

Think Tank, August 15 – 17, 2005 – Summary Report

Think Tank Day 1

Images of the Future

The Think Tank began with an opportunity to introduce ourselves and share “images of the future” around the tables. Here are a few examples of images, as the Think Tank began.

Images of the Future:

- Haves and have nots
- Live longer, walk longer
- Crowded info-wise, War between those who provide and those who want
- Personalized, customized, connected
- Time crunches
- Wiki-media
- Portfolios over degrees
- Bigger brains
- Isolation
- Large generational gap – want, need from public space
- Time of convenience over quality
- Nation in decline?
- Time savers, devices, recreation

Key Themes from Science Fiction Writers

Following the conversations with Brenda Cooper, Louise Marley, and Bruce Sterling, Think Tank participants summarized some of their key impressions.

- Magnitude of change in near term?
- Global (look broadly) and Local (look narrowly) – “Glocalization”
- Better delivery of services and marketing
- Benefit from defining core values – where we’ve been before we decide where to go.
- Regardless of tech change, still serve children and help re: literacy
- More change – more the same
- Energy vs. entropy
- “Muddle thru and make fresh mistakes”
- Always will be people behind and in front of technology
- Tech a tool
- Don’t have nouns to describe what the future holds
- Choice in defining future

Think Tank Day 2

2020 Time Capsule

To begin the day Think Tank participants were asked to imagine creating a Time Capsule in the year 2020, but a special kind of time capsule that could be sent back in time to 2005 and opened today. Into the capsule would go headlines, stories, artifacts indicating what actually happened in the “last 15 years” since the time of the Vision 2020 Think Tank. Table groups made lists and reported a few items each to compile a single list.

- Bio diesel widely available
- World-wide literacy
- Sheet of electronic paper
- Universal communication device
- Last pair of eye glasses
- Library of congress in digital form
- History book
- Chip that contains all the energy you need
- Report of 2020 conference
- A “noun” that is how people get non-fiction info –involves all senses
- Photo of last library to have all facilities “greened”
- Chip that allows you to be directly wired to the information grid
- Detailed map of bike paths that replace freeways

While this was a warm-up activity, it does indicate a few of the events, trends and developments that participants expect to see in the next fifteen years.

Key Themes From Day 2 Experts

Following the conversations with David Kusek, Greg Raymond and Joe Janes, Think Tank participants summarized some of their key impressions.

- Can help determine what libraries do/are, or it will be determined for us
- Imbed library resources at point of contact
- Don’t forget serendipity
- Levels of service, basic, premium
- Maintain balance of continuity and change
- Have to deliver – more quickly, efficiently
- Need to decide what is
- May have to give up doing some things
- Alternate models to make money, but companies reluctant to embrace
- Flexibility = durability
- Idaho not immune to external forces
- Always have laser disks
- Take chances

Scenario Development

A core activity of the Think Tank was the development of scenarios out to the year 2025. Following the exploration of the future with the guest expert speakers, Think Tank participants worked at their assigned tables (six in all) to create future scenarios. A brief version of classic scenario building was used. In this approach the goal is create a “plausible” history of the future. The first step is to agree on key events, trends, and developments (ETD’s) that are likely to shape the coming years, the probable future. The second step is to agree on two “critical uncertainties” in the coming years, the “possible” future. Table teams completed these steps and reported their results. Then, the table teams went back to work and composed a scenario in outline form, from 2005 out to 2025. Their charge was to use their scan of the ETD’s and uncertainties to create a plausible story in which Idaho libraries evolve over the next twenty years. After working on their scenarios, the groups reported.

Scenario Group Report 1

Five Most Likely and Important ETD’s

- Tax revenue will decline
- Boundary less
 - Collaboration increases
 - Geographical
 - City, state, U.S., world
 - Academic, school, public → blur
- Role of libraries in education
 - CE
 - Youth
 - Community Center for Education
 - Library Schools
- Digitization
 - Marketable
- Embrace & incorporate new technology

Critical Uncertainties

- Copyright and licensing changes
- Dead, dead and gone

Scenario 2005-2025

2005

- Lower taxes
- Push on literacy (all kinds)
- Professional education including grant/marketing
- Technical cooperation established
- Technology incorporated into children’s and young adult programs

2010

- Lower taxes

- Alternative funding
- Political cooperation established
- RA incorporates new technology
- Author/user court cases for access

2015

- Lower taxes
- Copyright less restrictive
- Post-petroleum economy
- Collaboration w/ commercial ventures

