

# *Marketing as a Team Sport*

**A workshop for the Alaska Library Association**

**Presented by  
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Friday, February 24, 2006  
1:30- 3:00 p.m.

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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# Goals

- To introduce basic marketing principles.
- To build skills and identify tools needed to help all staff join the marketing team.

# Agenda

## Introductions/Ground rules

*If you could have a marketing miracle, what would that look like?*

## What is Marketing?

Basic concepts and terminology

## Building a Marketing Communications Plan

- **Introduction**
- **Goals**
- **Objectives**
- **Positioning** (Image)
- **The message**  
What makes a message memorable?
- **Key audiences** (Internal & External)  
Whom do you want to reach?  
The “80-20” rule
- **Delivering the message: Strategies**  
What do you do now? What works? What doesn't?  
What could you do...new, more, better?  
The most powerful strategy of all: Word-of-mouth Marketing
- **Evaluation: How do you know it's working?**

## Next Steps

Questions

Evaluations

# 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. (Kotler/Levy)*

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, circ, trends etc.
  - C. Define your audience (market segments) and their needs. LISTEN.
- 2) **Plan:** Set strategic goals, determine objectives, develop service strategies.
  - A. Start with the library's mission. (Become mission driven, market dependent)
  - 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. Have a clear rationale. Formulate goals and *measurable* objectives that support the library's strategic goals. Identify your positioning, message, target audience(s), strategies for reaching them and evaluation measures. Establish a 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.

# Definitions

**Advocacy:** Persuasive communication designed to plead or make the case for a cause or point of view. Libraries and other nonprofit organizations use advocacy to win support for funding and other issues that affect their users. Lobbying is advocacy focused on legislation and is subject to IRS guidelines.

**Advertising:** The placement and purchase of time or space for announcements and messages in the media.

**Brand:** Brand is another word for identity as conveyed in print and other communications. A logo is one way to convey identity.

**Community relations:** How a library interacts in the locality in which it operates.

**Direct marketing:** Promotion designed to go directly to a target audience—generally direct mail.

**Emarketing:** Reaching out to particular markets of users/potential users using the Internet as a communications and distribution channel.

**Market:** Potential users or customers.

**Marketing mix:** A mix of controllable variables that may be used to reach goals and objectives. Core variables include: Price, product, place and promotion.

**Positioning:** How you want users and potential users to perceive your product or service—what separates it from the competition.

**Point of purchase:** Promotional materials placed at the contact “sales” point to attract user interest or call attention to a special offer.

**Public relations:** All the ways that your library relates/communicates with the public, including community/campus outreach, customer service, the media.

**Publicity:** Communications intended to promote your products or services that do not involve paid advertising, e.g. news releases, public service announcements, fliers, posters.

**Strategic marketing plan:** The entire marketing process including research, design, development and distribution of products/services, communicating the value and evaluating the success of these efforts.

**Target audience/market:** A segment of the population selected as the focus of a marketing effort in order to accomplish the stated objectives.

*Adapted from the Section on Management and Marketing: Glossary of Marketing Definitions, IFLANet, developed by using Peter Bennett's Dictionary of Marketing Terms,*

# Library 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 Web site?
  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 web address).
  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 web site a “branch library?”
- 15. Body Language**—What is the unspoken message being delivered by staff?

*What other ways are you communicating?????*

## 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.

# Building A Communications Plan

The following is a basic communications plan outline. Use it as a roadmap.

## 1. Introduction

*The why  
Use research.  
Keep it brief.*

## 2. Communication goals

*The Dream. Big picture.  
Make no small plans.*

## 3. Objectives

*3-5 Measurable steps toward your goal*

## 4. Positioning statement

*What is your unique selling proposition?  
What you say must be true, relevant and powerful.  
Positioning is a promise. Everyone on the staff should understand the library's  
positioning and their role in communication.*

Example (North Carolina State Library): *"The library is the best first stop for  
expert help in connecting children and youth to learning and discovery."*

## 5. Key audiences (External and Internal)

*Should be tied to your goals/objectives  
Internal audiences are constant, as are funders  
Focus on 3- no more than 5- additional audiences: If you talk to everyone, you  
talk to no one.*

