

MARKETING

Treasures

Featuring: Ideas, Hints & Pointers
on Promotions, Public Relations,
Marketing Research

plus: Calendar of Events
Book & Journal Reviews,
Graphics

ISSN 0895-1799

Vol. 1 No. 3 ■ January ■ 1988

Marketing Strategies for Lean Times

Not long ago an MT reader brought up the problem of continuing a library's marketing and public relations activities in an organization suffering severe cutbacks as it went through re-entrenchment and economic hard times. The librarian had been asked to cut back on marketing efforts to minimize costs of library services. Being a marketing oriented librarian, this was hard to implement. The reader wondered how one could initiate a low profile marketing campaign while not losing the visibility gained through recent marketing efforts.

Most organizations going through cutbacks will identify departments to be supported if the organization is to get back on its feet. As the librarian, find out who and what departments are being supported by upper management. Identify existing information services that can help them, and/or create services and products targeted to this group. Know everything about your organization's business - where it's coming from and where it's going - and then think creatively about how the library's information resources can add to the turn around effort.

You will probably have to concentrate your library's resources at the expense of some market segments. This may mean you will be supporting the marketing department instead of R & D sections. If you are uncomfortable with providing marketing information services, then get some outside help and take a crash course in marketing literature resources.

Let people in the organization know that you will be targeting the most productive/revenue generating departments of the organization. Attend meetings to learn what information is needed and how it can be utilized. Get out of the library and talk with management. This is a very inexpensive form of visibility that can get you and the library into the right place at the right time. If you are a one person library, invest in an answering machine, have a secretary take the phone calls, or hire a disadvantaged person to keep

the library open without the books walking out the front door.

It will be obvious to you that the library's resources should not be cut because it has the ability of providing information that can turn a company around. What is obvious to you is not obvious to everyone else. Sit down and make a list detailing specific resources the library has that can help your organization. Don't be general, but do be creative and stretch your applications. Think about information resources you either have inhouse or can get access to that can help: generate sales leads, provide market indicators, show diversification opportunities, reveal feasible corporate moves, introduce product innovations, improve in quality control, assist in personnel outplacement, and monitor government regulations.

If your library is threatened with cutbacks that are more severe than other organizational departments, be prepared to submit a detailed plan of action of how your library will help the organization get through the lean times and what it will realistically take in terms of budget and staff.

If you still yearn for visibility other than through a solid marketing program, then pursue a course of public relations. It's true you will not be spending money on a four color brochure during hard times, but there are plenty of public relations activities you can initiate to maintain the library's positive image.

Sponsoring an organization team event can be a low cost method to obtain visibility and generating goodwill. If there are bowling, golf, or baseball teams, be sure to sponsor a prize. Hand out a trophy for the highest bowling score of the evening, or give away a pair of tickets to a ballgame to the first homerun hitter. If there are no team activities to take advantage of, think about organizing a contest. Make sure you give away something worthwhile so people will be interested in participating. To make the most of your public relations effort, be sure to get the announcements out, take pictures of the winner(s), and have a follow-up story.

continued on page 4

Pearls of Wisdom

If you're tired of handing out Pepperidge Farm cookies at your open houses, maybe you should try fortune cookies with messages inside. David Scott, a big name in custom printing, has a Food Exchange Division responsible for putting client names on chocolates, lollipop sticks, or bags of popcorn. Prices for the fortune cookies run from \$0.42 per cookie when 250 are ordered, to \$0.18 per cookie in quantities of 5,000. The price includes the printed message, along with cellophane wrapping for each cookie. Write to David Scott Industries, 1500 Frontage Road, Northbrook, IL 60062-4107 or call (800) 323-5556.

Now that the value of information services is a hot topic, some librarians may be inclined to produce value coupons depicting U.S. currency and use them as premium offers. Be aware there are reproduction guidelines to be followed to keep you out of jail. First, the artwork must be reproduced in black and white. Second, the artwork must be less than three-quarters the original size or greater than 1 1/2 times larger in linear dimension - whether it's a whole bill or any part thereof. For a copy of the regulations, call Robert Snow, U.S. Secret Service 202/535-5708.

Synthetic paper isn't new - it's been around for about 10 years. However, it's taken that long for it to start being noticed. If you have an instruction manual, index, maps, outdoor posters, display materials such as banners, or other materials that receive heavy use and demand durability, then think about using synthetic paper. Although it costs a little more than regular paper, it is waterproof, extremely tough, and tear-resistant. A sample booklet of KIMDURA, the

synthetic paper produced by Kimberly-Clark, is available by writing to the company at 1400 Holcomb Bridge Road, Roswell, GA 30076. Attn: Helen Pearson.

Marketing, especially graphics and promotion, is rapidly gaining recognition by all types of libraries. The American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) presents a Law Library Publications Award. Honoring "achievement in creating in-house, user-oriented library materials outstanding in quality and significance", entries can include library aids, guides, pathfinders, maps, newsletters, videotapes, and slides. Entries are limited to AALL members. For information contact John Edwards at Drake University, 515/271-2141.

