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MARKETING *Treasures*

Ideas and Insights into
Promoting Library &
Information Services

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Marketing Calendars

by Dani Porter, M.L.I.S.

The fast-paced field of journalism relies on the editorial calendar to bring stability to its ever-changing world. The media field turns to trafficking calendars to keep frantic schedules under control. And the special library? As special librarians face the demands of maintaining an established mission and collection structure and providing quick, accurate solutions to inquiries and projects while implementing a solid marketing strategy, they need a calendar of their own: a marketing calendar.

With planned marketing techniques, information professionals can have the use of a strong marketing communications plan ready for easy implementation. Think of the marketing calendar in terms of other library or information center projects. A shelving shift within the information center would demand a timeline to keep track of ongoing projects and resource location during the implementation phase, and a major remodeling project for the library would also require a comprehensive, planned look at the areas and staff affected. When a library marketing project is on the table, professionals need marketing calendars as tracking tools to ensure success.

Calendar Types

Depending upon the marketing purpose, whether rolling out the library's Intranet, planning your company's end-user database training schedule, or implementing collateral

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materials such as brochures and guides for the services you provide, it is important to look at the factors involved. Starting and ending dates, key deadlines, staffing needs, and the nature of the project to be marketed need a look. Once goals have been set, and project planning completed, a specific calendar may be selected.

Microsoft's Schedule Plus can be a boon for solos, who may find this Windows-based system most convenient for overall marketing organization. Using clickable tabs, it offers an array of selections from daily, weekly, and monthly options, to contact information. Everything from company, department, and office data, to fax, home, office, cellular, and assistant's telephone numbers can be included for easy reference. The "To Do" section has a place for priorities, project duration and description, and percentage completed, along with the standard user-friendly edit features, copy & paste, and pop-up reminders. The Schedule Plus Planner provides a ready-made template for flow charts that are easy to create by highlighting boxes. Printable yet fluid, Schedule Plus is a strong option for those with multiple, or ongoing marketing projects.

A large information center may find a simple, erasable wall calendar works best, especially if several library employees have varying

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Letter from the Editor

In our
eleventh
year of
publishing
*Marketing
Treasures*,
Chris Olson

and Associates is pleased to present our first electronic, web-based issue. As a natural outgrowth of our library marketing consultancy, *Marketing Treasures* has always been full of the field-tested information and insights we've gained in the course of our work. Over the years, our pages have included articles on every aspect of information service marketing: from logo design and analysis, public relations, and managing the library sales force, to conducting marketing audits, determining client needs, and creating effective annual reports. By not focusing exclusively on promotion, but on marketing as a means to organize and optimize the work of the library, *Marketing Treasures* has always sought to offer solutions to current problems while laying the groundwork for future success.

In our move to the web, we will maintain the same approach to our articles that we've taken in the paper version of the newsletter. In addition, we will be able to take advantage of many benefits of electronic publishing that print newsletters cannot match. The most obvious of these is price. While the writing and design of a newsletter doesn't come free (even on the web), the savings in printing and distribution costs are enormous. When a newsletter is closely allied with an ongoing enterprise, as *Marketing Treasures* is with Chris Olson and Associates, it is a great temptation for the enterprise to absorb those writing and design costs. At Chris Olson and Associates, we have given in to that temptation.

In addition to free distribution, electronic publishing allows us to use the immediacy and ease of email to get closer to our readers and permits our readers to get closer to one another. We hope the new *Marketing Treasures* format will create a virtual community of information service providers who share questions, solutions, information, and experiences.

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We also plan to develop a reference archives that will enable us to base current articles on subjects already addressed, without the need for an in-depth review each time we approach a subject. In this way we will be able to write for a range of experience levels. When we cover more technical subjects, readers new to marketing will be able to reference earlier articles to bring themselves up to speed.

And, finally, by linking to related web pages, we will offer our readers immediately accessible resources that will extend our reach well beyond the pages of any one newsletter.

This new electronic incarnation of *Marketing Treasures* will be published four times a year. We'd like to take this opportunity to invite you to make this *your* newsletter—*your* forum for exploring and discussing the marketing issues that information service providers face. Please feel free to email us (mteditor@chrisolson.com) at any time with your questions, comments, queries, and suggestions. We hope you enjoy the new *Marketing Treasures*.

Cara Byington, Editor
Chris Olson, Publisher

P.S. The graphics that normally accompanied the paper version of the newsletter will soon be offered at our sister-site, Olson's Library Clip Art at www.chrisolson.com/libraryclipart.

