Too Big for the Library: Scaling Down Popular Library Outreach to Ensure Lasting Sustainability in an Academic Environment

ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

Outreach is necessary to further the visions and missions of many university libraries, including Manderino Library at California University of Pennsylvania. In the library's efforts to gain a larger user base on campus, it collaborates with academic departments to create and hold large, well-attended events that require high levels of staffing and hours. After analyzing chat and reference statistics, gate counts, and database usage, librarians found that large and successful events do not increase usage for other library services. As a result of this, we advise caution when planning outreach events and suggest that librarians work with their fellow collaborators to determine their collective goals before committing the library's resources to these efforts. This article explores the value of hosting events that eventually leave the library once they become popular.

KEYWORDS

outreach, faculty collaboration, college clubs, academic libraries, student engagement

The mission of California University of Pennsylvania (from the university's website, accessed July 7, 2020) is "to provide a high-quality, student-centered education that prepares an increasingly diverse community of lifelong learners to contribute responsibly and creatively to the regional, national and global society, while serving as a resource to advance the region's cultural, social and economic development" ("Mission Statement, Vision and Legacy" 2020). To this end, the library develops and hosts events for students that promote academic learning and a collegial campus community. Because of budget constraints and other factors, it became important to collaborate with other non-curricular campus departments to continue quality programming for Cal U's students. However, such efforts produced a number of challenges, including questions about the sustainability of such partnerships.

California University of Pennsylvania has a student population of approximately 6800, with general enrollment numbers that have been declining since 2013. Manderino Library's outreach programming, which began in earnest in 2010, has seen increased participation in events despite fewer students on campus. As fewer patrons entered the library building or used its collections, the main goals of library programming have been: to have patrons see a space that is welcoming and inviting; to have them learn about materials and services that may be of interest to them; and to get them to return to the library and use these spaces, collections, and services in the future.

Scholarly relationships are only one portion of outreach at Manderino Library. These are exemplified by the liaison program, wherein librarians collaborate with assigned academic departments for bibliographic and information literacy instruction. However, in order for students to see the library as a welcoming place—to use our computer labs, study spaces, and "just for fun" collections like movies, video games, and board games—the outreach librarian and other library employees organize non-academic, entertaining, and relaxing events. This maps to the overall goal to promote the library as a viable, welcoming, and usable space for the campus community. However, even with extensive planning, advertising, and enthusiasm, it is notoriously difficult to persuade students to attend functions on this majority-commuter campus. Librarians now know that the best way to ensure large groups of students will come to library programs is to work with other campus organizations that can draw from their membership for attendees. Thus, holding events in conjunction with other non-curricular units is the lifeblood of programming at Cal U's library. Student clubs receive funding for programming, and the library partners with several of these organizations to facilitate events both within the library and across campus. These clubs provide funding for food, entertainment, and other amenities for events (such as hosting a massage therapist for the week before finals). However, once these events become successful, the clubs often seek larger, newer campus venues to host their component of the program.

> "After analyzing chat and reference statistics, gate counts, and database usage, librarians found that large and successful events do not increase usage for other library services."

Over the past decade, Manderino Library held various events and displays in conjunction with fifteen different curricular and non-curricular units. Many of these partnerships lasted several semesters and some even continue to this day. However, those clubs and departments that moved their programs to other venues on campus usually did so because their event became very popular— and in some cases too popular—for the library, a cramped building that has not seen a major renovation since the 1970s.

When programming opportunities move to an alternate location on campus, this negatively affects library gate counts. Like many libraries, outside administrators often evaluate Manderino Library on the sheer number of people it brings into the building, and so high-volume single-day events boost those counts. One philosophical question Manderino Library grapples with is what to do after large-program partnerships end. Should the library continue to identify campus allies with whom to hold ever larger events, or does doing so merely artificially boost gate count numbers? Do students return in the weeks after an event? Do they use collections or library support services if these are promoted during an event? If programming supports other library functions—such as circulation and access to online information—then it does not need to be an end in and of itself.

This article examines two events in-depth: the Liberal Arts Festival and the Harry Potter Festival. One of these events overwhelmed the library's resources, negatively impacting the general functions of the building. And the other became too big for the California University of Pennsylvania campus itself. The library combats these issues by "scaling down"; however, lingering questions remain about the loss of foot traffic to the building and the sheer volume of people who will see our displays and collections and learn about our services.

