


Don't Miss:

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MARKETINGLibrary

S E R V I C E S

Managing Change to Achieve the Dream: Creating a 21st-Century Library in Scotland

By Liz McGettigan

When I was 5, just old enough to get a precious library card, I walked into Anderston Library in Glasgow, Scotland, and fell in love with the atmosphere and with the idea of becoming a librarian and working in such a wonderful place. In the same way that some people are born to be doctors, teachers, writers, politicians, or even footballers, I know I was born to be a librarian.

My professional career has spanned over 30 years, and I have worked in both the public and private sectors and have developed expertise in change, performance management, and all things digital. My work has taken me across Europe,

South America, and Russia, and I've gained insight and experience in excellence in libraries and information services. In 2007, I landed my dream job when I was appointed the head of library and information services for the City of Edinburgh Council in Scotland (edinburgh.gov.uk). I felt I had been preparing for that job throughout my whole life.



The flagship Central Library in Edinburgh, Scotland

As Scotland's capital and UNESCO's first City of Literature, Edinburgh is a wonderful, magical place to live, work, and visit. It's a cosmopolitan, multicultural city that boasts an internationally

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Creating a Winning Election Strategy in St. Louis

→ **How-To** By Charles Pace

In November 2012, St. Louis County Library (SLCL; slcl.org) successfully passed a tax initiative that will generate at least \$11 million in additional revenue per year in perpetuity. This "Yes" vote was the result of years of planning and hard work. The story of how we crafted a winning campaign begins with my arrival in Missouri in October 2006.

When I first started working as St. Louis County Library's director, I quickly realized that although the system had great strengths in many areas, one place we were sorely lacking was in our facilities. Most of the 20 buildings had been built during the boom years of the '60s, '70s, and '80s and were at or past the end of their projected design life. The cost of maintaining and repairing these aging facilities was

increasing, but the budget was not getting any larger. Our oldest building actually dated back to the 1950s and was also sitting on a sinkhole, resulting in structural issues. The 20 branch libraries served a population of more than 860,000, and I felt very strongly that our citizens deserved state-of-the-art libraries. So I set to work developing a plan to bring this about.

Laying the Groundwork

From 2007 to 2009, I worked quietly behind the scenes to create an appealing message while also addressing many of the internal needs of the library. I spent a lot of time and money during these years upgrading our programs and services. We greatly increased spending on our Summer Reading

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→ MANAGING CHANGE IN SCOTLAND

renowned reputation for culture, literature, art, tourism, science, and technology. The flagship Central Library and 28 branches are at the heart of Edinburgh's communities, serving almost 550,000 residents.

A Vision to Be the Best

In 2007, I took over Edinburgh's tired and very traditional library system and assessed the pressures facing it. Since I am so passionate about libraries, I wanted to improve them, to make them stunning, to make them the absolute best. I knew it would not be easy. However, I am a wee fighter, so I dug in and discovered what I was dealing with:

- A unmotivated and nervous staff that had been through some extremely difficult days
- A lack of vision and strategy
- A long-term lack of investment in decor and infrastructure
- A traditional book-lending service with no innovation in digital services or technology
- A heavily staff-dependent, dated supply chain
- Poor staff training
- No real performance data or monitoring
- A low profile with elected officials and within the library sector

Keeping my dream to be the best at the forefront of my mind, I set about driving and creating the Next Generation Library and Information Service Strategy, a new model for libraries across the city based on a strategic approach that borrows from the retail sector. This is the story of how I managed major systemwide changes and of the recognition that followed.

Starting the Internal Transformation

The transformation began with a difficult and often uncomfortable review of staffing and structure. In order to respond effectively to shifts in societal demands, demographic changes, and increased public expectations, it was essential to institute this period of evaluation. This also presented me, as a relative newcomer to Edinburgh, with an opportunity to experience every aspect of the library service; to communicate with staff on every level; to interact with users; and ultimately to observe our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) in order to implement a plan for the future.

A key revelation of the review was that our staff was one of our most valuable assets, and therefore it was integral to get the members' feedback and support. If we were to realize our full

potential as a library service for the future, it would be essential for the 280 staffers to feel ownership of the service. I made it my responsibility to ensure that, going forward, all employees would be kept informed of developments, supported throughout the process of change, and fully trained and confident in their roles. It wasn't easy, but through ongoing consultations, I established an atmosphere of trust, respect, and optimism for the future.

Another key aspect of the transformation was to instill the desire for success and change. One lesson I learned is that small things matter, and it is essential that every member of the staff feels that he or she is important and all staffers can see "what's in it for them." It was critical to involve everyone (including nonprofessional staff), and I worked hard to meet them all personally and find out what made them tick.

I began to change the libraries' structure by redefining staff roles. I looked for various talents and made sure to "put round pegs into round holes." For example, it's pointless to try to get someone who loves working with children's story times to become a digital enthusiast, and vice versa.

Then I was able to outline my structure and choose top teams for roles that suited our new strategic direction. These were the teams and their leaders:

- The customer services manager led the Performance and Information Managers and Neighborhood Team.
- The digital services manager led the Virtual Library Team.
- The business and operations development manager led the Events and Income Generation Team and Bright Ideas Team.



Images like this one drove the author's vision. She was keen to figure out what the customer of the future would want from libraries.

By 2008, the structure was in place, and the teams were getting organized and motivated. Then the real work began. Over the next 5 years, the most important thing I did was drive and enthuse those strong teams—teams that bought into my vision and my mantra "to be the best library and information service in Scotland." Together, we dedicated our energy to making the changes necessary to deliver a public library service that would be fit for the 21st century.

Beginning the External Transformation

I knew the first thing I had to do was acknowledge how tough things had been for employees in the past. And I knew just how important it was to raise awareness of my new vision and to ensure that everyone knew where we were going. I took my vision and, armed with my trusty, image-based PowerPoint, went on the road visiting libraries, local teams, elected members (government officials), and partners across the city. I initially faced

some opposition, but I knew my enthusiasm and vision were getting through. I talked to everyone I could and got myself known. I earned respect and got invited onto corporate boards and projects.

