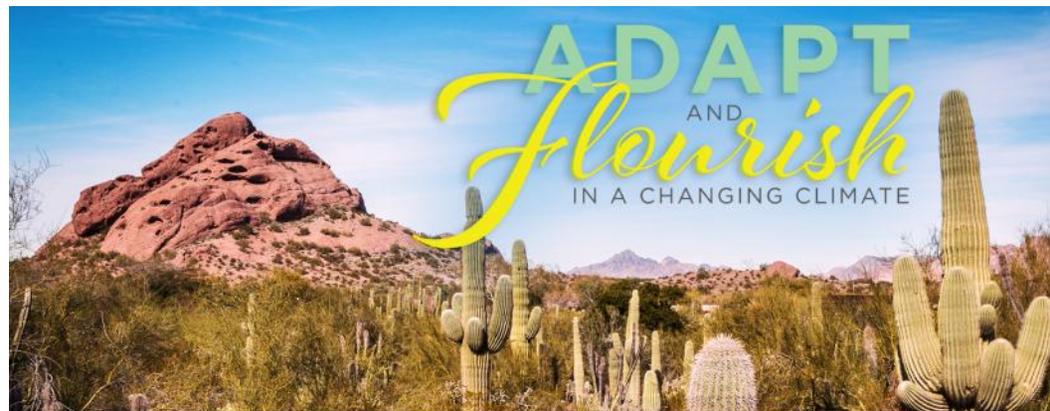# Talking About Value: How to Own the ROI Conversation

Mary Ellen Bates

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BatesInfo.com

"**The value of the librarians is the community they create, the education they provide about the importance of plants.**"

It's not just info pros...

Google

🔍 how to measure roi for

🔍 how to measure roi for **training**

🔍 how to measure roi for **social media**

🔍 how to measure roi for **automated testing**

🔍 how to measure roi for **marketing**

🔍 how to measure roi for **events**

🔍 how to measure roi for **sponsorship**

🔍 how to measure roi for **advertising**

🔍 how to measure roi for **public relations**

🔍 how to measure roi for **hr**

@mebs

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Are we talking about the right things?

93% of librarians think usage is a key value metric

24% of administrators think usage is an important metric

Count what matters to them!

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goo.gl/tTujFS

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What are you to the bottom line?

Overhead

or

Contributing to revenue-generation?

Why not both?

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Fight the "library" assumptions

Directors remember university, public libraries

Develop success stories, marketing vignettes

Show your passion!

Link your operations to your org's goals

Support a capital or endowment campaign

Pivot to new strategic focus & audience

Support staff professional development, retention

"**The library gives the institution legitimacy and reaches a broader audience.**"

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Identify unique value & highlight it!

Historical / rare book collections, special collections

Convert library users to garden members

Engage the public in unique ways

Collaborate (visibly) with other libraries

Use your value to promote the institution

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Show impact on revenue

of programs supported

# of donors / members engaged with

# of grant applications supported

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Address boom & bust funding

Connect salaries, operating budget to tangible value

During boom times, sunset marginal programs, create new value

Washington Monument strategy (*or not???*)

Find new ways to show value

Bring grant funding workshops to staff

ID open-access resources for researchers

Build libguides to support programs (see CBHL list
of libguides)

Contribute to institution's social media accounts

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Find new ways to show value

Review your institution's web site traffic

Find library resources to add to high-traffic pages

Build a horticultural custom search engine

Special ongoing program, service, events for members, friends of library

"**Libraries have unique areas of expertise; use that to engage people and help increase the library's value to the institution.**"

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What do *your* clients really value?

Ask them!

"How do you describe the library's services you use to a colleague?"

"Complete the sentence: *I use the library because* _____."

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Find your advocates

Cultivate board members

Find engagement points with staff, researchers, horticulturalists

Turn library friends group to advocates

Find parallel groups – Master Gardeners, beekeepers

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Find your advocates

Visibly connect programs with library resources

Find out where else your volunteers volunteer

Follow up on significant research projects

What difference did the library make for this project?

What impact did this have on your outcome?

5 questions to scare yourself silly

What's the most valuable thing we're doing *now*?

What should we retire?

What should we do now that we don't do?

5 questions to scare yourself silly

Who is doing interesting things? How can we get involved?

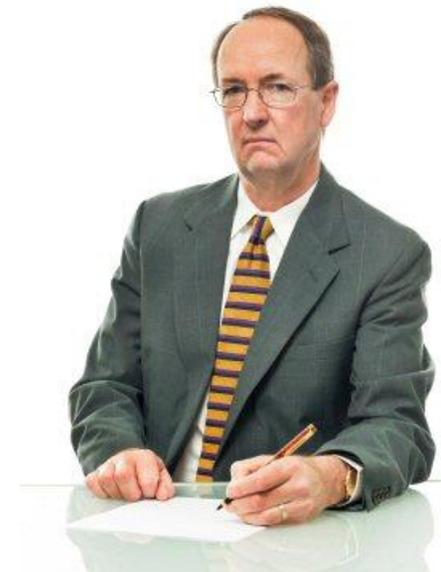**What's the scariest thing we could do next?** *What part of that could we do now?*

"So, what do you do?"

"So, what do you do?"

@mebs

Talk about outcome, not activity

Is it a WHAT or HOW?

or is it a WHY?

Turn it into a question

You know how {describe problem, in one breath}?

Well, we {describe what your clients get, in one breath}

Turn it into a question

You know what it's like to walk into a key donor's office and get blindsided?

Well, I can brief you the morning of the appointment with the latest on your donor.

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Tell a 3-sentence story

Tell a 3-sentence story

The situation

What you delivered

The result for your client

Tell a 3-sentence story

1. Describe the situation

One of our org's goals is to prepare youth for today's job market

Tell a 3-sentence story

2. What you did

Through a library workshop, 45 students learned how to build and program a communications robot for autistic kids

Tell a 3-sentence story

3. What was the result?

We partnered with a local company who hired the kids to design more robots

ROI Resources

Statistics, Surveys, Narrative (Taylor & Francis white paper)
goo.gl/tTujFS

The True Cost of Information (Springer white paper)
springernature.com/truecostroi

The True ROI of Digital Content (Factiva white paper)
go.dowjones.com/true-roi

Proving Your Library's Value (Missouri DOT report)
is.gd/DOT_ROI

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