



The electronic newsletter
with marketing ideas for
information professionals.

compliments of...
Chris Olson & Associates

A Note From Chris

In this month's [Promotion Gems](#) column, Rachael Clemens of the Pollak Library describes her flexible, inexpensive, and very successful advertising slide show which can be adapted by any library, anywhere. Have fun looking at the sample slides!

We've lined up great resources for you in [Pearls of Wisdom](#), including New Yorker cartoons, the beautiful 2006 Renaissance Library Calendar, and a new book to help you shape your library marketing plan.

Academic and other library newsletter editors will be interested in Emerald Library Link [free newsletter filler articles](#). And if you have a centennial or other large celebration looming on the horizon, you'll want to take note of the ideas offered by colleagues in the Help This Marketeer section.

Look for our next issue December 21st when our feature article will explore how the brand called "library" is impacting the image and perceptions of your information services.

Best wishes to all!

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

Chris Olson
Publisher

Tips For Holding Brainstorming Sessions

Brainstorming is a popular group process used to generate creative ideas in a short period of time. The process involves a group of 6-10 people, a facilitator, and a secretary, all of whom are involved in an open discussion aimed at generating ideas on a given topic. Brainstorming sessions are frequently used by marketers to generate names, taglines, product innovation, promotion themes as well as addressing product and service issues where ideas are needed to solve a particular problem.

As suggested by its name, brainstorming is an intense and rapid paced activity focused on generating as many ideas as possible -- in other words, a storm of ideas! Although it may sound like a free-for-all, a brainstorming session is actually a carefully choreographed meeting where rampant imagination is encouraged within a friendly, safe environment. Here are 8 tips for holding productive brainstorming sessions.

1.) The brainstorm group should number between 6-10 people. Less than 6 and there's not enough synergy for ideas. A group larger than 10 people may intimidate some people from offering unrestricted ideas.

2.) The facilitator is responsible for leading the group through the process. It's particularly helpful if the facilitator is creative so they can keep the ideas flowing and build on other ideas. While one secretary is good, we like to designate two people to record ideas. This ensures that if a secretary gets involved in formulating an idea, the other secretary is capturing the discussion.

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Please forward this newsletter to anyone you know who is looking for ideas and resources for marketing their library.

3.) Every brainstorm session should follow these golden rules:

No judgements or criticisms are made about any suggestion.

All ideas are welcome.

No idea is to be interpreted, evaluated or commented upon.

Don't hold back. The objective is to generate ideas.

Ideas may be combined, refined, and piggy-backed.

4.) Conduct the session in a room with a large white board and chart paper. I once had a client where every meeting room wall was pristine with not a white board in sight. It was impossible to brainstorm or develop ideas with a group of people. White boards and markers are my personal favorite brainstorming tools. Some people prefer large chart paper on easels while others like to write down ideas on large sticky notes and tape them to the wall. The bottom line is to make sure your session accommodates different types of idea generation behavior.

5.) Use your imagination when setting up a brainstorming session room. Many people like to fiddle with objects while they're thinking. Still others like to eat, doodle, or stare into space. We like to bring toys and brainfood to our sessions. We use the toys as ice breakers, and the brainfood -- well, it's just fun to munch on.

6.) Keep the session under 45- 60 minutes. Depending on the group and the pace of the session, most ideas will be generated in the first 30 - 40 minutes. Ideas will ebb and flow during this time. Critical to the success of a brainstorming session is the timely introduction of laughter to keep the group loose and give people a chance to refocus or shift their thinking. Nothing can kill a good idea like silence, so it's the facilitator's job to keep the energy going in the room.

7.) Don't get bogged down in the details. State the problem and restate it to stay on track, but don't get mired in the finer points. It's important that everyone in the group know what the brainstorming session is to address. However, too much information can be detrimental because people get sidetracked with the details and they start evaluating the idea instead of generating new ideas. In fact, the best brainstormers are those who are not closely involved in the problem to be solved. So as you facilitate a brainstorming session, be mindful of the amount of information you impart.

8.) Have fun! A brainstorming session should not be an endurance test. Regardless of the objective, thinking outside the box and considering the problem from every angle should be a exhilarating experience. Let your imagination roam. You might be amazed at what you conjure up!

