## Presented by



**Dr. Curtis Rogers**Founder of Curtis Rogers Consulting, recently retired, South Carolina State Library

# Library Signage: Effective Crisis Communications

WebJunction 1/27/22 Dr. Curtis Rogers curtisrogersconsulting.com



## **Session Outline**

- Welcome/Introductions
- Crisis communications within the context of library signage
- My library signage philosophy
- Library Signage 101 the basics for any library signs
- Plus/Delta with real library signs
- COVID-19 signage resources
- Customer service issues
- Marketing/Signage equipment
- Additional resources





#### **Crisis Communications Overview**

- → The Institute for Crisis Management defines a crisis as: A significant disruption that stimulates extensive news media coverage and public scrutiny that disrupts the organization's normal business activities.
- → Some of the common elements of a crisis are that it:
  - Occurs suddenly (but can persist)
  - Demands quick response (and constant updates as changes occur)
  - Interferes with organizational performance (HR, Marketing, Communications)
  - Creates uncertainty and stress
  - ◆ Threatens the reputation of an organization
  - Escalates in intensity
  - Causes outsiders to scrutinize the organization (social media)
  - Permanently alters the organization (the only constant is change)





### **My Library Signage Philosophy**

- → THINK CRITICALLY about your library's signage and what it means.
- → Understand how your library responds with signage in a crisis.
- → Less is MORE.
- → Compare your signage to what you see when you're shopping or at the doctor's office or at a retail location.
- → Look at examples of REAL library signs.









# Library Marketing and Communications Conference

www.librarymarketingconference.org

# How it all started



Session Title: "Do You See the Signs? Evaluating Language, Branding, and Design in a Library Signage Audit" by Amy Stempler and Mark Aaron Polger



# **Library Signage 101**

- Positive
  - Polite language
  - Not verbose get to the point (your mileage may vary)
  - Use library logo/branding (on most every sign – it depends)
  - No typos
  - Correct grammar
  - Font and font size
  - Image that supports content



#### Tip

Try using
Grammarly.com
to double check
your grammar,
punctuation, and
spelling.





# Library Signage 101

- Negative
  - Handwritten
  - Too many words
  - Clip art just. don't. do. it. UNLESS...
  - Comic sans/Papyrus font (another no no)
  - Passive aggressive
  - Too many colors
  - Too much going on



#### Tip

After creating a sign, go back and start deleting useless or redundant words.

Try to get it down to as few words as possible.





## **Tip**

During a crisis, no one will see your sign if there are too many.







## Tip

If someone can write on a sign, they will. Use acrylic holders.

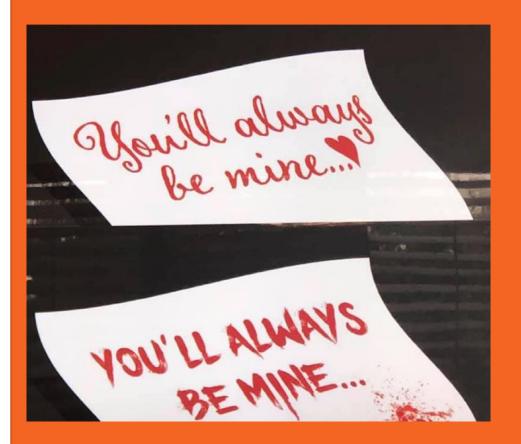
Also, these kinds of signs are completely inappropriate.





#### **Fonts Matter**

- → What is your library's recommended set of fonts?
- → What is your library's recommended color scheme?
- → For example: add a Media Kit web page to your library's website in the About Us section. You can add logos, colors, fonts, etc. These can be used by printers, staff, and others who are promoting the library.
- → Does your library have a <u>style guide</u> or communications manual? Does it include crisis communications?





During a crisis, you want to be able to find your communications resources in one place!



