Buffalo & Erie County Public
LIBRARY

BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
MARKETING PLAN
2015 /2016

Approved unanimously at a meeting of the Board of Trustees
of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library
on December 18, 2014.

Executive Summary

It is essential that the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System (B&ECPL) market its services and resources to effectively bring attention to our libraries, the services offered and to demonstrate value to the community, our stakeholders, our financial supporters and the public.

The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Marketing Plan for 2015/2016 is intended to strengthen the Library's image, increase library use by Erie County residents, drive traffic to the website, and place us above our competitors in an effort to demonstrate return on investment to the community and our financial supporters. The plan will help B&ECPL develop and execute strategies that communicate our mission and demonstrate the vital role we play in the community.

B&ECPL's 2015/2016 goal for marketing is to increase awareness and promote library services through a variety of public relations, advertising and promotional opportunities. The plan's objectives are:

- Communicate the roles of public libraries to the community;
- Communicate the value of the B&ECPL to the community;
- Implement the objectives included in the B&ECPL Marketing Plan;
- Help each library support the needs of its neighborhood through collections, displays and programming;
- Continue to strengthen Library programs and awareness in the community;
- Create and implement plans to strengthen awareness and outreach in areas without physical library buildings;
- Create and implement plans to strengthen awareness and outreach to seniors and special needs individuals.

The strategic marketing activities identified as priorities include:

1. Maintain and update the public website with easy access and maneuverability;
2. Promote our brand with sponsored and promotional advertising;
3. Promote the Milestones of Science-*Books That Shook the World!* exhibit opening in late spring 2015;
4. Expand number of library card holders;
5. Conduct outreach to specific populations;
6. Collaborate and further develop partnerships with community organizations;
7. Collaborate with schools to promote library services and programs;
8. Increase awareness of services via local businesses, advertising and displays;
9. Encourage staff to be proactive in marketing Library programs and services.

These nine strategic activities will guide the Library to meet the needs of the community and demonstrate the B&ECPL's commitment to Erie County residents. Targeted marketing of specific services and resources through awareness campaigns, surveys, focus groups and participation in community outreach, events, and programming, etc. will help raise the public's knowledge of Library services, programs and materials available to them.

Introduction

The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Marketing Plan for 2015/2016 presents a fresh opportunity to increase B&ECPL's visibility and create interest in using the libraries. The plan provides a consistent means of ongoing communication between B&ECPL, the staff, and the public. To accomplish this, the nine strategic activities are grouped into four categories:

Maintain B&ECPL's website:

- Regularly update the Library website so that the public can see what the Library offers;
- Use the website to highlight services and programs;
- Provide easy access points to website including via Mobile App., social network sites, etc.

B&ECPL's Outreach:

- Promote the B&ECPL brand with sponsored and paid advertising;
- Increase awareness of services via the new bookmobile (to be on the road in 2015), partnerships, advertising, speaking engagements, on and off-site exhibits and displays;
- Conduct outreach to specific populations and target audiences.

Develop and Expand B&ECPL's Collaboration opportunities:

- Develop new partnerships with community organizations, businesses, etc;
- Expand collaborations with current community organization and partners;
- Develop and expand collaborations with schools to promote Library services and programs.

Brand B&ECPL's Marketing of Library Programs and Services:

- Incorporate B&ECPL's logo into all marketing and communication tools;
- Encourage and promote use of social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest and new formats for all B&ECPL libraries;
- Expand and encourage promotion of Library programs and services through partner communication tools;
- Use *Reada Book*, the Library's mascot, in outreach and to encourage children to use the Library;
- Develop and encourage use of graphic standards for flyers and advertising;
- Use *plain language** in all areas of B&ECPL's marketing.

1. Maintain B&ECPL's Website

There will be ongoing review of the website in an effort to provide current, accurate and timely information about Library hours, programs and services.

Programming is a core service of the Library. B&ECPL will maintain an updated calendar of events so patrons can locate programs of interest as well as programs in convenient locations. B&ECPL will highlight special programs and events on its website.

B&ECPL will enhance access to its rare and unique collections by adding materials to its digital collection accessible through the website.

B&ECPL will implement and use the concepts of *plain language* in order to effectively communicate services and programs to its patrons and the community.

2. B&ECPL's Outreach

As B&ECPL continues to reach beyond the Library's walls in order to promote its services and programs, it must identify its target audiences.

B&ECPL will use varying sources to identify target audiences. Sources will include, but are not limited to:

- Internal and external customers (patrons);
- Community partners;
- Elected officials;
- Census data;
- Surveys.

