

Library Marketing and Communications Conference

November 14-15, 2024; St. Louis, MO

According to the conference website, *the first LMCC was held in 2015 in Dallas, TX, with nearly 200 attendees. Since then, LMCC has grown to reach more library marketing professionals from all over the United States and other countries. Around 450 people now attend the annual conference to learn about marketing and communications best practices from their peers and come away with new ideas and energy to grow marketing at their libraries.*

I attended my first LMCC in 2018, and enjoyed it so much that I attended again in 2019. It was held virtually in 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the cost to attend a national conference is significant, it felt good to get back to this conference!

The two days consisted of keynotes, break-out sessions, smaller conversations at breakfasts and lunches, and a group dinner with Wisconsin colleagues. All of the breakout sessions that I attended were well done. Following are just a few of the sessions that had an impact on me.

Bite-Size Market Research Tools: Micro Surveys and Usability Studies

Mark Aaron Polger, Associate Professor/Coordinator of Library Outreach at the College of Staten Island, City University of New York

Mark said that market research should be built into activities to drive future marketing. He said, “librarians are well-intentioned, and we think we know what our patrons want, but we don’t. Our decisions need to be data driven. When we create a culture of assessment, we can make more informed decisions.”

At his campus library, Mark uses mini-questionnaires with students to get feedback. The questionnaires have 3-5 questions, ask targeted and specific questions, and are meant to be completed in a short amount of time. Mark prefers paper surveys and questionnaires because he gets immediate results. While online surveys and QR codes are convenient, there isn’t a guarantee that students will complete them. He used mini questionnaires when determining the library’s weekend hours.

Been There, Done That, Do It Again

Thursday morning’s keynote featured a conversation with experienced library marketers. Chief Marketing, Communications and Strategy Officer for the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Meghan McCorkell said their library always looks at statistics to guide service and marketing decisions. A few years ago, her library revamped its summer library program because they weren’t seeing

the numbers they had in the past. Instead of doing traditional summer programs, they created boxes of free books for patrons and called it “Summer in a Box.” The initiative has proven to be very successful.

McCorkell said that libraries can’t be everything to everyone, and that librarians don’t have to be experts at everything. “We can point people to the experts. We are experts at finding the experts.”

Tips for Powerful Promotions for the Non-Designer

Caleigh Haworth, Engagement Consultant, NoveList

Jennifer Rothschild, Collection Engagement Librarian, Arlington Public Library

Caleigh and Jennifer provided a lot of design tips in this session:

- Use descriptive CTAs (Calls the Action). “Click Here” is not descriptive or effective. “View the Calendar” is a better option.
- Avoid clutter.
- White space is our friend.
- Colors should complement each other. Stick to a limited palette of three to four colors in a design. Colorzilla: Great tool (Chrome extension) for using complimentary colors.
- Fonts should be readable, and sans serif fonts are better for body text.

- [Pexels](#) is a great resource for royalty free images and videos.



During the second half of the presentation, Caleigh and Jennifer split attendees into small groups and gave each one a flyer. In small groups, design flaws and recommended changes were discussed.

Following the small group discussion, we gathered back as a large group to look at all of the flyers. To the left is the flyer that my group discussed.

Our group noted the yellow text was hard to read, and that the logo should be at the bottom of the flyer rather than at the top. We also wondered what the “main branch” referred to.

Building a Video Powerhouse: Project Management, Quality Standards, and Staff Development for Effective Library Marketing

Rachel Yzaguirre, Community Outreach Librarian, Plano Public Library

Rachel comes from a library with a large staff of 180 people. She talked about some of the equipment their library uses to record videos, such as iPads, lavalier microphones, tripods, gimbals and lighting kits. The key for the library to produce quality videos is to have the same branding and the same standards for each. Storyboards are used to sketch out camera angles and video clips, which is something I hadn't considered before.

Rachel said most of the staff enjoy participating in videos, and that project management tool Monday.com is used to help. They create videos on everything from programming promotions to staff cleaning toys in the children's area.

There were a few things that surprised me about the conference. One is that the sessions were academic focused. This isn't a bad thing, as it exposes public libraries to other needs, ideas and resources. But the audience for academic libraries is different than it is for public libraries. Also, there were not a lot of sessions on social media marketing. My guess is that because social media changes often and evolves quickly, it can be difficult for people to create presentations on best practices.

Here are some positives about the conference:

Location/Conference area: The conference was held at the Hyatt Regency in downtown St. Louis, just steps from The Gateway Arch. Not only was the location ideal, but the conference area was walkable and within minutes of my hotel room.

Swag Swap: Libraries were encouraged to bring and share marketing swag, and there was a room dedicated to all of it. Attendees were invited to take any of the swag on the tables.

Speaker Introductions: All of the room monitors gave the same introduction and had the same announcements. I also liked that they mentioned when the speakers would be taking questions. (I want to incorporate this idea into the Wild Wisconsin Winter Web Conference introductions.)

Conversations and Networking: The conference allowed for ample time to have conversations with attendees outside of the sessions and keynotes. I was able to talk with Kathy Dempsey, Angela Hursh and Cordelia Anderson - three women nationally renowned in the area of library marketing and who I hold in high regard.

Attending this conference was worthwhile. Thank you, WVLS, for this opportunity!