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MARKETING *Treasures*

Ideas and Insights into Promoting Library & Information Services

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WE'RE MORE THAN BOOKS!

by Lindy Rose M.L.S., Manager of the Research Library-Kalamazoo PPC at Pharmacia & Upjohn, Inc.

"Witness our transformation into the virtual library of tomorrow by touring our Internet, CD-ROM and LAN-based information systems." So begins an advertisement promoting the open house sponsored by the Research Library at Pharmacia & Upjohn, Inc., in May of 1995. The library's mission is to support the discovery and development of pharmaceutical and nutritional products by providing access to information. Sponsoring this event provided the opportunity to demonstrate how the library's technology could deliver information to the desktops of scientific, clinical, and regulatory personnel. This event drew more than 500 employees from the R&D component of the company, representing over 50% of its Kalamazoo, Michigan employee base. This success can be attributed to seven winning strategies, diligent planning, and focused teamwork.

Strategies

1. Know your objective. The main objectives were to increase awareness of library services and demonstrate commitment to information technology. The library director, newly appointed in 1994, had been instrumental in establishing CD-ROM stations, an Internet station, and in encouraging staff to facilitate electronic access to library services and

sources. An open house would draw attention to these major changes. A secondary objective was to demonstrate that although we were moving toward a digital library, we still prided ourselves on face-to-face, friendly, and flexible service. Our target audience was infrequent library users and non-users, rather than the core group of regular users. Good business sense told us to tap into and motivate the less frequent users.

2. Prepare staff and support teamwork. After receiving management approval to host the event, the entire staff of 20 employees were assigned specific responsibilities. Staff were advised to update their skills and knowledge in all operational areas of the library in order to create instructional handouts, answer questions, or demonstrate a service at the open house. Staff meetings were used to brainstorm and reach consensus on decisions. Weekly electronic mail communicated direction and appreciation to the staff. On the morning of the open house, a small token of appreciation was placed on each desk—a spring flower in a vase, a piece of candy, and a personal note of thanks. We also planned a post-event gathering at a local restaurant to pat ourselves on the back for a job well done.

Creativity was encouraged. An artistically talented staff member created cartoons for promotional materials. One cartoon depicted, in the first frame, a confused and pensive scientist walking into our library followed by a second frame illustrating the customer on his way out with his information needs clarified.

"Our target audience was infrequent library users and non-users, rather than the core group of regular users."

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Pearls of Wisdom

Are you feeling hard pressed to justify marketing expenditures? Or do you wonder what percentage of a business' budget is allocated to marketing activities? If so, consider these findings from an American Marketing Association 1994 survey, reported in the association's January 1 issue of *Marketing News*. Based on responses from 208 executives who indicated business-to-business/industrial as their primary or secondary market, 31 of the companies that reported sales of less than \$1 million spent 11.2% of their sales on direct selling. In comparison, 12 companies with sales of more than \$250 million spent 1.1% of their sales on selling. The study concludes that smaller companies aren't as well known as larger companies and have to invest more in marketing. Keep this in mind when you work up your marketing budget.

Here is a simple way to increase the participation in your promotional activities. When designing your flyers and posters to promote an event, be sure to include the day of the week, along with the date. For example, if you plan a demonstration of new library equipment for June 12, 1996, also mention that it is a Wednesday. This simple fact will save your readers from having to go to their calendars to check for the day. If all the information is provided for the potential customer, the notice does not pose a potential distraction, and there is no reason to disregard the announcement without a response.

What value do you place on your time? If you were asked to complete a survey, what would be a fair exchange for your time and thoughts? We recently received a survey that included food as compensation! A bag of Spicer's Apple Cinnamon Hunger Crunchers, to be exact. We loved it. Imagine opening an envelope and having a snack enclosed with a survey! You could use any individually packaged food—cookies, candies, snack foods, juices that come in pouches—to creatively boost response rates to surveys and reward people for their time.

