**ULA 2016**

**Digital Literacy a Service? Yes! You Can Help Bridge the Digital Divide.**

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Alisha Dangerfield Slides 1 - 9

Slide 1:

(Pickles cartoon)

Slide 2:

(Introduction)

Slide 3:

(What you will learn)

What you will learn in four steps:

* Planning and Curriculum - We will talk about which partner we selected to help us with the curriculum and why. We will talk about the planning stage and how to reach the goal of digital literacy as a service.
* Scheduled Courses
* Create-a-class structure
* On-demand service

Slide 4:

(Digital Literacy)

Literacy is defined as the ability to read and write. In our everyday world, literacy is an absolute must and in this world of ever increasing technology, digital literacy is becoming just as important as reading and writing. We want to bridge the gap that has so many people feeling lost in today’s electronic world. We have the ability to help those that have no idea where to begin to help themselves with this undertaking. Our goal is to be able to be available all the time to help those that need instruction in digital literacy. We want to be able to help someone as they need it without being told that they would have to come back in at a scheduled time. If we don’t schedule time for people to check out books, then why would we make people schedule time for a service such as digital literacy? Our goal is to make digital literacy a service so that everyone has the opportunity to learn at their own pace and at the time that they need it most.

As a definition, Cornell University defines digital literacy as the ability to find, evaluate, utilize, share and create content using information technologies (computers, tablets, and smartphones) and the internet. Knowing how to use these technologies is important in everyday life. Whether applying for jobs online, searching for information, utilizing patient portals, filing taxes, banking, paying bills, taking advantage of MOOC’s (Massive Online Open Course), communicating with others and much more. A person must have at least a basic understanding of computer and internet use in order to safely and meaningfully engage in these activities.

The US Department of Commerce states that digital literacy is necessary for today’s jobs. It also states that ninety-six percent of working Americans use new communications technologies as part of their daily life, while sixty-two percent of working Americans use the Internet as an integral part of their jobs.

What is digital literacy to you?

Slide 5:

(Free flexible training for adults)

We see every day that people need help with technology. While working at the computer lab we have any number of people daily that are unsure of themselves and how to use a computer. Often times, we find that we are the ones helping them figure out how to retrieve or create an email. We show them how to print off a document and help them with some things as simple as using a mouse. To someone that has never touched a computer, these tasks seem as hard as learning to read for the first time and there is absolutely no confidence in how to figure it out. That is where we come in. We have the ability to teach these computer basics in a way that is easy and fun. We teach computer basics such as mouse and keyboard skills, email, surfing the internet, connecting with friends and family and even how to use a table and/or smartphone.

Slide 6:

(Oasis)

Our library is somewhat small. We don’t have the staffing necessary for creating a curriculum for teaching computer courses. So rather than creating a curriculum, we found a company that will do that for us; it’s called Oasis Connections. Their curriculum has been created with the idea in mind that adults ages 50+ might need something simple, easy to follow and easy to read and understand. They keep their information updated so that each book for each course has up-to-date information and is not outdated. These books and courses can be used by anyone, but they are geared toward adults that are 50+. Examples of classes that are taught are: Meet the Computer, Introduction to Email, Facebook, iPad/iPhone, Android phone/tablet and many more. They are comprehensive and easy to teach and comprehend. One of the best things about this is that it is only 800 dollars a year to subscribe to their program. This 800 dollars gives you complete access to all the different curriculum and any type of support that you mind need from Oasis. Thus far, we have loved working with them and using the content from the courses. If we had to try and create the courses ourselves and trying to maintain them, we would spend a far greater amount in staff time alone just trying to keep them updated.

Slide7:

(Customer centered culture)

Once we decided on our curriculum, we knew we needed to figure out what we wanted to accomplish and why. Something that was absolutely important was figuring out this customer centered culture where we gave students exactly what they needed at the time they needed it. We didn’t want to come up with another program where we decided on everything. We wanted our students to tell us what they wanted most from this experience. We got some great feedback from surveys that Judy will go over with Marketing. Our experiences in the computer lab prove that people need help when they need it, not when we can schedule it for them. That is how we knew that having digital literacy as a service all the time was our ultimate goal.

Slide 8:

(Outcomes for individuals)

Having confidence is key to learning any new skill. Trish (name changed) had for years decided that she was too dumb to try and learn again. When she did try again, we were able to show her that she was fully capable of learning something new and she now has the confidence that was lost so many years ago. She now sees the benefits of lifelong learning, that it is entirely possible to learn new skills even as we age and grow. Learning doesn’t stop when you finish school, It stops when you decide.

