

Spring 2012

Be Your Own Architect: Manage Renovation Projects Internally - Part 1

Eric C. Shoaf
shoaf@clemson.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/lib_pubs

 Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Please use publisher's recommended citation.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the University Libraries at TigerPrints. It has been accepted for inclusion in Publications by an authorized administrator of TigerPrints. For more information, please contact kokeefe@clemson.edu.

BE YOUR OWN ARCHITECT:

MANAGE RENOVATION PROJECTS INTERNALLY – PART I

BY ERIC C. SHOAF

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Part II of "Be Your Own Architect" will appear in the summer issue of TLJ. Part II will discuss laying out furniture, working with vendors and designers, and addressing infrastructure issues.*

Architects on television always seem to be designing buildings – big buildings. Remember Mike Brady sketching buildings at his drafting table? The character Ted Mosby, an architect on *How I Met Your Mother*, designs new city buildings. Architects may appear to work only on designing new buildings, except that they do much more. They design and arrange interior spaces; oversee construction and building projects; specialize in concepts such as adjacencies, entryways, and exits; interpret fire and safety codes; and do it all with creativity and style. It may not be as glamorous as conceiving new edifices, but it is still interesting and fun.

Larger library building projects usually require an architect to manage design and construction, but these days many libraries find that the results of space planning often are implemented in smaller, less-expensive initiatives rather than a single large project. Many of these projects involve re-purposing space freed from shelving or other uses, where the total of the project is to remove the shelves and place new furniture. Further, many have realized that architects and engineers are expensive, and when it comes to renovating an open space, it may be possible to use internal library staff to complete the project.

NO WALLS

A project that can be managed internally generally involves minimal demolition and will not include the destruction or construction of walls. If walls are involved, it is a signal that the library should probably not try and manage the project on its own but rather call in the architects. Walls are sometimes structural carriers that bear loads. They provide a medium for electrical and data cabling, and they usually have doors for entry/egress. Also, if constructing new walls, there can be issues with heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) that complicate the project and require the use of specialty engineers in order to meet building codes. Floor to ceiling walls are semi-permanent structures that are not easily changeable to meet evolving needs. Further, fire and safety issues will have to be addressed, including any fire alarm and suppression system. These tasks are definitely not a job for amateurs. Temporary walls or partitions are easier to manage for the do-it-yourselfer.

It is possible to make some changes to space that includes temporary walls constructed with modular/systems/

landscape furniture, as it is variously called. This familiar type of flexible furniture is also sometimes derisively referred to as "cubes," but it has proven efficient for use in changing organizational environments, then later providing flexibility in changing the space again as needed. Not all modular furniture is necessarily cube-shaped or used only for creating office environments. Modular walls can frame areas or sub-divide rooms. The walls created by modular furniture typically do not extend to the ceiling and do not carry loads though they may have doors. Therefore they do not affect HVAC requirements and generally do not require a revision of any existing fire suppression equipment when specifications are within applicable codes. Modular furniture has several advantages for the do-it-yourselfer and can be designed and selected without an architect. Such furniture is not perfect for every application, and the cost is not insignificant; but, it may be useful in the library where a large room is re-purposed for office space, new reading spaces, or collaborative learning environments.



It is also possible to use modular partitions to create targeted small spaces within a larger room. For example, a bank of printer/copiers can be partitioned in order to minimize noise in a study room. Collaborative work tables may be partially surrounded by a half-wall of modular pieces and taller modular walls might have a marker board feature that would further improve utility of the space. In short, load-bearing walls are beyond the scope of being your own architect, but other lower modular walls and partitions are useful and cost-effective. Furthermore, they are reconfigurable for other future uses and are, therefore, ripe for consideration.

DO IT YOURSELF

Reworking a reading room, a large study area, or stacks space is something that can be undertaken by library staff with some planning and prudent use of vendor expertise. Library staffers wanting to do such work need to be able to conduct research, engage specialists when necessary, and know their limitations. The first step in planning this sort of

project is the programming stage where the specific uses of the re-purposed space are articulated and understood. This documentation of intended use is very important as it will affect how the space is created and ultimately functions. Every type of use for the space to be re-purposed should be defined. In addition, planners should carefully describe the users expected in the space and any services (e.g., equipment or furniture) required. Any and all uses and users of the space should be included in the analysis. As a result of this "space programming," a meaningful specification of desired spaces and use is developed to guide the planning process. For example, assume that book shelving stacks are being removed from a 30' X 30' area in an academic library. The space will be re-purposed for study. In the programming stage, a series of queries are made with a range of possible answers. Some examples in this specific case are:

