Library Showcase:
New Castle Public Library – Interview with Katie Newell

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LOCATION ADDRESS

New Castle Public Library
207 East North Street
New Castle, PA 16101

PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The New Castle Public Library's renovation and expansion project merged the original library building, a historic house adjacent to the property, and a two-story 9,135 square foot glass addition to connect them. The expanded library features a new teen section and children's area, improved building accessibility, and increased meeting spaces and seating areas.

Please describe the library renovation or new construction project to be featured in the American Libraries 2011 Library Design Showcase.

The New Castle Public Library did a major renovation/expansion to increase in size from ~8,000 sq ft to 22,000 sq ft. We expanded by connecting a 160+ year old house to the existing library, keeping the ambiance of the historic neighborhood all the while expanding the capability for new technology.

Why was the project needed?

The Library was too small for its service area of over 31,000 people. There was a need for more computers, meeting spaces, teen area, larger children's area, study areas, reading areas.

How did technology use or demand for technology influence the space planning for the new/ renovated library?

Increasing the number of computers available to the public was a high priority. With that in mind, the Library was set up to double the number of computers available to the public with wiring in place for future grown. Nodes for wireless connections were strategically placed to best utilize the areas suited for laptop use.

Did patron needs fit into the planning/design process? If so, how?

Yes. We completed a series of interviews/surveys to find what the community wanted. Answer: more computers, more study/quiet areas, more reading areas, meeting rooms for more programs.

What has been the patron reaction to the new or renovated library?

The community loves it. A year later, we are still getting new users and positive comments about the renovations and expansion.

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