

Marketing Ourselves

A resource guide for Ontario's community literacy agencies

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Community Literacy of Ontario

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Marketing Ourselves

About this Project

In April 2007 Community Literacy of Ontario received funding from the Adult Learning, Literacy and Essential Skills Program (Government of Canada) for a project called: “*Making the Connection: Effective Program Promotion in Literacy Agencies.*”

Community Literacy of Ontario has undertaken this marketing project in response to requests from the field for useful marketing strategies, tools and resources. In *Making the Connection: Effective Promotion in Literacy Agencies* CLO proposed:

- ▶ to conduct field-based research to examine how programs are currently marketing their services and conducting outreach to potential clients and their communities
- ▶ to use the survey results to showcase the value community literacy agencies bring to their communities
- ▶ to conduct research and study effective marketing and outreach in domains outside of literacy
- ▶ to document and highlight best practices and innovative ideas in marketing and outreach
- ▶ to give literacy agencies tools to help them enhance outreach to adult learners, community stakeholders, partners and referral organizations

As a result of the survey and research, Community Literacy of Ontario will deliver a resource guide, online training and a self-directed training module on Literacy Basics on marketing and outreach.

Preface

WARNING: This resource guide is intended to focus your energy, make effective use of your time and resources and provide long term benefit to your program. Proceed with abandon.

Marketing—Suddenly it seems to be everywhere. You are probably wondering whether or not all of the hype is just a short-term trend to be endured or another activity that will require new and complex documentation. More than likely, marketing is something that you are already doing, when you have time. Yet clearly, with the growing emphasis on and interest in marketing, there is more to learn. But with all of the promotional guides, recruitment resources, marketing tips and templates available to us, why do we need another marketing resource guide?

- 1 We need to learn to think marketing before anything else.
- 2 We need to connect marketing with our other strategic endeavours.
- 3 We need to know what we are doing right and build on it.
- 4 We need tools to help us.
- 5 We need to practise these skills so that they become the way we define our programs.

We need to learn to think marketing before anything else.

For many agencies, marketing is a modest line in the budget both in terms of time and money. In reality, our marketing plan should precede budgeting and determine how we will expend our resources. Planning our marketing guarantees a more efficient use of resources and a more targeted, effective program.

We need to connect marketing with our other strategic endeavours.

Marketing, like Continuous Improvement Performance Management Systems (CIPMS) and strategic planning, is a way of being more focused and intentional about things we already do. Marketing is strategic thinking that targets our efforts for optimal outcomes for our agencies.

We need to know what we are doing right and build on it.

It is good to know that we don't have to start from scratch. Community Literacy of Ontario's research shows that community-based agencies are using innovative outreach and promotions to connect with new learners and involve our communities. Nonetheless, business and non-profit marketers can teach us more about the methods we use and increase their value.

We need tools to help us.

It is all very well to be ready and willing to market our agencies, but how do we go about it? The user-friendly marketing circle introduced in chapter two of the guide is a no-jargon and commonsense framework for our literacy programs. This simple and straightforward tool will help us to plan our marketing strategies for each of our agency's specific markets.

We need to practise these skills.

Thinking “marketing first” takes practice. This resource guide contains examples and tools that will help you to see how marketing is a learned skill that is highly relevant to what we do.

After reading this resource guide you will have a different perspective on marketing. You will see how the plans and budgets you already have are part of the larger marketing picture. You already perform many marketing activities and have much of the information that you will need to create a workable marketing plan. Your marketing plan can become a component of your larger strategic plan, or you can use it as effectively on its own. With just a few new ideas and tips you'll be surprised at how easy and effective it is to market ourselves.

Marketing Ourselves

CHAPTER—I

Marketing: The New Essential Skill

The Marketing Challenge for Community Based Literacy

Collectively, adult literacy in Ontario is facing an identity crisis. We are spread too thin, dragged in too many directions. With recent changes that find us rubbing shoulders with employment agencies, we are re-assessing our role and purpose in the literacy field and in our communities.

It is up to us to re-discover and re-affirm who we are and what we do and to convey this message with absolute clarity to all of our stakeholders. It is not enough to say that we offer adult literacy. We need to unpack this message so that our community understands that we are meeting their vital needs and wants. Marketing can achieve this.

Prospective learners who want to move on to further training and education or employment do not always see our purpose in this process. They have very specific needs and goals we can help them to meet if we can only get them through our doors. Marketing can do this.