- Library cafes
- 2020**
- Lower taxes
 - Higher non-tax funding
 - Statewide universal borrowing
 - Staff transition to generalists
 - Remote access to everything critical

- 2025**
- No taxes
 - Region-wide universal borrowing
 - Infrastructure and interface for remote workforce
 - Info on demand
 - Global funding

Scenario Group Report 2

Five Most Likely and Important ETD's

- Increased need for early literacy and info literacy
- Need to build relationships and enhance image
- Idaho is older and more diverse
- Technology infrastructure is built
- Niche collections

2 Critical Uncertainties

- Legal limits to access to information
- Economic conditions

Scenario 2005-2025

2005 Think tank identifies gaps current library services of future opportunities

Example: Literacy cradle to grave, lifelong learning

2007 Libraries unite around common visions

2008 Present in communities to gather grassroots support.

Communities present it to leg.

2009 State funding for K-8 libraries

2010 State economic push to encourage it

2012 Attract new businesses.

Develop new infrastructure.

Businesses demand

educated workforce. Begin

development of "smart state" – wireless, etc. Library building as community centers

2015 Universal connectivity. Libraries have developed partnerships with privatized public orgs. More "risky" outreach encouraging community dialogues.

2020 Populations 3 million, older, immigrants

Niche collections – local info
Library is info portal for physical and virtual, all ages

Revenue

- New Sources

- Tax revision (green)

Scenario Group Report 3

Five Most Likely and Important ETD's

- Creating and providing services to more diverse populations
- Fewer resources leading to more partnerships – funding scarcity
- Increased transparency and integration of information technology
- Lifelong learning and info literacy
- Everyone is always on the grid

2 Critical Uncertainties

- Global politics and impact on US/Idaho
- Global warming

Scenario 2005-2025

2005	Separate libraries/Scattered resources/LiLI Unlimited developing	2010	Pilot project with HIT Lab for virtual connectivity
2006	ISL facilitates Library consortium	2015	Consortium and municipalities leverage resources and technology
2007	Legislature freezes property taxes	2020	Global warming changes again. Libraries re-educate ag workers
2008	Consortium finalized – library collections identified Begin marketing	2025	Idaho info network complete, ties in globally and corporately

Scenario Group Report 4

Five Most Likely and Important ETD's

- Questioning taxation
 - Uncertainty: Future funding
- Technological development
- Population demographics
- Pressures on education
- Changing perception of library as a public good
 - Uncertainty: How should we respond

