Engaging the Skill Set of the Millennials: Librarians, Content and Technology in the Mobile Age

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http://dx.doi.org/10.5339/qproc.2015.gsla.3
Baby Boomers
Born 1941-1960

Generation X
Born 1961-1980

Millennials
Born 1981-2000
Baby Boomers
Born 1941-1960

Generation X
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Millennials
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Baby Boomers
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Generation X
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Millennials
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Millennials

- Confident
- Optimistic
- "Digital natives"
- Quick assimilators
- Tech-savvy
- Networked
- Multi-tasking
- Graphics over text
- Nomadic information seeking
- "Good enough" will do
- Corner cutting

- Live with parents longer
- Greater disposable income
- Discerning consumers
- Collaborative
- Adaptive
- Direct
- Value education
- Value work-life balance
- Achievement oriented
- "Empower me please"
- Anywhere, anytime access
Millennial Requirements and the Changing Role of the Librarian

- Customer centred educators
- Information literacy tuition
- Creating and maintaining electronic resources
  - Metadata development
  - Licensing digital material
- Collecting and digitizing archival material
- Delivering quality learning spaces
- Reference support
- Specialist subject input
Penn State University
Evaluating Information

https://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/tutorials/eval_info.html

North Carolina State University
One Perfect Source?

http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials/perfect-source/
Harris Poll & Pearson 2014

Survey of 1,228 US college students aged between 18 and 30 on equipment used regularly for study

- 83% use smartphones
- 86% use laptops
- 45% use tablets

University of Leeds 2014 Report

300% increase in unique users of wireless devices since 2009
The digital library was designed for the desktop PC......

Adapt for the smaller screen, overhaul for the mobile keyboard
Which content is essential, which is suitable for mobile?
Native app or website customised for mobile?
# Mobile Services Offered by 58 Libraries in 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information or Service</th>
<th>Number of Libraries Offering Service on Mobile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library Opening Hours</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask a Librarian/Chat</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locations</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Databases</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Generational Perspective

The roll-out of mobile-optimized and other technology solutions, and the shift in the librarian’s role itself, show a profession responding to very generational expectations for anywhere anytime connectivity, engagement, interaction and service.

The generational lens is just one of several prisms through which we can interpret today’s students.

It is a useful prism, nonetheless, for putting recent developments in university library services in perspective.
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Pushing Back (or are Millennials really Snake People)?

Kate Hill
Electronic Resources and Distance Education Librarian,
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Outline

• Questioning generational differences:
  – Technology (Digital Natives)
  – Consumerism

• How two libraries have adjusted.
  – University of North Carolina at Greensboro
  – North Carolina State University.
Digital Native?


Bussert, L. (2011). Millennial Students’ Online Search Strategies are Associated With Their Mental Models of Search. *Evidence Based Library & Information Practice, 6*(3).


What can we do?
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