Whereas school board and college literacy programs can ally themselves with their parent organizations, community literacy sometimes finds itself in a more isolated position. We do not have a larger organization to house, support and identify us. In order to survive and flourish, we form relationships and partnerships within our communities. The most effective way to forge meaningful relationships and make ourselves known to the wider community is through marketing.

Sometimes we think that if we work harder at the things we do well, then we will be successful. But the reality of community literacy stands in sharp contrast to that vision. Staff and volunteers devote countless hours to hard work, yet the statistics are daunting. Often, we do not reach anywhere near the number of clients that need our programs. Many clients drop out of literacy programs before successfully reaching their goals. Despite the challenges we face, many people working in literacy are reluctant to market their organizations. It feels a bit like sticking a price tag on something whose value is beyond measure. It can be difficult to understand why a service as crucial as the one we

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offer needs to be marketed. Yet clearly, if we reflect on some of the issues concerning community based literacy, we begin to understand that something vital is missing.

On the one hand	On the other hand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Four out of ten Ontarians 15 and older do not have the literacy skills needed to meet the demands of modern life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Fewer than 5% of Canadians participate in literacy programs. <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 5px;">Source: <i>The International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS)</i>, 2005 (see Literacy Basics, Learner Recruitment)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ There are people in our communities who could benefit greatly by our programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Many of them are often reluctant to even visit our centres to see what we do.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Everyone acknowledges we live in the information age, and competent reading levels are vital for employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Very few employers contribute to adult literacy and only a very small number are aware that adult literacy programming exists.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Our communities have social service agencies that share many of our beliefs and goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Often, these agencies do not fully understand what we do. They do not always see how literacy fits with their mandate. We sometimes feel that we compete rather than collaborate in our communities.

Why haven't we adequately convinced our communities that they need our programs? Some marketing experts would say that what is missing between the one hand and the other is an *exchange*. Others would go further and say that what is missing is a *relationship*. But how can marketing, which seems to focus so much on sales and competition, help us with building relationships? Fortunately, even the most business-oriented marketing has evolved. Now long-term relationships are held as vital keys to business health and survival. And if relationships are essential for business, then how much more so for our organizations that depend exclusively on strong connections within our communities to fulfill our mission? To be effective, marketing community literacy in Ontario must be collaborative and relationship-building. However, just in case marketing still evokes thoughts of slick sales and ruthless competition, perhaps we need to delve a little more into the subject and re-think its meaning.

What Good Marketing is Not

Type the word "marketing" into your search engine and you will find that the results are in the hundreds of millions. Many of these sites attempt to define marketing, and these definitions can run in length from pithy sentences to pages. For our purposes, because this

is where much of the confusion about marketing originates, it is useful to begin with what marketing is not.

Good Marketing is not crass.

Let's be honest: many of us don't like the idea of marketing because we believe that what we have to offer goes beyond the values of the marketplace. Literacy is a fundamental human right, not a limited time discount offer. Yet to a large extent, marketing has become a primary mode of communication in our society. We are accustomed to hearing that we live in the communication age and that we are no longer merely persons but consumers. We rarely do one thing except as an alternative to something else. Marketing is a critical aid to decision-making in what has become an increasingly complex process of making choices.

Good Marketing is not manipulative.

Whatever we think of him personally, Donald Trump is a brilliant marketer. In the introduction to *Marketing 101* he wrote, "Promotion works—but only if you start with a great product". This may seem very obvious, but how often have we seen seemingly endless sums of money spent to promote a mediocre product? In community based literacy we have the great product, so our marketing will not be manipulative. We will be giving consumers much-needed information about how our agencies can benefit them.

Good Marketing is not "a piece".

Perhaps it is this era of tight accountability that encourages us to break projects into bites, one of which is usually marketing. As you will come to see through the information and examples in this resource guide, marketing pervades all operations of a literacy agency. If we engage in marketing, it will affect in a positive and dynamic way how we promote and deliver our programs.

Good Marketing is not an event.

A promotion can be an event. Marketing directs the course of action leading up to and including the event, and it also follows up. Marketing is about planning, implementing and analysing the event.

Good Marketing is not an advertising campaign.

An advertising campaign can be part of your marketing plan but not the whole thing. Good marketing will help you to target your ads to the right groups and effectively analyse the results of your campaign.

Good marketing is not fundraising.

