The Power of Public Libraries to Guide Small Businesses through Tech Disruption

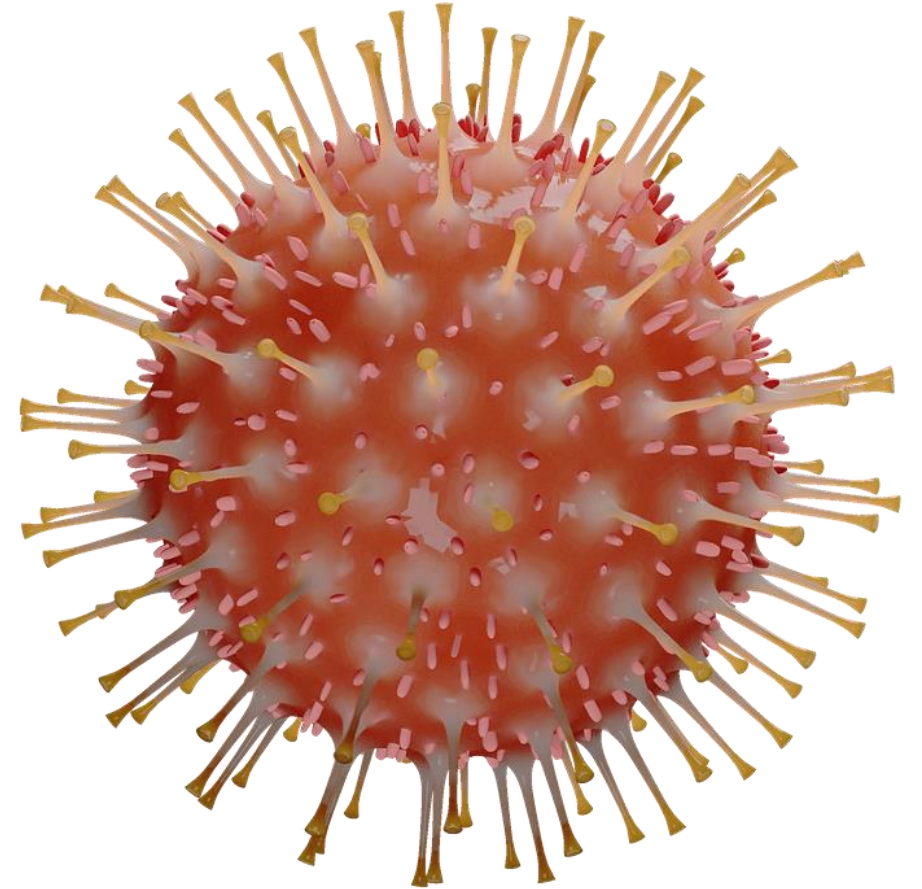Presented by Nick Tanzi | the-digital-librarian.com

Libraries Navigate Disruption

- Libraries as an equalizer.
- Access to information.
- Understanding.
- Technological change = disruption.
- Impacts job market, specific industries.

A Look at Small Business Disruptors

The COVID-19 Pandemic

- Accelerated existing tech trends.

- Increased virtualization.

- Remote work.

- Increased reliance on web presence.

- Job loss & need for new skills within the workforce.

Shifting Workforce Trends

- Gig Economy.
- Great Resignation.
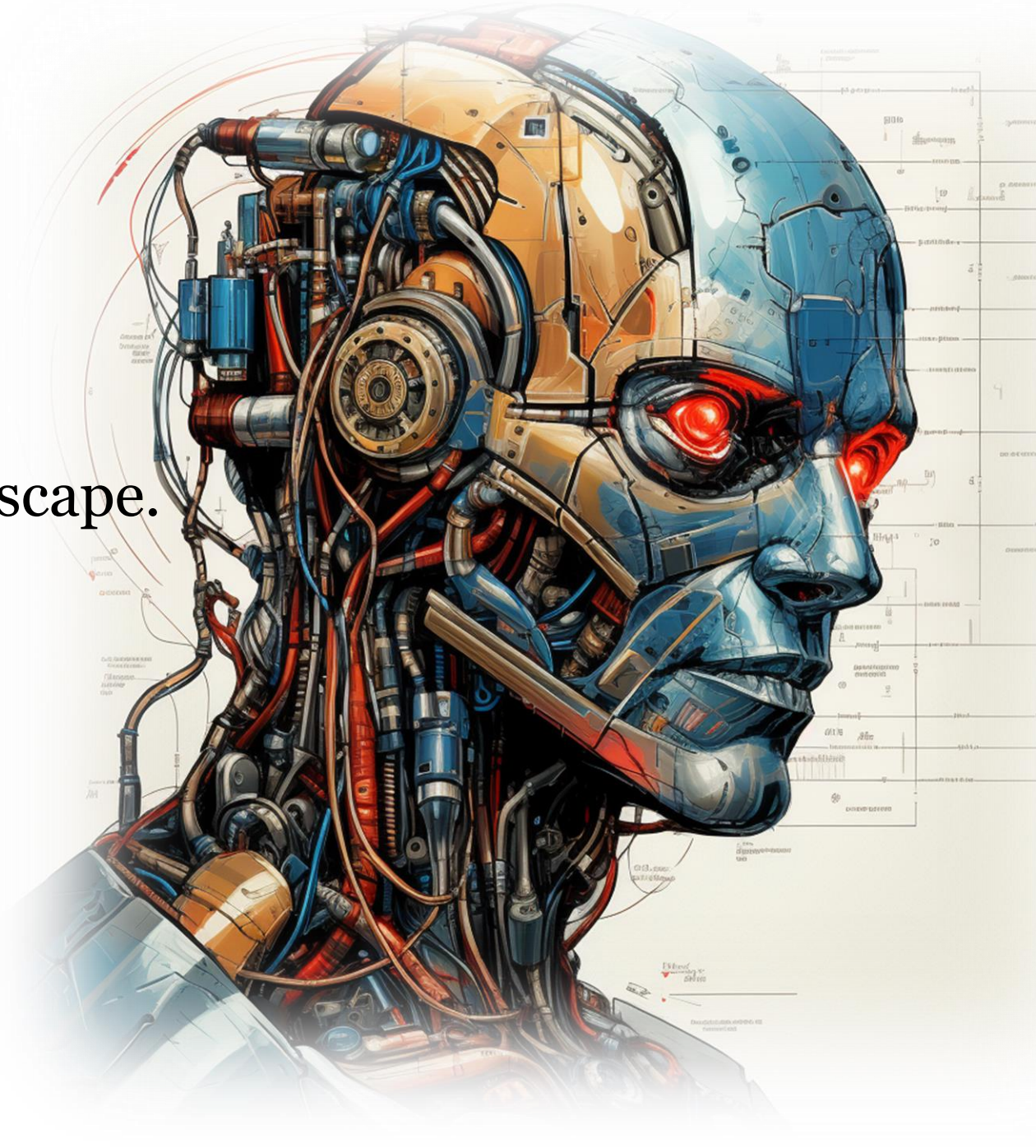- Shift to remote & hybrid work environments.

