

MARKETING

Treasures

The newsletter that helps librarians market the services of their libraries and information centers.

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Navigating the Library Through A Recession

"When times turn bad they're made worse by hesitation, halfway measures, and panicky decisions. Such as the decision to reduce or eliminate advertising. The fact is, companies that maintain or increase their advertising spending during recessions get ahead." *The Wall Street Journal*, May 16, 1991

When a recession hits, budgets are cut and organizations adopt the "lean and mean" approach to operations. Libraries and other "overhead" services, if not properly positioned as essential, are forced to cut back and absorb budget cuts. Like many business managers, librarians who are asked to operate on a reduced budget will take a look at their budget items and, if there was any money put aside for promotion, it most likely will be sacrificed. By taking this action, the budget-conscious librarian unwittingly contributes to the library's invisibility and perhaps future demise.

In recent months, the marketing literature has been filled with studies and reports showing that organizations that cut their advertising and promotion activities during years of recession lost market share and sales*. The studies conclude that companies that continued to advertise during recessionary times enjoyed a significant increase in sales and market share. It makes sense. A less crowded field allows messages to be seen with fewer interruptions, and that increases visibility – resulting in higher sales, both during and after a recession.

But, you say, you don't want more activity in your library. Your staff has been cut and you can't handle anymore business. You'd rather adopt a marketing strategy of "out of sight, out of mind" so the phone won't ring every five minutes. Well, your editor isn't talking about drumming up new business. She's suggesting that you adopt different marketing management strategies aimed at maintaining your visibility, and either reinforcing or developing the position within your organization of "the library is a valuable asset!"

First of all, are you trying to maintain the same level of service and products with a three person staff that you offered with five people last year? Let's not try to be superhuman, 'cause if you can do it with three, management may want to see if you can do it with two. This situation leads to the first important rule for a recessionary market-

ing program. **Don't try to target everyone with your services.** Redefine your library's niche and narrow the target markets to your most important segments. If you identify a market segment that you haven't targeted before (i.e. management), make sure you have products that meet this new segment's information needs. Eliminate products and services that are targeted to once important market segments. Be sure to let your management know the relationship between budget cuts and service cuts.

The underlying strategy for your marketing program during these tough times will be to appeal to the recessionary climate in your organization. **Develop messages that point out how library services and products solve problems caused by the tighter economy.** Look at your fax service, your library's membership in regional and national cooperative networks, your subscription to journal abstract services, the newly installed CD ROM system – to name a few services that are not just time-saving conveniences for you and your staff, they are genuine services that help stretch your organization's information gathering and management dollars. Most libraries are working examples of resource efficiency. It's up to the librarian to get the message out to the marketplace.

For example, instead of advertising the abstract service to attract more customers, a recession-sensitive promotion message informs your target audience of how an abstract service helps to identify materials that best match information needs. This increases your organization's return on investment – in terms of materials purchased and staff hours. The existence of a well-managed library permits, through its services of cataloging, indexing, serials check-in, report gathering etc., information resources to be shared by individuals. In a recession environment, this "service" function should be related to the "bottomline" and "productivity" figures of your organization.

Messages like these will maintain your visibility and secure your position as a valuable asset to the organization. Your editor thinks these are very good reasons why you shouldn't drop your promotion activities in these times of recession!

* *How Advertising In Recession Periods Affects Sales*, New-York: American Business Press., Inc. 1979; *McGraw-Hill Research Rpt. No. 5262.1, Laboratory of Advertising Performance*; Dhalla, Naziman K., "Advertising as an Antirecession Tool," *Harvard Business Review*, Jan/Feb 1980; 1990 *Monroe Mendelsohn Survey of Adults & Markets of Affluence*.

Pearls of Wisdom

The April issue of *Notes, News, and How-To-Use the American Hospital Association Resource Center* includes a management advisory entitled *Library and Information Services*. It is a fine example of positioning the value of library services, in this case hospital libraries, in management circles. The two page advisory is sprinkled with benefit statements on how health science libraries contribute to the achievements of the organization. For copies contact the AHA Resource Center at 312/280-6263.

The winning entries of the 1990 John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Awards have been compiled into the book *Great Library Promotion Ideas VI*. Over 40 successfully proven public relations ideas are presented in the 90 page paperback. Copies may be purchased from the American Library Association Publishing Services Order Department. The price is \$20 (\$18 for ALA members). Send your order to: 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611, or call 800/545-2433.

