

# The Value of Communicating with the Public



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## “The Why?”

Why should you effectively, consistently communicate with your public?

**Your fate depends on it.** Out of sight (or sound), out of mind. Once out of mind, how can you effectively compete for time or resources?

**You can't afford not to communicate with your public and stakeholders.**

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# Public Relations

- The goal of public relations is to change people's...
  - Attitudes
  - Awareness
  - Behavior
- Every staff member does some form of public relations.



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## Case Study: MCL

- In 2004, checkouts and on-site visits were stagnating; program attendance and cardholders were declining... in spite of a rapidly growing population! **Something had to change.**
- MCL made a commitment to improving its public relations and marketing in 2005. Over the past five years...
- New Strategic Plan
- New Website
- New Name
- New Brand
- Increased Media Coverage
- Increased Out-of-Library Presence
- Increased High-Profile Events
- Integrated Marketing Plan

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# Case Study: MCL

- What a difference it made!

	2004	2010	Change
Items Checked-Out (Circulation)	987,365	1,958,584	+98%
Cardholders	59,007	91,446	+55%
On-Site Visits	835,140	2,085,652	+150%
Program Attendance	32,458	95,104	+193%
Number of Programs	1,026	3,048	+197%
Reserves Placed	15,734	403,171	+2462%
Computer Sessions	134,783	381,467	+183%
Reference Questions Answered	74,752	99,615	+33%
Webpages Viewed	247,088	8,035,865	+3152%

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How do we effectively communicate with our public?

1. Make a plan
2. Implement the plan
3. Assess, correct, repeat steps.

**Easy, right? Now go do it!**

**Just kidding, not yet...**

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# Make a Plan

## Develop a strategy.

- What's your current position?
- Where do you need to be? What do you need to be doing?
- By what time?
- What needs to be done?
- Who are your primary target audiences?

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# Make a Plan

## Conduct Research.

- *Internal Data.* You already have data on customer behavior. **Are you using it?**
- *External Data.* Census 2010, PriZm.
- Turn a critical eye on existing practices.
- What don't you know?

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# Make a Plan

## Audiences

- Who are your core audiences?
  - How are they currently receiving information?  
How do they want to receive information?
- Who are you not currently reaching?
- Don't neglect internal audiences, including other libraries, staff, Boards in system.

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# Make a Plan

## Developing the Plan

- Marketing works best when its **integrated**: Program, collection, and messaging emphasis are all in agreement [each month].
- Consider the user viewpoint– barriers are often internally imposed.
- Remember: ‘communicating’ is just one part of a much bigger initiative.

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# Make a Plan

## General points...

- Make decisions based on data, not anecdotes.
- Partner with another library in planning for objectivity
- The greater the commonality of integrated marketing across the system, the greater the impact on customers.

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# Visual Clutter



Dreamstime.com

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# Sign Audit

- Message
- Location
- Attitude
- Aesthetics

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## Remove it!

- Unnecessary
- Unhelpful
- Out-of-date
- Doesn't align with policy
- Uses negative language
  - (Don't do *this*! No *this* allowed!)

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# Streamline it!

## HOLIDAY CLOSURE

All libraries will be closed for the Christmas holiday on Friday & Saturday, Dec. 24 & 25.  
For the New Year's holiday, all libraries will be closed on Saturday, Jan. 1.

## *Holiday Closures*

All libraries will be closed:  
**Friday, December 24**  
**Saturday, December 25**  
**Saturday, January 1**

