



Vista Public Library Marketing Plan
2010 - 2012

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Executive Summary

The Vista Public Library has undergone great changes over the past two years. In response to our rapidly growing community and an outdated library service, we sought out a mill levy increase in 2008, which was granted by our citizens and has allowed us to undergo a 5,000 square foot expansion and renovation project. The new space boasts an improved layout, a new computer lab, meeting rooms, and display spaces.

Our 2010-2012 strategic plan was built around this project and the resultant environment. Wishing to actively seek out and meet the needs of our dynamic community, we have developed this marketing plan, which is closely tied to our strategic plan's goals and objectives.

The main thrust of this marketing plan is four-fold involving re-branding the library, redesigning the library website, revitalizing our general marketing and promotion, and providing internal marketing for library staff and volunteers. The process has been divided up into three phases: community analysis and re-branding, website redesign, and continuing community publicity. Internal marketing will occur throughout all phases.

Motto:

Your world under one roof.

Vision:

Vista Public Library will partner with its community to innovate and expand horizons. By integrating forward-thinking technology, diverse programming, and dedicated staff, the library will become the pulse point of the community.

Values:

Community
Access
Information Literacy
Innovation
Enrichment
Diversity

Mission:

Vista Public Library provides diverse cultural and educational enrichment for dreamers and learners of all ages.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Target Market

Marketing Audit

Marketing Goals and Objectives

Marketing Strategies

Action Plan

Evaluation Plan

Implementation and Controls

Concluding Remarks

Introduction

The purpose of this marketing plan is to outline and detail the process of a small, public library located in the Southwestern United States as it undergoes a complete brand transformation. The changes will increase visibility for the library within the community as well as in an electronic environment.

The library located in Nueva Vista, known as Vista Public Library, has recently undergone an expansion. In spite of adding additional space, the percentage of the community population that holds library cards still only hovers around 25%. In an effort to encourage more residents to utilize the library, the library's executive board and staff would like to increase the amount of programming offered by the library, expand the collection in areas that have shown to be lacking, and capitalize on the physical location and appearance of the Vista Public Library building.

The plan includes additional market research to supplement what has already been made available by studying community demographics, hiring a professional marketing firm to design a marketing plan, and increasing Vista Public Library's presence on the internet using various web 2.0 tools.

The timeline for this transformation has been categorized into three different phases. It will begin in September 2010 with the library's executive board meeting, continue throughout 2011, and will commence January 2012 with the unveiling of the new webpage.

The Vista Public Library has the support of its staff, volunteers, patrons, executive board, as well as community leaders and professional colleagues. All parties involved recognize the importance of the library to adapt to changes in information access and the needs of its patrons. The Vista Public Library is prepared and motivated to increase its involvement in social programs, reflect the diversity of its patrons, and offer enriching programs to heighten the sense of community in Nueva Vista.

Target Market

Over the past decade, Vista's population has experienced vast growth, increasing by 58%, from 16,900 in 2000 to 26,700 in 2008. Since then, the numbers continue to rise. The growth is mainly attributed to the construction of a recycling plant nearby, and new business and residential construction.

The public school system has adapted well, passing a bond issue in 2006 and building a new middle school and one new elementary school. The Vista Public Library has likewise expanded, adding 6000 square feet.

The demographics have been consistent throughout the growth trends:

- In 51% of Nueva Vista's households, at least one member is Hispanic.
- At least 23% of families speak a language other than English at home.

- A large portion of the community can be considered as low income. Median household income in Nueva Vista is \$26,218. This is significantly below both state (\$62,469) and national (\$54,749) averages. 20.6 % of families are below the poverty level.
- The population is below the national average in high school graduates, at only 71% of adults achieving their diploma. Less than 10% of adults go on to finish a bachelors degree, far below the national average of 24%.

Community research has shown the need for more social interaction and community events, as well as cultural exposure. Because approximately one third of the residents are new to the area, there is opportunity to develop a more cohesive environment for the people of the Nueva Vista community.

Marketing Audit

Place:

- Vista's current products and services are being obtained by our patrons at our newly renovated library facility.