Your claims of being the "local online database search wizard" can be augmented behind the scenes with a subscription to the *Quick Check Directory of Online Business Databases*. This handy directory lists the important characteristics for over 200 business related databases found on DIALOG, BRS, and ORBIT – in a convenient chart format. For more information, contact Nancy McCarty, P.O. Box 1537, Auburn, ME 04211-1537, or phone 207/784-9724.

Expand your marketing literature horizons with the *Marketing Executive Report*. This new monthly publication offered by the American Marketing Association presents abstracts from over fifty business publications, a complete reprint of a distinguished article from the marketing literature, and a marketing information directory. If you

aren't interested in the subject matter, think about creating a similar value-added product for your own management! For information about the *Report*, contact the American Marketing Association, MER, Subscription Dept., 250 South Wacker Dr., Suite 200, Chicago, IL 60606-5819.

Another resource for preprinted brochure paper has surfaced. Paper Direct, the mailorder source for all types of paper has introduced "Inhouse Creations." Four different preprinted paper designs, ready for copying on your laser printer or photocopier, are available in several colors, paper sizes, and quantities. See pages 4 and 5 of the Spring 91 catalog. Contact Paper Direct at 800/272-7377 for the catalog or write to them at 205 Chubb Ave., Lyndhurst, NJ 07071-0618.

While you may have never thought about it, creating a computer screen display for your inhouse catalog or retrieval system is just like designing a layout on a piece of paper. To learn more, consider attending the "Screen Design for Online Public Access Catalogs" presentation on June 27th, sponsored by the Library and Information Technology Association's (LITA) Programmer/Analysts and Online Catalogs Interest Groups at the ALA conference in Atlanta. For information, contact the LITA office at 312/280-4270.

Sixty-eight percent of those surveyed in the 1990 Louis Harris survey "Consumers in the Information Age" said they feel that if they had a home computer, it would be either "very valuable" or "somewhat valuable" for them to obtain online information from the library or other non-profit service. The results of telephone interviews with 2,254 Americans, age 18 years or older, in a representative national sample, is available in the report *Using the Public Library in the Computer Age: Present Patterns, Future Possibilities*. Copies are available for \$16.50 from the American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

Here's an idea. Members of the The Literary Guild can call the new Home Previewline to listen to previews of soon-to-be-published titles and hear authors read excerpts from their books – complete with music and sound effects. The 900 phone service runs 24 hours a day and coincides with the launching of a new monthly membership magazine. So spice up your next issue of "Recent Acquisitions" – select a particularly interesting title or journal article and put your synopsis or review of it on tape! How about offering a series of "Tips" on how to use the resources of your information center – on tape, of course.

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Missing issues must be reported within 3 months of issue date. Missing issues requested after this time will be supplied at the regular back-issue price.

Make-Over

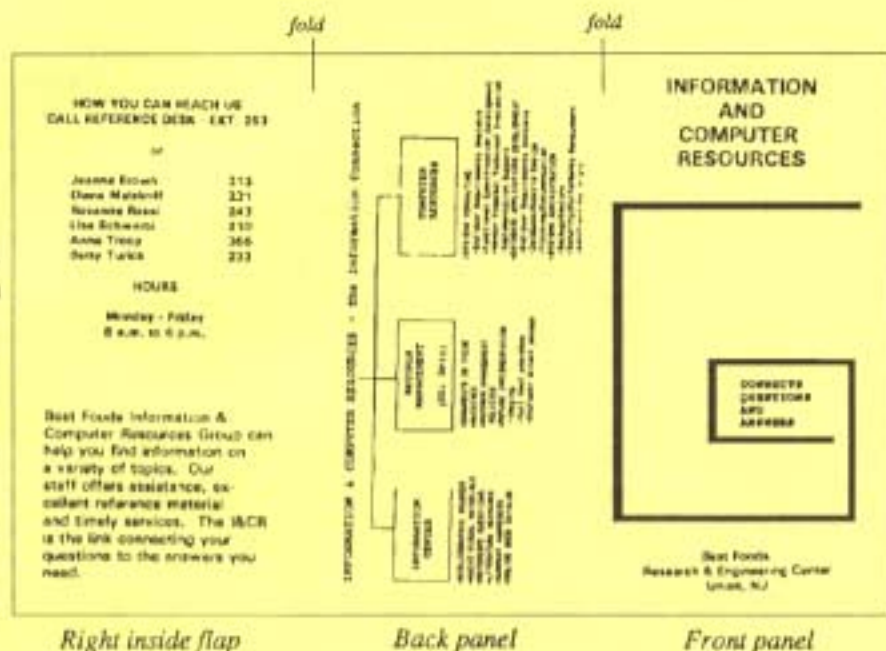
The Information and Computer Resource Group of Best Foods in Union, NJ.

