

Marketing and promotion of special libraries and collections: methods, vehicles and activities

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Abstract

Marketing and promotions is not just about increasing users and widening access; it must also be a concerted effort to advocate for, build awareness of, and articulate the value of your library service.

In the 2010 ALIA Special Libraries Survey, 'marketing' ranked highly as an important skill for a special librarian, and yet only 11.1% of respondents indicated that their library had a marketing plan (Australian Library and Information Association 2010).

In the case of special libraries, it is often difficult to devise methods, vehicles and activities to market and promote the library service due to the nature of the service. There may also be significant barriers to marketing and promotion of a special library service: for example, as is the case with the Museums Victoria Library, the collection sits back-of-house and therefore is not visible, and additionally has not been represented on the organisation's corporate website. Both of these things have led to a lack of awareness, as well as limiting the channels available to for promotion.

A literature review has summarised already documented methods, vehicles and activities for marketing and promotions in special libraries and collections, and a survey of special libraries and collections in Australia has been conducted to identify any gaps in the literature.

Using the resulting information gathered through the literature review and the survey, as well as my own experiences in marketing the Museums Victoria Library, this paper provides a catalogue of established, suggested, and 'tried and tested' methods, vehicles and activities which may be used in the marketing and promotion of special libraries and collections.

Introduction

As a special librarian working in a library that has significant barriers that prevent the library's effective marketing and promotion, I have repeatedly looked to literature for marketing and promotional ideas, and often the examples given in the literature are either few and far between or not able to be applied to my situation. There is little empirical evidence that captures the impact of advocacy, marketing, publicity and outreach on special libraries, and no best-practice data, which I would posit is due to dramatic differences in each special library or collection's circumstances.

I have chosen to combine special libraries and special collections here as I believe that both have several similarities: for example, both deal with highly specialised, unique, and often scarce material; both will often deal with a limited number of subject areas; and both often have low visibility within their parent organisation.

With the case of the Museums Victoria Library, the collection sits back-of-house and therefore is not visible, and additionally has only had representation on the organisation's corporate website for a few months. Both of these things have led to a lack of awareness, as well as limiting the channels available to market the service and collection. In addition, as a government-funded organisation, Museums Victoria has a mandate to engage with the public: something which is very difficult with no

physical and only minimal digital public presence, and which requires much proactivity.

Every special library and collection has its own unique strengths and weaknesses. In writing this paper, my aim is to examine the best-practice planning processes for effectively marketing special libraries and collections, and to create a catalogue of practical, real-life examples of methods, vehicles and activities that may be used to exploit strengths and circumvent any weaknesses, in order to promote, and engage people with our special libraries and collections (marketingspecials.miraheze.org).

This paper will firstly examine existing literature relating to marketing and promotion of special libraries and collections. A survey of special libraries and collections in Australia has been conducted to identify any gaps in the literature, and a description of the survey methodology and discussion of results follows on. Some best practice case studies will then be examined, including marketing and promotions successes we have experienced in the Museums Victoria Library, followed by best-practice recommendations and recommendations for future research.

Literature Review

“No librarian should assume that their library has a captive audience”
(Galbraith & Smith 2012, p.143)

Marketing skills are critical to librarianship. Your collection may be full of invaluable and unique information, but if nobody knows that information sits in your collection, or if there is a lack of awareness that your library or collection even exists, your customer base will gradually erode.

As Cullingworth (2016) and Fabian et al. (2012) point out, marketing in special collections and libraries is often confused with promotions; for example, organising and advertising an event. However, marketing actually concerns every single interaction that a library has with its users, and its potential users. Marketing is about defining customers' needs, meeting those needs, even exceeding expectations where possible, and it concerns long-range planning initiatives and documents (Fabian 2012). In addition, marketing and promotions is not just about increasing users and widening access; it must also be a concerted effort to advocate for, build awareness of, create support for, and articulate the relevance and value of your library service and collections (Lasewicz 2017, Ard 2012, Schachter 2008).

Any effort towards marketing and promotions must start with a clear marketing plan, one with a strategic vision at its core, and which takes into account your library or organisation's strategic plan. Consider what you want to accomplish, what information you want to convey to your audience, what results you want to achieve, and decide the standards by which you would deem it a success (Gordon & Higginbottom 2016). Identify your various customer segments, their needs, desires, and expectations, and think about how long your 'products' and services are likely to appeal to them (Germano 2010). It is also important to understand what the strengths of your collection are, and what makes your collection unique and distinct (Gaub 2011) as your point-of-difference will be the basis on which you develop your brand positioning.

It is also recommended to consider environmental influences such as social, economic, political and technological factors, as well as internal and external stakeholders, and to conduct a SWOT analysis and market research (Koontz and Mon 2014). Ard (2012) recommends gap analysis in order to understand user

behaviours and compare actual performance with potential or desired performance, and mentions LibQual, a library specific gap analysis tool. For more in-depth information on creating a detailed marketing plan for libraries, see Kennedy & LaGuardia (2017), Cullingford (2016), Gordon & Higginbottom (2016), and Potter (2012).

In addition, several authors advocate the creation of an outreach plan, to sit alongside the marketing plan (Lawrence 2007; Galbraith & Smith; Theimer 2014). 'Outreach' can describe a broad range of activities; but generally, it is the act of raising the visibility of the library and its collections in order to attract the interest of a broad and diverse community of potential users, with the eventual aim of converting those potential users into a network of patrons, friends and donors (Galbraith & Smith 2012).

Theimer (2014) advocates using innovative practices to interest new users in collections. She says there is "*such a broad scope and no standards or rules constraining how or how to attract*", and we are "*limited only by...resources and imagination*" (vii). Allen (2007) also notes that potential users can be anywhere, so flexibility is required, and each group of potential users will require a slightly different approach.

It is also important to consider what activities staff skills, talents and capacities can offer. For example, if your goal is to create more of an online presence, do your staff have the technical expertise to achieve this? Do staff have time to update online offerings on a regular basis? Do staff have the skills to write high-quality text suitable for the online environment? If not, are funds available to bring in an external contractor? Or are there other people in your organisation who could assist?

Knowing your own or your staff's skills as well as limitations is very important (Mazzenga 2011).

Survey Method

The aim in conducting this survey was to discover how special libraries and collections are marketing and promoting their collections, how often, and by which methods, vehicles and activities; how involved in marketing and promotions special library and collections staff members are; and how much time is spent on marketing and promotion. Additionally, which methods, vehicles and activities are found to be most effective; any perceived barriers to marketing and promoting library services and collections; and to collect best-practice case studies. See Appendix 1 for the survey questionnaire.

The survey contained 29 questions and was produced online using Survey Gizmo. It was distributed using targeted email and Listserv groups, shared on Twitter, and was also included in the ALIA Weekly bulletin. The survey was open from 7 March until 1 April 2018 and received 67 complete responses and seven partial responses. A further 19 partial responses were disqualified from the results due to nonresponse of majority of questions.

Discussion of Survey Results

Most respondents were located in an Australian city, with a spread of Australian states and territories represented. A broad range of sectors are also represented, with nearly half of respondents working for either local, state or federal government (Figure 3). On average, respondents' parent organisations have 1879 employees, and the special library or collection area has on average 3.5 full-time equivalent employees. Respondents indicated that an average of three volunteers assisted them in their work, however this varied greatly with 44 out of 74 respondents indicating they had no volunteers.

One surprising finding from the study is the lack of accessible information available about holdings in special library and collection (Figure 4). The highest result from this question was 54.8 per cent of respondents who indicated that their library