Have you ever invested valuable time and money on a promotional piece and then covered it with a mailing envelope, trusting that the addressees would actually open it? Well, you can now show your creations through a full-window envelope! These envelopes are real attention-getters. They're available in a wide range of sizes and colors—from basic white to bright magenta. The clear acetate front window lets your message show through,

while the address and postage go on the back of the envelope, which is solid paper. Your direct mail masterpieces can speak for themselves when you enclose them in these revealing full-window envelopes. They frame your message! For more information and samples, call Premier Papers at 800/843-0414.

Many special libraries maintain college catalogs and various odd pieces of useful information concerning universities and colleges for clients. Now those collections can be augmented or replaced with catalogs and application packages on the Internet. College and University Homepages is an impressive reference you can point your clients to. This online directory was created as a collection of hypertext links to university and college homepages in 70 countries! Check it out for yourself by visiting their site at <<http://www.mit.edu:8001/people/cdemello/univ.html>>.

Have you thought about taking advantage of the recent explosion of vendor award and recognition programs to further your own career and bank account? Look around and you'll find plenty of opportunities for the limelight offered by vendors and library associations. A couple recently caught our eye. Dow Jones News/Retrieval recognizes innovative customers with their Customer of the Quarter award. Dun & Bradstreet Information Services is currently inviting nominations for Online Champion of the Year, and West Publishing Company is running a campaign that salutes Information Innovators. Contact your local vendor representative for details. ■

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Back issues and samples are available. Contact our office for latest prices. Additional binders available at \$5.00 each. Promotional copies available for conferences & meetings. Call for details.

Missing issues must be reported within 3 months of issue date. Missing issues requested after this time will be supplied at the regular back issue rate.

Clip art used in this issue: all images from this issue's clip art sheet.



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and a smile on his face. Another staff member with excellent photographic skills produced individual and team photographs of our staff to advertise the human resource component of the library. One staff member used the library color copier to produce 3' x 3' posters of the library Internet home page and the newly purchased copier itself. These posters were displayed at the copier and Internet stations.

3. Invite the CEO. The library director extended a personal invitation to the company CEO to attend the open House. To our surprise and pleasure, he accepted. The acceptance by the CEO was a sure guarantee that a greater number of managers (an important component of our target audience) would turn out for the event. The time of his arrival was left open to accommodate his busy schedule. His half-hour tour included 10 minutes for greeting employees as he walked through the library and focused on the six most impressive service/product stations. Two days before the open house, we provided him with a portfolio of the library describing services and staff. After the open house, we sent a follow-up letter to thank him for attending.

4. Use a theme to give visual direction and purpose. Our theme, "We've got connections!", was the basis for our visual depiction of the library traveling in the world of information. The logo depicts the library's global connectivity. Capitalizing on the familiar "information highway" concept, we created twelve interstate road signs, one for each service/product station. Each black-and-white 10" x 10" sign was numbered to correspond with a map of library stations given to visitors as they entered the library. The signs were posted so they could be seen above the crowd. They proved to be a popular tool for directing traffic flow and enabling visitors to navigate the stations by themselves.

5. Focus on the benefits not the features. Because the majority of our visitors are library- and computer-literate, the challenge was to sell the value of the library products and services rather than software features. In demonstrating the new library- and LAN-based CD-ROM products, the rule of thumb was "overview, not overkill." This enabled us to reach more visitors during a shorter period of time. At each station there were sign-up sheets for users wanting more individualized instruction at a

"The acceptance by the CEO was a sure guarantee that a greater number of managers would turn out for the event."

later date. As often as possible, the demonstration examples represented drug development questions actually handled previously by staff at the library. We demonstrated products that complemented each other; for example, the new electronic journal station was set up in the same area as the current hard copy stacks. The two most popular stations were a station demonstrating a new corporate document management system used to produce new drug applications and the Internet station. Initially we meant to bring in a commercial online service representative for demonstration purposes. After much staff discussion, we decided this was not in our best interest. It was, however, better to demonstrate what we internally could do for our customers in terms of information provision.

