

Marketing, Communications, and Literacy Report February and March 2015

Prepared for the April 8, 2015 Commission meeting
by Sara Groves, Marketing & Communications Coordinator

Goal Two—Access

2. MSL provides libraries, agencies, and its partners and patrons with convenient, high quality, and cost-effective access to library content and services.

2.1. With input from SLR, prioritize key programs and services for development of marketing plan and corresponding marketing materials by March 31, 2015. Design and produce or manage the design and production of program informational and educational materials such as brochures, newsletters, magazine and newspaper articles, radio spots, on-line information services (e.g., Internet web page) and videos to provide pertinent, current and technically accurate information to the public about library services in Montana.

(Update: April 2015) Share Your Story – I wrote all material for the Share Your Story web site. This web site is designed for an external audience and includes the following items: About Us, How to Contribute Your Story, Frequently Asked Questions, Mission Statement, Questions List, and What to Expect. Additionally, I designed the web site so that it will be navigable by the public. Cara Orban has reviewed all materials and made some suggestions. After changes were made, I sent all material to Luke Duran, a graphic designer with whom we have contracted, who is designing the web site for us. Luke has worked with the State Library on several other projects over the last few years.

(Update: April 2015) Montana Memory Project – I rewrote a brochure for potential partners and contributors to the Montana Memory Project. I am currently working with Colleen Hamer to finalize a design for the new brochure, which I hope will be available by MLA. Additionally, I met with Luke Duran and Jennifer Birnel to discuss marketing projects for the Montana Memory Project as a way to market the MMP to potential users. Prior to meeting with Luke, Jennifer and I discussed potential audiences and goals we have for marketing the MMP. Luke came up with a great idea (a cabinet of curiosities) that will showcase several images from the MMP. This will be designed into a poster. At a later time when more funding is available, we can build on

this concept and use it for bookmarks, web buttons, and more. Our goal is to have the poster available at MLA.

(Update: April 2015) Montana Makers – I am working with Luke Duran to develop a logo that will represent the Montana Makers project. Additionally, I have started to write a series of materials that will be placed on the MSL web site that libraries can just use download, customize, and personalize for their use to promote the Montana Makers kits. The goal is to have a complete set of marketing materials by the end of May.

(Update: April 2015) Discover It! – After some discussion with Sarah McHugh and Cara Orban, we determined that we need to shift our marketing efforts for Discover It from marketing the product to librarians to marketing the service to library patrons. We also identified some specific ways to market Discover It! Cara is currently working with MT Library2Go to see if we can use their web site to market Discover It to MTL2Go users; these folks are already used to accessing library materials online so it should be an easy sell to get them to transition to accessing items via Discover It online. Additionally, we are working closely with EBSCO to identify ways that EBSCO can help us marketing Discover It to the public. Some of these ideas include:

1) Developing a series of radio ads to run in targeted markets (i.e. the engine repair ads to run on the agricultural network).

2) Purchasing ads on Montana Public Radio and Yellowstone Public Radio sponsoring different shows (i.e. Car Talk, etc.)

3) Developing a series of small ads that focus on these four areas. We want these to be image-focused and light on text. These would be made available to librarians to put in their newsletters, print out and use in their libraries or use in their local newspapers.

4) a series of web-based promotional materials that libraries can integrate into their own online marketing efforts, i.e. nicely-designed web buttons; a series of 20 – 30 FB pre-written posts and Twitter messages for each of the four areas.

Additionally, we will use some of the marketing money from MSL to purchase airtime on MT Public Radio to promote Discover It!

2.2. Encourage local libraries to participate in cooperative public education programs. This involves coordinating and motivating librarians and trustees, organizing and publicizing projects and events, and coordinating the statewide distribution of information and news releases related to library activities and issues. Maintain regular contact with information specialists at other public agencies, including local organizations that have related interests. Arrange for meetings, exchanges of

information and documents, and possible joint news releases, or other communications. Provide or arrange for training for librarian and trustees in how to use the promotion material and campaign strategies in local communities. Answer questions from others regarding the materials and the campaign. Evaluate the effectiveness of the training.

2.3. Develop new outreach effort "Outside the Lines" to replace Montana Library Week. Communicate with libraries about the outreach effort, including informing them what it is, why it's important, and how easy it is to participate in order to create buy-in. Work with Colleen Hamer to develop TUMBLR account in order to easily integrate data into Legislative Snapshot and the "Share Your Story" effort.

2.3. Continue to build online presence through experimental use of digital media and Web.

(Update: April 2015) With input from program managers, prioritize key programs and services for development of marketing plan and corresponding marketing materials by January 1, 2015. Design and produce or manage the design and production of program informational and educational materials such as brochures, newsletters, magazine and newspaper articles, radio spots, on-line information services (e.g., Internet web page) and videos to provide pertinent, current and technically accurate information to various audiences about MSL programs.

(Update: April 2015) Social Media – I met with Travel Montana's new social media manager to discuss social media strategies. She suggested that we continue forward with Facebook. I feel that our presence on Facebook is getting stronger all of the time. Our many programs have a great following and are posting great material nearly every day. At Caitlin's suggestion, I'm exploring Twitter and Pinterest as potential next avenues for social media exploration.

(Update: April 2015) Facebook – We are interested in continuing to grow our presence on Facebook. To that end, I am reaching out to a social media management company, Amobee, to look into buying ads on Facebook. Travel MT uses this company and has had fantastic success with them in growing their following. We are looking at buying ads to promote two programs: the Montana Memory Project and State Government Information. More details to come!