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Chris Olson, Publisher; Cara Byington, Managing Editor; Susan Borden, Senior Writer; Copyright 1999 by Christine A. Olson. Beginning with Volume 12 (January 1999) *Marketing Treasures* is published quarterly and available free on the Internet at www.chrisolson.com/marketingtreasures. Clip art images move to Olson's Library Clip Art web site at www.chrisolson.com/libraryclipart.

Readers may reprint a few articles from each electronic issue without written permission, provided *Marketing Treasures* is cited as the source. (And since we assume our readers are librarians, we also assume that you *will* cite us and know how to do it properly. If not, just give us a call or write us.) Reproducing any portion of *Marketing Treasures* or its associated clip art for the purpose of resale, without written permission of the publisher, is strictly prohibited.

Back issues of the paper format newsletter and binders are still available on a limited basis in order to complete collection runs. At the moment we do not have plans to convert prior paper-based issues to electronic format. Clip art images from previous issues are currently available on computer diskette. Call our offices for details.

Marketing Treasures is produced using Adobe PageMaker 6.5 on a Macintosh and then converted to PDF file using Acrobat Exchange 3.0. URLs in color are active links to the WWW.

Animated GIFs

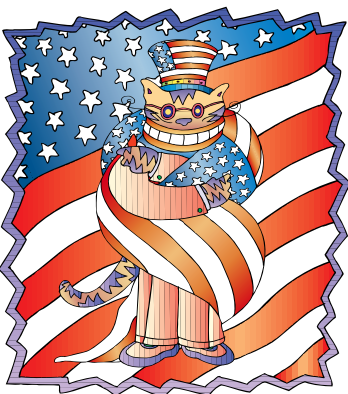
by Dani Porter, M.L.I.S.

To those information professionals on the technological fringe, animated GIFs are not what you buy your children at the Disney Store during the holiday season. Animated GIFs, or moving graphic images, are a fast and easy way to add style to a corporate Intranet or website. Generally colorful and creative, adding just one to the main page of your site can draw the viewer to your program's introduction, new research information, or company news.

While some animated GIFs dance and groove, others pop and move, with a wide selection available online through shareware for the non-profits or a nominal fee for commercial sites. Many sites also include tutorials on how to create your own animated graphic. Whether you want to call attention to a new product or service, encourage feedback through a conspicuous e-mail visual, or dress up your page during the holidays, it is important to first decide upon the character's purpose.

■ Designs for main pages can include traditional books with turning pages or subject themes for health care or law libraries. Free counters and trackers are also available, and here you can be as creative or conservative as your corporate culture allows.

■ Research-oriented graphics to announce the information product are abundant with spinning CD-ROMs, computers that type, and smiling diskettes.



■ Holiday animation can include dancing turkeys or waving flags, and valentines for American Heart Month in February.

When seeking out that perfect image, free, ready-made

animated GIFs can be found throughout the Internet. With a right click on the image, followed by a "save file as," shared graphics can be added instantly. Two comprehensive library-related sites with several links include:

■ Stephanie Stoke's Design at www.ssdesign/librarypr/toolbox.html

■ Geocities at www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/2161/clipart

Be sure to follow the rules of usage for commercial sites, as it is important to note that many have strict guidelines regarding both use and links. Most have rules posted prominently, spelling out the particulars of public and private usage.

Due to the ever-evolving nature of the Internet, the search engine-of-choice (for this month, anyway) is Google (www.google.com), which provides searches based upon phrase matching. While lacking in the Yahoo-type reference page with all the bells and whistles, Google provided a particularly useful site for animated gifs.

Discovered through a Web site for the Spring 1999 Computer Literacy class at Westminster College in Salt Lake City, "Finding Graphics Files," lists no fewer than 20 links to public domain (i.e., free) graphics files. This page is located at www.wcslc.edu/pers_pages/aleigh/cmpt120/graphics.html. Two exceptional links located here include Media Builder (www.mediabuilder.com), and a site with dozens of animated gifs (www.image.dk/~petermad/anigif), both generic and library-related.

Even if your computer lacks a Zip Drive, you can still right click, and "save picture as" to an a:/ diskette, in effect creating your own shareware library of animated clip art.

Viewers can be educated, entertained, or cued to new or added information by animated graphics used as an enhancement. But as a rule animated GIFs should not be used to distraction on the same, or consecutive, pages. And while graphics in general should be changed often to ensure an exciting, refreshed site, consistency is important to any professional site. With animated or standard graphics, balance is the key. ■

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"Viewers can be educated, entertained, or cued to new or added information by animated graphics used as an enhancement."