Once I had toured the city and gotten familiar with everyone, in early 2009 my team and I began to develop and roll out practical toolkits to support new ways of working. We focused on the following main areas and tasks to embed performance improvement into our organization:

- Inventing a People Plan with tailored training modules
- Driving the Performance Review and Development (PRD) process
- Scheduling regular performance information workshops across the city
- Improving the libraries' physical estate
- Creating social and digital media platforms

Inventing the People Plan and PRD

I involved and consulted a working group made from staff of all levels to develop our People Plan. This strategy identified the key knowledge, skills, and training we needed to deliver to take the service forward according to our vision. The key to this was absolutely involving staffers, learning from their frontline knowledge, and gaining their trust (and later, letting them see the final results of their work).

It would have been unfair to set goals for staff members if they didn't have the knowledge they needed to achieve their share of the vision, so we implemented a Performance Review and Development toolkit for every single person. This included six clear areas and tasks that each staffer should work toward or develop in support of the service goals and strategy. It ensured that staff members had regular one-to-one talks with senior staff and knew what was expected of them. People also had development plans to work through to ensure they had the training, conference exposure, or coaching and mentoring they required to achieve the goals they had set. The PRD was also linked to absences and salary increases.

It was obvious that everyone had different abilities, so I never pushed anyone as a round peg into a square hole. If a staffer loved working with children, older people, or IT, I encouraged him or her to develop those abilities.

We got really serious about performance monitoring and reported monthly on every individual library in the city on these benchmarks:

- Number of issues (items borrowed)
- Number of people coming through the doors
- Adult events and attendance
- Youth events and attendance
- PC usage
- Electronic resources usage
- Combined physical and virtual visits

Sharing at Performance Workshops

In 2010, I set about engendering a competitive spirit by playing libraries off against each other. We held regular performance workshops in which staff members talked about how they had achieved increased performance in various areas. Soon there was a hunger to be featured at a performance workshop. These talks were real eye-openers and highlighted some of the amazing work and creative thinking going on across the city.

Leaders were encouraging employees to think up and run creative projects. Our librarians presented the projects they'd

done in partnership with schools, police, health organizations, artists, and musicians, detailing a vast array of events that benefited local communities. They talked about hosting author events, exhibitions, and workshops. They explained how they had developed their communities by providing meeting spaces and information on community groups and initiatives and described a myriad of other projects, including book groups and knitting clubs.

Although there will always be some unshakable doubters in any organization, at this point they were a very small minority, and there was most

definitely a new pride and spirit in everyone.

Where Did the Money Come From?

The money for these improvements was reallocated from within existing revenue. They were entirely funded by realigning resource spending from traditional tools to digital ones. For example, where we had once bought very expensive multiple hard copies of reference materials, we switched to high-quality online versions. We also achieved a huge

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The Flickr album at tinyurl.com/l8wkmx3 shows photos of the Central Lending Library's service desk being dismantled and replaced by self-service kiosks and a new "help point" (service desk). Showing the changes helps everyone to accept them.

Black Friday Ads for—Lester Public Library?

By Jeff Dawson

Typically, I associate Black Friday (the day after Thanksgiving in the U.S.) with overt consumerism and aggressive behavior from the retail community. In November 2013, Lester Public Library in Two Rivers, Wis., experimented with joining the retail-sales melee. What began as a tongue-in-cheek idea to raise visibility in an un-library-like way became a very successful marketing campaign.

We stepped out of our comfort zone and created a marketing scheme that took real money to execute. The experience gave us a new outlook on how we market our services.

It Began as a Crazy Idea

The idea germinated shortly after Thanksgiving 2012 when our adult services coordinator Chris Hamburg and our youth services coordinator Terry Ehle got together over a couple of drinks and discussed the Black Friday madness. They were talking about how big-box stores slash prices so much that people queue up hours before the stores open just to buy their holiday gifts cheap. Why, they wondered, was Black Friday limited to retail? Why not use the Black Friday hype to promote our library with the same strategies that retail businesses use?

In January, Chris and Terry took the idea to Natalie Long, our circulation supervisor. It was vital to have Natalie on board because any Black Friday events would impact circulation more than any other department. Over lunch, Chris, Terry, and Natalie brainstormed a range of retail-copycat possibilities for a Black Friday event—extended hours, “doorbuster” deals, a guessing game, and half-price sales—all with the aim of bringing people to the library. They thought they had enough ideas to approach me, the library’s director.

I operate on the principle that anything and everything can be up for discussion. So during a meeting in February, they pitched the Black Friday idea to me, and I was on board.

The Deals We Decided to Offer

While many retail stores open incredibly early and close incredibly late to increase Black Friday revenues, we immediately ruled out the idea of having extended hours. I didn’t want to make staff come in early or, as was brought up in the initial brainstorming, work until midnight.

But we did want to have a big impact with a “doorbuster” (a short-term, super-low-price deal). We decided to offer 50% off fines from 10 a.m. until noon. So, if you had a \$6 fine, you could

give us \$3, and we would wipe your record clean. (This didn’t apply to monies owed for missing or damaged materials.)

We decided to offer three all-day deals. The first was a Buy One, Get One Free deal from our perpetual book sale. With bargain prices already set at 50 cents for hardcover books and 25 cents for paperbacks, we were looking to raise awareness of the ongoing book sale rather than to make money.

Our second deal was the chance to check out one extra DVD for free. Our normal limit on DVDs is seven at a time, but on Black Friday, patrons could take home eight.



DVDs are stored in these “pods” at Lester PL.

Our third special promotion was a “guess the pod” competition for all ages. We secure DVDs behind the circulation desk using “pod” technology. The DVD cases on the shelves are empty, so when patrons choose a title, they have to bring the cases to circ for check out. There, staffers scan the cases, and the proper DVDs pop out of the corresponding pods. Each pod holds 150 DVDs, and we have 42 pods. So for each DVD a patron got, he or she had a chance to win

a \$1 Off Fines coupon for future use by guessing which pod the disc would pop out of.