Regular hours will resume Sunday, January 2

LibraryJournal.com

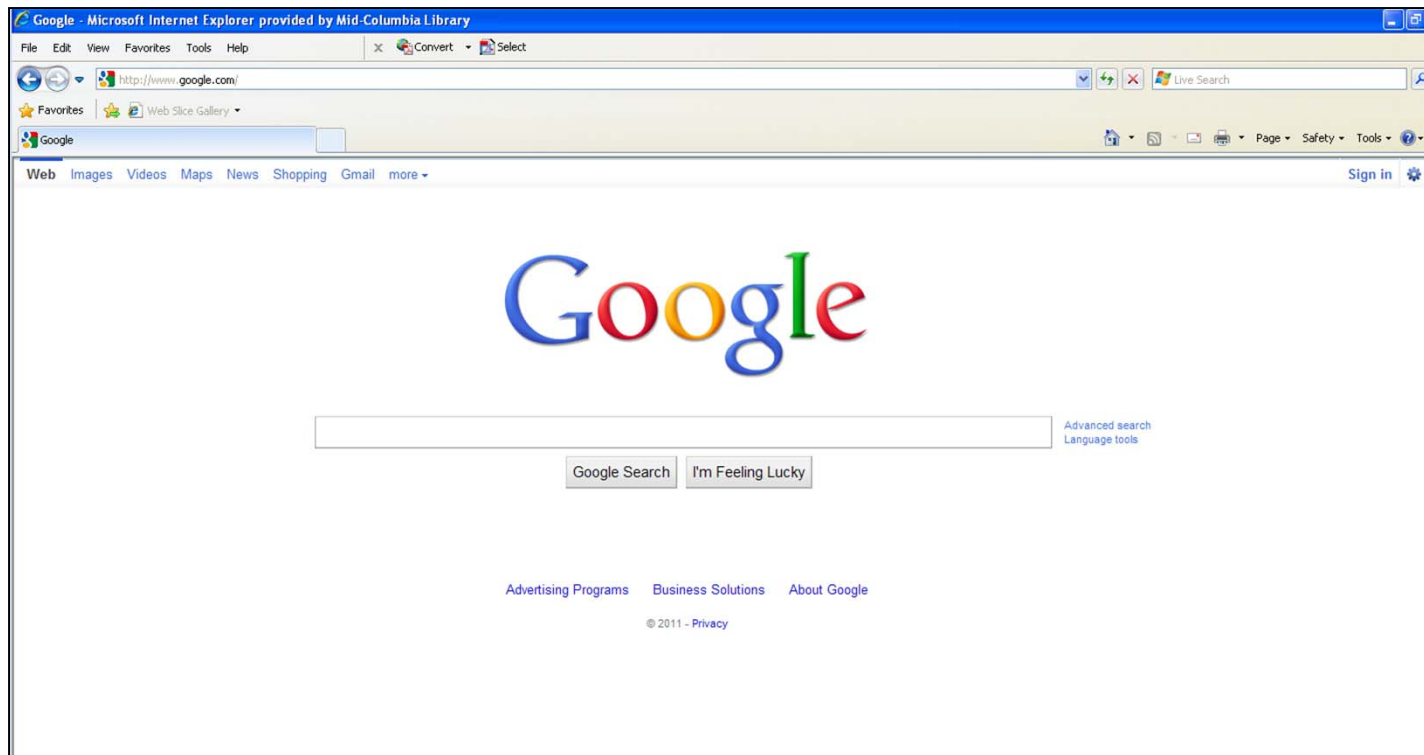
Aaron Schmidt

Signs of Good Design

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# Customers want...

## ...to GET or DO something!



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# Headings & Lists & Bullets... Oh my!



## Give a gift they'll love —a great book!

Your book experts at Mid-Columbia Libraries recommend these engaging stories for readers of all ages.

### Books for Children 0 - 5

#### » **Llama Llama Holiday Drama** by Anna Dewdney

In this latest edition in the Llama Llama series, little Llama Llama is wondering, "Will Christmas ever come?" When he just can't wait any longer, it takes a cuddle from Mama Llama to comfort him with the reminder that "Gifts are nice, but there's another: the true gift is we have each other."

#### » **Knuffle Bunny Free: An Unexpected Diversion** by Mo Willems

In this installment, Knuffle Bunny goes international when Trixie and her family fly to Holland to see Oma and Opa. Trouble ensues when Knuffle Bunny goes missing! Will Trixie find Knuffle Bunny? For fans of the Knuffle Bunny series, this is a must-have!

### Books for Kids 6 - 12

#### » **Hero** by Mike Lupica

Zach Harriman soon learns that he is more than just an average fourteen-year-old and his father was no ordinary man. He was a superhero, fighting the world's evil.

#### » **The Search for Wondla** by Tony DiTerlizzi

This imaginative new novel tells the story of Eva Nine, a curious twelve-year-old who has only existed in a subterranean home called Sanctuary. Desperate to go aboveground, Eva sets out on an adventure that will soon bring her both friend and foe.



For more good reads go to  
[midcolumbialibraries.org](http://midcolumbialibraries.org)  
to take care of Santa's list!