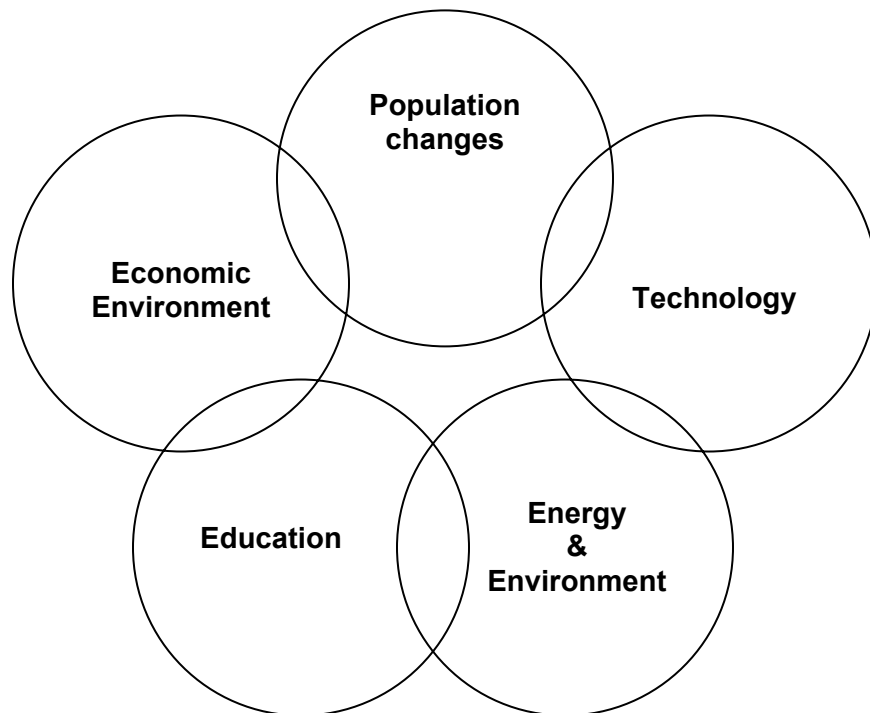
Scenario 2005-2025

2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taxation issue in 2006 election• Books delivered to door• Development of partnerships• In response to tax problems, more a coop. fewer barriers• Homeowners exemption increased• Effective marketing – more niche marketing• LiLI – Unlimited a big success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decrease funding, services• Distance Education MOU between colleges and public• Universities/colleges set up remote sites in public library• Courier solved• ILA Conference on Fundraising 2008• New Nancy Pearl figure distributed to legislature	2010
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- In response to funding create joint school/community libraries
 - State-wide network
 - Universities do cooperative col. Dev. For Elec. Col.
 - Common storage solved statewide
 - Pointing rather than shushing
 - RCDS Mgt
 - Books c/o on thumb drives online
 - Increasing number of personal access devices
 - Librarians start running for office
- 2015**
- Heinz Ketchum library opens
 - DRM solved with CR ACT 2014
 - Sites for print on demand
- Download on demand
- 2020**
- Increasing number of retirees 19%
 - 3-D Experiential learning products at library
- 2025**
- Librarians as consultants
- 2030**
- Libraries are the educational, training and social centers of their community
 - Virtual reality – live historic events
 - Library funding private/public
 - Librarians are concierges

Scenario Group Report 5

Five Most Likely and Important ETD's



2 Critical Uncertainties

- Politics and government
- User demands

Scenario 2005-2025

2005	Increased energy costs		>national universal borrowing
2006	Economy in decline Tax payer revolt	2019	Last stand-alone library branch closes
2007	Legislature cuts property taxes Libraries “bite the bullet”	2020	Universal access in Idaho for materials and services, multiple delivery avenues
2008	Copyright law revised to favor library deployment of assorted media		Consolidation complete of school/public libraries into a few large organizational entities
2010	Technology permits users to specify format that we desire for our reading materials – for a fee Free – fee tiered service model Libraries are reviewing and revising service and delivery models Start statewide media campaign about library	2025	Same number of library buildings Green buildings Energy efficient technology Collaborative partnerships with corporations and government Tiered service – free →fee Niches: Small business Literacy Retool career education Homework center
2011	1 st Corporate-sponsored library entity		Electronic “paper” – language, format you want
2015	> More multi-purpose (Shared with community centers, schools) > More “green” buildings > Personal library “accounts” based on national ID system		In Person Children Services: Community library center

Scenario Group Report 6

Five Most Likely and Important ETD's

- Demographics
 - Aging
 - Ethnic diversity
 - Socioeconomic
 - Migration patterns
- Technology innovations
- Funding esp. tax issues
- Environmental degradation
- Changing expectations

2 Critical Uncertainties

- Global power transition
- Privatization of authority/information

Scenario 2005-2025

“Captain Christine Saves the Earth” 2005

- Protagonist Christine, 12 years old
- Using Amazon & Google, email to find and deliver information
- Starts designing video games incorporating virtual reality named “save the earth”
- Graduates from high school early (at 16 yrs) because she had a customized education program

2010

- Travels to China & India to study environmental degradation as result of economic growth
- Sees public libraries’ essential effects on quality of life there
- Finishes B.A. through U of I. (Distance because campus closed) [does this while traveling]

2013

- Perfects game “Save the Earth” using multilingual interfaces

2015

- Receives MLS from an online university

2016

- Idaho tax revolt
- 1st job – loan forgiveness for working in Ruralton, Idaho’s public library
- U.S. experiences lower standard of living
- Loses job, but sells rights to video game to Googlezon.com and lives on royalties

- Uses book mobile (no longer needed) which has been retrofitted to use alternative fuels and travels Idaho visiting and studying diversity of population groups
- U.S. government scrambles to finance education to “catch up” with China
- Rebuilds public will for Idaho libraries by starting a grassroots movement

2020

- China looks to U.S. for outsourcing
- Meets a wonderful Chinese man (who happens to be a descendent of Polly Bemis) and together they create “Idachin,” a company whose mission is to revitalize information ownership rights. He sought her out because he is a fanatical fan of her video games
- PhD. orals: Christine goes to physical library to take 2 finals (in Mandarin and global economics with an eye toward virtual reality recreated scenario exam)

2021

- Loses royalty money because Googlezon.com’s owner Robert Jobs cheats her.

