

I am Oz the great and powerful:  
Elevator pitches to pull back the curtain on  
the Value of Technical Services

Susan Ponischil | Beth Johns | Francene Lewis  
Michigan Academic Library Association  
Annual Conference  
Saginaw Valley State University  
May 2019

# Welcome



<https://media.giphy.com/media/o59mueTI2hnQQ/giphy.gif>

# PRESENTATION and FACILITATION

the Pitch ~ Susan

the Data ~ Beth

the Value

~ Francene

we brainstorm

we draft a pitch

we wrap-up



the Pitch

“This speech is not a pitch or a commercial but an invitation to start a conversation.”

Toastmaster Magazine

[https://issuu.com/losangelestoastmasters/docs/august\\_2012\\_toastmasters\\_-\\_district5](https://issuu.com/losangelestoastmasters/docs/august_2012_toastmasters_-_district5)

“It’s important to always be prepared.”

Entrepreneur Magazine

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/249750>



# CONSIDERATIONS

## Time

*Attention Span:*  
8 seconds

*First Impression:*  
7 seconds

*Length:*  
“20 words” to “2 minutes”



## Length

Length: 20 words to 120 words

Example of 20 words

You can't predict when interactions, whether in a grocery store or at a networking function, will present a new opportunity.

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/249750>



# CONSIDERATIONS

Focus

Impact

Terminology

Tone

## Audience



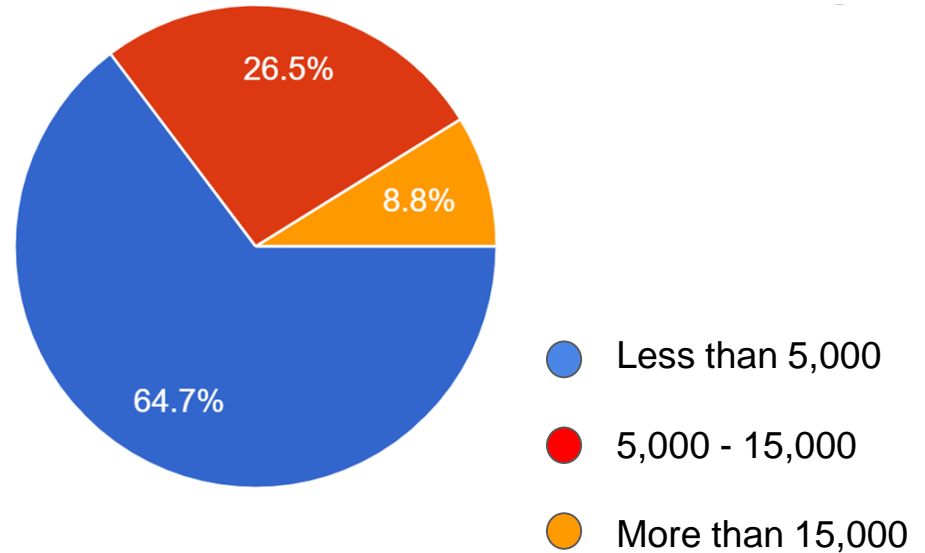
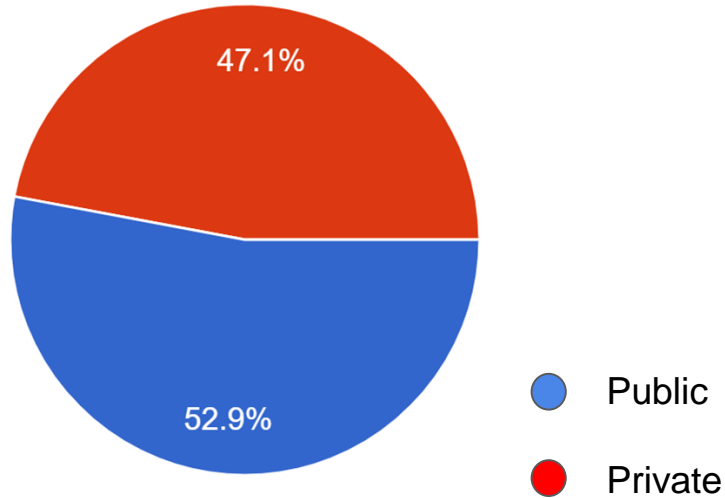
# The Data -- what the Michigan landscape looks like

Survey sent to 75 academic library deans and directors in Michigan.

- Public and private universities
- 45% response rate



# Type and Size of Responding Libraries



# Respondents said . . .

Average number of library full time staff = 12

Average number of full time technical services staff = 3

# How have staff positions changed?

Increased electronic maintenance

Additional responsibilities added

Positions cut

# How has the Technical Services budget changed?

Staff budget decreased = 35%

Operational budget decreased = 18%



<https://media.giphy.com/media/9M4WoqUpulPO/giphy.gif>

# Specific areas of Technical Services with FT staff:

Cataloging = 26% of libraries have **no** FT cataloging staff.

## **MOST RESPONDENTS DO NOT HAVE FULL TIME STAFF IN:**

E-Resources

Serials/Periodicals

Acquisitions

Systems

Collection Management

Department Manager

# We wear multiple hats!



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**“ . . . [University] Administrators do not understand the details and skills involved** and I’m finding there may be a radical change in our support staff with a likely decrease in positions. This will cause a lot of stress in our library as we are already short staffed due to a loss of a position last year.” -- *Community college library director*

# Value

“ ... much of the higher education community views libraries as a support organization alone, rather than an instructional organization.”

“The unfortunate truth ... is that librarians have failed to explain to those outside the field what contributions they ... make.”

What is true for our field as a whole rings true for technical services.



