

## ***Hints for Promoting On-line Services***

Promoting on-line database services can be frustrating. Librarians frequently ask me, "How do you promote on-line services?" and "How do you let people know what's available?" Here are some thoughts on creating a promotion program for on-line search services:

### ***Give the service a "brand name."***

If you don't have a unique name for your on-line search services, create one! Don't use a meaningless acronym. Think of a descriptive and attention-getting name for the service. This will make it easier for people to request services by name — and easier for you to clearly identify what you are promoting.

### ***Don't list database file names.***

Brochures and fliers that list database vendors and files are not effective promotional tools. Average people reading lists of database file names have no knowledge of how the information in these files can help them. An on-line search service's promotional materials should highlight the benefits of on-line searching. The specific information needs of your current or prospective customer should be addressed, as well.

Whenever possible, use real-life examples to demonstrate a service's value. Use real (but disguised) reference questions to introduce a particular file's subject coverage or database's capabilities. Show how on-line searching is more cost-effective and efficient than poring through printed indices. Create and print a list of "101 Ways On-line Services Can ..."

### ***Segment your prospective and current markets.***

To promote benefits that are perceived as valuable, divide your customers into market segments that include people with like information needs. You should develop several different promotional materials for the same on-line search service, each with a different target audience and message. Promotion materials directed

toward management, for example, should feature a different set of on-line service benefits than materials designed for your research department.

### ***Don't use jargon.***

On-line searching has a vocabulary of its own. Phrases like "off-line print," "on-line searching," and "citation hits" don't mean a thing to anyone but you. Use simple descriptive terminology. To get an idea of how to describe it yourself, listen carefully to how customers describe the service to colleagues. Better yet, after you have drafted your promotion materials, ask a customer to review them and give you some feedback.

### ***Support your promotion materials.***

To attract attention and increase your customer base you need a complete mix of promotions. On-line search demonstrations are a common promotion technique, but they can reach only a few people at a time. To increase the cost-effectiveness of your promotion dollar, print sample searches to accompany your promotional materials. Be sure to mark the sample with pointers that indicate the information contained in the search and how it directly relates to the needs of the target customer group. Don't be shy about announcing how an on-line search can save money or time, or how it contributes to the organization's bottom line or competitive position in the marketplace.

Some libraries use promotional items such as pens, markers, note pads, or rolodex cards, to reinforce the message of their promotional materials. If the item relates to on-line search services this can be very effective. For example, yellow markers (with your name and phone number printed on them) can be used to highlight search printouts. You might distribute sticky-backed note pads for customers to use to jot down notes or requests for follow-up information services.



## Pearls of Wisdom

Interested in learning more about library public relations? Consider joining the Library Public Relations Council (LPRC), an organization that sponsors speaker/dinner meetings throughout the year, holds an annual meeting during the American Library Association's annual conference, and sponsors two national public relations competitions. LPRC's Share the Wealth Packet containing innovative and effective public relations pieces, sent to all members, is worth the \$20 membership fee. For more information, write to LPRC, 15 Park Row, Suite 434, New York, NY 10038.

The Strathmore Paper Co. offers a new booklet featuring their writing and cover stocks, along with examples of such print processes as engraving, embossing, foil-stamping, and die-cutting. For a copy of "Special Effects," send your request on company letterhead to Dept. KS, Strathmore Paper Co., Westfield, MA 01085.

The publishers of Step-by-Step Graphics have released their second Annual Reference Guide, "Designer's Guide to Print Production." Articles cover copy preparation, using art and photos, printing, and paper. The articles explain design processes that will help you relate to artists and printers. Available at book stores and news-stands for \$15, copies also may be obtained from Step-by-Step Graphics, 6000 North Forest Park Drive, P.O. Box 1901, Peoria, IL 61656-9979.

If you read only one management article this month, make it "Communication and Control Processes in the Delivery of Service Quality" by Valarie Zeithaml et. al, in the April issue of Journal of Marketing, pp. 35-48. It is an excellent discussion on the delivery of quality service. Copies of the article may be obtained by sending a check for \$9.00 to the American Marketing Association Information Center, 250 South Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60606.

