



station and tell them about what the library has to offer and why it matters to everyone in the

dedicated accounts are created around events or advocacy efforts. Know which channels are used by key stakeholder groups and audiences that you need to reach. Then:

Build your social media communities organically by connecting and interacting with social media accounts from other libraries/library organizations, non-profits, education and cultural institutions, businesses, and government agencies in your area.

Interact with your online communities by asking questions, replying to followers and similar organizations, and providing a space for people to engage with each other on various topics of relevant interest.

Make sure the information you post is on message, accurate and without errors.

For important or special announcements, you can pay to promote your post on some social media platforms. This can help you distribute your message widely across and beyond your online communities.

Appoint a person to monitor your sites and communication. While the bulk of the feedback or comments received is generally positive, be aware that negative and inflammatory comments may arise and have a plan for handling them.

Be sure to post follow-up information, such as the results of your campaign, photos from an event, and progress towards your goals with your advocacy effort.

Identify social media outlets to be engaged for this campaign. Consider:

Outlet name

Type of engagement

Primary communicator

Support, including graphics

Other Media



Website: Make it easy for supporters to know how they can help advance your advocacy goals by including specific and easily accessed information on the very front page of your site, if it is allowed by policy and law. Possible actions can include:

Signing up as an advocate or taking action on a specific advocacy request (e.g., call your councilors, legislators, write the mayor).

Volunteering for a committee or to help with the campaign—provide contact information.

Writing a letter to the editor—give the newspaper’s address, along with “talking points” to help advocates make the case.

Turning out to vote. Make sure your organization follows applicable elections laws.

Organization Newsletter: Your newsletter gives you the “power of the press” to communicate with stakeholders not just about news and events, but also advocacy priorities and their impact on the community. It also is an opportunity to reinforce the library’s or organization’s branding and key messages.

Direct Mail: Although expensive, there are times when direct mailings are a constructive way to reach your audience (e.g., during a referenda campaign).

Promotional Materials: Bookmarks, book bags, program flyers, membership renewals, direct mailings for membership drives—all of these materials are opportunities to get your message out. Be creative and consider other options as well:

Leave branded bookmarks with your key messages at high traffic sites and places where people go and wait, such as doctors’ offices.

Ask the local grocery store to put your message on their bags for a given length of time.

Ask your utility company if you can include a bookmark or insert that contains information about your organization in a citywide mailing.

Send a selected list of new business resources at the library to members of the Chamber of Commerce and be sure to include how the library benefits all businesses in your city.

Presentations: Nothing is more effective than personal contact. That’s the upside. The downside is that you can’t reach as many people at once with your message. You’ll need to create and train a cadre of volunteers—board members, volunteers, retirees, to get the message out in person.

Civic groups such as the Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis, etc. always welcome guest speakers. Your volunteers may belong to other clubs and organizations as well. Make a list of all the opportunities there are in your community, prioritize them, and begin scheduling speaking engagements to get your message out. Remember to “know your audience.” Make sure when you talk about the importance of the library and its services, you are tailoring your comments to what is of interest to your audience. If you are talking to physicians, for example, talk about the link between health and literacy and all that the library does to support literacy.

Strategize

Consider the following when deciding which strategies to use:

1. **Who** is your audience?

2. **What** is the best way to convey the information to the target audience? What kind of image do you want to project? Will it be an effective part of your total communication effort?

3. **When** is the deadline? Will your message be distributed in time to be effective?

4. **How** much will it cost? Is this the most effective use of available funds?

5. **Why** is this the best strategy for this audience?