Negative Service Barriers:

- Lack of community outreach (We plan to take our products and services to the community so that they can learn of all that we have to offer)
- Significant gaps in the collection (Spanish language materials, Audio visual, Assistive technology)
- Outdated Technology (Patrons who do not own a home computer are unable to keep up with the latest technological advancements because we do not have these devices to offer them.)
- Low staff levels and high volunteer rates (Patrons do not always encounter staff trained specifically to meet their information needs since we rely heavily on volunteer staff in our frontline operations, often a patron can enter the library without talking to a staff member.)
- Outdated website (OPAC is difficult to use and the search results are often unrelated to the user's initial request.)
- Lack of community relationships (local government, local businesses, school district, and Hispanic population)

Competitive Alternatives:

- For those patrons in our community who own their own computers our competition in information retrieval services is online search engines such as Google

Product/Service's Current Position in the Customer's Mind

- The Vista Library Director conducted a simple survey regarding patron satisfaction. This survey was completed by 25 patrons who entered Vista Library on a given day. The results are as follows:
 - 93% of those surveyed stated that they thought our service was efficient and friendly
 - 45% were happy about the amount of materials we hold
 - 25% were happy about the variety of services offered
 - 100% said that they were willing to participate in focus groups designed to help Vista Library better meet our patron's information needs

Relevant Background

Vista Library administration feels fortunate that they are currently fully staffed and do not anticipate layoffs in the next two years. Keeping that in mind, the library board acknowledges that expanding the staff outside of the budget allocations (Web Content Developer and Staff Trainer) will be unlikely through 2011. The staff is aware of the situation. They have been cooperative and forthcoming in shuffling responsibilities, taking on new roles in the library work place, and dedicated to operating as efficiently as possible while maintaining a quality service environment.

SWOT Analysis:

Identifying the strengths for our product and services, determining the weaknesses of our library, finding the opportunities for our library, and being aware of the threats to the products and services of Vista Public Library

Strengths

- 1.) Well-developed collection in the following areas: Children's and YA materials, Adult Fiction, Non-fiction, Periodicals, and Local Documents.
- 2.) Active and invested volunteers
- 3.) Enthusiastic, friendly, and flexible staff
- 4.) Centrally located on main thoroughfare, next to a community park-- high visibility
- 5.) One story time each week that is overflowing with children of various age groups

Weaknesses

- 1.) Minimal staff due to budget constraints
- 2.) Technology is outdated and unable to support better software.

3.) Minimal programming

4) Collection does not accurately meet the needs of the community. Specific deficits are Spanish-language materials, audio-visual materials, and assistive technology.

5) Minimal community relationship both with the local government and other groups

Opportunities

1.) The building is a newly expanded and renovated facility including 12 new in-house display units and three conference rooms.

2.) The library can create a community connection through volunteer staff including a neighboring high school where students may need work experience, an increasingly diverse community population, and the existence of a Friends' group.

3.) Programming is an area of library services that can easily grow due to the following reasons:

- There is currently an absence of cultural/educational centers in Vista
- Vista has an active historical society and hobby clubs who would use the space for workshops and events
- Vista contains local musician's and artisan's guilds that could use the library as performance venue and gallery space
- The abundance of families in the communities provides numerous program opportunities.

5.) Availability of grants for institutions building programs for underserved populations.

6.) Community growth = increased tax revenue

7.) Community growth - larger pool of qualified candidates for new staff positions (library experience, literacy background, bilingual, etc.)

8.) New xeriscape courtyard could attract local gardeners, landscape artists, or boy/girl scouts needing a service project

9.) Located near businesses that may be willing to build partnerships.

10.) New recycling plant nearby could become a partner in "greening" the library

Threats

1.) Community perspectives including that Vista is traditionally a conservative community, Vista Public Library had past conservative management, and the diverse population has differing needs.

- 2.) Previous reputation as a quiet place for intellectuals and bookworms
- 3.) Larger space with increased shelving capacity, but the collection is still limited and needs to grow.

Marketing Goals and Objectives

1. Complete rebranding process.

- Objective 1.1 Community Analysis
 - Action Items:
 - Hire a Marketing firm to assist with the community analysis
 - Community survey
 - Community demographics
 - Library usage statistics
 - Focus groups
 - Marketing segmentation (age groups)
- Objective 1.2 New Logo ([Images](#))
 - Action Items:
 - Incorporate new graphic within the library
 - New name tags and t-shirts for staff
 - Include on bookmarks and storytime flyers
 - Purchase rubber stamp of new logo and return address to replace previous one
- Objective 1.3 New graphic standards
 - Action Items:
 - Choose organizational fonts
 - Create flyer templates
 - Organizational Letterheads
 - Logo usage standards

2. Revitalize general marketing and promotion.

- Objective 2.1 Utilize Social Media Tools
 - Action Items:
 - Teen and adult versions of an e-newsletter
 - Create a library blog
 - Create a Facebook group
- Objective 2.2 Build partnerships with local businesses and organizations
 - Action Items
 - Create a library page in the local newspaper
 - Create an outreach program with senior centers, daycares, and the school district
- Objective 2.3 Market Segmentation
 - Action Items
 - Early Literacy awareness / Story times (parents, caregivers, educators)
 - Computer Education Classes (adults, seniors)
 - Cultural / Art programs (children, teens, adults, seniors)