Looking for a source of badges and buttons? Contact the Sommer Badge Mfg. Company for their catalog which includes sample badges. Write to them at 186 Emmet Street, Newark, NJ 07114-2708 or give them a call at 201/623-3534.

Have you seen the new tape flags sold by 3M? Sold under the "Post-it" label, these flags are transparent color markers that you can write on and affix to the edge of a page to "flag" it. They are handy for quick-indexing books and reports. If you highlight database searches for customers, you might want to use these to "flag" important citations. Inquire at your office supply store and ask for Post-it Tape Flags; their product number is 680-1.

The Arnold & Porter Law Library has a good way to welcome summer associates and attorneys new to the firm and to the area. Says Jim Shelar, Director, "We mount a big street map of Washington, D.C., and the surrounding areas in the lobby, and have maps available for everyone who wants to tour Washington, D.C." Good public relations idea!

Some *Marketing Treasures* readers have requested human figures on our clip art sheets. Rather than duplicate commercial art images on our Cut & Paste sheets, from time to time I will point out low-cost clip art resources that include human images. One such resource is the Mead Paper Company. The 31st edition of Clip Tips includes cartoons, people, calendars, borders, animals . . . 45 loose pages of art. Interested? Send \$6.00 to: Larry Fox, Marketing Communications, Dept. (MT), Mead Paper, Fine Paper Division, Courthouse Plaza, Dayton, OH 45463. Be sure to ask for the Clip Tips folder.

Published bimonthly by Chris Olson & Associates, 857 Twin Harbor Drive, Arnold, MD 21012, 301/847-8708. 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

News Flash! The 1988 John Cotton Dana (JCD) Public Relations Award winner is the Cargill Information Center! The award, to be given at a reception at the upcoming ALA conference in New Orleans, recognizes outstanding achievement in library promotion. One of 120 entries in this year's contest, Cargill has received the overall award for "a year-long public relations program of outstanding quality and effectiveness."

Julia Peterson, Director of Cargill's Information Center in Minneapolis, and her staff are thrilled at the recognition for a public relations program that took a lot of time and energy. In 1986 their information center moved from a research center to a headquarters building. The staff viewed the move as an opportunity to initiate a new identity for the information center. Starting with a unique logo design and a handsome brochure, a new look was applied to existing promotional materials, including a newsletter makeover. Their objective was to create a family of promotional publications that would complement one another, while supporting specific marketing efforts.

In a recent interview with *Marketing Treasures*, Julia noted, "We use the print pieces for presentations to senior management, for corporate orientations, to educate users on different services, and at sales meetings for service overviews, to name a few applications." Promotion pieces, however, are not the whole story. Julia continues, "We support our materials with a staff that is competent and skilled at providing information services at the level customers require."

Since Cargill's Information Center is operated on a cost-recovery basis, Julia stresses the importance of what she terms "real information products — not just piecemeal services." Cargill Information Center products, special presentations, and papers are packaged in notebooks and folders reflecting the Center's identity. Services and products go beyond the ten-minute on-line search. If necessary, the staff will speak directly to the source person in any city or country to obtain detailed and accurate information.

Congratulations to Julia and the Cargill Information Center staff for taking home the gold!

Julia will present her JCD notebook entry at the SLA Marketing Swap & Shop session. All the JCD award-winning notebooks will be displayed during the ALA conference. (See the Crystal Ball for conference dates.)

## Promotion Gems

The printed materials you use to promote your on-line search services should be flexible and easily updated. For some libraries, fliers or fact sheets are an ideal alternative to printing expensive brochures. Easy to produce using desktop publishing programs or preprinted stationery, fliers can play an important role in your promotion mix.

When you sit down to compose a flier, consider a number of graphic design elements, including the "white space" -- the space where no type or illustration appears. White space provides contrast in graphic design. It also provides a resting point for the reader's eyes. Here are some sources of white space and how each contributes to the overall design and readability of the piece:

1. The open area surrounding a headline can be white space. Enhance the readability of a headline by adding more white space around it. This is often preferable to increasing the headline's type size.
2. Margins are white space. Wide outside page margins push the reader's attention into the center of the page.
3. The space between columns of type is white space. A general "rule of thumb" is the wider the columns, the more space needed between them.
4. White space appears at the ends of lines of unjustified or (ragged-right) type. Justifying your right margin eliminates this white space and inserts awkward white spaces in the middle of sentences.
5. Indented sentences provide white space and resting spots for the eyes.
6. White space also occurs between lines of type. If your lines are tightly packed together the piece's overall appearance will be dark.
7. White space can be used between paragraphs to visually "open-up" a piece.