6. Provide plenty of food and give-aways. If you feed them, they will come! The library purchased food from the company cafeteria and an outside bakery, including vegetables, crackers, cheese, fruit, cake, and beverages. The food was strategically placed in the back of the library, requiring visitors to pass at least three or four stations before they could enjoy the refreshments. We filled baskets at the entrance of the library with give-away magnets advertising our logo and phone/fax/mail address, and scratch pads with the motto "Information Fuels Success" and the library phone/fax/mail address. We also displayed copies of two different Internet books to be given away as part of a drawing. The drawing served a second purpose for us: we used the entry forms to get an attendance count and job profiles of those visiting.

"The two most popular stations were a station demonstrating a new corporate document management system used to produce new drug applications and the Internet station."

7. Promote, promote, and promote. As the result of a staff brainstorming session, we decided to enlist the assistance of the graphics department to redesign our library logo. We used the logo on promotional and instructional materials and on our nametags.

A front-page article in the employee newsletter was published the Friday before the event highlighting the open house. We also ran advertisements on hallway television monitors. Posters and flyers were distributed across two company sites and in hallways, staircases, and a major intersecting hub area. A global electronic mail announcement was sent to all employees two weeks prior to the date. One

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staff member designed a hallway display case promoting the library by contrasting items found in a traditional library with advertisements of electronic library services and products. The backdrop of the display contained a photograph of the entire staff, to add a "people" component. Another staff member designed a bulletin board showing a three-dimensional DNA strand with the header, "Quality customer service is just part of our genetic make-up." Elements of the strand were made up of quotes taken from literature search evaluation forms expressing customers' feedback of the bottom-line value of our services. Set-up directly outside the library, the board drew the attention of many guests.

Planning

1. Plan two months in advance of the actual open house date. We started planning eight weeks prior to the actual date. In this way regular library services could proceed normally during the two months of preparation.

2. Choose a day of the week and time that will maximize attendance. Taking into account our organizational culture and seeking to avoid conflicts with any important meetings scheduled for our target audience, we held the open house on a Wednesday, from noon to five o'clock. This choice of day and time directly contributed to the high turnout rate.

3. Delegate tasks and utilize internal experts. In addition to using the artistic skills of our library staff, we tapped the talent of other internal resources. We relied heavily on the graphics department for design of the logo, posters, and banners. Their assistance enabled us to focus on the content of the messages. The reprographics department produced copies of all handouts.

(A word of warning. Be sure to prepare enough handouts. Our appointed runner for the day made many trips to the reprographics department that afternoon, because we had underestimated the demand. Expect to run out of give-aways after two hours.)

An outside vendor produced the give-away items. Even the experts on the janitorial staff went the extra mile to clean the entire facility before and after the open house.

"We started planning eight weeks prior to the actual date."

"Plan for back-up relief staff."

"Test your computer systems 4 to 6 hours before the open house."

4. Assign each staff member to a specific task or service area. Each staff member assigned to a service/product station was responsible for set-up, handouts, and display and for personally interacting with visitors. Staff not directly involved at a particular station assisted in food preparation, general library and office house cleaning, promotion, project management, and greeting visitors. Plan for back-up relief staff. The assigned staff at our most popular stations stood and talked for five straight hours without relief. We were one tired group of librarians!

5. Test your computer systems 4 to 6 hours before the open house. Murphy's Law reigns. Early in the morning on the day of the open house, one station presented major computer system problems. Knowing the CEO would be touring the station, a SWAT team from the computing services department came to our rescue. They worked diligently for 4 hours to fix the problem—the "fix" included finding a brand new PC to loan us—and finished ten minutes before visitors started to arrive!