Advertising Our Black Friday Bargains

Terry and I came up with a working budget of \$1,000 and decided to spend it with the local newspaper, the *Herald Times Reporter* (HTR). Our library gets good return on free public service announcements from it already, plus I write a monthly article for HTR, so we have a good relationship.

In mid-October, Terry and I met with HTR’s multimedia account executive and plotted our advertising strategy. The HTR representative immediately understood our plan. We decided to place ads in HTR and its free weekly publication, the *Lakeshore Chronicle* (LSC). Both HTR and LSC charge for advertising based on six zones, and the more zones you use, the more the costs rise. We worked out a plan in which some ads would hit all six zones, while the more expensive ads focused on zone 3, the actual Two Rivers area. The paper’s staff would’ve been happy to create the advertising, but I opted for Terry’s excellent design skills and agreed to provide all copy by the Nov. 4 deadline. (Black Friday was Nov. 29.)

We used a wrap that hit all six zones, plus a quarter-page ad (front and back, with other Two Rivers businesses), set to run on Wednesday, Nov. 20 and on Sunday, Nov. 24. For zone 3, we made an 8.5" x 11" two-sided glossy insert (just like the big-box stores use) that ran on Tuesday, Nov. 26. We also bought two

full-color half-page ads that appeared on Monday, Nov. 25 and Tuesday, Nov. 26. We also opted for online advertising on Monday, Nov. 25, which referred customers to our website for more details. This advertising package came in at \$1,185 and was bankrolled by the Lester Public Library Foundation.

Terry did exhaustive research on Black Friday advertising to get the feel for big retail ads. For ours, she incorporated words and phrases such as “doorbuster” and “It’s on!” with striking colors on a black background. Elements of Terry’s design appeared in all *HTR* ads, even the ones online. With the insert, she used a “clip the coupon” scheme. The insert also gave us space to promote upcoming events and new services for 2014. (See all of the ads on Flickr: flic.kr/s/aHsjZ75J7w.)

Surprising Media Impact

What happened next was unexpected. After our ads hit *HTR*, one of its reporters called and asked if I’d do a quick interview about our promotion. On Wednesday, Nov. 27, an *HTR* front-page headline read, “Even Local Library Joining in Black Friday Frenzy.” Sure, it was below the fold, but anyone who missed our ads would be hard-pressed to miss this article.

HTR is owned by major media company Gannett. That story ended up going out across Gannett Wisconsin Media, which includes the huge Green Bay market. So on Nov. 27, the day before Thanksgiving, I received a call from WBAY-TV, the Green Bay ABC affiliate, asking for an interview on our Black Friday deals. Naturally, I jumped on this opportunity, and a WBAY team came down that afternoon, filmed the story, and aired it on the 6 o’clock and 10 o’clock news.

Seeing the story’s significant reach, I Googled “Lester Public Library Black Friday” and was pleasantly surprised. The story had gone viral across Wisconsin with help from the local ABC News and Gannett stories. When I saw the article online in the *Twin Cities Pioneer Press* of neighboring St. Paul, Minn., I realized the Associated Press had picked it up as well and had distributed it with the title, “Wisconsin Library Offers Black Friday Specials” (tinyurl.com/ofpkwuo).

Our event made news in LibraryLand too. It hit *Library Journal*’s Tumblr page (tinyurl.com/p4ek6hk), and a fellow Wisconsin librarian also posted the story to the ALA Think Tank on Facebook, a very active discussion group.

Measuring the Real Results

On the big day, Nov. 29, we were busy from our 10 a.m. opening until the close of business at 5:30 p.m. Being busy the day after a holiday is not unusual, but staff members definitely noticed an

increase in traffic. We were thankful that our perpetual book sale volunteer and her husband were there to restock the sale shelves (at least until the storeroom was empty). We even had a school teacher from the Milwaukee area drive 1.5 hours to purchase all of our children’s books.

In terms of real numbers, I compared Black Friday stats to those of regular Fridays in 2013. Our average Friday door count was 426 patrons; on Black Friday it was 745, a 43% increase. The average Friday haul for fines was \$43.32; on Black Friday it was \$243.04, an 82% increase. The average Friday income for the perpetual book sale was \$5.25; Black Friday’s total was \$61.35, a 91% jump. (A quick note on our fine-collection and book-sale theories: Sure, we may have sold ourselves short of total income by halving fees, but we felt the gain in good will would outweigh getting more money.)

Spending Money Pays Off

We were pleased with the overall results. Patrons who visited Lester Public Library on Black Friday enjoyed the festive air and some respite from the retail madness. Our staff was surprised that so many people ventured to the library on the busiest shopping day of the year and was happy that they took advantage of our doorbuster and all-day deals. The creativity demonstrated by my staff was incredible. The scheme was an inspiration that

vaunted our many services in a positive manner with a sense of humor and built favor within our community. It further solidified my belief that there is no such thing as a bad idea.

I think the biggest lesson here was that it’s good to spend money on marketing. At our library, at least in my 7-year tenure, we had never spent this kind of money to promote one event. We discovered that the newspaper inserts, half-page ads, wraps, and online advertising led to other beneficial outcomes. Our ads caught people a bit off guard, but they did clip our coupons and take advantage of our Black Friday specials. The front-page article in *HTR* garnered notice across the state and across the nation, something I deem a bargain at \$1,185.

Lester Public Library is now aggressively pursuing marketing opportunities that require funding. We’ve secured an annual deal for a highway billboard. During our National Library Week promotion last April, we tripled the media push, including advertising with *HTR* and two local radio stations. Currently, we are experimenting with paid Facebook promotions and are thinking of alternate promotions for Black Friday 2014. We are taking risks and spending money on advertising, and we’re seeing both pay off. *

Jeff Dawson is director at the Lester Public Library in Two Rivers, Wis. He holds an M.L.S. from the University of Iowa. His email address is jdawson@lesterlibrary.org.



