Anchors Aweigh: 
Sailing Ahead with Tableau to Support a Visual Library Organization

- July 17, 2015 -
A Visual Library Organization
“A visual organization is composed of intelligent people who recognize the power of data. As such, it routinely uses contemporary, powerful, and interactive dataviz tools to ask better questions and ultimately make better business decisions.”

-Phil Simon

Becoming a Visual Organization

1. Understand what has happened, in the past, what is currently happening, and what’s about to happen.
2. Discover new insights from existing datasets and sources
3. Surface and address nascent issues
4. Ask better questions of data
5. Make better business decisions.

“When we represent quantitative information in visual form, our ability to think about it is dramatically enhanced. Visual representations not only make the patterns, trends, and exceptions in numbers visible and understandable, they also extend the capacity of our memory.”

-Stephen Few

3 General Benefits of DataViz

1. Great visualizations are efficient;
2. Visualizations can help groups achieve more insight into the nature of a problem and discover new understanding; and
3. Great visualizations create a shared view of a situation and align folks on needed actions.

What is Tableau?

A data visualization and analysis software

Simple drag & drop interface

Powerful data engine
Why Tableau?

- Shifts ownership of creative analytic work from expert or “techie” to the average user.
- Enables the average librarian to gather and analyze data in real-time – in concert with thought process.
- Allows librarians to explore, analyze, and share data interactively.
- Supports data-informed decision-making and a culture of assessment.
Why Tableau? Why Not Excel? Access?

• One size does not fit all
• Select tool appropriate for the situation (Tableau, Excel, Access, SPSS, SAS, R)
# Tableau Dashboards – Examples

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