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| C:\Users\Leanne\Downloads\iStock_000033406938_Large.jpg  Your library Communications tool kit | Abstract  Use this document like you’d use a tool belt: have it hanging around somewhere handy and pull out what you need… when you need it.  Leanne Myggland-Carter & Wayne Rothe  C10: How to Shake Things Up in Your Community |

# Who should we communicate with?

Stakeholders and Specific Target Markets

[Library Name] Stakeholders

*What is a stakeholder?* A general term for someone who has an interest or concern in an organization or its work. Stakeholders can include funders, donors, board members, employees, partners, volunteers, patrons, and the general public.

Who are our stakeholders?

* The Province of Alberta, Department of Municipal Affairs
* The County/City/Town/Village of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* The Taxpayers of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Corporate / Partner / Individual Donors
* The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Library Board
* The Staff of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Library
* The Friends of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Library
* Partners of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Library
* Volunteers at the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Library
* Patrons of the of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Library
* Area communities of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* The Greater \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Area

[Library Name] Specific Target Markets

*What is a target market?* A particular group of consumers at which a product / service is aimed.

What are our target markets?

* Library Users
* Library Non-users
* Commuters
* Families
* Individuals
* New Residents
* Long-term Residents
* Infants and Toddlers
* Children
* Youth
* Adults
* All Ages
* Under-privileged and Marginalized
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# How should we directly communicate with them?

Press Releases, Media Releases, & Public Service Announcements

Press Releases

*What is a press release?* An official statement issued to newspapers giving information on a particular matter.

How do we create a press release?

1. Record the answers to the following questions:
   1. **WHO** does it involve, affect, benefit?
   2. **WHAT** is the key message
   3. **WHY** should people care
   4. **WHERE** does it take place (physical address and/or location information, i.e. “City Hall”)
   5. **WHEN** does it take place (actual time and/or significant information, i.e. “tomorrow”)
   6. **HOW** did the **WHAT** come about
2. From your answers, write a one-page release using the template below:

**PRESS RELEASE [all upper case; use bold face]**

From: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Library [Board]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Catchy headline**

**[only capitalize first word and proper nouns; text is one size larger than body; use bold face]**

Date

**City/Town information originates –** Article begins here with lead sentence that captures the attention of the reader and clearly and concisely state what the release is about. The first paragraph is only two-three sentences long and must summarize the key message of the release’s importance/value.

The next two – three paragraphs must succinctly communicate the answers to your “5W and 1H” questions. Facts and a quote from an appropriate source or expert can be included here.

The final paragraph sums up the previous information and restates the key message. Additional information such as websites, social media addresses, and/or links can be added here as a “Find out more details here….” Leave your readers wanting to know more and tell them where to find the info!

If you have room, add a boilerplate (standard information that can be reused over and over without change) with your library name and address underneath the release

- 30 –

[this numeric addition has been traditionally used by journalists to indicate the end of a story] **OR**

###

[three hash tags also signal the end of the release—in word it is also a shortcut for inserting a border line so you will have to undo that default setting should it occur]

Media Releases

*What is a media release?* Like a press release, a media release or video release is a written or recorded communication directed at members of the news media for the purpose of announcing something newsworthy.

Media releases are written very similarly in format as the news release but can be even more to the point. Journalists expect short, informative sentences and expect to learn a lot from a few words. Since you are not entertaining a public readership, you can stick to facts with as much precise detail as possible.

Public Service Announcements

PSAs in the communication world are Public Service Announcements that follow the 3Ms: memorable meaningful messages. They are distributed by the media without charge because their purpose is to raise public awareness about important social issues such as stranger danger, drinking and driving, and animal protection. So, besides being free and being called “public service”, how do they work best for libraries?

Just think of all the social issues we encounter through the people we serve everyday:

* Illiteracy
* Job Loss
* Homelessness
* Marginalization

And now think of all the solutions we are already providing:

* Early, Family, and Adult Literacy
* Résumé Building and Technology Support
* Community and Socialization
* Inclusivity and Freedom

Consider what is going on outside your library’s doors in your community; and then identify what programs, services and resources your library already provides that acknowledge, assist, and even eliminate such social issues.

# How should we virtually communicate with them?

Websites & Social Media

Websites

A virtual presence is a must in today’s technology-based world. Your patrons should be able to “visit” your library from anywhere in the world, any time of the day or night. If they have an internet connection, your library should be just a click or a tap away. Not only does this serve the practical purpose of being able to download e-books and the convenience of renewing the ones you left at home, but it immediately comforts people with the familiar.

For websites to be successful in meeting the practical and emotional needs of its users, there are 5 simple steps that will keep them coming back for more.