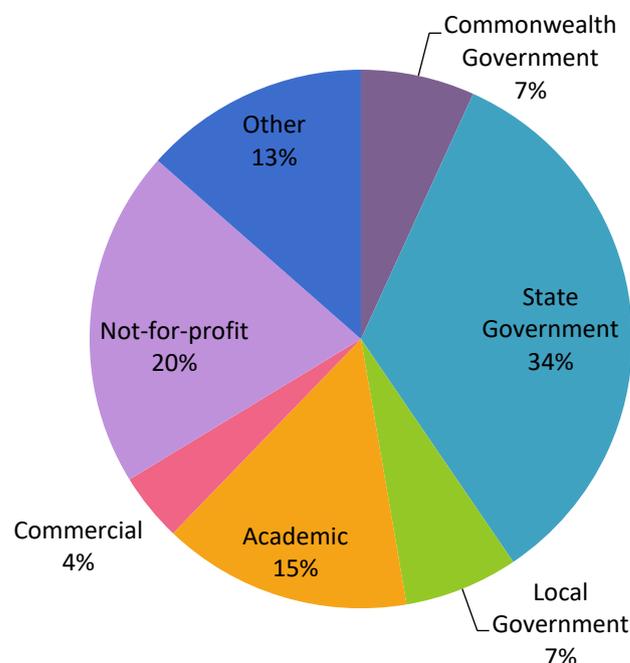
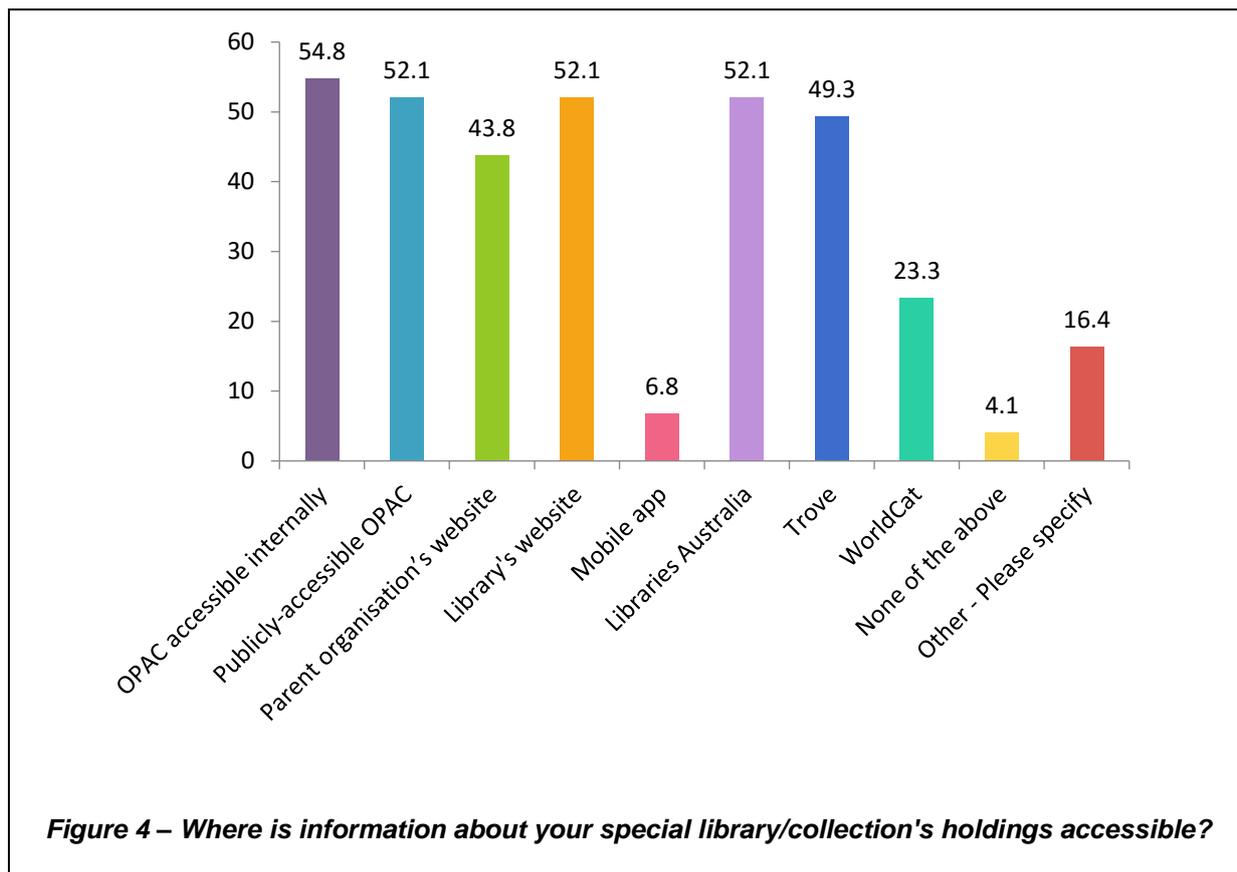


Figure 3 – Which sector best describes your parent organisation?



catalogue was available to internal clients, with slightly less (52.1 per cent) stating information about their holdings were available on a publicly-accessible OPAC; via their library's website; and/or via Libraries Australia. Only 23.3 per cent have their holdings on WorldCat, and 4.1 per cent stated that their holdings are not accessible anywhere. This is concerning, as Meglio (2012) states:

“A special library may house a wealth of invaluable information that patrons cannot find anywhere else, but if nobody knows about it, the library's customer base will begin to erode.” (Meglio 2012, p.16)

When asked ‘Do you feel there is a lack of awareness of the services that your library offers to its clients?’ the clear majority of respondents (72.6 per cent) answered ‘yes’. Most common responses to why there was a lack of awareness included: clients who are remote from the organisation; difficulty in creating marketing collateral or no marketing and promotional program in place; high staff or

client turnover; clients are too busy or not fully aware of the services the library provides; a lack of management support; a lack of time, resources, or marketing and promotions skills; limited opportunities to promote library services and collections; and a lack of visibility.

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that marketing is an important skill for someone working in a special library or special collection to have (95 per cent), and that marketing library services to internal clients is important (99 per cent).

Respondents were invited to comment on both questions, and some suggested there should be more marketing and promotions units available as part of qualifications for information professionals. Several respondents' comments to these questions strongly spoke to the belief that marketing of special libraries and special collections is important:

"A special library is only as useful as its collection and the regular access of that collection by its service users. If not being accessed, then it has no viable use. Marketing helps keep it relevant and memorable."

"Be visible or perish."

"...it is vital to communicate the value of your library not just externally but internally as well."

"If you can't market yourself people don't know you exist, if people don't know you exist you don't get used, if you don't get used you lose funding, if you lose funding you don't exist!"

"It's crucial. A special library lives or dies by the perceived value it adds. Perception is everything and the special librarian needs above average skills in this area to promote their service."

"This is especially so due to the smaller market who are interested in our products - you need to know how and where to best target them for the budget available."

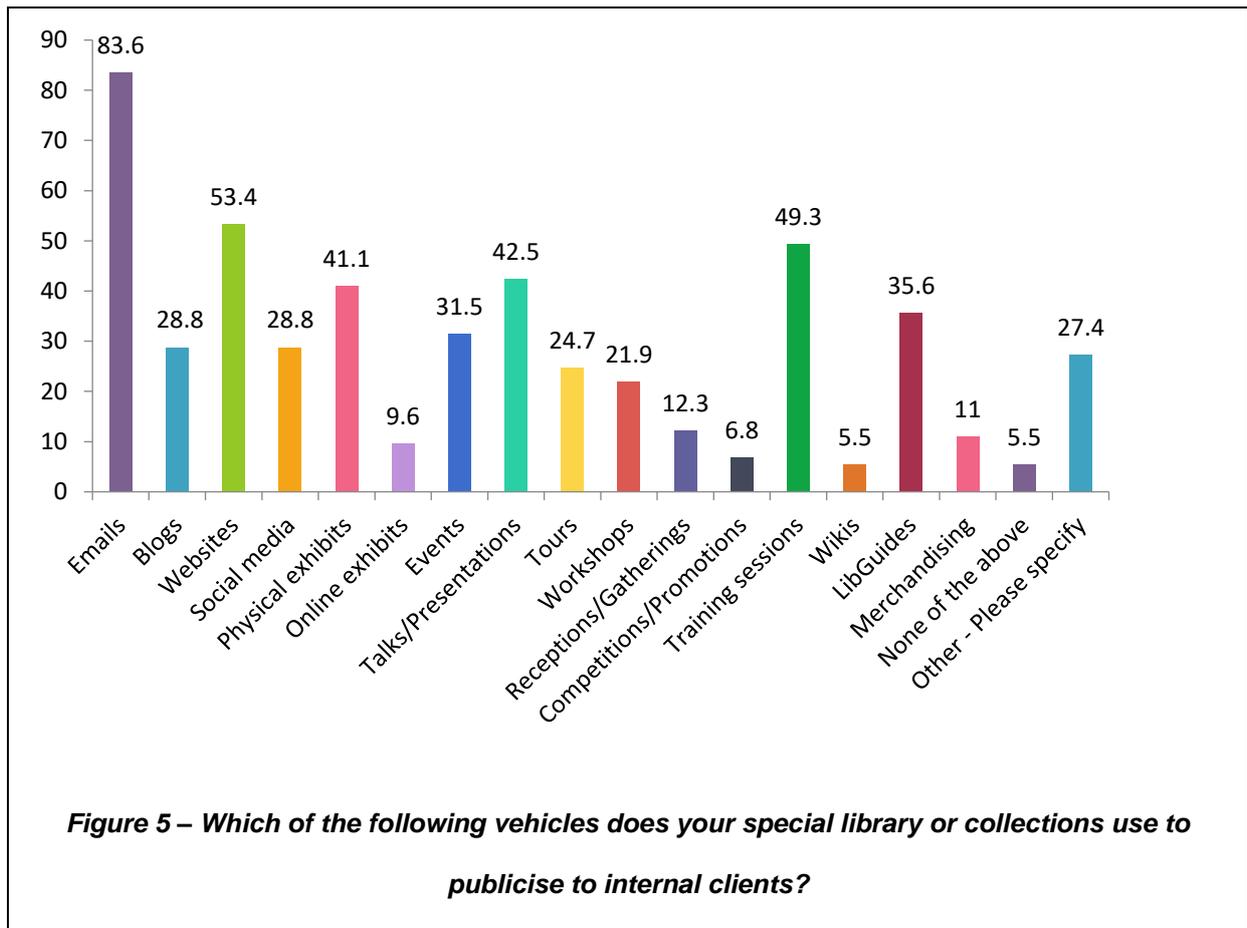
"Critical to maintain relevance, traction and demonstrate value or the library can be deemed superfluous."

