

Summary



»Longing to get away« / Trends in Digital Media Developed This Year In the Shadow of the Pandemic – Where Innovations Arose Out of Necessity (Boris Hänßler)

(pp. 546 – 549)

No question about it: this summer digital life became real life. Thus the media trends of the year are indistinguishably linked to the coronavirus pandemic. It was a summer of boredom, frustration, desperation, existential anxiety, but also of hope, solidarity and creativity. Trade fairs, concerts, exhibitions, readings, theatre plays, cinema, schools, universities – doors remained closed wherever you went. But you were not out there alone. German public broadcasters such as ZDF and ARD set up virtual classrooms, magazines published tips for the perfect office at home, educational book publishers provided supplemental teaching materials, often at no charge, and even ordinary individuals stepped up to the challenge. The sisters Ruth and Anne Löwenstein, for example, posted new downloadable ideas and suggestions for craftwork, playtime and puzzle-solving every morning at 8 a.m., 60 days long, under the title »Quarantine Kids«.

Suddenly it became necessary for the whole spectrum of institutions in the field of media, culture and education to do precisely what had been so difficult for them for so many years: within the shortest time they went digital. Until recently just a side project, suddenly it became a matter of survival. It was the summer that proved once again that necessity is the mother of invention.

This became especially evident, of all places, in the case of the digital conference titled »re:publica«, which had been for scheduled to take place in May. The Leipzig Book Fair had just been cancelled when the organisers of »re:publica« decided to postpone the analog conference for one year and offer instead a digital version, the »re:publica remote«. Ironically, the sponsors of the largest European conference devoted to questions surrounding the Internet and digital society had to ask themselves the very same questions that make up the conference's agenda: How can analog content be presented digitally? Is it then still the same?

Strategic Development at the Central Library Agency of Lower Saxony / Advisory Office for Public Libraries Takes Part in National Project »ForWhomItMayConcern #digital« – Using the Chances and Benefits of Digitalisation to Better Advantage (Angelika Brauns)

(pp. 565 – 567)

Since the Fall of 2019 the Central Library Agency of Lower Saxony has been participating in a nationwide project with the German title »Die Verantwortlichen #digital«. Its mission is to support the strategic development of digitalisation efforts within non-profit institutions. After initiating its own general plans for strategic development in June 2019, the agency found itself confronted with a series of questions regarding the internal management of customer data and IT-related applications. The strategic field of action labelled »Mastering Digital Transformation« included not only the digitalisation of the federal state's public libraries, but also their internal processes. In its role as provider of centralised advisory and coordinating services, the Central Library Agency is both a pioneer and a model for Lower Saxony's public libraries.

The ideal solution for dealing in-house with the customer data of its over 1000 libraries, collaborators and business partners and also for mapping its business processes turned out to be the use of a customer relationship management (CRM) system. A CRM system compiles data not only about customer contacts via telephone, email, writing or other actions, in a transparent and accessible manner for all staff members of the library agency, but also customer relationships with the agency. Participation in the project »ForWhomItMayConcern #digital« provides the foundation for implementing a CRM system. The goal is to develop the specifications for all aspects of a CRM system by the Fall of 2020 and, if possible, to take a survey of those systems which seem to fit those specifications.

Reading Does It / A Reading Promotion Plan for the District of Biberach (Corona Eggert, Frank Raume)

(pp. 568 – 571)

The new reading promotion campaign with the German title »Lesen bringt's« for the district of Biberach in southern Germany is designed to encourage parents to begin with reading aloud to their children as early as possible, in order to develop speaking and reading skills in infants and toddlers prior to the begin of schooling. Thanks to the financial support of the Bruno Frey Foundation Biberach, a continuous and comprehensive programme of reading promotion throughout the district will now be possible for the next five years. The media and information centre of the City Library of Biberach has joined forces with the Regional Education Office and the school library of a major school complex. The cooperating partners see this approach as an opportunity to reach all children in the city of Biberach and its surrounding district – even those from families where reading is not a common habit.

The campaign »Lesen bringt's« involves three milestones and thus includes as much incentive and inspiration for reading aloud as possible. As part of milestone 1, child-care centres receive a 400 Euros subsidy with which to establish the reading promotion plan in their facilities. Milestone 2 involves the presentation of a book bag to all five-year old children when they have their pre-enrolment examination in the year prior to starting school. The bag will include an age-appropriate book and a multi-lingual flyer for parents. In milestone 3 parents who attend a teacher-parent evening in the first year of schooling will receive an age-appropriate book for their child and a printed multi-lingual handout with further information, along with a motivational talk by a reading ambassador. In addition, a special event devoted to reading promotion will be held for all teachers and child care-givers who work in the district. Ideally, all children between the ages of 1 and 7, and their parents, will receive five sets of books to help motivate them to read and to read aloud. In this way children's books will find their way into every household in the district, regardless of social status or educational level and inclination.

Translated by Martha Baker