Note that white space doesn't have to be "white." If your promotional piece is printed on colored paper stock, then white space will permit more of the paper's color to appear. Be sure to "manage" your white space. Use it as you see fit, as long as you consciously select what's best — don't just let it happen.



## Sparkling Reviews

Clip Art & Dynamic Designs for Libraries & Media Centers. Volume 1: Books and Basics. Judy Matthews, Michael Mancarella & Shirley Lambert, 1988, Libraries Unlimited. \$25.00. ISBN: 0-87287-636-5

This book is divided into two parts. The first briefly covers basic graphic art processes and techniques. There's nothing complicated about the graphic art instruction on how to select type sizes, or how to use press type, or how to lay-out a printed piece. Enough design basics are covered in this first part so that readers will be able to create bookmarks, invitations, or other very simple projects.

The second and largest part of the book is 350 actual clip art images presented in thematic sections. Subjects include border designs, silhouettes, children and animals reading, people and animals, books, cartoons, calendars and other ready-to-go artwork.

The entire book is printed on coated paper, allowing the artwork to be clear and suitable for print reproduction. The introductory text on design techniques may be too elementary for anyone who has worked alongside a graphic artist. People who have never held an exacto knife will find the first part easy to understand and just enough to get started. The art work is good, but targeted towards public libraries' and media centers' materials--although several special librarians and *Marketing*

*Treasures* readers have found the art useful. Those of you who are looking for book images will love the 8 pages of "books."

Also received for review was a copy of Print Shop Graphics for Libraries. Volume 2: Perpetual Calendars. published by Libraries Unlimited for \$23.00. This book and software program looks interesting, again targeting public libraries and media centers. The package is designed to be used with Print Shop and provides several different calendars on 4 different subjects. Since I do not have a copy of Print Shop, I was unable to try out the software program. Any *Marketing Treasures* reader who would like to try the program is invited to contact Chris Olson.

Correction: Reprints of the *One Person Library* newsletter article on the user survey at Northeast Utilities, mentioned in the March issue of *Marketing Treasures*, are available by sending \$6 to OPL Resources, Ltd., P.O. Box 948, Murray Hill Station, New York, NY 10156.

Response to the reader survey included in the March issue of *Marketing Treasures* has been very good. If you did not complete and mail your survey yet, please do so. It's the only way I can find out what marketing topics you would like to read about in *Marketing Treasures*. (To those of you have replied, many thanks!)

## The Crystal Ball

May 21 "Marketing Library Services" led by Alan Rees at the Medical Library Association Conference in New Orleans. Contact: Eileen Fitzsimmons 312/266-2456.

May 25 "How to Work with Photographers" led by Linda Cohen & David Sailors in New York City at the Library Public Relations Council meeting. Contact: Sheldon Tarakan 516/883-4400.

June 11 -12 "User Surveys as a Marketing Tool" and "Design and Development of Promotional

Materials" led by Chris Olson at the annual conference of the Special Libraries Association in Denver. Contact: Larry Ham 202/234-4700.

June 13 "Marketing Swap & Shop" sponsored by the Marketing Section of the SLA Library Management Division at the annual conference in Denver. Contact: Liz Bibby 404/888-8263.

June 20-21 "Planning and Marketing for Information Services" led by Darlene Weingand at the UW Madison School of Library &

Information Studies. Contact: Jane Pearlmuter 608/262-6398.

June 29 "Creative Techniques for Promoting Your Library" presentation by Chris Olson at the annual conference of the American Association of Law Libraries in Atlanta. Contact: AALL 312/939-4764.

July 10 "Swap and Shop" sponsored by the Public Relations Section of the ALA Library Management Association. Contact: Ruth Gibson 312/459-4100 ext. 52.