



**Chapter Council Presents
Sharing Roundtables
MLA Annual Meeting
San Antonio, TX
Monday, May 16, 2005**

Table 17B: Marketing & Public Relations

Facilitator: Kathryn Skhal

Recorder: Kate Finkelstein

Additional Participants: Jason Baker, Elaine Attridge, Rebecca Daniels, Janis Teal, Michael Scholinbeck

Topics discussed and ideas shared:

Public relations and Marketing is a new role for librarians. Not only do we need to market our services, but we also need to market ourselves and our libraries to our stakeholders w/ the funds.

From experience w/ state legislatures, advice is to not give background to stakeholders, but make one specific and personal point.

One barrier to advertising is the perception that if we advertise, people will find out what we do and we'll have more work.

Hospital library finds that many people aren't aware of their presence, but when they find out, they're very excited.

Challenge: marketing to remote clientele. Contract w/ state dept of health services...
possibilities: link from web site, work w/ existing newsletter, explore Liaison program

Making the most of newsletters:

- Daily newsletter at hospital has proven to be an effective medium for marketing.
- Bi-weekly newsletter prepared for html, notify constituents by email, include contact information.
- Always have blurbs ready to go to insert into any opportunity that comes up. Think about how stakeholders use the library, giving them specific examples of how the Library can help them in their daily lives. Use real language, avoid Librarian-speak.
- Remember to hit all stakeholders, not just docs

Marketing is two-way communication:

- Educate library staff on user groups and what each group needs. “A day in the life of a nursing student / researcher/ medical student/ resident, etc.” Knowing what stakeholders are doing and when is essential to meeting their needs and to telling them HOW you can meet their needs.
- Ask questions! “...and then what do you do? And then what? What are you interested in? And did you find that helpful? What would have been more helpful?”
- Working with and targeting academic staff is important and may be helpful.
- CME credits attached to classes? Sometimes that works.
- Just ask! Target classes for times when students need it. Start class w/ clinical challenge... 5 minutes –give them a case and give them 5 minutes to find the answer. *Make* the teachable moment.

Blogs and RSS feeds may be a way to contact those people, but not necessarily good for everyone.

A business model:

- We're different than general academic libraries b/c we are working w/ a quasi-business model.
- How do you learn to do p.r. and marketing? Look to business literature and business classes for marketing and advertising.
- Elaine took an undergraduate course on advertising and promotions at her university.
- BRANDING, BRANDING, BRANDING is important. Work to make branding consistent w/ institutional branding.
- Make your own brochures or personalize existing brochures (like the PubMed trifold).

Make your library visible all over the campus or hospital:

- UNM works w/ main campus learning communities to train students interested in Health Sciences. Entire main campus is aware of what HSL can offer to students.
- UAB works with English classes. HSL Libraries supporting EndNote for entire campus.

How to get money for these things? Encourage colleagues to write in marketing budget with any proposals. Give away vendor-supplied materials.

Successes!

- NLW – party in front of the library. Got restaurants and a bank to come and give away food, etc; Radio station showed up; staff made chili dogs and rented a popcorn machine; gave away t-shirts, etc. Will do similar things 3 times per year: NMLM. Take photos w/ digi cam w/ library staff + users.
- NMLM, table in the cafeteria – Have you hugged your Medical Librarian today? Not Advisable!
- Add NMLM button to your division's web site, they can register to win a party for the whole department.
- Technology fair in February. Had vendors and door prizes – PDAs, VCRs, etc

- New faculty breakfast – big success! Gave a bag w/ most recent newsletter, resource of the month, bookmarks, magnet.
- Food is still a big draw.
- One Library created READ posters of prominent med center faculty – students liked the posters so much they copied the designs for their follies.