

Marketing Guidelines

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Prioritization & Planning

Depending on the type of program, available marketing efforts may differ. These program levels have been assigned to illustrate marketing procedures for each kind of program.

Available Publicity by Program Type:

- Program levels 1 and 2 will receive all promotional efforts.
- Program levels 3 and 4 will receive some promotional efforts, depending on program or program series. Promotions will be prioritized based on Promotional Planning Meetings, as well as news angle of the event, timeliness, and staff time.

Program Levels:

1. Library-Wide programs (ex: Summer Reading Club, OR programs that have gone through the programming committee, such as Rock Music Month or Star Wars Day) and important library initiatives (ex: important policy changes per the library Board)
2. Brand new program series
3. Standalone programs with high associated cost / high departmental priority
Program series with high departmental priority
Young program series (Audience still building; program series within their first 2 years)
4. Annual programs
Recurring programs with strong attendance
Standalone programs that are likely to have substantial attendance on their own

Promotional Planning Meetings

The Marketing Specialist, Graphic Designer, and Content Specialist will meet with programming department managers to develop promotional plans as they apply to a given newsletter cycle (Ex: Departments submit their January/February newsletter content at the end of October; planning meetings will occur around the first week of November).

The Marketing Specialist and the Graphic Designer will utilize the program levels listed above, as well as input from the department manager, to determine both marketing and graphics needs for each program.

The plans developed at these meetings will be shared with staff once they are completed. Following these meetings, staff are responsible for submitting graphics request forms (if indicated) as soon as possible.

Process at a Glance:

1. Newsletter content is submitted
2. Promotional planning meetings are held with managers
3. Marketing shares promotional plan with departments
4. Staff submit graphics requests for approved programs as soon as possible
5. Staff updates Evanced to match the newsletter, if not already done, as soon as possible
6. Marketing and Graphics execute promotional efforts and graphics work

Available Marketing Efforts

Newsletters

Latest Edition Newsletter

Program types promoted: ALL

Our newsletter is the #1 source our patrons cite when asked how they heard about a program, which makes it a great tool to promote all of our programming. As such, we list all programs in the newsletter.

Please follow newsletter deadline schedule and newsletter content submission guidelines. Each department's newsletter content should come from one designated representative, and must be submitted on time in order to be printed.

Front page promotions are determined based on program level and timeliness of events (EX: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service falls in January, as does MLK's birthday; Summer Reading Club is a library-wide program, and is always the cover feature for May/June), and may also include promotion of library services or important library news. Front page promotions are determined by Administration, Marketing, and Graphics.

Email Newsletter

Program types promoted: ALL

We send 3 email newsletters to our patrons: News & Events, Maker programs, and Youth events.

News & Events email newsletters are our 'general interest' programming newsletters, are sent on the 1st and 15th of every month. There are 5 promotional blocks in each newsletter; typically, this means each programming department gets one feature. Because Youth Services and Digital Services programs are promoted in their own email newsletters, their programs are not always included in N&E. Promotions are selected based on program level and departmental priority as discussed in promotional plan meetings.

Other promotions in the N&E email include: blog posts on the library's website, news updates about policy changes, promotions for library services, etc.

Occasionally, special eblasts may be sent to promote level 1 programs. These are created at the discretion of the Marketing Specialist. No more than 1 special eblast will be sent per month.

Maker program email newsletters promote all maker and crafting programs within a given month. There are between 3 and 8 promotional spaces, depending on the programs being promoted. Typically, Maker emails are mostly Digital Services/ makerspace programs, but they also include crafting programs from Reference or, occasionally, Maker programs for kids. Maker email newsletters go out two weeks before the first program (ex: the first upcoming program is October 10; the newsletter will go out around September 26). We send one Maker email newsletter per month.

Youth events email newsletters promote all Youth Services programs, as well as any other department's programs that are intended to reach exclusively kids and teens. There are between 3 and 8 promotional spaces, depending on the programs being promoted. Youth events email newsletters go out two weeks before the first program. We send one Youth events email per month.

Newspapers

Press Releases*

Program types promoted: 1 & 2

3 & 4 depending on news angle.

The library sends an average of 1-3 press releases per month. Press releases are most effective when they are announcing a library-wide or brand new program, or a program with a strong news angle. A good press release highlights something new, different, or changing that illustrates a larger impact on the community. This is why program types 1 and 2 are the best fit for a press release.

