Pop-up Library at the University of Birmingham

Extending the reach of an academic library by taking “the Library” to the students

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Library Services

20th October, 2016
The University of Birmingham

- Approx. 28,500 students from over 150 countries
- Approx. 6,000 FTE staff
- Library Collections:
  - 2.1 million items
  - 50,000 journals
  - 500,000 eBooks
The New Main Library
Motivation / Driver

- Promoting Library Services support
  - Getting out amongst the students
  - Engagement of non-users
- Learning and feedback from students
- Fits in with University objectives
- Supported by literature
How we did it

- Funded project
- Locations
  - Types of space
  - Themes and timing
- Branding
- Staffing
  - Central project team
  - All levels and divisions
    - Training and briefings
How we did it

- Stall
  - Literature
  - Freebies
    - Supplier Vs in-house
  - Questionnaire
What we achieved

- 23 locations
- Engagement with c.1000 students
  - Including non-users
- Varied conversations
- 300 survey responses
  - Helps with engagement
  - Data gathering
    - Student perceptions
Impact: Results from a longitudinal survey
Impact: Comments

“I did have enquiries from students that had never used the Library before which was fantastic…”
Library Services staff, staffing one of the stalls

“Definitely worth being there and reminding students of what’s on offer and finding out more from students themselves…”
Library Services staff, staffing one of the stalls

“The staff were so friendly and welcoming and the information they gave out was very useful for me!”
Student, responding to longitudinal survey

“I’ve learnt that there was such a thing as an academic skills centre advisor! I had no idea that service existed before”
Student, responding to longitudinal survey
Top tips

- (Lack of) Funding need not be an obstacle
  - E.g. supplier promotional material
- Very adaptable model
  - E.g. cheaper, smaller scale, subject specific
- Location and timing
  - Mixed locations
  - Lunchtimes
Top tips

- **Staffing**
  - Involve a range of staff
  - Training and briefing sessions invaluable

- **Stall and resources**
  - ‘Less is more’

- **Student feedback and impact**
  - ‘On stall’ questionnaire – quantifiable feedback
  - Impact survey – highly desirable
Contacts and Article details

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