#### LIBRARY OF MICHIGAN

#### WWW.MICHIGAN.GOV/LMMEDIAKIT

- Site: www.Michigan.gov/LibraryofMichigan
- Individual pages within the Library of Michigan website
  - Library Card Application: www.Michigan.gov/LibraryCard
  - o Family History Resources: www.Michigan.gov/FamilyHistory
  - o Databases for Library of Michigan Cardholders: www.Michigan.gov/LMda
- · Social Media accounts:
  - o Facebook (@libraryofmichigan): https://www.facebook.com/libraryofmic
  - Twitter (@LibraryofMich): https://twitter.com/LibraryofMich
  - Instagram (@libraryofmichigan): https://www.instagram.com/libraryofmi
  - YouTube (playlist under Michigan Department of Education account): http
- Social Media hashtag: #LibraryofMichigan
- Color Codes for LM Blue:
  - o CMYK: 100/35/0/0
  - o RGB 0/110/182
  - HEX: #006EB6
- Logo Files:
  - Stacked: BlueStacked: Black
  - Horizontal: Blue
  - Horizontal: Black
  - Additional color variations and file types are available.
- Credit Text: Use for source information retrieved from the Library of Michigan for Michigan, an agency of the Michigan Department of Education."



## **Tip**

Create a sign template for your organization that is accessible off site. Remember to include your logo.



# Beware! The sign barrier



# Beware the signage barrier

- Creates a physical barrier between frontline staff and patrons.
- Too much information gets lost in the shuffle.
- Are crisis communications mixed in with other information?
- How can your library create a space specifically for crisis communications?







## PLUS/DELTA

In these next sign examples, think about (and **share in chat**) what works (+) and what could be changed  $(\Delta)$ .







#### **Stop the Spread of Germs**

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.













Stay home when you're sick unless you're seeking medical attention.



Wash your hands often with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds.





#### FOR THE WELL-BEING OF ALL



Thank you for your continued support in keeping our Community and Library family safe!



# What are the types of COVID-19 signage?

Homework assignment:

Make a list of the different kinds of COVID-19 related signage your library has implemented and see what needs updating.

- Restroom/Hand washing
- Floor/Social distancing
- Updated services offered such as curb-side pick up
- Others?



# The Library Signage Audit

- Take photos of library's signs
- Compile visual report
- What is working well
- What to consider changing

## **Oconee County**

Salem Library Signage Audit







## **Library Exterior**

- Walk around the library exterior
- What is your overall observation?
- Look at parking signs, smoking areas, seating
- Can hours be seen from the road?



#### The Library Signage Audit

#### And why is it so important?

Library signage sets the tone not only of the individual library branch, but also of the whole county library system. All library signage should be positive, brief, and consistent.

The following are both positive and negative library signage general rules of thumb:

#### Positive

- Polite language
- Not verbose get to the point
- Consistently use library logo/ branding
- No typos
- Correct grammar
- · Font and font size
- Image that supports content

#### Negative

- Handwritten
- Too many words
- Clip art (try to use photography if possible)
- Comic sans font (use font that is similar to the library's standard font selection/ branding)
- Passive aggressive
- · Too many colors
- · Too much going on

A library signage audit is not only an audit of the library's signs, but it may also relate to the library's internal and external image including printed materials, customer service, grounds, and community perceptions.

#### Exterior Considerations

- Is the shrubbery or grass maintained?
- Are there areas flower beds could be created? If beds are there, are they maintained regularly?
- Are the signs for the library in good condition? Are they large enough? Do they need repainting? Do they need to be lighted?
- Is there trash on the grounds? Are attractive trash containers available? Are containers available outside for smokers to extinguish cigarettes?
- Is visitor parking prominently marked and plentiful?
- Is the entrance to the building clearly marked?
- Where are other directional signs to the library located in the community? Are the directions well marked and easy to understand?
- Is this a building you would be proud to bring friends and family to?



#### **Considerations**

- Review your library in a web search.
- Are there reviews?
- Hours and location correct?
- How welcoming is the library?
- Are there any unofficial social media pages/groups?

What does someone see when they first enter the building?

Where is the information desk? Is it well marked with signs? Is it cluttered or neat? Is it staffed at all times?

Is there a place such as a bulletin board to post special information? Is it attractively displayed? Is everything current? Is it regularly checked/cleaned?

