

# Library Day in the Life in Latvia: 6 Year Experience

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*The Library Day in the Life Project (LBB JSS, 2017) was a semi-annual event coordinated by Bobbi Newman. Twice a year librarians, library staff and library students from all over the globe shared a day (or week) in their life through blog posts, photos, videos and Twitter updates. The international project was closed, but New Professionals Section of the Latvian Librarian Association still coordinates the project in Latvia. The project has had different number of participants each year and it has been very popular and successful marketing tool for libraries in Latvia.*

*The research shows the results of the project in the 6 year period. The summary of the project is created by including number of participants, types of various activities that has been held. The opinion of the participants was gathered and analyzed to get to know the main reasons of their motivation of participation. The main research question is – how to involve more librarians to join this project.*

*This study will be useful for the New Professionals Section of the Latvian Librarian Association to evaluate the results and to analyze how to host this project further. It will be useful for other Librarian associations all over the world as an example how to create this kind of project in their countries.*

## Background of the research

The Library Day in the Life Project (Libday) (LBB JSS, 2017) was a semi-annual event coordinated by Bobbi Newman. She is a librarian, writer, consultant, library advocate and author of famous blog “*Librarian by Day*”. Bobbi Newman (2013) says that the main idea of this project “*was to share with each other, across divisions of the library – reference to tech services, and across types of libraries – public to special, and perhaps to reach outside of “libraryland”*”. Twice a year librarians, library staff and library students from all over the globe shared a day (or week) in their life through blog posts, photos, videos and Twitter updates using the hashtag #Libday. The international project had eight rounds and was closed in 2012. It was held for 4 years and have had thousands of participants from more than 20 countries.

New Professionals Section of the Latvian Librarian Association (NPS LLA) still coordinates the project in Latvia. The first time when the project was held in Latvia was February 2012 and it was part of the international project with hashtag #Libday8. Later on NPS LLA coordinated it as a Latvian project called “Library Day in the Life in Latvia” (LibdayLV) and created hashtag #LibdayLV in July 2012. NPS LLA has coordinated LibdayLV project seven times in a six-year period from 2012 until 2017 and there has been from 7 up to 30 participants (figure 1.).

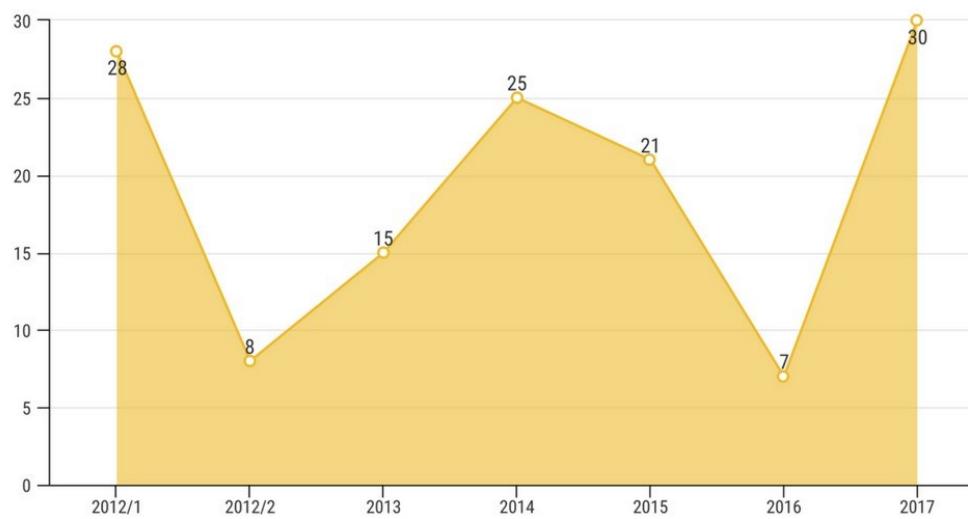


Figure 1. Numbers of the participants by year (2012–2017)

The rules of the project is very simple – to use free social media as a marketing tool to promote profession of a librarian – to show that there is more than just books at the libraries. Librarian were free to use any of social media tools – Twitter, Facebook, BlogSpot, WordPress, YouTube, Flickr, Pinterest, etc. As well as it was up to librarian to choose how many days he will describe and in which way – through article, tweet,

video, etc. Usually project was one week long, but as an experiment, NPS LLA changed it up to 3 months – summer at the library. Main rules of the project stayed the same – librarian could still choose how many days will be described one, two or more. This project motivates to create an account of a library on social platform, to think about public relationships of a library and to learn new skills.

