Introduction to Marketing: It’s More Than Emails, Newsletters, and Social Media
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Building & Maintaining Customer Relationships #1
Presented by the Wisconsin Valley Library Service,
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Key Idea

Understand and Respond Successfully to Your Library Customers’ Points Of View.
Outcomes

• Improve “sales” and “service” figures with better rapport with library customers.
• Introduce customer feedback from the beginning during your library’s product and service development.
• Improve response to advertising by emphasizing library customer benefits.
Agenda

• Library Marketing’s *Big Umbrella*: Customer Input, Public Relations, Advertising, and Community Relations
• *Awareness Of Your Library Customers’ Issues*: Which Will You Help Solve?
• *Change Because Of Behavior And Feedback*
• *Respond: Showing Them The Benefits*
• *Why Library Marketing Efforts Fail*
Exercise: Part One

Make a list of ten things you think are examples of library marketing:
Things you read in books, learned at workshops, or have applied in your library workplace.
Library Marketing’s Big Umbrella: Customer Input, Public Relations, Advertising, and Community Relations
Introduction

Marketing is Awareness, Change, and Response.
Marketing is about relationships, an ongoing conversation with library’s customers, and they get to do 75% of the talking.
Target Audiences

Successful marketing identifies your target audiences: groups of people that you can identify by age, socioeconomic status, education, cultural interests, ethnicity, geography, languages, clubs, hobbies, etc.
Customer Input/Feedback Challenges

- Embarrassed to ask
- Impossible requests
- Don’t like criticism
- Don’t know customers
- Don’t have time
- Don’t have staff
- Don’t have resources

- Uninformed answers
- Only polite positives
- Not part of strategic plan
- Offensive answers
- Feel defensive
- No one is in charge
- No governance structure
What is Public Relations?

• **Remember me fondly, and often.**
  • Reminds people you exist
• **The “white noise” of outreach**
  • Constant and specific information
• **Always include basic information.**
  • Written for the *new* customer
Better Public Relations?

- Avoid habituation (same-old stuff).
- Create “graphic identity”: branding.
- Contact info in every publication
- Contact info in every posting
- Get people talking (positively).
- Use the voice of the library customer.
What is Advertising?

- A compelling reason to use the library
- Get them off couch and out the door.
  - *Time limit on the offer:* Deadlines
  - *Novelty:* Change something often.
  - *Interaction:* Games, “mirrors”
  - *Surprise:* Extend your reach.
Better Advertising

• Pick your target audiences.
• Special events to draw people
• Engage library customers.
• Stay aware of changing expectations.
• Borrow from other enterprises.
• Have fun!
What is Community Relations?

• "We’ll come to you."
• The library’s presence outside its walls
• Partnerships with other organizations
• Showing up to demonstrate support
• Showing up to help
• Service club and chamber memberships
• Stepping up in time of need
Community Friendship

How does the library connect with people from different cohorts?
Assignment One

How much input do library customers have when you create new programs, services, collections, and projects?
Agenda

Awareness Of Your Library Customers’ Issues: Which Will You Help Solve?
Awareness

• What challenges do they have?
• What issues take up their time?
• What’s their personal vision?
• What’s their personal mission?
• What’s coming up next?
The Invisible Customer

How can we bring you back, to former library customers who have not returned. How can we bring you in, to potential library customers who have never shown up.
Assignment Two

What are your library customers most important issues?
If your library picked one issue to make the library’s new job, what would your library be doing differently?
Agenda

Change Because Of Behavior And Feedback
Changes

• Question barriers to library service.
• Challenge library sacred cows.
• Challenge library staff pet projects.
• Eliminate what only library staff like.
• Playing “What If”: Experiment!
• Even small details are important.
Caveat

If you’re not willing to make changes to your library based on customer feedback, then don’t ask for it.

Library marketing is a two-way street: a relationship, not a monologue.
Assignment Three

Which of these management issues would you allow your library’s customers to be part of the decision-making, not just input?

- When the library is open
- Additions to the collections
- Non-traditional materials to circulate
- Programming, services, and staffing
- The library’s physical environment
- Partnerships inside and outside the building
Agenda

Respond: Showing Them The Benefits
Response

- **What do you offer?** Repeat! Repeat! Don’t assume customers remember.
- Don’t assume new customers know.
- **Be specific, but don’t overwhelm.**
- **Use customer testimonials.**
- **Keep information up-to-date.**
The Benefit Statement

- **Features are what you like** about your library’s collection, databases, programming, services, staffing, etc.

- **Benefits are what library customers gain**, in their words, on their terms, from their points of view.
Customer’s Point of View

• First person: I, me, my, mine
• Their words: NO library/academic jargon
• What they can or have accomplished:
  – as a result of using the library.
  – in their lives outside the library.
Assignment Four

Translate your library feature statements into benefit statements:

- We have a great movie collection. *I have a date with Johnnie Depp tonight.*
- Our new databases are accessible from home. *I got an A on my term paper.*
- We start Spanish cooking classes on Monday. *My paella wowed my in-laws.*
Agenda

Why Library Marketing Efforts Fail
What is Marketing?

- Listening
- Asking for advice
- Testing a brochure
- Partnering
- Changing a service
- Collecting stories
- Customer reviews
- Evaluating services
- Gathering opinions
- Interviewing customers
- Rewarding feedback
- Running contests
- Report improvements
- Evaluate statistics
Exercise: Part Two

How many of the items you listed deserve an M for Library Marketing?

Capture data about customers.

Provide data to repeat successes.
Typical Mistakes

• Not involving customers from the start
• Not willing to give up anything
• Not setting aside enough time and money
• Not running small tests first
• Not capturing data to repeat success
• Not determining why they don’t like you
Homework

• Pick a specific target audience.
• Build network of customers for advice.
• Ask for advice on your “product”.
• Apply changes—as you can.
• Promote the “new library”!
• Gather testimonials from customers
• Use them to create your ad campaign.