Are the hours of operation posted clearly?

Are all areas of the library kept neat with books, magazines, and other materials shelved or attractively arranged. Is the furniture in good condition?

Are the floors or carpet cleaned frequently?

Are trash containers strategically placed throughout the library?

Are restrooms clearly marked and kept clean?

How attractive and inviting are the information desk, bulletin board, stacks, reading area, magazines, offices?

#### Communications and Customer Service...

- How is the library listed in a Google search? Has anyone reviewed the library?
- Do key points of contact such as the Chamber of Commerce, city hall, schools, and local service stations know where your library is located?

#### Things to Consider



Is staff dressed neatly? Is there a dress code and is it followed? Do you have dress-down day? Do patrons know this? Does the staff know what is acceptable and not for dress down?

Are staff members knowledgeable about their specific area as well as the library in general? Do they respond promptly and courteously to requests?

Do they speak positively about the library and promote its services to civic, church and business groups?

- Are library directional signs on well-traveled roads? Are the directions clear to someone unfamiliar with the area?
- What do you do to help patrons with special needs? Do staff members know what services are available for patrons with special needs?
- Are the specific areas of the library easy to reach and well

Do you have letterhead and envelopes for the library?

Does each staff member have business cards?

Do your printed materials have a special format? Do you have special colors for certain program areas or publications?

Does the staff know the library's policies on printed materials, such as who approves printed pieces? Is there a review of all printed materials before they are finalized?

Are printed materials grammatically correct and spell checked?

Does the library have a recognizable and consistently used logo? Is it current and does it reflect the image you want of your library? Are there guidelines for use of the logo?

Is there a style guide for the library? How are media communications handled?

How is the library's social media managed?

#### marked?

- Do all patrons, regardless of needs or reasons for visiting the library, feel welcome?
- Does the staff understand the importance of good customer service to the library?
- Does the staff understand the role they play in developing and maintaining a positive image for the library?



# COVID-19 and Crisis Communications Resources





#### **IFLA Resources**

- Handling materials
- Promoting hygiene
- Public communication
- Communicating with users in different languages

# **COVID-19 and the Global Library Field**







https://culc.ca/projects/toolkit/checklists

- 1. This checklist is helpful for your Marketing & Communications Director to review for crisis communications planning.
- 2. Does your library have a staff member who is responsible for Marketing & Communications?
- 3. Does your library have a Marketing & Communications committee or team that meets on a regular basis?

#### **Marketing & Communication Checklist**

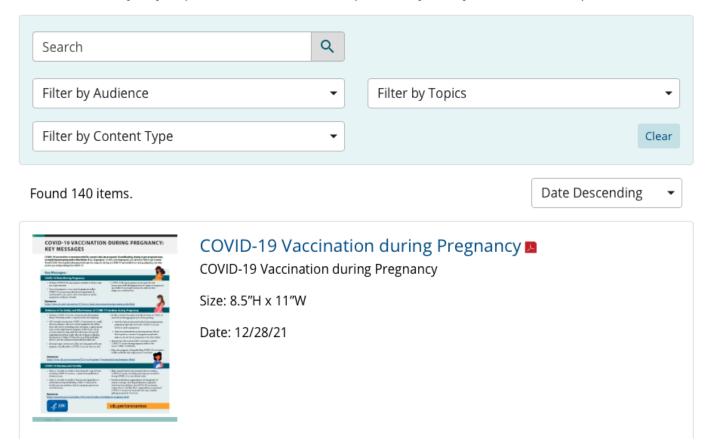
- ☐ How will you raise awareness of what the library can offer now and consider these existing services as a foundation to build on?
- ☐ How can your library create a cascade of information timely, accurate updates of what is available now, and what is to follow?
- ☐ How will you emphasize that a safe and sound approach to reopening will mean a gradual return of services; unfortunately, not every service?
- ☐ How will you remind patrons that each library service must adapt to a new operating environment?
- ☐ What are the best ways to keep your patrons informed of these immediate and long-term changes to their library system?
- ☐ Do you have a plan to communicate with your partners, your funders and your supporters to secure their continued interest and involvement?
- ☐ What roles can they play in your recovery efforts? What information do they need to support the library?
- ☐ Can you take your vision statement in a new direction? Can you deliver your mandate by doing things differently, and doing different things?
- ☐ How will we have candid and thoughtful community conversations about the ways libraries are changing?
- ☐ How can libraries demonstrate their relevance and communicate their value, without alienating library users that preferred the way things used to be?