## Research & results

### Content analysis

Content analyses has been done to collect the data for infographic. The content of all the participant social accounts has been evaluated every year. A resume of each round have been published in the blog of NPS LLA to show all the participants the work of colleagues from other libraries as well as to show it to students and library users. In the yearly resume there is collected ideas that participants have created for projects, for example, database Tuesday, guess a book, meet the librarian, daily post, throwback Thursday. After creating summary of a six-year there has been an infographic created and published on NPS LLA blog.

The content analyses shows that participants are not only from the city libraries, but also form small one-person libraries and there have been participants from all regions of Latvia (figure 2.). There has been one library that have participated all rounds of LibdayLV project. The content analysis shows that there was a participant that created new social media account on Twitter and created 87 Tweets in one week. It was the most active library despite it is a small library.



Figure 2. Map of the participants (2012–2017)

The participants have used different social media (figure 3.) as a communication channels – local social media “Draugiem.lv” (34 participants), “Facebook” (37 participants), “Twitter” (87 participants), “blog” (45 participants), “webpage” (4

participants), “Instagram” (5 participants), “Pinterest” (1 participant) and “Prezi.com” (1 participant). Nowadays the growth of technologies motivates participants to use it and to create interactive content such as video, photography, live translations, etc.

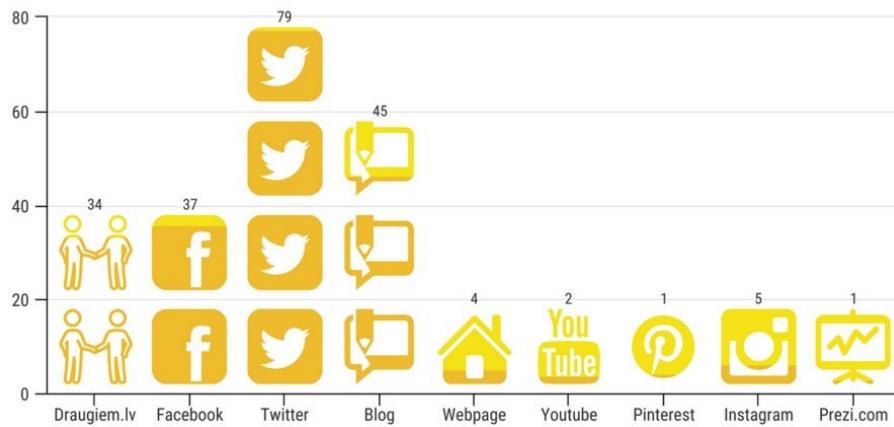


Figure 3. Social media used for project (2012–2017)

#### *Questionnaire*

The questionnaire has been sent to an e-mail list of 80 previous participants. 5 e-mails do not exist anymore and 10 participants do not work at the library anymore. 29 respondents have fulfilled the survey. The question “How many times have you participated at this project?” were given as a first question (figure 4.). 34% of respondents have participated at this project just once, 28% of respondents have participated two times, and 21% of respondents have participated three times. 7% of respondents have participated 4 and 5 times, but 3% of respondents have participated all 7 times of the project.