"You must have internal support for the library to ensure that the library is seen as too valuable to reduce or close."

It is clear from these comments, and from the high level of agreement to the importance of possessing marketing skills and the importance of marketing library services that most respondents understand *why* marketing is important. However, when asked if their special library or collection has a dedicated marketing plan only 17.8 per cent answered that it did, which suggests that there may be some doubt around *how* best to achieve positive results. It should be noted that this figure has risen since the 2010 ALIA Special Libraries Survey, where only 11.1% of respondents indicated that their library had a marketing plan (Australian Library and Information Association 2010).

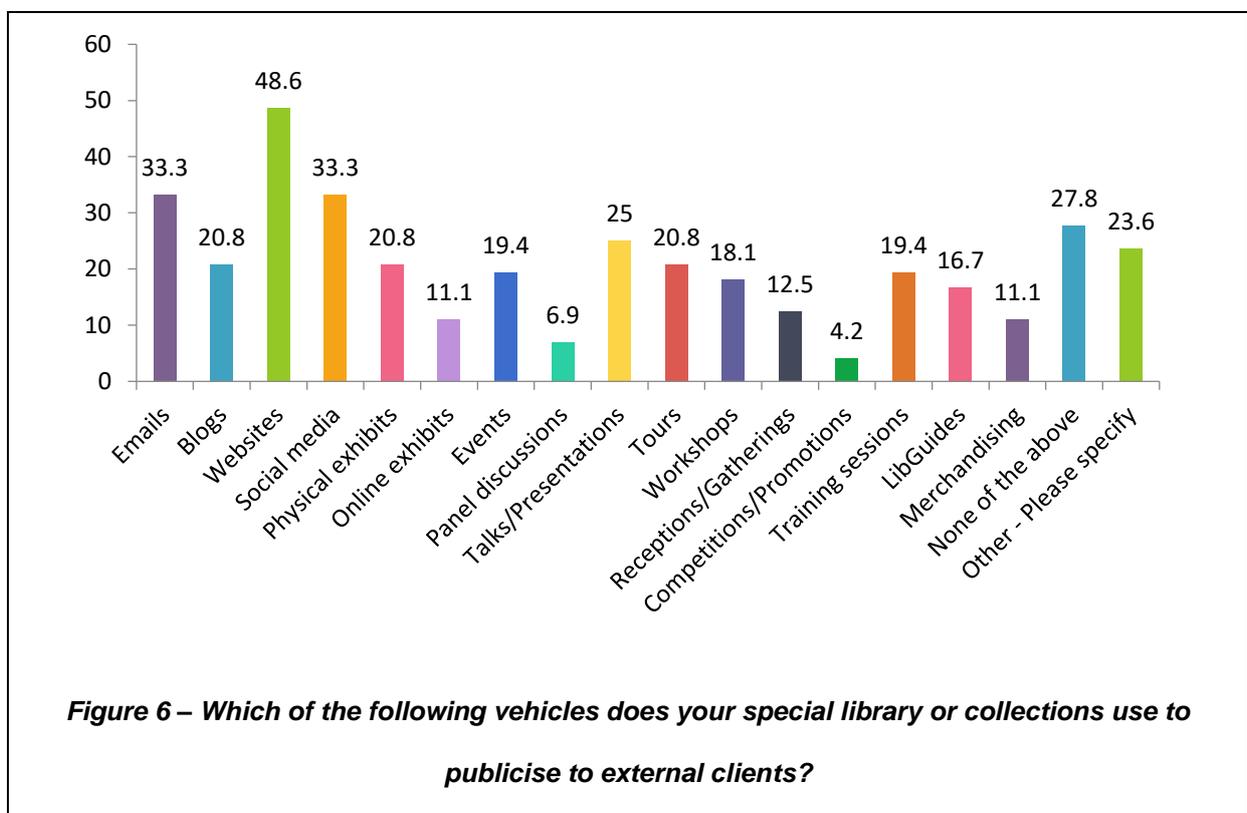
In terms of which vehicles special libraries and collections are using to publicise to internal clients, the highest result by far from that question was from 83.6 per cent of respondents who said they use emails, followed by 53.4 per cent using websites, and 49.3 per cent using training sessions. A surprising 5.5 per cent answered that they do not use any of the 16 listed vehicles for internal promotion, by which I can only assume they do not promote to internal clients at all as 'other' was also an option (Figure 5).

Respondents were asked to nominate which vehicles they found to be most effective for internal publicity and by far the most popular response (27 respondents) was any kind of face-to-face contact, such as presentations, tours and workshops. This was followed by 19 respondents who said email; 14 responses of website or intranet; seven responses of social media; and five responses of physical displays.



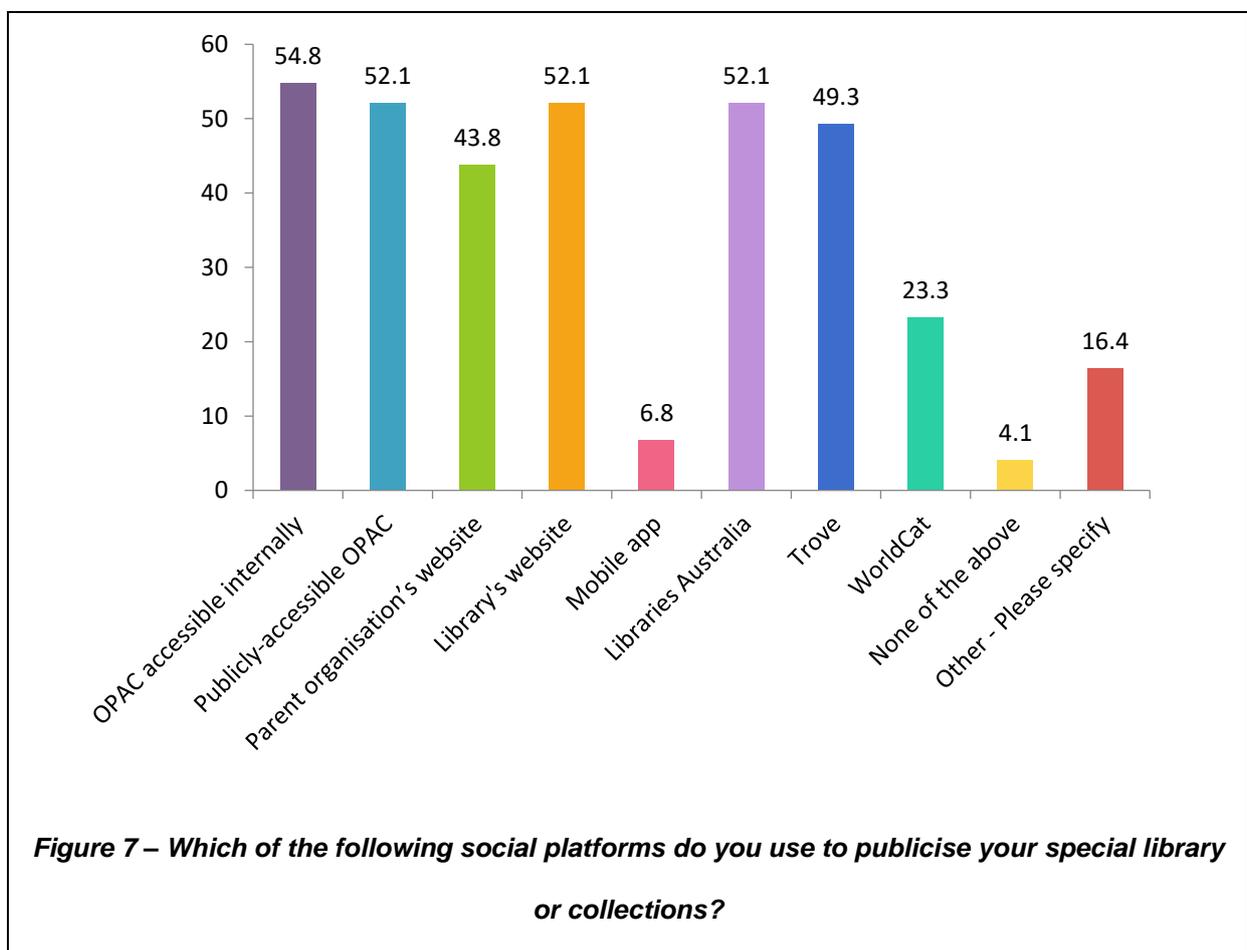
Perhaps not surprisingly, the number of respondents who agreed that marketing to external clients is important was a lesser amount (75 per cent) than those who agreed that marketing to internal clients is important. Some reasons given as to the importance of external marketing included: establishing the library as a community asset; having an obligation to the public to share collections and promote access to information; attracting donations; establishing networks with library colleagues and other affiliated professionals; and to create a sense of ‘value’ in the collection and build a network of stakeholder advocates. Negative responses tended to be that this question was ‘not applicable’, ‘not relevant’, or that external marketing provided no advantage.