One of the retail-like Black Friday ads

What Happened in Vegas: ALA 2014

By Kathy Dempsey

The 2014 American Library Association Annual Conference had a decidedly different feel than past shows because it took place in Las Vegas. While the city's massive convention center and many hotels could accommodate ALA's needs, there was definitely some negative buzz from members. And in fact, attendance was down dramatically from last year: There were 13,019 attendees in Vegas versus 20,237 in Chicago at ALA 2013, and there were 500 fewer individual exhibitors this year as well.

"Sin City," as Vegas is known, is certainly not everyone's cup of tea. It was impossible to avoid the slot machines that littered the airport, hotels, and storefronts. Scantly-clad showgirls were all over the entertainment areas, indoors and out. And sweltering temperatures presented their own challenges. Despite the fact that the heat was "dry" and it was often breezy, the 110-degree temps still felt like a blast furnace to me. On the bright side, no rain! And some conference-goers took advantage of popular shows, big buffets, and tours of sites like Hoover Dam and the Grand Canyon.

Photo courtesy of Stephanie Vance



Stephanie Vance

the morning (favorite causes) and what keeps him up at night (usually re-election).

Here's how to reach federal officials, according to Vance: Go to congress.gov and find your representative or senator. In her profile, look at the bills she's introduced to see what she cares about. Tie those issues to your library and your "ask."

Vance urged everyone to make their messages SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. You can learn more from her books, including her latest, *The Influence Game*, and at advocacyguru.com.

Stan Lee Loves Librarians

One highlight of the conference was seeing Stan Lee. The beloved Marvel comic book icon heaped praise upon the huge crowd during his hour-long appearance on Saturday. "What the hell can I tell you about reading that you don't know a thousand times better than me?" the



Stan Lee (R) had a lively chat with the editor of his next book, *Zodiac*. Lee is honorary chair of National Library Card Sign-Up Month in September (tinyurl.com/7r89pb5).

91-year-old asked before discussing how comics help kids read and how they've become a more accepted art form over the years.

Lee said he grew up three blocks from a public library and "man, it was a magical place." When talking about how he always has a small role in all the films he's associated with, he claimed, "One of my favorite cameos was where I played a librarian" (in *The Amazing Spider-Man*). So, he continued, "In my own subtle way, I'm carrying the torch."

After his prepared remarks, he sat down with his editor from Disney Publishing Worldwide, Nachie Marsham, for a Q&A session. They bantered about various topics, ending with a discussion about Lee's forthcoming illustrated novel, *Zodiac*. He joked with the audience, "If you don't buy a dozen copies each, I'll never talk to you again." The standing ovation came as no surprise.

Packed With PR Power

My ALA Sunday was packed with many hours of PR power, from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. It began, as always, with the annual PR

Reaching Government Officials

Between Friday, June 27 and Monday, June 30, I attended a number of sessions about marketing, advocacy, and promotion so I could share highlights and lessons with *MLS* readers. The first one I want to discuss was sponsored by ALA's Washington Office and United for Libraries. Longtime advocacy guru Stephanie Vance ran the lively session called Making an Impact: Proven Grassroots Strategies for Friends, Trustees, Advocates, and Foundations. Her background as an aide to U.S. legislators taught her the ins and outs of reaching them with your messages.

Vance won the crowd's approval right away by promising giveaways for session participants and by explaining that Congress "is not designed to get anything done, and it's doing a really good job at that." She stressed that, to get what you need from legislators, you need to know what you want (specifically), whom you're talking to (facts, voting records), and what matters to that person. You should design your brief message around what gets him up in

All photos by Kathy Dempsey



Christie Koontz signed the first copy of her book for Mark Aaron Polger, Best of Show co-chair, as the PR Xchange opened.

Forum. Eric Friedenwald-Fishman, creative director and founder of strategic communications firm Metropolitan Group, spoke briefly and then led group story-building exercises. Achieving real engagement, he said, is “about who tells the best story.”

He then detailed “the power of P’s”—13 of them, to be exact:

Plot
Peril
Personalities
Parable
Passion
Pitfalls
People
Pause
Pictures
Prologue
Proposition
Persuasion
Presence



Eric Friedenwald-Fishman called libraries “democracy’s best-kept promise.”

See the full presentation at metgroup.com/news/ala-storytelling.

PRX, PRMS, LLAMA, MLS, and BOS

Next, I set up my table at the annual PR Xchange, run by the Public Relations and Marketing Section of LLAMA (Library Leadership & Management Association). At the busy 2.5-hour event, I announced *MLS*’ two new, less-expensive subscription options. In case you haven’t heard, when you renew your subscription, you can opt to go digital (we’ll email you a PDF for \$74.95/year) or personal (get a paper copy mailed to your U.S. home address for \$69.95/year). Find all the details at infotoday.com/mls/mls-subs.shtml, and share the link with colleagues who could use best practices for effective marketing communication.

The PR Xchange hosted another launch too. Rowman & Littlefield unveiled a new book, *Marketing and Social Media: A Guide for Libraries, Archives, and Museums*, by Christie Koontz and Lorri Mon. Both Florida State University authors were on hand to sign copies of this in-depth, much-needed title. Learn more at rowman.com/ISBN/9780810890800 and look for a full review in *MLS* next year.

The Xchange floor bustled as hundreds visited to pick up samples of promotional products and to stop by the various sponsored tables. The other main part of the event is when the Best of Show Awards for library PR are bestowed. These awards are given in 10 categories (further broken down by budget). More than 300 entries came in from more than 100 institutions. The winners list is at ala.org/llama/awards/prxchange_winners, and a Flickr set at tinyurl.com/BestofShow2014 shows each entry.

