

MHLS Marketing & Programs Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 20, 2007

10:00am – 1:00pm

Attending: Barbara Flach, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Carol Corrigan, Anne Jordan, Midge Quick, Maria Steinberg, Kara Lustiber, Jody Ford, Margaret Keefe, Merribeth Advocate, Josh Cohen, Lauren Muffs

Minutes for the March 2007 meeting approved by M. Quick, seconded by C. Corrigan.

Kids OPAC Subcommittee Report: The Subcommittee will next meet on July 9th.

- **Kid Picks:** This section will be linked for the catalog and all content will link back to the catalog. Age 10 and under is the target. Committee reviewed list of suggestions from Kids Catalog Subcommittee.
 - Issues discussed: Include most recent and most popular books, and picture books. How large is too large a list to include? What topics can be included to support school curriculum and reading? Lists should include last 2 years.
- **PR for September:** Intended for rollout at beginning of school year. Ideas discussed included bookmark, poster, standing item to go next to catalog.
- **“Portal Pages” for Kids & Teens:** These two sites are separate from each other and will not be linked to the catalog. Goal is fun and educational links, including homework support. Drafts of each page were developed in conjunction with ideas from members library directors and member library Youth library staff. Criteria for sites chosen included good design and links critically looked at with a librarians or educators eye.
 - **Teen Portal Page:** committee reviewed a draft of potential content for the Teen page http://midhudson.org/department/youth/draft_teen_page.htm. Suggested the addition of Internships, hotlines, 211. Liked the design of Denver’s teen site <http://teens.denverlibrary.org>.
 - **Kids Portal Page:** committee reviewed a draft of potential content for the Kids page http://midhudson.org/department/youth/kids_catalog_revision.htm. Suggested the addition of a parenting section to push early literacy and being safe online.
- Committee will continue to review the drafts online. (*See Action 1*)

HOMEACCESS brochure and bookmarks:

- Committee brainstormed ways to talk about databases to patrons. Ideas discussed: appeal of these resources differs by generation, by interest, by need.
- Suggested MHLS provide a clearinghouse of brief text to include in newsletters to appeal to different groups. Topics to include: Use the tag lines from new bookmarks (“Want to fix your own car?” “Cleaning out the attic?” “Stop searching. Start Finding.”); Remember the old Readers Guide to Periodicals, we have a better way; Invisible Web (you’re not going to find it w/o your library card / invisible info the library can help you find); Above & Beyond Google; Free (free to them to use this expensive, valuable resource).

Spanish Language Outreach grant

- MHLS received a follow-up grant through the State Library. Member input from the SOL workshops indicated that print marketing materials in Spanish would be useful in

their libraries, including “How to Get a Library Card”. Committee reviewed the considerations for developing Spanish-language marketing materials and reviewed samples. Committee indicated that any materials created be bilingual. (See *Action 2*)

eCommerce

- Committee reviewed draft of bookmark. Library info can be stamped on back. Poster will follow from finalized info on bookmark.
- Committee suggested print support for library staff when faced with patrons who want to pay with a credit card at the library, but have never worked with the OPAC before and don't have a PIN. (See *Action 3*)
- Discussion of ways to market eCommerce included: “Now announcing a new service.” “Now you are off the hook.” “Did you know?” “Owe more than \$5? You can now pay your fines and fees online.” Suggestion to e-mail everyone that owes fines; send an E-newsletter to all patrons; add to fine statement, overdue notices, bills. (See *Action 4*). Suggested to add FAQ's for technical help with Ecommerce to the catalog. (See *Action 5*).

Marketing Strategy for Libraries – Building Your Base Project

- This MHLS project solves an adult programming issue, by tapping into already existing groups in the community.

Other

- Carol Corrigan will be leaving the New Lebanon Library and therefore our committee. ☹
- M. Keefe reviewed the Letterboxing Project <http://midhudson.org/Letterboxing/main.htm>, that 15 MHLS libraries are involved in.
- M. Advocate announce that there is now a direct link to *Consumer Reports* through **HOMEACCESS**

Actions

1. Committee will continue to review the drafts online of potential content for the Portal Pages for Kids & Teens and respond to M. Keefe with recommendations by July 5th.
2. M.Advocate will bring a draft of Spanish-language marketing materials to the next meeting.
3. L.Shedrick will create an In-house instruction sheet for library staff to use with patrons who want to pay with a credit card at the library, but have never worked with the OPAC before and don't have a PIN.
4. R. Smith will craft a Ecommerce message for L.Shedrick to use in a notice mock-up. This will be sent to committee for input about potentially making this a recommendation to DA.
5. L.Shedrick will create a FAQ for technical help with Ecommerce and link it to the catalog.

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 6th

Report to the DA:

1. Kids OPAC project on target to be ready for the start of the school year in September. PR pieces to help libraries promote the new interface will be developed this summer.
2. HOME**ACCESS** brochure and bookmarks are getting rave reviews. A *Consumer Reports* bookmark in the same style will be coming soon. The committee discussed ways in which to help libraries promote the databases within HOME**ACCESS** through word-of-mouth marketing and print PR produced by local libraries. Tips and content for use by member libraries will be developed and added to the MHLS Marketing & PR section of the web site.
3. Through additional funds awarded to MHLS by the State Library under the Spanish Language Outreach program MHLS staff will develop a bi-lingual PR piece. Member input from the SLO workshops indicated that print marketing materials in Spanish would be useful in their libraries, including "How to Get a Library Card".
4. eCommerce promotion: A bookmark and poster advertising the opportunity to pay fines and fees online is being developed. FAQs and troubleshooting tips will be added to the OPAC for patrons as well as an instructional piece to help patrons who want to pay online who have never used the OPAC or established a PIN before.
5. The MHLS LSTA project, "Building Your Base," is working with target libraries to develop marketing strategies that can easily be implemented at the local library level using "micro-marketing" techniques. Best practices will be gathered and summarized for all member libraries at the end of the project.