

Targeted Marketing. Because energy and time are at a premium for library trustees, this edition of *Across the Board* focuses on how you can maximize your library's marketing efforts. Included are several simplified ways to reach out to your community and let them know about the resources available for them, at the library and remotely. Just because you "build it" does not necessarily mean they will come—you have to keep reminding them.

A C R O S S T H E

B O A R D

Maximizing Your Library's Efforts

Libraries serve everyone, which is why marketing and publicity are so important. One message won't appeal to all segments of your community at the same time. **Batch Targeting** is an approach to marketing with a target group in mind. Through batch targeting you break down your overall target market into manageable segments, such as one specific age group (e.g., seniors) or demographic trend (e.g., new residents). Following are specific suggestions to help you with batch targeting.

Reaching Out to New Residents. Lots of legwork has been done for you already regarding this target group (don't you love to hear that?). The *Reaching Out to New Residents Project* of the Mid-Hudson Library System was created in response to the overwhelming data we found during our *2022 Project*. (The *2022 Project* gathered information about trends that will have an impact on the Hudson Valley over the next twenty years.) Data showed that there has been a major influx of new residents to our region. In fact, *four out of the five* counties served by the Mid-Hudson Library System have experienced population increases greater than the New York State average of 5.5 percent. (For more details about the impact of new residents on the Hudson Valley, general trends likely to have an impact in our area, and tools to help libraries address these trends, visit www.midhudson.org/MHLS/2022.)

Pilot Libraries' Suggestions. The ten target libraries of the *Reaching Out to New Residents Project* piloted a variety of activities designed to help new residents. To find out what new residents wanted libraries contacted their county's Real Property Tax Office (<http://www.rptd.nysac.org/minidirectory.asp>) and requested a list of homeowners who had moved to the area within a particular time frame. There is usually a fee to obtain this list, consisting of a set-up charge and a charge per number of mailing labels run. The cost varies but is likely to be between \$50 and \$100. **Helpful Tip:** Get more than one set of labels to use for future mailings. Use them to announce your library fund-drive, summer reading program, community events, et cetera. For more information about using the Real Property Tax Office as an information resource, go to <http://midhudson.org/gateway/finding-new-residents.htm>.

Another technique used was a *Library Card Survey*. Survey cards were placed at the circulation desk and given to each new cardholder. View the survey online at http://midhudson.org/gateway/Library_Card_Survey.doc.

It helped to place signs on the outside of the library building with an inviting message: "The Library Welcomes New Residents."

Offering specific programming for new residents, such as an orientation to the library and its electronic resources, finding area restaurants or an introduction to municipal services turned out to be a great way to snag new residents. Visit the MHLS EZ Library Program Database for more ideas: <http://midhudson.org/ezprogram/>. (Note: Type "new resident" in the keyword box and a list of new resident programs offered in member libraries will appear.)

The most successful component of the project was the creation of "New Resident Resource Kits" tailored to each library and its community. Bags designed for the project were packed with information such as:

- Welcome letter from the library director (<http://midhudson.org/gateway/marketing-new-residents.htm>).
- Copy of the library's most current newsletter.
- Quotable facts about the library.

- MHLS Library Card brochure.
- FAQ Sheet (<http://midhudson.org/gateway/marketing-new-residents.htm>) to answer questions like "How do I get a library card?" "What are the library's hours?" "Where is the library located?" Include answers to questions about the community to make the kit more valuable for new residents: "When is the town hall open?" "When is garbage pickup? Where can I find out about recycling?" "Where can I find information about public transportation?" "Is there a guide to local events and restaurants?" Include a list of local government contacts and Voter Registration Cards from the Board of Elections. Offer local businesses the opportunity to include information or to help defray the expense: libraries found the cost to be less than fifty cents per kit.

To see what other libraries have included in their kits, go to <http://midhudson.org/gateway/marketing-new-residents.htm>. Target libraries felt that the "New Resident Resource Kit" was so well received that all ten have decided to continue offering it using local funds.



"Helpful Links for Living in the Hudson Valley," a web site developed by MHLS, is a perfect resource for your library to use when reaching out to new residents. Included are links to general information such as resources for moving, commuter and travel information, daycare providers, travel directions and local services information, job information, local history links, town links, volunteer information and voting resources. Access this site at <http://www.midhudson.org/gateway/hvresources.htm>.

Targeted Programming: Suggested Programming for General Target Audiences. Using library programs throughout the year to reach specific segments of the population in your community can translate into a boost in support for your library. To get you started the MHLS Marketing and Programs Advisory Committee brainstormed a list of programs that would appeal to senior citizens, families, speakers of languages other than English, small business owners and men.