Other outcomes that we knew were important were those of Job Skills training and job status. Connecting with friends and family and taking these classes would be a new way to make new friends. We know that people are continuing to work well past the retirement age of 65 and that technology skills are a must. We can help them get new jobs by getting them the skills they need through digital literacy. We can help them improve their current job status by helping them learn new skills like Word or Excel. Aside from job-necessary skills, we know how important staying connected with friends and family is. There are too many people that are losing those connections because they don’t know how to get connected through social media or email. By teaching Facebook and email courses we can help them get the confidence they need to connect and stay connected. And finally this is a social experience. We have a classroom setting where everyone is on the same playing field. We have set it up in such a way that everyone that takes the same class as you feels the same as you. If you are taking “Meet the Computer”, our goal is to make sure that we have placed you with the same group of individuals that need the same knowledge as you do. This makes for a comfortable and safe environment for all and it turns into a social and fun way to meet new people. By the end of class, everyone is happy and interacting with one another and they are more confident than they were when they walked in the door.

Slide 9:

(Outcomes for community and local economy)

We know that as a library we connect with other businesses every day. What we wanted was to be able to make those relationships even stronger. One example is with our Tooele Senior Center. Our hope was to be able to partner with them through outreach and teach right where it was needed. For those that were unable to come to us, we would go to them. By teaching these classes right where it is needed most we are able to strengthen that relationship with them and build the trust so they know that we were dedicated to helping those that needed it.

**STORY**:  We met with a woman that had a job here in the city for many years. She did her job very well, but as time went on and technology changed, she had fallen behind that change. Her job was really on the line and she had lost the confidence she needed to learn this new challenge. We were able to meet that challenge with her and we set up courses with her that gave her the new skills she needed to maintain her current position. She left more confident and knowledgeable than she was before, and to this day still talks about how she was able to learn something new even though she felt she was past the point of learning.

Judy Taylor Slides 10 - 18

Slide 10:

(Frontrunner trains)

Because the curriculum we use is designed for adults 50 and over, we looked at where we wanted our target market to be.  We learned that in 2010 there were 2537 seniors 65 and over in Tooele City, not including nearby communities.  That may not sound like a lot, but it’s enough to fill 20 double decker frontrunner trains.

Slide 11:

(Baby boomers, Gen X, Digital natives)

We found that there is also a sizeable population between 45 and 64.  We set these as our secondary market in the initial phase.

Slide 12:

(Seniors at table)

In partnering with the Tooele Senior Center, we went before lunch to talk with seniors.  We personally surveyed whoever was willing to talk with us to find out if they were interested in taking computer classes, what they wanted to learn, and the best days and times to come. We got their call back information, left surveys and signage so we could get more responses.   We also met with them before one of their big dinner events to talk about the program.  At the Library, we asked people using the computer lab if they were willing to fill out a survey.  From those surveys we decided what classes we would teach and called back those who said they were interested to fill the classes.

Slide 13:

(Beta testing)

We began beta testing in January 2015. Ideally a class has one teacher and one facilitator (helper).  We all went together to the senior center during the first month and took turns teaching while the other two facilitated.  The senior center has 4 desktop computers, and we had 3 or 4 students in each class.  Next, we started teaching solo and began using laptops for in-library classes.  During that 7 month period we taught 36 classes and had 84 participants.

Slide 14:

(Baby, certificate, happy students)

What did we learn?  A lot of older adults feel embarrassed because they can’t do something that is second nature to their grandchildren and great grandchildren.  Most seniors prefer to take classes in the morning.  They love getting a certificate.  And they learn better in a small group.

Slide 15:

(Biting tablet)

We learned we could help seniors go from this...

Slide 16:

(Happy seniors!)

To this!

**STORY**:  Laura (name changed) was one of our first students to sign up for classes early in 2015.  Her main goal was to be able to communicate with her son who lives and works where phone service was rarely good, but he could receive text messages.  Not knowing if he was okay really worried her.  Her ultimate goal was to get a cell phone and be able to use it.  Her path to success began with Meet the Computer, then Exploring the Internet, the e-mail, and then a she took the android phone class several times even though she didn’t have one yet.  During all of those months she worked to pay off debt, so she could afford cell phone service.  Then after she bought a phone, she came back and took the android phone course again.  Now she is able to communicate with her son and has peace of mind.

Slide 17:

(Scope creep)

As planners we learned that while we had some great ideas, it is best to implement them in smaller steps and to keep it simple.

Slide 18:

(Learned as trainers)

As trainers we learned:  You need to use language your learners can understand -- for example, just because you know what an OS is, doesn’t mean they know.  Give verbal help, but don’t take control of the device -- whether it’s a computer, phone, or tablet.  Be patient, go at a slow pace, and allow them time to practice what they have learned.  Whenever possible schedule a trainer and a facilitator to teach classes. Be fun and welcoming.  Keep your staff up-to-date on what classes are coming up and make sure they are familiar with your sign up process.  At the end of a class always make sure the participants fill out the Oasis survey if that is the program you use - it does not collect any personal information, but lets you know how you did as a teacher.

Katie Larsen Slides 19 – 30

**Step 2 Scheduled Courses**

Slide 19:

(Scheduled courses)

Everything you have heard so far is part of the first step, planning and beta testing. So now you are ready for Step 2.

With Scheduled Courses we (the library) choose the date, time, location, and topic. During this stage, you can train additional staff members (a few at a time) to teach classes. Oasis offers an initial training webinar to introduce instructors to the system. I would recommend you also create your own supplemental training for staff members.