1. Plan ahead—take some time to kick back in your office and surf—visit popular websites and take not of what you like about them. This will help you decide how you want each page to look and what you want each page to contain. If you have clear vision, the web developer/service provider has a much better chance of setting you up for success. Even if you are limited by standard template design, looking at other sites can still give you ideas how you can improve and show the current web layout trends.
2. Be consistent—enter text, images, and links using the same fonts, sizes, and placement from page to page. Of course the information, photos, and URLs will be different based on their content and purpose, but their placement will be the same. Clicking from page to page should flow like a slide show and not distract the visitor resulting in them losing interest in your site.
3. Be concise—if a sentence has 5 words, ask yourself: will it work with just 3? If a paragraph has 5 lines, challenge yourself: how can I make it just 4? This may seem like a time vampire sucking up precious hours by constant editing. Rather, think of it as not wasting time thinking up the perfect word or poetic description. Just write it. The less words there are to read, the more time people will spend on your site.
4. Be correct—earn your visitors’ trust by only posting timely and accurate information without spelling, grammatical, or punctuation errors. Other than a web address not working, there is nothing worse than an outdated site. No one will ever bookmark a site that is still promoting last month’s programs.
5. Stay Fresh—change your home page often so that new images and information catches the eye of your regular visitors and captures the attention of new ones. Involving more than one staff member in suggesting content and finding new images adds personality and variety that will be appreciate by all who click and stick...with your site.

Social Media

**Having a social media plan provides procedures and information to ensure your library** staff Listen, Invest, Integrate, Segment and Experiment with the social media platforms you have chosen. This is definitely a case for the less is more philosophy as it is better to do one or two well than five or six terribly. The plan should be designed to earn an audience and achieve your online communication goals.

Before opening an account, you need to determine the following:

* Your target audience – generally, who do you want to reach
* Your audience profile – specifically, what are the demographics
* Your realistic inputs – how much time can you invest in regular maintenance
* Your desired outcomes – what are the measurable goals you want to achieve
* Your action plan – who, what, and when will make this happen

Once you have a plan to develop social media for your library, then you implement that plan by listening, investigating, integrating, segmenting and experimenting. Listening on social media is the most important activity—active and intentional listening will alert us of issues before they balloon or uncover potential opportunities before they pass. Based on what you hear, investigate further to discover what is needed, wanted and expected of your fans and followers. In order to achieve maximum exposure, social media access should be integrated into email signatures and on website home pages and/or side content. At no time will the same post appear on more than one platform—although the same information may be distributed using Facebook and Twitter, for example, the look and timing of the post will be different. As your social media presence and following grows, continue to experiment with new and refreshing ways to engage our audience by following other successful pages and developing your own tactics.

**Spruce Grove Public Library Internal Communication Policy**

**Purpose** SGPL strives to ensure that our staff members are provided with accurate and appropriate information on a regular basis that details the processes, achievements, and changes that occur within the organization. This policy has been adopted to establish guidelines for appropriate internal communication, and ensure that SGPL staff members are able to work effectively as a team. SGPL will provide our staff with the internal resources to send and receive information in an effective manner that will ensure awareness of company news, initiatives, changes, and achievements.

**Policy** SGPL will communicate the following forms of information:

Employment Opportunities – In the event that a position within the organization becomes available SGPL will post the opportunity internally prior to the posting being made public. Internal postings will be made available through the website, social media, e-mail and in print on the staff bulletin board.

Staffing Changes – SGPL will communicate staffing changes that affect the organization, including promotions, retirements, and vacancies created through other means of attrition. This information will be communicated in an effort to recognize the achievements of staff, appreciate the service of our retiring employees, and ensure that staff members are aware of any changes made in staffing that may affect the flow of work.

Organizational Change – SGPL will ensure that all changes regarding the way that we do business, or manage the flow or work within the organization is properly communicated to all staff. Changes regarding company initiatives, goals and objectives will be communicated to provide staff with the updated information. Similarly, SGPL will communicate news regarding changes made within the organization, to our internal structure (e.g. departments, work-units), our physical structures, and any other form of change regarding the operations of the company.

Policy Change – Where SGPL and/or “The Board” implement a new policy, or revises a previously existing policy that affects our staff and/or the organization, the change will be communicated through appropriate channels.

Motivational Information – In the event of any new incentive programs regarding performance, rewards made available or awarded, and/or the recognition of achievements made by our staff, we will ensure that these are effectively communicated to staff. SGPL recognizes and rewards the achievements of our staff, and will work to ensure that they are provided with motivational forces that spur on their achievements.

Health and Safety – In the event of any changes made to work-processes, or where any workplace hazards are identified, and control measures are put into place, SGPL will ensure that all staff are provided with appropriate information regarding the change. Information for the Public – SGPL will provide our patrons and the public at large with information regarding organizational news, disruptions in service, and other appropriate information regarding our products and/or services. This form of communication will be governed by the SGPL Board and this policy.