As much as it sometimes feels that way, the purpose of marketing is not to raise money so that we can survive another year. Adult literacy has a fundamental social purpose and any marketing we do ultimately needs to support that purpose and the overall mission of our literacy agencies. Ironically, focusing less on funds and more on our purpose will increase the likelihood of a successful fundraising campaign or event

Good Marketing is not an option.

To a large extent, marketing has become a primary mode of communication in our society. With so many choices to make, so many ways to spend our time and money, the competition is fierce to influence our decision-making processes. Our consumer culture makes a commodity of everything—no exceptions—literacy included. If we want our programs to be successful we must market them, period.

The Marketing Fit for Community Based Programs

So what can we say about marketing? For community based literacy agencies, it's the new essential skill. Like one of the nine "official" essential skills, marketing is both an enabling and a foundational skill. Learning marketing basics makes everything else work better.

Like one of the nine "official" essential skills, marketing is both an enabling and a foundational skill.

At first, marketing can seem like a strange territory.

Marketers do not use the same acronyms and language as we do. The process seems to be driven by products and profits, which we don't have. Published and bound marketing budgets and plans are beyond the scope of our organizations. Marketing seems best left to the experts. Fortunately, marketing shares another characteristic with the Essential Skills: we do not have to be at the top most level to be able to perform well. As we know, very few vocations require the highest essential skill levels. The same goes for marketing. Many non-profit organizations have been using marketing principles for years and adapting them to their specific purposes. For example, two recently developed strands of marketing will be useful for our community based programs to explore. These are relationship marketing and social marketing.

Relationship marketing places its emphasis on building longer term relationships with customers and clients rather than on individual transactions. The goal of relationship marketing is to build and maintain a base of committed clients for mutually profitable exchanges. Relationship marketing is not just about acquiring clients but more

fundamentally, about retaining them. Think **partnerships, volunteers** and **funders** for this marketing category.

Social marketing uses commercial marketing principles to bring about positive social change. Social marketers happily adapt the tools and techniques of their commercial counterparts to create a good fit for their own enterprises. Think **learners** for this marketing category.

The Ontario Literacy Coalition’s 2005 **Take a Step** campaign is a good example of social marketing. Its purpose was to motivate people to take action and to attract learners to literacy programs. The campaign’s primary target audience was potential literacy learners, and their secondary audience was community members who might volunteer or pass on information about literacy programming to potential learners. To access this resource, please visit OLC’s website at: www.on.literacy.ca, click on “Creating Awareness”, then scroll down to “Social Marketing”.

We can see how both of these strands of marketing—relationship and social—have good potential for the needs of community literacy agencies.

Appearances are deceiving. Marketing is incredibly flexible and adaptable. Marketing plans can take up hundreds of pages, and they can also fit comfortably onto a few pieces of paper. The terminology can be confusing, but can be translated into clear language and principles. As long as a few rules are observed and essentials included, a short and informal plan will work.

For example, let’s look at the famous four P’s of marketing: product, price, place, promotion and translate these terms from Bay Street to the world of literacy.

Instead of...	Think of...
Product	Program and services. Your literacy program and services are your products and they need to be marketed like their tangible counterpart.
Price	Buy-in. Our programs are free, right? But instead of “buy”, try thinking in terms of “buy-in”. For example, what energy has to be expended or time given up in order to buy-in to our literacy programs?
Place	Agency location and hours. Place focuses on how and where you deliver your program. Is your program flexible, mobile, accessible?
Promotion	Promotion! Promotion is about getting the word out on our products, which are our programs and services.

As you can see, these classic marketing categories adapt very well to the literacy scene. What they tell us is that we are already marketing, whether we know it or not. In reality, each time we make contact with a learner, partner, volunteer or funder, each time we answer the phone, each time we discuss our programs and what they do with anyone, we are marketing. The question is: How well are we doing it? Can we improve our marketing approach? Yes, of course we can. Community Literacy of Ontario has designed this resource guide for just this purpose. Marketing is like an essential skill and it can be learned and upgraded. (You will find more about the four P's of marketing in Chapters Two and Three.)

