

Marketing as a Team Sport

A workshop

For the **Wisconsin Library Association**

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Library Communication Strategies

November 6, 2008

Market-driven libraries . . .

- Know their markets.
- Treat everyone like a customer.
- Have everyone on the marketing team.
- Ask, ask, ask. Then listen.
- Innovate constantly.
- Don't fear the competition.

—*Mission-Based Marketing, How Your Not-For-Profit Can Succeed in a
More Competitive World*, Peter C. Brinckerhoff, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1997

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Marketing as a Team Sport

Goal To better understand the importance of marketing, basic principles and the role of staff

Agenda

- 10:45 **Introductions/Opening Remarks**
What is marketing? Why do it? Who should do it?
- 11:00 **Marketing Basics**
4 steps--*discussion*- Research- What's the best way to listen?
Building a Team- How to get the staff involved?
Communication Audit
- 11:30 **Beyond Bookmarks & Brochures**
8 Steps to Success: The Communication Plan
Positioning- an essential opportunity- *exercise*
- 11:55 **Wrap Up**
Questions/concerns
Evaluation
Next Steps

Marketing Basics

Marketing is that function of the organization that can keep in constant touch with the organization's consumers, read their needs, develop products that meet these needs, and build a program of communications to express the organization's purposes.

—Phillip Kotler/Sidney Levy, "Broadening the Concept of Marketing"
Journal of Marketing, January 1969

Key Elements

A four-step marketing program . . .

- 1) Research:** Analyze the situation and get the facts (primary and secondary research).
 - A. Describe the community including demographic characteristics and trends.
 - B. Describe the library, including staff, support, governance, circulation trends, etc.
 - C. Define your audience (market segments) and their needs.
- 2) Plan:** Set strategic goals, determine objectives, develop service strategies.
 - A. Start with the library's mission.
 - B. Develop services and delivery methods to meet identified needs and wants—also desires.
 - C. Develop a positioning strategy.
- 3) Communicate:** Public relations, advertising, advocacy, partnerships.
 - A. Develop a communications plan with action steps, budget, timetable and assign tasks.
 - B. Focus on listening to key markets.
 - C. Develop tools such as a basic fact sheet for the library, campaign press kit, talking points etc.
 - D. Build a press/contact list—media and opinion leaders—and use it.
 - E. Develop a media plan with timeline for sending releases, placing stories and public service messages.
- 4) Evaluate:** Are objectives (measurable) being met?
 - A. Set up evaluation procedures.
 - B. Measure performance vs. plan and adjust for the variance.

Marketing as a Team Sport

The Challenge: Focus on the community/get their attention.
Listen.
See the BIG PICTURE.
Get beyond the library.

Responsibilities:

- Appoint a Marketing Team (director must be a Team member)
- Develop marketing plan and budget
- Identify goals, objectives, benchmarks, new services, communication strategies
- Plan and develop ongoing research, including schedule
- Develop and keep materials up-to-date, consistent in look
- Monitor trends in libraries, community and nation
- Keep in regular contact with key markets (via attendance at key groups, etc.)
- Sponsor in-house training on marketing related topics/library goals
- Develop expertise via training, reading and doing excellent work in marketing and communication
- Spread the word. Be pro-active.

Marketing is...

- All about people, not stuff.
- Listening, not just telling.
- Organized, focused, consistent.

Communication Checklist

Use this list to help you answer the following questions:

- *Is this library welcoming?*
- *What is our message?*
- *What is our style?*

1. **Accessibility**—Can people with disabilities easily use the library building and website?
2. **Brand/Identity**—Does the library have a clear and consistent image—in print, in person, online? This includes consistent use of logo, full location info (including URL).
3. **Customer service**—Is the library's commitment to excellent customer service reflected in the courtesy and helpfulness shown to customers? Are there ID tags for staff? Can staff members articulate the library message? Are they encouraged to share their favorite books and other materials with users? Does front-line staff provide feedback on customer wants, complaints, compliments?
4. **Décor, decoration**—Is the library too light or too dim? Is the library clean, clutter free? Is there effective use of posters, banners, art and other promotional tools such as screen savers?
5. **Display**—Are books and other materials displayed face out? Are there "shelf talkers?"
6. **Local ownership**—How well does the library reflect the community, including its diversity? Is there a bulletin board? Displays of local art? Are there opportunities for the users to give feedback on library service/ interact with other users? Share their comments on books?
7. **Message**—Does your library have a key message that expresses its mission? Does everyone on the staff know it? Are library policies clearly and widely communicated?
8. **Media**—Does your library have a presence in relevant media? Is someone assigned to work with the press? Does your library initiate stories, interviews and placements of public service announcements/advertising?

