How To Market Your Library

By Victor Caputo
Who Am I?

- I have worked as the Director of Public Relations/Programs at Bryant Library for 15 years.
- I worked as a media coordinator in NYC.
- I started my library career as the Coordinator of Public Relations/Programs at Hicksville Library and stayed there for 4 years.
- I have a BFA in Journalism from CW Post, an MS in Marketing from Hofstra, an MLS from Queens College.
- Completed library management certificate program in December.
- President of Supernova Marketing & Public Relations Consultants.
In “library land” advertising and marketing are buzz words. What we really spend most of our time doing is public relations.

Very few libraries, if any have a marketing budget.

- TV ads, Radio spots
- Ads on search engines (Do we ever see a library ad on the right hand side of our Google page?)
- Ads in newspapers magazines
- Railroad platforms and on buses and trains
- Promotional items
“In a perfect world, the library would be the top-of-the list destination for information seekers. Unfortunately, in the real world, the public library may rate closer to 11 as the chosen place to seek information.

The truth is, the library isn’t on the radar screen of many people who think of themselves as information literate.”

What is Marketing?

- **Marketing** is the process by which companies create customer interest in goods or services.
Putting the right product in the right place, at the right price, at the right time.

- Our most advanced technology in a magical & revolutionary device at an unbelievable price.
The Marketing Mix
(The 4Ps)
Product

- What is it that we are selling?
- What does our community want from the library?
- How are we different than our competition?
  - Ex: Barnes and Noble, Google
How much does our product cost?
What is our value?
How does our price compare to our competitors?
Do we have a good answer to tell our patrons?

We are not free so that is the wrong answer!
Place

- How do people find us?
- Do they visit us online or in person?
- Do we bring the library to them through community fairs, school functions, etc? Remember book mobiles.
- Where are our competitors? How are they letting people find them?
Promotion

- How can we get our message to our target market?
- When is the best time to promote a service or event?
- What is the best way to market our events?
- How do our competitors promote their products?
The 7 Ps of Marketing
People

- Develop the habit of thinking in terms of the people, inside and outside of your business, who are responsible for every element of your sales and marketing strategy and activities.
- Word of Mouth marketing.
You should develop the habit of thinking continually about how you are positioned in the hearts and minds of your customers.

How do people think and talk about you when you're not present?

How do people think and talk about your company?

What positioning do you have in your market in terms of the specific words people use when they describe you and your offerings to others?
Packaging

- Develop the habit of standing back and looking at every visual element in the packaging of your product or service through the eyes of a critical prospect.
- Remember, people form their first impression about you within the first 30 seconds of seeing you or some element of your company.
- Small improvements in the packaging or external appearance of your product or service can often lead to completely different reactions from your customers.
What is Advertising

- Advertising is part of the overall marketing plan.
- Advertising is: “The paid, public, non-personal announcement of a persuasive message by an identified sponsor; the non-personal presentation or promotion by a firm of its products to its existing and potential customers.”
A library is a collection of resources in a variety of formats that is organized by information professionals or other experts who:

- Provide convenient physical, digital, bibliographic, or intellectual access.
- Offer targeted services and programs with the mission of educating, informing, or entertaining a variety of audiences.
- Stimulate individual learning and advancing society as a whole.
Libraries are a product.

To inform customers (patrons) of the goods and services offered by the library.

To draw customers into the Library.

To lay the groundwork for future library use:

- Repeat users (customers)
- Future generations of library users
Why Must We Market Our Library?

- Information is a commodity.
- Competition is fierce.

If we don’t market our services, who will?
What is Branding?

- The marketing practice of creating a name, symbol or design that identifies and differentiates a product from other products.
The Library is a Brand

- Do you know what your library brand is?
Do You Have a Brand?
Do We Stand Out in a Crowd?