The AALL Public Relations Committee has started a clearinghouse of sample AALL chapter brochures, program announcements, and press releases. To obtain copies of samples send a self-addressed, stamped (\$1), large manila envelope to Kathy Garner, Southern Illinois Univ. Sch. of Law Library, Lesar Law Bldg, Carbondale, IL 62901 (618/536-7711).

Ever wonder how raised print is created? Called thermography, it is a printing technique that adds three dimensionality to a printed piece. The process involves printing with a slow drying ink which is dusted with a resinous powder. The resin adheres to the ink, with the remainder vacuumed away. The paper is then moved to an oven where - at up to 1,200 degrees- the resin melts, fuses to the ink, and raises the image from the paper. Most printers lack thermography equipment, but generally maintain working relationships with printers who do.

In the last issue of MT, I announced the Marketing Swap & Shop program planned for the SLA conference at Denver in early June. Organizers of the program have identified where to send your samples. If you live East of the Mississippi send to - Gladys Mills, 3958 Haddon Road, Denver, Co 80205. If you live West of ol' Miss send to - Kathy Kinney, Auraria Library, Lawrence at 11th Street, Denver, CO 80204. You are asked to send between 20 - 200 copies of your most successful library marketing materials. Questions? Contact Liz Bibby at 404/888-8263.

Books reviewed in "Sparkling Reviews" are available for loan. For more information contact Chris Olson at (301) 647-6708.

Published bimonthly by Chris Olson & Associates, 857 Twin Harbor Drive, Annapolis, MD 21012. 301/647-6700. Copyright 1987 by Christine A. Olson. All rights reserved. No part of the text of this publication may be reproduced in any form, by microfilm, photocopy, or otherwise, or incorporated into any information retrieval system, without the written permission of the copyright owner. Use and reproduction of Cut & Paste Art is limited to subscribers only. Reproducing any portion of Marketing Treasures Cut & Paste Art for the purposes of resale in clip art services or other publications, without written permission of the publisher, is strictly prohibited.

Annual subscription price (6 issues) \$45.00 U.S. & Canada. Foreign add \$12.00. Subscriptions must be prepaid, payable to Chris Olson & Associates.

Back Issues: Issues without Cut & Paste Art are \$6.50, issues with Cut & Paste Art are \$7.50 for U.S. and Canada. Foreign orders add \$1.35.

Missing Issues: Please report the nonreceipt of an issue within 30 days of normal receiving date. Missing issues requested after this time will be supplied at the regular back-issue price.

Worth Its Weight in Gold

It seems that marketing and public relations become shrouded in mystery when it comes to determining whether a program has been successful or not. Usually, people claim success by pointing to isolated instances and reams of statistics to back up their claims. But how do you actually determine the success of your marketing efforts?

First of all, your marketing program should have measureable objectives. Whether your objective is to tell everyone in your organization about a new service or to alter your library's image, you should set up realistic numerical objectives by which you will be able to measure projected and actual results.

The most important evaluation criteria are based on the questions "what is happening? and why is it happening?" What percentage of the company actually received your brochure? How many phone calls or inquiries did it generate? Print a special phone number, mail box, or electronic mail code on the brochure so you'll be able to measure inquiries. Track them over a period of time to estimate peak return rates and to identify when, as inquiries taper off, it's time to mail out a follow-up promotional piece.

Analyze the responses to your promotional efforts. Are people asking the questions you wanted them to? Did they get your message? If not, then you'll need to rethink your communications theme and/or redesign

continued on page 4

Sparkling Reviews

Marketing the Modern Information Center: A Guide to Intrapreneurship for the Information Manager by Janet Schmidt. Find/SVP, 1987 \$95. ISBN 0-931634-73-3

This guide is presented in three basic sections. The first presents the results of a FIND/SVP survey conducted with 500 management decision-makers who had, at one time, used FIND/SVP services. The results are interesting, but are loosely tied to the purpose of the book and its contents. The second section presents interview conversations with six information managers who are considered by the author to be self promoters. This section offers an insight into the approaches and management styles of other information professionals, but doesn't warrant the 40 some pages it consumes. The third section finally approaches what the title promises. It offers an excellent discussion on competitors,

Promotion Gems

Day after day, in libraries across the country, information products are delivered to customers with little or no thought to package presentation. The importance of good, attention-getting, and persuasive packaging becomes apparent when one realizes that everyone judges a book by its cover. First impressions do count. Here are four key questions to ask yourself about how your library packages its information products. These questions can also be used to develop a packaging program for your library.