B&ECPL will determine the benefits to the target audience when crafting the key message for a particular campaign. The campaign's emphasis will focus on what the target audience will gain by using the service or program offered by B&ECPL. The Library will measure the satisfaction of users and their knowledge of Library benefits and services through in-house and external surveys.

B&ECPL will promote services, programs, collections, etc. through sponsored and paid advertising including various media outlets: print, radio, television, cable, Internet, as well as traditional sources such as in-house flyers, posters, pamphlets, webpage and social media.

B&ECPL will create a promotional video(s) to be distributed and used at various venues and for various purposes including but not limited to: promotion of services, programs, collections, collaborative opportunities, advocacy, sponsorships, library tours, etc.

B&ECPL will share Library use statistics with the community, media and elected officials including but not limited to: annual Return on Investment (ROI), circulation, program attendance, public access computer usage, open hours, door count attendance, etc.

3. Develop and Expand B&ECPL's Collaboration Opportunities

B&ECPL will revisit and renew previously established partnerships. All libraries will be surveyed annually to update the B&ECPL Partnership Directory.

B&ECPL Development & Communications Office will seek and develop additional partnerships with community organizations, businesses, governmental agencies, schools, etc.

B&ECPL will promote Library programs and services through various partnership networks including but not limited to:

- Community bulletin boards;
- Business organizations/consortiums;
- Partnerships and collaborations;
- University and College List serves;
- Elected officials List serves;
- Elementary, Middle and High School List serves;
- Social network sites;
- Mass e-mails;
- Media outlets.

4. Brand B&ECPL's Marketing of Library Programs and Services

Library services such as events, programming, collections, and access to information are the tangible goods that have value and benefit to our patrons. B&ECPL's entire staff shares in the marketing of Library services to our patrons in a variety of ways. B&ECPL's Marketing Plan takes into account all of the various methods of communicating Library services and benefits to the customer, including the use of *graphic standards* and *plain language* for flyers, media releases, social network posts and the website.

Library operations and the delivery of information and services will change as technology changes and so will our marketing strategies. Information access has shifted in recent years. More people are using mobile technology to receive and send information. It is important the Library explore new methods of marketing to reach all users such as blogs, gaming, RSS feeds, photo sharing, and social bookmarking. It is also important that staff use and expand the use of Twitter and Facebook in program marketing campaigns.

For each marketing campaign or event, the Development & Communications Office will determine the means of promotion best suited to the service, program, collection, event, concept, etc. being promoted for the target audience. The Development & Communications Office will analyze B&ECPL's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities in the development of marketing campaigns. The Development & Communications Office will use information from internal and external library surveys to determine what drives our users and what the customer considers important. The marketing promotions will tie into the needs, preferences, and decision-making practices of our users as well as Library initiatives and input/feedback from staff. The purpose of the Graphic Standards is to standardize all documents created by B&ECPL, maintain a high quality product, reinforce B&ECPL visibility and strengthen its

identity and role in the community. The B&ECPL graphic standards apply to all documents created for public use by Library Administration and staff of the Central Library and Buffalo Branches. *See Graphic Standards Manual.*

Plain language removes barriers to understanding, improves customer compliance and reduces the need to explain. It is direct, organized logically, concise and easily understood. *See Plain Language Concepts.*

B&ECPL will use the following to reach current patrons and new customers:

- Advertising (print and online, unpaid, in-kind and paid);
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Blogs, mass e-mail campaigns, etc.);
- B&ECPL Website;
- Direct communication-presentations (meetings, social/networking events);
- Distribution of flyers, posters, banners, publications, signage;
- Enhancement of community partnerships, outreach and collaborations;
- Distribution of media releases (local newspapers/radio/television);
- Pitching interviews /articles in library trade publications such as Library Hotline;
- Creation of promotional campaigns - (Hug Your Library);
- Display of internal/external exhibits;
- Production of podcasts;
- Enhancement of its mobile application;
- Creation of a promotional video;
- Development of public service announcements (PSAs);
- Using Quick Response (QR) Codes.

Marketing Campaign Themes

Annually, the Development & Communications Office will review and determine areas/topics of focus of high-level marketing needs, along with a recommended target audience for such campaigns.

Themes may include but are not limited to significant programs, events, advocacy, budget, etc. A budget will be developed to ensure proper resources be set aside for such purposes.

The effectiveness of B&ECPL marketing campaigns will be measured and evaluated through the use of surveys.