<https://media.giphy.com/media/zybnCsOjg5ATC/giphy.gif>

# Values change

In Technical Services, we focus on:

- Numbers of items purchased, cataloged, or edited
- Productivity and efficiency studies and analyses



<https://media.giphy.com/media/cjDoRld4xH83K/giphy.gif>

***Our audience has a different set of values  
based on outcomes or centered on user  
needs.***

# CONSIDERATIONS

## Impact

Make connections  
between your work  
and the mission of  
the organization.

# Advocate for yourself.

Metadata

Is

everywhere.



<https://media.giphy.com/media/vpL0uc6yniAuc/giphy.gif>

# Describe your Value

Curate the collection to fulfill the needs of the institution

Provide serendipitous research opportunities by placing like items together

Preserve the institution's past for use in the present and in the future

Troubleshoot electronic resource access problems so that researchers can complete their work

# POLL

How does your work  
impact students?



information

resources

find

describe

cataloging

people

data

provide

good

book

able

access

users

researchers

services

curriculum

figure

acquisitions

support

physical

stuff

way

create

library

books

resource

know

big

specific

regional

without

expose

materials

interested

catalog

patrons

somebody

online

say

research

floor

whatever

accurate

ensures

answer

probably

things

preserve

groups

link

can

make

useful

millions

purchase

findable

needs

best

like

library's

job

want

might

standardized

decide

plethora

thing

add

institution

locate

curate

allows

anything

notes

look

will

really

collection

throwing

similar

terms

future

records

use

puts

check

available

somewhere

metadata

# Now it's time to work on our Pitches!



# PITCHES

Beth [audience: University administrators]

I'm Beth Johns, E-Resources Librarian. I make sure access to our vast number of electronic resources is healthy and working. If there is a problem with a resource, I fix it -- or find someone to fix it. Because of my education in library science, I deeply understand the need to access information quickly and painlessly so that you can complete your work.

Francene [audience: a student researcher]

Hi, I'm Francene Lewis, Head of the Collection Management department. Like the electric grid, our work powers everything else in the library. We purchase the many books, journals, and resources you need for your research. We work hard to make them findable, and help you locate them in a fast and efficient way.

Susan [audience: anyone who does not work in a library]

I work in a library. You probably won't see me. But know this, if you're looking for books on just about any topic, I'm the person working behind the scenes making sure you can find what you're looking for.

# PRACTICE GROUPWORK

Who will the audience be for your elevator pitch?



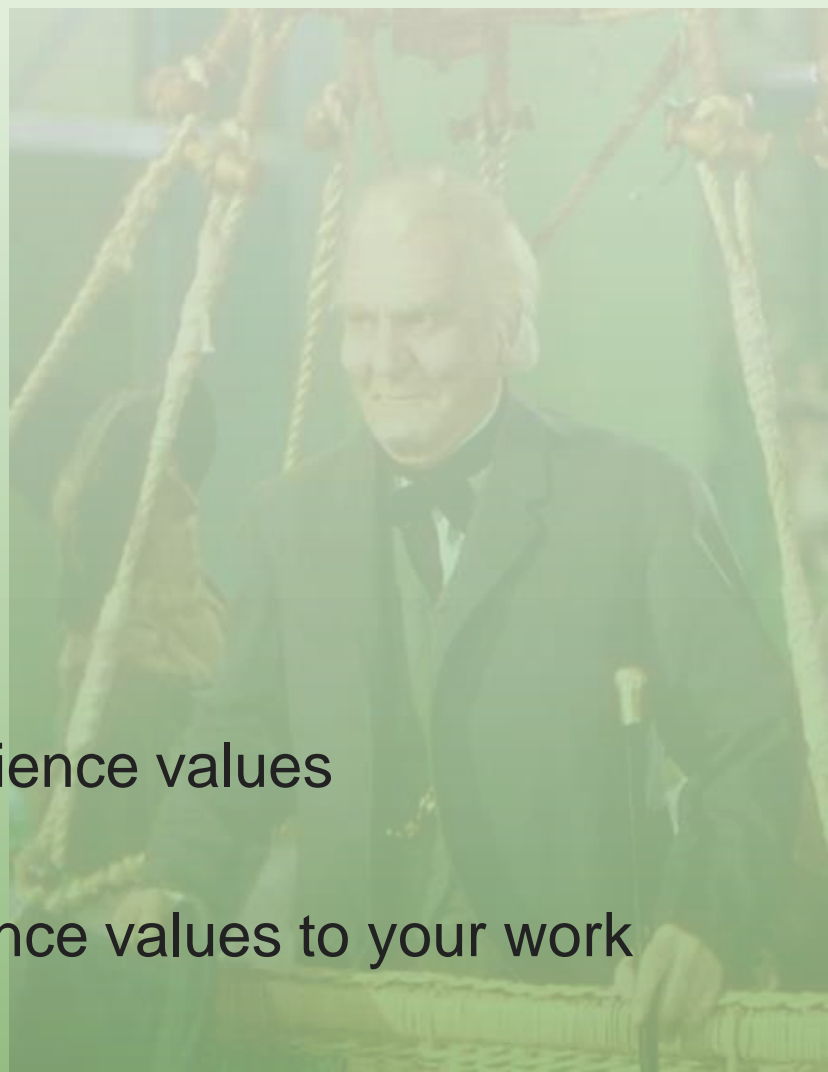
How does your work add value to the organization?

# PRACTICE INDIVIDUAL WORK

Identify your audience

Document what your audience values

Connect what your audience values to your work



# Wrap-up

How was that experience?

Was it challenging?

Did it make you think about your work differently?

Do you feel empowered?

Questions?

Volunteers?

# PITCHES

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# PRESENTERS

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Calvin College

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