- Book groups (children, teens, adults, seniors)
- Game nights (children, teens, adults, seniors, cross-generational)
- Health awareness programs (teens, adults)
- Create Hispanic programming to meet the needs of this dominate portion of our population (bilingual story times, bilingual book groups, community outreach to Hispanic businesses)

3. Redesign the library website.

- Objective 3.1 Update OPACs
 - Action Items
 - Work with ILS provider to update online public access catalog
 - Provide more web 3.0 tools (adding reviews, tags, creating custom lists)
- Objective 3.2 Add more content to home page
 - Action Items
 - Hire a web design team to help with the customization of library website
 - Interactive calendar of events with email reminder feature
 - Current programs highlighted on home page
 - Library policies, board minutes, strategic plan available for patrons to view
 - Create a teen space (interactive features - online book club, suggestion box, readers advisory)
 - Ready Reference space (local community info)
 - Database interface (more user friendly with tutorials)
 - Department contacts page
 - Live Librarian Chatbox

4. Internal Marketing Strategies: Empowering the Staff

- Objective 4.1 Train Staff
 - Action Items
 - Hire a Training Specialist to develop and facilitate staff learning opportunities
- Objective 4.2 Keep Staff Informed
 - Action Items
 - Develop a staff Intranet that will provide the staff with policy and procedure information as well as information about what is happening in the library.

Marketing Strategies

Product

Vista's goal for our product is to provide community members with the following services:

- quality information retrieval services
- friendly service and relationship building with patrons
- library materials that fit the community's needs
- up to date technology for patron's use

- quality and relevant programming for adult and youth patrons
- a gathering place for community members to meet and exchange ideas

Promotion:

Vista's broad goals for promotion of our product will include the following:

- Community Outreach: meet community members where they work and play to let them know about all that their community library has to offer them. Engaging with the Hispanic population will be a priority.
- Budget will need to allow for promotional fliers and staff time used to engage community members.
- All full time staff will be expected to engage in community outreach activities. Their accomplishments/failures in this area will be part of each full time staff member's annual performance review from this date forward
- Fliers will be used to promote library programs and should be distributed in government offices, schools, and local businesses.
- Hire a marketing firm to build our brand: when the community sees our brand it will invoke feelings of pride and trust for their community library.
- Budget will need to allow for the hiring of the marketing firm as well as the materials they will need to build our brand.
 - Reinvent our online personality by revitalizing our website
- Budget will need to allow for a new staff position of Web Content Developer and any materials this staff member may need.
 - Internal marketing-empowering the staff
- Budget will need to allow for a new staff position of Staff Trainer and any materials this staff member may need.

Price

- All basic library services will be free and there will be no restrictions to the community's access to our resources unless extenuating circumstances occur, see Vista's policy on restricting access and banned patrons. Basic library services include in depth reference services, technology assistance, and programming.
- Patrons will pay for copying services \$0.15 per page and printing services \$0.15 per page.
- Inter library loan services will remain free.
- Replacement library cards will be \$1.00 per card.

Place

- Vista's product/services will be received at our newly renovated community Library
- Vista's product/services will be received at the local high school for two hours three times per week

- The young adult librarian will establish a relationship with the high school principal. Since the school does not offer library services, the young adult librarian will take a laptop and provide reference services to high school students working on projects. This project will meet the outreach requirements of the young adult librarian.
- Vista's product/services will be received in the community through community outreach
 - Proposed sites
 - senior citizen centers
 - healthcare facilities (schedule in congruence with health fairs, etc)
 - preschools
 - local businesses (with special attention given to Hispanic businesses given that this population makes up 51% of our community)

Budget

- All budgeting decisions except for community outreach will be made by the marketing committee composed of the following staff members: Library director, facilities manager/assistant director, circulation supervisor.
- The marketing committee must reach a majority agreement in all decisions before moving forward with the project in question.
- Community outreach budgeting decisions will be made by the library director. The funds for community outreach materials will come from a special fund set up entirely for this purpose only.
- We are leaving these decisions up to the Library Director so that he/she can make schedule changes as necessary for staff's outreach activities. Staff time will make up the majority of the monies spent on community outreach.