Slide 20:

(Students per course)

Before you start offering scheduled courses you will need to decide on your maximum class size. While Oasis recommends about eight, we found that six was a good maximum for us. In fact we limit our most basic “Meet the Computer” class to 4 students, because more individual help is needed at this stage. When people come for workplace training they are more focused and a larger number of students can be accommodated.

Proper student placement is crucial. If the content is too easy students get bored, feel they are wasting their time, and can even distract others who are struggling. If the content is too advanced, they don't have the prerequisite skills needed to follow the class and become overwhelmed.

Slide 21:

(Flow chart slide)

Judy created this wonderful flow chart to help staff register students in the class most appropriate for their skill level. This flow chart should be included at your designated sign up point for staff reference. We can suggest a path to success. If a prospective student asks to learn Facebook, but has never used a computer before, we would suggest the following path to success:

* + Meet the Computer
  + Exploring the Internet
  + Introduction to Email
  + Facebook 1
  + Facebook 2

Slide 22:

(Current course offerings)

You will also need a list of all the classes your staff are currently able to teach at your designated sign up point for students to view. Students will be able to see there are courses offered outside of the current schedule. On this slide are the courses we currently offer. We plan to add more to the list as resources and demand increase. The numbers you see in parentheses indicate the number of 2 hour classes in each course.

Slide 23:

(Sign-up Sheet)

Here is an example sign-up sheet. When you have determined which classes you will offer in the upcoming month, the form is filled out and placed at the designated sign up point. We use a clipboard, but an online registration system would work as well.

Slide 24:

(Call Back Sheet)

The last item you need to make available at your sign up point is the Call Back Sheet. When a prospective student inquires about classes a staff member will:

* Ask qualifying questions and recommend a path to success.
* Refer to the upcoming scheduled courses on the sign-up sheet.

The Student:

* May need a different time or
* The course they need may not be on the schedule this month.

When this happens, use the Call Back Sheet to collect their contact information and the course they are interested in. We contact them when the desired course becomes available. The last column is for contact notes, so we can keep record of any future correspondence we have with that person. Another valuable function of the Call Back Sheet is that we can use it to determine which classes are in highest demand and schedule accordingly for the upcoming month.

Slide 25:

(Advertising)

At some point you will want to start advertising. We started out slow with advertising because we were not sure we would be able to meet demand. We received the highest response from the senior center and city newsletters.

**Step 3 Create-a-class**

Slide 26:

(Create-a-class)

When you start offering create-a-class, you would continue with scheduled courses and offer the create-a-class option as an addition.

What is Create-a-class? In the scenario I talked about a few minutes ago, a prospective student needs a time or course that is not currently scheduled. Now, you can create the needed class for them. The student will choose the date, time, location, and topic. All they need to do is get a couple of friends to come with them. We create the course, add it to the schedule, and give them just what they need (as of 05/06/2016 Tooele City Library is working in the create-a-class phase). Once you have been doing this for a while and it is flowing well, you can move on to Step 4.

**Step 4 On-Demand Service**

Slide 27:

(On-Demand)

Again, you can build on what you already have in place and add On-Demand Service. This is a skill or task based service.

How is this different from what we do now? Currently, the employee covering the computer lab area would help this type of walk-in customer. They do a great job, but are frequently interrupted to help others, and sometimes must pass the customer off to another employee. The goal for on-demand service is to have up to 2 hours of uninterrupted time that is dedicated to that person.

How is this possible? Over the past months you have been training your staff members, a few at a time, to teach scheduled courses. They have all improved their own technology skills, are now familiar with the curriculum and have the skills needed to complete any number of tasks.

In regards to scheduling: On the daily staff schedule each of these trained teachers is scheduled an hour or two a day as On-Demand instructors (the entire day will need to be covered). When you have a need for on-demand service, the scheduled staff member will do a quick reference interview with the student and start their 2 hour block of dedicated time. The staff member who is scheduled as on-demand in the following hour is notified, and will cover whatever staff member # 1 would have been doing during the remainder of the two hour session. We already have blocks of time scheduled like this for roving reference. It should be a fairly easy transition for our staff because it is closely related to something we already have in place.

Slide 28:

(Schedule image)

In this example schedule you can see that if needed Sabrina could provide on-demand service from 10:00 am to noon, and Alisha would cover tech services instead of Sabrina from 11:00 am till noon. This may not work for your library staffing structure, you may prefer to have an always available tech desk that is staffed for this specific purpose. As of 05/06/2016 we have taught 69 classes providing technical help, and knowledge to a total of 205 students.

Slide 29:

(What you learned)

Today you learned about a four step process that will help your library comfortably build up to providing technology training as an always available service. As Library professionals, providing access, education, and furthering the public good are among our core values. I can think of few better ways to stay true to these values than providing this much needed service to our communities. Thank you.

Slide 30:

(Questions)

If you have any questions please contact us using the contact information below.

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