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MARKETING Treasures

Ideas and Insights into Promoting Library & Information Services

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Marketing Tool Kits: Are They Really Turn-Key?

“I’m a librarian - not a marketer!” You may have uttered that heartfelt cry at some time, faced with the need for promoting your library and the lack of library-school training in marketing methods. What you need is a tool kit: materials that will let you “plug and play”—insert your library’s name and logo, fill in a few facts, list your phone numbers, and send out a solid, professional marketing message.

Library professional associations have heard your cry and are developing marketing tool kits, with varying degrees of success. In this article we review several for you, pointing out their strengths and weaknesses and giving you pointers on how to use them.

MLA’S Librarian Survival Kit

The Medical Library Association offers a tool kit, heavy on research and light on “instant marketing.” It includes articles attesting to the relevance of bibliographic research in clinical practice and to the importance of medical librarians and their work. There are materials on hospital accreditation, including the MLA Standards for Hospital Libraries. It includes a good bibliography on the value of medical libraries, two MLA policy statements (educational and research), fact sheets on medical library services, and several article reprints. MLA’s tool kit is a good resource for setting up a new medical library or benchmarking an existing library.

“Unfortunately for medical librarians working in small hospitals, the materials were developed from the point of view of a research library.”

However, the kit’s value as a “turn-key” marketing campaign is limited. The marketing materials are more guidelines than instant promotion and visibility items, so you’ll have to adapt them to your library’s needs.

The best marketing items in the kit are the sheets “Writing Letters to Get Results” and “Hints for Using this Kit,” in which MLA addresses the realities of downsizing and job elimination and gives excellent advice. That’s where the meat is—because it reminds librarians to cite specific examples and promote the importance of what you do when justifying your job to administrators. These tips are essential to follow as you put together your own marketing materials. Wisely recognizing the threat from downsizing and outsourcing, MLA has put its most practical advice in materials you can use to reach hospital administrators.

Unfortunately for medical librarians working in small hospitals, the materials were developed from the point of view of a research library. But more importantly, the materials miss the entire essence of marketing and focus on the library’s view instead of client needs. If you’re going to use this kit, you have a lot of work to do, so roll up your sleeves as we offer you a few pointers.

First, put yourself in your clients’ shoes. Starting with the hospital administrators whose desks are piled with paperwork, who are scrambling to stay on top of the newest regulations, whose eyes are on the bottom

Pearls of Wisdom

More companies are coming out with designer papers for laser and ink-jet printers. Great Papers, Avery, GeoPapers and Southworth are now competing with mail-order firms like PaperDirect. Many office supply stores carry these papers, but when you choose them, choose carefully. Do you really want your letterhead printed on paper that resembles satin sheets? The best choice is a conservative design, and if you really love it, stock up. Fashions change quickly in papers as well as clothes. Most of these designer papers are carried by the major office supply chains such as Staples, Office Max, and Office Depot, and they even turn up in WalMarts and K-Marts.

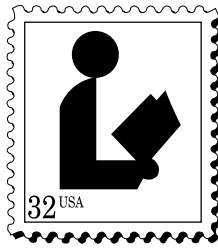
“Don’t squeeze the Helvetica” is the title of an entertaining interview with Emerson Schwartzkopf, a respected graphic designer who talks about the print side of graphic design. It’s a good discussion of the use of fonts, detailed and specific, without being overly technical. You can read it at www.graphic-design.com/Signs-Displays/Emerson/Emerson.html.

The site also links to other graphics design resources, worth a look even if you’re an amateur trying to produce your own in-house ads.

American Business Information offers a CD-ROM that lists more than 4 million small business owners. Odds are, those small businesses don’t have librarians, and they may be in the market for your research services. Other CD-ROMs include Manufacturers, Physicians and Surgeons, and Professionals. There’s a 30-day free trial of the CD-ROMS, so your risk is minimal. You can contact American Business Information at 1-800-624-0076 or on the web www.businessinfo.abii.com.

We’re getting towards the holiday gift-giving season. Music CDs are now available for under \$5 in discount stores and catalogs. Business and credit-card cases come in many designs, and are often inexpensive. Those 365-day daily calendars with jokes, sports trivia, historical facts, or inspirational thoughts will help keep you in someone’s mind all year long. If you want to send out personalized items from promotional catalogs, get started now, before the seasonal rush.

