

Access to knowledge and the Economic Crisis - a chance for libraries?

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Knowledge

.....Is the first raw material,
which is growing
when it is used.

(Zucker/Schmitz, 1996)




Access to knowledge is

-  restricted by tradition
-  restricted by culture
-  restricted by power
-  restricted by economy



Libraries and access to knowledge

- ▣ Library work in relation to tradition, culture, power and economy
- ▣ Libraries drive access to information and knowledge
- ▣ Libraries are often restricted in this goal

Access to knowledge supports

-  individual education
-  political freedom and democracy
-  economic development

The number of scientists...

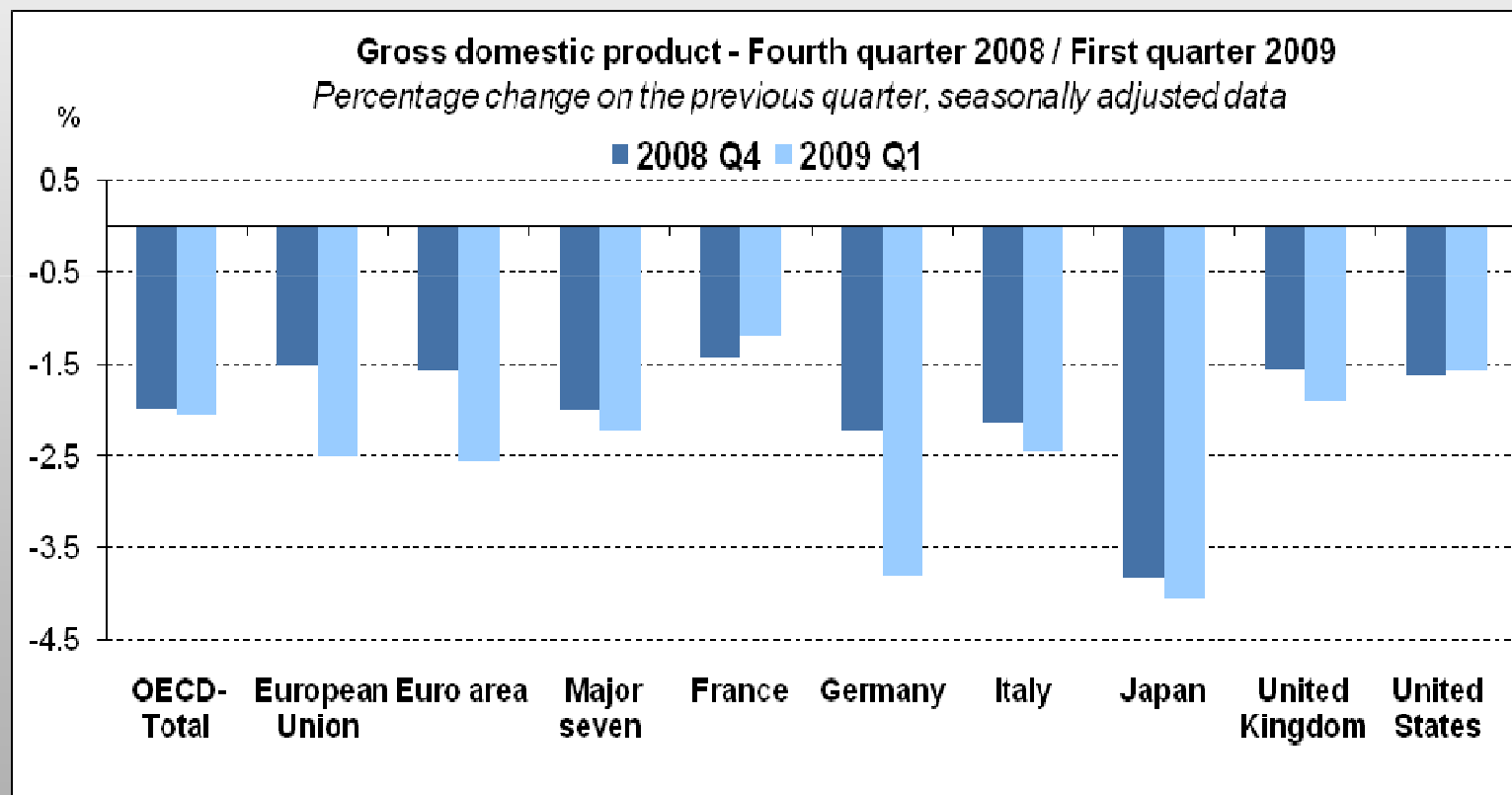
	17th Century	1 Million
	1950	10 Million
	2000	100 Million

...is an indicator for the
increase of knowledge
.....and the same for publications

Opportunity for Libraries

- From information to knowledge
- Current IFLA President's theme
- Easy access to knowledge through libraries
- Participate in the creation of new knowledge

The Current Financial and Economic Crisis



More economic aspects are relevant for libraries

- ▣ Structural economic crisis in multiple regions
- ▣ Global Information-Society (WSIS)
- ▣ Free market and market protection
- ▣ GATS and WTO

Ambivalent situation

- State budget for bank support and investment (in libraries, too)
- reduction of state and community general budget in (Re-financing credits)
- Reduced support of libraries in countries affected by the crisis
- But...

The Crisis is good for libraries

- Growing number of users
- More people going back to learn
- Need to support jobfinding activities
- Give bankrupt businessmen a home
- Provide business information
- and daily life information



Marketing libraries in a time of crisis

Economic development needs

- ⑩ access to information and knowledge
- ⑩ for free or very cheap
- ⑩ life-long-learning for the workforce
- ⑩ a place to be and communicate
- ⑩ libraries!

Libraries contribute to research and the creation of knowledge

through

- ⑩ Repositories and document servers
- ⑩ Open Access activities
- ⑩ Licences
- ⑩ Virtual services
- ⑩ Enhanced search

and effectively to economic development





- Inventions made on the Basis of open access repositories

Example: GPS Fertilizer machinery in Eberswalde, Germany

Business development supported by library repository

- Medium sized business developed from a university of advanced studies
- Free E-Repository of Goettingen University library leads to the key of the invention

Acknowledgement

-  Library not mentioned
-  Content is key
-  Library as infrastructure
-  Marketing of Success Stories

Public Library Services to Business Information

- Focus on small and medium enterprises
- NYPL fashion bags story
- Ukrainian Tomato business
- Russian Libraries' business information

Many more success stories

- Argentine, Bangla Desh, China – in difficult economic regions :
- Fisherman, peasants, other small business

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Access to Learning Award
of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Making cities stronger

- Research Project of the Urban Libraries Council in USA
- Public library contributions to local economic development – from manufacturing and service industries to information and idea industries
- Does this count for developing countries, too? Global economy.

Project findings

- Early literacy services contributing to long term economic success
- Library employment and career resources are preparing workers with new technologies
- Small business resources and programs are lowering barriers to market entry
- Public library buildings are catalysts for physical development

Library Services

- Access to current and comprehensive business product, suppliers and financing data
- Source for new online business information and databases
- Existing businesses strengthened and new enterprises created

Many Constraints

Library service – how to put this kind of service into practise

Library is not seen as a potential partner for business

Librarains are not aware or do not know how to support business

One solution

- Create services that are needed
- Market your library services



No matter how bad times are...

- ▣ Libraries will show their impact as
- ▣ librarians can make a difference to people's life and
- ▣ improve their situation through information and knowledge

Thank you for your attention!

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and don't forget to.... join IFLA
(if you have not done yet)