READS Tech Programming Roundtable Notes
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Brendan from Merrimack

Tech Tutors used in Minot, ND
3-person staff
Basic one on one help

Patterns of needing help:
  January – a lot
  February – dies down
  Spike periodically until major buying holiday and it spikes again (Christmas/January)

Create calendar in excel to see who is available when a patron comes looking for help, and to schedule appointments. Appointments are typically an hour long.

Tech help origins – purpose was to try to prevent backups at the reference desk with patron questions that could be involved

How to deal with a repeat person
  In Minot, they limited to 3 sessions
  At Merrimack, haven't encountered repeats yet
  Appointments are to prevent "needy patron" at the reference desk.
    Gives the patron more attention
    Makes it so that staff don't have to worry about helping patron and also keeping up with everything else at the reference desk.

Give survey at the end of each session
  Could help with performance reviews
  Ask for topics to cover in classes
  Ask how they found out about it
  Responses so far at Merrimack
    Email newsletter and word of mouth most effective
    In-house posters less helpful

Create a spreadsheet of staff skills: who can do what, what system they've used, what type of phone they have
  Patron scheduling procedure: go to spreadsheet to see who is an expert in their question topic, then schedule by when that person is available.

What do patrons want the most help with?
  Old Nooks (fyi: need to use adobe digital editions to make it work) Barnes & Noble sold Nook to Samsung – new Nooks are basically Galaxy tablets
The phasing out of technology drives the demand for tech help – people get new technology, and give old device to parents who are most likely to need help with using it and setting it up.

Merrimack has done classes in the past but not as well attended as they expected.
Get more numbers from one on one sessions.
Topics with some success for classes: internet security, ipads, they're considering adding in Ancestry as a bi-monthly how-to class.

Typical demographic: older women, and older men (11 out of 12 tech help patrons are women).

General information topics
Better received as a class
People don't want to hold up a teaching class with questions, don't want to feel like they're keeping others back.

**REMIND PEOPLE TO BRING THEIR PASSWORDS**

IDEA: Set up a general email address for the library for patrons who don't remember their email login but need to print a document. Send email from patron phone to library email address and print from public computer.

Wireless printing
Spot for Cassie by Librarica (http://www.librarica.com/)
Couldn't get it to read Android. Works with ios and laptops.
$995/yr for Spot
$445/yr for Cassie – seem to be universal prices.

IDEA: Have 3 staff members in a class
1 teacher and 2 assistants to walk around and help with basic stuff (highlighting, how to use a mouse).
Prefer one-on-one sessions because taking time to help someone use a mouse, etc can eat up class time and make it so that not everything gets covered.

Limit attendees in classes (8 seems to work well)
Break into 2 classes: beginner & intermediate sessions
Repeat a month or so later
Classes can also give confidence because patrons will see that others have questions too.

Many want to use their own device in class, which could be a challenge because their versions could be different (ex: different word versions have buttons in different places, and may not have the same features).

Classes:
Word, excel, publisher (less attendance) - these have become more one on one instead
Windows 10
Tablets and phones have most demand.

Alexa – patrons asking about it. Without inviting it into your home, how do you learn how to use it?
New Tech Offerings – Try Before You Buy
Library of things: check out new tech
Roku
Echo dot – voice activated is good for those with eye impairment
Alexa – patrons asking about it (Concern: how does staff learn it without taking it home? Some are uncomfortable about having it in their house.)
Amazon Fire TV Stick
Mobile hotspots – up to 10 devices, check coverage in your area
Don't trust the internet map, call the rep to ask them about coverage
Get an unlimited plan, no matter the cost
Patrons don't understand data usage
Without unlimited plan, if one person streams movies and uses it up in one check out, the device will sit on the shelf unable to go out until the next month
Pair mobile hotspot with a Chromebook for a “Take the Internet Home” package
Charge higher late fee: $5/day
"brick" the device - turn off remotely if they don't bring it back
Children's librarian used hotspot to have Minecraft program, in order not hog bandwidth from the rest of the library
Nice to have on hand if internet goes out
Hotspots – Sprint or T-mobile
Techsoup: Discounted tech for non-profits (https://www.techsoup.org/)
Tourists who go to ski country & White Mountains, can check them out and take with them. May be more likely to use it than someone taking it home
User agreement – they need to check the coverage where they're going
– overdue 3 times, suspended from using

