Research Project Explores how Librarians Connect Readers with Books and Authors

Readers’ Advisory Activities Compiled by over 40 Librarians and Industry Professionals

Seattle, Washington—January 17, 2019—Today the Panorama Project announced the upcoming release of a new directory that catalogs the various programs, marketing campaigns, and services that 16,000-plus U.S. public libraries and over 45,000 public librarians provide to connect readers with books and authors. This first of its kind publication is the work of a committee of over 40 librarians and industry professional convened in fall 2018 by the Panorama Project. The committee’s Directory of Readers’ Advisory Activities (v1.0) is the first output of the Panorama Readers’ Advisory Impact Committee. The directory will be introduced at the Panoram Project’s open meeting at the American Library Association’s (ALA) Midwinter conference in Seattle, WA (details below).

The directory provides information on 16 book/author recommendation services and activities undertaken in the country’s public libraries. They include librarian-to-patron activities such as in-person conversations and recommendations, form-based recommendations, reading groups and book clubs, newsletters, author visits, and a wide range of social media activities and virtual displays. The directory provides a description of each activity and links to relevant examples.

The first version of the directory will be available on the Panorama Project website on January 26, 2019. The committee will continue cataloging Readers’ Advisory activities and reference examples. Updates to the directory will be published periodically.

The Readers’ Advisory Impact Committee was convened by the Panorama Project to research and document the wide variety of Readers’ Advisory services, activities, and title recommendations provided by public libraries and librarians. The committee is co-chaired by Bill Kelly (Adult Programming Manager, Cuyahoga County Public Library), Cindy Orr (Digital Collection Advisor, OverDrive), and Magan Swarek (Director of Reference Services, Schaumburg Township District Library). The committee will now begin surveying the country’s public libraries to determine which advisory activities are most prevalent and measure the effectiveness of the most widely adopted activities.

“This first of its kind directory of readers’ advisory activities is an important resource for both the library and publishing communities,” said Magan Swarek, Director of Reference Services at the Schaumburg, Illinois Township District Library and committee co-chair. “It documents the variety and depth of book/author recommendation activities that libraries and librarians undertake in the library, online, and in the communities they serve. Library initiated recommendations play an essential role in the discovery and ongoing support of new books and authors. The members of the committee are excited to be working on this important industry initiative with the Panorama Project.”

Cliff Guren, Project Lead of the Panorama Project said “The work that the committee is doing to catalog and measure the impact of the various book/author recommendation activities that take place in our public libraries is relevant to libraries, publishers, and booksellers. Connecting readers with books and authors is an increasingly difficult challenge—we hope this initiative will help us all understand which activities are most effective so we can share best practices and work together to strengthen the reading community.”
About the Panorama Project

The Panorama Project is the first data-driven research project focused on understanding the impact of the nation’s public libraries on book and author discovery, brand development, and retail sales. The multi-year industry initiative is supported by a growing list of publishers, booksellers, libraries, library service providers, and industry organizations. Rakuten OverDrive is providing initial funding for the Panorama Project.

The project recently published its Community Reading Event Impact Report that looked at the impact of a nationwide ebook reading event on retail sales of the title selected for the event. In 2019 the project will be studying the impact of library-hosted author events and conducting additional community reading event studies. Additional project research initiatives will be announced in the coming months.

The Panorama Project has the support of a growing list of publishers, booksellers, libraries, library service providers, and industry organizations. The project’s Advisory Council includes thought leaders from across the industry. The Panorama Project is an open membership initiative. Learn more at panoramaproject.org.

About the Panorama Project Open Meeting at ALA Midwinter

**Date:** Saturday, January 26, 2019  
**Time:** 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM  
**Location:** Washington State Convention Center (705 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101), Conference Room 3B

Contact:

Cliff Guren  
Panorama Project Lead  
 cguren@panoramaproject.com