2025

- Taking Idachin international and talking with her new in-laws

Preferred Images of Idaho Libraries 2020

Having explored the future with scenarios, Think Tank participants were asked to review the scenarios and search for images of future libraries that are preferred. As this discussion took place, some argued that the scenario images were not sufficiently futuristic or bold. So the discussion was deepened by asking “If we had no limitations and we knew we could not fail what would our vision be?”

A variety of ideas were suggested. After they were listed, participants were given the opportunity to argue that one or the other image was most preferred and why, first around their table groups, then to the whole Think Tank. When the discussion was finished, a nominal group voting process was used to select the most preferred images from the list. The entire list and the vote totals are below. Four images emerged as most preferred.

Preferred Images 2020

161 votes	Libraries without borders
118 votes	Information is like water. Universal access to global info and education to use it
112 votes	Vital community hub rooted in user needs
104 votes	All libraries in Idaho have a <u>brand</u> so strong that, when said, people “get” the standard
46 votes	The “Third Place”, a commons for the American public, defined by each community
32 votes	SPLAT Special Project Library Action Team
21 votes	Community social information center
14 votes	Center for research and development in all fields
9 votes	Every Idahoan will have their own personal “info-bot”

A Vision for Idaho Libraries 2020

Now that the Think Tank had a set of preferred images, the participants worked to refine them toward a draft vision statement. Discussion among all the participants was followed by work in Table Teams to draft vision statements that capture the most preferred images. The charge was to draft a vision for Idaho Libraries 2020 that began with a statement or phrase, followed by up to three bullet points.

A vision was defined as “a compelling description of your preferred future.” Participants were challenged to create statements that were bold enough to meet the “15% rule”, which is that if you know more than 15% of what you need to know to accomplish the vision, it will probably be too timid. In creating a future vision most people fear coming up with something that is too far out there, even too crazy. But in reality it is more common to come up with something that is too pedestrian, too limited, too timid. Rather than saying “wow, that would be worth doing”, people who are presented with the vision statement say, “ho hum, who really cares if that happens.” So we tried to think boldly.

The question is, did we?

Presented below are the six vision statements, and a compilation of them into a common vision.

Over the months of September and October 2005 feedback to these vision ideas will be collected and synthesized, and in early November a final draft will be completed.

When you read these statements what stands out as most preferred to you? What is least preferred? What is missing and needs to be added?

Common Themes in Vision Statements: Idaho Libraries 2020

Idaho libraries in 2020 are

- Borderless, providing unlimited access to global information and more importantly, a single system, sharing resources and collections.
- Vital institutions, providing a spark to community, a continued gathering place, a hub for interaction, a place to be inspired
- Learning centers, where anyone in Idaho can come to any library and learn to use global information resources in a high-touch atmosphere
- Strongly branded, so that when people in Idaho think of libraries they think of dynamic places of passion and opportunity.

Draft Vision Statements: Idaho Libraries 2020

Team 1 Vision

Idaho Libraries:

Where ideas spark innovation, ignite passion and inspire people to pursue their dreams

Team 2 Vision

Idaho libraries, the commons for all

- Information access without barriers
- A hub for interaction
- [cool graphic goes here!]

Team 3 Vision

Captain Christine says...

Idaho libraries spark community vitality

- Hub rooted in user needs
- Gateway to the world via unfettered universal access and universal use
- Relevant information and savvy to use it
- Strong identity: "If I need it, I can always get it there!"

Team 4 Vision

Idaho libraries are vital community resources providing open access to the world's information and the knowledge to navigate it.

- Slogan: "We give you access to a world of information and the knowledge to navigate it"

Team 5 Vision

Idaho libraries without borders are:

- Dynamically branded
- Vital community hubs
- Providing unlimited access and "high touch" services to empower our communities

Team 6 Vision

Idaho libraries are the Universal Community Hub

- Vital portal
- Empowering citizens of Idaho to meet their needs through
 - Unlimited/Borderless access to information
 - Life-long learning enrichment
- Community gathering place

Conclusion

Before reviewing the next steps in the Vision 2020 project, Think Tank participants were asked a final question: What must happen or become true in order to make progress toward the vision?

This is what Must Happen or Become True...

- Our attitude must change from ownership of info to providing access
- The vision must be Used
- We must commit... to collaborate
- All must approach funders with same, unified message
- Public and political support must be generated
- Library leaders are convinced
- Librarians have to be inspired