

Use of Public Libraries in Hard Economic Times

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A huge increase in use during 2008 set a new circulation record for the Calgary Public library, making it one of the busiest library systems in North America. Library users borrowed nearly 15.4 million books, CDs and DVDs from city libraries in 2008, an increase of more than 1.1 million items over 2007, library officials said Thursday. That makes the library the sixth busiest in North America, after the huge cities of Toronto, Los Angeles and the boroughs of New York. What's more, library officials predict another dramatic rise in 2009.

Economic downturns often prompt people to flock to libraries, so officials are planning ways to deal with booming demand. "The Calgary Public library was wildly popular during the boom, but we become absolutely essential in tough times," director Gerry Meek said in a news release. The library has plans to launch a new online catalogue and borrowing system in February.

Use of Public Libraries in Hard Economic Times

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Use of Public Libraries in Hard Economic Times

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Use of Public Libraries in Hard Economic Times

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Escape From Bad Times. Authors: SHEFFER, CAROL csheffer@live.com Source: Public Libraries; Nov/Dec2008, Vol. 47 Issue 6, p6-6, 1p

Abstract: The article reports on the increased use of public libraries especially during the economic downturn in the U.S. The use of public libraries increased since customers want and need the job-related services like resume writing, interviewing techniques, and job search strategies. In addition, libraries provide an escape through books which are the portable escape hatch that takes people wherever they want to go.

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