

Marketing and Public Relations

April 6, 2005 – May 31, 2005

External Communications and Marketing

- a. **MSdL Publicity** – Due to being short on staff and in the midst of construction, and at the request of program managers, many MSdL marketing opportunities have not been seized upon for the last several months. However, as our library usage continues to decline, something must be done to remedy the solution – regardless of our internal difficulties.

To that end, I have developed a comprehensive marketing plan for MSdL, which will be distributed at the Commission meeting. The plan includes everything from “spiffing up” the library downstairs and making it more welcoming to our patrons to developing a series of classes we offer at the library or at other sites on the State’s campus to increase awareness and working knowledge of our databases. I’ve also included a speaker’s series, special events, and a myriad of ways to reach out to new and existing employees. This plan has been reviewed by MSdL managers and Darlene, and I am still seeking suggestions from this group. Additional suggestions from the Commission are also sought and welcome!

MSL staff has also had initial discussions about the grand “re-opening” of the library. I would like to plan an event that would welcome people into our new space.

I have also begun planning for a celebration of “20 Years with NRIS,” which will take place sometime in the fall. I am working with the Governor’s staff to possibly host a party at the Governor’s mansion in the fall. Additional celebrations could include possible work within the community (such as GIS Day, which we could do for kids and adults), NRIS application training for state agencies, etc.

- b. **Statewide Marketing Plan** – We have begun working intensely with Q Communications, an advertising firm specializing in design in Helena. Our initial work with Q has been to develop the main theme of the overall statewide campaign. This theme will tie together all of our campaign efforts over the years, which will focus on different user groups. We are currently focusing on two main themes; they are: “What’s Your Story?” and then an underlying theme of “open” and the wide range of meanings this word has – from “open your mind” to the library being “open” and available via Web sites, etc. I will provide artwork at the Commission meeting. The artwork is being reviewed by the entire committee via email. The committee seems to feel we are on the right track.

Our initial user group will focus on senior citizens. Work has begun to provide resources to librarians beyond what is produced just for marketing purposes, including resource lists, etc. A timeline, which highlights a wide range of materials we will produce, including the big launch of our campaign, will be

distributed at the meeting. It is currently being reviewed by Q, who is adding their portion of materials and when we can expect to see them.

While Q will handle most of the design for us, and assist us with developing other media, such as television and radio ads and the placement of those ads, I will complete most of the writing for our materials. I have started work on this, and will have a wide range of tools available to librarians within the next few months, including op-eds, letters to the editor, speeches and various presentations, short articles for their newsletters, a guide on developing local partnerships with businesses, and many more.

Additionally, a meeting has been scheduled with a potential sponsor of the campaign. I plan to ask this statewide business for additional funding to sponsor some of the more costly media, such as TV and radio ad placement in exchange for having their logo on our ads and other materials.

Finally, thanks to Bruce Newell, who has helped to get OCLC on board. OCLC is willing to help us with production of materials, which will allow us to produce top-rate stuff at little cost.

I have also slowly been laying the groundwork for next year's target market for the campaign – families with young children. I have had some initial, very positive discussions with a potential sponsor of this outreach effort. Again, additional funding from a sponsor would allow us to market our efforts in costlier ways – such as TV and radio. I have also had initial discussions with Bob Cooper and Darlene Staffeldt about how to implement the “Every Child Ready to Read” program at a statewide level. They offered the suggestion that it may be something the federations would like to tackle. I plan to lay additional groundwork with some of the federations over the summer, and start working on marketing materials and programming next fall.

- c. **PEEL Marketing** – I have been assisting Sue Jackson with marketing of PEEL. A wide range of efforts have been made to market both the scholarship and stipend portions of the project. A summary of PEEL marketing efforts is attached.
- d. **Stories in the works** – I am in the midst of trying to get some feature articles placed. They include stories on:
 - i. the Montana Shared Catalog – A reporter from the Helena IR is interested in doing a feature story, which will hopefully run in all Lee Newspapers. He will come talk with us the week of 5/30.
 - ii. MSdL – I have been in contact with ArcUser magazine, which is distributed nationally. They have asked us to submit a specific story idea, and are very interested in running an article on how we use GIS at MSL.
 - iii. Natural Heritage Program – I am working with Sue Crispin and her staff to develop a feature story on the field work that Heritage does every summer. I am looking at placement of this story in either Montana Outdoors or Montana Magazine.

