
Marketing library sources and services is an ongoing venture that entices patrons into the library. Often marketing is associated with library activities such as storytimes, arts and crafts programs, and musical events. Although patrons may be aware that, in addition to physical books, they can obtain a range of electronic information through the library, they may be less aware of just how extensive that body of information is. As authors Kennedy and LaGuardia note in their preface, patrons would be much more likely to use digital resources if they knew what was available and how their specific needs and interests could be met.

Beyond emphasizing the importance of marketing electronic resources, the primary objective of this book is to identify strategic steps that libraries can use to craft an effective marketing plan. The authors have successfully conveyed the intricate details of developing a plan, including crucial first steps such as identifying the needs and concerns of patrons; analyzing how well a library is meeting those concerns; setting goals; and designing, initiating, and evaluating the marketing strategies that are implemented.

The book comprises two parts. Part 1, “How to Design Your Marketing Plan,” offers six chapters that guide the reader through the marketing process. Chapter 1 covers activities such as taking inventory of current library resources while considering additional ones, obtaining usage statistics, engaging patrons, and garnering staff and volunteer participation with marketing strategies. Chapter 2 focuses on developing the plan, gathering information about the community, designing a strength-weakness-opportunity-threat (SWOT) analysis, and instituting an action plan. Chapter 3 describes techniques for implementing the plan, marketing the library’s resources, and expanding on the SWOT analysis. Here, the authors also offer information about how specific types of libraries (college/university, medical, public, school, and special) have instituted marketing plans. Chapter 4 helps readers identify the problems being addressed, develop strategies to solve them, and manage budgeting. Chapter 5 emphasizes assessment, especially regarding the effectiveness of the library’s website in directing patrons to resources. In this chapter, the authors also offer examples of online forms for reporting difficulties using library resources. Chapter 6 addresses revising and updating a marketing plan. Most chapters include lists of recommended supplemental readings.


The ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, adopted in 2016, “encourages information literacy librarians to be imaginative and innovative in implementing the Framework in their institutions” (ACRL Framework, appendix 1). In this spirit, authors Brier and Lebbin have collected eighteen very short stories—typically one to three pages in length—whose themes raise questions concerning the nature of authority, the process of searching, and the creation and value of information. Following each story, the authors add discussion questions designed to initiate philosophical conversations among librarians, instructors, and students about significant topics in information literacy.

Originally published in various venues between 1937 and 2010, these stories are sure to provoke dialogue and debate among students. Many of the stories could be characterized as science fiction or speculative fiction, examining “what if” questions and carrying scenarios to logical but extreme conclusions. For instance, “The People Who Owned the Bible,” by Will Shetterly, uses both humor and rational argument to explore the question “what would happen if someone could copyright Shakespeare's works or the Bible?” The conclusion: “Everyone was content, except for the storytellers who had to buy a Disney license to prove that their work did not owe anything to any story that had ever been part of human civilization” (49). It is easy to imagine this story prompting a lively exchange in the classroom regarding the limits of commercial ownership and the right to creative