

DATE: January 4, 2002  
TO: Local and Library Press  
FROM: Sanford Berman (4400 Morningside Road, Edina, MN 55416;  
952-925-5738)  
SUBJECT: THE SELLING OF HENNEPIN COUNTY LIBRARY

It has already happened at places like San Francisco Public Library, where whole areas or rooms have been named to commemorate corporate donors, in effect providing daily, nonstop advertising to the beneficent giver. Libraries are increasingly and overtly being commercialized. This process threatens the very soul of the profession: its commitment to genuine openness, diversity, and neutrality. Such business tie-ins and commercial promotion profoundly and politically affect --indeed, undermine--the feeling of a nonthreatening, hype-free turf that a public library ought to have. If the trend continues, this last refuge from incessant sales pitches and Conglomerate Culture, this one public institution dedicated to preserving and making readily available the whole universe of human thought and experience in an environment that values autonomy and privacy, may simply become a K-Mart annex.

Judging from the attached plans for Hennepin County Library involvement in an expanded Mall of America, HCL eagerly seeks to be commercialized. It is anxious to sell itself to the highest bidder. The documents betray an enthusiasm and energy for ingratiating the library with big players like Dell Computers and Best Buy, and for showcasing HCL's "virtual" wares. A comparable intensity of enthusiasm and energy has not been exhibited, however, for adequately serving linguistic minorities and inmates at the County's Adult Correctional Facility, for developing broad, as well as in-depth, video, DVD, CD, book, and periodical collections, and for restoring the library's cataloging operation to its former, globally-acclaimed stature. Nor has there been any honest recognition that glitzy, high-end, fee-for-service programs--typified by Bestseller Express rentals and expensive "Pen Pals" lectures--discriminate against low-income people, in essence declaring a preference for the well-heeled. Maybe it's time for HCL to reexamine its priorities.

**From:** brown, charles  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 16, 2001 2:09 PM  
**To:**

**Cc:**  
**Subject:**

You already may have read about plans to expand the Mall of America on the former Met Center site. In terms of size, the planned expansion will be larger than the existing Mall! A recent, front page story, regarding this development, appeared in the Sunday, July 29th STAR TRIBUNE.

Several months ago, John Wheeler approached me to discuss a possible library "presence" in the new space. He had just returned from Washington where he met with officials of the Smithsonian and other museum representatives about a possible museum "presence" in this new space, and felt that a similar nod to libraries might be in order as well.

John is a true visionary, and would like to explore early possible options with us. He and I both see this potential opportunity as far more than the kiosk library-in-the-mall concept that was discussed as one possibility for the Mall in the past. At this early stage, he also has strongly encouraged me not to allow funding considerations to limit my thinking. He views the Mall as "MN's Gateway to the World." (As cited by John, both the number of annual visits to the present mall as well as the revenue it generates are fairly staggering.) And it may well be possible to identify support for the outcome of our planning efforts from some outside funding source (s).

John will be here at Ridgedale for a further brainstorming session on Wednesday, September 12 at 9:30 a.m. (Rohlf Room/EAST half). If your schedule permits, I encourage you to join in the expanded discussion. Pls. let Cindy know by Sept. 5 if you plan to attend, so the room can be set up accordingly.

Thank you.

Charles M. Brown, Library Director  
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**From:**  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 06, 2001 3:26 PM  
**To:**  
**Subject:**

**Importance:**

Message from Charles Brown:

Thanks for your interest in attending next Wednesday morning's meeting with John Wheeler, of the Mall of America. One of the things that I want to be certain to stress is that while the meeting will have a presentation component, I very much envision the morning as a whole as a *working* session, with myriad ideas being generated. Please come prepared accordingly.

A loose outline for the session follows.

Possible Mall of America Library "Presence"

1. Mall of America Expansion/Met Center Site Project Outline (John Wheeler)
  - A. Background
  - B. Development Outline/Timeframe
  - C. Current Level of Mall Activity/Success
2. Discussion of Possible "Presence" (C. Brown, J. Wheeler, Group)  
(Examples)
  - A. Historical/Archival View of the American Public Library
  - B. Current (Evolving) State of the Art Library (Internet Cafe Model)
  - C. Emerging: "Center for the Experimental Book"
  - D. Others, Others, Others
3. Identification of Potential Partners (C. Brown, J. Wheeler, Group)
  - A. MELSA
  - B. State/Federal Government (IMLS--Institute of Museums and Libraries)
  - C. Gary Marshall (Motion Picture Industry)
  - D. American Library Association (ALA)
  - E. Foundations
  - F. Others, Others, Others
4. Other Issues (J. Wheeler, Group)
5. Next Steps (J. Wheeler, Group)



Hennepin County Library

M E M O

TOMORROW'S LIBRARY... TODAY

DATE: October 22, 2001  
TO: Charles Brown  
FROM:  
SUBJECT: HCL presence at the Mall of America  
COPY: Mall of America planning group

This memo addresses issues of funding for a library presence at the Mall of America. Table 1 identifies key parameters that determine the nature of the facility and Figure 1 illustrates important issues surrounding signage.