Partying With the PR Pros

Finally, I made my way to the year’s biggest PR party, the John Cotton Dana (JCD) Library Public Relations Awards ceremony, to celebrate and hobnob. EBSCO hosted the stylish shindig in the Skyview rooms at Bally’s hotel on the famous

Las Vegas Strip. Eight winners were chosen from 83 entries, and each got a certificate and a \$10,000 check. Here are the 2014 honorees:

- Birmingham (Ala.) Public Library for “Letter from Birmingham Jail: A Worldwide Celebration”
- Champaign (Ill.) Public Library for “Show Some Library Love”
- Kitsap Regional Library (Wash.) for its “Traveling Book Campaign”
- North Carolina State University, James B. Hunt Jr. Library, for “The Library of the Future”
- Sacramento (Calif.) Public Library for “The Poe Project”
- Texas A&M University for “Deeper Than Swords: A 2-Day Celebration of George RR Martin”
- University of Texas–San Antonio for “Ask Us Anything”
- Wells County (Ind.) Public Library for “Your Go-To Spot”

I don’t need to detail all of the winning projects here, because now all JCD entries are electronic, and anyone can study them to learn what goes into the best PR efforts. (See the detailed applications and the collateral itself at tinyurl.com/moodmnz.) Everyone was very grateful that the H.W. Wilson Foundation donated the prize money again, that EBSCO sponsored the awards, and that LLAMA ran the contest. One winner joked about gambling with the award money before leaving the land of casinos, but I’m betting that he didn’t.

Getting Buy-In From Decision Makers

I sat in on my final sessions on Monday, one of which addressed a very common problem. In *Convincing the Decision-Makers: Turning Skeptics Into Champions*, Ben Bizzle discussed the process he and his team went through to get permission from administrators at the Craighead County Jonesboro (Ark.) Public Library to do unconventional things like buying billboard ads. His advice boiled down to this: Explain your ideas in terms of reach and cost per exposure.

He used his library’s cardboard coasters as a prime example. His creative team had funny quotes and the library’s URL printed on inexpensive drink mats, which local establishments were very happy to take and use. The team explained to management that the library could reach lots of local people with humorous messages. He priced the printing and found out how many times most coasters are used, which told him that he could promote the library for 27 cents per exposure. In the advertising world, that’s a bargain, and the idea was approved.

While Bizzle acknowledged that he has open-minded administrators, he insisted that business practices like measuring ROI were the way to go anywhere. Anecdotal info “is kinda tough to sell to your decision makers,” he said. But since you’re already spending many thousands of dollars on collections and services, it’s silly not to advertise them. “If it’s worth doing, isn’t it worth promoting?” ❄

→ How-To: ELECTION STRATEGY

program, expanded our long-standing author program, and put renewed focus on outreach to the schools in the various districts within our service area. We also upgraded our technology by implementing a more robust Wi-Fi system and RFID. All of these changes were good and necessary in and of themselves, but they were also designed to increase usage and to win public support for what would come next.

As a result of these efforts, usage statistics began to increase sharply in 2008. (Here is a link to the annual report that shows some of the stats: 2012.slcl.org/statistics.html#2.) I knew that a message of growing demand would be vital in order to secure public support for a tax increase. During these early years, I also held many quiet conversations with members of our board, elected officials, and business leaders to communicate the libraries' importance to the community and the fact that our facilities would need attention soon. By 2010, it was clear that we were finally ready to start the prep work for the campaign itself.

SLCL commissioned initial rounds of polling in 2010 and 2011. We hired Telephone Contact, Inc. (telephonecontact.com) to conduct phone polls of residents in the library district. The group called 600 registered voters, and each poll showed (with an accuracy of + or -3.5%) that while a majority of the population supported the proposed tax increase, much of this support was "soft." Therefore, we devised a strategy to promote the library heavily as a means of converting much of this soft support into people who would actually come out and back us on Election Day.

St. Louis County Library's marketing department conducted the promo campaign during spring and summer 2011 with the slogan, "If you haven't been to the library lately, you're overdue." The campaign did not say anything about a tax or ask people to vote for anything; it was strictly designed to raise awareness and usage of the library. In order to accomplish this, we used a variety of different means, including social media, billboards, print advertising, our website, and radio ads.

These promotions were generally very well-received by the public and resulted in yet further increases in usage. During the entire period from 2007 to 2012, circulation increased from about 9.2 million to some 14.4 million, visits increased from about 4.5 million to 6.4 million, and attendance at programs and events more than tripled. (Totals are comparing a baseline year of 2008 to 2012 statistics.) Obviously, the more often people are using the library, the more likely they are to support it at the ballot box. With a successful marketing effort behind us and the support of many key community stakeholders, I knew that we were finally ready to formally get the election campaign underway.

Building a Campaign Team

A professional pollster had advised us that the general election of November 2012 would be our best bet for a successful outcome, mainly because many of our strongest supporters tended to be minorities and younger voters, who are less likely to vote in special elections. Therefore, we spent spring 2012 finalizing our ballot language, assembling a political team to run the campaign, and forming a citizen's committee to support and advocate for us in the community. During this time, we also developed the campaign budget and marketing strategy. Our campaign team included a pollster, a campaign manager (Paul Zemitzsch of Sequel, LLC in St. Louis), marketing specialists, and a fundraising specialist. Of course, I was also on the steering committee and involved in all aspects of the operation.

We were very fortunate because we possessed a number of key strengths going into the election season. Our library was viewed favorably by 92% of the population, which was higher than for any other cultural institution in the greater St. Louis area. We also had a crack team of political professionals. For example, our campaign manager had won five previous tax elections in the St. Louis region. We were also able to craft the ballot language in such a way that it talked about what people would get from the tax increase.

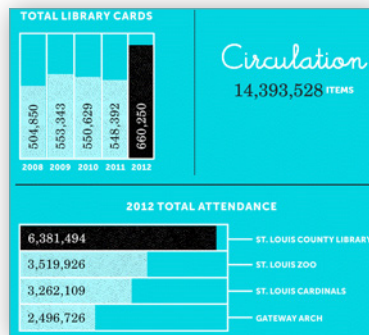
Finally, SLCL was also viewed as a very fiscally conservative institution, and we were able to point to the fact that, unlike many other government entities, we hadn't asked the voters for a levy increase since 1983. In spite of all this, the campaign would not be without its challenges.

