

**Prospect Heights
Public Library
District**

**Long-Term
Marketing Plan**

April 2002

Community Clientele

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census for 2000, the Prospect Heights Public Library District has over 15,000 people within the district; approximately 85% are Caucasian, 6% are Asian and the remaining 9% are of a variety of different races. The Library emphasizes lifelong learning and serves patrons ranging in age from birth to senior citizen.

Historical Background

The public library for Prospect Heights was established in 1955 under the direction of the Prospect Heights Woman's Club. During the first two years, the Library was staffed by volunteers. In 1957, the volunteer Library became the Prospect Heights Public Library District, following a Project PLUS demonstration funded by the Illinois State Library.

During its first fifteen years, the Library moved through a series of locations in storefronts at and around the intersection of Camp McDonald and Elmhurst Roads. Collections and services have evolved to meet the changing needs of the community.

The present library building was constructed in 1972 and was later enlarged and renovated from 1990-91. The building is now approximately 26,000 square feet.

Current Status

The Library has a current staff of six departments with a total of over 35 employees plus additional volunteers.

Library collections include books, periodicals, newspapers, videos, DVDs, books on tape, books on CD, music cassettes & CDs and CD-ROMs.

This Marketing Plan is intended to cover approximately 3 years from the time of adoption. Some parts of the Plan are already underway and will be maintained and enhanced during the next 3 years.

Mission Statement

"To link our community to the world of ideas."

Position Statement

The Prospect Heights Public Library District is dedicated to providing popular materials and accurate information to the widest possible audience.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Personal service
Technology commitment
Unity of purpose from staff
Strong senior citizen program attendance
Community support through use of the Library
Library usage increasing
Record highs for both Youth and Adult/Young Adult Summer Reading Programs
Good program attendance for both Youth and Adult
Growing "Friends of the Library" group
Positive patron comments
Voluntary donations
Growing population and tax base
Building, environmental, organizational and lighting improvements

Weaknesses

Staff technology knowledge
Library location; poor public visibility, not located at a main intersection
Lack of room to grow in shelving and parking space
Public perception of libraries in general; stereotypes
Media education of libraries
Young Adult /High School (ages 12-18) programming

Opportunities

Neighboring libraries
Library Cable Network
Improvement of staff's technology knowledge
Public perception of libraries in general; overcoming stereotypes
Media education of libraries
Young Adult/High School (ages 12 –18) programming

Threats

Neighboring libraries with similar services
Computers, television and other media compete for patrons' limited time
Technology/Internet – fast-paced changes overwhelm the non-technical services
Book stores
Tax caps limit library revenue
Non-print media undermines reading
Changing political districts and responsibilities
Impact of potential new legislation

Marketing Action Goals

Based upon the SWOT analysis, Department Head meetings and the Board/Department Head meeting, our three main Action Goals were determined. Many individual Marketing Action Goals are already implemented and intend to be continued, maintained or enhanced. The three main Action Goals consist of the following:

- 1) To increase overall Library use, both in house and at remote locations.**

- 2) To build electronic resources as well as staff and public knowledge to encourage more electronic use.**

- 3) To build community involvement with Young Adult (ages 12-14) and High School (ages 15-18) programming, area agency and library co-sponsored programs.**

Objectives for Action Goal #1

To increase overall Library use, both in-house and at remote locations.

I. Increase Library use in-house.

- A. Form a Display Committee to create displays with eye-catching signs to highlight the Library's collection, emphasizing that books on display can be checked-out.
- B. Increase periodical circulation.
 - 1. Require periodical check-out to qualify for grand prize during Winter & Summer reading programs.
 - 2. Display periodicals at Circulation Desk.
- C. Increase the large print collection and its circulation.
- D. Promote Rebecca Caudill nominated books in the Fall and the books written by the schools' visiting author in the Spring.
- E. Offer in-house Storytimes for ages 0-36 months and 3-5 year-olds.
- F. Offer a Preschool Fair for parents to visit the Library and learn about area preschools and daycares.
- G. Make sure school textbooks and accelerated reading lists are available for children.
- H. Develop a weekend book discussion group for 6th and 7th graders and, in cooperation with the schools, offer accelerated reader points to attendees.

II. Increase Library use from remote locations.

- A. Update Library homepage monthly.
- B. Investigate potential external publicity sites to post flyers, posters and bookmarks to target specific audiences, Library patrons and potential Library patrons, including possible locations for an outdoor sign promoting Library events and programs.
- C. Increase usage of Homebound Delivery Service.
 - 1. Publicize the service fully and repeatedly.
 - 2. Concentrate on Brighton Gardens as a source of homebound delivery requests.
- D. Utilize the Library Cable Network for publicity purposes.
- E. Bring Library youth programs and books to the schools to supplement students' education and remind them of the Library's helpfulness.
- F. Co-sponsor the schools' visiting author during Spring.
- G. Implement traveling Storytimes for area preschools and schools with grades K-2.