## 6. Key message

*What is the most important thing you want people to know/do?*

*Support with three talking points.*

*Ultimate message is the library's mission.*

*Clear. Conscious. Consistent.*

*Easy to say. Easy to remember*

*7 X rule*

*Message sheet. Get everyone on the same page*

## 7. Communication strategies

*How will you deliver the message? e.g. media, publications, presentations*

*Be creative. Use all the available channels.*

*Get beyond bookmarks and brochures--or have a plan when you use them.*

*Be sure to use the most powerful strategy of all—Word of Mouth Marketing*

## 8. Evaluation measures

*How will you know what worked and what didn't?*

*Evaluation is not about success or failure. It's about learning. What worked?*

*What didn't? Do it better next time.*

*Refer back to objectives.*

*Don't wait till it's over. If it's not working, fix it or drop it.*

# Really Good Ideas

- **BARK IF YOU LOVE LIBRARIES**—Ellie (short for Library Enthusiast) makes a delightful mascot for the Polk County (N.C.) Library. A real, live book hound “from her knows to her tale,” Ellie makes appearances in community parades and other events and is often rewarded with money for the library’s building campaign.
- **MMMMM-GOOD**—Some 65 people turned out to learn about databases and enjoy dessert (donated by local businesses) at a program titled Data & Dessert sponsored by Corvallis (OR) School District and the Corvallis-Benton County Library System. The free program was offered at both a middle school and public library. A local paper carried a feature with comments from enthusiastic participants.
- **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.
- **A BEST VALUE**—The Winter Park (FL) Public Library figured the return on its community investment and came up with a whopping 620% return on each taxpayer dollar received.” The figure was the subject of much boasting in local media, the library’s newsletter and a brochure.
- **GET CAUGHT READING EXHIBIT**—The Highland Park (IL) Public Library opened a photo exhibit featuring local readers of various ages in action during National Library Week. The photos were taken by staff and residents.
- **A WINNING RECIPE**—From Suzanne Schwichtenberg, at the Lewis and Clark Library, Helena, MT. Buy some chocolates and arrange for chair massages in the staff room. Provide open-ended questionnaires on the table along with the chocolates and ask for input on how to improve. Acknowledge their frustration and sympathize with their fears. After the venting and the rubdown, ask staff to focus on solutions and implement their suggestions.
- **THE DAILY BUZZ**—The office manager at Pekin (IL) Public Library emails a daily announcement of meetings and activities to staff, along with “Don’t Get Stung” reminders for staff about policy changes/other news items. The announcement is also is posted on bulletin boards.
- **REALLY GOOD AND REALLY SIMPLE**—Mary Dempsey, Chicago Public Library Commissioner, sends an end-of-year memo to every staff member, highlighting the year’s accomplishments and extending her appreciation.

# Really Good Resources

## Books...

***Mission-Based Marketing: Positioning Your Not-for-Profit in an Increasingly Competitive World, 2nd Ed.***, Peter C. Brinckerhoff, John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2002. \$35.00. A little expensive, but worth it. Borrow it from the library! 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, \$17.95. 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 can seldom afford traditional advertising.

***Libraries, Mission & Marketing: Writing Mission Statements That Work.*** Linda K. Wallace, American Library Association. 2005, \$27.00. How many of your staff can 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.

## Online . . .

**Campaign for America's Libraries: [www.ala.org/@your\\_library/](http://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.

***Library Media & PR: [www.ssdesign.com/librarypr/](http://www.ssdesign.com/librarypr/)***  
Terrific online newsletter with ideas, strategies, tips, updates on book/movie tie-ins. downloadable art and more.

**Library Research Service: [www.lrs.org/oldsite.htm](http://www.lrs.org/oldsite.htm)**  
For an extremely useful community analysis form, look in the left column under Data/Public Libraries. More useful planning tools, including sample community surveys, can be found under Tools at the bottom of the page.

***Marketing Library Services: [www.infotoday.com/mls/default.shtml](http://www.infotoday.com/mls/default.shtml)***  
A bi-monthly newsletter with excellent ideas and advice for information professionals in all types of libraries. You'll find practical suggestions for strategic planning, increasing business and proving your value. Sign up here.

***Marketing Treasures: [chrisolson.com/marketingtreasures/indexmt.html](http://chrisolson.com/marketingtreasures/indexmt.html)***  
A free monthly newsletter filled with ideas, insights and examples of how libraries of all types are getting their message out. Sign up here.

**Millennium Library Survey:** [www.svls.lib.ca.us/SVLS/html/millennium.html](http://www.svls.lib.ca.us/SVLS/html/millennium.html)  
Conducted by Godbe Research Associates for the Silicon Library System, this study of consumers in the California Bay area was reported in April 2000, but the results remain VERY relevant for libraries all over the country. A 2005 survey has just been completed and is also available on the SVLS website.

***Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources***

***www.oclc.org/reports/2005perceptions.htm*** The much discussed report of a June 2005 OCLC survey of 3,300 English-speaking residents of the U.S. and five other countries. It says that people are using libraries less and read less since they began using the Internet. -And there are many more eye-opening survey findings.

***PR Talk Discussion List***

A lively idea exchange for library staff interested in marketing/PR related topics. To subscribe, send message to: [alaproc@ala.org](mailto:alaproc@ala.org). Leave the subject blank. In the body of the message, type: subscribe PR Talk [your first and last name]

**The Smartest Card. The Smartest Campaign:** [www.ala.org/pla](http://www.ala.org/pla)

Check out the toolkit for this PLA/ALA campaign. You'll find downloadable graphics, sample message sheets, tips and more.

**Wabash & Lake:** [www.wabashandlake.com](http://www.wabashandlake.com)

This Chicago consulting firm is dedicated to creating "customer evangelists." Their focus on word-of-mouth and non-traditional marketing is refreshing. They produce a free e-mail newsletter that is full of good ideas and well worth reading.

## ***Marketing is....***

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