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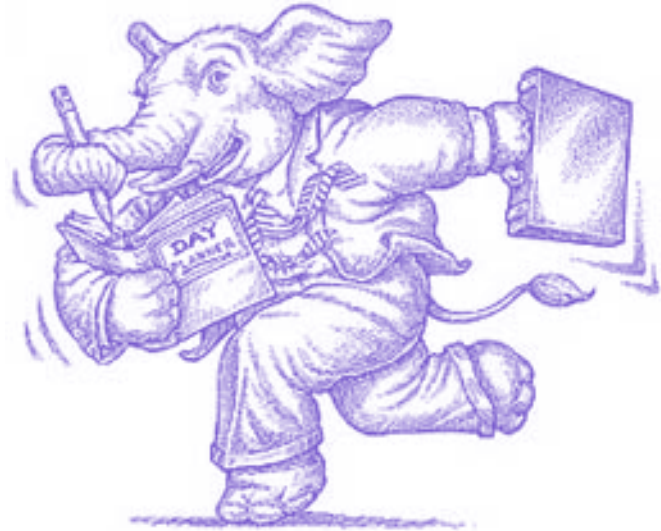
responsibilities. For example, if one works on the monthly newsletter, and another, on weekly flyers announcing newly acquired (or existing) resources, they could add, delete, or maintain the necessary tracking information for all to use. The convenience of viewing marketing projects in different colors is also an advantage here. Events can be in red, training seminars in green, and website refreshment in blue. Also, if an information center is working on research for numerous clients, it could color-code these as well. The wall calendar can also be used for internal advantage: vacations, birthdays, and employment anniversaries are sure to be remembered with large, colorful notices.

Another popular method is the use of flow charts. Often used in media planning, landscaped, legal-sized flow charts with horizontal arrows can graph days, weeks, and months, along with a variety of subject areas or departmental needs, all on one page. Templates are available in Schedule Plus, or can be customized using Microsoft Excel, or Lotus 1-2-3.

The calendar or fiscal year can run along the top of the page by week (i.e., Jan. 4, 11, 18, 25), with vertical lines separating weeks or months. The side column can list the library's promotional mix (i.e., special events, brochures, and newsletters). Again, if multiple clients are the key marketing priority, they can be listed on a patron flow chart by name, department, or external client. If more than one flow chart is necessary due to a variety of patrons and marketing projects under consideration, Excel and Lotus 1-2-3 make for quick moving, copying, and interconnection within charts. The flexibility of flow charts, just as with Schedule Plus, is that they can be modified on the desk top, and printed regularly for distribution.

There are also numerous commercial calendars available in several formats. Just as with library marketing, it is important to choose the right venue for organization. Depending upon your information center's projects, calendar length needs to be taken into account. Those with an uncomplicated, quarterly newsletter, weekly training sessions, or monthly reports to submit can plan comfortably for deadlines. However, those with one-time events or changing formats need to decide upon calendar duration. Weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly can fit short-term to long-term alternatives. Weekly might work for a marketing flyer or

article; monthly, for a newsletter or brochure; quarterly, for contests or surveys; and yearly, for budgets or departmental reports.



Calendar Usage

The program and promotional mix within your library can prescribe calendar timetables and options. A large information center with a marketing plan may use several programs, whereas a solo with a small constituency might use just a few. Large or small, many or few, different types of ideas can be added to your calendar. One-time projects can include creation of a library logo and letterhead, special events, contests, surveys, brochures, or a distinctive voice-mail message for branding purposes.

To illustrate, for logo and letterhead creation to be used long-term, an outside marketing vendor might work best, especially if you are short a graphic designer or lack the time and experience. A calendar noting department or company input, agency or vendor direction time, design duration, first drafts, revisions, second drafts, proofs, and department or company approvals would need to be graphed, logged, or arrowed in. Likewise, a brochure explaining your library's resources and services would need tight calendar coordination with the printer. Even placing a special voice-mail message as a library branding method, or announcing new resources on your information center's telephones would require a timeline for writing copy, rehearsals, recordings, revisions, playbacks, and the like. As a rule,

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“One-time projects can include creation of a library logo and letterhead, special events, contests, surveys, brochures, or a distinctive voice-mail message for branding purposes.”

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one-time marketing projects can take the most effort and organization.

Frequent library resource promotion can include articles, letters, flyers, fax transmittals, report covers, newsletters, training materials, and website and intranet projects. Presuming your library wants a strong representation in your company or community, routine programs need to be a part of the marketing calendar.