The Next Open House

Staff and visitors, including managers, continued to compliment our efforts months after the open house. Our goal to demonstrate the spectrum of library services and products to new customers was realized. Our commitment to technology continues, with an Internet fair in the planning for 1996. We're confident we'll have new and exciting connections to share! ■

Lindy Rose was appointed Director of the Research Library-Kalamazoo PPC at Pharmacia & Upjohn Inc. last January, and has worked for the company since 1990. She holds a MLIS from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a BS from Michigan State University. She was President of the Western Michigan Chapter of the Special Libraries Association from 1993 to 1994. Her areas of library expertise include corporate document management systems, proprietary technical information systems, reference services, and online literature searching services. She can be reached via e-mail at: lrose4@wplnet.upj.com.

Worth It's Weight In Gold

This issue of *Marketing Treasures* includes your new clip art sheet. The sheet presents original artwork in camera-ready form. These images are also available as EPS graphic files on 3.5" PC and MAC computer disks.

"L" for SuperLibrarian. Get recognized for your superhuman ability to locate information. Here's a graphic to use on nametags, staff appreciation observances, and awards. And it would be perfect for t-shirts! It's time to transform your image. Go team!

National Library Week. Here are two choices for use with your annual celebration of National Library Week (April 14-20, 1996). You are planning to celebrate, aren't you? If time is short, and projects are crowding out your creativity, let these two unique designs promote your festivities.

The Changing Face of Library Customers. Not only are our customers spanning multiple generations, their needs and interests are spread far beyond mere books. Showcase your library's versatility and range of services with this appealing image.

Pointing Hand Icons. We've given you the right- and left-hand variations of the icon. Use them to point out important features within your library on signs or draw attention to items in your printed materials.

Cyberspace Navigator. If your library offers help to travelers of the Internet or other helpful electronic resources, use this graphic to advertise your ability to make the trip more efficient and productive.

Open Your Eyes to Information. Here's a warm, fuzzy invitation to those prospective library clients who are computer afraid, or who might be sick and tired of cyber-hype. Who could resist such a friendly face?

"MAY" We Help You With Your Information Needs? A seasonal question, a reasonable offer. Get creative with this Springtime theme—ideas will burst forth. It "MAY" be the start of something big! ■



Promotion Gems

"R" (Relationship) Marketing

"Relationship"—known to some as the "R" word—is not just something we commit to outside of work. Since customer focus is essential to marketing efforts, it's helpful to examine the kinds of relationships we have or lack with current and prospective customers.

Time spent focused on customers is a wise investment. Since most of us don't have much time, if any, left over in our busy work schedules, this effort may currently have a very low priority. But, considering the typical library budget, perhaps time is more easily available than dollars, even if both are scarce!

Consider shifting just some of the effort you expend on non-work relationships to customer relationships. For instance, share your morning coffee break with someone who could benefit from a new reference tool that just arrived in the library. Invite the budget guru to lunch and share your enthusiasm about library services, and their far-reaching benefits.

Tips for Building Customer Relationships

Maintain ongoing communication with customers to learn their needs and expectations, both present and future. Remember, communication is a two-way street. Really listen to what your customers have to tell you. Try to abandon your preconceptions and to have an open mind.

Practice "active listening." Clarify what is being communicated; don't allow important issues to go unvoiced. State your own concerns only after you feel you have heard the other person's concerns and needs. Reiterate what is important to you and confirm what is important to the other person.

Pay attention to customer feedback—it's essential. If personal meetings are not appropriate for culling this information, try telephone contact, surveys, or quality assurance cards. The important thing is to get the data and heed it. Share it with your staff. Look for trends and address them when setting objectives.

Get your staff involved in the relationship mode. Invest in their knowledge, skill, and confidence to address and resolve customer concerns, then give them the authority along with the responsibility to serve customers. Empowered employees are great ambassadors. ■

Editor's Note: Marketing Treasures originally came with sheets of library clip art and this column provided ideas on how to use the graphics. The clip art images from Marketing Treasures are now available from www.LibraryClipArt.com.

Sparkling Reviews

Successful Marketing Research: The Complete Guide to Getting and Using Essential Information About Your Customers and Competitors. Edward L. Hester. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, NY, 1996. ISBN:0-471-12381-1. \$17.95

The author uses a 1957 quote from J. B. McKitterick to set the stage for his book:

"The principal task of the marketing function...is not so much to be skillful in making the customer do what suits the interests of the business as to be skillful in conceiving and then making the business do what suits the interests of the customer."