## CDC Marketing Resources

- Print Resources
- PSAs
- Widgets, Buttons, and Graphics
- Videos

The following print-only materials are developed to support COVID-19 recommendations. All materials are free for download. They may be printed on a standard office printer, or you may use a commercial printer.







# Resources from ALA

## **Pandemic Preparedness**

#### Resources for Libraries

A pandemic is an outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area and affects an exceptionally high proportion of the population. (Merriam-Webster Online). This page provides information about preparing for a pandemic, including library-specific policy suggestions and more universal resources on pandemic education, prevention and preparation. Some of the resources are specific to seasonal influenza outbreaks and the 2019/2020 COVID-19 pandemic, but can be used more universally to help educate and inform decisions on pandemic prevention and preparedness.

#### News

**Library responses to COVID-19** 

Topics to include in an individual library policy

Professional development/training resources

**Resources from ALA** 

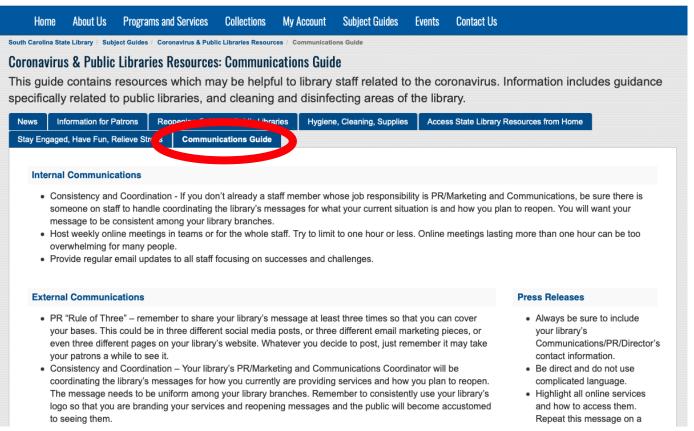
Federal resources

State and local resources

Additional resources











Home Happening now Research Resources FAQ About

Subscribe to updates



#### Resources

https://www.oclc.org/realm/resources/communications-signage-roundup.html

Resources > Communication and signage

#### **Communication and signage: Resource Roundup**

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenging time for many people, changing day-to-day life in unprecedented ways. Employers and employees have played a critical role in protecting themselves and each other while helping to prevent further spread of the disease. A crucial aspect of this work lies in how we communicate to our staff and the public. These resources provide examples of relevant communication tools, including signage templates and COVID-19 communication guides.

Note: These examples may have changed since being reviewed. Last accessed April 20, 2021.

<u>General signage</u> | <u>Communications from museums</u> | <u>Communications from libraries</u> | <u>Communicating to specific audiences</u>



# Internal Communications and Customer Service Issues



- Library signage and systemic issues
- Reacting to problems with signage –
   Something to think about:
  - Does it work?
  - Why or why not?
- Is customer service training needed?
- Let's take a look at two signs I came across in a small rural library branch men's room...









How could you handle this situation with signage and procedural changes?



# THIS RESTROOM **FOR** CUSTOMERS ONLY

**Ask Attendant for Key** 



# Internal Communications

How does your library communicate signage updates and changes?

New library signs should be communicated to ALL STAFF on a regular basis via email - WITH IMAGE

Your Mileage May Vary - staff meetings, quarterly emails, whatever works best for your staff

Why is this important? So that all staff are on the same page.



