System 30
  - Get cost savings and flexibility of steel with benefits that the welded frame cannot provide.
  - This is today’s shelving
Shelving types

- Wood Shelving
- Single Slot Brace Built Shelving
- Welded Frame Shelving
How Much Shelving

• A library furniture specialist or library consultant can give you figures to estimate how many books per shelf.
  – You must decide from there
    • Option one: Put the whole collection on the floor
      – If you have the floor space then you are all set
    • Option Two: Use High Density Compact Shelving
      – Put it in a back room or basement for non browsing items
    • Option Three: Weed your collection down to the size you need
      – This maybe a PR nightmare when the public sees a library throw out books. Make sure you are open and have a good reason why.
Planning The Service Desk

• From a work standpoint this maybe the most important area of the library.
  – Make sure you are controlling the flow of the desk
  – Leave the look of the desk to whoever you have for design.

• Some libraries are still doing large service desks while others are reducing their service desks down to nothing more than Kiosks.
TYPES OF DESK

• First Type: A Shell Desk
  – This is the most economical desk style out there
  – Shell can be built to look like anything you envision

• Second Type: Modular Desk type
  – Can be reconfigured but rarely if ever is
  – Cost is much more because of the increase in materials

• Third Type: Kiosk
SERVICE DESKS

SHELL DESK

MODULAR DESK
KIOSKS

- Smaller desk units that create more interaction between your staff and the patron
Tables Chairs and Lounge

• Tables:
  – What size tables are you looking for and how many people to sit at each table

• Chairs
  – How many seats are needed for your patrons

• Lounge chairs
  – Are you looking for a lot of comfortable seating for patrons to curl up and work in
Computers/ Wifi

• What type of computers will the library be having?
  – Towers
  – Laptops
  – Form Factor

• Will the patrons be able to be working throughout the library?
All Laid Out Now What?

• Once each piece of furniture is drawn into the floor plan it is time to assign each shape a piece of furniture
  – What does the furniture look like?
  – Is it Library Furniture!!!!

• This is where the designer really should help you develop your look and feel. If you do not have one no worries many libraries are successful without a designer. It just mean more work for you and your staff.
Budgeting

• Your space planning is done and each piece of furniture is assigned an actual piece of furniture.

• Depending on what stage in this project you are at depends on how accurate you can get numbers wise for furniture.

• Good reference: If you are early in the process and still fundraising. Todays libraries are being furnished at a cost of 25 to 35 dollars a square foot.
Budgeting

• The multiple variables that go into the most accurate numbers.
  – Fabrics: These can fluxuate your costs significantly so the sooner you know your finishes the better
  – Materials: This will change pricing if you have quartz counter tops instead of high pressure laminates.
  – Edge Types: A solid wood edge will cost more than a wood edge band.
  – Paint finishes: If you can select a standard you can typically keep pricing down.
  – Time of year: You can get better deals in the winter than the summer. Manufacturers are trying to pump out every schools order from March to September. So time of month is a factor in pricing.
  – The list goes on.

• The Library Furnishing Specialist will work with you to meet your budget.
Budgeting

• It is recommended that libraries periodically have the budgeting reviewed by the library furniture specialist and architect. Pricing can fluxuate from the start of a project to the completion. It is important you are kept aware of what things are going to cost.
  – Steel prices can sky rocket
  – Oil can fluxuate pricing
  – Stains and woods can change pricing.
Example

This library is 15,000 square feet in total.

Take your total square footage
15,000 x $30.00
Which means you would need about $450,000.00 dollars to furnish this library.
After The Orders Are Placed?

• We placed the orders nothing left to do right?
  – Orders need to be placed 90-120 days before the date of installation.

• I AM AFRAID NOT!!

• Hopefully you have selected your finishes for your furniture. If not that must be done before orders can be placed to manufacturers.

• Shop drawings must be produced and approved.
What is a shop drawing?

• A shop drawing is lined image of your table with all the information that the manufacture needs to accurately build that piece of furniture.

• Not all pieces of furniture need them but if you have some customization on it then they are probably going to need to be approved by you or the designer or architect.
Shop Drawing

16 = 53-36102066-S - B/F COLUMN UNIT, 36X10/20X66 - STARTER
67 = 53-36102066-A - B/F COLUMN UNIT, 36X10/20X66 - ADDER
3 = 53-36101090-S - S/F COLUMN UNIT, 36X10/15X90 - STARTER
5 = 53-36101090-A - S/F COLUMN UNIT, 36X10/15X90 - ADDER

NOTE - 2 COLUMNS TO RECEIVE EXTRA HOLES FOR 36' H ADDER UNIT

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**ITEM** | **DESCRIPTION** | **PART NO** | **QTY**
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**DRAWN BY** | **DATE** | **SCALE** | **SHEET**
S Harvey | 2-27-14 | none | 1 OF 7

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**TOLERANCES ARC** | **FRACTIONS**: ±1/32 | **DECIMALS**: ±.03 | ±.005

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**INDUSTRIES**
PO BOX 259 GEORGETOWN, MA 01833
TEL (978) 352-6190 FAX (978) 352-9896

**TITLE**
Six Mile Library Main Branch

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**MATERIAL**
Color to Follow

**SIZE** | **DWG NO**
A | 3141

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Shop Drawings

• Do not be scared. The library furniture specialist and your architect are very familiar with these and we will be more than happy to go through them with you if you want.

• It is at this point though that any and all changes must be made. These are the last step in what the furniture will be.
Wood Finishes

• If you have an interior designer you may leave this up to them. Understand that most manufacturer’s can stain woods to match.

• You will need to approve the stain matches for the final process of manufacturing to happen.
Installation

• Know who your project manager and installers are!!!!
Installation

• Projects typically start with the shelving as that is usually the largest part of your project. The project manager will coordinate the deliveries of other furnishings from there.
Things to anticipate

• Construction is not an exact science and sometimes things happen.
  – Do not plan your grand opening too close to the estimated completion date. You may be disappointed and embarrassed.
  – Weather can delay construction. We live in Pennsylvania after all.
  – Hold your GC and Architect accountable: You do not want sloppy work but you also do not want to wait 30 years for your project to be done. Be fair but firm.
Conclusion

• You do not need to know everything about this process but you do need to be the one in charge
• Get the right people on the bus
• Team work is Key
• You are never to early to start thinking about library furniture

“SUCCESS HAS MANY FATHERS, FAILURE IS AN ORPHAN”