Guerilla marketing guru Jay Levinson suggested this years ago, and it’s still viable. He



Included in the next issue of Marketing Treasures clip art—our very own library stamp!

recommended putting unusual, special-issue stamps on envelopes, to increase the chances that your letter will be opened. The post office has a cornucopia of colorful, unusual, and odd-sized stamps. And don’t feel that you have to stick to the 32 cent denomination. Feel free to mix and match designs, themes, and denominations, for a custom look. If you only use in-house mail to distribute your materials, why not create a stamp graphic that you can print on labels or on folded flyers. To help you out, the next issue of **Marketing Treasures** will include a library stamp graphic with the clip art.

Libraries appeal to readers. Ask your colleagues, managers, and customers which books changed their lives, and then hold a contest to see who can match the book with the individual whose life was changed. You might be very surprised by who was inspired by **The Little Prince** or **Atlas Shrugged**.

Law librarians, take a break with a compilation of eccentric laws and off-the-wall cases, collected by those ultimate jokesters, law students. Check out the site at http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~ddunn/L_schl.html. (that’s a letter “L”, not a number 1 after ddunn/). It’s a good source for light fillers in your law library newsletter. ■

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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 rate.

Clip art used in this issue: Front cover, **Olson's Library Clip Art**, Volume 3; page 2, **Marketing Treasures Clip Art** Vol 10, no 2; page 4, **Marketing Treasures Clip Art** Vol 8, no 4.

Marketing Tool Kits ...continued from page 1

line in a volatile and competitive market. Do they have time to read studies on the value of libraries in hospitals? No. Their only question is, "What have you done for me lately?" When marketing to administrators, especially when your job is on the line, tell them exactly what you have done for them, how much, how often, and how no one else knows information resources as well as you and your staff.

And think of the doctors. Dashing from patient to patient, fielding phone calls, grabbing colleagues for curbside consultations. They're not concerned with the overall impact of libraries on clinical decision-making. They need to know the latest treatment options for a patient's problem right now.

Nurses are swamped with administrative duties, rapidly changing treatment protocols, and the million details of minute-by-minute patient care. Tell them how you can save them time. Show them how you've streamlined the flow of information from the journal to the nurse on duty.

Have you considered all the other special therapists and caregivers in the hospital? How much contact does a physical therapist have with a stroke patient? What is your library doing to make that therapist's job easier? Are nutritionists using your library? If not, why not? Give them a reason to use your resources. Is your hospital running community education classes? How are you helping the instructors gather materials for their courses? Are class participants getting any message about the value of the hospital library? A sticker on a folder of reprints reading "Provided by Metropolis Hospital Library" reminds even community members that you are there, caring for their interests.

The MLA tool kit doesn't begin to deal with these specifics, so librarians will have to be creative and develop marketing materials carefully directed to the needs of their many clients. This is where some camera-ready copy and targeted promotion copy would have been helpful.

There is a poster in the kit—one of a series running in medical journals to promote medical librarians' services. This particular ad came in for some severe criticism from medical librarians who believed that it promoted

stereotypical images of female librarians serving a male medical establishment. The poster also has printed on it, "To Find Out How Your Medical Librarian Can Save Valuable Time and Cut Health Care Costs, Contact MLA at..." Appropriate, perhaps, for a medical journal ad, but it would be more effective as a poster if the medical library could insert its own contact information.

When marketing your library's services, you will have to go beyond the materials the MLA provides and carefully tailor your messages to both your current and your potential clients. You'll have to rework MLA's materials to suit your situation.

This is not meant to downplay the importance of research on the impact of medical libraries. You need to be familiar with that too. You need to know what your colleagues are doing, and how it is affecting their jobs and their status. But when you sit down to promote your services to your clients, focus on them, not on the library. Use the MLA tool kit as a jumping-off point, but talk to your clients where they work to find out what they need to know about your services.

AALL Tool Kit

The Association of American Law Libraries (AALL) has assembled a kit with resources to help librarians lay the necessary groundwork for marketing and ready-to-use promotion ideas and tools.

Rather than merely citing studies on the importance of libraries, the AALL kit, **Law Librarians Making Information Work**, suggests which statistics to present to your clients and use in your marketing effort to prove how valuable your library services are. The section titled "Report It" provides a fine outline for your annual report, that is, one designed to sell your organization on your value.

Another page, titled "To Market, To Market," suggests practical, down-to-earth marketing ideas, such as offering training sessions, publishing a newsletter, using email for marketing, and hosting social gatherings.