1. Is the package design directed toward the target market? Think about the attitudes and behavior of different market segments and what they look for in your products. The chief of surgery will need a different package from that used for medical technicians and secretaries.
2. Does the package design leave an impression consistent with the image you want for the product? Submitting a market research report in a nonserious, colorful, fun-looking binder won't do much for credibility. If your product is new and improved, does its packaging convey that message, or are you still using old folder labels?
3. Does the package persuasively communicate the product's primary benefit? Your package design should motivate customers to eagerly review your information product. The visuals and copy on the package should prompt people to open the product and review it immediately instead of putting it on the corner of the desk for "later reading".

continued on page 4

both external and internal, and presents a marketing program based primarily on advertising and public relations.

With some editing, this book could be a succinct guide to marketing for librarians. There are two fine examples of brochures included in the appendices, but that's all. One wishes there were more examples to review after reading the section on advertising and public relations. The cost of this book is rather high for what the reader gets. The entire book is double-spaced on standard size paper and inserted into a 3 ring binder. If you are looking to augment your marketing literature collection, then this is a fine book to buy, but if you're just starting your collection and have limited funds, I recommend purchasing 2 or 3 basic marketing texts with your \$95.00.

Promotional Gems continued from page 3

4. How well do you use point of purchase packaging?

Using your package to make a product available at places where your target market will easily see it is called point-of-purchase (POP) marketing. (Candy displays at the grocery store check-out counter are POP examples.) Use your product packaging on POP displays to advertise the availability of information services in locations away from the library. Places like the cafeteria, bank or money station, conference rooms, and lobbies can use POP displays. By the way, posters are not point-of-purchase displays.

Worth Its Weight continued from page 3

your promotional tools. If you originally wanted to reach middle management and at the last minute decided to include upper management as well, you could be asking for trouble. Middle management may respond positively, but upper management may be put off. I wouldn't consider the results of that promotional effort a success, would you?

How many resources did it take to gain a new customer or introduce a new product? A favorite PR event for libraries is the open house. Did the money spent on the open house really change your image, or did people just come in, eat cookies, and leave. Many open houses are poorly attended. If this has happened to you, find out why people didn't attend. Was it because the event was held during lunch time on a sunny day? Late Friday afternoon? Did your notices reach your target audience

the day before the event? Was your announcement attractive? Did it promise a benefit - give a good reason for people to attend the event or did it just list the databases you planned to talk about? Or did word get around that this year's open house was going to be as boring as last year's?

Before initiating any promotion or public relations plan, identify what you want to gain from your efforts. Establish how you will gather information for evaluating whether your objectives were met or not. It's not enough to keep statistics. Finding out the "what and why" will enable you to capitalize on your successes and avoid failures - an approach that's worth

Marketing Strategies continued from page 1

You can also participate in programs that will benefit employee families, such as the company picnic or holiday parties. To get ideas, look at your local newspaper and observe what other organizations in your neighborhood are doing with the YMCA, the Scouts, churches and other civic organizations. Just adapt the idea to your situation.

If you're faced with an economic climate requiring you to scale back your marketing efforts, don't give up. Instead, rethink your marketing strategies and carefully plan your resources to get the biggest return on your investment. You'll be pleasantly surprised at how much you can do.

The Crystal Ball

The following seminars will be led by Alice Warner at the SLA Mid Winter Conference in Williamsburg. Contact: Kathy Warye 202/234-4700.

January 29 "Fee-Based Service: Intrapreneurship"

January 30 "Budgets and Libraries"

January 31 "Fee-Based Services: Entrepreneurship"

February 14-20 American Marketing Association Marketing Week. Various activities and meetings have been planned by 90 chapters across the country. The Atlanta Chapter will have roundtable discussions of services marketing, advertising, and marketing research. Contact: AMA offices to identify the chapter in your area. 312/648-0536.

February 19 "Making Money: Fees for Information Services" led by Alice

Warner in Sacramento, California. Contact: Dena Sehr 916/453-3529.

February 24 "Knowing When to Pat Yourself on the Back: Evaluating Your Public Relations Program" presentation by Chris Olson at the Library Public Relations Council dinner meeting, New York City. Contact: Sheldon Tarakan 516/883-4400.

March 5-8 "Building Library Support with Creative Marketing" Alaska Library Association meeting in Fairbanks. Contact: Maurine Canarsky 907/452-5170.

March 7-9 "Marketing and Public Relations" unit of the SLA Middle Management Institute led by Chris Olson in New York City. Contact: Kathy Warye 202/234-4700.

March 18 (tentative) "Marketing Tips for the Information Center Professional" led by Corilee Christou. Sponsored by Mead Data Central in San Francisco. Contact: Cris Fischer 800/523-8168.

March 26 "Design and Development of Promotional Materials" led by Chris Olson in Bloomington, Indiana. Contact: Gwen Pershing 812/335-7686.

March 28 "Making Money: Fees for Information Services" led by Alice Warner in Philadelphia. Contact: Ann Nista 215/728-2711.

April 27-30 Public Library Association Conference program promises some interesting marketing presentations. Contact: PLA 312/944-6780.