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Transforming our Library Reading Room for a Leisure Reading Collection

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Introduction
A major goal of Dominican University of California's new strategic plan is to transform our library into a center where students can develop a life-long habit of reading. Our 1960’s style reading room was the ideal location to refurbish and to locate our new leisure reading collection of books and magazines. By updating the room with new carpeting, shelving, tables, chairs, and ottomans, we wanted to change the philosophical perception of the library so the students would have an inviting place to satisfy both their educational and entertainment needs.

Then by adding a leisure collection of books and magazines, our goal is to increase the reading amongst the students and improve their college experience. So far our project has been well-received on campus with good circulation and student use of the reading room for browsing, reading and studying.

A Plan
• Atract students to library
• Entice students to read more
• Update reading room for comfort, reading and studying

"I had an unexpectedly wonderful moment two weeks ago when in the middle of a presentation about my library's short-range strategy I displayed a photo of Dominican's lovely popular reading room...The change making image from Dominican wasn’t a comparison of what money can do. That photo was a comparison of what leadership can do" (Schneider, 2009).

Budget & Purchasing
• $3000.00 annual budget
• Buy from local bookstores and online when necessary
• Purchase paperbacks when available
• Decisions based on book lists from newspapers, library journals, and patron and staff suggestions
• Ongoing weeding

Beginnings
• From old tile floors to new carpeting
• No space for books to new shelving and kiosks
• From funky old chairs & tables to new chairs with laptop tables and new study tables
• Additional electrical outlets added for student's computers
• New moveable ottomans for added comfort

From the before to the after picture—how the reading room was transformed

View of the newly remodeled reading room with leisure collection from the second floor of the library

Shelving & Display
• Genre designations
• Genre sticker on each book for shelving
• Labeled with LC numbers for tracking
• New books displayed on kiosk
• Books faced out to browser
• Stands for paperbacks
• Rearrange frequently

Marketing
• Blog
• Updates on newly added books
• Library Thing
• “Catalog by genre” as first word in tags
• Facebook
• Suggestion Box
• Events

Results—Student Satisfaction
• Increased usage of reading room
• Improved check out of reading material
• Not only student, but also faculty and staff approval of collection

Literature cited

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For further information
Please contact suzanne.roybal@dominican.edu. More information on our leisure collection can be obtained at: http://library.dominican.edu.

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