2015/ 2016 Themes to Focus External Awareness Campaigns on

- **System-wide Library services and resources** (such as eReaders, databases, WiFi, training labs, programs, library card benefits);

- **Budget-related** including "Return On Investment," budget updates, issues and concerns;

- **Milestones of Science** – major exhibit, unlike anything the Library has ever produced;

- **Sponsorships / partnerships**;

- **System-wide Library promotions** including National Library Week, Winter Reading, Summer Reading, National Library Card Signup Month, Bullying Stops Here campaign;

- **Specific programs and events at Central Library** including Martin Luther King, Jr. Anniversary Celebration, recurring events for the Disability community, Women's History Month, etc.;

- **Specific significant events in member Libraries** (examples: Dudley Anniversary, Marilla 100th Anniversary, national author visits at XYZ, etc.);

- System-wide or member libraries **fundraising events** and campaigns, such as the Best Sellers Fundraiser, Bucks for Books, IMLS grant recipient, etc.;

- **Cross-promotion with partners** (such as Young Audiences programs in the Libraries);

- Library-related **connection relevant to National story or National event** (examples: Most Popular Books in 2015, Pew Survey results, etc.);

- **Library's new state-of-the-art bookmobile**;

- **Rare Books & Special Collections** treasures, exhibits, acquisitions, conservation activities, and new types of access;

- **Spotlight** on staff, trustees or volunteers.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Strengths:

The Library System has numerous promotable benefits, programs and services of interest to the community.

The Library System has 37 Library locations located geographically across Erie County which, in total, reach hundreds of thousands annually (7.95 million visitorship in 2013).

The Library System has technology in place to disseminate information including a vibrant website, Facebook page, Twitter, e-mail and List serves, to name a few (5300+ Facebook followers).

The Library System has a variety of graphic and design resources to produce vibrant and timely marketing materials, and a fully community-accessible distribution network in its 37 sites. The Library has built a respectable and growing List serve with contacts representing a variety of constituent groups including: elected officials, library card holders, financial and in-kind

donors, partner organizations, fundraiser attendees, and individuals who "opted in" to receive information.

The Library System has 298,198 active library card holders (229,178 adult and 69,020 youth).

The Library System has over 2.9 million items in its collection including print, digital, rare and reference materials, and databases.

The Library System owns a significant Rare Books Collection including the Audubon Birds, Mark Twain's original manuscript of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the Milestones of Science collection of history of science first-editions and four Shakespeare folios, to name a few.

Library use has, to some degree, unlimited capacity.

The benefits of the Library include:

- Open, equal and free access to information in accordance with the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights";
- Timely, confidential and customer-oriented services to meet the informational, recreational and educational needs of the community;
- Lifelong learning promotion by encouraging all children and adults in their enjoyment of reading and discovery;
- Contributions to the region's economic vitality by assisting individuals, businesses and government as they pursue personal and business jobs and economic growth;
- Dynamic, versatile programming and resources;
- Availability as a public community and neighborhood gathering center;
- Collections that support the educational needs of students (Common Core learning);
- New technology and training on its use;
- Knowledgeable employees;
- Partnerships with organizations who provide resources to library patrons;
- Community support for libraries is generally strong and positive. The Library System has a hardworking administrative staff, dedicated board, and experienced Development & Communications staff who can creatively and effectively communicate the various types of messages to the various audiences;
- Policies that benefit and protect library users.

Weaknesses:

- Library users are not fully aware of all of the available benefits and resources;
- Community at large is unaware of all of the benefits and resources libraries offer;
- The large number of programs, services and collections provides a challenge to effectively market and promote;
- Limited staffing and financial resources impose upon B&ECPL's ability to provide programming and services on a long-term basis;
- Historically, B&ECPL has experienced unstable funding;

- B&ECPL's governance structure is multifaceted which lends to confusion pertaining to operations and authority;
- B&ECPL recently dropped plans to become a Special Public Library District after several years of working with, training and educating staff and trustees;
- (Limited) Library open hours, not meeting the needs of all;
- B&ECPL keeps up with technology as best as possible, however, we are not ahead of the curve in terms of new technology;
- Elected officials, business leaders have an unclear understanding of library funding and management;
- Strong Library *brand* not yet established.

Opportunities:

- To some degree, B&ECPL has unlimited capacity (online resources, Ask Us 24/7, WiFi at all locations, etc.);
- The residents of Erie County support their libraries;
- B&ECPL can educate and advocate through various mediums (webpage, e-mail, social media, flyers, posters, print materials);
- B&ECPL and its contract libraries must work together;
- B&ECPL has the ability to grow usership;
- B&ECPL can grow financial donors and supporters;
- B&ECPL can expand its internal education initiatives and support for Library policy and future endeavors;
- B&ECPL must create an identifiable brand;
- B&ECPL must continue to expand and grow partnerships and collaborations;
- B&ECPL must create unique and interesting spaces using new technology and space design to encourage people to use the Library;
- B&ECPL can partner with Erie County Departments (Social Services, Health, Safety) to educate the community about local issues and concerns;
- B&ECPL can use its owl mascot, *Reada Book,* to encourage library use among youngsters;
- B&ECPL can take advantage of opportunities within the local region which is now positioned to move upward to establish strong and stable economic growth.