- e. **Talking Book Library brochure** – I am working closely with Christie Briggs on a professional re-design of the TBL brochure. The new brochure will also include information on giving opportunities.
- f. **Miscellaneous** – I was also asked to write the public service announcements for the summer reading program collaborative of which Montana is a part. The PSAs have been translated into Spanish, and have been recorded in both English and Spanish, and will be used by libraries in 38 states to promote their summer reading programs.

Internal Communications

After having worked at MSL for the past eight months or so, one thing that is noticeably lacking is an internal communications plan – to inform staff of various developments but also just to let staff know what their co-workers are working on and even who their co-workers are. Darlene sends out an e-mail to staff on a fairly regular basis that informs staff of a wide range of things, and I have heard very positive things from all staff in regards to those email updates. I am working with Tristen Shinnick on developing some various outreach materials that will be used on an internal basis only. They include:

- A. Weekly updates – these will be distributed via e-mail, and will include a quick, down and dirty summary of what various programs will be working on for the week, and will also include information on conferences, trainings offered, etc. Additionally, I plan to feature an employee in each weekly issue to increase staff awareness of their co-workers. This will begin in June.
- B. An intranet site – this Web site will have a calendar to which people can post things such as trainings, retreats, conferences, meetings, etc. There will also be other relevant information posted that will help keep staff informed. I hope to have this up and running by mid to late summer.

PEEL Marketing Efforts

Scholarships

Focus – articles appeared February and April 2005

Flyers developed

Flyer posted on Web site in color, black and white for download and distribution at libraries.

Notice of scholarships sent out on Wired, January, February, March, and April.

Notice of scholarships sent out on MetNet – January, February, March, and April.

Mailing – 2/16/05 – brochures/flyer/press release to 50 college career offices, counselors, librarians, tribal presidents, school librarians, and public library directors.

Press release developed and distributed to all Montana media outlets. (Still waiting on clips to see how many times it ran.)

Press release also posted on Web site.

Career Fairs – Billings (2/24) – flyers, brochures at DOA booth

Fort Belknap (3/1) – Flyers, brochures at DOA booth

Great Falls – (4/5) – Flyers, applications, brochures (Tracy and John)

Helena – (4/6) – Flyers, application, brochures (Various Helena librarians staffed booth)

Federation meeting – Flyers/brochures

Offline – Flyers/brochures

MLA – Flyers/brochures/applications

Stipend

Flyers developed for different library types

Press release developed and distributed to all Montana media outlets. (Again, still waiting on clips to see how many times it ran.)

Press release also posted on Web site.

Mailing to 425 public library directors, trustee chairs, school superintendents, tribal college presidents and librarians.

Article appeared in Focus – February 2005, April 2005, and will do again in June

Article appeared in Big Sky Libraries – feature article in April 2005

Flyer posted on Web site in color and black and white format for download.

MLA – Flyers

Federation Meetings – Flyers

OPI – Summary of OPI activities (MASS meetings – discussed at Superintendents meeting in April. (will also do again.)

Stipend information posted to Wired once, but will do again throughout December.

Will continue to promote stipend money via our traditional sources – Wired, various newsletters, OPI, METNET, etc.

Will re-issue press release in Fall 2005

Talked with Sue about possibly planning event for National Library Week 2006 – highlighting those that received the first scholarships and are finishing up with library school.

Also talked with Larra Clark at ALA about possibly doing some kind of national feature story on scholarships for librarians, and could highlight MT PEEL program. Possible outlets could include NPR, New York Times, L.A. Times, etc.