Literature Review

At California University of Pennsylvania, librarians develop and lead a variety of popular outreach initiatives that raise the library's profile across campus and in the community. However, a review of library literature recommends that more work needs to be done to illustrate how outreach programs translate into library usage. As German and LeMire (2018) state, "[a]lthough outreach is a common activity in academic libraries, little has been written about strategies for assessing library outreach efforts" (66). Concepts like exposure, awareness, and visibility to the community at large seem to be the largest talking points. Much has also been stressed about collaboration with outside departments. As Faulk (2018) states, "[f]aculty are interested in developing their awareness of the information landscape but want to know a resource's connection to their curriculum before adoption. The majority . . . cited the importance of outreach activities in creating awareness of library resources," (194). Libraries strive to reach to collaborate with other campus departments, but not much information is available on the pitfalls of doing so and how to avoid them, or "how to evaluate the return on investment for the Libraries' outreach activities in service of meeting student success goals" (Santiago et al. 2019, 359).

It is increasingly necessary to connect library outreach efforts to the greater mission of the university, just as it is important to assess these programs to ensure that they align with campus goals. "Outreach is most effective when tied to institutional goals. To measure success we must begin with a goal in mind, as this can help staff prioritize activities, budgets, and time," (Farrell and Mastel 2016, para. 2). Outreach is tied to Cal U's institutional goals, but does this necessarily justify the time and effort put into an event, especially if those events ultimately leave the library when they become too successful?

Hallmark, Schwartz, and Roy (2007) emphasize this assessment of success, saying, "[i]t is critical for every marketing and outreach activity to include a method of measurement and evaluation that is built into the front-end of the activity before it takes place," (94). Surveys and attendance tracking create a good picture of how students feel about the events the library offers. At Manderino Library, however, once programs become too large and expand outside the immediate scope of the library, librarians have less control over their message to students about the library and its significance, and it is difficult to measure such exposure beyond how students feel about a program.

A case can be made that by holding large-scale events, libraries exhibit their financial viability to the administration and campus community. Delaney and Bates (2015) outline the financial benefits of library services, observing that, "While librarians are good at evidence-based performance indicators and evaluating services, the issues of equating value or defining impact are more difficult. Yet, by showing value and impact the future for libraries would be more secure" (40–41). Manderino Library spends a significant amount of time and effort on outreach. The events and services offered no doubt translate as valuable to the campus community, but it is more difficult to assign their tangible impact on student education and academic goals. By collaborating with other departments, librarians attempt to enhance the library's reputation as an academic service.

Collaboration with academic and staff departments is incredibly valuable to the library. But it is also important to consider how such collaborative partnerships function. For partnerships to be effective, librarians need to focus on programming that ultimately benefits, rather than depletes, their organization. As Shapiro (2016) illustrates:

Maybe it's not about proving our utility or selling our services. More likely, it is a matter of reformulating our goals and redirecting our energies . . . . Why not encourage academic libraries to support the creative process by becoming intellectual incubators that nurture new ideas, multidisciplinary collaboration, discovery, and the entrepreneurial spirit. It is an opportune time for academic libraries to consider repositioning themselves and investing in a variety of new and promising programming and technology initiatives to reignite interest among core users as well as capture the attention of the wider community (26).

Shapiro's article is a call to action for librarians. Libraries scramble to prove their worth to administration and take advantage of any and all opportunities to advertise their collections and services to students and faculty. However, these occasions for outreach do not necessarily translate into impactful and measurable value. For Manderino Library, collaboration with other departments and groups on campus has been a fruitful way to promote liaison work and create a collegial atmosphere, but the high cost may not be worth the end result. In some cases, we have had to scale up or scale down events to maintain our presence on campus, but still offer programming that is manageable for the library itself.

Scaling-up Events

Day of the Dead / St. George's Day / Liberal Arts Fest. Manderino Library partnered with the Hispanic Student Association, the Modern Languages Club, and the Department of Art and Languages to hold a Dia de los Muertos (Mexican Day of the Dead) event in November, 2015. A Cal U Spanish instructor organized the first of these Day of the Dead events. The Hispanic Club and Modern Language students made all the decorations as well as Mexican food and pastries, and the library provided space and helped decorate and clean up after the festival. The library put together a display of books and other materials related to Hispanic heritage, and library student workers helped serve food—in costume and full Day of the Dead makeup. The single-day program drew a crowd of approximately 500 participants from the Cal U community.

