

Games and Contests
Score Big in Library Promotion 1

Library Clip Art Sheet #2

Pearls of Wisdom:
National Library Week,
binoculars, ALA graphics,
book mark magnifiers....
.....2

Worth Its Weight in
Gold: National Library
Week Clip Art5

Promotion Gems: Book-
plates Live!5

Sparkling Reviews:
Strategic Brand Marketing...6

Treasure Tips:
Behind the Scenes with
Color.....6

MARKETING *Treasures*

Ideas and Insights into
Promoting Library &
Information Services

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Games and Contests Score Big in Library Promotion

Contests and games are a classic promotion strategy. You pique someone's interest and bring them in for a closer look at your product or service. Contests and games are also traditional elements of parties and celebrations. They add an air of festivity, and even frivolity, and offer a break from the daily routine of work. Use this winning combination to celebrate important events in your year and to draw attention to what you do.

Before you run a contest for National Library Week, or some other equally deserving occasion, stop and think about what you're trying to accomplish. You're not trying to win. You're not trying to prove you are smarter than your customers. You are trying to reach new customers, update the old ones on your new products and services, and bring the lost sheep back into the fold.

The promotional value of a game or contest is its ability to entice people into your arena, where you can then make contact with them, get acquainted with them and sell your library, your products, and your information. Always keep that goal in mind. Certainly, contests and games are fun, but don't just play for the sake of playing. Set a goal, whether it's introducing your library's staff, bringing visitors to the library, or gathering information about your customers.

“What kind of contests will appeal to your customers?”

Bring Them In

Having determined your goal, it's time to identify your gameplan. What kind of contests will appeal to your customers? Much depends on where they are. If you have a lot of traffic in-and-out of the library, action games and guessing games are a good draw. If you interact with your customers via paper or electronic media, guessing the number of beans in a jar won't be a feasible contest but solving a crossword puzzle will. If your library is accessible to a lot of people, bring them in with on-site games and contests. Gummy worms have made "guess the number of bookworms in the jar" popular. If people come in with a little time on their hands, a treasure hunt can be fun. Use your creative imagination to lead people to resources they didn't know you had but might find very useful, such as local street maps, consumer information, or the latest editions of critical reference resources.

One way to make the World Wide Web into a visible reality is to dust off those cat's cradle skills which served you so well at recess in the old days. Have you forgotten those patterns? Turn to one of the books on "string figures" at your public library.

A cat's cradle contest may draw in some of your public, but you might also want something more action-oriented, like paper airplane races; who can fold a paper airplane which will fly a "slalom" of one gate and land in a designated area? That will challenge the engineer-wannabe's out there.

continued on page 3

Pearls of Wisdom

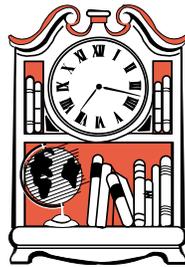
Get up close and personal with Folding Cardboard Binoculars from R-Visions™. Made of water-repellent laminated cardboard, these 1 ounce binoculars with shatter resistant 5.0 acrylic lenses easily fold up to fit in a shirt pocket. They have plenty of room for printing your library logo and promotion message, and would be perfect for a treasure hunt contest with a jungle theme. Call R.V.I. II, Inc. at 610-696-3666, or visit their Internet site to take a look: <http://www.rvi2.com>.

The ALA Graphics Winter 1998 Catalog has arrived! In addition to the continuing "Read" poster series, there are miniature eyeglass pins that can function as real eyeglass holders and make excellent contest awards! First Amendment Brass Bookmarks or Library Symbol Brass Bookmarks add a touch of elegance to any proceeding (at a reasonable \$10 per item). If your ALA Graphics catalog has not yet arrived, call 1-800-544-2433, ext. 5046.

Nostalgia rules the day when you have these books on hand for your contests. The folks at Klutz offer an entire series of books that reteach us forgotten games and arts. Some titles of interest are **Juggling for the Complete Klutz**, **Devil Sticks for the Complete Klutz**, **The Klutz Book of Knots: How to Tie the World's 25 Most Useful Hitches, Ties, Wraps, and Knots**, and **The Klutz Book of Marbles/Book and Marbles**. Order online from www.BarnesandNoble.com or from www.Amazon.com.

