

Amazon Should Replace Local Libraries to Save Taxpayers Money

Forbes

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Amazon should open their own bookstores in all local communities. They can replace local libraries and save taxpayers lots of money, while enhancing the value of their stock.

There was a time local libraries offered the local community lots of services in exchange for their tax money. They would bring books, magazines, and journals to the masses through a borrowing system. Residents could borrow any book they wanted, read it, and return it for someone else to read.

They also provided residents with a comfortable place they could enjoy their books. They provided people with a place they could do their research in peace with the help of friendly librarians. Libraries served as a place where residents could hold their community events, but this was a function they shared with school auditoriums. There's no shortage of places to hold community events.

Libraries slowly began to service the local community more. Libraries introduced video rentals and free internet access. The modern local library still provides these services, but they aren't for free. Homeowners have to be financed by taxpayers in form of a "library tax." It is usually added to school taxes, which in some communities are already high.

Meanwhile, they don't have the same value they used to. The reasons why are obvious.

One such reason is the rise of "third places" such as Starbucks. They provide residents with a comfortable place to read, surf the web, meet their friends and associates, and enjoy a great drink. This is why some people have started using their loyalty card at Starbucks more than they use their library card.

On top of this, streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime have replaced video rentals. They provide TV and movie content to the masses at an affordable rate. Actual video rental services like Blockbuster have gone completely out of business.

Then there's the rise of digital technology. Technology has turned physical books into collector's items, effectively eliminating the need for library borrowing services.

Of course, there's Amazon Books to consider. Amazon have created their own online library that has made it easy for the masses to access both physical and digital copies of books. Amazon Books is a chain of bookstores that does what Amazon originally intended to do; replace the local bookstore. It improves on the bookstore model by adding

online searches and coffee shops. Amazon Go basically combines a library with a Starbucks.

And expanding into the local library space will be an opportunity for the technology giant.

At the core, Amazon has provided something better than a local library without the tax fees. This is why Amazon should replace local libraries. The move would save taxpayers money and enhance the stockholder value of Amazon all in one fell swoop.

To be fair, library surveys do not seem to confirm the idea that public libraries don't have the value they used to. A Pew Research Center [survey](#) finds that Millennials are the most likely generations to use public libraries. Though it isn't clear whether "public libraries" are community libraries or school libraries. And what the trend is among this group.

The survey also finds that "In-person library use in the US remains fairly stable" for the period 2012-16. At least that's the title of one of their charts. But a reading of the chart is different: Library usage dropped from 53% to 46% over the same period.

Apparently, more data are needed to confirm a trend. But the opportunity for Amazon to enhance shareholder value remains.

Accessed on July 23, 2018 from:

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