### Books for Teens 13+

#### » **Pegasus** by Robin McKinley

This *New York Times* bestselling author weaves an unforgettable tale of unbreakable friendship, mythical creatures, and courtly drama destined to become a classic.

#### » **Reckless** by Cornelia Funke

Funke takes readers on a new adventure into a magical place where the dark side of fairy tales holds sway.

### Books for Adults

#### » **Washington: A Life** by Ron Chernow

From National Book Award-winner Chernow comes a landmark biography of George Washington—a richly nuanced portrait of the father of our nation featuring a breadth and depth unmatched by any other narrative.

#### » **Barefoot Contessa: How Easy Is That? Fabulous Recipes & Easy Tips** by Ina Garten

This bestselling cookbook author and beloved star of *Barefoot Contessa* on Food Network TV is back with her easiest recipes ever.

#### » **The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo** by Stieg Larsson

A crusading journalist joins forces with a 24-year-old pierced and tattooed genius hacker to investigate the whereabouts of a missing woman from one of the wealthiest families in Sweden.

#### » **Life** by Keith Richards

The long-awaited autobiography of the guitarist, songwriter, singer, and founding member of the Rolling Stones. Look for the audiobook read by Johnny Depp.

#### » **The Confession** by John Grisham

When Travis Boyette is paroled because of an inoperable brain tumor, for the first time in his life, he decides to do the right thing and tell police about a crime he committed that another man is about to be executed for. ■

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Don't be Google.



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# Attributes vs. Value

## Web Resources

### Homework Help

Grades K - 5

[www.midcolumbialibraries.org/  
homework-help](http://www.midcolumbialibraries.org/homework-help)

#### Searchasaurus

EBSCO database with  
kid-friendly search engine.

#### eLibrary

Search magazines and  
newspaper articles.

#### World Book KIDS

World book encyclopedia with  
kid-friendly text.

#### Culture Grams Kids Edition

82 countries , famous people,  
recipes and more.

#### Novel Finder

Reader's advisory, series lists,  
reading levels for kids fiction  
titles. TIP: enter 'series' in the  
search box.

Novel Finder

## Web Resources

Grades K - 5

[www.midcolumbialibraries.org/  
homework-help](http://www.midcolumbialibraries.org/homework-help)

Have homework? This is a great place to  
start. You can cite these web resources  
with confidence. See website for full list.

#### Explore a World of Information!

- **World Book Encyclopedia:** Access all of  
the World Book encyclopedias with just  
one click!
- **CultureGrams:** Concise, reliable, and  
up-to-date country reports on 200  
cultures of the world.

#### Need an Article?

- **eLibrary elementary:** Articles from  
more than 140 magazines, newspapers,  
and journals.

#### Looking for a Book?

- **Accelerated Reader:** Do you need an  
AR book for school? Search AR Book  
Finder to find the AR book that's just  
right for you.
- **Novel List K-8:** Need help finding your  
next great read? NovelList can help you  
find the perfect book.

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# “You” is powerful!

## Are you raising a reader?



Your choices today affect your baby's tomorrow.

We can help. Take 3 easy steps.

1

### Blockfest

Don't miss the chance to do something free, fun, and educational with your young child. October 4 (Prosser), 5 (Pasco), and 12 (Kennewick).

2

### Read for the Record

On October 7, we join communities around the world reading the same book. Attend storytime to help break last year's international record!

3

### Get your baby a library card

It's never too early for your baby to join the library. The first 5 years of life are the most important for early learning.

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*Grow your mind!*

[www.midcumbialibraries.org](http://www.midcumbialibraries.org)

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**Not enough interest,  
too many characters**

## Thanksgiving Card Craft

- Monday, November 24th at 5:00 p.m.

## Storytime

- Tuesday, November 25th at 10:00 a.m.

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# Engaging and simple

## Create a Thanksgiving Keepsake!

- Monday, NOV. 24 • 5 pm

## Storytime - Raise a Reader!

- Tuesday, NOV. 25 • 10 am

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# Working with Media

- Cooperation, not competition is the best policy
  - Library vs. library undermines newsworthiness
- Be selective, strategic in what you pitch
- Repetition, repetition, repetition – stay on message.
- Timeliness is planning ahead.

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## Questions?



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