Press releases do not always guarantee pre-event coverage; sometimes, newspapers will come to cover an event in person and write their own feature rather than publishing the press release ahead of time. Post-event coverage is another significant way the library gets newspaper exposure

Common Venues: Northbrook Tower, Northbrook Star, Daily North Shore

Other options: Time Out Chicago, Chicago Parent, Make it Better Magazine, Chicagoist, Chicago Reader, North Shore Weekend, Daily Herald

Media Alerts*

Program types promoted: 3 & 4

The library sends an average of 2-4 media alerts per month. Media alerts are another way of communicating Library events to the press. Media alerts are short (What, Who, Where, When, Why, and Contact Information) and are normally used as a way to get reporters to cover an event, but they can also generate interest in an article leading up to an event.

Venues: Daily North Shore, Northbrook Tower, Northbrook Star

Other Kinds of Feature Articles*: When feasible and appropriate, the library sends feature articles and human interest pieces to the newspapers for publishing consideration. These articles are a great way for us to generate positive buzz about the library. These feature articles are a key part of our content marketing strategy; **read more about content marketing on page 6.**

*A Note about Newspapers:

It is important to note that nothing we send to the press is guaranteed to be published, nor is it guaranteed that a reporter will show up to cover a program. Newspapers are very busy covering the community, and it is impossible to predict what articles will interest them.

Online Promotional Outlets

Online Community News Articles:

Program types promoted: 3, 4

All press releases are also posted as community news articles.

Community news articles are not printed; they exist online only. We post any press release we send on these online outlets. Occasionally, we will write a short article to promote a program that did not get a press release, but since we do not get tons of visibility with this outlet, we don't write extra articles often.

Venues: Daily North Shore, Daily Herald, Northbrook Star

Online Event Calendars

Program types promoted: ALL, unless registration capacity is limited

Online event calendars are a great way for us to spread the word about our events. Some online calendars translate to print (MetroMix listings can be printed in the Northbrook Star), and some online calendars live exclusively online. Both options can work well for us.

Programs are uploaded into these event calendars on a monthly basis (for example: November events are uploaded in the first week of October, if not the last week of September). Occasionally, website and newspapers like the Northbrook Tower will pull events from our website, so staff are highly encouraged to make sure their Evanced listings are up to date.

Please note that programs that require registration are not always uploaded to event calendars (when the program only allows a small number of people to attend, or the program is mostly full at the time of uploading). We want to avoid promoting programs that community members will be unable to attend.

- **Common Venues:** MetroMix (Chicago Tribune/Northbrook Star), SpinGo, Daily North Shore, Daily Herald

Social Media

Program types promoted: ALL, within reason

The Social Media Committee shares funny, entertaining, and informative posts on the library's social media channels. The Marketing Specialist and Content specialist supplement those posts with promotions for library events and services.

Social media works best when it showcases the personality as an organization; as such, we have to balance all event promotions with other content (including our blog posts; turn to page 6 for more information) so that our social media followers remain engaged and interested.

It's also important to note that social media does not provide a big return when it comes to program attendance, especially when compared to our print and email newsletters. When it comes to showcasing programs, social media is better for posting photos after programs, rather than promoting them ahead of time.

Staff are always welcome to suggest a social media post (examples include photos taken at programs or news about a library service we provide)! **Please email socialmediacommittee@northbrook.info** with ideas, suggestions, links, photos, etc. that you think could work on our social media accounts.

Library Home Page

Program types promoted: ALL, but limited space is available.

The home page aims to carefully balance promoting programs (especially levels 1 and 2), library services, and blog posts. We try to simultaneously feature programs from all departments as much as possible.

Graphics

Print Media: Posters, Flyers, Bookmarks, Handouts, etc.

Program types promoted: ALL, within reason

Posters, flyers, half sheets, and quarter sheets can be an effective promotional tool. In order to minimize the visual clutter in the building and maximize the return we get on print collateral, we have designated promotional areas in the building, and we prioritize the programs we advertise. The lobby is our most successful promotional space, which is why we designate one large poster and one smaller poster for each programming department at any given time. Additional materials (8.5x11 flyers, half sheets, quarter sheets, etc) are put out at the discretion of the Graphic Designer, who aims to minimize visual clutter and balance program promotions across all departments.

In their promotional planning meetings, Marketing & Graphics will work with department managers to prioritize programs that need graphics work, just as they will prioritize programs that need press releases and other marketing efforts. Once those programs have been determined, staff will be informed, and are expected to submit their graphics requests as soon as possible.