What kind of study space? – quiet study, lounge study, collaborative study, learning commons

Who will use the study space? – students, faculty, community users, others

Is special lighting required? – natural light, existing lighting, new fixtures

How is the room to be accessed? – adjacent open space, doors, separate room

What are competing goals for the space? – lowest cost, highest number of seats, comfort, usability

Are there other potential uses of the space? – staff meetings, events, collaboration

Upon completion, information gathered in the programming phase is used to develop criteria for use of the space. Architects often refer to this documentation as the design brief for the project. The purpose of this activity is to ensure that the specific use of the space drives the design of the finished project. In the example above, the programming phase leads to a brief describing a quiet study space of 30' x 30' for use primarily by students. This space is to retain existing lighting

COME BY AND SEE US AT BOOTH # 1221 FOR A GREAT SELECTION OF GRAPHIC NOVELS FOR YOUR LIBRARY & A CHANCE TO WIN FREE GRAPHIC NOVELS!



6517 Westheimer Road
Houston, TX
(713) 780-0675
www.bedrockcity.com

LIBRARIES GET 20% OFF ON ALL ORDERS & FREE DELIVERY IN THE HOUSTON AREA. USE CODE **LIBRARY** AT CHECKOUT ON OUR WEBSITE FOR THE DISCOUNT.



Go directly to our all ages selections:
<http://store.bedrockcity.com/store/department/9/Kids-Books/>

MAVERICK & YALSA



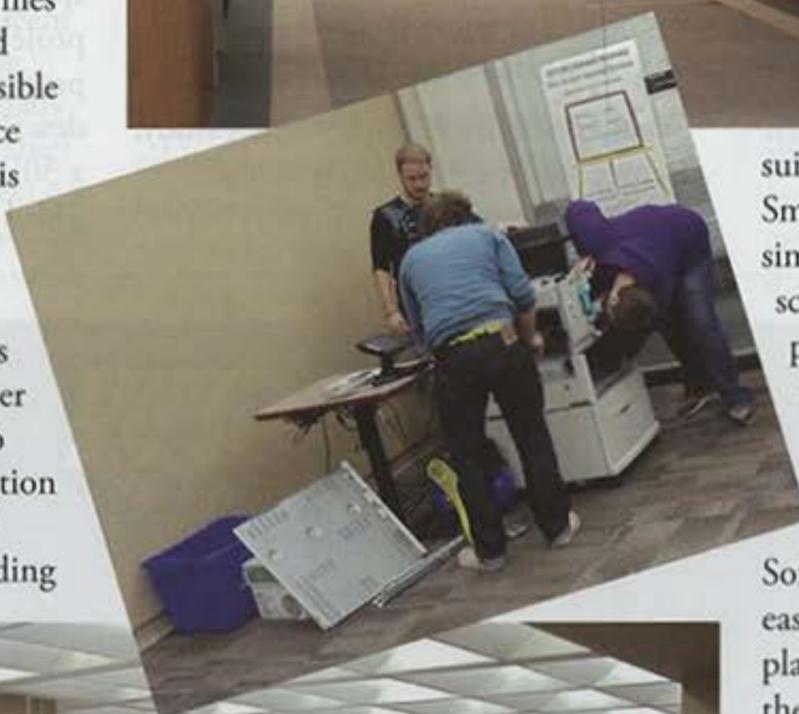
2012 PICKS



in the room with a door as entrance/ exit point, provide the highest number of seats available for the space, and contain furniture that would be reconfigurable on occasion for library events.

In developing the criteria for use and integrating it with the design, it is helpful to acquire or produce an accurate architectural plan or floor map of the space. The best choice is to obtain copies of the original architectural drawings that were used to construct the facility. These can often be acquired from the facilities and planning unit at an academic library or the city planning office if at a public library. In some cases, specialized software is necessary to view the CAD (computer assisted design) drawings, but these can be converted to PDF files for the purposes of printing out and making analog copies. It is also possible to use a tape measure to self-produce floor plans. If making your own, it is important that all the drawings be made to a specific scale and that accurate measurements are taken and noted for all the spaces. If plans include installation of shelving rather than removal, it will be necessary to have copies of the original construction documents in order for a structural engineer to determine the floor loading capability of the space.