# Signage Equipment Review

- Laminator
- Acrylic holders
- Floor signs
- Outdoor/street level signs
- Banner stands
- Ceiling mounted signs
- Permanent signs
- Suction cup signs



### **Tips**

- Consider neon signs (lighted)
   that can be seen from the street
- Consider digital (wall mounted) signs only if your customers would stop and see them and if they are strategically placed
- Consider an iPad/tablet interactive display but also consider that people will be touching it



### The following images do not recommend specific brands – they are for informational purposes only.



Scotch Thermal Laminator, 2 Roller System for a Professional Finish, Use for Home, Office or School, Suitable for use with Photos (TL901X)

Visit the Scotch Store \*\*\*\*

35,892 ratings | 446 answered questions

#1 Best Seller in Office Presentation Laminators

Price: \$21.99 Prime FREE Delivery & FREE Returns

Thank you for being a Prime member. Get a \$100 Gift Card: Pay \$0.00 upon approval for the Amazon Prime Rewards Visa Card.

May be available at a lower price from other sellers, potentially without free Prime shipping.

Style: Laminating Machine

Bundle \$51.98

Laminating Machine \$21.99

- #1 Laminating Brand\*
- Laminates items up to 9 inches wide
- · Two heated rollers create high quality professional, bubble and wrinkle-free results
- · Safe to use on photos to help preserve precious memories
- · Will laminate pouches up to 5 mil thick. Two temperature settings
- Starter pack: contains 1 thermal laminator and 2 letter size (8.9" x 11.4") starter pouches.
- . This machine is only suitable for use with a grounded 120V outlet, do not use laminator with a voltage or outlet converter





Plastic Counter Top or Wall Mount 4 Tier BiFold Pamphlet Holder

\$6.98



Plastic Countertop or Wall Mount Convertible Pamphlet Holder

\$5.50



Plastic Counter Top or Wall Mount 3 Tier Convertible Pamphlet Holder

\$9.49



2 Pocket Tri Fold Pamphlet Holder Clear Acrylic with Black Sides

\$15.46 \$10.82



Medium Oak 4 Pocket Wood Brochure Holder with Acrylic Front

\$51.26



Light Oak 4 Pocket Wood Brochure Holder with Acrylic Front

\$51.26



Mahogany 4 Pocket Wood Brochure Holder with Acrylic Front

\$51.26

Medium Oak 8 Pocket Wood Brochure Holder with Acrylic Holder

\$62.73



### 11 x 17 Menu Floor Stand, Snap Open, Tilting, Adjustable Height - Black

Home > Food Merchandising Displays > Restaurant Signage > Menu Stands > Adjustable Height > FST1711BLK



Hover over the image to zoom in.



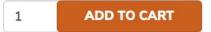


- Easily Adjusts Up and Down to Your Chosen Height
- · Frame Tilts to a Desired Viewing Angle
- · Can be Placed in Vertical or Horizontal Position
- Snap Open Edges for Easy Sign Changes

#### IN STOCK

Ships on Friday, Sep 10 if ordered within the next 23 hrs 3 mins.

Quantity	Price Each (USD)
1 - 3	\$152.99
4 - 10	\$145.99
11 - 33	\$136.99
34+	Request a Quote





## BigBoss Changeable Message Board: Pro Frame with Standard 4 Inch Letters and Numbers Kit, White Message Board (BOS-1001) Learn More...

based on 27 customer reviews



(Black letters & Red numbers)







Material: BigBoss Changeable Sidewalk Qty: - 1 + Kit Total Price \$199.95
Per Kit \$199.95





#### \$129.00

Budget Narrow Base Retractable Banner Stand

+ More Options Available!



\$291.99

Link Magnetic Retractable Banner Stand - Stay-Flat Vinyl

+ More Substrate Options Available!



Save 20%

\$207.00 \$165.60

Premium Wide Base Retractable Banner Stand

+ More Options Available!



**Best Seller!** 

\$313.99

Custom Printed Swap-Out Retractable Banner

+ More Color Options Available!



\$283.00

Silver Wing Retractable Banner Stand

+ More Substrate Options Available!



Save 20%

\$492.00 \$393.60

Premium Double-Sided Retractable Banner

+ More Options Available!



\$268.00

The Edge Retractable Banner Stand

+ More Substrate Options Available!



\$367.99

Glow LED Illuminated Retractable Banner

+ More Height (in.) & Substrate Options Available!