Rosanne Rossi of the Best Foods Information Center in Union, NJ, submitted her brochure for a *Marketing Treasures* Make-Over. The Center is part of the Information and Computer Resources Group that provides information services to the Research & Engineering Center of Best Foods. The brochure is used as a handout and describes the resources of the Group, not just the Information Center.

The make-over candidate that we received was photocopied on beige parchment paper. The size is 8.5" x 11", folded twice to make three panels. A scan of both sides of the brochure is shown here with its panel positions noted. The brochure was created using WordPerfect 5.1.

Because not everyone has access to the latest in graphics and page layout programs, this Make-Over will limit its suggestions to those that can be easily accomplished using any word processing package. First, the front panel. This graphic does nothing for the brochure. If no clip-art is available, then forget the graphics and concentrate on the content – starting with the name. In this case, the name of the organization appears three different ways in the brochure – on the cover it's "Information and Computer Resources" and inside it's "The Information & Computer Resources Group" and the "I&CR." There's also an inconsistency in how the "and" is handled in the text. Standardizing the name of the organization in the headlines and body copy is frequently overlooked by brochure developers.

The front panel headline exhibits another common mistake – the words in the top headline are supposed to lead to the second headline, "Connects Questions and Answers". Because of the visual distance between the two headlines, the linkage isn't made, allowing the second headline to read as a sentence fragment. The best approach to headlines and body copy is to have them stand on their own. A better treatment for these front panel headlines would be to change the "Connects . . ." to a statement. There's a nice statement on the back panel that reflects the "connection" theme. "The Information Connection" works much better on the front panel.



Make-Over *Continued from page 3*

The organization chart on the back panel is a nice touch. Pictures are worth a thousand words when trying to explain a complex organization such as this group. The right inside flap, however, needs help. This is an example of a writer being too familiar with the material. "Call Reference Desk" doesn't read smoothly and the transition to the list of staff members is awkward. An alternative treatment might read "Linking to Our Information Resources Begins at the Reference Desk. Dial ext 263." By adding the area of responsibility next to staff member names, along with the extension number, an explanatory lead-in sentence can be easily added to the copy. And where is the complete phone number? How about a fax line? Electronic mail address? What is the physical location address? Inter-office mail address? A brochure should offer alternative methods of getting in touch with the staff.

The next paragraph needs editing. "... find information on a variety of topics." should be expanded. This is a perfect opportunity to use examples or a sampling of topics the Group's resources can address. "... excellent reference material. . ." is not a powerful statement. What makes reference materials valuable? Material that is up-to-date, easy-to-use, and comprehensive – to name a few adjectives that could replace the word "excellent".

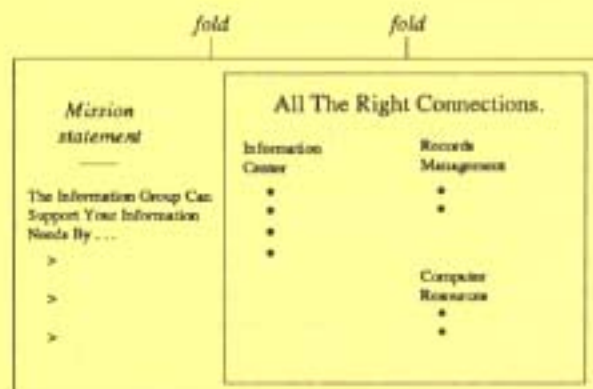
The inside layout of the brochure is confusing – everything competes for the eye. While graphics would help, consistent use of capitalization, margins, text alignment, and some explanatory body copy will make a significant positive impact. Starting with the left inside panel, the headline "MISSION" is unnecessary. Putting the mission statement in italics and centering it is a nice touch. But the headline underneath the statement sends mixed messages. A better headline would be "The Information Group Can Support Your Information Needs By . . .". Notice how only the first letters are capitalized here. It is much easier to read upper and lower case, then all caps. So leave the capitals for only those times when a *major* emphasis is desired.