Not only does the kit give you materials, the layout and design of the kit visually suggests how library promotion materials can be laid

Sources...

Step One: Survival—MLA's Librarian Survival Kit
MLA, Suite 300
Six North Michigan Ave
Chicago, IL 60602
312/419-9094
\$18 members
\$30 nonmembers

Law Librarians Making Information Work
AALL, Suite 940
53 West Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
312/939-4764
\$25 members
\$35 nonmembers

The Value of Corporate Libraries. Findings from A 1995 Survey of Senior Management.
SLA
1700 Eighteenth St, NW
Washington, DC 20009
202/234-4700
\$5 members
\$7.50 nonmembers

continued on page 4

Marketing Tool Kits ...continued from page 3

out too. There's a clever use of a horn icon to point out sample marketing messages that can be adapted to your library. The kit includes logos and advertising copy that can be incorporated into your own marketing materials.

AALL has clearly thought through the entire marketing process. First, define your business. AALL provides sample mission statements and resources for developing your own. The kit includes library standards and even common questions and answers about the value of law librarians.

Second, know your clients' needs. The kit includes a user survey and information on how to interpret the results. Third, design your marketing campaign. AALL's kit is full of marketing ideas and tools that can be used in small print ads and large briefing books.

Even the library budget receives careful attention. Measurable productivity is an important tool for justifying your budget, your staff, your resources, and sometimes your library's very existence. A handbook on gathering library statistics takes you through all the steps of collecting and organizing the numbers that the bean-counters want to see. To wrap up the marketing effort, the kit includes a briefing report for management that you can use as it is or as a blueprint for your own briefing information.

The AALL kit leaves nothing to chance. The table of contents lists each item, describes it, and then suggests uses for it. And for those who want to see the research that backs up the recommendations, there's a well-annotated bibliography to direct you to more information on valuing your library, managing it, and marketing it.

SLA - Valuing Libraries

The Special Library Association (SLA) doesn't offer a tool kit per se, but it does offer various marketing resources. One is an interesting booklet entitled "The Value of Corporate Libraries." Based on a 1995 study of senior management, it touches on an important preliminary marketing task—know your clients. This survey of 103 corporate managers gives special librarians an inside peek into how upper management perceives a library's value.

The SLA study finds another quantitative measure—number of requests handled, an im-

"AALL has clearly thought through the entire marketing process. First, define your business... Second, know your clients' needs."



"Of the three associations, AALL and its tool kit, Law Librarians Making Information Work, gets two thumbs up."

portant value indicator. Quality of information lags well behind these numeric measures of a library's worth. This sends the message that the bottom line of a library's value should be expressed by a number. We're not so sure you should stick only to numbers. After all the individuals interviewed in the SLA study probably have been conditioned to evaluating information services by numbers. An educated manager will appreciate concise accountings of how the library has helped the organization move towards its goals, in addition to the numbers. Just like an annual report, numbers can't paint the whole picture, so management explains the story behind the numbers. Take your cue from your organization's annual report—and the reporting techniques of other managers—add substance to the figures and educate your management at the same time.

Getting back to the SLA 1995 study... it also examines library competencies, products, services, and other contributions to the clients' mission.

While the SLA booklet is by no means a tool kit in the conventional sense, it can be used as a basis for an internal audit and self-study. What makes the study especially valuable to the library marketing effort is that it is an outsider's view. Although it is easier to design a survey of what librarians think is important, it's the client's point of view that is critical!

Using the Tools Reviewed

Of the three associations, AALL and its tool kit **Law Librarians Making Information Work**, gets "two thumbs up." It is evident that a lot of thought went into the package. It is the most practical and ready-to-use kit if you want to jump-start your library's marketing campaign. And while the kit's layout uses too much "in your face" design, at least it has design, which is more than we can say for the MLA kit. If you follow the presentation example set by the MLA kit, you'll be in deep trouble. In fact, we suggest that our medical library readers get the MLA kit for background info, but get the AALL kit for real implementation ideas. Just substitute "health care professionals" when you read "attorneys."

As for SLA, it's not really fair to criticize their materials. They weren't designed to be "instant marketing kits." But, maybe the time has come for SLA to show how to put esoteric research to practical use! ■

Inside Treasure

Marketing A Subscription Library

What if a third of your library's operating funds depended on membership dues? How would you market your library's resources and services?

