Module 3: Tips for promoting your project and collections

Tailoring Your Messages

Media communications about your project will be tailored to the type and format of the vehicle or outlet. A press release will be very different from a blog post or an electronic billboard announcement. You will need to find ways to tell your story in multiple ways: very briefly; core points plus some details, and longer formats that provide for quotes, descriptions and acknowledgements. More dynamic communications vehicles, such as radio interviews or video messages will require special tailoring of core content. For all of these it will be important to ascertain the type of reader or viewer and to shape your core message(s) accordingly.

Create publicity vehicles that reach beyond your traditional library community.

Printed announcements posted in the library or articles in the library newsletter are not enough. Even placing a feature about the project on the library’s homepage is not enough, although all these steps should be taken.

Consider alternative sources. Target social media and broadcast outlets that reach more broadly. Pay special attention to the communications vehicles – social media, radio stations, local newsletters - used by the communities which you are targeting for collection development.

Use outreach for collection development as vehicle for promotion

The Outreach you conduct for sourcing appropriate born digital materials is another means of promotion. Outreach inherently builds curiosity and interest in the project and starts to establish ongoing connections with new archival constituencies. Once you have established local contacts for content sourcing, keep them informed about the progress of the project. They are key stakeholders and can themselves generate local awareness.

Citizen generated publicity

Engage members of the public with whom you have trusted connections to widen your circle of communicators. Patrons of the archives, educators, individuals contacted through Collection
Development Outreach, leaders of community organization and local associations, Friends of the Archives and Friends of the Library, branch librarians – all of these are potential allies in getting out the word about web archiving and its significance for your community. Word of mouth can be surprisingly effective. Provide the individuals with Talking Points or FAQs.

Build personal connections with local media outlets and journalists.

Invite them to visit your facility and your current digital collections. By gaining their interest in the project at the outset you will set the stage for future reports, articles, blog posts or interviews. Explain the significance of the project, both locally and as part of a national initiative.

Directly inform donors and other supporters such as City officials

Appearances at meetings of Library Boards, Friends Groups and City Council or related Committee meetings are another way to build community consciousness of your project and emphasize its importance to the library and the community.

Host web archiving conversations

These could be formal or information conversations with the goal of gaining perspectives of stakeholders and starting community conversations about the project. They could take place in the Central Library, a branch library, or a community location. Even a small group of allies can help generate local interest and, potentially, local support.

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Community Webs program partners

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