Finance Decisions and Fundraising

Using a Facilities Master Plan that had been created with the help of consultants in 2008, the campaign steering committee, our pollster, and our campaign manager worked together to estimate how much funding we would require to address the long-term building needs of the library district. Based on this information, we determined that a tax increase in the range of 4 to 6 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation would be needed to address these issues.

I cannot stress enough how important the fundraising aspects of a campaign are. Without funding, you can't get your message across. Prior to the campaign's official launch, I had been doing a lot of fundraising on my own time as I touted SLCL to various groups and individuals. Members of our campaign steering committee got on board in earnest in April 2012, helping with targeted "asks." Our biggest success in this regard came when the library's development director and I secured a donation of \$200,000 from Civic Progress, one of the leading business groups in St. Louis.

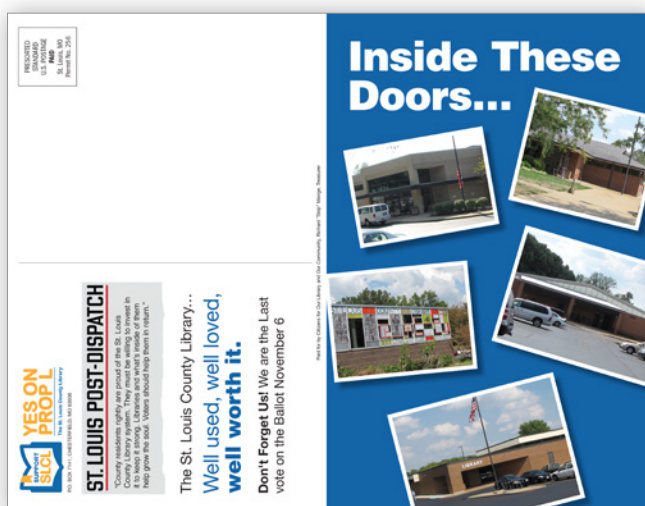
Eventually, we would raise and spend about \$440,000 for our campaign. We were optimistic going in, but we knew that



This chart from SLCL's 2012 annual report illustrates how high the library system's usage was.

nothing could be taken for granted, so we made sure we executed the strategy as if we were behind in the polls. The levy campaign officially got underway in June 2012 for the November 2012 election.

Knowing that we would be on a very crowded ballot in a presidential election year, we decided to make the most of the fact that our proposal would be the last item on the list. Part of our messaging was “Don’t forget us, we are last on the ballot.” We wanted to make sure people knew since there is always some drop-off in voting as people move toward the bottom of the ballot.



Mailers carried the message about SLCL being the last item on the ballot.

Gaining Support and Endorsements

We created a website called Support Our Libraries to get the message out, and we put a heavy emphasis on social media. I also set up meetings with the editorial board of the leading daily newspaper in St. Louis as well as with the largest newspaper serving the African-American community. We were able to obtain the endorsement and support of both newspapers, which was another important step in getting community buy-in.

Another key constituency was the labor movement. Labor unions have a long and rich history in the area, and we knew it was important to get their support for the tax increase. We were able to secure the endorsements of the building trades unions and the Association of General Contractors. Building contractors and unions accounted for most of the remaining funds we raised for the campaign.

Public speaking is also key to election success. During the course of the campaign, I personally spoke to more than 30 organizations, while the members of our campaign committee collectively addressed more than 150 different groups. I perfected my “elevator speech” so that in 3–5 minutes I could communicate the gist of why we were asking for a tax increase and what a successful outcome would mean for St. Louis County.

Of course, some organizations are more supportive than others, and you have to be prepared to answer some tough questions. Those I spoke to included chambers of commerce, church groups, political coalitions, and service clubs. These groups gave me good feedback on the types of questions and concerns we might face

closer to Election Day. I was able to take these back to our campaign team so we could make subtle adjustments to our overall messaging.

One example of this was the concern that many people expressed over what would happen to the staff at their neighborhood libraries while the buildings were closed for construction. I was surprised by how many people feared that these employees would lose their jobs. Therefore, I made it a point to reassure the public that none of our 650 staffers would be laid off as a

result of these construction projects.

Campaign Challenges and Drama

Going into fall 2012, we felt pretty good about our chances. SLCL had garnered the support of both major newspapers, most of the business leadership of the county, and key labor unions. However, it wasn’t going to be smooth sailing for long.

Various anti-tax groups had come out in opposition of the proposed levy, and one particularly zealous individual took it upon himself to file numerous open records requests as well as complaints with the State Ethics Commission regarding how the campaign was being conducted. (Almost all of these items were eventually dismissed, although we were found in technical violation on the labeling of some informational materials produced by the library.)

In addition to the anti-tax crowd, we had to contend with a vocal group of preservationists who objected to our plans to replace one of our 1960s-era buildings with a new facility. At times, it felt as though we were fighting a two-front war in our efforts to get the levy increase passed.

One point of contention was the question of to what degree staff members were able to be involved. Many of our employees were eager to volunteer to help the campaign, so

we had to repeatedly stress that if they wanted to do so, it had to be strictly on a volunteer basis, on their own time, and not coordinated with the library in any way. The importance of good, sound legal advice cannot be stressed enough. I would encourage those who are contemplating a referendum to have their lawyer on speed dial. You are

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This page from the 2012 annual report (2012.slcl.org) highlights new construction.

→ HOW-TO: ELECTION STRATEGY

likely to encounter many legal issues and concerns that will not typically come up in the course of your day-to-day career as a librarian.

The Final Push to Election Day

During the campaign's closing weeks, the pressure seemed to increase almost every day until it was hard to bear. Concerned that we might get lost in the shuffle, we launched a final blitz of radio advertising to all of our constituents. We used our last remaining financial resources to distribute door hangers in targeted neighborhoods that we thought were likely to support us.