In terms of which vehicles special libraries and collections are using to publicise to external clients, the highest result in this category was 48.6 per cent of respondents who said they use websites. This was followed by emails and social media which 33.3 per cent of respondents indicated they use for external publicity. The next highest result was from respondents who marked 'none of the above'; at 27.8 per cent this roughly corresponds with the quantity of respondents who agreed that marketing to external clients is important (Figure 6).



Respondents were also asked to nominate which vehicles they found to be most effective for external publicity, and face-to-face events such as tours or presentations was the most popular answer here as well with 13 respondents, followed closely by 10 responses of social media; seven responses of website; and emails with five responses.

The variation in which platforms and vehicles that have been found to be most effective internally compared with externally is interesting: for example, social media has been found to be more effective externally. This paper suggests that this could be due to the monetisation of corporate social platforms such as Workplace by Facebook; or perhaps some organisations still consider social media use in the workplace as timewasting rather than an exercise in marketing and promotion, and a networking opportunity.



Indeed, one surprising result from the survey was that a relatively small percentage of respondents are using social platforms to publicise their special library or collections (Figure 7). The highest result for that question was 38.4 per cent of respondents who stated that they use no social platforms for publicity, followed by 35.6 per cent using Facebook, 28.8 per cent using Twitter, and 16.4 per cent using

Instagram. Of those who responded positively to the question, respondents tended to post to social platforms an average of five times per month. Interestingly, only 39.5 per cent of those who responded positively manage their own social accounts, with the rest relying on their parent organisation to post on their behalf.

The survey showed that on average, special library and/or collections staff spend two hours and 50 minutes per week on marketing and publicity, with 81 per cent stating they thought it would be beneficial to spend more time on such activities.

Some respondents answered that they are marketing continuously, or that marketing is embedded in their services, while some responded that they have organisation-wide communications teams that do all of this work for them. A modest 32.8 per cent of respondents stated they have done cross-promotion with another collection or organisation.

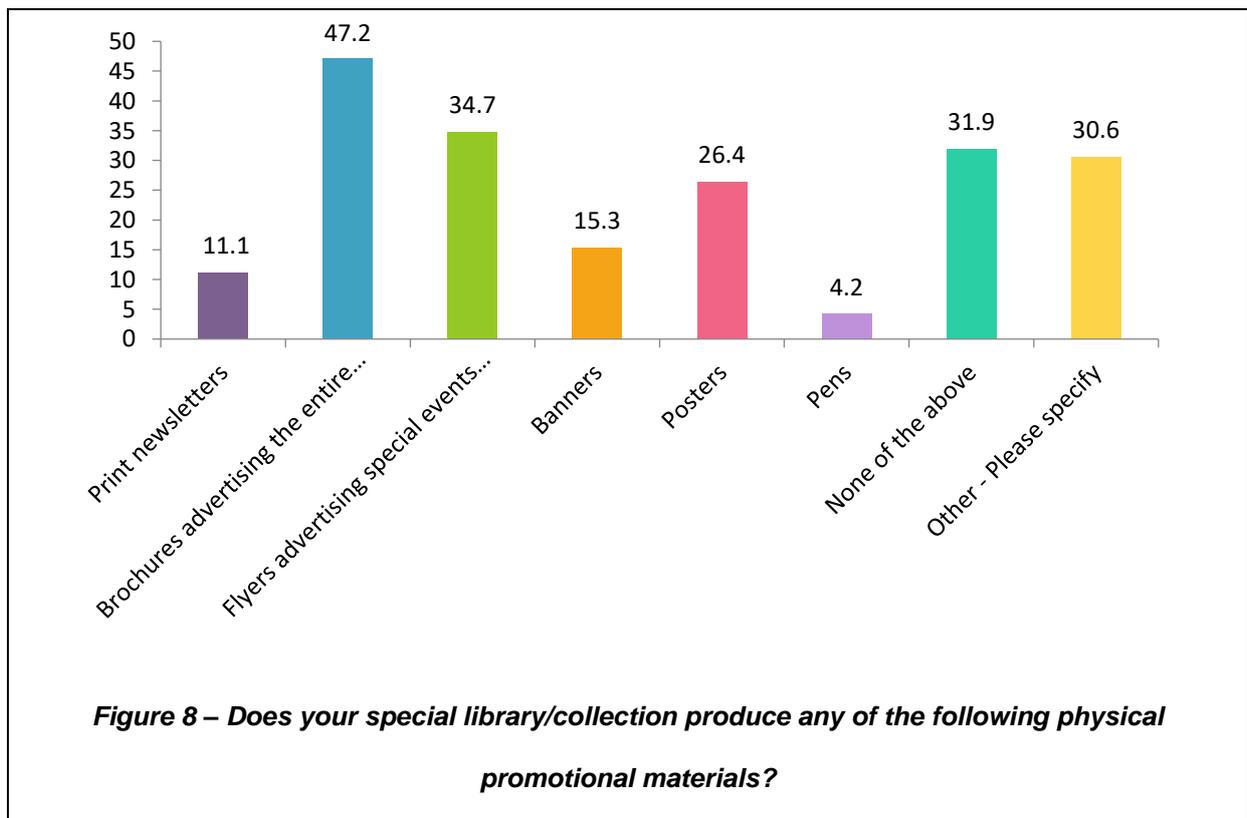
In considering the barriers to promoting their special library or collections, the most common answers were time; money; a lack of organisational support from either management, senior staff, or marketing and communications staff; a lack of marketing expertise or a lack of ideas; and an unsuitable space to host visitors.

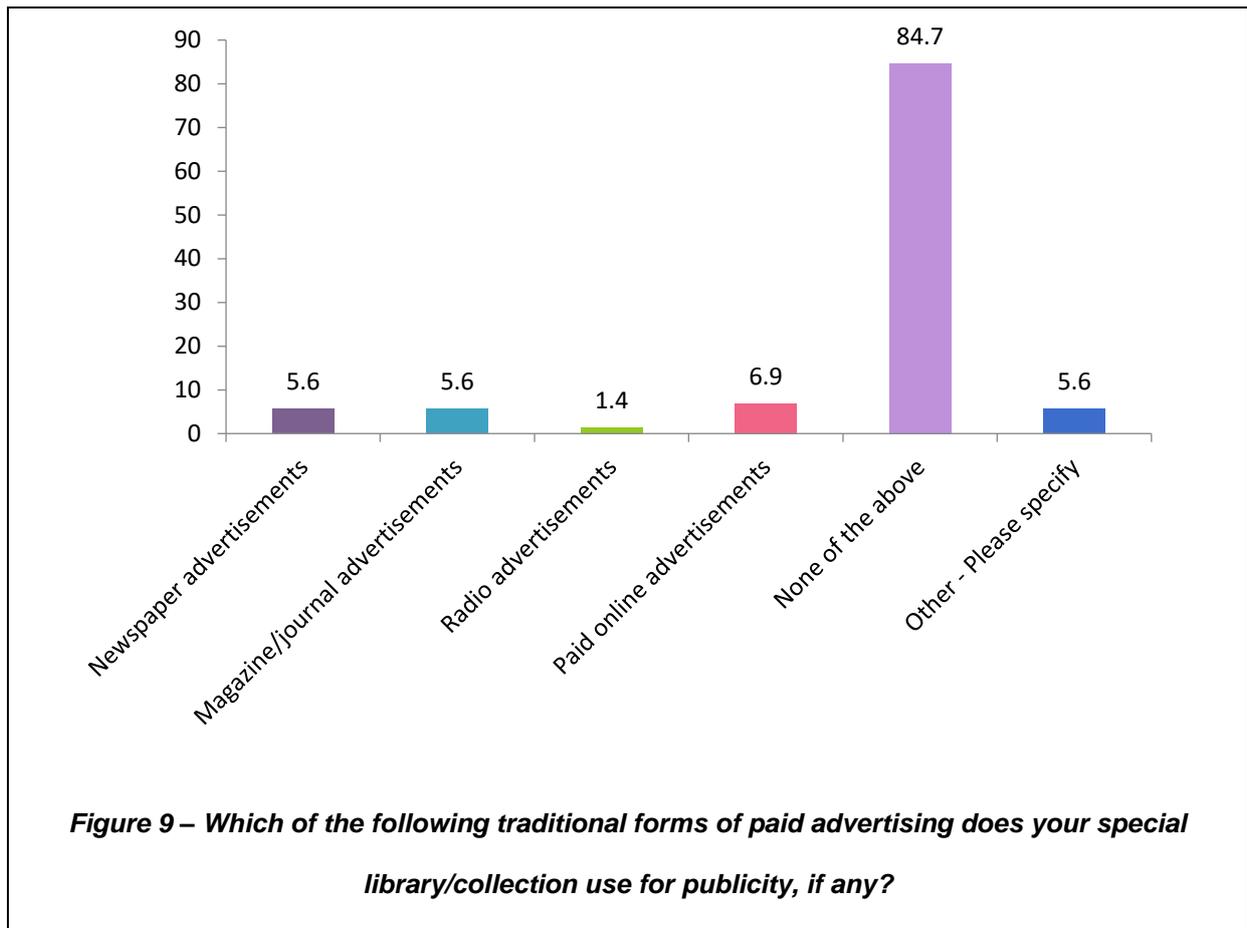
Interestingly, a number of respondents also raised concerns about an increase in marketing and promotional efforts resulting in an increase in demand, and not having the resources to meet this demand, which is a real dilemma.

