Charleston Fast Pitch Bootcamp

Free Webcast
July 17, 2:00 pm Eastern
Introduction and Background:

• Began in 2016
• Two $2,500 awards are given: a judges’ award and the audience award
• These awards are generously funded by the Goodall Family Foundation
• Timeline:
  o June 24 to September 16: Open Call for Proposals
  o September 17 – October 14: Selection and notifications to applicants
  o October 15 to November 1: Coaching
  o November 6 or 7: Competition takes place at Charleston Conference

www.charlestonlibraryconference.com/fastpitch
Our Presenters:

• **Caroline Muglia**, Co-Associate Dean for Collections, Head, Resource Sharing & Collection Assessment, University of Southern California Libraries

• **Rob O’Connell**, Director of Discovery, Access and Digital Engagement, Smith College Libraries

• **Devin Savage**, Interim Dean, Galvin Library, Illinois Institute of Technology

• **Curtis Michelson**, Founder and Principal, Minds Alert LLC

• **Jim O’Donnell**, University Librarian, Arizona State University
Caroline Muglia

• Co-Associate Dean for Collections, University of Southern California (USC)
• 2017 Audience winner
• “Reimagining Reference: Why should Silicon Valley have all the Fun?”

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Process

- In 2016, I received 2 small grants to pursue technology projects in the Libraries
  - Partner with the Viterbi School of Engineering
  - Answer collection assessment questions related to use of physical materials
- Grants successful in developing a proof of concept/ technology demonstration using object detection software
Enter Fast Pitch

• LOVED concept at a library conference!
• Proposal based on steps following proof of concept:
  • Build, test, iterate, and institutionalize collection assessment methods
• **Goal:** pitch a new method for answering an old problem

*Is it worth the direct and indirect costs to maintain an updated print reference collection at our research library?*

*How do we systematically measure use?*
Refining my pitch with coaches

• Hour-long call with coaches with goal to strengthen pitch submissions
• Coaches helped distill value statement, cultivate creativity, and refine talking points
• They asked: why now?, what is the impact of this innovation?, what is this solving?
Executing my pitch

• 5 minutes on problem statement
  • WHAT, WHY and HOW
• Focused on lack of solutions in field for my problem
• Focused on project goals:
  • Autonomous book tracking
  • Inventory/collection management
  • Regularize statistics of usage
  • Reduce human labor (pesky humans)
  • Reduce cost and time
• Tried to make pitch fun, relatable
Lessons learned

• Trust the expert advice of coaches
• Tell the story that demonstrates the need to fund this innovation
• It’s okay if your innovation isn’t tech-heavy
• Address a problem you’re facing!
Rob O’Connell

• Director of Discovery, Access and Digital Engagement
• 2018 Audience Winner
Smith Inventory System

Built on three core principles

Modern
Built using modern Javascript frameworks that can be run on a Mac or PC

Flexible
Designed to easily integrate with whatever services you are using from your ILS to ILLiad

Open
Created to be free and open
Devin Savage

• Interim Dean, Galvin Library, Illinois Institute of Technology
• 2018 Judges’ Award Winner
Challenges Accepted

My experience at the Charleston Conference Fast Pitch Competition
The Pitch for a Pitch
Challenge 1: A colleague’s
Challenge 2: An aggressive timeline

Less than a month to:

- Coordinate for logistics and receive training and coaching (3 sessions?)
- Get very familiar with an application I didn’t build, and didn’t regularly use
- Coordinate remotely with colleague to craft appropriate messaging
Coaching Sessions: So valuable

Listen to the advice given: see how you can make a pitch out of your content, what are the discrete pieces you need to address.

Reflect on how to make your project resonate in both its usefulness and how the relatively small amount of money can do something concrete for your innovation.
Challenge 3: the Pitch itself

Practice makes ... adequacy?

5 minutes!

Breathe!

Practice for the questions, too.
Library wins Innovation Award!

Share and celebrate your success!
We Made Fetch Happen!

Devin Savage

Interim Dean of Libraries

Illinois Institute of Technology

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Special Credit to Max King, the inventor of FetchCounter
Curtis Michelson

- Founder and Principal, Minds Alert LLC
- Fast Pitch Finalists’ Coach
FastPitch Tips
from one coach’s perspective
What Judges Look For

- Clarity
- Opportunity
- Impact
Clarity

“I have made this longer than usual because I did not have time to make it shorter.”

- Blaise Pascal
You Have Five Minutes

1. Present up to 5-6 slides, one minute each.
2. State the proposal (or problem) clearly.
3. Describe the project or solution, how it is innovative.
4. Clearly state what are you asking for.
5. Ask for it.
6. Provide a closing summary and contact details.
Use Visuals More Than Text
Opportunity

“It takes a helluva lot of attention for you to hear a voice that is other than your own - a radical kind of attention - to hear a voice, to see something, that you haven't already put together and given a name in your own mind.”

-David Whyte
Your Unique Entry Point

- Some New Technology
  - Data/Metadata Mining
  - Data Visualizations
  - Immersive Applications

- A New Process or Standard
  - “rethinking Peer Review”
  - “rethinking workflows”

- New Knowledge
  - a study
  - white paper
  - critical research

- New Connections
  - bridging campus/community divide
  - a partnership to facilitate an industry collaboration
Impact

“Whoa, that idea has legs.”
- someone important
Why does this need attention NOW (or yesterday)?

What key indicators (needles) can be moved?

Simon Sinek - “Start with why”
Who Cares?

- Testimonials
  - from inside higher-ed
  - outside higher-ed

- Measures of commitment
  - a partner offering a technology
  - a library offering space
  - a dean offering to pilot a program
  - students signed up to intern/test
Jim O’Donnell

• University Librarian, Arizona State University
• Fast Pitch Competition Judge, 2016 - present
The Judge’s Perspective

Jim O’Donnell
ASU
Two Questions

• Did it make me say, “Gosh!” or “Huh!” or “Cool” or “Yes!”?

• Would I hire you?
  • Hunger
  • Speed
  • Weight
Q&A
Thank you!

Questions?

www.charlestonlibraryconference.com/fastpitch

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Charleston
FAST PITCH
Competition