The remaining inside panels are devoted to highlighting the resources of each Group component. Eliminating the dividing line between the center and right inside panels will help pull together this information. The headline, "AVAILABLE RESOURCES," misses the opportunity to reflect the "connection" theme. A possible headline could be "All The Right Connections." Whatever the headline, it should be located at

the top. No other subheads should be as high in the layout. Having the names of the component groups in all caps is okay, but there is no need for the colons. As for the body copy, there really isn't any. There is no text here that persuades the reader to use the information resources. This section of the brochure is a list of resources that needs some descriptive promotion copy. The grammatical treatment of each list is different, suggesting that three people contributed their lists to the brochure developer. These lists need to be edited and reformatted to make a consistent presentation of the information. The centering of the text in this section of the brochure adds to the visual confusion. A right or left justified text block alignment would be better and would eliminate the need to underline some of the subheadings. The large gap of space on the bottom of the right panel is a "no, no!" Always try to have the top and bottom margins equal, same with side margins. By dropping the "Computer Resources" section down, the bottom margin will even out, and the "Records Management" section won't look so cramped.

A rough sketch of the revised inside layout is shown below. Nothing fancy, but certainly "doable" with a word processor. Actually, if Rosanne and her colleagues decide to expand the body copy as suggested in this Make-Over, they will run out of space on 8.5" x 11" paper. They should consider legal size paper as an alternative. With two folds, the panels will be wider, but that's okay.

I hope these comments help you, Roseanne. There are many librarians who are limited to using word processing programs to produce their library brochures. Thank you for sharing yours with us.



Candidates for a Make-Over can be sent to the editor c/o Marketing Treasures.

Worth Its Weight in Gold

Many *Marketing Treasures* subscribers enjoy using the clip art images that come with the subscription. Sometimes we get carefully wrapped examples of how the clip art has been used in a library's publication or announcement. Over the past five years your editor has seen some very good adaptations and wonderful applications of the images that have graced our art sheets.

The other day one of the best applications of a *Marketing Treasures* clip art image arrived. It's so good that your editor just has to share it with you – to spark your creative juices.

When the staff of the Uniroyal Chemical Ltd. Library in Guelph, Ontario, Canada sat down to create their new brochure, they decided to have some fun while promoting their library's services. Working with their company's public relations person, the library staff adopted the cartoon character from the Vol. 3, No. 4 (March 1990) clip art sheet as their mascot "INFO".



Alecia Lambert, the library's records manager notes, "We plan to use INFO in future library promotions and are currently including him in a large poster that is being designed to welcome people to the library. He will also be used on shelf-end cards that indicate the range of journals or books on a particular shelf. Several sizes of self-adhesive stickers of INFO have been obtained for this purpose."



INFO now graces the front cover of the library's new brochure. While primarily a black and white figure, INFO's roller skate boots are bright red – visually emphasizing the "information to go" service philosophy of the library staff.

These are just two of the INFO figures that can be found in a brochure that is well written and a delight to peruse. Congratulations to Pat van der Kroft, Eileen Brown, Alecia Lambert, and Lorna Cole for producing a memorable brochure and promotion campaign that is sure to win the hearts and loyal business of their customers.



Promotion Gems

As this issue's front cover article suggests, your library's marketing programs don't exist in a vacuum. Many of the forces and conditions that affect the marketing plans of large organizations will also influence your library's marketing activities. Some recent statements from *The Langer Report* may predict the essence of marketing programs to come in the 90s.

The 80s were seen as "having it all". It was commonplace to hear 20 and 30 year olds make plans for "making big money". Conversely, the 90s seem to be an era of downward expectations. Respondents in focus groups and in-depth interviews are now saying that it just isn't possible for most people to achieve their goals. Research findings show that "real" and "realistic" are words used repeatedly as consumers review their ideas about financial and personal happiness.

The readjustment of the hopes and aspirations is being called the "New Realism" by marketing researchers. This new trend for the 90s suggests several implications for marketing and advertising that marketing-oriented librarians may want to note and monitor.

- Coping strategies will form the basis of many promotion and advertising communications campaigns. Many organizations will position themselves as being on the consumer's side in finding practical, money-saving approaches to the difficulties being faced by consumers.
- The life-styles portrayed in advertising may become less glamorous, and more down-to-earth. The role models may be people who do their best to get on with life. The days of "SuperMom" will be over, as less intimidating, "real-life" role models are used in advertising.
- The trend to New Realism suggests that more "straight talk" about products will be made in advertising. Unrealistic promises may give way to "reality" promises.
- As a counter to the New Realism, there will be a need for fantasy and escape. Consumers will seek outlets for the frustration of lowered expectations.

