

Cerritos Public Library User Survey Report

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Introduction

In July 2002, Experience Library Grant consultants and Cerritos Library staff administered a survey to a random sample of 239 library customers as they left the library. In addition to the written surveys, 25 customers were interviewed and videotaped.

The survey focused on the perceptions and reactions of library customers in regard to the impact the new Cerritos "Experience" Library made on their library experiences and usage.

Since the Cerritos Library puts a very high priority on meeting customer needs and providing experiences relevant to their lives, the information garnered shows the importance of continuing to collect customer input. From the youngest respondent (5 1/2) to the oldest (86), the survey responses paint a clear picture of what the library means to its users and what they would like to see changed so their future library experiences will be even more memorable and relevant.

Key Findings:

- The new Cerritos Public Library is highly used and regarded by customers from outside its service area as well as those who reside in Cerritos.
- The atmosphere provided by the building and grounds is an important element that made a significant contribution to the experience customers had. Words used most often to describe the atmosphere were: beautiful, openness, futuristic, sophisticated, awesome, energizing, state-of-the-art, and convenient.
- Even in the midst of the high tech digital age, Cerritos customers emphasized the value of the wide variety of books and other materials as much as they did that of the computers and high speed Internet access.
- Customers were amazed at how well the library provides a learning environment for both children and adults. When asked what they valued most about the library, customers put the highest priority on its atmosphere, aquarium, book collection, children's area, computers, comfort level, and wide variety of learning experiences.
- Customers made it clear that they appreciate how convenient it is to find materials and check them out themselves. However, they also stated that they really value the well-trained and courteous staff Cerritos provides. Staff make customers feel comfortable as well as assist them in finding their way around.

- As always, customer surveys provide a means to solicit views on issues about which even loyal customers remain less satisfied. Those issues mentioned most often were noise, parking difficulties, more convenient outside book return locations and the availability of an onsite eating area such as a café or coffee shop.

Demographics

The gender and age breakdown of the 239 respondents is as follows:

Gender

male	93	39%
female	132	55%
not stated	14	6%

Age

under 13	49	21%
13-19	47	20%
19-29	15	6%
30-39	32	14%
40-49	37	15%
50-59	13	5%
60-69	13	5%
70+	10	4%
not stated	23	10%

Use of the Temporary Library at Towne Center

Over 84% of those surveyed had used the temporary Cerritos Library facility at Towne Center. The frequency of use by the majority (60%) had used it weekly. Other frequency levels were: monthly (16%), daily (13%) and less than once a month (11%). The majority (76%) had a library card.

Use of Other Libraries in the Area

Respondents who used libraries other than Towne Center mentioned branches of the County of Los Angeles Public Library most often (Artesia, Cypress, Diamond Bar, La Mirada, Lakewood, Montebello, Norwalk and Southgate). Other libraries mentioned frequently were Buena Park, Downey, Redondo Beach, Santa Fe Springs and Whittier.

Frequency of Use of the New Library

Over 80% of those surveyed had previously visited the new library. The frequency of use by the majority (58%) was weekly. Other frequency levels were: monthly (23%), daily (14%) and less than once a month (5%).

Change in Type of Use at the New Library

The factors respondents mentioned most frequently in regard to how the new library had changed their usage patterns were: increased usage due to the atmosphere and comfort level of the new building, ability to do different things e.g. look at the aquarium, computer availability, and self check-out. Often mentioned was that the new library is so much bigger and there is more of everything e.g. to do, books, computers, space, fun, etc.

Awareness of Services and Programs

Respondents were asked if they had used or visited areas of the library and/or programs the library offers. Most frequently mentioned were self check-out stations (71%). Other items that were mentioned by over half of the respondents were: magazines and newspapers (70%), young adult reading area (67%), materials return slots (64%), children's library help desk (63%), children's computers (62%), Internet express stations (61%), aquarium (61%), dinosaur learning center (59%), multimedia center (58%), First Ladies wall (56%), adult/young adult computers (56%), adult reference desk (54%), lighthouse (53%) and reservation desk (51%).

What Customers Value and Use Most

When asked what they value most about the new library, respondents stressed the appearance of the building most frequently using words such as atmosphere, beauty, openness, style, futuristic, sophisticated, awesome, energizing, convenient, state-of-the-art and elegance; they felt that both the size and layout of the new building made it more conducive to reading and studying than the old building.

A number of respondents stated how proud they are of the library and mentioned they often bring friends to see just how wonderful it is. Several really treasured the experience of sitting by the fireplace and reading with their children. The children's room, aquarium and computers were all highly valued.