The Social Law Library (SLL) is such a private library, serving the Massachusetts legal community. Unlike fee-for-service research organizations, the Social Law Library depends upon members who pay annual dues to access the library's resources. Unlike law firm libraries, SLL is independent. It has been in business for almost 200 years and is an important and respected resource for lawyers and law librarians.

With that kind of reputation and a loyal core membership, you might think that the SLL doesn't need to do much promotion. You'd be wrong.

A look at any library's budget reveals the rising costs of print and electronic media, and the SLL is no exception. A law library requires specialized, expensive, and constantly updated resources. The law doesn't stand still; neither can the library's acquisitions. Here, too, the SLL is committed to deliver. The Social Law Library has also upgraded its physical plant recently, and it is planning to move to a larger site by the end of the decade. These are heavy expenses, and the library has a marketing plan designed to raise the money needed to meet the current budget and to plan for future expansion.

The SLL knows its market. It serves legal firms and libraries in Massachusetts, and, as the primary reference source for the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial and Appeals courts, its resources are also used by legal services agencies and scholars. Although it houses an historically important collection, the library looks to the future, and doesn't rely on its past successes. Recently, the library commissioned a marketing study by Boston University MBA students to help upgrade its services. To the surprise of SLL librarians the upgrade most requested by clients was air conditioning! An extension in reference service hours was the second most requested upgrade. After the survey, SLL responded to other client requests by adding online workstations, Internet access, and computer training programs.

How the Social Law Library Promotes Itself

SLL's marketing strategy is personal and efficient. It supports four major efforts: information product sales, promotion of research resources and services, memberships, and additional fund-raising through solicitation of charitable gifts.

As an independent library, SLL must make every effort to stay in touch with current and potential clients. The library participates in trade shows, produces a newsletter, maintains a web site, sends postcards and brochures announcing new services, and places regular print ads in the **Lawyer's Weekly**.

Trade shows are carefully selected. SLL goes where its clients are, seeking contact with Massachusetts lawyers and law librarians. A trade show is a great place to demonstrate electronic products, network with colleagues, discuss the merits of membership with conference attendees, and emphasize the library's comprehensive resources.

The quarterly newsletter, **Proprietors' Report**, keeps SLL members abreast of new acquisitions, library news, and important legal issues. The nameplate, which provides basic publication information, is printed in a large font and lists the library's phone numbers, including department extensions. This is a newsletter which not only reports, but facilitates responses and requests for information—after all, even a print newsletter can be interactive.

SLL's web site <<http://www.sociallaw.com>> is an excellent resource in its own right. Not only a marketing tool, it demonstrates SLL products and resources, links to a variety of legal sites, and provides an Internet search engine. It's a real librarian's site—informative and easy to use.

Postcards and brochures keep library members informed about new services, such as the newly opened Tech Center, which houses computer workstations at which patrons can access LEXIS/NEXIS, CD-ROM resources, the Internet, and the library's online catalog. While these mailers are useful to members, they are also important documents to send out to people inquiring about the SLL by phone, mail, or the Internet. *continued on page 6*

Social Law Library...continued from page 5


Print ads not only announce the library's services and resources, but also point to the library's web site and solicit members. The SLL produces its own clever and attractive ads. And as you will see, humor plays a major part in SLL's advertising.

For starters, the "everything but the librarian" ad raises a chuckle and quickly conveys the image of information for sale. The reader gets the message that the library offers information products in CD-ROM format and that the expertise of a librarian stands behind the information offered. This is no mere database—it is personal service, and a real librarian, not Fabio posing in a suit.

Since the library depends upon membership dues, advertising for members is an important part of its message. One ad quotes the great legal scholar Oliver Wendell Holmes: "Your education begins when what is called your education is over..." a provocative message to place in a legal publication. Other membership ads begin "ROOMMATES WANTED: SLL seeks non-smoking, male and female attorneys to share large furnished main reading room..."

As an additional incentive for membership, SLL provides discounts for parking, cellular phone services, and computer training. This eye-catching saxophone graphic stands out in a legal publication, leading the reader's eye to the benefits of membership.

A Perfect Harmony of Legal Services




SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP PREPAYMENT FOR 1996 BAR ADMITTICES \$150.00* includes membership through September 30, 1997.

COPY CENTER SERVICES
ACCESS TO TECH CENTER
DISCOUNT RATES
SLL HOME PAGE
CELLULAR PHONE SERVICE
socialaw.ultinet
LAWYERS PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

For More Information on Membership Call: (617) 523-0018 Ext. 530

The SLL's CD-ROM product, The Massachusetts Administrative Law

We'll sell you everything but the Librarian.



