



The electronic newsletter  
with marketing ideas for  
information professionals.

compliments of...  
Chris Olson & Associates

### A Note From Chris

Marketing Treasures has returned! Like the proverbial cat with nine lives, our newsletter has sprung to life again to deliver ideas and tips for your library's marketing activities. Our editorial team is excited about the line-up of topics we'll be writing for you. Each issue of Marketing Treasures will include a feature article about a vital marketing subject, followed by shorter sections covering marketing concepts, insights into promotion activities, popular communications resources, and upcoming learning opportunities to expand your marketing know-how.

Marketing Treasures has been streamlined for quick reading and is produced in 3 formats: HTML, plain text, and PDF. Our web site maintains an archive of all the past issues in PDF format. The newsletter is free and is published the 3rd Wednesday of every month.

We lead off our revamped Marketing Treasures with ideas on how you can maintain and expand your library brand name in electronic environments. Branding has emerged as an essential ingredient in successful marketing programs, and grooming your library's brand and its electronic presentation should be on your agenda.

I find other people's discussions about marketing always gives me a fresh perspective. Anne Abate does a fine job of reviewing retail merchandising ideas in her article "What Libraries can Learn from Bookstores: Applying Bookstore Design to Public Libraries."

Don't overlook the Golden Opportunities section at the end of the newsletter. It lists upcoming educational events, starting with the February 18th teleconference entitled Library Marketing: Tips & Techniques.

And if you attended a 2004 library association conference, you may have seen flashing light star pins attached to badges. We tracked down the source and found a whole treasure-trove of lighted pins for every possible promotion theme.

Look for our next issue February 16, when our lead article will feature marketing plan essentials.

Welcome to Marketing Treasures!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Chris Olson'.

Chris Olson  
Publisher

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## Six Electronic Branding Opportunities

Creating visibility for your library's brand doesn't have to depend on physical items or a "brick and mortar" presence. In today's electronic world the brand props are changing. Signage and posters are giving way to e-postcards and digital self-help. You may already be experiencing a decline in the number of walk-in customers, replaced by people who frequent your web site and ask for information through virtual live chats. If you think none of these new electronic interfaces can support your branding activities, guess again. The evolving electronic world offers plenty of new and exciting opportunities for putting your library's brand out front in the marketplace. If you don't believe us, consider Amazon.com and e-Bay. Both have successfully defined and branded their organizations and services without having a storefront or physical place.

Here are 6 electronic branding opportunities to keep in mind for expanding and reinforcing your brand name with your target customers.

### 1. Display your logo consistently across all web site pages.

This may sound elementary, but from where we sit, it needs repeating. Too many library web sites limit their logo to the primary site pages, and overlook ancillary message pages, forwarding pages, error message pages. Every page display related to the library web site should display your logo, and it should be in a consistent location, color, size, and not distorted.

### 2. Give your library credit.

Use "bylines" to link your brand name with the products and services your information service provides. For example, a report service might use as a byline "101 Citations researched by Super Duper Information Service." Here are a few byline phrases to get you started.

"Produced by"

"Created by"

"Brought to you by"

"Researched by"

"Developed by"

"Coordinated by"

"Certified by"

"Coordinated by"

### 3. Exploit file names.

The names you give documents and other electronic files that are downloaded from your web site can extend your brand name and help solve cryptic file names. Do you know who produced the file named "checklist.pdf"? How about "execsummary.doc"? By adding an abbreviated version of your brand name or acronym to the beginning of every electronic file name, you reinforce your brand presence. For example, USLibExecSummary.pdf, or ThomsonLib\_ReadList.doc. Make sure you follow a file naming convention so you maximize the benefits of including your library name. For example, starting file names with your brand name helps all the files from your library to sort together in an alphabetic listing. It's also easier for people identify the file they just downloaded from your web site.

### 4. Bookmarks broadcast your brand name.

Web site bookmarks are created using the title of a web page. Make sure your pages each have a title, beginning with the brand name of your information service. Some folks go further, and include the URL in the page title, or a short brand message. Go to

<http://www.wetfeet.com> and bookmark the home page. You'll see what we're talking about.

Web site bookmarks can travel, so take advantage of this visibility opportunity.

## 5. Leverage "Send this link/page to a friend" messages.

Are you maximizing the free publicity generated by people who forward your library's URL or web pages to friends, colleagues and family members? Send yourself a "forward to a friend" message from your library's web site and evaluate it as a marketing opportunity. Is your logo or library name displayed? Have you included a brand message or other slogan lines in the message template? How about promoting an upcoming event or new product?