**Spruce Grove Public Library Press Kit**

**Definition:** compelling, media-friendly and easily understood information that invites inquiries; a clear and consistent message that provides basic background data—“the idea is to create interest, not to exhaust it.” (<http://www.ccmc.org/node/16138>) The Spruce Grove Public Library Press Kit is a quick and constant resource that introduces SGPL to any person, organization or other group ensuring that the same material, with different cover letters, can be used as information packets for City Council, Board members, funders, stakeholders, partners, staff, new employees, volunteers, patrons, and the general public.

**Components:**

Statement of purpose:

SGPL mission and vision statements and current goals (Strategic Plan) with an outline about the issues/problems being addressed that answers why is this important? What are we doing about it?

Background of organization:

The history, operational information, services, programs, resources, and patron demographics of SGPL concise enough to fit on one sheet of paper using subheads, bullets, and brief paragraphs.

Profiles of spokespeople:

Professional background, education, and some personal information about SGPL representatives; photos available upon request.

Issue briefs:

Just the facts that can include: “a chronology, a glossary of terms, opinion poll data, state-by-state summaries on your issue, press contacts, and academic contacts” (<http://www.ccmc.org/node/16138>) presented with charts, graphs, subhead, bullets and short paragraphs.

Contact list:

The names, background info (one line) and complete contact information (office address, email and phone) of the “experts.”

Additional resources or bibliography:

Related books, articles, and SGPL material including web sites, Internet mailing lists, or online discussion groups.

Press clips:

Newspaper or magazine articles and/or editorials featuring SGPL and supporting the issue.

Optional items:

Annual report, newsletter/publication, letters of support, or the texts of outstanding speeches.

**Purpose:** 1.) Provide enough information that invites intelligent questions but does not include a complete debate: “Raise your opponents’ best arguments and demolish them, so...those arguments as old news.” (Joanne Omang, Washington Post Reporter)

2.) Include success stories and/or about the plight of people who have or may be affected as well as dramatic anecdotes about people with variety of backgrounds.

3.) The SGPL tool that promotes, supports and defines our strategic communications efforts.

# **Spruce Grove Library Social Media Plan**

# Target Audience(s)

**Primary Audience(s)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1** | Those who |
| **2** | Those who |
| **3** | Those who |

# Audience(s) Profile

**Primary Audience(s) in providing information about what we do…**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Audience Name** | **Audience Description** |
| **1** |  |  |
| **2** |  |  |
| **3** |  |  |

# 

# Goals: Increase by \_\_% each year

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1** |  |
| **2** |  |
| **3** |  |
| **4** |  |

# 

# Action Plan: Listen Indicate which terms you will listen for. Listening on social media is the most important activity. Listening to the right terms can alert us of issues before they balloon or uncover potential opportunities before they pass.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Phrase/Term(s)** |
| Industry trends |  |
| Keywords |  |
| Influencers | **Government**:  **Organizations**:  **Businesses**: |
| Branding / Service specific / Taglines |  |

# Action Plan: Invest

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tool** | **Tactic** | **Objective** | **Frequency** | **Measurement** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

# Action Plan: Integrate, Segment and Experiment

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tool** | **Tactic** | **Objective** | **Frequency** | **Measurement** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

# Action Plan: Stay Fresh

Extra Content Links:  
BIRTHDAYS

<http://www.famousbirthdays.com/>

THIS DAY IN HISTORY  
<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history>  
<http://www.cbc.ca/archives/onthisday/january.html>    
<http://www.canadahistory.com/timeline.asp>  
  
FUN AND FUNNY DAYS OF THE MONTH  
<http://www.daysoftheyear.com/>  
  
OFFICIAL / GOVERNMENT DAYS  
UN days <http://www.vercalendario.info/en/event/days-unitednations-year-calendar-2014.html>  
Canada's National events <http://www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1323803726195/1323803852238>

# Social Media Best Practices Tip Sheet:

When you are prepared to publicize something on social media, pause and ask yourself these questions:

**What else was posted/responded to today?**

Check and see what other messages were posted and tweeted so you do not duplicate information; also, if it is not your regularly scheduled day with social media responsibilities make sure it is necessary

**Am I in a hurry?**

Slow down and take the time for an effective post or complete another time during that day

**Did I re-read my post/tweet/response?**

A second look by you or a colleague ensures that our public messages remain error-free

**Does my post/tweet fit into/have at least one of the following?**

Fill in the Blank

Caption This

Topical Information

Participation/Invitation to “like this” or “share this”

Tags

Images that are Age and Industry Appropriate

**Is my response all of the following?**

Appropriate – does it answer the question? Address the issue?

Courteous – is an apology required?

Authentic – be honest about the information you have or need to get

Helpful – provide additional information as required

**Can my post/tweet/response be shorter and/or easier to read?**

Remember, the most effective messages are 80 characters or less

**Is my post/tweet/response clear and appropriate?**

Is your message clear, have you answered the question, do you need management to help?