The aforementioned clubs and a private donation funded the 2015 Day of the Dead (November 1). The large number of students entering the library on a single day meant the program was a success, and librarians immediately began looking for grants to fund a similar project the next year. Luckily, the Spanish professor wanted to hold another event in conjunction with her classes, this one in recognition of a holiday celebrated in Barcelona, St. George's Day (April 23), and hoped the library could collaborate.

The outreach librarian began working with the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research to identify outside funding sources. Even though they faced funding challenges, the library and faculty organizers worked to build a program that represented the many aspects of St. George's Day—a medieval holiday celebrated with the exchange of books and roses. To accomplish this feat, the organizing committee opened St. George's Day to more clubs and departments, including the Medieval Club, the Arabic Club, and the English Department. This outreach expanded the event's scope, drawing attention from students and members of the community who might otherwise not have attended the event.

Librarians brought local authors to campus for the day to set up tables where they could sell their novels and worked with the Parking Office and Campus Police to secure single-day permits for guests to park on campus. Librarians and student workers also arranged tables of library books promoting different genres, and adding to the Barcelona-like atmosphere. A librarian created a logo for the festival which featured a dragon and a rose on a shield, in the colors of

Cal U, and this logo was used in all advertisements as well as throughout the building on festival-related tables and displays. Library staff and volunteers from various classes and clubs worked for days before the festival, moving furniture and decorating the entire first floor of the building to resemble a bookseller's paradise in the middle of a medieval castle. St. George's Day was an even bigger hit with the campus community than the Day of the Dead and drew a crowd of about 700 students, staff, and faculty. The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research at Cal U closed in 2016, making it more difficult to identify and apply for funding outside the university. In 2016, the university hired a new president, and the library's Day of the Dead event (assisted by the Hispanic Club) was held in her honor that fall. Given the festival's importance, the university awarded the Hispanic Club extra funding for the event, which drew approximately 1,000 people. This event was very similar to the Day of the Dead program held the previous year but on a larger scale with more food and every spare inch of space decorated.

Because of a successful track record, Manderino Library once again held the St. George's Day festival several months later in spring 2017. With funding from the College of Liberal Arts and a large number of campus organizations as partners, St. George's Day drew a crowd of 1,000 people. Even university administration took notice of these events, and several deans and the Provost showed up to take part in the festival.

In fall 2017, St. George's Day and the Day of the Dead celebrations transformed into the college's first annual Liberal Arts Festival. The College of Liberal Arts and Administrative Affairs provided funding to hold the program, which served as a recruitment event for the university. The university bused in students from local high schools and offered free lunch (served in the library). Taking accurate gate counts for a festival this large was difficult; however, the best tally library staff could manage shows the event drew over 1,200 people to Manderino Library for the day.

For the Liberal Arts Festival, a library staff member created all the graphics and programs, and the outreach librarian created a website for the event, designed print and online surveys, installed displays of library materials relating to Liberal Arts classes, and gave talks to potential Cal U students about the collections and services offered in the library. Most of the food was cooked by the same Spanish instructor who had originally thought-up the idea for the Day of the Dead, and her classes as well as library student workers served the food. Library staff and faculty were on-site during the day to manage crowds, direct exhibitors to their assigned areas, answer questions, and continually count attendees.

The next program of this size was the second annual Liberal Arts Fest, held in October of 2018. This time, the festival brought 1,500 people, including Cal U students, faculty, and staff, as well as local high school students, to Manderino Library. The organizing committee spent months gathering exhibitors from the campus community and designing floor plans and decorations. Students created artwork for the event, and faculty cooked food. Setup for this program took two days, and a group of employees and volunteers completed the tear-down the same day as the festival. The committee erected tents and set up chairs outside the building entrance to offer overflow seating for the luncheon. The library brought in electricians to ensure the bands outside the entrance would have proper electricity for the day, and stepped-up crowd control to ensure everyone had somewhere to sit for lunch and no one trampled the equipment. In conjunction with Liberal Arts Festival, which covered the first two floors of the building as well as the lawn and concrete pad outside the library, Cal U also hosted a gallery show of Cuban artists in Manderino

Library's third floor art gallery. With so many departments and clubs joining in the festivities, and the presence of physically active events, the space was cramped. One student got hurt during a Judo demonstration and part of the medieval sword fighting had to be held indoors due to the weather.