Brainstorming sessions can yield great ideas for marketers. If you haven't held or participated in a session, you should try it. There are excellent books and resources available describing different brainstorming techniques and offering tools for generating ideas. I find browsing materials by Roger Von Oech to be helpful. Roger is the author of the classics "A Whack on the Side of the Head" and "A Kick in the Seat of the Pants." His web site offers a number of creativity tools which you may find helpful. <http://www.creativethink.com/>

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Treasure Tips

What Is A Dog?

If this were a newsletter about animals, your "woof-woof" answer to the question would be right.

However, in marketing management circles, dogs are products that consume resources without being profitable.

The term "dog" and the concept of profitability and unprofitability is the focus of product portfolio reviews and the Growth-Share Matrix system developed by the Boston Consulting Group. The matrix is used by managers to visually represent product positions in the marketplace based on the product's market share and market growth rate.

A product dubbed a "dog" is one that has both a low share of the available market and a low market growth rate. Products which are deemed "dogs" have little or no chance of succeeding and yet require valuable corporate resources to produce or maintain. A marketing manager faced with a product or service "dog" would eliminate the product from the product portfolio and redeploy resources to profitable products or product development efforts which promise success.

Managing an organization's product and service portfolio and applying the Growth-Share Matrix is one of the responsibilities of the marketing manager. Working with the matrix reveals product strategies which can keep an organization's product offering yielding the greatest return on investment. Like other organizations, it's important for libraries and information services to regularly review their product portfolios, divesting them of "dogs" in order to focus resources on products and services of higher value. Too many times librarians believe that more is better. Not true when there are "dogs" in the product lineup. Woof. Woof.

Promotion Gems

Pollak Library Advertising Slide Show

Rachael Clemens, Distance Education Librarian at the Pollak Library, California State University in Fullerton has implemented an original marketing idea that we think many of our readers could adapt and incorporate into their own promotion and communications activities. About two years ago Rachael introduced "projection media" into her promotion mix. She got the idea from commercial advertisements that you might see projected onto large buildings in placea like downtown Los Angeles and Times Square in New York City.

Rachael describes her "projection media" promotion as a "Reference Slide Show." Taking the concept of commercial advertising, Rachael explains that she "adapted the idea to a much smaller (and less expensive) scale by developing a long, continuously looping PowerPoint slide show that displays on a very large wall over the library's Reference Desk area. This is a high-traffic area in our library and adjacent to a large computer lab."

Rachael says "I collected about 150 Q&A's and made eye-catching slides that project for about 16 seconds each ... akin to the trivia questions you often see in a movie theatre. I made a point of adding the information source, hoping to highlight library resources and model good citation practice." Here are a couple of examples:

Q: What was the median home price in Orange County in July 2005?

A: \$603,000

Source: Los Angeles Times article accessed through Proquest Newspapers

Q: How many new hybrid vehicles were registered in the U.S. in 2004?

A: 83,156

Source: Article in AdWeek accessed through TableBase

"Interspersed with these Q&A's are slides with library information such as advertisements for chat reference service, photocopier info, and library website tidbits." Rachael explains that "the only expense outside my time was a new computer projector. The response has been terrific -- students often linger at the desk waiting for the answers to the questions."

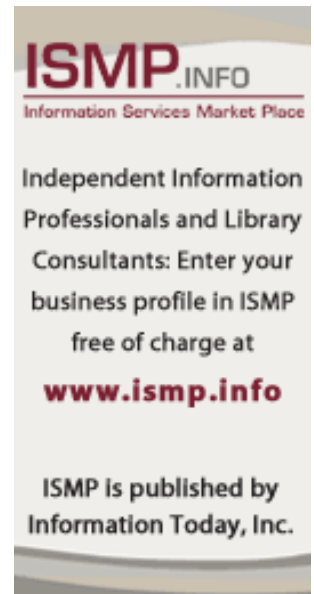
"I update and change the slide show each semester so folks don't get tired of the questions. We turn the show on in the morning and leave it running throughout the day. With approximately 350 slides in total (at 16 seconds each) it's about 1.5 hours of programming." Rachael's library has purchased a large plasma screen to mount in the library atrium and she intends to have the slide show in place there by Spring semester.

Rachael has agreed to share a shorter version of her slide show with Marketing Treasures readers. We have converted the PowerPoint file to a PDF (4MB), and posted it on the Marketing Treasures web site. Click this link and you'll be taken to the PDF. <http://digbig.com/4fhcp>

We thought Rachael's idea was great and it got us thinking. Here are some ideas to increase the marketing value of the slide show and get even more return on the investment.