Threats:

- B&ECPL does not have secure funding;
- B&ECPL has a complex structure leading to inconsistency in messaging and application of the logo;
- Graphic standards are not consistently applied;
- Territorialism amongst B&ECPL libraries;
- A complex governance structure of 23 governing boards;
- Inconsistent application of policies;
- Competition for funding;
- Competition for free time;
- Reduction in open hours, reduction in circulation, reduction in usership;
- Google, online information resources, and book stores;

- Rise in popularity of eBooks.

MARKETING BUDGET

Annually, the Development & Communications Office will develop a budget for purposes of supporting campaign themes. The budget will include anticipated expenses for paid and sponsored advertising using various mediums. Rates for TV, radio, cable, Internet, print, etc. will be listed and updated.

The Development & Communications Office will also seek alternate forms of funding through sponsorships, grants, collaborations and in-kind donations for the purposes of marketing the Library, its programs and services.

$50,000 per year in 2015 and 2016

2015

- **Awareness Campaign advertising /promotions** - ($15,000)
    - Tagline;
    - Downloadables**;**
    - WiFi;
    - Computer use and training;
    - Convenience;
    - Bookmobile;
    - Job/career/business resources;
    - Winter/summer reading;
            Options:
        - Electronic & print media;
        - Billboards;
        - Traditional media;
        - Social media;
        - LCD signage @ Central;
        - Street banners;
        - Bus advertising;
        - Advertising on Library bookmobile;
        - Buttons, giveaways;
        - Canalside promos.

- **Milestones of Science** – exhibit opening & programming **-** ($25,000)
            Options
        - Posters/flyers/promo pieces;
        - Electronic & print media;
        - Billboards;
        - Traditional media;
        - Social media;
        - Buffalo Spree/WNY Heritage Magazine.

- **Video** – plan in 3Q 2015 - ($10,000)

2016

(2016 spending will be proposed/planned during 2nd and 3rd quarter 2015)

- **Milestones of Science**
- **Children's literacy / STEM**
- **More awareness**
    - Databases;
    - Ancestry.com;
    - Training.

Plain Language Guide and Graphic Standards Manual

*Plain Language

Plain language is described as the concept of writing clear, simple prose and making it easier for people to understand publications intended to provide information or explain a process.

Main concepts of plain language:

1. Identify and understand your readers and their needs;
2. State the purpose of the content and why the information is important to them;
3. Organize content so that information and procedures are presented in the order in which the material will make sense to the reader;
4. Clearly state requirements and responsibilities;
5. Provide clarity by using examples and/or anecdotes. Employ a clean, uncluttered, well-ordered design;
6. Use short sentences - keep the subject, verb, and object close;
7. Use short paragraphs consisting of one topic;
8. Write to the reader, using second-person pronouns;
9. Avoid noun strings, example: corporate-partner-strategic-marketing plan. Use plain language to make the sentence clear, example: "a marketing plan that helps corporations we do business with understand our goals"
10. To indicate a requirement, use *must*, not *shall*: "You must include a sample";
11. Avoid smothered verbs: "We will decide soon," rather than "We will make a decision soon";
12. Allow contractions (we're, they're, isn't);
13. Use consistent and standard terms;
14. Use industry-oriented terms ONLY if your audience knows the terminology;
15. Use industry acronyms and initialisms ONLY if your audience understands the reference;

16. Use a question-and-answer format for presenting information, when appropriate;
17. Use present tense;
18. Be precise, omit unnecessary words;
19. Avoid cluttering content with definitions if possible;
20. Use Internet links wisely. Links should be as short as possible while clearly indicating where they will lead.

*Graphics Standard Manual; http://intranet.buffalolib.org/sites/default/files/dev-comm/Standards%20New%20Logo%20FINAL%2010-31-12.pdf

Standards for the Use of The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Logo

The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library has a new logo, which we will be using for all print and online applications going forward. The logo has been posted on our website since September and now it is time for everyone to start using it.
You will begin to see the new logo on Library stationery, business cards, signage, programming flyers, brochures, posters, internal and external forms, PowerPoint presentations and on our online sources – website, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, etc.

Because of the variety of uses - both internal and external and the costs associated with updating the logo, it may take the Library several months to a full year to revise and update all applications with the new logo. Thank you in advance for your patience.