9. **Outreach**—Does the library have a life outside the building? Does it have a presence in the life of the community?
10. **Programming**—Does the library actively offer and promote programs and/or training sessions? How are programs promoted?
11. **Print materials**—Are there too many? Too few? What is the message?
How is it communicated on bookmarks and flyers? Letterhead and business cards? Newsletters?
12. **Signage: Internal and External**—Is the library easy to find? Is it easy to find what you're looking for? Is the library mission visible? Does signage reflect awareness of diversity?
13. **Telephone**—Does a person or a machine answer the phone? If it's a machine, does your telephone greeting help or harm your image? Is it clear? Easy to follow?
14. **Website**—Is the image/message consistent with other library communications? Does it take advantage of the unique qualities of the web? Is the website treated as a branch library?
15. **Body Language**—What is the unspoken message being delivered by staff?

What other ways are you communicating?????

Building a Marketing/Communication Plan

- 1. Introduction** (Briefly explain *why* you are proposing this campaign/project. Identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). Include relevant research, observations.)
- 2. Communication goals** (The dream--big picture. No more than 3.)
- 3. Objectives** (3-5 doable, measurable outcomes.)
- 4. Positioning statement** (Briefly describe what you would like the library's image to be in the hearts and minds of others. What makes you unique? Example: *"The library is the best first stop for expert help in connecting children and youth to learning and discovery."*—State Library of North Carolina campaign)
- 5. Key message** (What is the most important thing you want people to know/do? In 10 words or less. Example: *Your library is the very best place to start.*)
- 6. Key audiences** (External and Internal. Be specific. No more than 5.)
- 7. Communication strategies** (How will you deliver the message? Media, publications, displays, presentations, word-of-mouth, etc. Identify tactics/action steps and budget needed for each item.)
- 8. Evaluation** (How will you know what worked and what didn't? Refer back to your objectives.)

Really Good Ideas

- **A FRIENDLY REMINDER**—“We miss you” is the message on a postcard sent by the public library of Spijkenisse, near Rotterdam in the Netherlands, to nonusers (those who borrow zero to two books a year). The reverse side carries a reminder about various library services and asks why they aren’t using the library. The result: 20 percent of the recipients came back, with many commenting favorably on the postcards. The campaign received a 2006 International Marketing Award from the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).
- **SPECIAL DELIVERY**—Director Melissa Acquaviva and her staff at the Ohio County Public Library, Hartford, KY, put story time flyers in diaper bags at their church’s nurseries. The library also purchases 200 copies (\$75) of the Scholastic’s “Parent-Child” magazine and distributes them at day care centers, private preschools and McDonald’s story times. The magazine is highly prized by parents.
- **SPEED DATING @ YOUR LIBRARY**—The state library of Victoria in Melbourne Australia hosted a speed dating event attracted 52 people and resulted in 13 couples making date plans. The only requirement: Participants must bring a book they either love or hate for conversation fodder. More events are planned. The event drew worldwide attention thanks to media coverage.
- **MY LIBRARIAN**- All first-year students at the University of Richmond (Va.) receive a personalized letter from an Outreach and Instruction librarian at the Boatwright Library. The letter briefly introduces him/herself and the library's services. Each letter is signed and a business card enclosed. The letter works- many students use the contact and some tell next year's freshmen students about it.
- **CELEBRATING DIVERSITY**—The Pelican Rapids (MN) Public Library reached out to its increasingly diverse community with an exhibit titled “The Faces of Change” featuring photos and interviews with more than 40 community members, including many new immigrants. The exhibit brought many of the newcomers and their friends to the library for the first time.
- **THE A+ PARTNERSHIP**—The Howard County Library, Columbia, MD, launched the A+ Partnership with the local school district. Every school and every library has a liaison. The library director and local library head met with every school principal, reading specialist and media specialist. Activities include a library card sign-up campaign and a spelling bee sponsored with the local newspaper.

Really Good Resources

Books

Libraries, Mission & Marketing: Writing Mission Statements That Work.

Linda K. Wallace, American Library Association. 2004. Can you say your library's mission statement? That's what we thought. This book is dedicated to the proposition that your mission statement is your library's ultimate message. You should say what you do and do what you say.

Mission-Based Marketing: Positioning Your Not-for-Profit in an Increasingly Competitive World, 2nd Ed.,

Peter C. Brinckerhoff, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2002. Brinckerhoff provides a clear, step-by-step guide for identifying and understanding your markets, considering the competition, needs vs. wants and lots more. Practical and interesting.

The Secrets of Word-of-Mouth Marketing. George Silverman, American Management Association, 2001. Silverman says traditional advertising doesn't have the impact it once did and makes a great case for an organized, strategic approach to word of mouth. This is good news and a practical strategy for libraries, since we couldn't afford traditional advertising.

Online

Campaign for America's Libraries: www.ala.org/@your_library/

A wealth of messages, ideas and strategies for promoting the value of libraries and librarians using the first-ever international library brand.

Word of Mouth Marketing Association: <http://womma.org>

Word of mouth now has its own association with a great free newsletter. Sign up here.