Marketing — an Outcomes Approach

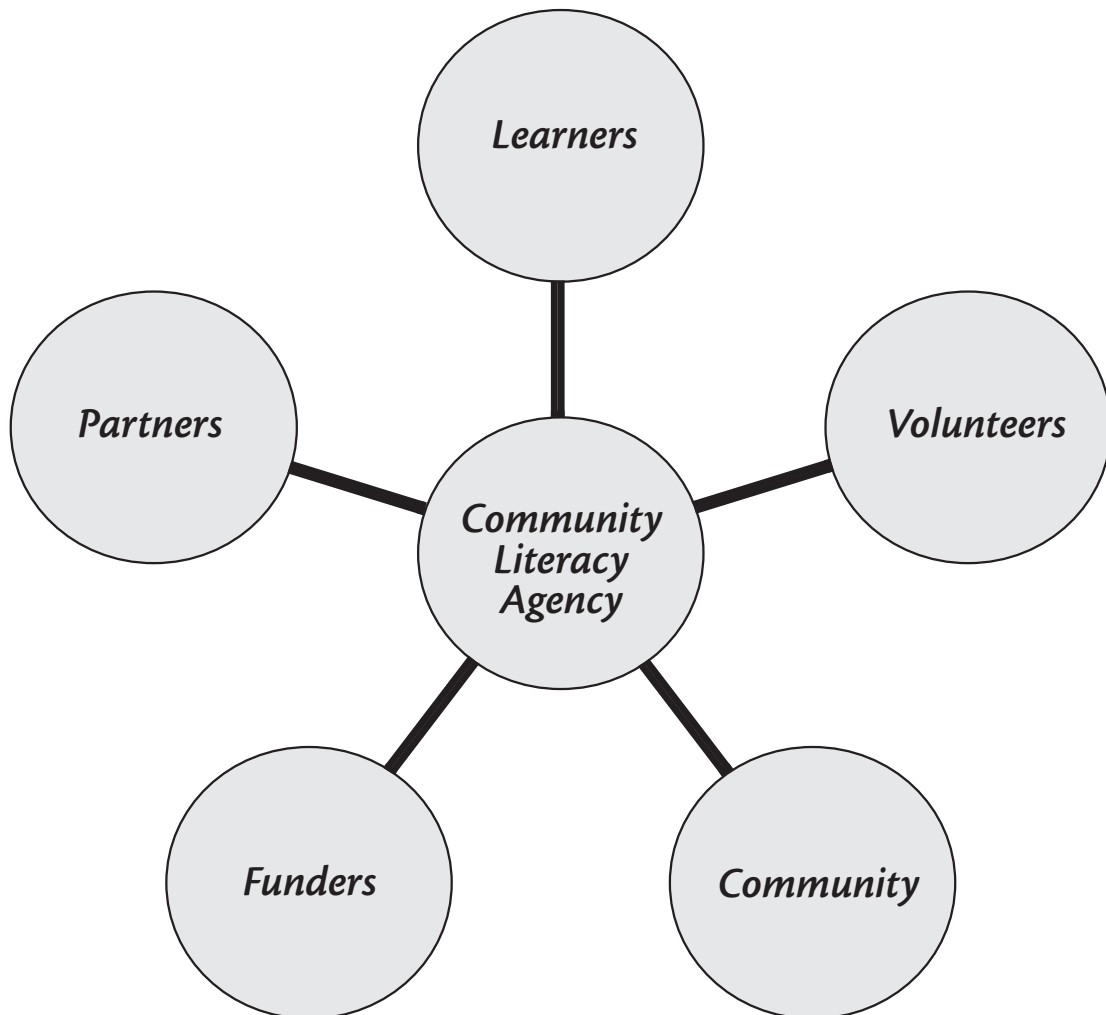
One of the most effective ways we have of solving our marketing dilemmas is to think about outcomes. Many of us can recall the advent of learning outcomes language in our literacy agencies. We remember how it changed the focus of our thinking. It forced us to examine our programs from the point of view of where we wanted things to successfully end. Then, of course, the tough questions came. Was our current path going to get us there? What needed to be changed to ensure success? Marketing is exactly the same: we need to begin with the end in mind. It is crucial to take the time to think about what we need to have happen as a result of our specific actions. For example, if we need to increase our intake, how is our current activity going to add to our numbers? If we want to connect to more partners, how are our current strategies effecting these partnerships? Let's promise ourselves never to participate in another promotion, pen another ad, or design another brochure without first asking, "What outcomes are we looking for as a result of this activity?"

An outcomes approach saves both time and resources. If we begin with the end in mind we are less likely to meander down the wrong path. This is particularly evident when we think about target markets. Whatever our marketing endeavour, our first question should be: Who are we trying to reach with this message? We hope for a shot-gun effect from much of our marketing effort. Our message erupts and we await results. This isn't always the wrong approach; it just can't be the only course of action we take.

