

Marketing

@your library[®]
The Campaign for America's Libraries

**Simple steps that
will help you create an
@ your library campaign**

Marketing @ your library

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I. Introduction

Welcome to the ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. By attending The Campaign for America's Libraries training, you demonstrate that telling the library story is everyone's job, whether you work in an academic, research, school or public library.

This workbook will help you tell your library story by leading you through steps on how to prepare an effective marketing plan.

Be sure to inform the ALA Campaign for America's Libraries of your efforts by sending your success story to mmcfarlane@ala.org.

We can't wait to see the results you achieve @ your library.



Judith Gibbons
Chair, ALA Public Awareness Committee
2007

II. The Campaign for America's Libraries Phase Two

In a 1999 ALA survey, members indicated that “ALA needs to do more to educate the public about the value of libraries” and ranked public awareness and advocacy among the highest priorities for the association.

Out of that survey was born The Campaign for America's Libraries, the largest public awareness and advocacy initiative the ALA has ever undertaken.

During the Campaign's first five years, its messages reached 20,000 libraries across the country and even more around the world, as libraries and library organizations got on board, bringing the @ your library brand and messages about today's libraries to local communities.

To ensure the Campaign was useful to all libraries, five additional campaigns were launched, focusing on the needs of specific library types and services. Those campaigns created tools specifically for academic and research libraries, school libraries, public libraries, rural libraries and children's librarians.

The library message was amplified beyond library walls, as well, through partnerships with Major League Baseball and the National Baseball Hall of Fame, Woman's Day magazine, 3M Library Systems, Walgreens, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage and more.

We also want to thank ALA Champions for their support of this important effort.

In 2005, the ALA Executive Board approved a five-year extension for The Campaign for America's Libraries. The second phase of the Campaign will continue to deliver the key messages that:

Libraries are changing and dynamic places;
Libraries are places of opportunity; and
Libraries bring you the world.

Special focus will be given to additional areas identified as important by the ALA membership, such as outreach to more diverse audiences and the promotion of key library issues, including the value of libraries in the community, libraries as the “cornerstone of democracy,” and libraries' role in bridging the “digital divide” and providing access to information for all.

Now is the perfect time to put the Campaign's tools and messages to work for you in your community. For more information – including tools, resources and information about partnership programs - visit the Campaign Web site at www.ala.org/@yourlibrary.

About the workbook: Much of the content for this workbook comes from the AASL “@ your library Toolkit for School Library Media Programs,” the ACRL “@ your library Toolkit for Academic and Research Libraries,” both edited by Linda Wallace, and the ALA “Advocacy Action Plan Workbook,” the content and concept for which came from “Making Our Voices Heard: Citizens Speak Out for Libraries,” published by Friends of Libraries U.S.A.

III. Building a Communications Plan

Building a communications/marketing plan is an essential step in getting the word out about your library. It will provide a strategic framework for the ways you communicate with the audiences that are important to your efforts. The plan should support the overall mission and goals of your library and should be reviewed and updated annually. It should be practical and doable.

A. Introduction: What is the environment?

Briefly outline challenges and opportunities to be addressed, relevant data and other key factors.

For example: People are aware of the library but think our programs and services are primarily for children/students.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

B. Goals: What do you want to happen?

Describe the desired outcomes – your dream. Your communication goals should support your library’s overall goals.

For example: All community members will see the library as a place that has something for everyone.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Prioritize your goals. Which are most important to you? List in order of importance.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

C. Objectives: What will be accomplished?

Objectives are doable and measurable.

Some examples:

We will see an increase in attendance at our adult programming in the next 12 months.

There will be a 20% increase in circulation in the next 12 months.

The library will have a Friends group within 6 months.

Web site traffic will increase by 20% this year.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

D. Positioning statement: How do you want the library to be perceived?

Define the image you would like for your library. Consider the competition. What do you offer they don't? What are your library's unique "selling points"?

For example: Our library offers free access to information for all. People of all ages and backgrounds can come to our library to find the information they need and get personal assistance in finding it from trained information professionals – our librarians.

E. Target audiences: Who needs to hear your message?

What groups would you like to reach with your message? Why is your library, its resources and services important to them? What do you want them to think? Feel? Do?