If you are distributing flyers outside the building, you must indicate this on your Graphics Request so that the Library's information will be used on your materials. Distributing flyers around the Northbrook community is the responsibility of the person in charge of the program. Please contact Emily Glimco if you need a list of venues to go to.

Tips for submitting a graphics request:

To request graphics, fill out the Graphics Request Form (found on the Form Finder) and submit it to Emily Glimco via email. Once the submitted text has been proofed, Emily will forward the request to the Graphic Designer.

- It is the responsibility of staff to complete these requests by the provided due date following promotional plan meetings.
- Graphics requests must be completed in full; please do not send request forms and desired text separately.
- The "date needed" should be approximately 4 weeks before your program will take place.
 - If you need to see a proof, you may want to allow at least 5 weeks before your program will take place.
- In the "description of work requested" box, list anything you want the Graphic Designer to know about your request. Examples:
 - Who is the audience you are trying to reach?
 - What is the most important thing you want to convey with your print materials?
- If you need to see a proof, be sure to make all your changes on that proof—you might not be able to receive more than one.

Content Marketing

Program types promoted: ALL, within reason

Content marketing is an important aspect of our overall marketing strategy. Content marketing means creating content that inspires, educates, and entertains our patrons while simultaneously humanizing (and subtly promoting) the library. The goal is to generate a recurring interest in the library by distributing relevant, valuable, interesting, and shareable content across our marketing outlets.

While content marketing does help us promote our events and services, it also helps us tell stories, whether they are the stories of our patrons or our staff. Because we strive to be a place where community happens, these stories are a key part of our marketing plan. The Marketing Specialist and the Content Specialist work together to create a content marketing strategy that balances human interest stories with pieces that promote our events and services. We also discuss content marketing initiatives with departments during promotional plan meetings. Here are some examples:

- Teen Advisory Board: Year in Review
 - Featured quotes from T.A.B. members, recognized their accomplishments
- What are Little Free Libraries?
 - Explained origins of the two LFLs put up by NPL; promoted Summer Reading initiative involving LFL tokens
- Steinway Piano Finds Home in the Library
 - Announced new piano, presents backstory, promoted Fine Arts Fall
- Northbrook Knitters & Crocheters Craft for Charity at the Library
 - Showcased a group of patrons, told their story
- How the Library Can Help Your Career Search
 - Promoted relevant programs and highlighted NPL services
- Touching Tribute: A Seat of Honor
 - Showcased a Northbrook family who sponsored an auditorium seat
- October is Family History Month
 - Promoted relevant programs and highlighted NPL services

Other examples include how-to articles, curated staff recommendations, and more.

When we write content, we share it across a number of channels, including:

- Print newsletter
- Email newsletter
- Social media
- Library home page
- Library blog

Content marketing usually involves written articles, but can also include videos we create.

Ultimately, in content marketing, our goals are to:

- Make patrons feel successful by answering a problem they have
- Inspire the patron to dig deeper into our events and resources
- Make the patron feel connected to the library
- Position the library as a place where community happens

Who do I contact if...?

Problem:

Contact:

I saw the proof of my graphics request, and I want to change the text (such as the program description) ?	Emily Glimco (who will approve and relay changes to Dave)
There is a small error on my graphics request (incorrect date, presenter's name misspelled, etc.)	Dave Kosrow
I saw the proof of my graphics request, and I want to change the style/color/etc?	Dave Kosrow
I am not sure what kind of visual or written message I want on my graphics request and need some direction?	Dave Kosrow (Emily can consult on the text if desired)
I want to distribute my flyers in the community, but I don't know where to go?	Emily Glimco
A patron wants to receive our Latest Edition newsletter?	Emily Glimco <i>Please take down their full name and mailing information and email, if they come to you in person. Otherwise, any calls or emails can be forwarded right away.</i>
A patron wants to sign up for our email newsletters?	Emily Glimco <i>You can also direct them to the "eNewsletters" section on our website, at the bottom of all pages.</i>
We are out of newsletters in my department?	Emily Glimco
I want to share something on the Library's social media, but I'm not on the committee?	Emily Glimco, or email the social media committee at socialmediacommittee@northbrook.info .
I need a last-minute social media push for my program (registration numbers are low)?	Emily Glimco
My program isn't part of one specific department, but I still need marketing and/or graphics? (Library-wide programs or programs put on by committees)	Please fill out the graphics request form and check "Yes" on the section that says "Do you want to be contacted about available marketing efforts for your program?"

Contact Information (for staff use only):

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