Advertising

- Community outreach advertising has already been addressed by handing out fliers in the local government, schools, and businesses.
- The marketing firm hired will be in charge of four advertising campaigns unveiled each quarter of the upcoming fiscal year.
- First Quarter: An advertising campaign to promote early childhood literacy and the library.
- Second Quarter: An advertising campaign to promote our Friend's of the Library and to encourage community members to give to Vista Library.
- Third Quarter: An advertising campaign to promote adult research and reading services.
- Fourth Quarter: An advertising campaign to promote the Vista library as an organizational whole.

Action Plan

Phase 1 – Community Analysis & Rebranding

Phase 2 – Web Redesign

Phase 3 – Continuing Community Publicity

September 2010

- Library Board agrees to consider marketing firms for community analysis and re-branding

October 2010 (*Begin Phase 1*)

- Research marketing firms with emphasis on local firms (Director)
- Contact top three firms and ask for prospective and presentation with samples of past work (Director)

November 2010

- Marketing firm presentations (Director, Library Board, and Management Team)
- Hiring of Marketing firm (Director)
- Budget Line: Marketing Firm, Amount: \$20,000
 - Contracting Fee: \$1500
 - Community Analysis: \$5500
 - Survey design and implementation, 4 focus groups, analysis report
 - Re-branding: \$3000
 - 5 identity packages (names, tag lines, and graphics)
 - Graphic Standards: \$4000
 - Templates and standards (business cards, letterheads, flyers, newsletters, web-ready graphics and templates, brochures, etc)
 - Publicity Campaign Management \$6000
 - 1 year contract

December 2010

- Survey design and focus group development (Marketing Firm, Director, Management Team)

January 2011

- Conduct three-week survey in-house and off site. (Marketing Firm)
- Conduct two focus groups. (Marketing Firm)
- Compile library use statistics for past three years for firm (Director)

February 2011

- Conduct two focus groups (Marketing Firm)
- Prepare community analysis report with age and group segmentation (Marketing Firm)

March 2011

- Design five identity packages (Marketing Firm)
- Make adjustments to marketing plan as necessary (Director and Management Team)

April 2011

- Identity packages presented by firm (Director, Library Board, Management Team)
- Public informational forum held to present identity packages and seek feedback (Marketing Firm and Library Board)
- Library Board votes on identity packages
- Contingency Plan – Should the Board be unable or unwilling to make a decision on the five packages, the marketing firm will produce five more packages for their review, and two more months will be given in this effort.
- Library Board agrees to consider web design firms for the design of the new library website

May 2011 (*Begin Phase 2*)

- Research web design firms with an emphasis on local firms (Director)
- Contact top three firms and ask for prospective and presentation with samples of past work (Director)
- Design of Standards and Templates (Marketing Firm)

June 2011 (*End Phase 1*)

- Web Design firm presentations (Director, Library Board, and Management Team)
- Hiring of Web Design firm (Director)
- Budget Line: Web Design Firm, Amount: \$26,500
 - Contracting Fee: \$2000
 - Current Website Analysis: \$4000
 - Analytics tracking, library website comparison
 - Information Architecture Redesign: \$7000
 - Graphic Redesign: \$5000
 - Website Management \$8500
 - 1 year contract
 - Software and training for staff

- Standards and Templates provided and implemented (Director, Marketing Firm and Management Team)

July 2011

- Web site analysis (Web Design Firm)
- Publicity campaign development for marketing segmentations with focus on programming and services for 2012 (Director, Management Team, and Marketing Firm)

August 2011

- Graphic redesign of homepage presented with three variations by firm (Director, Library Board, and Management Team)
- Graphic redesign variation chosen (Director, Library Board, and Management Team)
- Publicity campaign development for 2012 programming and services continued with an emphasis on creating partnerships with local businesses and organizations (Director, Management Team, and Marketing Firm)

September 2011

- Work with ILS provider to streamline OPAC with new website (Web Design Firm)
- Information architecture and graphics redesign (Web Design Firm)
- Publicity campaign development for 2012 programming and services with emphasis on marketing materials and social media (Director, Management Team, and Marketing Firm)

October 2011

- Basic library website (homepage and all connecting pages) and optional web 3.0 features presented by firm and discussed (Director, Library Board, Management Team, and Marketing Firm)
- Publicity campaign development for 2012 programming and services with emphasis on virtual library (including new library website) (Director, Management Team, and Marketing Firm)

November 2011

- 2012 publicity campaign for programming, services, and virtual library presented (Director, Library Board, Management Team, and Marketing Firm)
- 2012 publicity campaign budget approved by Library Board
- Chosen web 3.0 features and other changes incorporated into the library website (Web Design Firm)

December 2011

- Final library website presented by firm (Director, Library Board, and Management Team)
- Staff training begins (Web Design Firm)
- 2012 publicity campaign begins with marketing for first quarter programs and services

January 2012 (*End Phase 2 and 3*)

- New library website unveiled
- Staff training continues (Web Design Firm)
- 2012 publicity campaign continues with marketing for virtual library and website

Evaluation Plan

Goal 1: Complete Rebranding Process

How visible is our new logo? An informal phone survey will be taken by a library staff member of all community organizations that were sent new marketing materials in August 2011. This survey will take place approximately 60 days after the publicity campaign to create partnerships between area businesses has been completed.