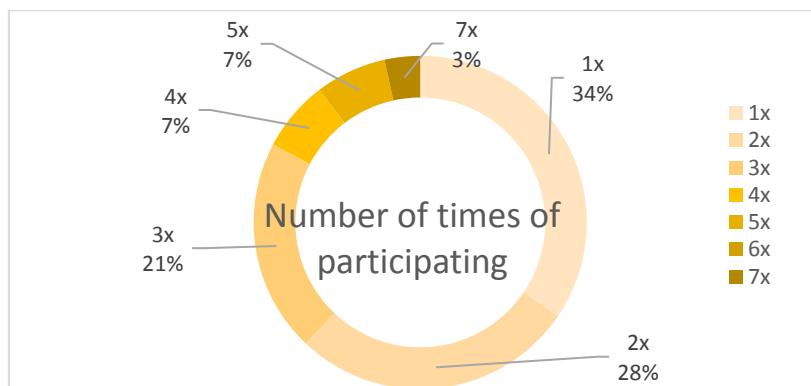


Figure 4. Number of times of participating at LibdayLV project.

The question “Do you plan to participate again at this project?” were given and 86% of respondents plan to participate in LibdayLV if it will be continued in 2018 if there will not be vacation or any other important events at the time of the project (figure 5.). Only 14% of respondents do not want to participate again. As a reason not to participate respondents mentions:

- Participation at this project takes too much time for me,
- I am not working at the library anymore,
- I do not see the point of the project,
- I am going to retire.

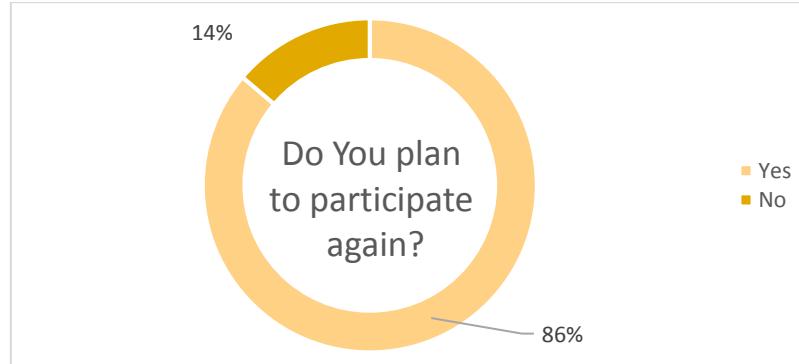


Figure 5. Answers to the question “Do you plan to participate again at this project?”

There is a tendency that some of participants have not understand the rules of the project – that they can choose how many days they want to describe. There seems to be tendency not to participate because it is not clearly defined that there is no obligation to participate every day of the week.

Participants were asked to give their suggestions for next project rounds:

- To find the key of motivation,
- To explain the idea of project more detailed,
- E-mail lists of association members,
- Regular e-mails to participants to remind about project, to say “you are doing great!”,
- Regular project updates in blog (usually we did summary after the project),
- To make an instructions (how to make video, how to create good PR in social accounts),
- To create the week with articles from the readers point of view,
- To create thematically weeks,
- To divide week into thematically days - day of acquisition librarian, music librarian, user service librarian,
- To create more seasonal activities,
- To add some side activities like a contest - best activity, language quote, surprise of the day, etc.

There was a positive comments about the project, for example, “I gained a lot, I learned to work with blog”; “was interesting to read what other colleagues do at their libraries”; “I learned that even all the small things that we do are worth to share!” These

kind of comments show the need of the project and motivates NPS LLA to create the next round in 2018.

## **Conclusions**

The aim of the research was to collect the thoughts from participants about the project “Library Day in the Life in Latvia” and to decide if it is needed to continue the project and what to improve. The aim is reached and the decision to keep and improve the project was made.

Most of the participants admit that it has been great motivation for many libraries to show their activities and to evaluate the public relationships of their library. As there is a tendency that everyone (shops, café, schools, etc.) are on social media, libraries must be smart to attract their readers and even more new readers through their social media and this project is an opportunity to think about public relationships on social media, about creative and qualitative content.

Some of participants mentioned that it is too hard to create the content for social media, so there will be more articles and videos on the NPS LLA blog about creating qualitative social media content. The material for ideas what to do in the LibdayLV week would be useful tool to create for 2018 as suggested from one of the respondents. Suggested e-mail lists of association members are in progress. There is an idea to create a webinar about the project and creative and qualitative content on social media.

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