

Empowering Library Services through Planned Abandonment

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PLANNED ABANDONMENT

Planned abandonment is the practice of developing plans to abandon a service before the service is launched.

BUT WHY?

1. Frees up resources (money, people, time, server space, etc.) for other services.
2. Eliminates the temptation to continue supporting a service that is failing or obsolete.
3. Can help alleviate resistant to change

QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. Is this service still viable?
2. Is this service likely to remain viable?
3. Do our patrons still gain value from this service?
4. Are our patrons likely to continue to gain value tomorrow?
5. Does this service still fit the realities of our technology stack, funding, and patron population?
6. If not, how can we best abandon the service – or at least stop pouring resources into it?

REFERENCES

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Planned Abandonment of library services is vital to the allocation of resources for future library services.

This works for legacy services too!

SUNSETTING LEGACY SERVICES

1. Review historic data on the service.
2. Collect new data to help understand service use.
3. Review resources allocated to the service.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. Is this service used?
2. Is this service likely to continue being used?
3. Does this fit in our reality?

If you answered ‘no’ to any of these questions, it may be time to plan the end of the service.

ABANDONMENT TIPS

- Communication is key- with service managers, internal service users, and to our patrons.
- Taking the time to conduct a selfstudy, survey patrons, and survey colleagues will create holistic picture of the service and help with buy-in.
- Drawing up a plan of how the newly freed resources will be used provides a positive goal to work towards.

KEY QUESTION

“If we did not do this already, would we start it now?”