It's a bookmark. No, it's a magnifier. No, it's a ruler. No, it's Book Keepers® from Kustom King by Trim®. Book Keepers are four products in one: bookmark, three-power magnifier, inch and metric rulers. You can customize your Book Keepers with your library logo or contact information. Book Keepers are also available with magnets for easy attachment to file cabinets, desks, etc. Talk to Chuck at Colony Specialty Printing at 301-662-5790 for additional information.

Remember, your brand or image should be central to any contest, game, or other celebration you plan. That's one of the reasons for holding a game—to attract attention and gain visibility to your library's services and products. Don't be tempted, however, to create a quick slogan or theme unless you've carefully considered how it fits into your overall mar-



keting plan. Managing your library's brand image and message shouldn't be taken lightly or given too little thought. If your slogan needs an update or hasn't been created, then start the process now, but don't put something in place on-the-fly that you'll regret later.

National Library Week is April 19-25th and this year's theme is "Connect @ the Library." Promotion materials to help celebrate the week are available for purchase from ALA by calling 800-545-2433, press 7. Or visit the web site www.ala.org/events/promoevents/nlw_98/index.html.

It's time again to look at your promotion materials and consider entering them in the annual library promotion contests. The first deadline is May 15th for the Special Libraries Association Marketing Section Swap and Shop. For an electronic entry form contact Jill Konieczko at jill.konieczko@lexis-nexis.com. Or call our office and we'll fax you a copy.

Our dark color in this issue is teal blue, Pantone 3025. Here are two screens of our blue, along with a solid color block for comparison. If you're a new reader, go to the Nov/Dec 97 Treasure Tips article to learn about our dark color demonstration.



100%



70% screen



30% screen

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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:

Oops. We incorrectly spelled the last name of the 1975 government documents librarian in our Jan/Feb cover article. The correct spelling is Joan Kerschner. We apologize for the mistake.

Contests ...continued from page 1

Getting to Know You

Use contests to gather information. Ask people to tell you what they think a librarian does. You might be surprised at what your customers believe that you do all day. You might also get some useful direction for your marketing program if they define your job too narrowly or are way off the mark.

Matching staffers with their interests, favorite books, or prior jobs can build ties with customers. Don't just put up a series of mug shots and ask people to identify the passionate gardener, the person who shows Tennessee Walking horses, or the antique furniture collector. Include clues with the photos. Photograph people with something that leads to the answer. Remember, your goal isn't to stump your customers; your goal is to build relationships. The gardener can be pictured holding a book by an author named "Lilly" or "Bush." Put a horseshoe in the horse-trainer's picture. Photograph that antique-lover with something very old in the frame.

Turn the contest around and ask prominent people in the organization to tell you something interesting about themselves or their reading; then ask customers to make those matches. Part of the fun of these contests is that they give people a chance to get to know each other better. Promoting relationship ties can build business. Someone who knows you are a fellow hiker or cat-fancier is more likely to come to you for help than if you are just an anonymous face in the crowd. As people in the organization discover common interests, information is exchanged more freely, and that's something all librarians should encourage.

Go Where Your Customers Work

But what if your organization is spread around the country, or around the globe, and you can't bring people into the library for fun? Take the contests to them via your intranet, web site and newsletter. As much as possible, make these contests interactive so that you know who's visiting your site or reading your newsletter—and who isn't. Ask for email responses, keep track of the sources, and then look at the gaps. Are there some divisions of your organization or some sections of your customer base which are not responding at all? Better check and make sure you're in

touch with them. It might be time for a visit, some customer training, or a focussed marketing campaign.

Trivia contests are popular because they can expose the funny and unusual side of work. Can your customers translate a list of acronyms pertaining to their jobs? Federal bureaucrats have a million related to their work, but all specialties have quite a few. To throw your customers off, include some common Internet acronyms such as IMVHO (in my very humble opinion), 2BI^2B (to be or not to be), SMOFF (serious mode off), and the ever popular TANSTAAFL (there ain't no such thing as a free lunch).