## 6. Don't forget e-mail signature blocks.

Your information service brand can take advantage of signature blocks – the lines of contact information found at the end of e-mail messages. From a marketing point of view, a signature block is an electronic calling card representing the person and the organization to all who read the message. Many organizations include a short promotion message or slogan at the bottom of a signature block. They rotate the message every few months to maximize the communications broadcast opportunity signature blocks give them. If you're planning to host a special event or want to advertise your meeting room facilities, consider adding a line to the signature blocks your staff is using. One word of caution: keep your signature block short. No more than 7 lines is a good rule of thumb. Keep the lengths of the lines short too. If necessary, use a two-column format for the signature block so it's visually balanced. You might want to create a series of signature blocks for different situations or to vary the brand messages sent out.

Visibility opportunities for your library brand abound in the virtual environment. We hope these six ideas jumpstart your strategies for extending your brand image using electronic communications. Got an another idea for electronic branding that you'd like to share? Drop us a note or send an example to [MarketingTreasuresEditor@ChrisOlson.com](mailto:MarketingTreasuresEditor@ChrisOlson.com)

### *Treasure Tips*

## What is a Brand Promise?

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How many times have you seen ads for an organization that touts their "promise" and "values" of superior customer service and satisfaction guaranteed?

Simply stated, a brand promise articulates what customers can expect when they do business with an organization. For example, when Jiffy Lube says they will have your car in and out of an oil change in 30 minutes that is a promise of the Jiffy Lube brand.

A brand promise extends beyond that by being an internal guiding statement that breathes life into brand benefits and its external pledges to the customer. A brand promise is a powerful statement that drives communications, behavior and strategy throughout an organization and it serves to guide employee commitment to customer satisfaction.

Whether it's a just paragraph or only a sentence long, a brand promise needs to inspire and motivate employees to live the brand—to be the brand. This is a great challenge because it means employees have to live, breathe and act on the promise every day.

As markets become more competitive and customers more demanding, it is vital for organizations such as information services to secure long-term relationships with consumers to continue healthy business growth. An average brand will not do the trick but, a great brand will capture a customer's imagination — not only through great advertising, but through the daily interaction with the brand be it at a physical location, personal interaction or by virtual channels.

Although a brand is nurtured and managed by marketing and communications professionals, its promise is represented by the entire organization. Strong brands are made

when everyone in the organization has a complete understanding of and ability to express the brand promise and brand values. For a library this means that everyone, not just the folks at the reference desk, is dedicated to making the brand promise come to life.

When an organization lives the brand, it means that staff members understand how to best interpret the brand and execute it at every point and time the brand touches a customer. Information service organizations and their stakeholders benefit from brand promises that articulate values and set expectations. For when employees live the brand, they resonate a high level of valued expertise in concert with each other and provide outstanding service in a way not available anywhere else.

### **Promotion Gems**

## **Going Beyond Promotional Bookmarks**

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We've noticed that many libraries utilize colorful, paper bookmarks to promote their web services. But are bookmarks the most effective way to market electronic resources? After all, how many people immediately think to refer to the scrap of paper protruding from the novel on their nightstand when they need market research or other information?

Human behavior aside, not only do bookmarks cost a bit extra to have cut to shape and printed in multi-colors, the services they're usually advertising are electronic and delivered on the desktop. With that in mind, shouldn't the promotion of these services be delivered the same way?

Here are few ideas for advertising your electronic services:

**E-postcards:** You send them to your family and friends, why not use them to inform clients about new services, let them know about upcoming events or thank them for their support? They're cost-effective; in fact they will not impact your marketing budget because they cost nothing. Here are few sites to refer to:

[E-Cards](http://www.e-cards.com) (<http://www.e-cards.com>)

[E-Greetings](http://www.egreetings.com) (<http://www.egreetings.com>)

[E-Postcards](http://www.e-postcards.com) (<http://www.e-postcards.com>)

**Create partnerships:** Partnerships and alliances come in many forms online. Picking the right one may depend on what sort of services your library offers. For example, a corporate library may wish to consider aligning itself with employee benefits like human resources, the cafeteria and gym or any other employee perks by placing a link on a web page advertising them. This may seem like such a small step but imagine the large rewards the library stands to gain because it is now positioned as an employee benefit.