Election Day 2012 dawned overcast and chilly, and I spent much of the day pacing the floor in my office as we waited for the polls to close. The members of the campaign leadership group assembled in a local restaurant at about 7:30 that evening. Missouri allows for early voting, and the first counts to come in showed us having about 58% of the total vote. (A simple majority was all that was needed for passage.) This total remained remarkably consistent throughout the course of the evening, and by 10 p.m. it was clear that we had been victorious.

I felt a great deal of relief and joy that this long journey was finally over and that we had achieved a successful outcome. None of it would have been possible without a great team of campaign

professionals and the tireless work of many library employees who volunteered their own time to make this happen.

The tax will run indefinitely and will generate at least \$11 million in additional funds for the library every year. The total Facilities Master Plan (slcl.org/sites/default/files/shared-files/FacilitiesMasterPlan2012.pdf) calls for \$108 million in capital improvements, all of which will be funded by bonds issued against this new tax revenue.

Regardless of what happens in the rest of my career, I will always consider this as a high point—the time when people worked together to secure the future of a large urban library district for many years to come. ✧

Charles Pace earned his M.L.S. from the University of North Texas and worked in libraries in New York, Texas, Illinois, and North Dakota before going to St. Louis County in October 2006. He was named a *Library Journal* Mover & Shaker in 2006. Following his decision to leave St. Louis County Library in 2013, he became executive director of the Gwinnett County Library in Georgia in January 2014. His email address is cpace@gwinnettpl.org.



The Eureka Hills branch of SLCL

→ MANAGING CHANGE IN SCOTLAND

saving in postage. Instead of sending out reminders and overdue letters, we have gradually moved 78% of our customers to online or text notices.

I grappled with huge budget efficiencies over 4 years, but by realigning staff resources, skills, and funds, we still managed to increase our profile, usage, and performance even with the decrease in our overall budget.



These staff "pods" replaced old countertop workspaces.

We invested in self-service checkout machines in 14 locations. This caused a stir, as there was a perception among staffers that it would do away with jobs. It took a lot of talking to convince them that it freed them up for the work that really mattered (and that they really enjoyed). Gradually,

staff and customers realized the benefits. Soon, 75% of transactions were going through self-service.

We began using supplier-selected materials and supply-chain efficiencies, which also enabled us to free up staff to concentrate on more citizen-focused services. That allowed us to reallocate employees who were once heavily involved in doing more traditional reference and checkout tasks.

I was also creative with budgets when I began to invest in new furnishings and decor. Simple things like new fridges and staff chairs made a big difference in morale. Banishing huge, ugly counters in favor of staff pods made many workers uncomfortable at first, but by involving and talking to them constantly, we got through it.

By 2009, the basics were in place: structure, staff, vision, and supply-chain efficiencies. But we were not finished improving yet. ... ✧

[Dear Readers: The story of Edinburgh's transformation will conclude in the next issue, Nov./Dec. 2014. Stay tuned! —Ed.]

Liz McGettigan was the head of library and information services for the City of Edinburgh Council in Scotland from 2007 until 2013. She has a B.A. and is a member of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, an associate of the Chartered Management Institute, and a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. McGettigan is now director of Digital Library and Cultural Experiences at SOLUS UK Ltd., where she transforms other services to be customer-focused for the 21st-century world. Her email address is lizzymcgettigan@gmail.com and her Twitter name is @lizzmcgettigan.

Leading the Change: Libraries Breaking New Ground

Baltimore: Library Video Network, 2013. 57 min. \$99.
SKU: 11297L.

Reviewed by Kathy Dempsey

I'll admit that, with the plethora of leadership and innovation articles, books, videos, and posts that are out today, I wasn't sure if this video would be anything special. But after watching it, I can assure you that *Leading the Change: Libraries Breaking New Ground* is worth your time and money.

In just under an hour, this video profiles four cutting-edge libraries, two in the U.S. and two in the Netherlands. The topic is not marketing per se, but much of what these people discuss is rooted in true marketing even though they don't use that phrase. All four profiled libraries have based their operations on discovering what users want and need, then delivering that in new and interesting ways. None of them are doing what the director feels would be good—they're doing what their communities want and they're changing rapidly along with those desires.

The first Dutch library is in Spijkenisse, a small city that had purposefully decided to change with the times. Local leaders wanted to preserve some small-town feel and historical culture while instituting planned growth into a more modern city. The library, Boekenberg Bibliotheek Spijkenisse (deboekenberg.nl), became a centerpiece of that vision. Amid some concerns, the old library building was taken down and replaced by a very unique building that was designed to be a destination. You might have heard of this "book mountain library," as it's come to be known. From the outside, it looks like a glass pyramid. Inside, the stacks are in the middle in the shape of a mountain, with a wide base that grows more narrow as it rises.

Renate Broekmeulen says the library's leaders took a risk with this design. One challenge is that the books are shelved in a continuous range from bottom to top, so shifting and reorganizing is not really possible. "It's not an easy building. It's a building that makes you work for it," she admits. But it's also a building that has won awards and worldwide recognition.

The next Dutch library that's profiled is DOK, known as the Library Concept Center, in Delft (dok.info/over-ons/about-dok.html). Its marketing communication leader, Mark Borneman, opens this segment by saying that DOK's mission is "being the living room of Delft." He later explains its two philosophies: "library outside-in" (making people welcome, having great staff) and "library inside-out" (being visible outside the building, using partnerships). Borneman talks a lot about having the right staff members, such as employing marketing professionals in that department and degreed librarians in those jobs as well as bring-

ing in innovation designers and other pros in whatever capacity is needed. The library doesn't staff the entire organization with LIS pros and expect them to cover specialty work.

One unusual service the video covers is DOK's art library, which contains more than 4,000 pieces. Cardholders can check out paintings, for a fee, for 3 months at a time to enhance their homes or businesses. (*MLS* highlighted DOK in 2008: infotoday.com/mls/mar08/Boekesteijn.shtml. And we interviewed Borneman for our Marketing Masters column in 2013: tinyurl.com/ln98o9c.)