A Taste for Trivia

There's lots of library trivia you can use as well. How many words begin with biblio? Biblioclast? Bibliophage? Bibliotaph? (one who destroys books, one who devours books, one who buries books by keeping them under lock and key). There are trivia gold mines out on the web, whether it's for libraries in general, medical libraries, law libraries, or corporate libraries. Jokes, acronyms, puzzles and games can be built around these treasure-troves lovingly collected by people with time on their hands and a great sense of humor. Everyone can use a little comic relief. Some of the best sources for subject-specific trivia and jokes are students. Leave it up to the law students to collect the best lawyer jokes, or the library science students to come up with a list of librarians in literature and movies.

The ALA series of "Read" posters demonstrate a great use of celebrities linking up with libraries. A look around your local public library's walls to see which posters are displayed can tell you something about that library's clientele. Guessing celebrities' favorite books can be entertaining in itself. Matching Cher to **Interview with a Vampire** is almost a no-brainer, but can you name the actor who said, "I'm a confirmed print freak?" It helps to picture him holding those imprinted stone tablets in one of his famous movie roles.

Librarians in specialized libraries can use the same idea but make it local by asking key people in your organization what they like to read—and then ask customers to match the person with the book. Again, don't do a

Web Sites for Contest Resources

library trivia
www.gale.com/gale/cl.html

puzzle-authoring software
www.ac.net/~centron
www.crosswordkit.com

library quotes
www.slq.qld.gov.au/cwppp/qlpc/quote.html

banned book lists
www.bannedbooks.com

law trivia
www.dsklaw.com/ww.htm

medical trivia
www.cyberway.com/sg/~yangsc/star7.html

acronyms
www.portnet.k12ny.us/port2000/acronyms.html

continued on page 4

Contests ...continued from page 3

blind guessing game. Give clues and hints, whether it's something related to the book in the picture of the reader or something about that person's job which links directly with that book. Be careful what you reveal. You might not want to hook up a hard-nosed supervisor with **Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun**. However, revealing that person's interest in genealogy can help humanize him or her.

Contests and Games Galore

Your contest can be something as simple as virtual bingo or as complex as a fiendishly clever crossword puzzle.

You can custom-design crossword puzzles and word hunts. The software programs teachers use to make up custom puzzles is inexpensive and easily available. It might be worth the investment if you plan to integrate puzzles into library training, new-employee orientation, or other training situations. Even if you just post an annual crossword puzzle, it could be a good buy.

Mysteries can be quite a challenge. If you have room on your web site and a creative webmeister, set up a little mystery along the lines of Clue, using hypertext links to jump from one lead to another. As the story goes along, certain events eliminate suspects. For example, if Ms. P and Ms. Q are seen together shopping at the time of the crime, they are eliminated because they provide alibis for each other. It doesn't have to be fancy, but can be just a little diverting fun for your web-page viewers and a showcase for the creative possibilities of hypertext.

Create team games to build competitive spirit. Pit a couple of your organization's divisions against each other in identifying technical terms, solving mysteries or even writing daily jokes for your web page.

How about virtual bingo? You can send out either paper-based or electronic/PDF file bingo cards to everyone, inviting them to play. Every day draw a number and email it to all the players. First person to get BINGO! gets a cool prize. Make sure you keep a master board which tracks all the numbers in your library—for the folks who want to stop by and see if they've won anything. And make sure that you announce the winner and include a photo in your library or company newsletter, as well as posting it on your web site.

Treasure hunts are always good for introducing people to your library's resources. Your hunt can be in the physical library or virtually on your library web site. Be sure to make a map of where you place your "treasures" so you will know when a treasure hasn't been found and where it is located.

What Else Can We Celebrate?

National Library Week is a great opportunity for promoting library products and services through contests and games, but don't limit yourself to that. The calendar thoughtfully provides enough holidays, week- and month-long observances to meet every possible industry and interest you could ever want.

Use the week or month observed by your company's industry to launch a library-sponsored contest. By linking the contest game to the industry observance, you position your library outside the information realm and to the industry itself.