Library staff always collect data before, during, and after any program at

	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neutral	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The invitation, program, agendas and directions were clear and easy to understand.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Liberal Arts presentation sessions were appropriate in length.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The activities were engaging and meaningful.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The food was good-tasting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The program was well-organized and the activities flowed well.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I had ample opportunities to actively participate in the program.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would like to attend a program like this next year.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
After attending the program I feel that I have learned something new or important about other cultures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
FOR CAL U STUDENTS: Programs such as the Liberal Arts Festival would persuade me to take a Liberal Arts class.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS: Programs such as the Liberal Arts Festival would persuade me to apply to CalU.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Figure 1. Survey from 2018 Liberal Arts Fest. California University of Pennsylvania, Manderino Library.

Manderino Library. Gate counts and head counts are taken during events and compared to similar days in previous years, either in weeks during the same semester or the same date in previous semesters. To judge whether outreach efforts have an impact on print materials circulation or electronic resource usage, librarians weigh circulation statistics and library website hits before and after events both large and small. Library employees often give surveys to attendees—for example, five-point surveys were given to all festival-goers at Liberal Arts Fest to assess program quality (see Figure 1).

More granular appraisal of these results is presented below. For the Liberal Arts Fest, participants described that the library's involvement in the event improved their cultural competency and facilitated engaging and meaningful activities. However, the library scored less highly in areas related to organization and the ability to understand directions and agenda. The three floors meant the different parts of the program were scattered and hidden from each other, and many attendees completely missed the Cuban art in the third-floor gallery. Space was an issue for this excessively large one-day outreach effort.

Following the success of the events, the university requested that the Liberal Arts Fest Organizing Committee move the festival to the Convocation Center, the campus's 142,000 square foot multipurpose arena. The organizers of this event always felt the library has a more academic feel than a sports and executive conferencing center. Plus, if Liberal Arts Fest remained in the library, clubs and faculty could keep the costs for the day down by cooking all the food, as opposed to going through the contracted dining services as would be required in another venue.

If the Liberal Arts committee held this festival outside the library, then the library employees would lose out on their parts in coordinating these events and the library itself would lose an amazing opportunity to use the library as a dynamic space. Many campus facilities, such as the Convocation Center, have their own staff of organizers who schedule events, make floor plans, arrange catering, make graphics, and advertise. These are the functions librarians provided for programming efforts held within Manderino's walls. Librarians would also miss the opportunity for impromptu talks with attendees about library services, and potential-patrons would not see library displays and collections that are not a part of whatever limited materials could be brought to an alternate location for the day.

However, space not only became an issue for the festival attendees, but also for the Dean of the Library, who was hard-pressed to maintain daily operations throughout this event's disruptions. In 2019, the College of Liberal Arts finally yielded to administrative pressure and moved this festival to the Convocation Center. Library personnel could not design, organize, advertise or assess the event. In fact, the library's only contribution to the day was to staff a booth exhibiting a collection of textbooks for Liberal Arts classes.

Overview: Harry Potter Festival. There are events that are too big for the library, and then there are events that are too large for the university. One such program was the planned 2017 two-day Harry Potter Festival. A faculty member in the Cal U English Department conceived the idea and received a grant for programming it. From the library's perspective, this collaboration promoted the library as a community space, the joys of reading, built the staff's relationships with the rest of the campus employees, and enhanced the overall visibility of the library itself. The event included local businesses, public libraries, area high schools, and an academic conference that showcased Harry Potter sessions from presenters chosen from all over the country.

The library was to be the festival's home base, with several events taking place over the course of two days. Librarians helped to plan the event, organized, recruited, and managed volunteers, and created decorations. Within a few short weeks, over 3,000 attendees signed-up for the Harry Potter Festival and it immediately became a massive and exciting undertaking. The entire campus became involved—including Liberal Arts faculty, students of all majors, and staff members in various departments—lending their Harry Potter expertise, paraphernalia, fan art, and more.

> **"**Within a few short weeks, over 3,000 attendees signed-up for the Harry Potter Festival and it immediately became a massive and exciting undertaking. The entire campus became involved—including Liberal Arts faculty, students of all majors, and staff members in various departments—lending their Harry Potter expertise, paraphernalia, fan art, and more.**"**

However, the sheer number of potential attendees who wanted to attend this festival led to its downfall. As talks among university administration and event organizers illustrated, it quickly became clear that the school did not have the facilities to accommodate such a large, multi-venue event. In a scramble, the Cal U English Department downsized this program to a one-day conference with area high school students and California University students, cutting out the larger city of California and its business completely.