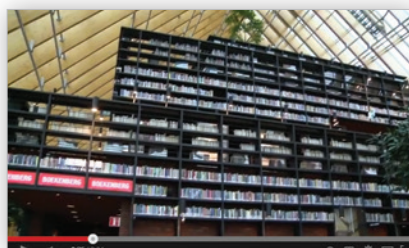
The video's next segment is an interview with José Aponte, executive director of San Diego County Library (SDCL; sdcl.org). I found his service philosophy fascinating and very well-stated. Without saying "marketing," he explains that SDCL does focus groups and surveys, concentrating especially on nontraditional users of all stripes. "We do a lot of listening and a lot of research. It's really quite simple: What do people need?" Aponte's vision for his county's residents: "We can help you not only survive, but prosper."

One key to success, he says, is that doing pilot projects is part of the DNA of the 33-branch system. He lets staffers try new initiatives for a few months and may then adapt or dismantle them. SDCL also works with healthcare providers. It has nurses ride on the bookmobiles to serve at-risk communities and does breast cancer screenings in the libraries. "A number of my peers are risk-averse," Aponte ventures, but he's driven by the fact that "We are here to make San Diego better."

The final segment highlights the process of constant innovation at Darien Library in Connecticut (darienlibrary.org). Director Louise Parker Berry explains how she wants the library to be a sort of "Main Street." She's passionate about hiring the right people and empowering them to give the best possible customer service. Berry tells employees at all levels that their actions won't be seen as mistakes as long as they result in better service for visitors. John Blyberg, assistant director for innovation, further articulates that concept. Great experiences are based on encouraging staffers "to make decisions that fix the situation right then and there."

The managers also constantly take ideas from customers and all employees (professionals or not). They're not afraid to try new things, tweak them, give them up, and move on. Blyberg sums up Darien's fearless philosophy: "All of our successes are built on a layer of failures."

I felt a renewed sense of purpose after I watched this video. Seeing what these organizations are accomplishing can challenge your way of thinking and embolden you to take risks. I recommend viewing *Leading the Change* with staff, stakeholders, emerging leaders, managers, potential investors or architects, trustees, and Friends. If you're looking for inspiration, here it is. Check the video's website (tinyurl.com/kqm8p9s) to see 2 minutes of clips and to place your order now. *



A scene of the "book mountain" in Spijkenisse

→ IN THE NEWS

Czech Republic Takes Top Honors in IFLA's 2014 International Marketing Awards

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions' (IFLA) Section on Management and Marketing joined with global academic publisher Emerald Group Publishing to announce the winners of the 12th IFLA International Marketing Award. It honors organizations that have implemented creative, results-oriented marketing projects or campaigns that promote the library and information services industry. Here are the top 2014 winners:



First place went to the **Jirí Mahen Library in Brno, Czech Republic**, for its innovative partnership with Brno's DP Public Transport company and an advertising agency. "Library in the Tram—Tram to the Library" promotes the library in tram cars. It reaches about 1,000 riders a day and is heavily publicized through webpages and social media.

Second place went to the **Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region Health Sciences Library in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada**, for its creative "Standby ... Action!" campaign in which library staff produced three amusing 90-second videos to promote three services.

Two institutions shared third place honors: **Stellenbosch University Library and Information Service in South Africa** won for its "Get Research SMART@Your Library" project, and the **National Library Board of Singapore** won for its project "S.U.R.E.—Promoting Information Literacy Awareness to Singaporeans."

The first-place winner received a cash award of \$2,000 plus coverage for registration, airfare, lodging, and other expenses in order to attend IFLA's World Library and Information Congress, which was held in Lyon, France, in August. Click to www.ifla.org/node/8562?og=75 to find a full winners list and a link to a Storify site that has details, photos, and videos.

New 2012 Public Library Survey Data Is Out

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) recently released data files for the FY 2012 Public Library Survey (PLS), which provides statistics on the status of public libraries in the U.S. The data covers the number of visits, circulation, collection size, hours, staff, electronic resources, operating revenues, and expenditures. It is collected from approximately 9,000 public libraries that have about 17,000 individual outlets in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and outlying territories.

You can use this data for presentations, budget requests, articles, pitches to stakeholders and journalists, etc. The FY 2012 data files and documentation are available at imls.gov/research/pls_data_files.aspx. IMLS will publish an analysis later this year.

United for Libraries Gives Three Baker & Taylor Awards for Library Support Efforts

United for Libraries named the three 2014 winners of its Baker & Taylor Awards for outstanding efforts to support their libraries:

Friends of the Weber County (Utah) Library won for its PR campaign "Libraries Change Lives," which educated voters about a \$45 million general obligation bond to build new libraries and to transform existing ones.

Friends of the Peoria (Ariz.) Public Library won for bringing free science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (STEAM) educational programming to local 6- to 12-year-olds and their families.

The Danville (Ill.) Library Foundation won for its third annual "From Page to Stage" fundraiser in which 100 local singers and performers brought stories from books to life. It raised just under \$60,000.

Each of the three winning groups received \$1,000 and a clock from Baker & Taylor. In addition, Friends of the Novi (Mich.) Public Library and Friends of the Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library earned honorable mentions. Details will be posted at ala.org/united/grants_awards/friends/bakertaylor.

Library Communications Conference in October

On Oct. 6 and 7, 2014, the Library Communications Conference will take place in Mount Laurel, N.J., about 30 minutes from Philadelphia. It will focus on best practices for library communications and outreach workers and will feature about 20 sessions and three keynotes (some by *MLS* editor Kathy Dempsey).

Topics include social media, marketing planning, digital photography, surveys, graphic design, and more. See the full program at tinyurl.com/klk25dp. (This is the same event that had been known as ALCOP's fall conference for the past few years.) You can attend for 1 day (\$129) or both. Prices are \$229 if you sign up by Sept. 10 or \$249 later (deadline Sept. 29). *

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