1. Use PowerPoint templates which include your library logo. This gets extra mileage from the slide show by reinforcing your brand. Consider developing templates that are seasonal or thematic, and then carry the themes over to web pages, signage, and handout materials.
2. We like the idea of advertising library services and we suggest taking that a step further by including statistics about library services -- how many questions did the Ask-A-Librarian service field last

advertisement



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month? How many students attended library instructional sessions? We recommend that the answers demonstrate the library's value to students, professors, and the administration.

3. With the questions already developed and the slide show in place, it would be easy to take Rachael's idea to the next step and convert the show into a web site banner. We also think she's got the foundation for a great trivia contest that could drive traffic to the library and web site.

If you decide to produce a similar slide show and you need some graphics, consider the New Yorker cartoons we mention in Pearls of Wisdom. If you find yourself stuck for trivia questions, our link to the World Almanac newsletter should help.

Many thanks to Rachael for sharing her slide show with us!

Pearls of Wisdom

Blueprint For Your Library Marketing Plan

Hot off the ALA press is a book that has earned a spot on our recommended reading list. This is a hands-on book that not only outlines marketing concepts in the context of library settings, but goes the extra mile of providing worksheets, diagrams, and activities which help readers put marketing concepts to work. And we're not talking about a couple of anemic forms. This book is packed with thoughtful worksheets designed to get you thinking and to put your marketing plans on track. Here's a sampling of the contents the authors walk the reader through: Strategic plans, data mining, target markets, assessing the current marketing situation, positioning, competitor audit, and more.

The book includes a entire section devoted to marketing plan worksheets, with some specific to academic library environments and other sheets designed for public libraries. The worksheets are at the end of the book, so as you read about various marketing concepts you can turn to the back of the book and begin jotting down ideas and observations in the corresponding worksheets. The sheets are well developed and contain excellent questions which will help you work-up your plans. With this book in hand, you'll be able to develop a plan which is multi-dimensional and realistic for your library's setting and resources. Marketing teams may want to use the book to walk through the process of developing or evaluating their library's plans and marketing strategies.

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Blueprint for Your Library Marketing Plan by Pat Fisher and Marseille Pride. ALA Editions, 2006. ISBN0-8389-0909-4 \$45.00 (\$40.50 for ALA members) <http://www.alastore.ala.org>

Free Articles For Library Newsletters

Academic library newsletter editors looking for content can get professionally written filler articles for their newsletters. Provided as a free service by Emerald Group Publishing, the articles are approximately 800 words long. The articles are written primarily for library newsletters targeting students, but we think editors of all types of library newsletters will find the articles can add interesting content to their publications too. There are two articles currently available for usage: Turn Down the Volume Please, and Google & Libraries. New articles are posted quarterly in the Library Link section of the Emerald web site. By signing up to receive the Emerald Library Link newsletter, Knowledge & Networks (free), you'll be alerted when each new filler article is posted and ready to include in your newsletter. http://www.emeraldinsight.com/info/librarians/filler_index.htm

New Yorker Cartoons

Looking for something different to spruce up your slide presentations? How about clever cartoons. Cartoonbank.com features the cartoons and artwork from the New Yorker magazine. For \$19.95 you can purchase the rights for a cartoon to illustrate your message or introduce a concept in a humorous way. You can also purchase cartoons to use in newsletters or advertising campaigns. Go to <http://www.cartoonbank.com>

World Almanac Monthly Events

Every few days I see requests on different library listservs asking for ideas to promote and showcase various library services or information resources. Many times it's a matter of getting the creative juices flowing. Here's a web site that we recommend you bookmark, especially if you're a library exhibit coordinator, newsletter editor, program and event organizer, or if you work alone and need to jumpstart your thinking. The World Almanac has a monthly newsletter featuring robust lists of holidays, events, birthdays, quotes, links, stories, and more for the current month.

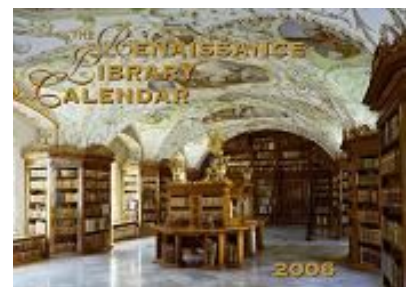
<http://www.worldalmanac.com/wa-newsletter.htm> Archives of past issues go back to 2001. In the November 2001 issue, they noted that Micky Mouse's birthday is November 18th.