The survey also indicated that most are using quantifiable measures to judge the success of a marketing or publicity campaign, most commonly through monitoring statistics for an increase usage and/or enquiries, and numbers attending events. A small number of respondents said that they used web or social media analytics, web hits, or surveys to measure success. Qualitative feedback was also highlighted as

being important to respondents, while 14 respondents said they either did not measure success of campaigns, that they were 'not sure', 'not required to' or that the question was 'not applicable'.

Meglio (2012) states that online technologies such as YouTube and other online video channels, mobile-friendly websites and apps, blogs, and social media should be used to *“compliment, rather than replace, traditional outreach strategies such as marketing collateral and promotional materials”* (p.16). The survey results indicate that libraries are following this advice, with 68.1 per cent of respondents indicating they do produce physical items such as posters, brochures, printed newsletters, bookmarks, and tote bags (Figure 8). A modest amount of respondents (15.3 per cent) also invest in paid advertising (Figure 9).





Case Studies

Marketing and Promotions at Museums Victoria Library

The Museums Victoria Library collection was first established in the 1850s as a working collection for the Museum's curators. Over its 160-plus year history the library has evolved into one of the best collections of natural history books and journals in Australia. The library continues to be largely an internal resource for curators, scientists, researchers and other museum staff, and is also considered to be of high significance to external researchers, scholars, artists, and the wider Victorian community. The Library houses a rare book collection specialising in eighteenth and nineteenth century natural history titles.

The Library has a limited number of channels available to market our service and collection as we have very little physical presence as all of our collections are locked away in limited-access storage. Despite years of outreach and engagement efforts within the organisation, somehow we still have patrons who tell us they had no idea the organisation has a library. As a small team with a limited budget, all of our marketing and promotional efforts require a great deal of persistence, proactivity, and creativity.

Internally, we have had successes making connections with new staff members by sending welcome emails to new staff members with basic information about the library and web links to our online resources, we take part in corporate induction sessions, as well as running general information and orientation tours biannually, and regular rare book displays for staff and volunteers. We maintain an internal blog that features information on new acquisitions, news, reviews, research links and general updates, and we post regular updates on our organisation's intranet page.

We have several 'pop-up' libraries located around Museums Victoria sites for increased visibility, and we take the initiative to circulate new resources to appropriate staff members, in person where possible. We make contact with project teams and at the start of exhibition development and renewal projects to offer our assistance and make teams aware of relevant library resources. We also produce and circulate reading lists based around our exhibitions and sites, and have conducted training workshops on topics such as accessing eResources.

In addition to connecting with our internal patrons, as a government-funded organisation, Museums Victoria has a mandate to engage with the public: something that is quite difficult with no physical and only minimal digital public presence. We

tend to find effective external networking opportunities particularly difficult to come by in our situation; however, we are lucky that much of our collection is visually appealing, which certainly helps to attract attention.

In terms of external promotion, we now have a presence on our organisation's website containing information about our collections and how to access them, donating to the library, and student and volunteer opportunities. Our holdings are also available on Trove and Worldcat. We contribute to our organisation's social media accounts, in collaboration with the Museum's marketing department. We find that partnering with our organisation's marketing department is beneficial because it takes away the pressure to post every day, instead we can contribute semi-regularly when we have something to promote or illuminate. Additionally, our organisation's social media has a larger reach than an individual library account would have, due to its multidisciplinary nature.

We also partner with the Museum's marketing department to offer regularly-scheduled behind-the-scenes tours of the library and our rare books to museum members, and other groups on an ad-hoc basis.

We contribute and loan items to exhibitions, have curated and assisted with exhibits of rare books, and developed online exhibitions, such as 'Time flies in museum collections – ornithology in Victoria' (<https://bit.ly/2K0muAd>) for Creative Victoria. In addition, the Australian node of the Biodiversity Heritage Library is based at Melbourne Museum, and several of our books and journal runs have been digitised for that website, and items from and information about our library is also featured in their promotional efforts as a result.

Below I have included some information on opportunities we have found particular success in exploiting:

Melbourne Rare Book Week

Melbourne Rare Book Week (MRBW) is a 10-day program of events, exhibitions and lectures held annually. Initially the program of events was curated to support the annual rare book fair run by the Australian and New Zealand Association of Antiquarian Booksellers, but since that first year MRBW has taken on a life of its own. The program has grown year-on-year since its inception in 2012, and last year over 40 free events were held at libraries, literary and historical societies and bookshops throughout Melbourne.

“It is a major attraction for book collectors, librarians and all who have a love of words, print on paper and literary heritage”, says organiser Kay Craddock. “Rare book librarians were pivotal to the initial idea of running Melbourne Rare Book Week...their continued support and growing involvement in the program is building an even stronger bond between libraries, the rare book trade, and public recognition of the role of libraries in our society.”

A host of special libraries and collections take part in MRBW, including the Museums Victoria Library. We have found that hosting or presenting events is fantastic exposure, and attending the events is a great opportunity for free professional development and to network with other librarians and those in the book trade. The model of MRBW could certainly be adapted to other cities.

