

CASE LIBRARIES COMMUNICATION PLAN

Executive Summary

The Case libraries are central to the academic life of the university and sustainability of the university vision, which is to become “the most powerful learning environment in the world.” As an innovative partner in the pursuit of academic excellence, and a leader in providing dynamic library and information management services the Case libraries:

- Contribute to research and learning working in partnership with members of the university community;
- Support research, scholarship, artistic endeavors, and learning through the acquisition, management, presentation, and preservation of information resources;
- Provide knowledge and skill sets for the effective use of library and information resources in order to create and sustain learners.

The delivery of online information causes a loss of visibility for libraries. As the Case librarians make a transition from information providers to collaborative partners in the academic enterprise (information producers, publishers, portal editors, information literacy experts, SAGES instructors, etc.), it is critical to extend awareness of the range of resources and services provided by all the libraries beyond the “traditional” library user and their impression of Case libraries as differing entities. Effective communications are essential for the Case libraries at this point in time. The Case libraries are establishing more formal ties and the new library initiative presents an opportunity to think creatively about the libraries’ image. It encourages the libraries to develop a structured interactive communication process using quantitative and qualitative methods to gather attitudes and opinions about the libraries and to publicize the collections, programs, and services.

The Case Libraries Communications Plan will use survey results from the Kelvin Smith Library’s participation in LibQUAL+ (in academic years 2001/2002 and 2002/2003) a national research and development project to measure service quality across academic libraries. LibQUAL+ uses an online survey tool to gauge library patrons’ satisfaction with services and collections. <http://www.cwru.edu/UL/REF/libqual/highlights.html>

The plan presents a framework for effective two-way communication between the libraries and constituent groups. It sets goals and strategies for building greater awareness of librarians’ new roles, to inform about library/information technology issues, and to encourage support for the libraries. As well as communicating about the libraries, the plan includes strategies for collecting and analyzing information that will enhance the libraries understanding and adaptation to the evolving information requirements of the Case community.

Goals and Objectives

- Promote the Case Libraries: the whole is greater than the sum of its parts

- Develop understanding of the essential contributions made by the libraries to the academic enterprise
- Increase awareness and encourage use of libraries collections, services, and programs
- Build library pride, ownership and advocacy among members of the university community for their Case libraries
- Provide a leadership role in developing and organizing digital content whether created from analog sources or born digital
- Collect and analyze information to help the libraries understand and adapt to the needs of their constituent groups
- Increase awareness of library employees in library goals, staff development opportunities, and common interests and encourage participation
- Encourage private support of the libraries and the university
- Contribute to the university's marketing and public relations initiative

Libraries Mission Statement

The Case libraries create and sustain life long learners while striving for excellence and embracing opportunity. As an innovative partner in the pursuit of academic excellence and a leader in providing dynamic information management services, the Case libraries: provide physical places that welcome and contribute to research and learning; work in partnership with members of the university community; acquire, manage, present, provide access and preserve information resources that support research, scholarship, artistic endeavors, and learning; and educate the university community in the effective use of library/information resources and services.

Guiding Principles

The communications plan is based on six principles that guide the libraries approach to communications:

Interactive	Communications will be proactive, structured and interactive (two-way)
Positive	An appreciative inquiry approach to communications assures the focus is on what's right rather than what's wrong
Open	Information will be shared throughout the libraries, the university and the greater Cleveland community
Decentralization	Information is best communicated by those closest to the target audience; however, with decentralization comes the need for consistency
Inclusion	Anyone who cares to participate in the communications process will be invited to contribute
Strongly themed	Communications will build on strong themes that reinforce the goals of the libraries and emphasize the idea of the Case libraries as an organization with a common purpose

Case Libraries Communication Team

Art Biagianti, Harris Library Director

Kathy Carrick, Law Library Director
Joanne Eustis, University Librarian
Gina Midlik, University Library Project Manager
Gail Reese, University Library Associate Director for Collections and Personnel
Ginger Saha, Health Sciences Library Director
Case libraries development staff

Key Messages - 2004/2005

The Case Libraries: A System Greater Than the Sum of its Parts

Target Audiences

Case Administrators (Central and deans)

Faculty and students use the library regularly therefore a number of methods are in place for communicating with them. For the 2004/2005 fiscal year Case administrators (central administrators and deans) have been identified as the highest priority audience because they have less opportunity to become aware of library programs, services, and issues.

Donors/Alumni

At this time, the individual libraries manage communication with donors and external funding agencies. The Health Sciences Library and KSL also work with the central development assigned to libraries.

Faculty

Traditionally faculty members are the libraries' highest priority group so many opportunities exist for communication between librarians and faculty. Collections are built and services designed to support faculty research and teaching.

