



Why public libraries choose

opening the book

North America

Redefining today's public library

Defining the elusive qualities that make a library successful has been a life's work at Opening the Book.

We can help you create interiors which are inviting, accessible, stimulating and comfortable. The physical environment should convey these important values to everyone who steps in to look.

Opening the Book delivers libraries that work. Our designs are not just decorative, they are embedded structures built from observation of patron behavior and knowledge of staff operations.



Face-out books and a Lego® play wall transform a children's library.



Make your offer visible - this library is in a new shopping mall.



The reading room in the city is open and light.

Discovery layout - shelving creates dynamic flow between departments



Young adult



Magazines



Retail style display wall



Mobile shelving moved for events



Face-out display



Lounge



Local history



Children



Circulation desk



Makerspace



Bring color and excitement to the children's library



“Before we refurbished I never thought that shelving design could have such an impact on patron behavior. But when I saw those attractive propeller shapes I knew we had to consider Opening the Book for our project.

We are thrilled with the result. Response from both children and adults is so positive – how bright the space looks; how much bigger it seems (it isn't); how inviting it is, how much fun. This definitely brings more joy to the library!”

Lisa Mettinen,
CEO/Chief Librarian,
Oxford County Library, Ontario.

Get children and families reading!

Libraries play a vital role in early literacy development and everyone knows how important this is for success at school and in later life. We can help you create friendly spaces that parents and grandparents want to visit.



Both books and families come in all shapes and sizes so we display books at the right height for different ages.

Keeping boys reading as they get older can be a challenge.

Face-out books on feature units adds extra boy-appeal.

Picturebook Tunnel



Reading Hideaway



Book Tree



Rocket Pod

Wall shelving doesn't have to be bland



In today's libraries the focus is less on the size of the collection and more on how the collection performs. Creating a retail-style showcase area will really pay off. A display wall like this one turns over so fast it will give your circ figures a tremendous boost.

Shelving is available in a wide range of colors to complement any library interior.

Draw people through the space with flowing shelving shapes



Endless straight rows of shelving can look intimidating to audiences not familiar with libraries. Even regulars will not go down a shelving aisle which is already occupied by another patron.

Our discovery layouts are more open and friendly as well as better for wheelchair users. They will help your patrons make new discoveries for themselves!

At Opening the Book we have studied the way patrons move through a space; what causes them to pause and to linger; what makes them pick up a book.

We apply this knowledge to create a unique custom layout for every library we design.

Achieve design coherence with matching tables and circ desks



Our Curve Tables with power outlets or neat wire management for computers fit perfectly within our shelving shapes.

Each user is angled away from their neighbor which gives a greater feeling of privacy; additional privacy dividers also available.



Byte and Orbit Tables fit together for groups and meetings.



Alpha Bar can be customized to required length. Add power outlets for patrons to plug in their own devices.



Circulation desks include an open table end which invites patrons to sit comfortably for a longer inquiry and is also wheelchair-friendly. Three sizes available, with optional drop box and push-under units.

Showcase your collection with retail-style merchandising and signage

Library staff love our shelving systems as it's so easy and quick to make the books look good. Every shelf in our bookcases is angled upwards to tilt the books to the eye of the viewer in front.



Display shelves turn books face-forward.



Reversible shelves can be turned to bring small or large formats to the front of the shelf where they catch the light.

We offer a range of on-shelf acrylics to take your merchandising to a professional level.



Feature Fillers bring books to the front of the shelf and the strong sides act as a support to hold other books upright.



Zig-zags support thin floppy formats like music books.



Bookcase signs slip into sign holders and are easily changed when the collection moves around.

All signs are text-customizable to your preferences.



Lightbox Signs bring 'wow' factor.

“The floor plan you designed has really helped patrons explore our non-fiction collection. We love the high quality materials and construction of the shelving - the ability to switch from full size to paperback to angled display is so GOOD!

We reduced the collection by 25% but maintained circ overall with increases in specific areas. We see patrons consistently choosing from the front-facing displays. It is the highlight of my day to walk around and fill the spaces where books have been taken!”

Helen Palascak,
Library Director,
Upper St Clair, PA

Library Design Service



“ I felt like a kid on Christmas Day opening your designs! I really appreciate your creative problem solving with the collection and I love how the library is opened up to encourage people to explore. ”

Connie Mathews,
Children's Librarian,
Mt. Lebanon Public Library, PA

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