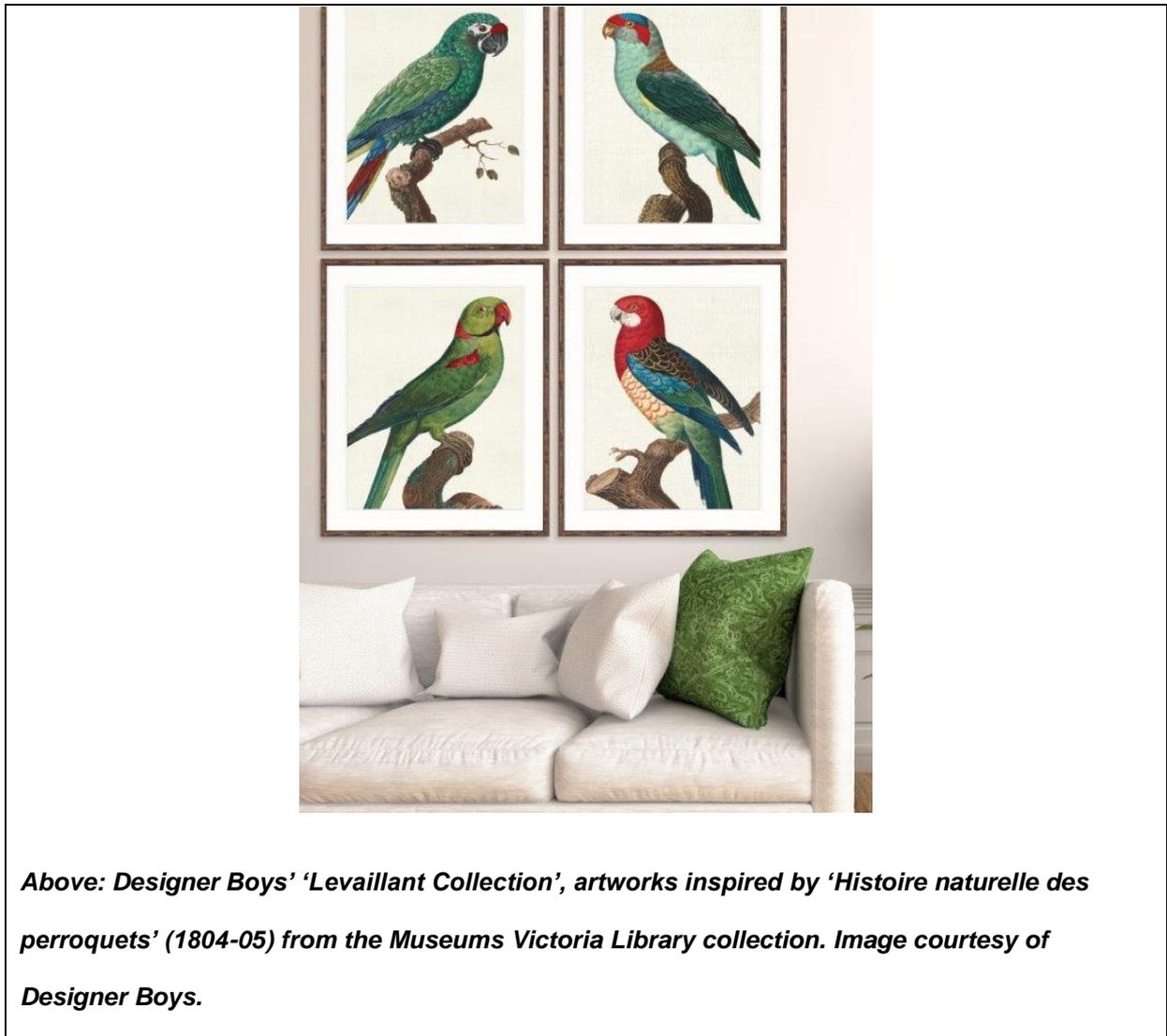


Above: Photograph of participants at Melbourne Rare Book Week drawing studio event held at Melbourne Museum, 1 July 2017, scientific books and specimens are together for artists to sketch. Photographer: Jon Augier.

Designer Boys

Motivated by a lack of original art available for interiors, Gavin Atkins & Warren Sonin launched art wholesale business Designer Boys, working in partnership with artists and photographers to curate and create beautiful decorative art exclusively for design professionals. The Designer Boys have a love of nature and natural curiosities, and in recent years have begun to work in partnership with the Museums Victoria Library to create collections of artworks inspired by our rare book collection. Each sale gives rise to a royalty that contributes to the work of our organisation, as

well as raising the profile of the library and our rare book collection to new audiences through this external partnership.



Above: Designer Boys' 'Levaillant Collection', artworks inspired by 'Histoire naturelle des perroquets' (1804-05) from the Museums Victoria Library collection. Image courtesy of Designer Boys.

Nocturnal

Nocturnal is an adults-only after-dark special event held on the first Friday of every month at Melbourne Museum which features live music from local talent, and interactive talks and demonstrations from museum experts. Primarily aimed at 18-25-year-olds, Nocturnal provides Museums Victoria's librarians the opportunity to engage audience segments that are ordinarily hard-to-reach.

Librarians from Museums Victoria are amongst the experts featured in Nocturnal, displaying and discussing non-rare library material carefully curated to tell a story: a live and interactive mini-exhibition, if you will. Each story is told to visitors by the librarians using books, journals, and archival material such as letters and photographs. Topics are chosen carefully so as to appeal to a curious younger generation; previous topics selected include fashion and tattoos (<https://bit.ly/2l0BVHy>). Storytelling by non-fiction librarians to this audience is not only a great application of curatorial skills, but also an opportunity to engage the audience in the stories hidden within collections, and create awareness of library collections to a new audience in a new way.



Above: Photograph of Museums Victoria Library manager, Hayley Webster discussing library collection material with visitors to Nocturnal, 6 April 2018. Photographer: Cesur Sanli.

Marketing and promotions in other Australian special libraries and collections

As part of my survey questionnaire, I put a call out for any marketing or promotional successes that librarians had, that respondents were particularly proud of, or any projects or methods that had been surprising or innovative. Below I have included some interesting case studies from librarians working in special libraries or collections:

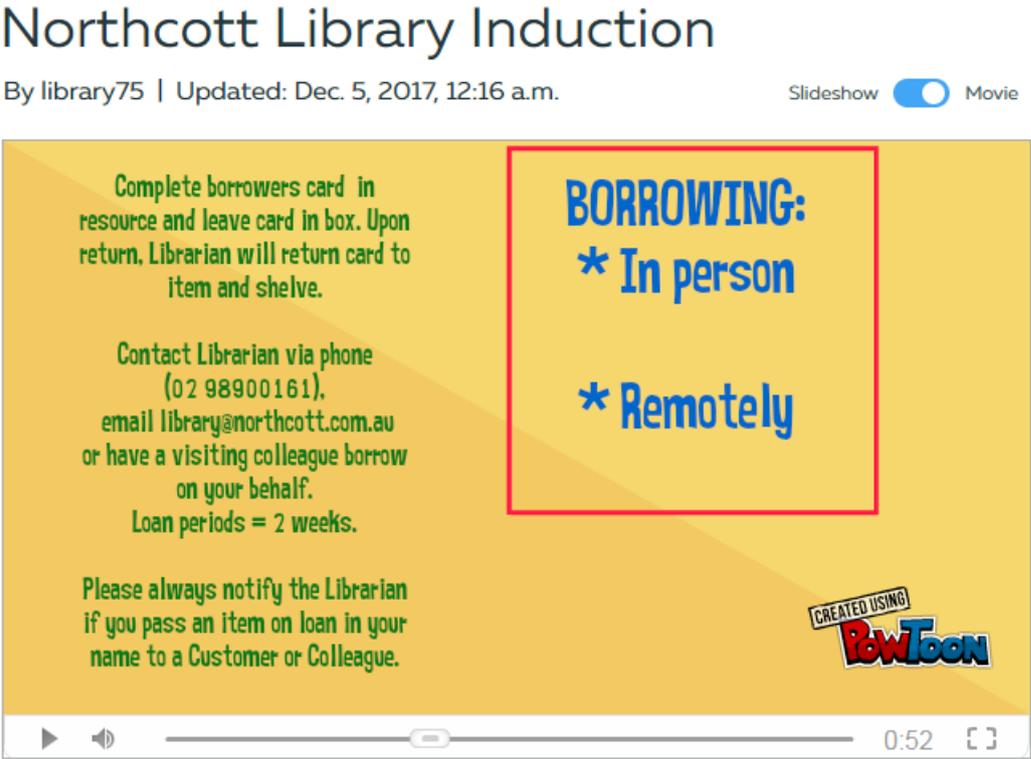
Northcott library and Powtoon

Judi Lipp is a one-person Librarian, Archivist & Records Management Officer at Northcott, the disability organisation in North Parramatta, New South Wales. Many of her patrons work part-time and so she had to get creative to engage them with library services and procedures. Judi utilised the freemium software PowToon to create an animated presentation in order to engage patrons with whom she had little opportunity for face-to-face contact:

“Northcott has used PowToon animations as a means to engage with staff over updated policies and procedures. Our Multidisciplinary Services have located to a modern hub environment with a hot desk setting and their many resources have found a home on the Northcott Library shelves. Attendance at team meetings would only engage with some of their staff.

I tentatively launched myself into the PowToon site and came up with a simple video which can be edited at will. There are options to develop the PowToon application that attract a cost. I have chosen to only use what is freely available. The Library Homepage from our Intranet includes a link to my POWTOON presentation (<https://bit.ly/2vT0XDD>).

As Northcott has grown, there have been reduced options to have my service included in any induction process, but our People and Culture team have given me positive feedback on the PowToon animation and are happy to include this as part of their induction process, and the response from the Multidisciplinary Services team has been encouraging.”



The screenshot shows a Powtoon presentation titled "Northcott Library Induction" by library75, updated on Dec. 5, 2017, at 12:16 a.m. The presentation is in "Movie" mode. The main content is on a yellow background and includes the following text:

- Complete borrowers card in resource and leave card in box. Upon return, Librarian will return card to item and shelve.
- Contact Librarian via phone (02 98900161), email library@northcott.com.au or have a visiting colleague borrow on your behalf.
- Loan periods = 2 weeks.
- Please always notify the Librarian if you pass an item on loan in your name to a Customer or Colleague.