You should begin using the new logo now.
The new logo has several interpretations – to some it looks like book pages, to others it represents the round world of discovery and information found in a library, and to others it is a freeform graphic that is colorful and pleasant to look at.
The standards below represent the main reference for the upkeep and use of the new Library logo.
Establishing and maintaining strong identity standards are important to our organization because we:
▪ Present a unified, updated, and pleasant visual identity for the Library System;
▪ Promote consistency;
▪ Project professionalism, value and reliability to our patrons and the community.

Basic Standards:

The new logo is to be used in its entirety (as above) at all times and shall not be distorted, stretched or cropped. In order to maintain a high quality appearance, reproduction must be made directly from the artwork received from the Library System's Graphics Department (716-858-7183).
Size may be reduced or enlarged proportionally as long as the logo remains sharp and clear and the typefaces are maintained and readable. You can find the logos on the staff Intranet at: http://becpl4all.buffalolib.org/depts/cr/graphics/index.asp
The new library logo is to appear on ALL printed materials throughout the B&ECPL System.

The Logo Graphic and Font Are Together:

The size of the type (*Buffalo & Erie County Public)* should not be revised, **as the logo and text are one graphic together**.

We are supplying several sizes to suit your needs. Visit the Intranet at: http://becpl4all.buffalolib.org/depts/cr/graphics/index.asp for a variety of versions of the logo. Contact the Graphics Department at 858-7183 if you need additional sizes.

Colors:

The circle of the logo is to appear in one of the following colors only:

- PMS 368 (green) Black White (on black or colored background)

The text of the logo (Buffalo & Erie County Public Library) is always black, unless the paper is dark and then the text is in white. Use of any other color or combination is not acceptable.

When printing on colored paper, use the black logo and black text.

Placement:

Flyers, posters, brochures, annual reports: The logo should always be on the bottom left hand corner. The Library web address should be placed in the bottom center of the page. The Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest mini logos should be on the bottom right hand side of the page. See example below:

Stationery & Memos: The logo is placed at the top and it is centered. The Library's street address, phone number and web address run along the bottom of the page. The Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest mini logos are on the bottom right hand side of the page.

The suggested Font you should use for correspondence in letters: **Book Antiqua**

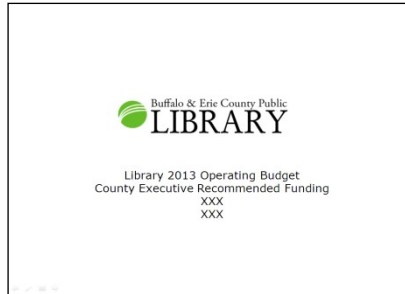The suggested Font you should use for emails, programming flyers and staff memos: **Verdana**

Your Verdana emails can be in a 10 pt or 11 pt size. Click here for details on setting your email to the Verdana default:

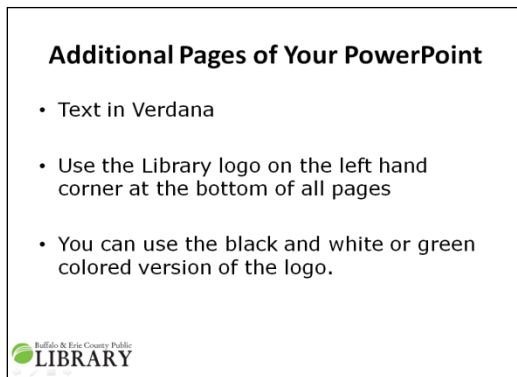http://becpl4all.buffalolib.org/depts/cr/graphics/Verdana%20Screenshots.pdf

Business Cards: The Graphics Department will be laying out a standard business card. Library directors will be notified when the process is ready and you will be required to complete an online form to place an order for business cards. Watch for a message when this process is ready.

PowerPoint Presentations

Home page: Logo Centered, in color, Verdana font for your text

Additional Pages of Your PowerPoint

• Text in Verdana

• Use the Library logo on the left hand corner at the bottom of all pages

• You can use the black and white or green colored version of the logo.

Secondary pages: use the logo at the bottom left, can be in black and white, green. If possible, should appear on all pages.

YouTube and Animoto Presentations: Your cover (first) page/ slide / screenshot should reflect the PowerPoint cover page design. Please contact Joy Testa at 858-7182 to discuss further.

You can find the new logo located at:
http://becpl4all.buffalolib.org/downloads/images/index.asp

If you have any questions, please contact Dawn Stanton or Darlene Pennachi in the Graphics Department at 858-7183.

Graphic Standards Manual presented to staff – October 31, 201Marketing Plan Approved by Library System Board of Trustees – December 18, 2014

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