Community Literacy's Distinct Markets

When literacy practitioners think about marketing in community based literacy, we often think about reaching more learners. We may also think about garnering more sources of funding. How do we reach these markets? How can we communicate our programs and

services to them? In community literacy agencies there are *at least* five very broad market categories: students or learners, funders, partners, volunteers, and the community at large. Perhaps you have already recognized this, and in the past, your marketing may have looked like this:



The difficulty with the above model is that the literacy agency holds the central position. In effect, we are focused on ourselves and therefore, we are marketing our vision to others. Unfortunately, when we are absorbed with our services and programs, what we do and what we have to offer, we are not as focused on the needs of our market. One example of this is the language that we use. How often and to what purpose do we painstakingly explain LBS levels to community partners? Professional marketers advise their clients not to sell their product, but to solve their customers' problems. For example, if we have an Ontario Works client in our program who needs to improve communication skills

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for employment, how will we “sell” our program to OW? We would not talk about level two or three competencies. Instead, we might discuss essential skills or foundational skills training. This is why paying attention to target markets is so important: it directs our energy outward, away from ourselves and towards our target. It makes us focus on our market’s needs and wants, not our services. At the same time, as we set our sights on our target markets, we need to be fully grounded in who we are and what we do. That is, I would not try to convince OW that we could train their client to be a baker’s assistant. Therefore, we may need to be satisfied that a learner has achieved a certain LBS level; however, we only need to assure our community partner that their client now has adequate skills to look for work or further training or that their personal goals have been met.

We cannot be all things to all people. Reflecting through our mission, mandate and strategic plan about who we are and our primary purpose is foundational work for effective marketing. Just as a salesperson does not expect to sell products she doesn’t know inside and out, we need to be firmly aware of our identity as a community based agency. When we are not worrying about our programming, we can relax and turn our attention towards our stakeholders, who are our target markets. Let’s take two examples from the above model: volunteers and funders. Do these two markets have the same needs and wants as one another? In business terms, can we solve their problems using an identical strategy? We can see that the same approach and the same materials will not have the same impact on these two groups. This will become even clearer when we look more closely at the concept of target markets in the next chapter.

Why Wait?

If you are not yet convinced we need to get more serious about marketing, there is one more thing Community Literacy of Ontario wants you to know. We are already marketing. Everyday we are saying something about our programs to others. We may be doing it well or poorly, but we are doing it. People in our communities are already deeply involved in the marketing process, sifting through endless options for spending time and money. They are not inclined to seek out our programs or decipher our literacy language and acronyms. We are responsible for initiating the exchanges. We are responsible for forging new relationships that provide mutual benefit.

The good news is that this collaboration is our strength. We enjoy strong networks and long established presence in our communities. Perhaps we have never thought about it in these terms, but we know our markets very well. We have a vital product to offer. Let’s take advantage of our strong community placement and knowledge to begin marketing ourselves more effectively.

Marketing Ourselves

CHAPTER — II

An Introduction to the Marketing Circle

Once we are committed to marketing ourselves, naturally we will look for efficient tools and procedures. This is where we can really bog down in those millions and millions of websites about marketing. Where do we begin? How much time and money do we have to devote? How difficult does it have to be? Community Literacy of Ontario is providing a tool that is easy to use right away and yet works well for more complex and in-depth marketing needs. It allows you to control how you expend your marketing resources.

In this chapter we will examine the Marketing Circle¹, dismantle it and analyse its parts. When it is reassembled you will see that you have a ready-made marketing plan with which to work. You can see from the diagram that actions flow one into another. Each marketing sequence informs the next. No decisions are made or actions taken in isolation. You can decide how much time, effort and material to spend on each component.

In order to understand the marketing circle, we will begin at the top and work our way around. Before we begin, take a look at the Marketing Circle on the next page.