What is an immediate implication for your marketing program? Develop messages that offer solutions to the "real-life" information requirements of your target market. Get acquainted with how and when your customers determine when they need assistance from your library. Use this insight to build a promotion program around "real" information requirements – show how your library's services and products help your organization achieve its goals in "real" situations.

Sparkling Reviews

Customer First: A Strategy for Quality Service. Denis Walker. Gower Publishing, Vermont, 1990. \$64.95
ISBN: 0-566-02860-3

The author promises in the preface to show the reader what has to be done to create a total service commitment to customers. He succeeds in a well-written discussion of customer service from all perspectives.

The book is divided into three parts. The first reviews and develops the concept of service at the strategic management level. It includes a template for auditing the service "health" of an organization. The second part, the meat of the book, provides practical examples for capturing service data, service-oriented training, communications, and quality service program activities. The last part tells the story of how British Airways, from 1983 to 1989, turned around its image with its "putting the customer first" program, a "real-life" situation to which the author contributed as the airline's Customer Service Manager.

Libraries are businesses where service is the primary product. Service is delivered by people – and there's the challenge. How to get people with their diverse characteristics to deliver a consistent level of service that will be perceived by the customer as meeting or exceeding expectations. The discussions, charts, checklists, and summaries contained in this book will provide library

and information center managers with a solid foundation for a customer-driven information service. There's even a short chapter on handling customer complaints, a tricky, but necessary activity for any service.

Most important, Mr. Walker understands and relates the value of a customer-driven service to the success of an organization's marketing program. He describes the role of internal and external communication programs in a customer-oriented service and provides examples to illustrate his points. Throughout the book the author brings the reader face-to-face with marketing management's "performance-expectation" theory, where service performance is evaluated by customers and expectations are either exceeded, matched, or not met. Tying service quality into such well-established marketing concepts adds to Mr. Walker's insights into developing and maintaining a customer-driven quality service.

Yes, the price of this book is a little steep, but its contents are timeless. Recommended for librarians who understand that the future of their library depends on customer service and who are willing to do something about it.

Call For Ideas! To celebrate our fifth volume of *Marketing Treasures* (coming up in September) we will be creating and publishing an entire collection of original library clip art. As always we are seeking ideas . . . so drop us a line, a fax, or call us with your suggestions.

The Crystal Ball

June 17 - 21 "Strategic Marketing Planning". Offered by the Michigan Business School in Ann Arbor. Contact: 313/763-1000.

June 17 - 18 "Developing Marketing Plans". Offered by The University of Chicago. Contact: Charles Schmidt 312/702-1724.

June 25 - 26 "Positioning and Segmentation Research". Offered by the Burke Institute in Cincinnati. Contact: Lisa Raffagnone 800/544-7373 ext. 3775.

July 1 "Desktop Design: Fundamentals of Design for Desktop Publishing". Offered by Promotional Perspectives in Sacramento, California. Contact: 313/994-0007.

July 11 "Improving Customer Contact Skills". Offered by Johns Hopkins University School of Continuing Studies in Baltimore. Contact: 301/659-8211.

July 12 "How To Write, Design & Edit Newsletters". Offered by Business & Professional Research Institute in Philadelphia. Contact: 802/757-3261.

July 15 - 18 "TS9/91 - The Trade Show About Trade Shows". Exhibitors conference sponsored by the International Exhibitors Association in San Diego. Contact: 703/941-3725.

July 17, 24, 31 "Sharpening Your Business Writing Skills". A three session course offered by Johns Hopkins University School of Continuing Studies in Baltimore. Contact: 301/659-8211.

July 23 "Opening Doors to the Law Library: How Do We Get and Keep Our Foot In, Part II". Presentation by Kaycee Hale at the American Association of Law Libraries in New Orleans. Contact: Alyson Withers 312/853-7475.

August 7 - 9 "Competitive Strategies: How to Develop Marketing Plans, Strategies, and Tactics". A three day seminar offered by the American Management Association in Boston. Contact: Lisa Wallace 212/903-8129.

August 20 - 21 "Customer Satisfaction Research". Offered by the Burke Institute in New York. Contact: Lisa Raffagnone 800/544-7373 ext. 3775.