

# The digital public library for Flanders: a strategic look into the future

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Image 1



Image 2



Image 3



Image 4



Image 5

### Internet

- 10 years ago: the internet revolution
- New technology, content, cultures, behaviour
- Internet has become the driving force for change, for a media revolution

Image 6

### Media 2.0

- Now: web 2.0
- What are people doing in a media 2.0 environment?

Conclusions:

- New media -> new use
- Shift of control from provider to consumer: shift of time, place and authority
- Driven by mass: mass of content, "power of many"

Image 7

### Shift of time

**TIMESHIFTING**

8:00 8:30 9:00 9:30 10:00 10:30

- Cfr. This, Telemet Flareview, ...
- Allowing to skip ads
- And users skip ads more than you like
- User behavior is shifting towards more control (what, how, when). They are just waiting for DVR's.
- And this can hurt TV business!

Control:

- Technology
- Use
- Business model

Image 8

### Shift of place

**PLACESHIFTING**

Image 9

### Content choice

Image 10

### Communities 2.0

- Consumers are increasingly engaged in on-line communities, where they find kindred spirits and where organizations can find groups with similar interests, ideas or wishes.

Social networks / virtual worlds

Social networks, sharing, ...

Image 11



Image 12



Image 13



Image 14



Image 15



Image 16



Image 17



Image 18



Image 19



Image 20



Image 21



Image 22





Image 23

**Web 2.0**

- Web2.0 is the manifestation of
  - Shifting power to consumers
  - New communication and marketing
  - Introducing new business models
  - Introducing new technologies and rich internet experiences
  - Shift of authority

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Image 24

**Shift of authority**

- Users decide on time, place, and content
- Users focus on digital communities and their peer groups
- Users focus on a universe of immediately available content
- Users co-create content, co-create their own digital environment

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Image 25

**What is the impact on public libraries?**

- Mission and challenges
- Changes of roles
- Strategy and roadmap

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Image 26

**Mission**

- The public library is a basic facility for every citizen, as inexpensive as possible, neutral, and free from any (commercial) pressure.
- The library has to:
  - Be an active intermediary and guide for people searching for knowledge, culture, information and recreation
  - Stimulate people to raise the right questions and learn how to do this
  - Make sources of information available
  - Facilitate by delivering services, supporting processes, providing infrastructure, and creating places where people can meet
- This applies to the physical and digital library alike. Borders between the physical and the digital become vague.

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Image 27

**Libraries today**

Current strengths

- 1 million people visit the library at least once a month
- 32% population uses the library, 27% is member
- Uniquely embedded: 800+ locations
- Libraries have a local flavour, adapt to local timing, local current affairs
- Physical "long tail"
- *It's everybody's library*

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Image 28

**But! New users**

- Future customers? Research of student behaviour:
  - 84% starts searching in Google, Yahoo....
  - Only 1% considers using the website of a library
- Universe of the new user = digital, shared with peers, enables participation, delivers immediately

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Image 29

### Libraries today

Weakness:

- The library is a well known brand, but it's image is grey, dusty, old fashioned - especially with people who don't use the library
- For most people "library" equals "books".
- Because of the less important position of the book as a source of information, people will stop associating the library with searching and finding information and related processes
- One of the big challenges in the future will be the re-branding of the library and communicating its new identity

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Image 30

### Challenges: the collection

- Assumption: within +/- 10 years certain physical media will disappear:
  - Digital physical products: CD's, DVD's, ... Completely disappeared
  - Non-fiction Partially disappeared
  - Newspapers, periodicals, ... Partially or completely disappeared
- Books stay for specific niches and as a (temporary) carrier

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Image 31

### Challenge: new collections

- Digital content, "replacements of old media":
  - online services, downloading, on demand use of music, film
  - online non-fiction databases, sources
  - online newspapers, magazines ...
  - online entertainment, culture, art...
- New digital sources, currently only outside the library:
  - blogs, podcasts, vodcasts, ...
  - user generated content, mash-ups, ...
  - community sites (MySpace, ...)