- **For Seniors:** Financial planning | How to lower your taxes | Cooking on a budget, meal planning | Services provided by the Office of the Aging | Crafts, drawing, quilting & painting | Religion series, featuring speakers from different denominations | Classical music programs | How to lower medical costs, presented by representatives from area nursing homes & hospitals | Garden club displays; flower shows | Celebrate "Older Americans Month" each May | Oral history program.
- **For Families:** Family budgeting from the Cooperative Extension | How to reduce your energy costs | Car repair | Big trucks.
- **For Speakers of Languages other than English:** Foods from around the world program | Bilingual storyhour | Music of many cultures series | Folktales from other countries | First-Aid classes for speakers of other languages.
- **For Small Business Owners:** Speaker from the Small Business Association | How to search for grants for small businesses and individuals | Desktop Publishing workshops: basics; tips and tricks | Making decisions about technology.
- **For Men:** Program about Harley-Davidson motorcycles | Crusin' (host an event for enthusiasts to show off restored cars, swap parts and reminisce) | Book discussion group highlighting authors such as Ernest Hemingway and Tom Clancy.

For more ideas check out Tools for Transition: <http://midhudson.org/admin/tools.pdf> and the MHLS EZ Library Program Database at <http://midhudson.org/resources/ezprogram.htm>.

Talk the Talk. Create easy-to-remember sound bites about your library. These little tidbits can make a big difference when someone is considering how to vote on a library issue, make a donation to the library or become a library volunteer.

To create a context for your library's statistics, for example, use the **Value of Circulation Formula** and the **Value of Programming Formula**. By calculating the value of your services you can present that value to the public and other key decision makers in dollar terms—which makes good sound bites. This method is less humdrum than citing circulation statistics or reporting the number of people who walked through the door.

Value of Circulation Formula

**2003 Reported Total Circulation x \$20 (average cost of library item)
= Total Value of Items Lent to the Community**

Value of Programming Formula

2003 Reported Attendance at Library Programming x \$8 (average price of a movie ticket) = Money Saved for Families and Residents

By engaging in targeted marketing you can expect your efforts to be more cost-effective and timesaving. Targeted marketing helps position your library as the specialist's place, making it indispensable—a dream position in any community.

A Selection of Resources from the MHLS Professional Collection

http://midhudson.org/MHLS/professional_collection.htm

- *The New Planning for Results: A Streamlined Approach*, Sandra Nelson, for the Public Library Association. American Library Association, 2001.
- *A Place at the Table: Participating in Community Building*, Kathleen de la Peña McCook. American Library Association, 2000.
- *Powerful Public Relations: A How-to Guide for Libraries*, Rashelle S. Karp, editor. American Library Association, 2002.
- *Marketing the Small Library*, Local Library Development Division, Kansas State Library, 2002.
- *Get Out The Vote! How to Increase Voter Turnout*, Donald P. Green & Alan S. Gerber. Brookings Institution Press, 2004.
- *101+ Great Marketing and Fundraising Ideas for Libraries and Friends*, Sally Gardner Reed, Beth Nawalinski & Alex Peterson. Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2004.
- *Running a Successful Library Card Campaign: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians*, Patrick Jones. Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2002.
- *The Visible Librarian: Asserting Your Value with Marketing and Advocacy*, Judith A. Siess. American Library Association, 2003.

Trustee Success Story Recognition Award Winners. The 2004 Trustee Success Story Recognition Awards were presented at the MHLS 45th Annual Meeting, which was held at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, Friday, November 19th. Trustee Success Story winners exemplify admirable public library trustee qualities and have demonstrated, in different ways, what it takes to make a library viable, vital and visible in our communities. Winners from each of the five counties served by MHLS were awarded \$200 for their libraries.



COLUMBIA COUNTY
Paul Johann, Valatie Free Library. For his years of service and instrumental role in the library's successful 414 referendum with the Kinderhook Library; the establishment of the Val-Kin Council, promoting cooperation between the two libraries; and a large preservation project involving the library's photograph collection.



PUTNAM COUNTY
Karen Baumann, Putnam Valley Library. For her help in the coordination of several building improvements; development of a town-wide newsletter; development of the library's Long Range Plan; expansion of the library's fundraising efforts; for the encouragement of better communication with the local school district; and for the recent coordination of the library's participation in the second annual "Town Day" in July.



DUTCHESS COUNTY
Richard Taylan, Hyde Park Free Library. For his role in initiating a successful collaboration with the Mid-Hudson Teacher Center to increase library advocacy, funding and community outreach.



ULSTER COUNTY
James Simmons, Town of Ulster Public Library. For his efforts to attain a sound financial base for library funding; increase library staff and services; expand and acquire a new building; and increase and improve electronic services to meet the growing needs of the community.



(left to right) Josh Cohen, executive director, MHLS; Patricia Miller, trustee, MHLS; William Conine and Patricia DeLucia

GREENE COUNTY
Patricia DeLucia & William Conine, Heermance Memorial Library (Coxsackie). For their role in helping the library attain Special District status; encouraging professional development for library staff; advocacy efforts for the library on both local and state levels; and serving as role models for existing and new board members.

Advocacy Call to Arms

As many of you are aware this has been a tough year for library funding on the state legislative level. We are facing a serious struggle in 2005 to maintain adequate System funding from New York State. We hope that you will respond to our **Advocacy Alerts** in the coming months, because legislators need to hear from you, member library trustees, about how System services help local libraries. We need you to step up and speak out on behalf of System funding. Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do on behalf of libraries.