1

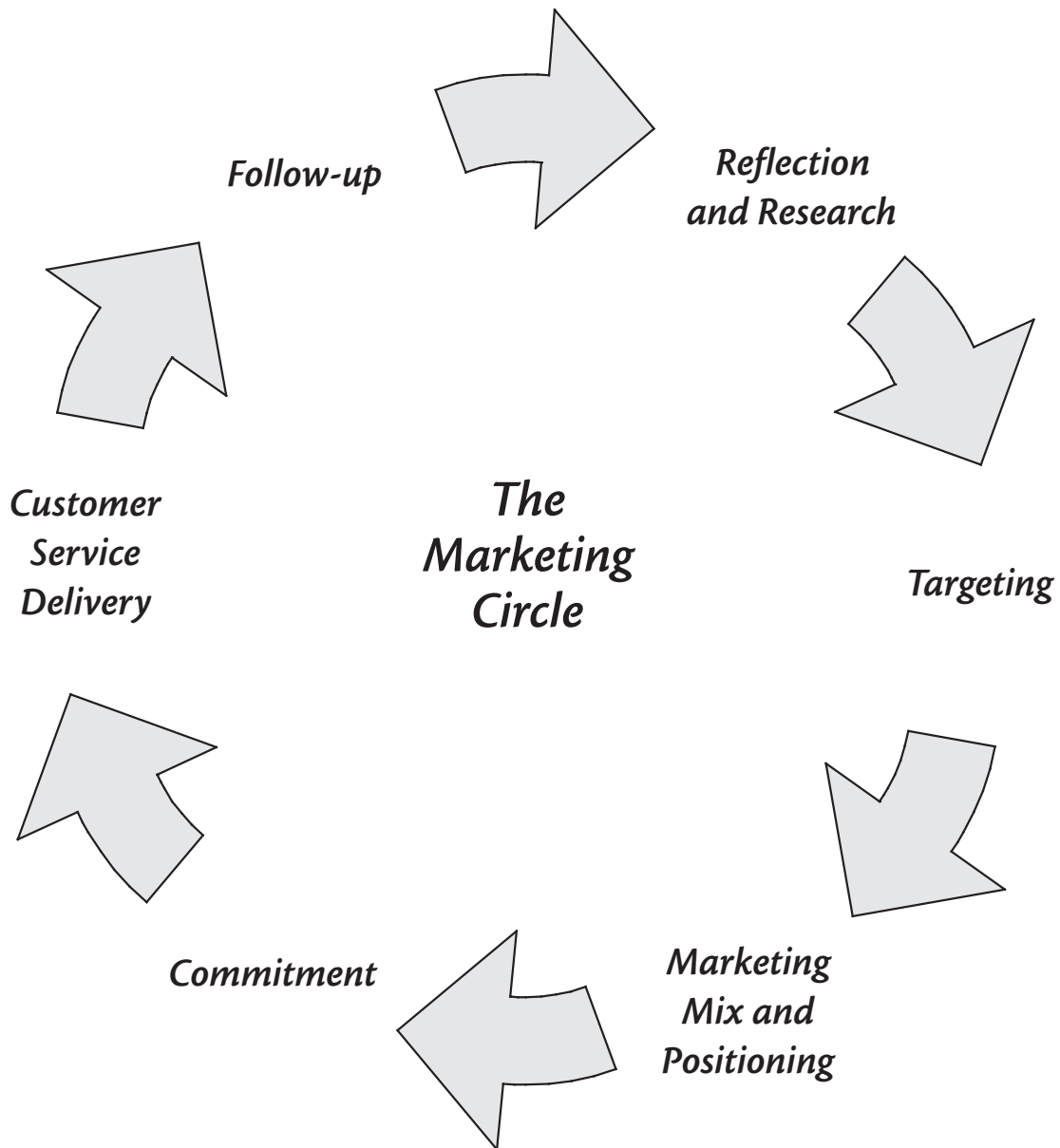
Marketing Circle Introduction — Part One: Reflection and Research

As with all strategic undertakings, reflection and research come first. Ideally, our marketing should work this way. Of course, sometimes we experience marketing opportunities as thrust upon us. We scramble to get some materials together and participate in a photo opportunity. Often, we can think of just the right things to say after the press has left. Or we find out that our local mall is hosting a job fair because one of our volunteers has a son working at Coles. We hastily throw some materials together and erect a booth. One of the benefits of being a community based organization is that we can respond quickly and

... we don't react to good marketing: we generate good marketing.

1. Several versions of a marketing circle or cycle are available. Most give reference to an overview of marketing. This marketing circle is based on the one illustrated in *Small Business Marketing for Dummies*, 2005.

Marketing Circle



flexibly when opportunity knocks. These situations come and go, but they should not be central to our marketing. Good marketing begins with reflection and research. Using this reflective process, we don't react to good marketing: we generate good marketing. Reflection and research are about clear and strategic thinking. Here are some of the elements that might belong to your reflection and research.

