Developing a Library Market Research Service

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Business
Background Info

- Began with predecessor in business librarian position and different Provost leadership
- Office of the Provost was paying a market research firm for insights into graduate program development
  - Provost didn’t want to approve new programs without knowing what the market for them looked like
  - $$$
- Library & Librarians offered resources and skills to provide a similar if not the same service at no added cost
- Service stalled with position vacancies (library) and personnel changes (Provost)
  - Communication slowed dramatically
- Library kept it “alive”
  - Done ad hoc by other librarians
  - Inclusion in new Business Librarian position description
Anatomy of a Report

Each report consists of three main components:

**Academic Program Analysis**
- Focuses on competing programs at other universities identified either anecdotally or through initial research.
- Each program is evaluated by format, length and focus, target audience, size, conferrals etc.

**Labor Market Analysis**
- Reviews the potential job market for those who graduate with a particular degree.
- Provides an analysis of the skills demanded by employers in the area, the number of jobs available, trends in the top industries, employment projections etc.

**Source/Methodology and Appendixes**
- Contains citations from consulted sources along with additional charts of data.
Improvements

- Consistent staffing in both departments
  - Business Librarian, Entrepreneurship Librarian, Graduate Marketing Manager
- More dedicated to communicating and meeting
- Revamped request process for schools/departments
  - Provost communicates with interested parties
  - They are asked to complete a Qualtrics based survey to collect information that librarians need to create report
    - Librarians communicate with Provost any further needs
  - Librarians research existing competitor programs for the proposed degree and the labor market for graduates with the degree (both based on CIP code)
  - After 4-6 weeks, a completed report is provided to the Provost to share with the requestor & inform decisions
How can you implement?

1 Get Buy-in

Librarians already have the unique skills and access to resources to implement a program such as this. However, buy-in from both library and university administration is important to the success of a program because:

- Reports are time consuming to complete
- It is an unorthodox use of subscription resources and you may need to purchase additional resources
- Falls outside scope of a traditional librarian role on campus

2a Decide your process for receiving and managing requests and the selected resources for creating reports

We created a process and request form that funneled and prioritized the overflow of legitimate and incomplete requests.

We purchased a new database called Burning Glass Technologies to support this project in addition to using Ibisworld/other industry research databases, freely available websites such as the university program pages and US News and World Report rankings, and government resources like IPEDs and Bureau of Labor Statistics reports.

2b Determine staffing and time management needs

Two full-time librarians are trained to offer this services and liaison librarians are consulted as needed.

- You may need to hire and train a graduate student worker to assist with the upflow.
- A dedicated staff person on the Provost side to act as liaison to the requesters helps keep librarian focus on research
- Result of having buy-in from university administration

Fruits of our recent labor

New programs and ways to learn launch this fall...students on the Pittsburgh campus can now earn a Master of Education in PreK-12 Special Education.

The university announced recently the additional of a new degree program that was informed by our report on secondary education with specializations in urban and special education.