For information or a FREE trial call: (617) 523-0018 Ext. 338

Library, is promoted with ads that use the same graphic, but the headlines are changed periodically. Some ads are keyed to the season: "New Year's Resolution," "Spring Bouquet," and "Fall Ahead". Others target market segments.

Print ads are also used to announce changes in hours, the new Tech Center, the web site, the annual book sale, and special research services, such as the people and asset locator.

Finally, the SLL solicits contributions, using well-produced brochures giving detailed information about the annual and capital fund-raising campaigns. The annual campaign's slogan, "Technology for the Patron," accents the library's commitment to expanding its online and electronic resources. The capital campaign, "An Investment for the Future," is raising funds for a move to a larger location.

A Marketing Plan that Covers All the Bases.

SLL also gives back to the legal community. Its Massachusetts Administrative Law Library CD-ROM is an important resource for all lawyers doing business in the state. The library is the parent organization of the Supreme Judicial Court Historical Society and assists in collecting, assembling, preserving, and displaying important historical records. In addition, the SLL offers several courtesy memberships each year to lawyers just starting out in practice; these memberships are funded by member contributions.



We're on the Web!

For information call: (617) 523-0018 Ext. 338

<http://www.sociallaw.com>

The Social Law Library's well-coordinated, consistent marketing plan catches the eye of its target market and can serve as a model for many libraries. Your library may not have clients who are paying members, but you have clients and many more potential clients who can benefit from your services. Do what SLL does—promote what you do best, creatively, frequently, and enthusiastically. ■

Worth Its Weight in Gold

This month's article on the Social Law Library with its look at the library's humorous advertising headlines and eye-catching graphics reminds your editor that I frequently see library promotion materials with dull headlines, too many words, and too few graphics. I don't know why. Most of the librarians I know have a great sense of humor, a sarcastic wit, and enjoy a good play on words. It's time to share your humor with others.

Managing a marketing consulting practice like mine necessitates having a few tricks up the sleeve. There are days when I can sit down at the computer and type out advertising headlines and brochure themes without blinking an eyelash. Then there are other days when I can't even recite my own name. On those days I turn to my bookshelf for inspiration.

First on the list is **Every Bite a Delight and Other Slogans**. Filled with phrases and slogans used in popular advertisements, scanning this book can usually jump-start creative juices. While you can't just lift a slogan from the book, you can adapt or do a takeoff on a popular phrase. All those car ads offer wonderful slogan ideas for promoting access to the Internet, Intranet and the information highway. Remember the Hertz ad, "Let Hertz put you in the driver's seat?" Well, why can't you adapt that slogan to announce your network training sessions? Better yet, for those of you working in corporations with strong product advertising campaigns, try adapting your company's ad themes for your own use.

For creating advertising headlines with a twist consider all the slang and catch phrases in our language. **A Dictionary of Catch Phrases** is "a hard act to follow" when it comes to "famous last words." There are more phrases in this book than you can "shake a stick at." It includes both American and British phrases. Each entry gives you an interesting background of how the phrase came to be. Arranged alphabetically, you can look up any phrase "your heart desires" or scan the book to see what "comes off with flying colors."

So now there's no excuse for boring announcements. With these books at your side, you too can write headlines and themes that "knock their socks off!" ■



Chris Olson, Editor

Promotion Gems

When you start a new marketing campaign, or refurbish an old one, go back to your roots. Take out your mission statement, pull out the latest client survey, review your organization's annual report, and take time to look at the big picture. If your library is part of a larger organization, bring in its mission statement and current marketing plan as well. Now you're ready to talk about who you are and what you do.

Pay special attention to your mission statement. If you don't have one, write one. You can't promote what you can't define. Make sure you know exactly what you do before you tell your clients what benefits you can deliver. It may seem self-evident to you that you are Information Central, but given today's rapidly changing information sources and media, you need to remind clients that you are fulfilling your central charge, making good use of the very latest in technologies and resources.

Pull out those client surveys. What do you do best? Put that in the middle of your marketing message. Then extrapolate about how you can do that job better, faster, and more completely. Positive feedback from your clients is one of the best ways to determine which services to promote aggressively.

Your parent organization's mission is critical. You wouldn't be there if it did not have an important purpose. When you're marketing within your organization, tie your services to its goals. Be supportive, and suggest ways you can expand that support to every area of the organization. This strategy can bring you new clients and, as always, deliver the message to upper management that you're vital to their operations.