Your library's anniversary is another good time to have contests which highlight who you are and what you do. National holidays are a good time to test how much people know about history. If your company launches a new product or wins a big contract, celebrate with a contest matching key players in the business coup with their favorite light reading selections. You never know who secretly loves Clive Cussler or Danielle Steele.

Important Tips

Managing a smooth-running game or contest takes some planning. Make sure you leave yourself enough time to identify what needs to be done and the time to do it. Depending on the game or contest you will need to set deadlines, rules, and procedures and distribute them in advance. They don't have to be complicated, but you don't want people to misinterpret the game rules.

While you don't want to overdo the light-hearted approach, people enjoy humor and need diversion from work. As you plan your contests and games, be sure that they meet one of the important marketing goals: making contact with new customers, building relationships with existing ones, or spreading the word about your library. Having fun offers marketing opportunities you won't want to miss. ■

"Your contest can be something as simple as virtual bingo or as complex as a fiendishly clever crossword puzzle."

Worth Its Weight in Gold

National Library Week Clip Art

Editor's Note: Marketing Treasures originally came with sheets of library clip art and this column provided ideas on how to use the graphics. The clip art images from Marketing Treasures are now available from www.LibraryClipArt.com.

It's time to celebrate what's nearest and dearest to our hearts—our libraries. **Marketing Treasures** clip art will help you, whether you're sending out a special NLW newsletter or going all out with a library open house.

Get Out of the Box. This graphic will work well on invitations, offering your customers a chance to take a break from work and visit the library. It's also a good graphic to announce a new product line. People get "boxed in" by their assumptions about what your library offers. Wake them up with this playful action theme and introduce them to a new information dimension.

Knowledge at Hand. You may be an old hand when it comes to knowing what your library offers, but your customers are a different story. Use this graphic to remind customers that you offer a helping hand. Show your library as having it all and that the information is easily accessible.

Magic Information Carpet. Electronic media make information access appear magical—and you're the magician. This is a great graphic for invitations to the library's magic kingdom of "information" resources.

Knowledge Managed Here. "Knowledge management" is the new buzzword. Use this graphic on a poster identifying the library or in your newsletter to introduce the concept of "knowledge management."

It's Time. Our knowledgeable clock announces the time for a library event, and the books and globe tell customers that your resources are world-wide.

Literate Mice. Have some fun! These mouse buddies can show off your print and electronic resources. Use them to announce new acquisitions or point to your catalogs.

Get a Lift at the Library. Our intrepid balloon is another reminder that your resources come from far as well as near.

Gem. Precious information is right in your library. Use our gem to show off your most valuable resources and the "treasures" of your staff. A great name-tag graphic! ■

Promotion Gems

Bookplates Live!

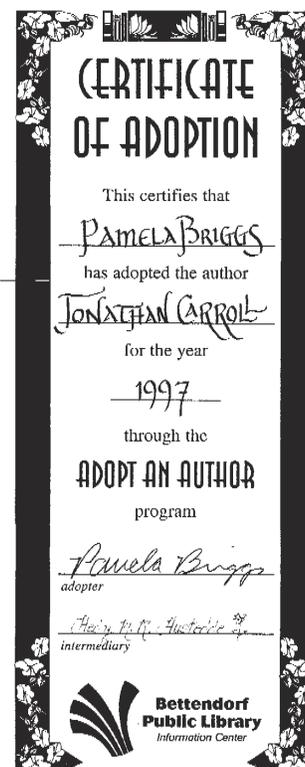
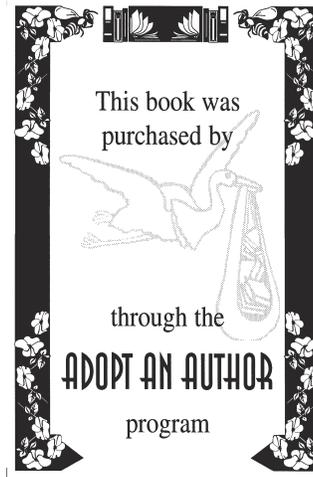
Bookplates are passé, right? You couldn't be more wrong! Stamping your library's name on page 55 and bar coding the cover may identify your library as a book's owner, but it takes a bookplate to convey essential information if the book is a donation or part of a special collection—or if you want to take advantage of another image-building opportunity.

