Steps to Success: Marketing

**Step 1.The community.** Start by looking again at “Understanding Your Library: the Community.” To effectively market to the community, you’ll need to know the community’s opinions of the service that you currently provide to them. Start by considering:

* Are there segments in my community that are underserved?
* Who else is providing the same or similar services (See “Steps to Success: Referrals”)?
* Does the community value this service? How do we know?

**Step 2. Pick a target demographic.**  Which segment of the community would benefit most from your service: seniors, adults with children, young adults, unemployed adults, etc? Where do they hang out? What’s the best way to reach them?

**Step 3. Understand that demographic.** Until you know who the patrons are, what they want, and what motivates them, you can’t effectively market to them. Don’t confuse “wants” with “needs.” To really get to know your patrons ask yourself:

* How does this group get information (in a store, on the web)?
* What are my target customer’s primary motivations for seeking out information?

**Step 4. Develop your message.**

Your marketing message not only tells your audience what you do, but persuades them that you’re the best at what you do. Two types of marketing messages should be developed. One message should be short and to the point. It’s your response to someone who asks you, “So, what do you do?”

So, what do you do?

The second type is a more complete marketing message. To make your message compelling and persuasive, it should include the following elements:

* An explanation of problems or issues your target demographic faces (their need).
* An explanation of why you are uniquely positioned to meet that need.
* An explanation of the benefits people will receive from the library.
* Examples and testimonials from customers you have helped with similar problems.

Pick one program or service the library provides. Fill in the following:

Do you need [insert need]? Try coming to the library! We’re the only place that [how you’re uniquely positioned]. While you’re there you can [list the benefits patrons receive]. One patron to our library said “[example or testimonial]”.

**Step 5.** **Determine your Marketing Medium.**

Your marketing medium is the communication tool you use to deliver your message. You want to choose the medium that delivers your marketing message to your target audience at the lowest price. Look back at the media outlets you identified on “Getting to Know Your Library: Marketing.” Which is most likely to reach the target audience? What costs are involved with each?

Here are some tools you have at your disposal to get your message out (Visit <http://guidingohioonline.org/marketing> for templates):

* Fliers
* Posters
* PSA
* Social Media

**Step 6. Set Goals.** How will you know your marketing is working? When creating goals, ensure that your goals are SMART:

1. **S**ensible: what is currently being done? What makes the most sense to do?
2. **M**easurable: What can be counted?
3. **A**chievable: What can you do, given time constrains?
4. **R**ealistic: Don’t try to do too much.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Target Demographic | Marketing Medium | Goal |
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1. **T**ime specific: When will you have it done by?