A nice feature of recurring marketing programs is the ability to make minimal changes to newly distributed documents and handouts. During initial creation and production, be sure to prominently display the library's name, location, phone numbers, and hours of operation, even if it is on a simple bookmark. Also, all resource training you provide should be accompanied by informational handouts or training materials. Even if trainees set these handouts aside, still calling or visiting the library with questions previously answered, you will still have the benefit of wide library publicity.

Marketing calendars can also be a boon to newsletter writing and production, especially if you need to collect photos, articles, calendars of events, maps, or fact sheets from contributors. You might even include a small deadline calendar for upcoming features in each publication, to assist in keeping the project on track (e-mail and phone reminders are good, too). Keeping multiple people and priorities pinned down for ongoing programs can be essentially stable with structured calendars.

However, future events can be somewhat difficult to pin down. If you are aware of approaching changes, such as a move toward more intranet-based information services, or a new library column in the company's newsletter, you can be pro-active in organizing your library's marketing calendar around the new or enhanced format or program. Anticipation of user needs and services is a given in the profession, so it is always good to ask around, listen, and learn of potential happenings.

Some view the upcoming Year 2000 (Y2K) problem as a challenge certain to impact information centers. (For a comical look, please visit www.refurl.com/y2k_bug.gif). With less than a year to go, information professionals can prepare for, and begin implementation of, upcoming requirements of news, facts, and solutions.

“A nice feature of recurring marketing programs is the ability to make minimal changes to newly distributed documents and handouts.”

Perhaps you have already provided a primer on Y2K. Updates and new information appear daily on the topic, and the library could be THE source on this hot issue. Future calendar planning for Y2K could include weekly or monthly updates on trends in business and industry, a quarterly watch on government agencies and how they are solving the problem, or regular coordination with in-house management information systems on re-programming attempts or adaptive hardware accessory or software replacements. Library research, along with communication of efforts and successes, could be included in the marketing mix.

As with all calendar types, ranges, and purposes, planning, goal setting, and organization is the key. Regular review of calendars and programs will also illuminate fresh needs for services and new strategies, in addition to means of improved productivity and effectiveness. Marketing calendars are essential to a professional, composed operation, and can be implemented easily. ■

If you've been looking for an easy way to quickly create animated banners, you might want to try www.animationonline.com. They offer a step-by-step approach to creating your own, starting with the selection of the design layout you like best and ending with the words you wish to see displayed. Whatever you create is yours to keep for free!



Need to publicize your ready-reference phone line? A colorful telephone-shaped magnet or key chain could be just the reminder your customers need. Magnets can take up residence on filing cabinets or desk lamps, and save your customer from having to flip through a phone file for your number. If some of your customers spend a lot of time on the road, that phone-shaped key chain can help them stay in touch with you. Hand one to your favorite road warrior and say, “Give us a ring!” U.S. Toy Company is on the Internet at www.ustoyco.com and available by phone at 1-800-255-6124.



Marketing Resources on the Web

It will come as no surprise to information service providers that there are thousands—no, tens of thousands—of library and marketing websites in this world. An ongoing mission of the electronic version of *Marketing Treasures* is to cull through these sites and point you toward the best. So, in the inaugural issue, we thought we'd point you to some classic sites, the back bone of library marketing resources.

Library Sites

American Library Association (ALA)
www.ala.org

The ALA website is a colorful, high energy, well-organized site divided into the following categories: News and Announcements, Events and Conferences, Library Advocacy and Support, Education, Employment, ALA Interests and Activities, The Marketplace, Membership Info and Services, ALA's Library, and ALA Divisions, Units, and Governance. Visitors to the Library Advocacy and Support page will find a link to PR-Talk!Shop, which currently includes a press room that posts ALA News Releases, a literacy calendar, free downloadable library web site clip art, PR ideas and solutions, ALA awards, grants and scholarships, and a chance to subscribe to a PR!Talk discussion list. While this site is mainly geared for public libraries, the ALA can be a great jumping-off point for special library activities and initiatives.

Special Libraries Association (SLA)
www.sla.org

The SLA website makes a sound case for the value of libraries in several articles on its site. Among them, an article titled "Special Librarians: Putting Knowledge to Work" found at the "What is a Special Librarian?" page and a listing of "Seven Good Reasons To Use a Special Library" in the Promotional Tools section of the Public Relations page. While visiting the site, check out the Virtual Bookstore, which offers several marketing-related books for sale. The website also offers a schedule of conferences and meetings, listings of education and career opportunities,



an information resources center, and a government relations section.