Your Mission Statement or Statement of Purpose

Mission statements or statements of purpose are often underused tools. Many of our agencies have spent time, effort and money developing these statements, only to have them lead a static existence in a frame or drawer. Yet this statement is the key to our organization. It should succinctly state our overall purpose and/or mission in our community. What is your mission statement? Is it current? Relevant? How does it relate to your day-to-day activities? The effective mission statement should play an important role in our reflection because the marketing we undertake should align us more closely with our mission. Our mission or purpose should keep us—and our marketing—pointed in the right direction.

Your Strategic Plan

If you have a strategic plan or even the beginnings of one, your plan will influence your marketing decisions. Where are you heading in the next one to three years? What are your strategic planning goals? How will your marketing further these goals and objectives?

Staff, Volunteer and Learner Experience

Remember that no single person has to make all of the marketing decisions. Ask your staff, students and volunteers about your programs. Often a staff member will mention something in passing. Volunteers often bring valuable external perspective. Do you have a place to record important observations and insights? Hold an open forum with learners. Do they know your agency's mission statement? What do they think would positively contribute to the programs offered by your agency?

Program Evaluation

All community based agencies perform some evaluation of their programs. "Program evaluation is the process of systematically collecting information about the program or some aspect of the program in order to make important and necessary decisions," (Community Literacy of Ontario's online training website **Literacy Basics**). The analysis of this material should influence marketing decisions and directions. The more relevant the information we capture, the more effective our marketing. One of the many benefits of CIPMS (Continuous Improvement Performance Management System) is that we can use our findings to promote our programs. By deliberately and comprehensively tracking our results and continuously working towards improvement, we can highlight exactly what we do well and areas that need improvement. If you feel that you could learn more about this process, check out CLO's Program Evaluation training module on "Literacy Basics" at www.nald.ca/literacybasics.

Marketing Circle

Budget

Even though the principles presented here are chiefly about a new way of thinking and approaching our marketing, any marketing we do costs money, time and commitment. For this reason, it is even more crucial that we take the time to plan our marketing strategies. Successful marketing builds its own momentum and makes future endeavours easier and more efficient.

As with any new enterprise, we wonder where the time and money are going to come from. Once again, it helps to focus on outcomes. What will be the outcome if we spend some extra resources marketing? What will be the outcome if we don't? As we have seen, we are already marketing. It makes sense to spend the time and money to see that we do it well.

Extra money is not easy to come by in community based literacy. We all know how long it has been since our core funding received a cash injection. Ironically, spending time and money on our marketing is one of the few hopes we have of getting more for our programs. The onus is on us to prove that we are worth more.

**BEST ADVICE —
from the
Marketing
Experts**

No one ever built a successful business by marketing with leftover dollars. Plan your marketing budget as an integral part of your marketing plan, get it approved as part of the plan and invest the money wisely.

From Small Business Marketing for Dummies, 2nd edition

Regardless of how much goes into it, a budget is a critical component of a marketing circle and serves as a guide to help make decisions and reach goals. The budgeting process will help to determine whether our marketing plan is realistic. If it isn't, we will need to re-focus on our top-most priorities. A marketing budget (and plan) will help distinguish between our agencies' needs and wants. We will see clearly how much we have to spend to reach our goals. Through tracking results, we will gain a sense of the strategies that work best to achieve which goals. The budgeting process begins with reflection and research and continues to influence all of our decisions as we make our way round the marketing circle.

Reflection and research are on-going and inform the marketing circle at all points. But chiefly, they allow you to make important decisions that move you into the next circle phase: Targeting.

2 Marketing Circle Introduction — Part Two: Targeting

Targeting is a key activity in the marketing circle and one of the most central concepts in marketing. Having a target market keeps our efforts focused and relevant. A target will prevent us from becoming distracted into other activities that don't advance our objectives. Targeting is central to marketing success.

When you select a target market, you are deciding where most of your marketing resources are going for a specified period of time, so you will want to ensure that you make the effort to make the right choice.



BEST PRACTICE — Tri-County Literacy Network, Chatham

The Tri-County Literacy Network provides an excellent example of how research and reflection result in a targeted market. This excerpt is taken from their *Evaluating Outreach Strategies and Events Final Report 2003*.

