



[www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/advocacy.html](http://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/advocacy.html) • LOCAL LIBRARY AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

## ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY IN YOUR LIBRARY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

### ***Communities need to hear that their library is a vital community resource.***

It is critical to heighten awareness and understanding throughout your community—this is even more important than in-library communication. This ongoing conversation is intended to motivate people to become active in demonstrating their support for the library through acts and deeds.

### ***1. Use posters, signage, and banners for impact***

- Outside the library
- At community events
- At community/recreational centers
- Outside/in windows of local businesses, community centers, clubs, museums, schools, etc.
- In front of a city building or on lampposts

### ***2. Distribute campaign information to your community***

- Provide handouts, bookmarks, stickers and any custom-made items to schools and teachers to distribute and spread the word.
- Ask local retailers, restaurants or business offices to have bookmarks or handouts available for people at check-out or in the lobby.
- Work with human resource departments of local businesses to add a bookmark or flyer to employee communications or mailings.
- Check with city offices for distribution or display possibilities.
- Find opportunities to make an appearance at local events and offer materials to attendees.

### ***3. Generate buzz***

- Add online banner ads to your library web site and any social networks, such as Facebook.
- Ask local business owners to post online banners on their web site.
- Check with your local newspapers, magazines and radio stations about free or inexpensive online advertising opportunities.
- Place ads in local event programs—concerts, fairs, dance recitals, etc.
- Create posters that feature people in the community and what they “geek” or are passionate about. Hang them in the library, local businesses, schools, etc.

#### ***4. Use videos to tell your story:***

- If adopting “Geek the Library” as your campaign theme, encourage local businesses to include the Geek campaign videos on their web site or to run them at their own events and meetings
- Create your own videos using patrons, local decision makers, and staff sharing how the library supports their passion.
- Remember to run videos in your library and at your local events when possible.

#### ***5. Ask people in your community to:***

- Check out [www.geekthelibrary.org](http://www.geekthelibrary.org) to submit a story and learn more about library funding and support.
- Place library-made “geek” walls or passion boards in retail stores, public places, or at events.
- Start the conversation with friends, family and your own social networks—remind people that their library is vital to their community and needs their support.
- Use geek as a verb (or “love,” “dream of” or similar sentiment that evokes passion for a topic) in advertising their businesses, in conversation, in promoting local events, in local publications, etc.

#### ***6. Create your own events:***

- Host a reading event in a local park, recreation center or at a retailer where people share their favorite book and what they are passionate about. Give away posters, flyers, and bookmarks.
- Create and promote a storytelling event where people share how the library played a positive role in their life. Let participants vote for the best story and the offer the winner a prize.
- Host a get-together in a church hall, public meeting room, or local store. Feature four or five people who will share an interesting geek/passion. Do this regularly or incorporate it into other meetings.

#### ***7. Reach out to important business/community leaders:***

- Relate stories about how the library has sparked transformation in specific patrons to business owners, local leaders of organizations, board members, etc.
- Create an in-library event that gathers influential members of your community to get a snapshot into the ‘day in the life’ of the library—demonstrating how people rely on the library. Then ask these community influencers to speak to how vital the public library is when at local gatherings or events.
- Ask the Friends and/or other library support groups to start the library support conversation with everyone they know.
- Partner with local arts or sports organizations for an opportunity to speak or simply have a presence at an upcoming game or event.