

South-End Eco-Development (SEED) Library of Things (LoT)

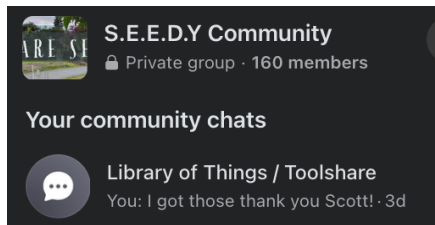


We thank you very kindly for your generous help providing “seed funding” for this brand-new project to get up and running. Here is an overview of some of the things that were accomplished in this initial startup phase of the “Library of Things (LoT)” community toolshed, and distributed network of households involved in the borrowing network.

Undertakings & Accomplishments

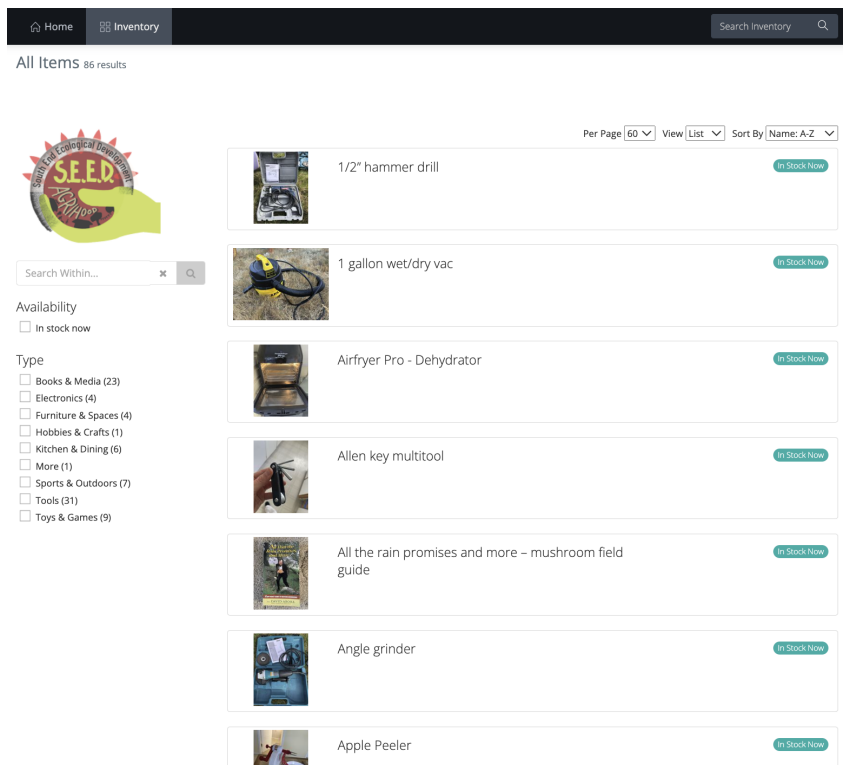
Social Media

- Social media was established on Facebook:
 - Private [Facebook Group](#) for members to connect to one another and stay informed of items they could borrow and find a way to coordinate
 - Public [Facebook Page](#) for wider community to discover the project and become interested. This was also interesting for the purpose of understanding whether a large population of people outside the service area of the pilot project would express strong interest in its expansion, and provide a means to grow outwards into that audience.
- Cross-posting was done in the neighbourhood [SEEDY group](#) for select posts
- A Facebook “community chat” was also created within the [SEEDY group](#) as a way to procure items and facilitate exchange.
- 2-3 posts per week generally went up, showcasing items available to borrow.
- Plan was created for 1 year of content, and final post creation happens more monthly.



Website Database

- Items on the database were increased from 10 to 85
- Research was conducted on what the most in-demand types of items tend to be from these programs, and those were prioritized.
- Item categories became diversified and valuable to wider audiences and hobbies
- Purpose-built platform usability was improved and tested with early-adopters.
- Trial-and-error led to deep consideration of personal privacy, ease of mobile and multi-item use, tool-shed items vs. borrowing from neighbours, tagging and searchability of items



Outreach and Awareness

- Postering around the community to advertise the program so that people could discover it without using Facebook
- [SEED website](#) includes information about the Library of Things (LoT)
- Blend of online infrastructure and offline borrowing has been practiced
- Mural has been designed for the Library of Things (LoT) shed to animate the space and promote it as a placemaker and attractor. Waiting for the dry season to be painted.

- SEED community newsletter has included key updates for the wider community to know about the Library of Things (LoT) program.
- Library of Things (LoT) shed “tool drive event” which involved ~15 neighbours cleaning out the shed on the private property of Cait (the LoT Coordinator), and refilling with items from the neighbours in a blitz that also documented and uploaded the earliest items to the website.
- Booth at SEED year-end block party to drive awareness and sign up earliest members
- 3 “orientation” events offering tours and explanation of the concept to new or prospective members.



Left to Right: Poster / Mural / QR Codes for Tools

Further Infrastructure

- Toolshed items have been assigned a QR coding system to track bookings and make light phone work with dirty hands.
- Consent forms were created in order to help individuals understand their responsibility in safe use of tools that may involve risk of injury.
- Ownership details have been given further refinement regarding whether owners want something back, or if it's donated to the program completely. Definition of how to manage replacing damaged or missing items, and proactive mitigation of inter-personal conflicts.
- Step-by-step borrowing instructions posted in the Toolshed, anticipated training for volunteers in the community to be champions and advocates for their working groups that access the Library of Things (LoT).
- Code padlock was installed on the shed door to ensure security in the simplest way possible, as well as new hinge-latch hardware that would allow the lock to be compatible.
- Formation of a committee to help shape the program in the early conceptual phase.



Toolshed Kickoff event and tool drive (emptying and refilling with earliest shared items)

Early Community Benefits

- Several volunteer events in the neighbourhood benefited from using tools stored in the Library of Things (LoT) shed. It was accessed throughout the month over the fall/winter for tree-planting events, pruning of community food forests, trail-building, river restoration and others.

- Snowfall hazards were mitigated by snow shovels available in the Library of Things (LoT) as well as tire chains, etc.
- Items which were no longer needed by individuals found exponential utility by others
- Items which take up excess space in limited storage of individuals' homes had win-win space in the Library of Things (LoT).
- Facilitated the exchange of knowledge and mentorship between individuals who had a low barrier to access to learn by doing with tools on hand.

Final Thoughts

- This project ramped up substantially after December, when a Coordinator role was created. This individual put in several hours per week.
- The Winter is what we expect to be the “off-season” but was good as a soft-launch.
- The emphasis in this phase was to create the infrastructure from scratch and get it up and running. A certain amount of hype was generated around the project, but it was most essential to make it work well for people through testing and iteration.
- A massive amount of work has been done to make the website back-end well configured so that the public-facing experience is smooth and functional.
- A large effort as well has gone into familiarizing people with the concept and what is possible.