It's time to call on clients who rave about your services and get their remarks in writing. And don't just settle for one or two lines to fill space in a margin. Interview a client who depends on you, and have your client explain why you are indispensable. Then post the interview on your intranet or print it in your newsletter. If you aren't distributing messages that way, enlarge the interview up to poster size and put it on prominent display.

A new marketing campaign can be exciting and energizing, but look back before you look forward, so you can be sure you know exactly what you do for your clients and how they depend on you. ■

Every Bite A Delight and Other Slogans, Laurence Urdang and Janet Braunstein, Visible Ink Press (a division of Gale Research), 1992. 0-8103-9423-5 \$15.95

A Dictionary of Catch Phrases, Eric Partridge, edited by Paul Beale, Scarborough House, Lanham, Maryland 1992. 0-8128-8536-8 \$12.95.

Sparkling Reviews

Innovate or Evaporate: Test & Improve your Organization's I.Q. James M. Higgins. New Management Publishing. Winter Park, FL. 1995. ISBN 1-883629-01-2. \$19.95

What's next after restructuring, reengineering, and TQM, now that your competitors have used these same techniques? James Higgins poses this question and then answers it, as part of his mission to educate organizations about innovation.

"Innovation is the only long-term, sustainable competitive advantage, adaptable to any situation," Higgins maintains, and he cites studies that reveal that innovative firms make more money than the non-innovative.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I tests your organization's I.Q. (Innovative Quotient); Part II is designed to improve it.

In Part I, Higgins defines innovation as "a creation that has significant value," and then describes the organizational culture needed to promote it. He lists ten strategic challenges that organizations will have to overcome in the 21st century in order to survive and prosper.

Higgins provides a detailed review of the four principal types of innovation: product, process, marketing, and management. While marketing innovation is probably of most interest to **Marketing Treasures** readers, who among us wouldn't benefit by developing our innovative abilities in every area?

Higgins ends this section by providing questionnaires that allow you to test your organization's I.Q., using 49 characteristics that have been identified as being shared by innovative firms. In Part II, the author goes on to discuss the issues raised by the questionnaires.

This is not a difficult book to read. Sprinkled throughout its pages are successful innovation stories—an effective technique for illustrating how the theory plays itself out in the real world. The index is extensive, and each chapter includes numerous references.

Not having filled out the I.Q. questionnaires, I can't comment on how difficult it is to do so and then to interpret the results, but I can say that in this environment of library closings and downsizings, it seems to be an exercise well worth performing. ■

*Reviewed by Jacqueline True
True Information Retrieval*

Treasure Tips

One of the best ways to get the attention of folks who aren't using your library services is through an exhibit display. It gets you out of the library and (hopefully) to the spot where your clients roam. Steve Miller has some excellent suggestions for exhibits in **How to Get the Most Out of Trade Shows** (NTC Business Books, 1991). Some prime examples: The first message that exhibit attendees see should present a benefit to them. Use large print to tell prospective customers what you can do for them. Then tell them your name.

Make sure all staff members know where the supplies are, so they can replenish displays. Check everyone out on all electronic equipment—computer demos, VCRs, lighted signs. Your staff must convey competence at the show, or they won't convey a positive message about your information business.

Don't crowd your exhibit space with too many pictures, graphics, handouts, or samples. Make sure that every item on a wall or countertop sells your message. Anyone who glances at your booth should be able to tell immediately what you do. Anyone who reads even only one handout should be urged to action, not just given information.

It may sound elementary, but check your written materials to make certain everything on them is up-to-date. An incorrect phone number or email address can spell disaster.

Qualified mailing lists can be a marketer's best friend. Hold a drawing at your booth for a give-away to collect the names of people who stopped by your exhibit. Use the mailing list to send "thank you for stopping by" notes and later when you have new products or specials to announce.

International Airworks has developed an inflatable trade show booth. Lightweight, portable, and compact, it solves many of the problems inherent in transporting a booth. You can carry it on an airplane, and set it up at the show in minutes. There's even a repair kit available, so you don't lose valuable exhibit time to a sagging booth. Contact International Airworks at 800-9009 AIR, or visit their website at <<http://www.pcinews.com/business/pci/tradeshows/airworks.html>>. ■

"Anyone who glances at your booth should be able to tell immediately what you do."