With a floor plan in hand, the layout of the space can proceed. Architects use the concept of adjacency to inform their space planning, and it is a useful way of thinking about how best to plan space in a functional way. Certain functional areas or types of furniture make sense when adjacent to one another. Group study tables in the middle of the room, computers lined up next to a wall, comfortable chairs near the entrance door, and quiet spaces in a nook are examples of adjacency that accomplishes the brief of the sample project. A vending machine by the quiet study space, stacks blocking windows, or group study furniture haphazardly placed are examples of what not to do. In developing the proposed new floor



plan, use input of stakeholders from the library who have expertise in the area being designed: reference librarians, circulation staff, facilities personnel, and others. Also, if the institution will be purchasing new furniture for the space, take advantage of the resources offered by library furniture vendors. They employ designers with experience in space use, adjacency planning, and can recommend types of furniture that will provide efficient use and meet the needs of the design brief.

Working with a floor plan can be somewhat difficult without a drafting table, and CAD software is expensive plus requires a fair amount of knowledge to use. Alternatives do exist for an affordable software that is relatively easy to use, although it will require some practice. One is called Visio, part of the Microsoft suite of office products, and there is also SmartDraw or EZblueprint. These are similar as they allow novices to make scale-able drawings, place furniture, and plan for egress pathways. Technology is now so inexpensive that it is not necessary to enlarge the floor plan on a photocopier and use scissors to cut and place the sample furniture. Software to design floor plans is fairly easy to learn and can provide accurate plans that can easily be changed during the design phase.

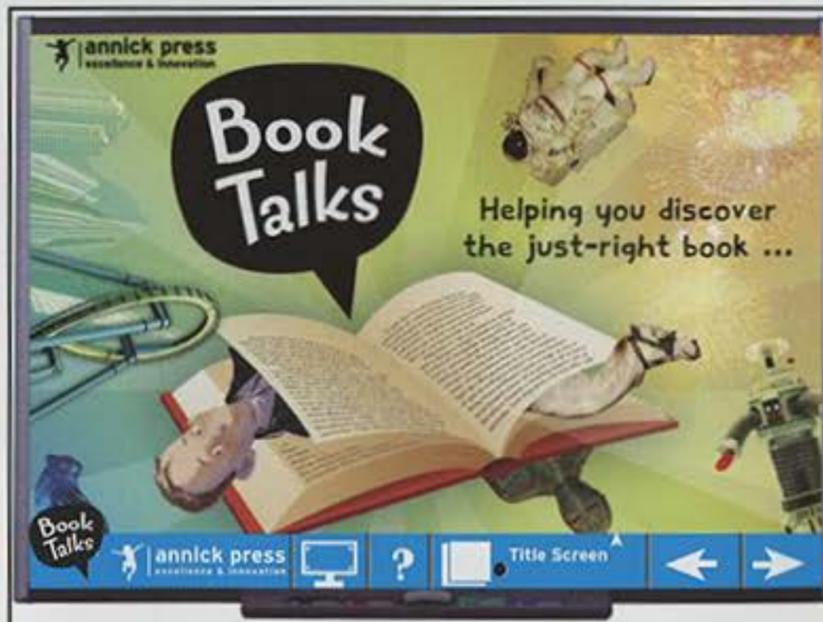
Using the example noted previously (30' X 30' study area), a sample room design might show seating for 30 students at tables of two different sizes with comfortable furniture. The precise selection of furnishings is up to the library and may be dictated by design elements in the library, available funding, or a combination of both. While librarians may not feel comfortable making selections of fabric type, colors, material, or style of table and chair, assistance can be close by in the form of the local furniture vendor.

Part II of "Be Your Own Architect" will appear in the summer issue of TLJ. Part II will discuss laying out furniture, working with vendors and designers, and addressing infrastructure issues.

Eric C. Shoof (shoof@clemson.edu) is associate dean of libraries at Clemson University in Clemson (SC).