Pamela Briggs responsible for public relations at the Bettendorf Public Library (Bettendorf, IA) decided to use bookplates to identify gifts presented through their "Adopt an Author" program. People who donated money for books would receive double recognition: an "adoption certificate" bookmark and a bookplate to give them credit for the donation.

Pamela started with a spring floral border from "Libraries Through the Seasons," **Olson's Library Clip Art, Volume 3**. She added "Adopt an Author" text and a stork bearing books graphic to develop the bookplate. A matching "Certificate of Adoption" bookmark was designed that included Bettendorf Public Library's logo. Whenever a book is purchased through the Adopt an Author program, a staff member completes the bookplate and certificate in calligraphy with the donor's name.

Requests for donations can be a good marketing tactic. They focus attention on your library and give you a chance to highlight new acquisitions. Donors enjoy the opportunity to participate in building the library's collection and usually enjoy the public recognition they receive. The bookplates are just a part of this larger recognition program.

Thanks to Pamela Briggs for sharing this idea with our readers. ■



Sparkling Reviews

Strategic Brand Management: New Approaches to Creating and Evaluating Brand Equity by Jean-Noël Kapferer. The Free Press. New York. 1992. ISBN 0-02-917045-1. \$27.95

National Library Week is a good time to reinforce your library's brand name and image. If you are a little fuzzy on the role branding plays (or should be playing) in your library marketing strategies, then Jean-Noël Kapferer's **Strategic Brand Management** is an excellent starting point.

The author introduces his readers to the branding philosophy as an integral component of a marketing program in Part 1, Understanding Brands. In an excellent discussion on brands, Kapferer reminds us that "For the potential customer, a brand is a landmark" and that "A brand is not a product: it is the product's source, its meaning, and its direction."

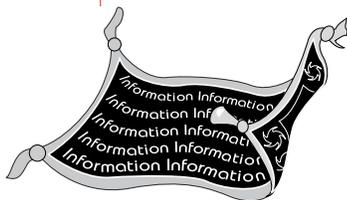
Kapferer asserts that brand positioning is based on an analysis of the response to four questions:

- "Why, or for what? What is the specific consumer benefit or exclusive motivating attribute justifying the brand?"
- "For whom? This indicates the target."
- "When? This indicates the occasion on which to use the product."
- "Opposed to whom? In today's context this question points to the main competition."

In the book's Part II: Brand Management and Part III: The Brand in Perspective Kapferer gets into the details of managing a brand from all angles. He brings up marketing issues that are enlightening and instructive. Our copy of the book is marked-up and laden with sticky notes so as not to lose track of the critical points.

This is not a lightweight marketing book, but neither is the subject. Establishing and maintaining a brand is critical to the success of a marketing program. Libraries have just skimmed the surface with logo and slogan development. Now it's time to understand the bigger picture and how brand management strategies will work for your library. We highly recommend **Strategic Brand Management** to

Printers specify the color black with the letter K, so there's no confusion on whether it's blue or black.



Treasure Tips

Behind the Scenes with Color

When preparing your graphics for print and computer screen presentation, it's important to understand how color varies from one platform to the next and why.