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Image 32

### Challenge: access

- Transparent access to
  - physical collection: catalogue, previews, scanned books, downloads, streaming, print-on-demand, ILL, lending of buying services ...
  - digital collection: music, digital sources - what with prices and rights?
  - Context, supporting searches, interpretation, ... In personal contact with the staff
  - Supporting digital services and processes: handling content, co-production, mash-ups..

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Image 33

### Challenge: physical library

Building on strengths, being local:

- "Home" of physical media
- Access to the digital environment
- Focus on personal contact with people, not necessarily on richness of IT infrastructure
- Physical "place" for social networks
- "Physical" display-window and storefront for content providers
- Crucial in battling digital divides

- But who of the staff members can do this, wants to do this, is allowed to do this?

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Image 34

### Change of library paradigm?

<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
Scarce resources	Overload
Product driven	Process driven
Consumers	Participants
Lead	Support
	Democratise (digital divide)
	Quality / Reliable
	Free from (commercial) influence

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Image 35

### Change of roles

- The library has to keep its role in society to deliver quality services; but should take into account the changed behaviour, control and expectations of new users: it has to search a new equilibrium on the balance of authority.
- The library should assume 4 roles:
  - The library as gatekeeper
  - The library as curator
  - The library as guide
  - The library as participant

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Image 36

### The Library as gatekeeper

- Objective, neutral
- Reliable
- Authority for selection, describing of content
- Part of the local community
- + opening up, e.g.: folksonomies

Image 37

### The Library as curator

- Discovery
- Experiencing
- Shop windows
- Qualitative storefront for other sources, providers
- Subjective presentations
- *the libraries'*

Image 38

### The Library as guide

- *Learning how to fish the ocean of information*
- Quality, critical assessment
  - Problem definition
  - Questioning
  - Judge
  - Digest and process
  - Share

Image 39

### The Library as participant

- Part of Web 2.0
- Participates in dialogues of users, sharing its specific expertise
- Equal to the user
- Visibility in the universe of the web 2.0 generation

Image 40

### The changes

- The (digital) library learns to "work with people" rather than "work with books".
- Focus shifts from "carriers" to "content".
- The library evolves from "a supplier of products and services" to "a facilitator for people to develop their own products and services".
- The core business will shift from managing a physical (local) collection, to finding, interpreting, using, organising a larger, continuously expanding universal collection.

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Image 41

**Towards a strategy**

- Strategy with 6 policy guidelines
- + Roadmap for the next 3 years, with a perspective on 6 years
- Keep attention to the context:
  - Position in the digital landscape
  - Partnerships
  - Using strengths
  - (Re-)building the library brand image

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Image 42

**Policy guidelines**

- Guideline 1: one central "project", one project owner
  - Flemish government
  - Many subprojects on different levels: Flemish, provincial, regional, local
- Guideline 2: a strong organisation
  - Authority
  - Expert in combining knowledge on technology and library business models

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Image 43

**Policy guidelines**

- Guideline 3: Library staff
  - Provide training and education
  - Promote the hiring of "digital natives"
- Guideline 4: develop knowledge of legal context in libraries + lobby for a more adapted legal framework
  - Libraries are accountable, users are not or less
  - Legal framework always lags behind reality

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Image 44

**Policy guidelines**

- Guideline 5 : this affects all aspects of the library system
  - Impact on core business. This strategy should be embedded in a comprehensive vision on the libraries' future
  - Issue of scalability: towards bigger library organisations
- Guideline 6 : Developing partnerships
 

1. Cultural heritage	4. Publishing, music
2. Education	5. ...
3. Media	

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Image 45

**Roadmap**

1. Awareness program
  - Library sector, learning platform, co-creation, experimentation
  - Policy makers and other stakeholders
  - Development of Web 2.0 platforms with users
2. Data and metadata: creation and connecting
  - Digital collection management
  - Creating metadata
  - +
  - Context: cultural community of 6 million

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Image 46

**Roadmap**

3. Marketing en CRM of local libraries
  - User information
  - Developing CRM tools
  - Changing public image of libraries
4. Digital divide, challenge for local libraries
  - Working with people
  - Infrastructure and services

⇒ Library as a trustworthy place to get acquainted with the digital universe
5. Legal advice, informing policy makers

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