Because Manderino librarians did not write the grant and were not in charge of how the money was spent or allocated, the library had very little to do with the overall decision-making for this festival. While the event was still a success in that the conference was well-attended, university administration eliminated the library's part in it. This meant that all the work-hours—librarian, work-study, and administration included—were spent without much library usage

or exposure in return. This event crystallized the idea that while collaboration is sometimes necessary and often beneficial, librarians need to have a clearly defined role, a vested stake in the outcome, and vocal support from their own administration to become involved in larger events.

Scaling-down

Harry Potter Festival to Harry Potter Escape Room. Students were still enthusiastic for a Harry Potter-themed event after the university canceled the original Harry Potter Festival. This was especially true among student workers in Manderino Library, one of whom had worked for a Harry Potter event at her community library the previous summer. Combining the contemporary zeal for escape rooms with the theme of Rowling's novels, librarians held a more measured event in Manderino Library. This escape room had no curricular agenda; instead the outreach librarian envisioned it as an entertaining way for the university community to interact with library spaces and collections. The goals fulfilled part of the library's mission to promote the campus experience of students, and engendered goodwill among students, staff, and faculty. The assessible outcomes were whether attendees enjoyed the escape room, would attend other library programs, and would return to the library again for other purposes because of it.

For this program, library faculty and student workers used a large multipurpose study and conference space on the third floor. This space was semi-enclosed by cubicle walls, and featured a gallery system as well as furniture and glass shelving. The library collaborated with the Theatre Department, who lent props for this event (their students and faculty were, consequently, one of the largest pools of attendees to the program). Librarians and student workers decorated every square inch of the conference room as scenes from the books, including hanging candles in the Hogwarts dining room, a Gryffindor common space, and Platform Nine and Three Quarters.

This Harry Potter Escape Room was the perfect test for Manderino Library's plan to scale down a large festival and host an intimate program entirely under the library's control. It was a much smaller event than the Harry Potter Festival and was advertised only on campus. Student groups needed to reserve a timeslot to participate, further decreasing the likelihood that the event would become too popular for the library to sustain. Because of the nature of an escape room, only one group could complete the challenge at a given time, so the online reservation system turned away anyone who attempted to reserve the same time allotment as another group. In all, 110 groups attempted to reserve a timeslot, and 25 were accepted by the system and completed the escape room.

Though the escape room featured only one room in the library, library staff still spent days elaborately decorating it, thus turning a beige library study room into the set of Hogwarts. The outreach librarian sourced props from the Theatre Department and student workers hauled them across campus. Other library staff gathered books from throughout the library and made many trips up and down a stepladder to hang candles and other ornamentation from the ceiling.

Running the escape room also took a coordinated effort between librarians and student workers. After setup, the decorations remained in place for the rest of the semester; however, the escape room still needed to be reset after every session. This process alone took a full 15 minutes, or more if a group contained more than four people because extra players got bored and tore the room apart instead of playing the puzzles and looking for clues. After quickly realizing attendees became destructive when they could not figure out a puzzle, the outreach librarian required one library worker to stay in the room with

participants so they could answer questions and give hints if players became frustrated or stumped.

Luckily, during this particular semester the library had a plethora of dedicated student workers, many of whom were fans of the Harry Potter series and two of whom eventually went on to study library science at the master's level. Without their help, it would not have been possible to hold a free program that required so many personnel hours. Still, it was difficult to offer time slots for this escape room during the evening hours that many players wanted to participate, because most student workers ended their shifts by 6 pm. Student workers and librarians volunteered extra time to run this event, in part because it was just so much fun.

The Harry Potter Escape Room was, in many respects, a successful outreach effort. 440 people wanted to participate in it and over 100 partook in the event. Eighty percent of attendees were Cal U students and the rest were faculty and local high school students. Over 90 percent of attendees enjoyed the program and said that they would return to the library again because of it. Those who did not enjoy it noted that group sizes for the puzzles were too large—an issue which was discovered and controlled for several days into running the event. Despite this program's success, librarians learned a hard lesson about the enormous amount of time and work required to plan, manage, and routinely reset this type of program. Even though librarians had attempted to scale down this event, it was clear they had not gone small enough. When the student workers who volunteered extra time graduated at the end of the semester, it became apparent that the library would not have the staff to run an escape room again.