Objectives for Action Goal #2

To build electronic resources as well as staff and public knowledge to encourage more electronic use.

I. Offer computer classes.

- A. Offer 4-6 computer classes per week for the public.
 - 1. Classes include but are not limited to:
 - a. SIRSI
 - b. Internet
 - c. E-mail
- B. Offer classes for the staff to learn necessary computer technology.
 - 1. Classes include but are not limited to:
 - a. SIRSI
 - b. Internet
 - c. E-mail
 - 2. Require staff attendance to NSLS technology classes as necessary.
- C. Give research instruction to visiting school classes.
- D. Provide simple help guides for all Library databases.
- E. Provide a special web page for children with graphics and interesting sites for children (Preschool – 8th Grade).

II. Increase promotion of Answers Unlimited and Nightowl Reference with flyers and bookmarks throughout the community.

Objectives for Action Goal #3

To build community involvement with Young Adult (ages 12-14) and High School (ages 15-18) programming, area agency and library co-sponsored programs.

- I. **Create a Young Adult Department combining services for patrons, ages 12-18.**
 - A. Including, but not limited to services such as:
 1. Book talks.
 2. School visits.
 3. Study hours.
 4. YA Summer/Winter Reading Programs.
 5. Other programs.
- II. **Co-sponsor advertising at movie theaters with other libraries.**
- III. **Develop a partnership with area Park Districts to sponsor programs.**

Marketing Image Goals

Based upon the SWOT analysis, Department Head meetings and the Board/Department Head meeting, our two main Image Goals were determined. Many individual Marketing Image Goals are already implemented and intend to be continued, maintained or enhanced. The two main Image Goals consist of the following:

- 1) To be known as, and maintain the perception of, an inviting comfortable place to seek information, education, fun and leisure.**

- 2) To be known as the primary information resource in the community.**

Objectives for Image Goal #1

To be known as, and maintain the perception of, an inviting comfortable place to seek information, education, fun and leisure.

- I. **Appear inviting to patrons and make them feel comfortable.**
 - A. Place large print collection in a more inviting area, with more space and sitting room.
 - B. Display and hang consistent signs with consistent fonts and colors to coordinate with current décor (exempt are temporary signs, i.e. book displays).
 - C. Create and display enticing and colorful book displays.

- II. **Schedule and promote fun and educational events, programs, displays and contests.**
 - A. Involve patrons of all ages in contests that stretch their knowledge in a fun and interesting way.
 - B. Offer programs for adults.
 1. Music concerts.
 2. Programs for senior citizens.
 3. Lyric Opera volunteer lectures.
 4. Book Clubs
 5. Other programs.
 - C. Hold art instruction and craft classes for children on a regular basis.
 - D. Supply space for local and emerging artists to display their work.
 - E. Provide an educational preschool play area for toddlers and their caregivers.
 - F. Produce eye-catching decorations for reading programs.

- III. **Create a volunteer program.**
 - A. Seek volunteers to:
 1. Help library staff.
 2. Generate positive, word-of-mouth talk about the Library.

Objectives for Image Goal #2

To be known as the primary information source in the community.

I. Stock the shelves with current materials.

- A. Maintain an adult non-fiction materials collection which has current information.
 - 1. Maintain an ongoing, aggressive acquisition and weeding procedure in adult non-fiction.
 - a. Purge out-of-date titles and editions each year.
 - b. Review 5% of the collection monthly.
- B. Review and weed Youth Services fiction and non-fiction collections monthly.

II. Supply patrons with current informational technology.

- A. Enable patrons to bring and use their laptops to access our network through wireless network cards.

III. Promote informational services through bookmarks.

- A. Create a different bookmark for each month, highlighting a specific service each month.
 - 1. Insert one bookmark into a bag or book per patron check-out.
 - 2. Display a new bookmark at the community park districts and school libraries each month.

IV. Emphasize informational services to area schools.

- A. Visit area schools.
 - 1. Visit schools at the beginning of each school year to notify both teachers and students of the library's services.
 - 2. Visit area preschools regularly to notify preschools of library's services.
- B. Give handouts to teachers continuously, listing the library's services specifically for teachers and students.

V. Maintain current informational booklists for:

- A. Patrons.
- B. Students.
- C. Teachers.