Peggy from Dover Library

Runs 4 classes
3 levels of excel
Beginning excel has perquisite of how to use a mouse, highlighting, and copy & paste
1 word class: concentrates on formatting

Publicize – signs & chalk board in the building
Send posters to employment security and vocational rehab
Gets a lot of referrals from employment security

Classroom area has 6 computers (Dover is getting a new computer lab classroom in the near future!)
Excel is most popular, hosts it once a month – good for resume and job skills
Required registration, and usually there is a waiting list
Call everyone to remind them – if not coming, tell them there’s a wait list
Average attendance is 4 – more attendees from wait list than from original sign ups

How to create and run a class
Have everyone use library computers so everyone is using the same operating system and software
Use the tech you teach
Teach how to use help provided, so that they can use it in the future on their own
Teach concepts not skills
Be reasonably comfortable
Look at tutorials and dummy books to give list of basic topics to cover
Have attendees introduce themselves to the class: what experience they have, and what need to learn. This helps to target classes/level of individual class
Create examples so the class has to do things too
  List of names and addresses to organize; percentages they have to add up, etc
  Tip: download .csv from government website (list of senators, congressmen...) to get lots of data to use in examples in sorting or formatting

Make class interesting
  Walk them through
  Same example to walk through a series of actions
  Periodically make it break. Show how to fit it

Teach how to use the program, how to troubleshoot, what tools are available to figure things out. When something goes wrong, use it as an opportunity to show class how to troubleshoot.

Create handouts
  Write down everything you're going to say
  Then give pictures to illustrate what you're saying
  Handouts give permission to forget – give them the paper to use later at home - but allows them to pay attention and be engaged now, instead of worrying about writing things down
  "Google is your friend"
  Show that you as an instructor need to use google as well – give them permission to look it up

Follow along with examples
Give quizzes during class – make them SAY it
Stand behind them to see their screens to see if they're following along, or if they've fallen behind

Beginning classes
  If they have never used a mouse, suggest a one-on-one session to get started
  If someone comes in because they want all three levels of class – most know they'll be a little bored in the first class
  If they go to intermediate and struggle, they don't usually sign up for the advanced class
  The more advanced in the class are generally patient with the others who are not

She doesn’t teach Google docs or open office – but tells them it's out there

TIPS:  The more enthusiasm you have, the more they will have
Let them know how cool it is, convince people that it is fun
Stress that they won't to remember and *that's okay*.
Schedule a new class when existing class is full
  Many people on wait list for first class will sign up for the next class

Teaches excel Monday & Wednesday nights
Will try Saturdays soon
Audience is job seekers
If older population in other towns: days might work better
Other classes
Email class: how to set up an email and how to use it
“What is the cloud?” lecture
Manchester has a PowerPoint class

Memory Lab at Dover – always open
Set of equipment patrons can use to digitize pictures, slides, audio cassettes, VHS, negatives
- Scanners, VHS to DVD machine, external floppy disc drive
People can use independently. They sign up for a 3-hour slot.
Do one-on-one with training of all staff (helps refine your instruction handouts)
Can hand instructions to patrons and they can do it themselves
Whole thing cost $1000
1 specific hardware station for each format
- VHS--> DVD most expensive, and only getting more expensive as time goes on
- Alternative is USB-based device, plug into computer, other end into VHS player, covert to digital, then move file to hard drive or burn to a disc
Both COPY IN REAL TIME – 2 hour movie, takes 2 hours to copy – USB device will keep going, so you have to be there to stop it after the 2 hours. VHS-->DVD device will stop on its own
Quality is as good as VHS quality – it just makes a copy, doesn't improve anything
Can give a program on how to use the machine
But people didn't sign up for machine time after the program
Lot of overwhelmed people with a lot of pictures
Sign up through Google forms & posts to a calendar that patrons can view to see what's available
Some sign up for two machines, so can digitize photos at scanner while a VHS is copying
All in house – nothing get checked out
TIP: Use a donated VHS player to check for grungy VHS tapes before using them in the expensive machine
Have how to covert instructions
- DVD --> Mp4
- How to use Dropbox
Requests for the future:
- 3.5" floppy drive
- 8mm
- Old simcards of multiple sizes for cameras and videorecorders
All machines are getting more expensive over time