Results

Scaling down programs to more manageable efforts allows Manderino Library to provide quality outreach experiences for Cal U students while keeping each event's footprint contained and manageable. When surveyed, most students favorably rate library programs; they enjoy the experience of attending and feel they have learned something new during the program. And

Festival	Questions Per	Month	
Day of the Dead November 2, 2015		October 237	November 160
Day of the Dead October 11, 2016	September 315	October 177	November 163
St. George's Day April 27, 2017		April 193	May 61
Liberal Arts Fest October 5, 2017	September 200	October 179	November 150
Liberal Arts Fest October 2, 2018	September 271	October 208	November 129
No Large Event Spring 2018		April 182	May 44
No Large Event (Liberal Arts Fest held in Convocation Center) Fall 2019	September 294	October 237	November 160

Figure 2. Reference statistics. California University of Pennsylvania, Manderino Library.

respondents to Manderino Library's 2018 LibQUAL+ survey, which asked a local question about library programming that promotes cultural awareness, felt that the library exceeded their minimum desire for these types of events.

Outreach—especially in the form of events—has a strongly positive effect on the sentiments of library patrons at Cal U. In a survey given to 2018 Liberal Arts Festival attendees (with 272 respondents), 87 percent of those surveyed felt the activities they encountered that day at Manderino Library were engaging and meaningful. Furthermore, 86 percent of respondents wanted to attend programs like this festival in the future.

Programming did not have a discernible positive effect on reference transaction numbers through the LibAnswers and LibChat systems. As tabulated in the library's LibAnswers online platform, in the month before the first Day of the Dead event in 2015, Manderino Library's Online Reference Desk received 237 questions, and in the month after it received 160. Similar drops
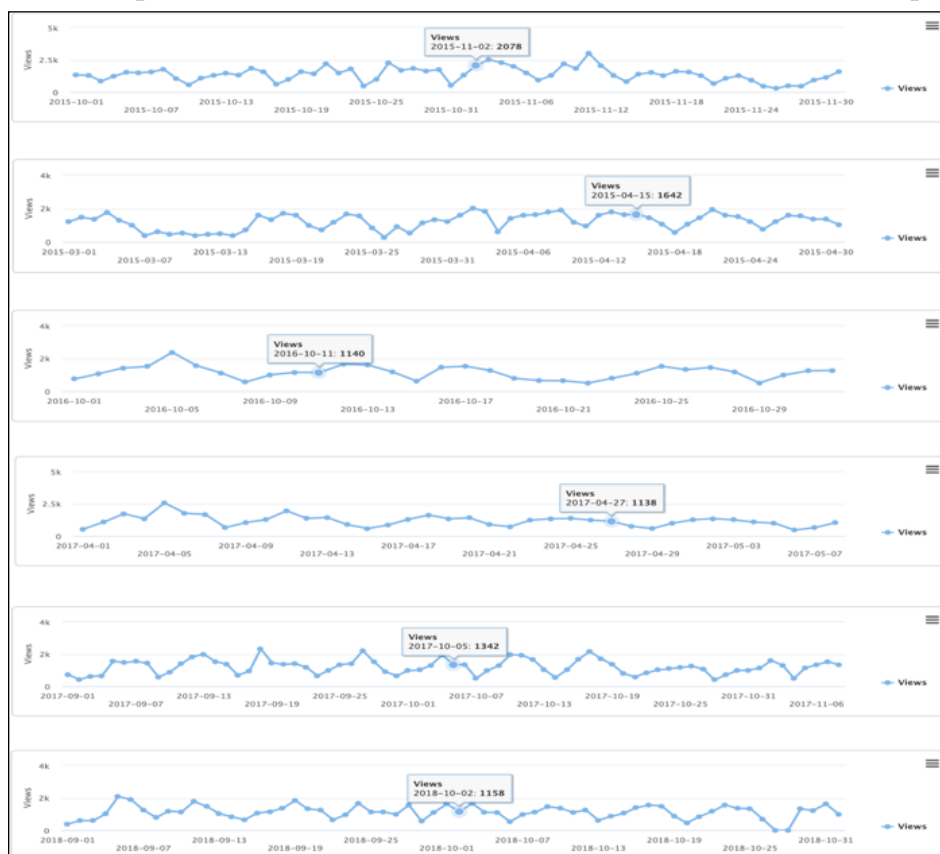

Figure 3. Library website hits. California University of Pennsylvania, Manderino Library.

were seen in 2016 (315 questions in the month before Day of the Dead to 177 in the month after), as well as before and after Liberal Arts Fest in 2017 (200 before and 179 after), and 2018 (271 down to 208).