### Global Approved 172709 Acrylic Hanging Poster Frame, 17" x 11", Acrylic ,1 Piece

Item #: T9FB1104189

Not Yet Rated

Enter zip code for delivery date estimate







**Price: \$29.95** 

•



Save \$1.50 with 5% off when you use your Global Industrial Credit

Card.

Save 5% | Apply Now



**ADD TO CART** 

Quantity

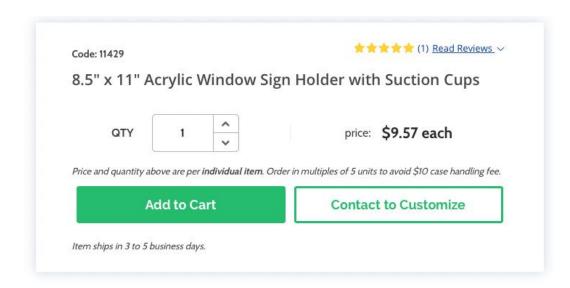
ADD TO LIST











Additional Product Options V



Home > Food Merchandising Displays > Restaurant Signage > LED Signs > LEDOPCL02



Hover over the image to zoom in.



#### **★** ★ ★ ★ (1 Review)

- Open hours sign with LED lighting is more affordable and energy efficient than neon lights.
- (2) 28" Long hanging chain included for displaying in a window.
- Monday Sunday hours listing clearly states when a business is open.
- Pulling chain switches the red "OPEN" text to orange "CLOSED" text.

#### IN STOCK

Ships on Friday, Sep 10 if ordered within the next 22 hrs 47 mins.

Quantity	Price Each (USD)
1 - 3	\$131.99
4 - 10	\$123.99
11 - 33	\$117.99
34 +	Request a Quote













Roll over image to zoom in

### Sungale CPF1909 19" Wall-Hanging Commercial Digital Signage; Promote Company, Product, Service, or Organization with Images, Music, and Videos

Visit the Sungale Store

★★☆☆ ~ 7 ratings | 13 answered questions

Price: \$219.99

Not eligible for Amazon Prime. Available with free Prime shipping from other sellers on Amazon.

Size: 19 inch

7 inch \$99.96 \$139.96 \$189.96 \$219.99

Specific Uses For Business, personal

Product

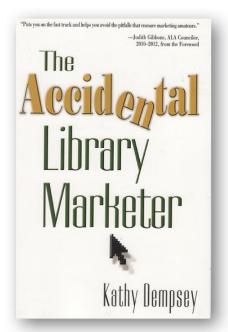
Refresh Rate 70 Hz
Brand Sungale
Screen Size 19 Inches

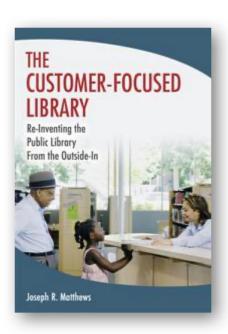
Resolution HD

#### About this item

- Send PROMO content to Display on this 19" wall-hanging digital Display from anywhere. Ideal for high traffic areas like lobbies, banks, & supermarkets
- Promotions and Product introductions can be sent to Display instantly on digital signage at all branches and store locations from one central location.
- Simultaneous loading and sending of content saves time and effort and reduces mistakes. You can also assign Each unit its unique content to Display



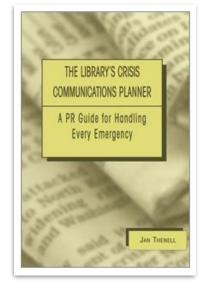


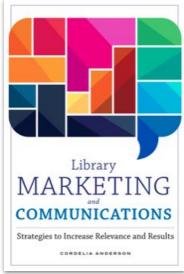


### Resources

- The Accidental Library Marketer
- The Customer-Focused Library:
   Re-Inventing the Public Library
   From the Outside-In









### Resources

- The Library's CrisisCommunications Planner
- Library Marketing and Communications
- Library Signage and Wayfinding Design: Communicating Effectively with Your Users



# Thank you!

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