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2006 Renaissance Library Calendar

Imagine working in a beautiful old building where the walls and ceilings are painted like the Sistine Chapel, complemented by stained glass windows, marble sculptures, and rich wood carvings. You might not be able to work in such a romantic setting, but you can dream while gazing upon 12 magical old libraries in the 2006 Renaissance Library Calendar.

The Renaissance calendars feature beautiful photographs of lovely old libraries from around the world. The 2006 calendar includes libraries from 11 different countries, including Mexico. The calendars make great gifts and are reasonably priced. The photographs are clear and sharp, and the printing and paper quality first-rate. We think you'll fall in love with this calendar. You can also have the calendar customized to include your library logo and message, perfect for giving to library supporters and library fundraising. <http://www.renaissancelibrary.com/>



Help This Marketeer

Marketing SOS Lifesavers

Kari Martin at Eastern Kentucky University Libraries was looking for ideas for a Centennial celebration that fit within a \$3,000-\$4,000 budget. Here are some ideas submitted by colleagues via the PRTalk Listserv - a creative and imaginative group! (The list is sponsored by the ALA Public Information Office. The purpose is to provide a forum for news, idea exchange, questions, tips and other information on library public relations and marketing. To join, send a message to listproc@ala.org with "subscribe PRTALK" in the message body.)

1) Karen Richgruber from Duluth, Minnesota writes "With your budget, you should be able to bring in a moderately well-known author or guest lecturer. For your fee, you should get them for a whole day, plus travel and accommodations. (For a similar event at our public library, with a few thousand dollars more & a connection, we brought in Nevada Barr.) This will appeal to all your targeted groups if you select someone who has broad appeal, either through what they have written or their area of expertise. Check references to make sure he/she is a good speaker. Having an autograph signing after the evening lecture is popular. Serve light refreshments -- coffee, teas, cookies. Earlier in the day, you can have a morning coffee with the speaker and library staff, and at noon have an invitation-only luncheon at your University Club for library and university supporters, so they get a chance to meet your author. You can follow the luncheon with a two-hour Master Class for grad students or emerging writers from the community (pre-registered). And don't forget to invite the press." (Karen Richgruber Community Services Manager Duluth Public Library Duluth, Minnesota)

2) Kristi Bontrager from Iowa notes "At the University of Iowa Libraries, we are celebrating our Sesquicentennial this fall. When we started planning, we decided to target activities to our user groups: faculty/staff, students and public.

- We had a series of open houses at our branch libraries and we sent personal invitations to faculty and staff
- We are co-hosting (with the library science school student association and the student-run theater) a librarian film series
- We're planning a campus party with food, prizes and behind-the-scenes tours of the library
- We're doing two exhibits: one about librarian culture and the other about the history of the UI Libraries
- Our big event is an evening speaker and dessert reception to which we invited our donors. It also will be open to the public. Check out our website for more information. <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/sesqui>

So far the response has been pretty good. The librarian culture exhibit has drawn a lot of attention. I'm looking forward to the big events which happen at the beginning of November. It's been a great project to work on and I think that the library staff are having fun too (we're also planning a dinner/movie party with the library staff after the rest of the events are finished, so we can all take a sigh of relief and celebrate together)." (Kristi Bontrager Coordinator, Public Relations University of Iowa Libraries Iowa City, Iowa)

3) Susan Dennison in Illinois asks "Does the Library have textbooks from 1905? How did students in 1905 understand their world? What professions were they training for? What was the economy like? What were job prospects? What will education be like 100 years from now? How will contemporary textbooks be viewed in 100 years?"

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Especially for the library: a display of 1905 artifacts. Popular titles in 1905 published that year:
John Burroughs - WAYS OF NATURE
Willa Cather - TROLL GARDEN
Eugene Debs - INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM
Thomas Dixon - CLANSMAN (later made into the controversial film Birth of a Nation)
Paul Laurence Dunbar - LYRICS OF SUNSHINE AND SHADOW
Henry James - QUESTION OF OUR SPEECH
William James - SENTIMENTS OF RATIONALITY
Jack London - WAR OF THE CLASSES
George Santayana had just started publishing his 5 volume work -
LIFE OF REASON Edith Wharton - HOUSE OF MIRTH.
Robert Penn Warren was born in Kentucky in 1905.