Web Trends

- Mobile has surpassed desktop.
- Social media disruption
  - End of infinite growth.
- Rise of "screenless" web browsing.
  - Smart speakers.
  - Voice assistants.

AI Disruption

- Potential job loss/obsolescence.
- Privacy implications!
- Uncertain legal / copyright landscape.
- Also opportunity.

How are Our Libraries Responding?

Becoming Videoconference Friendly

- Reimagining our interior space.
  - Repurposing rooms.
  - Acquisition of quiet booths.

- Investing in our IT infrastructure.
  - Higher bandwidth needs.
  - Ensuring equipment is Zoom ready.
  - Backup generator.

- Considering our outdoor space.
  - Wireless access points.
  - Solar charging stations.

Quiet and Collaborative Space

StoryCorps Workshop
Wed., July 24 at 7 p.m.

Providing Uninterruptable Power

- Reliability is key!
- Library investment in solar.
- Backup diesel generator.
- 24 hour internet access.

The Makerspace as an Ideas Lab for Entrepreneurs

Emerging Tech with Business Applications

- 3D printers.
- Vinyl cutters.
- Laser engravers.
- 3D scanning.

Spotlight on Middle Country Public Library

- Mix of high tech and low tech.
- Regular formal classes.
- Opportunity for self-paced learning.
- Staff-mediated services.
- Business center.

Digital Media Lab as a Marketing Hub

- Video production.
  - Adobe creative suite.
  - High-def capture.

- High-quality photography.
  - Green screens.
  - Lighting tools.

- Audio production.
  - Recording booths.
  - Sound boards.

Social Media Marketing for Businesses

- Very turbulent landscape!
  - Regulatory environment.
  - Algorithmic changes.
  - New features.
- Classes focused on
  - Platforms 101.
  - Paid advertising.
  - Analytics.
  - Best practices.

Emerging Virtual Marketplaces

- 3D print repositories.
- Digital art sites.
- Non-fungible tokens (NFTs).

Job Market / Workforce Development

Virtual Reality Job Training

- New twist on an old mission.
- Bring the job training site to the library.
- Clayton County Library in Georgia.
- West Charleston Library in Nevada & Employ NV Youth Hub & Teen Zone.

The New Computer Literacy

- Traditionally rooted in desktop PCs, word processing.
- For employers and employees.
- Now—collaborative, mobile, and cloud-based.
- Libraries teach business-oriented software classes.
  - Google Workspace tools.
  - Office 365.
  - Accounting software.
- Mobile device programming.
  - Smartphones, tablets, Chromebooks.

Website Development Programming

- Popular content management systems.
  - WordPress.
  - Drupal.
- Website builders.
- Search engine optimization (SEO).
  - Changing market share.
- Evaluation.
  - Mobile friendly?
  - WCAG?

Spotlight on Code Louisville

- Started by Louisville Free Public Library.

- Free career training on web development, software development, UX design, and more.

- Connects employers with graduates.

- More than 800 graduates have been hired by more than 300 employers!

Entering the Age of AI

Libraries Can Teach AI Literacy

- Teaching how AI works allows business to be proactive rather than reactive.

- Teaching privacy considerations.

- Demonstrating the capability of AI as a productivity tool.

- AI in a virtual office environment.

- Developing effective chatbots.

- Utilizing text-to-image tools.

Spotlight on DoSpace Omaha

- Implementing Chatbots, Artificial Intelligence, and Marketing Automation.

- How Small Business Can Apply Artificial Intelligence and Big Data to Drive Business Results.

- Boost Productivity and Provide Better Customer Service with Chatbots.

- The Secret to Making More Time in Your Day – Automate the Mundane Tasks Away.

Final Thoughts & Contact Info

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