### Key parameters

Listed below are key parameters, all of which depend on the level of funding. Alternative funding for exceptional service could be derived from the sale of naming rights, similar to the approach used by the TARGET CENTER and UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA.<sup>[1]</sup>

**Table 1. Hennepin County Library at the Mall of America:  
expansion through partnerships**

Item	Exceptional service	Limited service
Size	10,000 to 15,000 sq ft	ditto
Operating budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$500,000 annually from the sale of facility naming rights</li><li>• \$500,000 from HCL budget</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$500,000 annually from the sale of facility naming rights</li></ul>
Signage	See Figure 1 on page 2	ditto
Capital partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Computer workstations, software</li><li>• Startup costs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In-kind contributions in exchange for workspace naming rights</li><li>• Public and private grants</li></ul>	ditto
Content partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local</li><li>• National</li><li>• International</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minnesota Department of Tourism, MELSA, WALKER ART CENTER</li><li>• GALE Corporation, Dell Computers, Barnes and Noble, etc.</li><li>• Sister libraries in foreign countries</li></ul>	ditto
Hours of operation	All Mall hours	Daytime Mall hours

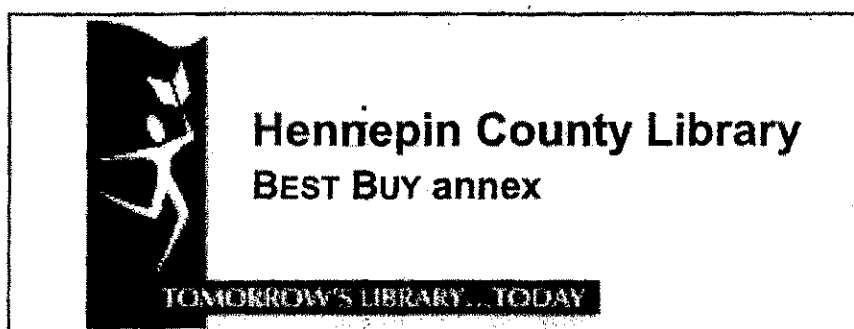
1. At the Carlson School of Management and Mondale Hall, cafeterias, classrooms, lounge areas, even hallways, are named to honor those who made a significant contribution during construction.

**Table 1. Hennepin County Library at the Mall of America:  
expansion through partnerships (continued)**

Item	Exceptional service	Limited service
Service plan	Full-service virtual library, reading room and tourist information center	Virtual library and reading room
Staffing	Information literacy, computer literacy	Information literacy
Programming	Conspicuous outreach within the Mall complex	none

## Signage

Signage is a valuable asset, and it should not be squandered. Published reports indicate that naming rights for the TARGET CENTER sell for \$1M per year, with a multiple-year commitment. Listed below are issues that merit discussion. BEST BUY, a home grown business, serves here merely as an example.



**Figure 1. Proposed signage for HCL facility at Mall of America**

1. The sale of naming rights for a service delivered by County employees would be a first, as would be the linkage of HCL's logo with that of a commercial partner. This sign goes a step beyond mere recognition for philanthropic support of HCL programs.
2. The facility is called an *annex* to distinguish it from the traditional branch library.
3. Only the business name is used, not the corporate logo, to avoid any inference that the primary partner exercises control over the services delivered.
4. This sign does not assume that the name of the facility will remain constant because the primary partner would likely change over time.
5. Exclusivity is a commercial asset. Thus, including the name MALL OF AMERICA, say as a locator, could devalue the image sought by the primary partner. However, sharing is an option.
6. If the Mall of America provides significant support,<sup>[2]</sup> then its name could be integrated into the signage, which could then reduce the commitment needed from the primary partner.

2. Without (a) a long-term commitment of (b) rent-free space (c) in a fixed location, HCL would be just another tenant.

## FACE OF THE MALL

### NOT A LIBRARY IN THE MALL ---- THE MALL'S LIBRARY: WHAT DO VISITORS TO THE MALL WANT

An (unstated) response to the WTC - telling stories of who we are; who we love, etc.

Focus on what libraries do well (catalog who we are) and what the Mall does well (bring in people)

#### **Project:**

Catalog and index mall visitors

Something like the Aids Quilt project

Showcase technology - contemporary library stuff using a demonstration type project

Create a digital postcard (as seen at the State Fair)

Build on Judith's Walker Art Center program idea

A digital collection at the Mall -consisting of people and messages

Create a digital postcard (as seen at the State Fair)

Build on Judith's Walker Art Center program idea

A digital collection at the Mall 'library' -consisting of people (visitors) and messages

Something like a 21<sup>st</sup> century time capsule

HCL eLibrary as part of the demonstration - the gateway to online collections, other libraries, etc.

Presence NOW - maybe in Camp Snoopy?

Catalog and press into CD's to give and as part of the archival, digital collection

#### **Benefits:**

Would give HCL and libraries a 'national' presence if tied into Mall marketing

HCL's 28<sup>th</sup> agency - the digital library?

Think of the number of visit statistics!

Redirect catalogers focus

Plug into work that other states and libraries are doing with digitized collections

Foundation money, Mall support(\$), Techno board (with money and ideas and staff skills)

Use volunteers

If no longer popular we could discontinue or morph into something new (like mall stores)