

***Bite-Sized Marketing: Realistic Solutions for the Overworked Librarian* by Nancy Dowd, Mary Evangeliste, and Jonathan Silberman. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2010. 140pp, \$48.00, ISBN 9780838910009**

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The library profession has been concerned with public relations and marketing for more than 100 years. Many librarians trace this concept to the 1896 ALA Conference when Lutie Stearns of the Milwaukee Public Library presented a talk on advertising a library and its services (Iyengar, 1996, p. 147). A search of WorldCat in April 2010 reveals 152 unique items, dating back to the 1960s. While the concept of marketing in libraries is hardly new or rare within library literature, *Bite-Sized Marketing: Realistic Solutions for the Overworked Librarian* takes a novel approach to it by providing ideas for “simplifying and streamlining” the process in a way that is both understandable and meaningful (xi).

Authors Nancy Dowd, Mary Evangeliste, and Jonathan Silberman bring a distinctive set of experiences to this volume. Each of the three authors have developed and implemented successful marketing campaigns for various libraries and library services, winning national awards in marketing from ALA and ACRL. Collaborating to publish 11 chapters that discuss different approaches to promoting library services, the authors lay out a simple plan of action in each chapter, providing readers with specific ideas and what they will need to enact each strategy or area of marketing. Examples of checklists, questionnaires, and strategies are also included. Chapter topics include word of mouth marketing, using stories, outreach, new media tools, and branding. The volume ends with a chapter on best practices in library marketing, neatly tying the previous 10 chapters together.

*Bite-Sized Marketing* is not geared toward any specific type of library or library environment; for the most part, the concepts and ideas discussed within this resource are general enough to be applicable and appropriate within any library setting. The majority of the examples throughout the 11 chapters come from the public environment. Many “teen” related examples are provided, as well as a few examples of applications to the academic or special library setting. Chapter 3, “How to Market Electronic Resources,” is an exception, speaking mainly to academic librarians.

Dowd, Evangeliste, and Silberman focus on using new and emerging technologies in each of the chapters. The authors’ precise definitions, clear examples, and quick tips surrounding the use of new technologies work to mitigate any anxiety or intimidation that could be associated with their ideas. When talking about using the social networking photo site Flickr, for example, the authors provide a brief explanation of the site, how it works, possible legal issues, and concrete ideas for getting started. This model applies to all technology tools discussed throughout the book.

In successfully simplifying strategies for creating marketing plans in libraries, Dowd, Evangeliste, and Silberman have oversimplified one important issue: the distinction between marketing and advocacy. This distinction is particularly important because *Bite-Sized Marketing* was published during Dr. Camila Alire’s ALA Presidential Initiative to promote advocacy and increase the library profession’s awareness of its need to support a distinctive course of action that will secure libraries’ required funding. In Chapter 6, “Advocacy,” the authors never provide a functional definition for the term; furthermore, the authors seem to use the term “advocacy” interchangeably with the term “marketing” in several other chapters. In their introduction to the book, the authors mention that marketing is simply “a concerted effort to articulate your value,” a flexible definition that can also extend to include advocacy, but that omits the specifics that make each topic deserving of special attention (p. xi). The marketing/advocacy

distinction needs to be made in order to underscore the unique responsibilities and strategies that accompany advocacy in libraries.

This book represents a valuable resource for library staff members working with emerging technologies, involved with marketing library services, or participating in advocacy campaigns. Additionally, the tools and strategies described in *Bite-Sized Marketing* are also applicable to those working with professional organizations outside the library; anyone who has planned a conference, networking event, or similar function will find the advice offered here valuable. Because Dowd, Evangeliste, and Silberman make the case that all library staff members need to be agents of marketing, this book is also recommended for anyone interested in gaining or reconfirming their perspective on library marketing. With its clear organization, easy to read style, and concrete ideas, this book would make an especially good selection for a professional reading group or an entire library staff's discussion.

### **References**

Iyengar, S. (1996). *Library Public Relations*. New Delhi: Anmol Publications PVT LTD.