As part of the survey, an invitation to link to the business's home page or to include their logo showing support within the library will be made. Also included will be the opportunity for the business to sponsor one of the new library programs for the upcoming year. Sponsorships can be in the form of merchandise, prizes, gift cards, or general marketing materials highlighting the support of the library.

Goal 2: Revitalize General Marketing and Promotion

The results of the innovative marketing and promotion changes will be evaluated by statistical analysis of library programs. Beginning in September 2011, as the marketing campaign is gaining momentum, interest sheets for each program will be available at the library circulation desk for patrons to sign-up for further information. A database will then be established for future library emails and mailings. A short survey will be designed for each of the new programs, asking how the patron heard about the program, if the program was what they were expecting, and how likely the patron will participate in future library programs. A space for comments and suggestions will also be provided.

One of the library staff members will also be responsible for summarizing the blog, Facebook account, in-house suggestion box, and library email for community dialogue regarding the changes at the library. The summary will be in the form of a concise, written report shared with the Vista Library director and the marketing team on a monthly basis.

Goal 3: Redesign Library Website

A monthly record will be tracked of the number of hits to the library website. Included in these statistics will be the usage of the online catalog. The following items will be determined monthly starting 30 days after the new website's launch date:

- Number of hold requests placed
- Number of online renewals
- Previous year's numbers of holds and renewals
- Number of emails to the library
- Number of ILL requests made online
- Number of room reservations made using the online form
- Usage of Teen page, also compared to the numbers of teen programming
- Satisfaction rates of the Librarian Chatbox: is it being utilized, are patrons using it for what the library is intending it for?

Implementation and Controls

The marketing committee will meet once a month to determine if the plan is on schedule.

1.) The committee will review the month's progress and make suggestions on how to meet the following month's goals.

2.) Budget will also be reviewed at this time.

a. In the case that the plan is over budget or off schedule then the marketing committee will meet weekly to find solutions to these issues.

b. If a solution cannot be reached then the library director will be given executive control.

Note: The library director will be a key member of the marketing committee. He/she will monitor each step of the plan as well as act as a day to day liaison between the hired marketing firm and the committee. If the library director foresees a problem to the schedule or the budget between monthly meetings then he/she has the authority to call a special meeting so that the plan can get back on track as soon as possible.

Unforeseen developments in the environment or on the competitive front that occur after the implementation of the marketing plan will be dealt with in the following manner:

1.) The marketing committee will hold a special meeting to discuss the unforeseen development and decide on an action plan. Committee members will take any changes made to the overall marketing plan to all staff members and open a forum for suggestions and concerns.

i. If there is no concern that needs to be addressed then the marketing committee will prepare the necessary changes and present a new marketing plan with the changes added.

The new marketing plan will be available for staff and the public to review.

ii. If there is a concern from staff that cannot be easily remedied or if the marketing committee cannot reach a majority consensus then the library director will review the information and make an executive decision.

Concluding Remarks

The Vista Public Library recognizes that excellent library services and a courteous well-trained staff that meets the needs of library patrons are the heart and soul of any marketing effort. We will design and fund public relations programs using various approaches to publicity with visually attractive print and electronic materials, signage, and graphics. The public image of library services, staff, and programming will be evaluated. We strive to understand, target, and meet the needs of special groups within the community as well as the general demographics of the community. If presenting library services to the community is not a priority, there will be many community residents who do not know what the library has to offer.

Vista Public Library has numerous internal strengths to draw from; however, we view our greatest resource to be the community which we are part of. Our highly dedicated staff looks forward to developing meaningful relationships with community groups and individuals in a way that facilitates widespread cultural and educational enrichment for a greater number of library users, ranging from long-time residents to the young families who have recently moved here. We are eager to explore new and forward-thinking strategies to utilize the space created with the recent renovation of the Vista Public Library, as well as ways that we can improve service and outreach to our diverse and previously under-served population. While we deeply cherish the past, we are looking forward to a bright future in which we embrace changes in staffing, technology, and programming to become a pulse-point of the community.