

Date of Meeting: November 28, 2024

Report Number: A54-24

Report Subject: Third Quarter (Q3) Operations Report 2024

Recommendation:

1. THAT the Clarington Public Library Board receive Administrative Report No. A54-24: Third Quarter Operations Report 2024.

Report Overview:

The purpose of this report is to update the Library Board on service transactions for the third quarter (Q3) from July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024, from a system-wide perspective. Location based information and an infographic are included in Appendices A & B for information only.

Summary

CLMA is seeing a relative stabilization of KPIs in comparison with the previous year's statistics. There are some variations in service levels, but generally, they are attributed to exceptionalities in services and are not indicative of overall usage trends.

Circulation

Total circulation continues to increase with approximately 20,000 more items checked out, a 2.6% overall increase.

- Physical materials: Print usage has increased 3% over Q3 2023 whereas multimedia has decreased 1% over last year's usage.
- Electronic materials (eMaterials): includes eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines, and video streaming eMaterials have decreased marginally at 5% from Q3 2024 over Q3 2023.
- Special collections: Usage of these collections continue to increase, by 47% over Q3 2023. These collections include new items such as Kobo readers, watt readers, and telescopes.

Visits

- Overall, visits to CLMA locations have increased by 3% over Q3 2023, remaining stable across the library branches. Newcastle, Orono and Sarah Jane saw slight decreases this quarter, while Bowmanville and Courtice saw increases in foot traffic.

Digital Usages (Computers & Wi-Fi)

- Computer use: Computer use has increased 1% over Q3 2023.
- Wi-Fi use: Wi-Fi usage has decreased 23% over 2023. Management is investigating cause for the significant decrease in Wifi usage.

Website Visits & Social Media

- Website visits & app: The CLMA launched our new website in Q3 2023 and have seen an increase of 18% over Q3 2023 with the new website. The app also continues to see considerable growth over Q3 2023 with an increase of 28%.
- LiveChat, an instant messaging service, was introduced to the CLMA's new website in Q3 2023. This service was used 325 times in Q3 2024.
- With the launch of the new brand and social media strategy, marketing is focused on creating fewer, yet higher quality, social media posts, in comparison with Q3 2023, which naturally results in fewer impressions. This strategic intent is intended to draw larger numbers of impressions by post, rather than increase the number of posts created by month.

This strategy has proven successful and though the impressions have decreased, the average reach, or the number of unique accounts that viewed our content, has increased by 11%, or 558 impressions per post, in comparison with Q3 2023.

Program & Outreach Attendance

- Program attendance increased 16% between Q3 2023 and 2024.
- Outreach impact has decreased by 55%, in comparison with Q3 2023.

Notably, in 2023, CLMA had 3 summer students through the Canada Summer Jobs grant program who were largely dedicated to outreach throughout the summer months. We were unsuccessful in the grant in 2024, and the lack of summer students to attend outreach events demonstrates the impacts it has on our services.

Program and outreach statistic gathering transitioned to a new reporting platform in April 2024, which accounts for variations in reporting during the learning curve on the new platform.

Membership

- Registration for new cards has decreased 7% comparatively to Q3 2023.

The decline in new members can also be attributed to the decrease in outreach opportunities, again demonstrating that the lack of summer students through the Canada Summer Jobs grant program has a critical impact on our services.

- Active membership continues to rise, with a 13% increase, or an additional 5,696 active members comparatively to Q3 2023.

Museum Research

- The Museum has received 28 research requests in Q3 2024, with a slight increase of 8% or 2 additional research requests, over Q3 2023.

Room Bookings

- Room bookings have seen a significant decrease in Q3 2024 with only 2 room bookings.

Effective January 1, 2024, a new fee structure was implemented for space bookings. It was anticipated that the introduction of fees would cause a decrease in bookings. The management team is actively seeking opportunities to promote the availability of rooms, to generate revenue.

Conclusion

CLMA continues a relative stabilization of KPIs in comparison with the previous year's statistics, as demonstrated through the increases in our key performance indicators, Appendices A and B.

The management team continues to see both an increase in in-person use, as well as a shift in the way in which visitors are using our spaces and services and continue to look towards the strategic plan deliverables to develop collections, increase in-person visits, and expand community engagement.

Report Submitted by:
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November 28, 2024