



Getting the Word Out Guide

Don't assume that everyone knows about all of the excellent resources, workshops and services your library has to offer to the community. Even people who come into the library don't necessarily know the extent of what you have to help them.

It is also crucial to communicate beyond your users to other stakeholders in the community. When you're pitted against the police and firefighters for funding, be bold and clear about how "libraries are public safety, too" and how they contribute to the economic well-being of the community.

Inside Promotion

- Have big signs and little signs to direct users to specific sets of resources. For example, make it easy to find the computer(s) with extended time limits.
- Create table, wall or case displays of "Job & Career Help Center" or other workforce recovery resources.
- Place prominent links to workforce resources on the library website.
- Promote classes, workshops and special events with posters, brochures and flyers inside the library and in all of the branches.
- Use a digital frame at the circulation desk for a rotating screen display that advertises meetings, programs and events at the library.
- Use your phone tree to promote events: "Press 6 for a listing of local job-seeker events (job fair info, etc.)."
- Design various bookmarks that will help patrons with different aspects of job search and unemployment.

External Promotion

- ALA's [Public Awareness Tools and Resources](#) is a general guide to promoting library services.
- The [Marketing](#) section on WebJunction has useful articles on marketing and branding.
- [Marketing Toolkit for Job Seekers](#) has general principles and strategies that can be applied to the marketing of any library program or service.
- Use the media—articles or columns in the local newspaper, radio spots or your Facebook posts.
- Place promotional flyers and brochures in community agencies serving job seekers and the unemployed.
- Ask other agencies to provide links to the library resources on their websites.
- Participate in local career fairs, farmer's markets, music festivals and county fairs.
- WOM—Never forget the all important "word of mouth."

Communicating Value

Understand the value of the library as an essential support system for the development of the local economy.

- See the collection of **Impact Studies and Reports**, including statistics about increased library usage, especially by job seekers, and some ROI data.
- The **Community Relations** section on WebJunction has information on communicating the library's value in general.

Connect with key stakeholders in the community to inform them of the library's relevant services and essential value.

- Give a 15-minute presentation at a library board meeting to talk about the ways in which your library is supporting the economically impacted; solicit ideas and suggest volunteer opportunities.
- Have a breakfast event for the Chamber of Commerce and local politicians; explain what the library does to contribute to economic recovery, and solicit their ideas and help.
- Ron Carlee, Chief Operating Officer of ICMA (International City/County Management Association) has excellent insights into relationship building from his perspective as the former County Manager of Arlington, Virginia for 30 years.
 - Watch the hour-long **Building Bridges webinar archive**, which includes video interviews, or look at the **slide deck**.
 - Read the ICMA report **Maximize the Potential of Your Public Library** for examples and guides on how libraries are partnering with local governments to tackle critical community priorities.

Discover effective strategies for articulating the value of the library's services.

- Colorado Public Libraries' **BHAG Project** (Big Hairy Audacious Goals) enlists citizens to broadcast the value of the library.
- Washington State Library awarded **Communications Grants** to libraries around the state to assist in communicating the importance of their libraries in their communities to local decision-makers.
- Create a "postcard from patrons" to send to the governor and legislators expressing the value of our library.
- Invite the county manager to work the desk during a busy time to give practical knowledge of the value of the library.

URLs Reference List

Links to resources are listed below in the order they appear in this guide.
The online version has embedded hyperlinks to resources.

External promotion

ALA's Public Awareness Tools and Resources:

www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/publicawareness/campaign%40yourlibrary/prtools

Marketing section on WebJunction:

www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/marketing-outreach.html

Marketing Toolkit for Job Seekers:

www.webjunction.org/documents/wj/Marketing_Your_Library_to_Job_Seekers.html

Communicating value

Impact Studies and Reports: www.webjunction.org/documents/wj/Impact_Studies_and_Reports.html

Community Relations on WebJunction: www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/community-relations.html

Building Bridges

Webinar archive: www.oclc.org/go/buildingbridges

Slide deck: http://www5.oclc.org/downloads/webinars/BuildingBridges_Value.pdf

Maximize the Potential of Your Public Library: http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/documents/kn/Document/302161/Maximize_the_Potential_of_Your_Public_Library

Colorado's BHAG Project: <http://bhagcolorado.blogspot.com/>

Washington State Communication grants:

www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/renewwashington/projects.aspx#commgrants