3D Printer at Dover
Patrons email a Thingiverse link and library prints for them (https://www.thingiverse.com)
In constant use – but only during open hours. Don’t run it overnight.
Charge for materials used: $1.5/ounce
Run a program: “Meet the 3D Printer!”
Future programs: Tinkercad (https://www.tinkercad.com)
General Discussion

Google docs: tell people you have to constantly be connected to the internet for it to work
Word: Tell people that you have to pay for it, even if it's installed on a new computer. That's a trial version that will run out or have fewer features.
GCFLearnFree.org (https://www.gcflearnfree.org/)
  Run by Goodwill. Free tutorials on 180 topics.
Digitallearn.org by ALA & PLA (https://digitallearn.org/)
  “Use a computer to do almost anything”
  Links to tutorials on: How to mouse. What is a browser? Intro to email. Facebook. Skype.
  Creating a resume. Being safe online.
To learn new skill, use Google and YouTube (more useful than built in help)
Suggest patrons have a laptop & ipad to follow a tutorial and do the steps at the same time
Seniors are afraid – tell them it's just a tool
Patrons need to be doing to understand
Smartphone help - schedule a one-on-one session
  Tip for a beginner smartphone: Motorola is an android with less features
Have a tablet in house to use
Ipad & iphone classes - popular
Android classes
Poll the staff "what do you use?" Helps to determine who can help with what tech.
Staff training
  First line staff
    If complicated question, ask for help
    Once solved, go back with that staff member and explain how to solve that problem.
    Link to how it's done. So all staff keep learning, and are able to answer more questions.
Nesmith has a teen tech help
  Advertise that a teen will be there to help. Drop-in session. Held twice a month. One week day and one Saturday.
  From 1 – 3 in the afternoon, for ½ hour blocks
  Teen librarian coordinates
  Must find the right teen with the right attitude
  They are to teach, not to do it for the patron
Considering: a class on online job applications
  Time intensive to complete applications, especially for those who don't know computers
  Applications are all different, some have a LOT of questions to answer
Document every tech help given
  See themes to plan future classes
VR headsets?
  Skeptical feeling in the room
    VR could become this generations Nook. All it takes is some other universal device to come along (like a tablet that can download an app for books) for it to be passed by.
    They're expensive
    Nintendo switch has cardboard cutouts accessories
    Be cautious unless there's a demand
3D Printer – constant value
  Park by circ desk to show off & introduce technology
  Many people not in a high school have never seen one
State library loans a 3D Printer – must take class first
Part in well trafficked area – make sure it runs all day
Give a workshop on how it works

Coding (Moultonborough)
An Hour of Code class. All ages.
9-10 year olds help the 6-7 year olds who go
Switch to tinkercad in future to let them design something and print it with 3d printer when it is borrowed from state library again

Videogame club
Loan systems – user agreement like tablets or Lego kits
Use black friday deals to get tech for the library
Teen librarian has video games on Saturdays
Multiple stations of different systems that kids can come in to play
Set up a program with retro store to play old game systems
"A link to the past" retro store
Retro can be more expensive than new
Call for donations of systems – a small call
Gaming nights – add systems to board game nights
For kids, watch the game ratings

In teen room
Ps4, wii u, xbox one set up in corner of teen room. Available at all times for teens to play after school. Racing games are big. Not just shooting games
But they do bring in numbers?

Volunteers with drop in tech help?
Nesmith has teens that come in at a scheduled time
Dover is looking at adults soon for drop in type help
Moultonborough has a drop-in tech time, and volunteers come in as helpers
Merrimack uses exclusively staff to help with tech

Loaning tablets (Merrimack is going to do this)
Don’t loan obsolete stuff
Keep old stuff for staff training
Get the most modern systems
Put on parental controls to prevent downloads
Otterbox is overrated
Be prepared to deal with stolen and damaged items
Consider using a donated item for lending
Check what’s on files and history and condition before loaning out again to next patron

Charging stations
Have one in teem room (on amazon - small)
Wires with a stand
Brand it with library logo – Nesmith has one like this
Others loan out chargers and cables in the library