(Update: April 2015) Gov Delivery – Jennie and I met with a sales representative from Gov Delivery, which helps manage email newsletters for government agencies. MT FWP uses this product and has had great success with it. Managing email content was identified as a need by multiple programs when I met with program managers about marketing needs, which means this product could have a number of future uses by all MSL programs. Unfortunately, Gov Delivery's quote for MSL to use this product

was way too high for us to move forward. However, the Department of Administration is investigating a purchase with Gov Delivery that all state agencies can use; we will keep in contact with DOA to see if there are opportunities for MSL to proceed with Gov Delivery in some way.

Goal Five—Collaboration

5. MSL promotes partnerships and encourages collaboration among its users.

5.1. Continue to develop Ready 2 Read program through outreach and development of collaborative relationships. Continue marketing and outreach efforts to Governor Bullock's office and administration to help them understand how MSL can be of service to their programs and agencies. Serve as consultant to libraries with Ready 2 Read programs to assist them with troubleshooting, development of their library's programs, address issues, and more. Represent Montana libraries on Montana's Governor-appointed Best Beginnings Advisory Council to help other BBAC partners recognize and understand that libraries are an integral part of how the educational, emotional, and social developmental needs of young children are met in communities throughout Montana. Continue to develop relationships with MT PBS; MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks; MT Head Start; and MT Department of Public Health and Human Services Early Childhood Services Bureau. Continue to develop relationships with private sector partners, such as Washington Corporation and First Interstate Bank. Assist libraries statewide with the development of true partnerships that position them as a prime community resource in the area of early childhood development. Assist libraries with getting involved with their local Best Beginnings Advisory Councils.

(Update: April 2015) Identify those remaining public libraries that are not "Ready 2 Read" libraries" and make contact with them to determine what barriers exist and how MSL can help.

(Update: April 2015) I attended the Early Childhood Summit hosted by HOPA Mountain. This event was well-attended by early childhood professionals from throughout the state and included representatives from the Governor's office, Department of Public Health and Human Services, foundations from throughout the state, and more.

I met with Edge Marketing and Design about revised web site for Ready 2 Read. The bid came back too high to proceed. Therefore, I have redesigned the site by myself and have begun conversations with Tom about completing a web site redesign in-house.

The Ready 2 Read Rendezvous is scheduled in Bozeman for October 9 – 11, 2015. Speakers for all-day Saturday, October 10, training are confirmed. Marisa Conner and Dorothy Stoltz are experts in early literacy and play in libraries and recently published a book called “The Power of Play: Designing Early Learning Spaces”.

Goal Six—Sustainable Success

6. MSL is efficient and effective (measured against partner and patron outcomes) and is engaged in fulfilling its mission.

6.1. MSL will deliver a 2015 Legislative Snapshot to Legislators at the beginning of the 2015 legislative session.

6.1.a. The Legislative Snapshot is dependent on the expertise of cross program staff. These staff research topics of importance to the Legislature and data that is relevant to inform deliberations, organize and/or format data so that it can be mapped and charted to improve information understanding, and present the data in both print and online forms that help Legislators understand issues at both a statewide and local level and that facilitate further research as necessary.

6.1.b. The 2015 Legislative Snapshot will be organized around specific issue briefs rather than broad topics. Examples of issues may include Women in the Workforce, Federal/State Coordination, Education Funding, Economic Impacts, etc. While the print version will remain static once it is printed, as issues develop during the session, additional briefs may be added to the online version of the snapshot.

6.1.c. The online version of the snapshot will “go live” on December 1, 2014. A print version will be delivered to Legislators during the first week of the legislative session.

6.1.d. MSL staff will use a satisfaction survey(s) of legislators to seek information about the value of the snapshot. The survey will be open during and after the legislative session and it will be designed to provide information about the overall value of this tool as well as to gather feedback for updates to the current and future versions.

The Legislative Snapshot continues to be a valued tool created by the State Library for the Legislature that showcases the kinds of information and services that MSL provides in the context of the issues that legislators will consider during the session. MSL staff seeks data and information from a variety of state and federal agencies which creates further opportunities for future partnerships. The Legislative Snapshot will reflect positively on the services and information we offer as Legislators consider our budget and other matters that impact the State. When surveyed, legislators will report that the

snapshot is a valuable tool that provides ready access to information that makes their deliberations more manageable.

6.2. MSL managers will spend a significant portion of FY15 preparing for, monitoring and participating in the 2015 legislative session.

6.2.a. Beginning in September, a team of staff led by Groves, Flick and Orban, and with representation from each program and the Montana Library Association (MLA), will plan for and host Library Legislative Day (date to be determined). This carefully planned event includes music, entertainment and a Read poster photo booth. It is the primary event where Montana librarians engage with their legislators in Helena during the session. As with the 2013 Legislative Day event, we will also encourage participation from the GIS community.

6.2.b. As we near the legislative session I will work with MSL program managers to prepare budget testimony and handouts and will assist with identification of persons who will testify on behalf of the State Library in support of MSL's budget requests.

The legislative session is the most important period of the biennium for the State Library as it is one of the few opportunities we have to propose and receive funding for new services. Careful consideration and planning goes into preparing our EPP requests and submitting them to the budget office. Articulate messages and talking points regarding the importance of our budget requests are drafted and shared with stakeholders and will be ultimately formulated into testimony that will be shared during the session. A successful legislative session will result in a budget that includes sufficient funding for MSL to continue to support existing library services and funding for any new budget requests at a level that will allow them to be implemented successfully. Legislators will have the best available information for any decisions that will impact the State Library and the services that MSL provides and legislation passed will benefit the communities we serve.

Continue to present a compelling argument for ongoing and increased legislative support in 2015 through outreach and the development of strategic talking points and elevator talks that target community members, legislators, and policy makers that can be used to communicate a consistent message about MSL and Montana libraries.