Medical Libraries Association (MLA)
www.mlanet.org

This site features information about the MLA, news about its annual meeting (mid-May), education, jobs, press releases, and publications and resources. "The Value of the Hospital Library," an article based on a study of the impact of hospital library information on patient care, is in the Resources section of the website, at www.mlanet.org/resources/value.html. It contains research worth citing in reports, brochures, and on your website. Also worth a visit is the site's "Hot Quotes" page, a list of literature citations that are pro-library or pro-librarian. You'll find it in the "Press" section at: www.mlanet.org/press/hotquot1.html.

American Association of Law Libraries (AALL)
www.aallnet.org/events

While not as marketing-oriented as the MLA website, you'll find some marketing resources here, mostly in the form of customer service issues. To that end, check out the AALL's press releases and professional development sections. The Meetings & Events page promotes the Annual Meeting (July 17-21) where the theme will be "At the Crossroads: Information Management, Technology, Policy." Marketing issues such as Total Quality Management, downsizing, and outsourcing promise to be addressed.

Canadian Association of Special Libraries and Information Services (CASLIS)
<http://199.247.148.81/caslis/brochure.html>

Even more pro-library quotes are located on the CASLIS website, among them, one from the U.S. Department of Energy noting that "Firms without libraries spend an average of 2 to 4 times more per professional for information than firms with libraries."

Everything is Coming Up Marketing!

Guerrilla Marketing
www.gmarketing.com

From one of the best marketing books ever written, Jay Conrad Levinson's *Guerrilla Marketing*, comes a lively, dynamic site full of

insight and ideas. Best of all, for the chronically time-strapped, the site's information comes in small chunks that, despite their small size, offer plenty of food for thought. We recommend visiting this site at the end of your day. It will ensure a very creative ride home. The site offers "The Weekly Guerilla," an energetic meditation on marketing. Recent topics include "What's Your Frequent Buyer Program?" "Do You Really Aim To Please?" and "Tickets to Ride into the Millennium." Another section, "Tales from the Front Line," presents short profiles of marketing tactics submitted by visitors to the site. In the Publications section, 17 Guerilla Marketing publications are available for purchase.

American Marketing Association (AMA)
www.ama.org

The AMA website's Publications section posts content from all eight of the AMA's major publications. It also includes the AMA's books catalog, which offers titles on every aspect of marketing. The Resources section is thin, unless you're an AMA member, in which case you'll have access to the Marguerite Kent Library/Information Center. The site's Events Calendar lists a number of regional and national conferences.

Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)
www.prsa.org

Probably the most valuable section of this web page is the Publications section, where highlights of the PRSA's monthly newspaper, "Tactics," are available online. Back issues from 1995 are also available at the click of a mouse. On the Conferences, Seminars, and Distance Learning page, you'll find professional development opportunities in special events, writing, marketing communications, PR planning, and leadership.

Marketing Library Services (MLS)
www.infotoday.com/mls/mls.htm

For marketing advice targeted at information service professionals, visit the MLS website. MLS is a subscription-based newsletter, but the full text of each issue's cover story is posted on the website.

"From one of the best marketing books ever written, Jay Conrad Levinson's Guerilla Marketing, comes a lively, dynamic site full of insight and ideas."

*Which Sites Do You Visit?
 Send us an email
 (mteitor@chrisolson.com)
 and let us know of sites
 worth sharing with other
 Marketing Treasures
 readers.*

Library Media & PR
www.ssdesign.com/librarypr

Every public and school librarian will want to visit this page often. It is full of art, ideas, tips, and enthusiasm. The "Little Black Book" section includes useful contact information for library associations, library magazines, educational television producers, and library PR organizations.

In fact, Stephanie Stokes, the person responsible for the site, has just posted a selection of goodies to celebrate the Alfred Hitchcock centenary—

Free Library Clip Art is Never for the Birds!

Hitch your library to the "Mater of Suspense." Celebrate Alfred Hitchcock's Centenary with a very special collection of links, web and print graphics and fonts from Library Media & PR at:
www.ssdesign.com/librarypr



In Case You're Wondering...

Those of you who know our design work may be wondering if we're going to make-over this newsletter to take advantage of the graphic and color options available to us in an electronic format. The answer is YES! Our next issue of *Marketing Treasures* will present a whole new look and feel which we think you will enjoy perusing. We're gonna start having some fun!