As in the corporate community, there are plenty of connections in local and campus communities for academic and public libraries to imbed partnerships in their marketing efforts. Schools, businesses, organizations and other groups offer alliance opportunities for libraries. Your library could co-sponsor an event, team up in fund raising, and act as a host place for a group meeting. Websites also act as a link between partners in this instance as well.

**Toys for the young at heart:** If your clientele can't seem to part with tchotchkes, here are a few you might find more effective and memorable than bookmarks. Stick with items that can become part of your customer's office landscape – mouse pads, coasters, sticky notes, calendars, and stress balls are all great ways to get and keep your information center in front of a customer's face or right under their nose anytime they are seated at their desk.

And one more idea. For extra visibility, try putting magnets on the door of the refrigerator in the office snack room. If the magnets "walk away" you know you've got a winner! Only need

a few magnets? Make them yourself with sheets of magnetic material you can put through your color copier! <http://www.paper-paper.com/magnetic.html>

For more ideas on how to promote your library or where to find giveaways for your customers, visit the Marketing Treasures Resource web page at <http://www.ChrisOlson.com/marketingtreasures/mtresources.html>

### *Pearls of Wisdom*

#### **Twinkle, twinkle little star...**

By all accounts, the most popular exhibitor give-away of the 2004 library conference season, was the twinkling star light pins. These flashing light pins use hearing aid batteries to power the flashing LED light, and magnetic backs are used to adhere the pin to any surface, including ear lobes! We found the source of the flashing star pins and discovered a world of flashing pins of all shapes and motifs. You're sure to find something to mark a special promotion event or celebration. If you like the stars, then there are plenty of thematic ideas you can use: the stars come out at the library... our staff is the star of the show... questions answered at the library, starring... They could also be used to draw attention to new materials or important notices. It would be easy to have the star pins complemented by star graphics on your library web site to create a coordinated promotion theme or maybe a reading campaign. <https://www.flashingblinkylights.com/>

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#### **Post-it® Table Top Easel Pads**

Have you ever tried to lead a brainstorming session without a whiteboard or an easel? It's like working without a net, isn't it? Well, no more! Thanks to 3M, you can now turn the tables in your favor with the Post-it® Table Top Easel Pad.

They're easy to carry, the built-in stand sets up in seconds and the paper on these pads gives you all of the advantages of Post-it® Self-Stick Pads. Have one on hand in your office or set one up in the library to capture customer comments and testimonials. Use the pad as a quick and portable announcement board on counters and tabletops. The pads are great for small group collaboration and impromptu brainstorming anytime, anywhere. With the Easel Pad, you're free to roam. <http://www.3m.com/us/office/postit>

#### **What Can Libraries Learn From Bookstores?**

A lot according to this idea-provoking and well written article by Anne Abate. If you're encouraging walk-in traffic to your library, then tips from the retail merchandising world may help your marketing team manage your library's brand environment. We like Anne's observations and numerous ideas, and heartily recommend her article to those of you operating a "brick and mortar" information service shop (library)

<http://www.ckls.org/~crippel/marketing/bookstore.html>

### *Golden Opportunities*

**February 18. Library Marketing: Tips & Techniques.** Teleconference broadcast from College of DuPage, Noon - 2:00 pm (US Eastern Time) "Listen to the success stories of fellow librarians as they share their personal experiences in finding interesting and effective ways to mass-communicate and promote the value of their libraries."

<http://www.dupage.edu/COD/index.php?id=31>

**March 15. Services Strategy: How to Get the Right "Mix" of Services.** Computers In Libraries Conference Workshop. This workshop focuses on developing a service strategy and portfolio that best serves clients, today and tomorrow, without draining financial or human resources and is driven by the library's mandate and goals.

<http://www.infotoday.com/cil2005/preconference.shtml>

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**March 15. Managing Your Brand: Personal PR for the Average Librarian or Info Pro.**

Computers In Libraries Conference Workshop. Each librarian or information professional

must develop a strategy for their individual development as well as for increasing the visibility and credibility of their department or library. This workshop provides tips, templates, and techniques for doing just that. <http://www.infotoday.com/cil2005/preconference.shtml>

### **March 19. Creating Customized Marketing Plans to Target Your Customers.**

Computers In Libraries Conference Workshop. This course reviews the basic terms and definitions of marketing and focuses on the tools you'll need for success. Then, through instruction, group discussion, and brainstorming, you'll create a customized marketing plan to take back to work. <http://www.infotoday.com/cil2005/postconference.shtml>

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