



Metropolitan Group
the power of voice

TIPS FOR LIBRARY MARKETING

Strategic Communication

Basic Tips

- Everyone has a library story. Spend time learning about the stories people associate with your library. Use this as a way to “break the ice” with visitors, guests at events, donors and community leaders.
- Use storytelling to paint a vivid picture of all that your library provides and what it might provide in the future. Consider telling stories about real people and situations rather than statistics. For example, tell a story about an elderly couple who use the library to surf the Internet, or a local small business owner who worked with a reference librarian to research and develop a business plan.
- Library staff are great storytellers and should be involved in marketing and PR activities when appropriate.
- Maximize your library’s communication tools and resources by conveying consistent and repeated messages in news releases and media relations, on your website, in advertising, direct mail and print materials.

Resource Development

Intercultural and
Cross-Cultural Communication

Organizational Development

Message Tips

Develop key messages to communicate about your library. Some examples of messages that resonate include:

- Libraries are a democracy’s best-kept promise. They provide “information for all.”
- The library is an access point for information, both as a building and as an online resource. The library is an important part of our information age.
- Libraries provide educational, literacy and senior programs.
- Libraries are community and cultural centers.
- Books, books, books! People love books and they want to know that their library invests in books. Talk about them.
- The library is a forum for an exchange of ideas delivered through a diverse array of speakers, exhibits and programs that spark exploration and dialogue.
- Libraries serve people from early childhood through their senior years. They are an important resource in early childhood development. They support people through school, during their search for a job, through parenting, careers and retirement.

Chicago

35 East Wacker Drive Suite 1750
Chicago Illinois 60601-2208
Phone 312 628 1447 Fax 312 628 1449

Portland

519 SW Third Avenue Suite 700
Portland Oregon 97204-2519
Phone 503 223 3299 Fax 503 223 3474

Washington DC

1800 K Street NW Suite 200
Washington DC 20006-2247
Phone 202 380 3123 Fax 202 380 3127

Metropolitan Group crafts strategic and creative services that empower social purpose organizations to build a just and sustainable world.

www.metgroup.com

- Libraries are a source of lifelong learning, social interaction and entertainment.

Grassroots Outreach Tips

- Seek the support of authors for readings, presentations and endorsements. Most authors have a library story to tell and tend to be very generous to libraries with their time and support.
- Many key influencers and business and community leaders have not used the library in a while. Invite them to come for a visit and demonstrate to them the library's impact on the community. Take advantage of their lack of familiarity to show them some of your services, such as research and reference assistance.
- Develop partnerships with cultural/ethnic communities and communities with special interests. Such partnerships build strong marketing and outreach opportunities for programs and special collections.
- Develop partnerships with cultural groups, public broadcasting and arts organizations to help build strong new audiences. They can also provide an excellent opportunity to share or trade mailing lists for fundraising and outreach efforts.
- Plan events related to special interests (rare books, book groups, summer reading program kickoff, etc.). Such events can become media stories and opportunities for sponsor involvement. They can also help a library build its mailing list.

Media Tips

- Write an op-ed piece for your local news media positioning the library as an expert on important issues. Early childhood development, adult literacy, access to health information and meeting the needs of new communities are a few topics that are newsworthy and can effectively be address by librarians.
- Position library staff as local experts for the media to interview on topics ranging from business research to early childhood development and other specialized subjects.
- "Pitch" news on a quarterly basis to secure feature stories or community news coverage above and beyond regular calendar listings. Your chances for feature coverage increase if you pitch reporters stories that are about an impact the library is making on people's lives.
- Proactively pitch to radio and TV stations—not just newspapers. Pitch stories that have strong audio and visual components to increase placement.
- Build partnerships with the media and local businesses. Newspapers, radio and television stations, and outdoor media (billboards, bus shelters, etc.) can contribute valuable promotional space or time if they are offered benefits as a

partner. Similarly, local businesses can help promote the library in creative ways—for example with discounts and premiums for library cardholders.

Tips for Integrating Marketing and Fundraising

- Timing is everything. Coordinate your fundraising communications and appeals with general library communication such as cardholder newsletters, program marketing, branch materials and Web content. This maximizes resources and builds support and awareness for fundraising campaigns, while raising general awareness of your library.
- Media sponsorships are a good match for library funding campaigns. They help “sell” your project in the public phase of capital campaigns. Media partners can run ad campaigns coordinated with direct mail and Web-based fundraising.
- Fundraising campaigns are an opportunity to uncover library lovers and seek external advocates who can help make your library’s core case for support. Profile business leaders, government officials, and community leaders as supporters and champions.
- Effective library program marketing also helps to support fundraising. Use marketing of summer reading, an author series and other programs to brand your library as a community resource.

Marketing services include:

Market Research • Message Development • Audience Identification • Media Relations and Training • Public Information and Education Campaigns • Film and Video Production • Graphic and Web Design

Metropolitan Group provides a full range of services for libraries, including fundraising, marketing and branding, public relations, public affairs, strategic planning, outreach to new and diverse audiences, online communication and graphic design.