Numbers for St. George's Day show an even more drastic fall, from 193 questions in the month before the 2017 festival down to 61 afterward (2016 statistics cannot be assessed because of the timing of the event date in the middle of the month). In the semesters after these events—when the library did not hold large-scale outreach productions—the statistics show similar trends in online reference questions.

There was no increase in online usage of the library's website after large-scale events, either. Graphs of the library's web traffic look similar from semester to

	Day of the Dead (2016)	St. George's Day (2017)	Liberal Arts Fest (2017)	Liberal Arts Fest (2018)
2 weeks prior	4901	3985	4086	4328
1 week prior	4928	3974	4490	4337
EVENT	**5715**	**5405**	**7344**	**6436**
1 week after	3747	4827	4450	4155
2 weeks after	5110	3440	4339	4133

Figure 4. Gate count statistics. California University of Pennsylvania, Manderino Library. Event Weeks are shaded and in bold

semester, regardless of whether a significant outreach effort was accomplished. Dates of festivals appear with the views count on the following graphs:

Large events give a temporary—sometimes only day-long—bump in gate counts. This could be because of the extreme disruptions to normal library operations that come along with hosting such immensely popular programs. Library patrons are often upset that the areas they typically use—and expect to be quiet—are being decorated and filled with lots of noisy music and festival-goers.

Gate count data from early years show a muddled picture. Recorder error is suspected and thus data from Academic Year Fall 2015–Spring 2016 have not been included in the following table.

According to gate count data, no long-term increases in patronage to the library are seen in the weeks after festivals. In fact, as enrollment decreased across campus, library patron numbers from semester to semester and year to year also declined. Programming does not appear to have a significant effect on Manderino Library's circulation statistics. However, the system the library uses to track circulation only shows check-in dates, whereas it would be more helpful to see if books were checked out during or directly after a program.

Conclusions

It is obvious that large-scale library outreach positively affects attendees' perceptions of the library, although further testing is needed to determine what emotions—such as feelings of acceptance, enjoyment, or belonging—these efforts engender in patrons. It is also currently unknown whether the short talks about library services given during programs decrease students' feelings of library anxiety, or even if they encourage patrons to return for information, help, or to use the library as a place.

The numbers of students who attended the library's outreach programs and initiatives—and the overwhelmingly positive feedback (86 percent of respondents rated Stress Relief Week as an enjoyable event and 90 percent of the Harry Potter escape room respondents felt similarly about that program)—indicates the library enriches the student experience through its programming. In fact, comments from attendees who rated these programs negatively mentioned that there were too many participants and not enough resources, such as too few puppies during Therapy Dog events or puzzles that only required the collaboration of 2 or 3 people during the Harry Potter Escape Room.

When the library is solely in charge of hosting events, it is better able to maintain control over the size of the program's footprint and gather manageable attendee numbers. Even though outreach efforts hosted by the library alone do not draw the huge gate counts that collaborative partnerships attract, they are more manageable and equally beneficial to the students. The library could bolster its mission by holding many small events that target specific user populations. Of course, these would not reach as broad an audience as large events, and consequently may not make as strong of an impact on the campus. Librarians should also look for funding in the form of grants to provide stable resources that are not tied to any club, department, or the university itself deciding to take an event away from the library.

Even though outreach does not make a significant impact on other library functions—such as information access in the forms of online usage or print circulation—they do promote the campus experience to our students and should be continued for that reason. In Manderino Library's case, taking on larger events with a wider student and faculty reach is impossible without collaboration and funding from other departments.

Moving forward, Manderino Library will be taking a proactive and considered approach to collaborative outreach. As the library strives to expand its reputation on campus and further its mission, it will seek out departments and services that wish to hold events that are equally beneficial to all involved. This is the best investment of the library's limited time, resources, and budget. Starting from ground zero on programming each year is its own challenge, and to break that cycle the library must seek funding from partnerships that are long-lasting, strong, and sustainable. Most of all, Cal U librarians have learned to be more mindful in choosing and creating the types of collaborative opportunities in which to take part so that the library's voice is heard and librarians' time and effort are spent toward the goal of delivering a dynamic library experience to the campus community.

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