RESOURCES

1. "ACRL/LAMA Guide for Architects: Guide for Planning Higher Education Library Spaces." Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 2010. Available at: wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/ACRL/LLAMA_Guide_for_Architects_and_Librarians
2. Elisa Addlesperger, et al. "Redesigning Library Spaces to Meet Students' Needs." Available at: www.carli.illinois.edu/mem-serv/mem-train/100514pswg/Redesigning_Space_May21.pdf
3. "ALA Library Fact Sheet Number 11 – Building Libraries and Library Additions: A Selected Annotated Bibliography." Available at: www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=Buildings&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=25417
4. BCI Library Design – www.bcieurobib.com/tag/library-space-planning/
5. Marilyn S. Billings. "Library Space Redesign (Virtual)." Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC). Keene State College, Keene, NH. (2009). Available at: works.bepress.com/marilyn_billings/22
6. Crumpton, Michael and Kathryn Crowe. "Using Evidence for Library Space Planning" *Proceedings of the 2008 Library Assessment Conference*. Seattle, WA 2009. 51-64. Available at: [libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncg/f/M_Crumpton_Using_2009%20\(MULTI%20UNCG%20AUTHORS\).pdf](http://libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncg/f/M_Crumpton_Using_2009%20(MULTI%20UNCG%20AUTHORS).pdf)
7. Anders C. Dahlgren. *Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline* (2009). Available at: dpi.wi.gov/pld/pdf/plspace.pdf
8. Designing Libraries: The Gateway to Better Design - www.designinglibraries.org.uk/resources
9. EZ Blueprint – www.ezblueprint.com
10. Herman Miller Inc. "The Once and Future Library." Available at: www.hermanmiller.com/MarketFacingTech/hmc/research/research_summaries/assets/wp_Once_and_Future_Library.pdf
11. Library Space Planning Think Tank at UNC-Asheville. Available at: facstaff.unca.edu/sinclair/spaceplan/index.html
12. LJ Design Institute: Six Space Challenges from Six Libraries: Library by Design, September 27, 2011. Available at www.libraryjournal.com/lj/home/892022-264/design_institute_six_space_challenges.html.csp
13. Master class in library design – www.sconul.ac.uk/news/evolvinglibraries
14. Tim Newcomb. "Is a Bookless Library Still a Library?" *Time Magazine* July 11, 2011. Available at: www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,2079800,00.html#ixzz1dyr5DnB7
15. Hellen Niegaard. "Library Space and Digital Challenges" *Library Trends* Volume 60, (1) Summer 2011. Available at: muse.jhu.edu/journals/library_trends/v060/60.1.niegaard.pdf
16. William Sannwald. "Checklist of Library Building Design Considerations." Chicago: American Library Association, 2009. Excerpt available at: www.alastore.ala.org/pdf/9780838909782_excerpt.pdf
17. Bryan Sinclair. *Commons 2.0: Library Spaces Designed for Collaborative Learning* (2007). Available at: www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly/EDUCAUSEQuarterlyMagazineVolum/Commons20LibrarySpacesDesigned/162265
18. SmartDraw – www.smartdraw.com
19. Space Planning Resources – Utah State Library. Available at: library.utah.gov/programs/development/toolkit/spaceplanning.html
20. Margaret Sullivan. "Divine Design: How to create the 21st-century school library of your dreams." *Library Journal* April 21, 2011. Available at: www.libraryjournal.com/slj/home/889642-312/divine_design_how_to_create.html.csp
21. Leena Toivonen & Maarit Laskujärvi. "Changing physical library space: Planning and design of new academic library" (2008). Available at: www.eahil.net/conferences/helsinki_2008/www.terkko.helsinki.fi/bmf/EAHILpapers/Leena_Toivonen_paper.pdf
22. Susan Tschabrun. The Pollak Library Space Plan – Cal State-Fullerton (2011). Available at: www.library.fullerton.edu/content/documents/PL_Space_Plan.pdf
23. Chijioke Ferdinand Ugwuanyi, Roseline Ngozika Okwor and Emmanuel Chukwudi Ezeji. "Library space and place: Nature, use and impact on academic library." *International Journal of Library and Information Science* Vol. 3(5) May 2011. 92-97. Available at: www.academicjournals.org/ijlis/PDF/pdf2011/May/Ugwuanyi%20et%20al.pdf
24. Visio – visio.microsoft.com
25. Whole Building Design Guide: Libraries - www.wbdg.org/design/library_st.php  [library_st.php](http://www.wbdg.org/design/library_st.php) 



Free Book Talks

for SMART, Promethean, and Mimio Boards!

Engage students instantly with interactive, ready-made Book Talks designed for the big board!

Visit Annick Press at Booth #2012

First-time Exhibitor at TLA

www.annickpress.com