While this book doesn't tell you how to get more staff or resources, it does give tips that can be incorporated quickly and easily by librarians in their attempts to integrate marketing into their everyday management decisions. Hester brings to the reader valuable information on electronic marketing databases and marketing information systems. He offers a comprehensive section on marketing research using the Internet, which should give librarians ideas for their own research, as well as provide insights when conducting Internet-based research for clients.

This book is an easy read, and packs a considerable amount of information into 240 pages. A sampling of chapter titles: Creative Research Planning; Convenient Sources for Marketing Research; Real Intelligence Tricks of the Trade; Preparing the Marketing Plan; Communicating with Your Customers; Marketing Information Systems; Conducting Surveys; Interviewing; and Problem Solving with Marketing Research. Librarians looking for quotes from outside sources may find the chapter titled "The Library and Other Secondary Sources" of interest.

Hester describes his book as a primer intended for the busy manager, marketer, or customer service representative, and he keeps it simple. It's a handy resource for those of us who just need some motivation, inspiration, or education to get us going on our marketing activities! For others not interested in the title, we recommend copying the opening quote and posting it as a reminder of what marketing is all about. ■



Treasure Tips

Creating Lively Text Charts

Charts and graphs can spice up any presentation, but charts made up of only text can be dull. Your materials should keep your audience's attention and make them eager to see the next slide or chart. Here are some tricks to make your text charts more visually appealing and easier to follow.

Use **bullets** to draw attention to items. Try different bullets, such as diamonds, triangles, or arrows. If you are working in color, match the border color and the bullets.

If your copy contains only one or two words per line, use a narrow, two-column layout. Use a wide column layout if your copy consists of five or six words or more.

Keep your **punctuation** consistent. Don't add periods to some topics and not to others. Periods are needed only if topics consist of subject-verb-noun sentences.

Align text flush-left and ragged-right. This format is easier to read than justified text, which has irregular spacing that can be distracting when reading a chart.

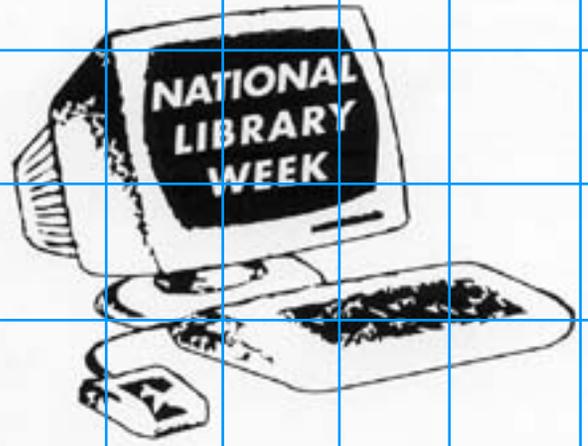
Keep your presentation format simple. Multiple indents and levels are difficult to read in chart format. Add the same amount of **space** above and below each chart entry. This makes each topic and line entered under a topic appear visually distinct.

Customize your presentation by adding borders, backgrounds, and shadows. However, use these options with caution, and be consistent.

Beware of software programs that automatically select **type size** based on the number of words included in a text chart. Turn this feature off, and instead keep the type size in all your charts consistent.

Keep each **line length** the same, too, if possible. Your software probably "wraps" text automatically (moves words to the next line). This feature may be desirable in almost all cases, but occasionally you'll want a line to break at a specific place. You can accomplish this by entering a "soft return." This command pushes text to the next line without adding paragraph spacing. To enter a soft return, hold down the Shift key while hitting Return/Enter. Some programs use the Control key with the Return/Enter key.

Test your completed project. Recruit friends or colleagues unfamiliar with your subject and ask them to review the presentation. ■



*we help you
with your
Information
needs*

