

Marketing Information Products for your Library/Organization From Nickels and Dimes to Dollars

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I am going to discuss, how and what other libraries/organizations are doing to market their services and products that are simple, easy to implement and not costly. I will also mention some products and services that others have used to generate some income.

With budget cuts, we need to be innovative and be able to carry out our responsibilities to our respective companies.

Few of us can imagine companies without a library but many businesses can and do okay without them.

The aggressive proactive library that markets its services will reap the rewards of that marketing. If you properly sell yourself, you may be viewed as an essential, integral part of your company versus just being there.

You should define your market and product before you market to your constituents and management. Fortunately, to help you, there is tons of information available on marketing.

Here are a few marketing resources that may interest to you: Individual copies will be available to peruse after this presentation.

- Selected References on Marketing Special Libraries
<http://www.sla.org/membership/irc/market.html>.
- Marketing Tips for Information Professionals: a Practical Workbook available from Lexis-Nexis.
- Special Libraries Association's (SLA) annual conference holds a Swap and Shop that provides attendees opportunities to share marketing tactics and learn how other libraries sell their products and services that includes hot home pages, nifty newsletters and fun fact sheets. They are arranged from small, medium and large libraries
- Newsletters - Marketing Library Services from Information Today, Inc.

In developing your library's marketing plan, find your niche. Why do you exist? What makes your library different than others? For example, Alrene Barnhart, NFPA, specializes in Codes, Nora Jason, NIST, research & testing and my library, local fire/EMS programs. Once you have answered that question, you may find that marketing

your library can be as simple as tabulating the number of requests your library processes or may require developing a comprehensive plan.

This will help you determine whether to emphasize your services over your products when marketing your special library.

Here are some things that other libraries are doing that were gathered from several brown bag lunches with Association Information Services (AIS), roundtable discussions at SLA annual conference and networking with other librarians. Please feel free to interject any marketing tools that you are currently using as we move from one topic to the next.

Information Packets

- The MIC gathers information on local programs, after compiling top ten reference requests and produces a packet of information.
- One library produced 19 packets in one year, they surveyed their membership/constituents, chose one topic and had a sustaining member sponsor and pay to send to their membership for free.

Piggybacking

- Work with other in-house departments, i.e. MIC brochure incorporated into Membership Brochure
- Public Affairs publication standard column. Survey's with other departments.
- Have all staff familiar with products talk about them on the phone with patrons

Advertising

- Ads in newsletters, inside and outside
- 1 page about library services - send out internally or externally
- Monthly articles

Direct Marketing

- For specific topics, the MIC sends direct mail pieces. For example, item that affected the IAFC's Volunteer Section in particular.
- Develop flyer and send with all publication and reference requests.
- Library gave an information packet to every member. The printing and postage was paid for by a sponsor. Last page of information packet provided information on their library - product and services

Brochures

- Show samples from other inFIRE libraries

- Posters

Customization

- Develop logo for library, cover sheets for research projects
- Consistent in what you are sending to patrons - color coordinated - i.e. Cover for reference packets.
- Color coordinate with other departments - ex. Membership packets.

Faxing/Broadcast Fax

- Use cover sheet that has an ad for some of your products, use back sheet for feedback response. The National League of Cities receives a 12-30% return of feedback form as opposed to using postcards. They do more faxing than copying.
- Send a list of publications with every fax
- Make special fax cover sheets to include library information
- Use bottom on fax cover to promote products.
- Broadcast Fax - advertise products/services - do it at night - direct to specific/target groups, like volunteers, etc.
- Fax on Demand - Used by the American Hotel and Motel Association - still going strong because of computer literacy.

ListServes

Mailing Lists

- Hard copy and electronic

Websites

- www.iafc.org - lists MIC services and information packets
- Library database contain studies of cities which provide contact information with email addresses to members could talk with someone

Identifying Trends

- Write articles identify trends at end of year in association newsletter. Influx of requests.
- Refer to information packets surveyed.

Surveys

- Internally and externally - shows you are trying to meet the needs of others.

Training

- Vendor Fairs
- Use of library
- Use of internet

- Use of popular databases
- **Open House**
- Contests
- Trinkets
- Food

National Library Week was an excellent time to sell your library? What did you do?

- Keep in mind, when marketing, don't sell one item (idea) but as many as possible.

Thanks for providing me the opportunity to share these ideas with you today and I want to thank those of you who shared your ideas also. Marketing your library doesn't have to cost a lot but you need to take some time and thought to implement these ideas to promote the success of yourself, your library and your organization.