

# PLA Campaign Plan

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## INTRODUCTION:

In September 2004, the Public Library Association will launch an exciting new campaign to help promote the value of public libraries nationwide. The message: *“A library card is the smartest card. Get one and use it.”* A full menu of resources will be provided to support librarians in reaching out to their communities. The campaign builds on ALA’s Campaign for America’s Libraries. The goals and messages are linked to the PLA Strategic Plan, where one of the four key goals within the 3-5 year planning timetable is “Advocacy & Recognition: Public Libraries will be recognized as the destination for a wide variety of valuable services and their funding will be a community priority.”

## GOALS:

- The library card will be the most valued and used card in every wallet.
- Funders/community leaders will value and support America’s public libraries.
- All library staff will understand the value of the campaign and be enthusiastic supporters

## OBJECTIVES:

### *For PLA:*

- The number of cardholders will increase nationally.
- Every governor will be presented with an honorary “smartest card.”
- All library staff will receive instruction in word-of-mouth marketing.
- Library managers will have tools to help motivate their staffs to be library advocates.

### *For local public libraries:*

- Library funding will increase.
- Library use will increase in person and online.
- The number of library cardholders will increase.

## POSITIONING:

Is there anything more American, more magical, more empowering than a library card? A library card is more than an ID. It is a symbol of what the library offers and what it represents in our democracy. From cradle to grave, a library card signifies the opportunity for learning and enjoyment for all people. Libraries are a bargain for taxpayers, allowing us to share resources and services that most of us could never afford on our own.

## **KEY AUDIENCES:**

*Internal:* The Library Family-staff, trustees, friends, volunteers

*External:*

- 1) Influentials: Funders & policymakers/business & community leaders
- 2) Families
- 3) 20-30 “somethings” (parents and non-parents)
- 4) Seniors
- 5) New Americans
- 6) Teens

**KEY MESSAGE/TAGLINE:** The Smartest Card: Get it. Use it. @ your library

Talking points:

- Public libraries are partners for vibrant and educated communities.
- Public libraries are essential for a free people.
- Public libraries are places of opportunity.

## ***YEAR I (2004-05)***

### **KEY AUDIENCES**

*Internal:* Library staff

*External:*

- 1) Influentials: Funders & policymakers/  
Business & community leaders
- 2) Families

### **STRATEGIES**

***Internal:***

1. Produce a menu of online materials and tools for statewide and local library use.

*Internal:* Staff motivation  
Message sheets  
Sample communication plan

*External:* Sample materials for reaching each audience:  
Message sheets  
Camera-ready art online  
Links to relevant materials e.g. *Library Advocate's Handbook*

2. Develop a state network to build ownership and participation in the campaign by every state.  
-Sponsor a preconference in Orlando. Provide tools:

3. Promote the campaign to internal audiences.
  - Announce at all PLA programs at Annual.
  - Provide a fact-sheet/handout for conference bags.
  - Focus an issue of *PUBLIC LIBRARIES* on the campaign.
4. Provide promotion tools for local libraries: poster/bookmark for Library Card Sign-Up (directed at parents)
5. Recruit Friends and allies to help deliver the message:
  - FOLUSA, ALTA, NCLIS, IMLS
  - ALA Graphics
  - 3M
  - Gates Foundation
  - Senior Service America
6. Encourage every state reach out to “state influentials”, e.g. governor or other public official/celebrity with “smartest card” media event.
7. Sponsor a competition for local libraries to submit their best ideas and strategies for motivating staff.
8. Develop a Fish-type motivational kit for library employees that will support them in supporting their libraries.

***External:***

1. Recruit a celebrity spokesperson to appear on campaign materials/do endorsements.
2. Kick off campaign with visit by the PBS Lions during Library Card Sign-up Month in September 2004.
3. Focus LCSM media materials on the “smartest card.”
  - PIO to develop and send to targeted magazines and newspapers.
  - Sample press materials to be posted on Web site.
  - ALA Graphics will offer library card sign-up materials with the campaign theme.
4. Seek speaking opportunities at the U.S. Governor’s Conference/other gathering for national policymakers.
5. Present library cards to all governors.
6. Work with ALA Washington Office to make “the smartest card” the theme for National Library Legislative Day.
  - Give every member of Congress a button/handout.
  - Make materials available for state legislative days.

7. Seek national partners, e.g. retail stores, credit card companies, etc., who will feature “the smartest card” in national advertising/in-store promotions or provide financial/other support.