Graduate/Professional students

After faculty, graduate students are the libraries' largest client group. They benefit from the library liaison program, orientation presentations and research consultation.

Undergraduate Students

Undergraduate students are an important constituent group that is ever changing. Communication with freshman is focused the on the relationship between academic success and library/information resources.

Case Staff

Case staff members support faculty and students in all aspects of their lives at the university. Staff work is often directly related to the use of information resources.

Case Library Personnel

People employed by the libraries are a primary audience. While communication within the libraries is usually ample, communication among the libraries' staff has not been a priority. At present there are 119 library employees distributed across all the Case libraries.

Secondary Target Audience

Local community – News Media

Association of Research Libraries (ARL)

OhioLINK

Strategies and Tactics

Communications will be centralized through the Case Libraries Communication group so that the key message remains consistent. Elements of the communications plan include: advertising, common identity, customer interaction, development and donor relations, Case staff and library employee communications, media relations, promotional materials, research (surveys and focus groups), and special events.

Individual Presentations/Discussion/Committee Participation

Meetings with deans

University Librarian annual presentation to Dean's Council

Faculty Senate Library Committee meetings

Annual State of the Library Address

Librarian liaison program (librarians assigned to each academic department)

Dean's Council

Faculty Senate Information Resources Committee

Cleveland Medical Library Association (CMLA) Board – Health Sciences

(Health Sciences Library Director meets with Board quarterly)

CMLA annual dinner – *Health Sciences Library Director addresses Membership*

School of Medicine Committee on Medical Education

(Health Sciences Library Director meets with twice a month)

Library Advisory Groups

Arts & Sciences Library Advisory Group (Advises Dean and Library Director)

Faculty Senate Library Committee

Ad Hoc advisory groups such as the Baedeker Grant Group, etc.

Harris Library (MSASS) Committee (minimum 2 meetings a semester)

Law Library and Technology Committee

Cleveland Health Sciences Library Visiting Committee

(advises Deans of Medicine and Arts & Sciences)

Development and Donor Relations

On Reserve Magazine

Year-end letter to major donors

Alumni Open Houses

University Alumni Weekend

Speaker series and events with publicity targeting donors

Structured focused plan for fund raising (with communications component)

Individual visits to and from donors

Library presentations to alumni events

Publications & Reports

Topical publications:

Special Collections brochure

Advertise earned income services such as Preservation, Scanning services, ILLiad for alumni, Corporate Library Services

Announcements of KSLearn classes in campus publications

Campus News articles

Faculty Senate Library Committee Report

KSLearn Semester Schedule (mailed to all employees)

Case Library Annual Report

Health Sciences column "Trends and Realities"

IW Students Newsletter (Harris Library)

Websites/network-based communication

Case Libraries website:

General Information: hours, staff, services, forms

Discipline specific resources and new acquisitions list

Monthly subject area highlight:

What's New?

"Contact Us" link on all website pages

LibQual survey

Topical surveys: Media Center, E-books, etc.

EuclidPLUS suggestion/complaint feature

"Ask A Librarian" – online, interactive reference

Harris Library Update (6 times a year)

Special Events

Annual KSL Open House

Academic Event: GIS Symposium

Forums on Digital Library Issues (funded by Morino endowment, planned for 2005/06)

New faculty orientation (KSL)

Undergraduate orientation (KSL)

Graduate Orientation Fair (KSL)

Law Library Open House for 1st Year Students

CMLA dinner

Health Sciences hosts teleconferences on medical library issues

Case and External Public Relations

Announcement of new hires to *College & Research Libraries*

Press releases

Campus News articles (many more than in previous years)

Observer articles and advertisements

Administrative Notes announcements

Print flyers:

Scanning Lab

New policies (displayed on front doors)

- Handouts and Bookmarks
- KSL Display Cases
- Harris Library Display Case and Bulletin Boards
- Work with Development
 - Annual Fund letters
 - Year-end letters to major donors
 - Adopt-A-Book Campaign

Employee Communication

- Electronic newsletter - *KSLNews*
- Semi annual all staff meetings
- Monthly department head meetings (followed by department meetings)
- Brown bag lunch seminars for all University Circle Libraries
- Use of the Corporate Time Calendar (KSL and Harris Library)

Resources

When library personnel are stable many of the strategies/tactics listed above take place as a matter of course. Staff is so thin however in several of the libraries that any emergency (illness, extended leave, vacancy) results in less emphasis on communications and a necessary focus on maintaining basic services. In addition, there is no one in the libraries with public relations, marketing, development, or communications expertise.

Money must be allocated to hire a communications consultant or a marketing graduate student to assist with major communications publication projects such as the annual report and the alumni newsletter. It would also be helpful to have professional guidance on surveys and focus groups (gathering data for assessment). The development person assigned to the library works closely with the libraries communications initiatives in particular planning the special events.