A red box highlights the "BORROWING:" section, which lists two options:

- * In person
- * Remotely

The video player at the bottom shows a progress bar at 0:52 and a "CREATED USING PowTOON" logo.

Above: Screenshot from Northcott library's Powtoon presentation

Cultural Collections at University of Newcastle's Voices of the Hunter project

Paige Wright is Senior Library Technician, Cultural Collections at University of Newcastle. Paige was the Project Manager of the Voices of the Hunter project, which made significant oral history cassette tapes available online for the first time, initially

using online audio distribution platform SoundCloud. The digitisation project had a varied promotional mix:

“The Voices of the Hunter Project was a collaborative effort with the Coalfields Heritage Group. The tapes were made by local historian Jack Delaney from the late 1970’s to the mid 1990’s. Jack’s daughter gave us permission to publish the tapes online. The cassette tapes were popular among the Cessnock community; however it was difficult for members of the community to access them as the Edgeworth David Museum where they were kept was open limited hours. By digitising these tapes and making them available online, the community could access them 24/7.

In the initial stages of the project we didn’t have a repository capable of storing and playing them so we chose to use SoundCloud. This was a relatively easy option and the users found it simple to access and play the interviews. The downside to SoundCloud is that the search interface did not work very well. To help search functionality we made an online A to Z index of the tapes so individuals from the community could easily look for family members. This was made available in our online exhibition (<http://www.coalandcommunity.com/oralhistory>). We also linked the Soundcloud interviews to summaries of the topics discussed in the interviews.

The online exhibition gave a ‘jumping off point’ for those new to the project, promoting access and helped by breaking the interviews into categories of topical interest which made this huge collection more browseable. During workshops we taught community members how to record their own oral histories as well as encouraging them to use the Voices of the Hunter collection, showing them the online exhibition and SoundCloud.

By the final stage of the project we had acquired a new multimedia digital repository and community engagement platform, Recollect. Our Recollect site, Living Histories @ UON (<http://livinghistories.newcastle.edu.au>), has full-text search ability which allows people to search for names, events, businesses and topics throughout the collection and to cross-check the oral histories with other resources, as well as containing a video of the project launch, audio files, summaries and associated photos. Additionally, it allows for extensive metadata, geotags and linking to other related objects.”



Above: Screenshot of the Voices of the Hunter project website

@oldbooklibrarian and Instagram

Daniel Wee is a Librarian currently working with the Victorian and Australian Printed Collection and Manuscripts Collection at State Library Victoria. Daniel previously worked as an Online Engagement Librarian for Frankston City Council, so is well

versed in social media, and has carved out an impressive following on Instagram as @oldbooklibrarian in only 18 months:

"I started a blog as a bit of an intellectual pursuit. I had very, very few followers. Mainly I blogged to improve my knowledge in areas that I wasn't familiar with. However, I found blogging to be time consuming and really gave me very little bang for buck on a narcissistic level. I chose Instagram as it is the most popular photo-sharing app.



I took the opportunity to take the images that I was capturing on a daily basis and gift them to anyone who was interested. I tend to get up, go through "Instagram" folder in the morning, and pick out something that speaks to me that day. If something

crosses my desk on the day that I love, I tend to use it either that afternoon or the following morning.

There really is a fine line between promoting the institution and yourself. I have started including @libraryvic and including my location as SLV. SLV do a great job of blending the personal and the professional.

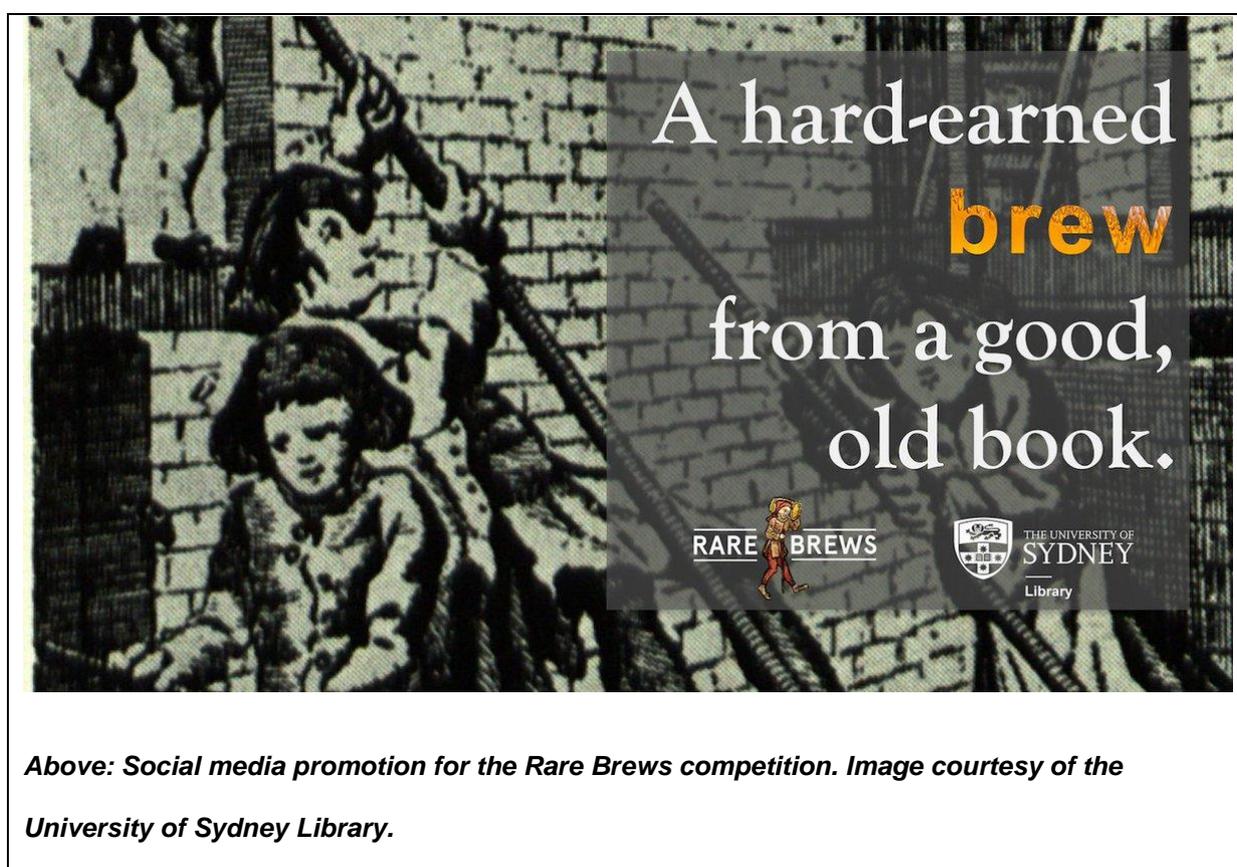
As you can imagine sometimes libraries aren't always the right environment to put forward your own personality or sense of humour (this might only be my experience). I did inject my personality into the Frankston City Libraries social media presence and I feel that it really helped with engagement. I look at using humour as a way to make the image accessible to everyone. It doesn't matter if you know a lot or a little about books and literature. Instagram is all about visuals, so I try to compliment the image with some humour. Some of the things you find in libraries can be down right hilarious and often ripe for some sort of parody. Also, if I am being honest, it is a much simpler way to deliver content."

Rare Brews at The University of Sydney Rare Books & Special Collections

Julie Sommerfeldt is Manager Rare Books & Special Collections (RBSC) at The University of Sydney. In the hopes of raising the profile of RBSC within the University and attracting new user groups, Julie and her team developed a competition called Rare Brews (<https://bit.ly/2u3bcBS>), which challenged entrants to home brew beer using historic recipes from their collections:

"We provided a handful of recipes to choose from (selected to be safe for consumption and contain available ingredients, and adjusted for metric measurements) and found industry partnerships to donate prizes, host the awards

night, and participate in the judging panel together with some University VIPs. The recipes were scanned and available on the competition website, which also contained competition rules (developed with the University legal team), information on the process, and responsible drinking information. Associated events held in the Library included an ‘in conversation’ talk by a master brewer from Wildflower, an exhibition of RBSC material, and a demonstration of home brewing in the Library foyer.



Above: Social media promotion for the Rare Brews competition. Image courtesy of the University of Sydney Library.

Our hopes and aims for this project were to raise the profile of RBSC within the University – we have wonderfully rich and diverse collections, but they remain very ‘under the radar’ within the University. There is a legacy misconception that our collections are off limits to all but the most serious of researchers, when in fact we’re open to everyone, including the public. We hoped to attract new user groups, focusing on those who might not ordinarily think that Rare Books held any particular

relevance for them. It is a bit of a cliché, but undergraduates, and students from STEM areas of study tend to engage poorly with RBSC, and this competition gave them the opportunity to find relevance in our collections, and a personal connection in a way that was surprising, quirky, fun and unforced.