Internal audiences might include:

- Library staff
- Library board/Trustees
- Friends group

External audiences might include:

- Parents
- Students
- Decision makers (principals, school board administrators, mayors)
- Students
- Teachers

Internal Audiences

External Audiences

1. _____

1. _____

2. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____

Prioritize your audiences. Which audiences are the most important to reach now? Which audiences do you want to reach further down the line?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

F. Key message(s): *What are the most important messages you wish to deliver?*

Your key message(s) are the most important thing you want others to know. The key message should be repeated as often and as consistently as possible in person, in print, online and in other materials for maximum impact. It should be easy to say and remember – no more than 15 words. Different messages might be appropriate for different audiences.

The three messages from the @ your library Campaign are:

Libraries are changing and dynamic places.

Libraries are places of opportunity.

Libraries bring you the world.

What are your key messages?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Using your key messages, you can craft slogans to help deliver your messages in a succinct, creative way. Examples of slogans that have been developed for @ your library campaigns have included:

There's so much to see, so much to do @ your library

Every student succeeds @ your library

The Smartest Card. Get it. Use it. @ your library

Smart starts @ your library

Make the grade @ your library

What are some slogans you can create from your key messages?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

G. Strategies: How will you deliver the message?

Identify publicity and outreach activities aimed at your target audiences. Strategies for delivering the message include:

Library newsletter: Integrate the brand into your newsletter's logo and design. Your newsletter gives you the "power of the press." Once you have come up with a message or slogan that is powerful for the library, use it often and remember to explain what's behind the message.

Web site: Be sure to keep it updated and visually interesting with your messages visible.

General promotional materials: Bookmarks, book bags, program flyers, membership renewals, direct mailings for membership drives -- all of these materials are opportunities to give visibility to your message and the brand. These materials also travel well: leave them in local businesses and with other community groups.

Letters to the Editor: Everyone reads letters to the editor, short, time-sensitive letters anyone can write that the paper prints at its discretion. A good way to "hook" library promotion into a letter to the editor is to respond to a big issue that the press is covering showing how libraries make a difference in the public's lives.

Op-Ed: Op-eds provide a place in papers for readers to express their views. Most op-eds are about 500-750 words. Here is what will help you get some excellent press coverage via this more in-depth citizen editorial:

- Have a well known citizen write it.
- Tie into a major issue facing the city.
- Call the editor and talk to him or her about writing an op-ed piece and find out what topic is likely to be printed.

Radio: Develop radio public service announcements (PSAs) for airing on local channels.

Visit with the radio station and tell them about what the library has to offer and why it matters to everyone in the community. Ask the station to develop three or four PSAs using your message/slogan and the @ your library brand as a tag line.

Television: Getting coverage of library events can be challenging unless the event is highly unusual. The key is to try to hook the station into covering something that will have significant visual appeal and/or special interest appeal. Talk to the station manager about what kinds of community programs are most likely to get some air time.

Another television avenue is to book your spokesperson on a local noon show or on public access television. This will give you an opportunity to really get your message across whereas coverage of an event is likely to last no more than 10 seconds. Call the station manager to see about being a guest on a local show.

Presentations: Nothing is more effective than personal contact. That's the upside. The downside is that you can't reach as many people at once with your message. You'll need to create and train an entire cadre of Friends and volunteers to get the message out in person.

Civic organizations such as the Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis, etc. always welcome guest speakers. Many of your Friends will belong to their own clubs and organizations as well. Make a list of all the opportunities there are in your community to get some "face time" and begin scheduling speaking engagements.

Remember to "know your audience." Make sure when you talk about the importance of the library and its services you are tailoring your comments to what is of interest to your audience. If you are talking to physicians, for example, talk about the link between health and literacy and all that the library does to support literacy – beginning at birth. If you are talking to the gardening club, talk about the importance of lovely, well maintained libraries as an important part of civic beauty.

When considering which strategies to use, consider your audience.

Who is your audience?

What is the best way to reach your audience?

When is the deadline? Will your message be distributed in time to be effective?

How much will it cost? Is it the most effective use of funds?

Why is this the best strategy for this audience?

Partnering in the community – extending your reach

Collaboration is a key strategy for extending the reach and visibility of your messages.

Who are your allies?

How can they help you extend your reach?

Tips for collaboration:

- Don't assume that others know what you have to offer. If you see an opportunity of mutual benefit, take the lead. Use collaboration as an opportunity to educate others about the library's role in the community (school, campus, community).
- Don't assume you know what others have to offer. Do some homework before you make your move.
- Be patient and persistent. Scheduling and details can be challenging when working with many parties.
- Try to keep everyone on the same page through multiple types of communication on a frequent, regular basis.
- Make sure your boss and everyone on staff are aware of the nature of the collaboration and the reasons behind it. Invite their input.
- Get to know your co-workers.
- Confirm goals and expectations in writing for all contributors.
- Build in an evaluation process.
- Be sure to thank everyone involved.

