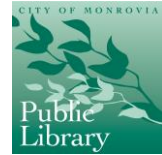




**CITY OF MONROVIA
LIBRARY BOARD
AGENDA REPORT**



DEPARTMENT: Community Services
Library Division

MEETING DATE: March 25, 2021

PREPARED BY: Rebecca Elder
Adult Services Supervisor

AGENDA LOCATION: AR-1

TITLE: 2020-2022 Library Marketing Plan Annual Update

OBJECTIVE: To update the Library Board on the status of the Library's Marketing Plan

BACKGROUND: The Library's Marketing Plan was created to increase the library's visibility and provide a consistent means of communication between library staff and community members. The plan provides staff guidance on communicating library goals and objectives established in the library's Strategic Plan of 2017-2022. The marketing plan is a two year plan covering 2020-2022, it is evaluated and updated annually as needed, and includes the following goals:

1. Develop community awareness of the library's programs, services, and resources.
2. Create wayfinding and a user-friendly experience in the library.
3. Identify and use appropriate channels and methods to market the library.

In order to meet these goals, marketing team staff members meet on a monthly basis to review and assess goals, strategies, and desired outcomes. Staff utilize a variety of marketing tools to communicate and reach the public, which are reviewed on a regular basis in order to align with current marketing best practices as well as guidelines established by the City of Monrovia.

ANALYSIS: The Library's Marketing Plan began its first year in January 2020. The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent library closure directly impacted and limited carrying out some goals of the marketing plan. Specifically, those goals related to patron access in house such as wayfinding signage, book displays, and in person outreach efforts in the community, as well as some publicity materials. As the library transitioned its programming and services to virtual offerings, curbside service, and e-library cards, the marketing team identified goals and strategies to best serve community members and promote and publicize library offerings.

Goal 1. Develop community awareness of the library's programs, services, and resources. Promotion of programs, services, and resources in a rapidly changing environment depended upon an informed and responsive staff. To insure that staff were knowledgeable and able to respond to community questions, library staff and volunteers were frequently updated via email, phone and zoom. Virtual trainings were created for library e-resources so that staff could effectively respond to patrons. Weekly emails informed staff of curbside statistics and program offerings. This provided the community with current information in a uniform and consistent manner, and assisted the community with accessing virtual library programs and services.

All library programs and services were promoted online on the library's website, social media, and available to view via the City of Monrovia's YouTube channel. Staff reviews all content and promotional materials for

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brand identity and consistency. The library's website is a 24/7 gateway to information and connects members to the library's catalog, databases, downloadable ebooks, and calendar of events. Details about book return locations, extended due dates, and vetted coronavirus resources were prominently displayed. Social media promotions included posts of live reference assistance; edutainment resources such as online storytime and craft programs; virtual programs for teens and adults; behind the scene videos of new books; meet the staff segments; and collection highlights. Staff continued to promote the library's full array of services to assist both current members and new members. Since print and hard copy options were limited for the *Monrovia Today* quarterly publication during the pandemic, staff increased online cross-promotion efforts with community partners and other City Departments.

The Library's mobile literacy program had limited service this past year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Staff partnered with recreation for *Recess in the Park* in several Monrovia Parks and provided promotional materials on library programs and services. Schedules were posted on the library and City websites and social media.

Goal 2. Create wayfinding and a user-friendly experience in the library. Wayfinding efforts were primarily focused outside the library building. In order to help patrons navigate the new curbside services process and create a positive user-friendly experience, large outdoor wayfinding signs were designed and created using library brand fonts and colors. Signs were placed strategically throughout library park for visibility. A variety of how-to videos were developed to help community members access resources easily and effectively. Staff generated how-to videos included library account features; accessing e-books and audiobooks; using Zoom; linking to virtual programs; applying for an electronic library card and curbside service. In addition, staff provided instructional videos on using the library's electronic resources, such as HelpNow, VetNow, JobNow, and the Legacy Project Online Collection.

Goal 3. Identify and use appropriate channels and methods to market the library. The community views the library as a trusted resource for information, and staff sought to maintain brand awareness with current users and make connections with non-users. Best practices for social media were identified for staff to use for marketing strategies and included guidelines for video content creation and submission, thumbnails, posting schedules, and programming promotions.

With the transition to virtual programs and services, staff focused on fine-tuning community engagement through social media platforms and expanding library content online. In order to build a stronger online audience and optimize marketing efforts, staff tracked metrics and reviewed analytics for the library's website, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. Since social media platforms are transforming and changing rapidly and unpredictably, new features and algorithm adjustments affected marketing strategies. This required staff to be flexible to see how patrons reacted to those changes and make adjustments as needed. Analytics also provided a picture for when and how often to post content, and staff experimented with scheduling in order to create a consistent schedule for posting. By listening to the library's follower's comments, staff gained a better sense of how to serve patrons.

Fine-tuning social media strategies allowed staff to effectively manage content curation and increase the library's social media presence. During the first month of implementation of these strategies, Instagram showed a 40.8% increase in post interactions and a 180% increase in story interactions. In November 2020, video content transitioned to the City's YouTube Channel as a more suitable platform for longer videos, searchable across the web, and shared across social media platforms. Staff compared the average length of viewing of a virtual storytime on both Instagram and YouTube, and the results showed a 1,315% viewing time increase with YouTube.

Library staff continues to research marketing strategies to ensure that library programs and services are communicated to the public and are reviewed on a regular basis to align with the library's Strategic Plan, City of Monrovia Guidelines, and current marketing best practices.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT: There is no environmental impact associated with this program.

LIBRARY BOARD ACTION REQUIRED: If the Library Board concurs, the appropriate action would be a motion: *Receive and file report AR-1 2020-2022 Library Marketing Plan Annual Update.*

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