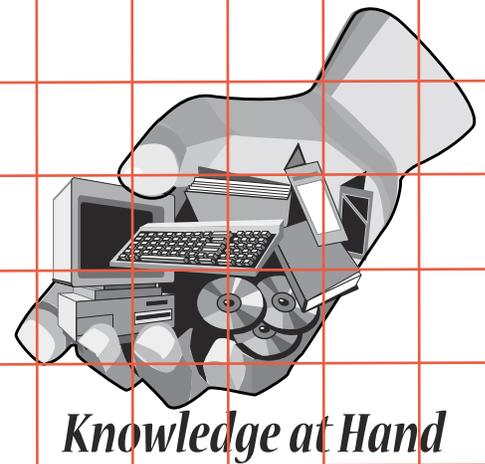
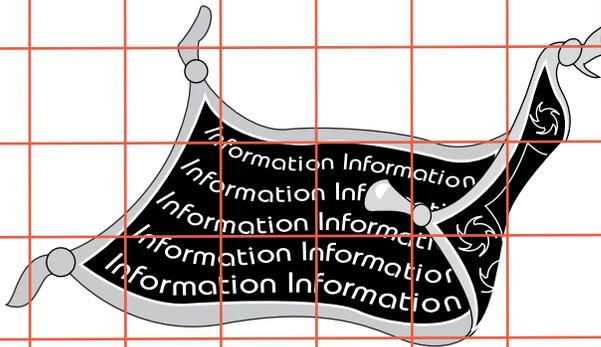
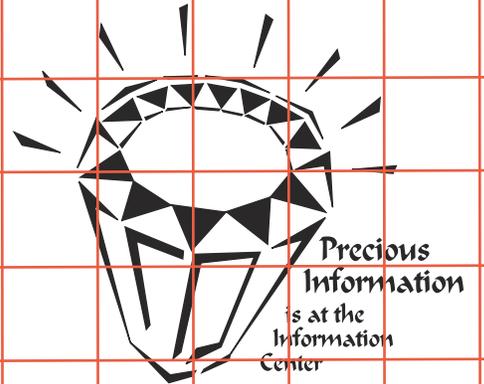
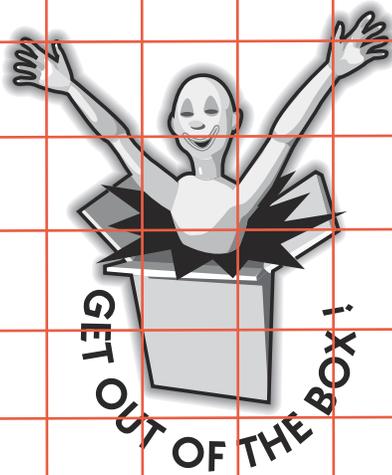
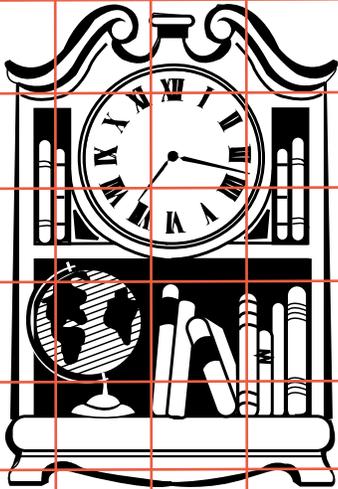
Color laser printers rely on a four-color print process called CMYK, representing the four colors of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black, to create a color image. The printer builds the image by overprinting these four colors, layer by layer. Unfortunately, using four colors to create another color sometimes means muddy or inaccurate color. To make matters worse, color laser prints vary from day to day depending on humidity, ink, and paper. If you've ever noticed a difference in your color laser prints, this is the reason why.

Another color system is the Pantone® Matching System (PMS). This color system was developed by Pantone to provide exact color recipes for more than 1,000 colors. Ordering Pantone color is like shopping for paint color at your local paint store—it's pure color. If your logo is specified with Pantone color, it prints on an offset press in clean, clear color. But try printing the same logo on your laser printer, and chances are the color doesn't match. Why? Because the four-color process of the laser printer is trying to build or imitate the Pantone color.

Color on a computer monitor screen is based on yet another color system. Monitors project images using red, green, and blue (RGB) phosphors. Graphic cards, individual monitor settings, and even monitor age affect the quality of color displayed on a computer screen. In addition, monitors for Macintosh and PC computers use different color palettes to display color. That's why your logo can look terrific on your monitor, but grotesque in the neighboring office.

What to do? Make sure you use colors from the 216 browser-safe color palette that is compatible on Macintosh and PC systems. The colors in this palette will display the same on both platforms.

When we develop logos today, we specify colors for all three color presentations—offset printed paper, color laser prints, and web sites. It's not perfect, but at least it's consistent. If you are having problems with color variations, ask a graphic designer with color printing and web site design experience for help. ■



Get a Lift at the Library!