H. Evaluation measures: How will you know what worked and what didn't?

Your objectives should provide a clear means of evaluation. Frequently used measures include: circulation, Web site visits, attendance at programs, number of media stories placed/speeches given, follow-up surveys/interviews, word-of-mouth feedback, letters of appreciation, honors received. Review each strategy and why it did or didn't work. Use what you learned in making future marketing and communications plans.

How will you evaluate your plan?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I. Putting It Together

What are your goals?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Who is your audience?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are your key messages?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What strategies will you implement?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

IV. Additional Resources

The Campaign for America's Libraries

www.ala.org/@yourlibrary

Promotion ideas, sample press materials, downloadable artwork and PSAs, tips and suggestions for National Library Week, Library Card Sign-up Month and more.

ALA Public Information Office

www.ala.org/pio

Develops and implements strategic communications plans tied to association goals and priorities in the areas of media relations, crisis communications and public awareness, including @ your library, The Campaign for America's Libraries. Provides public relations counsel and media training and support to ALA offices, coordinates key national media relations efforts and develops support materials to help librarians promote their programs and services.

ALA Advocacy Center

www.ala.org; Click on “Issues & Advocacy.”

Tools and publications to help you advocate for your library, including the “Stand Up and Speak Out for Libraries” Action Kit, Library Advocate’s Handbook and the popular “Quotable Facts About America’s Libraries.”

Library Administration and Management Association (LAMA)

www.ala.org/lama

A division of ALA, LAMA has a Public Relations and Marketing Section. Sponsors programs, workshops, annual “Swap and Shop” at ALA Annual Conference, “Best of Show” and John Cotton Dana Awards for library public relations.

@ your library® Toolkit for Academic and Research Libraries

www.ala.org/@yourlibrary; Click on “ACRL Academic and Research Library Campaign.”

Key messages, outreach strategies, media relations materials and tips for marketing and promotion. Online version available in both Word and PDF formats. Hard copy also available for purchase. Web site also features additional resources. From the Association of College and Research Libraries.

@ your library® Toolkit for School Library Media Programs

www.ala.org/@yourlibrary; Click on “AASL School Library Campaign.”

Messaging, marketing, promotion and advocacy for school library media programs and school library media specialists. Hard copy also available for purchase. Online version available in both Word and PDF formats. From the American Association of School Librarians.

“Smartest Card. Get It. Use It. @ your library” Campaign

www.pla.org; Click on “Smartest Card” logo.

Resource materials to help public libraries participate in the Smartest Card Campaign and help make the library card “the most valuable card in your wallet.” From the Public Library Association.

“Kids! @ your library” Campaign

www.ala.org/kids

Tips and tools for promoting library services to children in grades K-4. From the Association for Library Service to Children.

A Small but Powerful Guide to Winning Big Support for Your Rural Library and Small is Powerful Online Toolkit

www.ala.org/rural

Tips and tools from the ALA Rural, Native and Tribal Libraries of All Kinds Committee, in collaboration with the ALA Office for Literacy and Outreach Services and The Campaign for America’s Libraries. Online tools include a sample action plan, answering hard questions and more.

Communications Handbook

www.ala.org/commhandbook

From the ALA Public Information Office, this handbook was designed to help librarians and others develop and achieve effective media coverage and win support for libraries and their programs. Starting with the basics, it defines publicity and how it can help a library attract attention, create interest and gain support and continues through creating a communications plan to connect with media.

Discussion Lists

To subscribe to any of the electronic discussion lists below, visit <http://lists.ala.org> and click on “login.” First-time users will click on “send me a password.” Once logged in, click on “view all lists,” then the list name.

PRTALK

Electronic discussion list maintained by the ALA Public Information Office that provides opportunity to discuss marketing/promotion, advocacy, outreach, public and media relations.

CAMPAIGN

Discussion list providing news, updates and idea-sharing for @ your library®, The Campaign for America’s Libraries. Maintained by the ALA Public Information Office.

ALANEWS

ALA’s weekly news digest comes out on Tuesday afternoons in an email format. News items are also posted concurrently on the ALA homepage at www.ala.org.

ACADEMICPR

Electronic discussion list maintained by the Association of College and Research Libraries to share ideas and best practices related to marketing, PR and outreach in academic and research libraries.

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