Google™

Best Buy

facebook

@your library™

TARGET

Yahoo!®
Contents of The Marketing Plan

- Library Mission Statement
- Situational Analysis
- SWOT Analysis
- Objectives
- Target Market
- Financial Outlook
- Strategy
- Goals
Situation Analysis

- Understand your external and internal situation (know who you are).
- Know your market.
- Understand your customer.
- Know your library’s capabilities.
- Forecast trends in your environment.
A SWOT analysis must first start with defining a desired end state or objective. It may be incorporated into the strategic planning model.

- **Strengths**: characteristics that give you an advantage over others in the industry
- **Weaknesses**: characteristics that place you at a disadvantage relative to others
- **Opportunities**: external chances to make greater sales or profits in the environment
- **Threats**: external elements in the environment that could cause trouble for you
Important Aspects of a Marketing Plan

- Set clear and realistic goals.
- Indicate who is responsible for each aspect.
- Include a deadline.
- Provide a budget.
- Have someone who is responsible for monitoring the results.
Marketing Starts With The People

- It is less costly to keep existing customers than to find new ones.
- Provide excellent customer service.
- **Rule of nine:** For every one person who leaves unhappy, nine people will hear about it from that patron.
- How much do you value good customer service where you shop?
- Make your customers feel welcome.

*Do not let them leave empty handed*
The concept of libraries being “all things to all people” is too large to market effectively
- Market is too big with too many variables
- Understand and determine the needs, wants and demands of the community you serve
- Develop marketing campaigns to select target groups
  - Adults
  - Children
  - Young Adults
Who Is Our Competition?
What Do We Do?

- We market our worth.
- The Library needs to be an active participant within the community.
- All staff is important in the marketing of the library.
- Recognize your competition and meet them head on.
- Know your customer.
Newsletters

- Decide what you want your newsletter to be
- Do you want it to be a calendar listing, program announcements, or like a newspaper with all of the above including articles about the library
- Is the newsletter your main marketing item?
Send press releases to all media outlets including local papers.

Online resources such as calendars listing events in your area.

College radio and local radio stations.
Flyers

- In the Library
- In local businesses
- At local village halls
- At the schools
Social Media

- Use Social Media as one avenue of marketing, but don’t make it your primary marketing tool.
- Library blog on your own website.
Pinterest is quickly becoming a major player in social networking, and proves just how important visual content has become on the web. As the fastest standalone site ever to reach 10 million monthly unique visits, Pinterest's beautiful and intuitive pinboard-style platform on the web and on mobile is one of the most incredible resources for collecting the best images and categorizing them on your own boards.
Where Do Our Patrons Go?

- Instagram has grown to be one of the most popular social networks for photo sharing that the mobile web has ever seen. It's the ultimate social network for sharing real-time photos and short videos while on the go. Instagram was bought for a hefty $1 billion in 2012.

- Tumblr is an extremely popular social blogging platform heavily used by teens and younger users. Like Pinterest, it's popular for sharing visual content. You can customize your blog theme, post all different types of content formats, follow other users and be followed back. Reblogging and “liking” is a popular way to interact. If you post great content, you might be surprised to see how many followers you can attract.
Where Do Our Patrons Go?

- Do you remember MySpace?
- Others include:
  - Twitter
  - YouTube
  - Snapchat
  - Facebook
Marketing Suggestions

- Community Outreach (Be a presence)
  - The public schools
  - Host open houses
  - Civic events
- Library logo on bookmarks, reusable bags, pens, mouse pads, etc
- Conduct surveys
- Facebook, Twitter and blogs
- Direct email of library events and services
- Programs for all ages
Marketing Suggestions

- Be members of community organizations (Rotary, Chamber of Commerce).
- Include all staff in the marketing process.
- If a marketing plan is not working, don’t be afraid to throw it away.
In order for a good marketing plan to be effective, libraries themselves must change their culture in order to grow

- Throw out old stereotypes
- Be knowledgeable and part of today’s culture
- Change with the world, don’t live in the past
- Be inviting, not intimidating
- Friendly not cold
- Customers choose to use you and could easily choose to go somewhere else
Marketing is the most important thing you, as a library, can do because without patrons there are no libraries.
Thank you!

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