When asked what they did during recent visits to the library, the most frequent responses were: read and/or checked out books and videos, used computers, studied and participated in the summer reading program.

Customer Service

Over half of the respondents (56%), said they noticed a different approach to customer service in the new library. Most frequently mentioned were the friendliness, helpfulness

and courtesy exhibited by the library staff. Also mentioned were how much faster and efficient services are, e.g. self check-out and info stations.

Finding Their Way Around

Most respondents used all three approaches to find their way around the new library: looking around by themselves, asking staff for assistance and searching for information using computers.

The breakdown of the approaches used to find materials follows:

Approach

all of the above	106
looked around myself	63
asked staff	46
used computers	40

Combining Other Activities

Combining library use with other leisure activities was the highest rated of the five choices listed. Respondents often combine multiple activities with their library visits.

The breakdown of the activities combined with library use follows:

Activity

leisure activity	100
school	87
shopping	45
restaurant	28
government service	10

Suggestions for Change

Suggestions for changes came from 40% of the respondents; the most frequently mentioned requests included: more books, providing a food service area, improving parking, decreasing the visibility of security personnel, identifying the fish in the aquarium, more quiet areas, and more convenient outside bookdrops.

Additional Comments

Examples of additional comments from respondents are:

- 43 year-old female “The library is the jewel in the crown of Cerritos - I bring out of town visitors to show it off all the time. Money well spent.”
- 24 year old female “Fascinating for learning and fun; self check-out stations are great”
- 15 year old male “This library rocks!”
- 60 year old male “Most outstanding and state of the art library I’ve ever been to”
- 47 year old female “I am proud of my new library”
- 11 year old female “Everything's perfect”

CERRITOS "EXPERIENCE" LIBRARY SURVEY

1. Did you use the Cerritos Library at Towne Center? () Yes () No

If yes:

a. How often did you visit the library? (check one):

___daily ___weekly ___monthly ___less than once a month

b. Did you have a library card? () Yes () No

If no: Did you use another library? () Yes () No

If yes: Which library

2. Is this your first time visiting the Cerritos "Experience" Library? () Yes () No

If Yes, go to question number 5.

If No:

3. How often have you been to the new Cerritos Library since it opened in March 2002?

___daily ___weekly ___monthly ___less than once a month?

4. In what ways has this new Cerritos Library changed how you use/what you do at the library?

5. Have you used or visited the following.....(check as many as apply)

Main Street InfoStation 1 ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Children's Library Help Desk ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Children's Public access computers ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Art Studio ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Little Theater ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Lighthouse ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Dinosaur Learning Center ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Aquarium Learning Center ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Parenting Learning Center ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Rainforest/Ecology Learning Center ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Space Travel/Astronomy

Learning Center ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Geologic strata wall ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Comments:

Old World Reading Area ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Books/Printing & written word

Learning Center ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

First Ladies wall ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Print Center, 1st floor ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Local History Room ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Friends retail store ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 City Hall After Hours Area ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is

Reservation Desk ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Materials Return Slots ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Self Check-out Stations ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Comments:

Multimedia Center on the first floor ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Young Adult reading area ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Magazines, Newspapers, ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Internet Express Workstations ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 InfoStation II ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Comments:

2ND FLOOR:

Adult Reference/Information desk ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Study Rooms ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Adult/Young Adult
 Public Access Computers ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 History of Computer exhibit ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 World Traditions Learning Center ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Comments:

3rd FLOOR:

Skyline Room ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Hi-Tech Training Lab ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Board Room ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Comments:

LIBRARY PROGRAMS:

MyClio Website ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Taken the Art Tour ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Experience Birthday Parties ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Author Series ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Summer Reading program ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Aquarium Experience with diver ___yes ___no ___not sure what this is
 Comments:

6. Describe what you did the last two times you visited the library?

7. What do you value most about this new library?

8. Have you noticed a different approach to customer service in this new library? yes
 no
 If yes, what:

9. How did you find the materials you wanted:
 I asked the staff I used computers I looked around myself all of the above

10. Did you combine your trip to the library with any other activity?
 school government service shopping restaurant leisure activity

11. If you could make a change in the library, what would it be?

12. Please feel free to write any additional comments. (If needed, use the back of this sheet.)

Your response to this survey is private and confidential, however, it will help us in understanding our results if you could tell us the following:

If you are: Male Female Your current age: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

May we contact you again to complete another survey? Yes No

*Thank You Again for your time and for visiting the
 Cerritos "Experience Library!"*