I very much believe it is important to attract new and different audiences to our collections. Our primary aim is to support teaching and research within the University and beyond, and contributing to the cultural life of the University and beyond is also important. Higher education is a complex, volatile and rapidly changing environment within which we constantly need to find ways to remain relevant and accessible to the entirety of our diverse community. This project provided a modern twist on approaching historic material and instigated unexpected and creative learning opportunities with a modern, industry-focused slant, aligning well with the University's recent curriculum overhaul, with a focus on real world industry projects. It was a great example of object-based learning!"

Meyer Vandenberg Lawyers' swap library

Alison Jones is a law librarian working as a knowledge manager at Meyer Vandenberg, a Canberra law firm with about 80 staff. The specialist library collection at Meyer Vandenberg is very well used; however, Alison receives occasional comments that there are no recreational reading resources in the library, and has decided to implement a swap library for staff:

"The primary driver for this swap library is that as a librarian, I do care about how people engage with books (and other material that they read), to the point where I will do what I can to enable my work colleagues to engage with books on a

recreational basis. My hope for the swap library is that by removing the barrier of staff locating books suited to recreational reading, I make it a little easier for our busy staff to incorporate recreational reading into their day.

I also envisage that this swap library will become an additional point of focus within my already well-visited library space. I suspect I will have conversations with people on the contents of the swap library and thereby get to know a bit more about them as people, rather than just work colleagues. Over the years, I have discovered that casual conversations are a vital part of successful librarianship. By getting to know one another on a level beyond our work selves, I build trust with my colleagues. This makes it easier for them to ask me when they do not know something (a big thing to admit as a lawyer in a law firm) or to share a piece of work they have done with our knowledge repository, knowing that I value their contribution and will curate it well.

So in addition to enabling recreational reading amongst our staff, I also hope that the swap library will build further trust, resulting in another broadening of use of the library service within my firm.”

Recommendations

Marketing and promotions is not just about increasing users and widening access; it must also be a concerted effort to advocate for, build awareness of, and articulate the value of your library service, and librarians need to be strategic about it. This paper considers that while there are certainly significant barriers facing librarians in marketing and promoting such collections, that many of the issues effecting the level of awareness could be overcome with the implementation of an effective marketing and advocacy plan.

When constructing a marketing plan, consider your library's weaknesses and brainstorm possible methods to circumvent them as part of a SWOT analysis. To use an example from the results of the survey: if there is a lack of management or organisational support, consider all of the possible methods by which you might be able to lobby, advocate, and ultimately change the perceptions of those people. If this process is particularly successful, it may also be possible to increase staffing or funding, which would aid the constraints of time and money, which so many respondents listed as obstacles. As another example, if clients are remote or there is a lack of visibility, perhaps it might be possible to collaborate with your organisation's IT department to increase online visibility and access.

From the survey results, it also became obvious that some librarians are not willing to buy-in to strategic marketing. If a lack of time is an issue, it might be possible to collaborate with your organisation's marketing and communications department, or perhaps recruit some volunteers to assist. Additionally, consider cross-promotion with another library or collection so that resources and marketing collateral can be shared.

This paper also recommends that marketing and promotions units be embedded in librarianship qualifications. Post-qualification learning and professional development is also important: while professional bodies such as ALIA currently do or have offered marketing courses in the past, this paper suggests that many special librarians do not take up these courses because they are not relevant or specific enough to their libraries, or they are too expensive.

Recommendations for Future Research

It is necessary for each individual library to discover what is effective, depending on their unique circumstances; there is little empirical evidence that captures the impact of advocacy, marketing, publicity and outreach on special libraries and collections, and no best-practice data.

Research into the impact of increased marketing and promotions efforts on special libraries and collections is also required. The Museums Victoria Library has increased its online presence in the past few months, and rather than experiencing an increase in enquiries, preliminary results have shown an increase in the *quality* of enquiries and an increased level of awareness. It is this author's hope that further research into this topic might encourage others to buy-in to strategic marketing methods by mitigating concerns about an increase in demand.

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Appendix 1

Survey Questionnaire

Q.1 – Where is your library located?

- Australian Capital Territory
- New South Wales
- Northern Territory
- Queensland
- South Australia
- Tasmania
- Victoria
- Western Australia
- Other - Please specify

Q.2 – Are you located in a city, regional area, or rural area?

- City
- Regional area
- Rural area

Q.3 – Which sector best describes your parent organisation?

- Commonwealth Government
- State Government
- Local Government
- Academic
- Commercial
- Not-for-profit
- Other - Please specify

Q.4 – How many EFT paid employees does your parent organisation have?

Q.5 – How many EFT paid employees work in the special library or special collection area/s?

Q.6 – How many volunteers work in the special library or special collection area/s?

Q.7 – Where is information about your special library/collection's holdings accessible?

- OPAC accessible internally
- Publicly-accessible OPAC
- Parent organisation's website
- Library's website
- Mobile app
- Libraries Australia
- Trove

- WorldCat
- None of the above
- Other - Please specify

Q.8 - Do you feel there is a lack of awareness of the services that your library offers to its clients? Why?

- Yes
- No
- [free-text comments field]

Q.9 – "Marketing is an important skill for someone working in a special library or special collection to have"

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- [free-text comments field]

Q.10 – "Marketing library services to internal clients is important"

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- [free-text comments field]

Q.11 – "Marketing library services to external clients is important"

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- [free-text comments field]

Q.12 – Does your special library or collection have a dedicated marketing plan?

- Yes
- No

Q.13 – Does your special library or collection have a dedicated budget for marketing and publicity?

- Yes
- No

Q.14 – Roughly, how many hours per week do special library/collections staff spend on marketing and publicity?

Q.15 – Do you think it would be beneficial to spend more time on marketing and publicity?

- Yes
- No
- [free-text comments field]

Q.16 – Which of the following social platforms do you use to publicise your special library or collections?

- Pinterest
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Vimeo
- Flickr
- LinkedIn
- None of the above
- Other - Please specify

Q.17 – How many times per month does your special library/collection post to social platforms to publicise your collections?

Q.18 – Does your special library or collection have its own social media accounts, or do you rely on your parent organisation to post content on your behalf?

- We have our own accounts
- Our parent organisation posts on our behalf
- Both
- Not applicable

Q.19 – Which of the following vehicles does your special library or collections use to publicise to internal clients?

- Emails
- Blogs
- Websites
- Social media
- Physical exhibits
- Online exhibits
- Events
- Video screenings
- Panel discussions
- Talks/Presentations
- Tours

- Workshops
- Receptions/Gatherings
- Competitions/Promotions
- Training sessions
- Wikis
- Mobile app
- Podcasts
- Vodcasts
- LibGuides
- Merchandising
- None of the above
- Other - Please specify

Q.20 – Which of these tool/s do you find to be most effective for internal publicity, and why?

Q.21 – Which of the following vehicles does your special library or collections use to publicise to external clients?

- Emails
- Blogs
- Websites
- Social media
- Physical exhibits
- Online exhibits
- Events
- Video screenings
- Panel discussions
- Talks/Presentations
- Tours
- Workshops
- Receptions/Gatherings
- Competitions/Promotions
- Training sessions
- Mobile app
- Podcasts
- Vodcasts
- LibGuides
- Merchandising
- None of the above
- Other - Please specify

Q.22 – Which of these tool/s do you find to be most effective for external publicity, and why?

Q.23 – How many times per month do you use these vehicles for publicity, both internally and externally?

Q.24 – Which of the following traditional forms of paid advertising does your special library/collection use for publicity, if any?

- Newspaper advertisements
- Magazine/journal advertisements
- Radio advertisements
- Paid online advertisements
- None of the above
- Other - Please specify

Q.25 – Does your special library/collection produce any of the following physical promotional materials?

- Print newsletters
- Brochures advertising the entire library service
- Flyers advertising special events or similar
- Banners
- Posters
- Pens
- None of the above
- Other - Please specify

Q.26 – What, if any, are the barriers to promoting your special library or collections?

Q.27 – How do you quantify or measure the success of a marketing or publicity campaign?

Q.28 – Have you ever done any ‘cross-promotion’ with another collection or organisation?

- Yes
- No

Q.29 – Do you market or publicise to young children, primary school students, or high school students?

- Yes
- No

Q.30 – Have you executed a marketing or promotional campaign, or held an event, workshop, or similar that you are particularly proud of, felt was innovative or different, or was particularly successful? I am looking for some interesting case studies to include in my paper, so please let me know what you are proud of! If you are happy for me to follow up with you, please also include contact details