Successful Libraries in Uncertain Times

Presented by George Needham
for the
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Not today...
“There is no reason for any individual to have a computer in his home.”

KEN OLSEN
FOUNDER OF DIGITAL EQUIPMENT CORPORATION (DEC)
QUOTED IN 1977
“No one will need more than 637 kb of memory for a personal computer. 640K ought to be enough for anybody.”

BILL GATES
FOUNDER OF MICROSOFT
QUOTED IN 1981 – PERHAPS APOCHEIRYPHALLY
“... the Internet will soon go spectacularly supernova and in 1996 catastrophically collapse.”

ROBERT METCALFE
INVENTOR OF ETHERNET AND 3COM FOUNDER
QUOTED IN 1995
“There's no chance that the iPhone is going to get any significant market share. No chance.”

STEVE BALLMER
MICROSOFT CEO
QUOTED IN 2007
“Nice, but as long as there are readers, there will be scrolls.”
“Never make predictions, especially about the future.”

CASEY STENGEL
BASEBALL HALL OF FAME
UNDATED, POSSIBLY APOCRYPHAL, QUOTE
So how *do* we plan for the future?
Successful libraries...

- Align with their communities
- Question the orthodoxy
- Manage their message effectively
- Stay focused
- Make mindful choices
Successful libraries align with their communities.
Successful libraries…

Are relentlessly local
Successful libraries…

Join the community conversation

YouTube™ Broadcast Yourself

Pinterest

flickr

Wikipedia

facebook
Successful libraries…

Create mutualistic relationships
Successful libraries…

Know the community’s self-image
Successful libraries…

Develop bone-deep understanding
Successful libraries…

Then apply library skills liberally

We Can Do It!
Successful libraries question the orthodoxy.
Successful libraries...

Take risks
Successful libraries…

Can adapt to any future
Successful libraries...

Experiment with new services
Successful libraries...

Experiment with presentation
Successful libraries...

Encourage cross-training
Successful libraries…

Practice technology agnosticism
Successful libraries...  

Let customers take the lead
Successful libraries manage their message effectively.
Successful libraries…

Evangelize reading and learning
Successful libraries…

Emphasize abundance
Successful libraries…

Rethink the elevator speech

This feels forced and not organic
Successful libraries…

Have a clear, shareable vision
Successful libraries stay focused.
Successful libraries…

Show discipline
Successful libraries…

Avoid “mission dilution”
Successful libraries…

Define their desired outcomes
Successful libraries...

Eliminate frustrating policies
Successful libraries…

Leave the “twiddly bits” alone
Successful libraries…

Focus on relationships
Successful libraries make mindful choices.
Successful libraries…

Choose their people carefully
Successful libraries…

Choose optimism

Captain Optimism vs. Pessimistic Man

I will defeat you!

Yeah, probably.
Successful libraries...

Choose civility
Successful libraries...

Choose generosity

IF I HAD TWO DEAD RATS, I'D GIVE YOU ONE!
Successful libraries…

Choose flexibility
Successful libraries…
Choose teamwork
Successful libraries…

Choose laughter
Questions and Discussion
Let’s continue the conversation…

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