The "turn back the clock" events are always interesting, not only informative about history, but put today in perspective. What do we miss most about 1905? What do we like most about 2005? What events did the Library host in 1905? What are the 2005 equivalents? We had great success with our Lincoln impersonator -- perhaps you could do "An evening with Teddy Roosevelt." (Susan Dennison Community Relations Coordinator Highland Park Public Library Highland Park, Illinois)

4.) Mary Rindfleisch from Ridgefield, Connecticut writes "We did a whole year's worth of different programs when we did a centennial celebration in 2003, including a big birthday party with speakers and displays of photos and artifacts from the past 10 years; exhibits of works by literary figures who had resided in our town at various times; our regular book discussions and film series used a decade-by-decade through the last century theme for their monthly meetings; and a once-a-century fine amnesty. We were lucky to be able to more or less tie our 100 years to the progress of the 20th century, since the dates were so close.

The main thing we did that might be especially interesting in the university setting was to do a "one book, one community" project. We chose a book that was published roughly at the time of our founding and reflected some of the values we identified as being, then and now, at the heart of our community. In our case, it was "The Wizard of Oz", since we wanted a family read, but I can imagine there could be all manner of more sophisticated material that might be appropriate -- perhaps something by a writer associated with your institution, historical fiction or non-fiction dealing with your locale." (Mary Rindfleisch Assistant Director Ridgefield Library Ridgefield, CT)

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Marketeer SOS Update

A public library wanted to know if other libraries sold advertising space in their library newsletters.

Angela Smith, the Liaison Librarian of the Gardiner Library Service in Australia, wrote to say "Please see our Interface newsletter where we sell advertising space to off-set our printing costs. We are moving away from our print newsletter next year and into an e-newsletter format. I'd be really interested to know if anyone is selling advertising in their e-newsletter, examples from the library world would be great."

Here's the link to the PDF of her Interface newsletter:

http://www.gardinerlibrary.com/media/Aug_05.pdf Look at the bottom of pages 2, 3 and 6 for the paid ads for an auto dealer, an office supplier, and a financial service. We suggested to Angela that in the future she might want to offer hyperlinks as an additional promotion service for the advertisers.

While browsing her newsletter, we direct your attention to page 6 and the cool contest she holds using library membership numbers. She publishes 3 membership numbers in each newsletter and the winners who claim their prize at the library get \$50 gift certificates to a local bookstore. Good idea!

Many thanks to Angela for sharing her newsletter with us.

Need some help with a promotion program? Looking for advice? Want to know what others have done? Send your marketing challenge to "Help this Marketeer" at MarketeerSOS@chrisolson.com.

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December 1 Marketing As If Your Library Depended On It. A workshop presented by Pat Wagner. Sponsored by PALINET in Philadelphia. <http://www.palinet.org/>

December 4 Planning Library Promotion Campaigns. Step through the process of planning a campaign & apply your new knowledge on a promotion planning team. A morning workshop by Chris Olson in Washington, DC. Sponsored by OCLC CAPCON.
<http://www.oclc.org/capcon/training/courses/descriptions/M212.htm>

December 7 Customer Service and Communication. A workshop covering the principles of library customer service. Presented by Cal Shepard in Chattanooga, TN. Sponsored by Solinet.
<http://digbig.com/4fhck>

December 8 How to Create and Use a Successful Marketing Plan for Your Library. A workshop led by Pat Wagner. Sponsored by the Southwest Florida Library Network.
<http://www.swfln.org/training/2005/december.html>

2006

January 10 Brand Names & Touchpoints. The first workshop in a 3 part series called Strategic Library Branding. Presented by Chris Olson in Washington, DC. Sponsored by OCLC CAPCON. Details forthcoming.

January 20 Creating a Marketing Plan for your Academic and Research Library. ACRL Midwinter Workshop in San Antonio, Texas. A full day session with numerous presenters.
<http://digbig.com/4fhcm>

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Whether you need help on a product make-over, logo design, brainstorming sessions, promotion campaign, web site design, communications plans or branding strategies, Chris and her associates are available to lend a helping hand. Call 410-647-6708 or send a note to Chris@chrisolson.com.

All inquiries and projects are held in complete confidence.

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