“To help us understand both the gaps in learner recruitment and the successes in outreach, a 14-question telephone interview was created...LBS administrators were contacted and asked if they would be willing to participate in the interview, while explaining the purpose, the format and the approximate duration of the interview... The results from the interviews indicated that the most underrepresented group of potential learners throughout the TCLN area was single mothers. Using this information, we reviewed relevant resources on reaching out to single mothers.” (pp 5-6)

Tri-county Literacy Network also held focus groups with single mothers already enrolled in LBS programs “to find out more how the learning programs can better advertise and offer their services in the community, especially for single mothers.” (p 6)

Market Groups and Segmentation

The first step toward developing a target market is deciding who your markets are. As we said in the last chapter, community literacy typically has five main market groups: learners or students, partners, volunteers, funders, and the community at large. You may decide you have more than five, and that's fine. **Market segmentation** means dividing a market group into subsets (segments) that have similar characteristics. Let's take the market group, “learners”, as an example. One segment of this larger group may be learners with independence goals. Another may be students who wish to go to college. These segments are very broad and you may wish to further subdivide them; however, you can easily see how marketing to these two segments would require very different approaches.

Marketing Circle

Target selection

Target selection is choosing one or more segments that you will want to focus your marketing on. You can choose more than one segment if it is likely they will respond similarly to your marketing strategy. For example, you may have one segment of students that needs math upgrading to get into the college and a second group that needs math upgrading for apprenticeship. The same marketing strategy may appeal to both of these groups. However, it is a good idea to choose only one segment as the target to sharpen your focus.

Learners make up our most obvious market and the one that is often most difficult to reach. We might segment the learner market by their goals as in the example above, or we might look at segmenting by other characteristics:

- ▶ Who we are serving.
- ▶ Who comes to intake but does not show up to class.
- ▶ Who comes at first and then stops.
- ▶ Who is successful in our program.
- ▶ Who is missing.

We can also segment by age, sex, goals, or even geographical locale. Where can we find this information? Student personal files are a valuable source. They tell the learner's age, gender and address. Training plans record the learner's goal and level. Attendance sheets let you know when they started and stopped. The learner satisfaction survey may let you know why they have decided to opt out. If you analyse this information, you may discover that certain themes emerge. For example, perhaps you will see that your program is thriving with female learners with independence goals but is not so successful with males. You may find that male students who want to go to college are very committed, but only for three months. You may find your program is extremely successful for math upgrading, but that students requiring writing skills are not completing their commitment.

Once you start to analyse your data, you will begin to see patterns.

Targeting Example

Let's suppose that you have looked at your intake, student files and training plans. What has emerged is that quite a few students begin in September but by November attendance has dropped sharply. You see from the training plans that the majority of these learners are male and cited further training or the college as their goal. More than half of them needed only math. The Learner Satisfaction Surveys that have been filled out indicate a neutral response to your agency's program, though they don't specify why. Based on this

data, you decide that this segment, male learners who want to go to college and need only math, will be your target market.

To re-cap, we began with a market group: learners. We segmented this group with an analysis of the students who had left the program by the end of November. We decided that within this group there was a target market of male learners who wanted to go to college and needed only math to get there.

Target Study

Once you have chosen your target market, you need to gather as much data as you possibly can on that specific group. You will already have investigated your own records, but you can also look further afield. If other organizations also view this target as a potential client, check out their marketing. Also, watch commercial ads to see how the professionals market to this group. A target review prepares you for developing a focused marketing mix. A “marketing mix” is how we plan, develop and implement our marketing strategy based on our knowledge of the target. We’ll study this concept in more detail later.

At this point in the targeting process, it is important to be perfectly clear about what your agency wants and needs from the target. Ideally, this is what you will receive in the marketing exchange, which is the mutually beneficial interaction between you and your target. Briefly review your reflection process to make sure that targeting this market is in line with your strategic thinking or plan. Within the context of the mutually beneficial marketing exchange, the remainder of the marketing circle is devoted to meeting your target’s wants and needs.

Competition

No target analysis is complete without thinking about who our competition is in relation to a particular target market. In the example we are using, our competition is not the college, because this group of students does not have sufficient math skills for entry. Instead, we are working in cooperation with the college because it is the students’ goal to move on to further training in a college environment. If we have a private training organization in town, this is a direct competitor. But competitors are not always in the same business as we are. Here is an insight on competition from business:

“No one has to buy what you’re selling. In fact, one of the biggest obstacles to the purchase—and therefore the biggest phantom competition—is your customer’s inclination to do nothing at all... To increase your share of opportunity, think about where your phantom competitors are hiding. Then find ways to make your product an

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easier, more gratifying, more satisfying, and more valuable alternative.” (*Small Business Marketing for Dummies*, p 52)

Despite our tendency to view other organizations in this role, in actual fact, our strongest competition could be anything from the pool hall to video games to correspondence courses. To edge out the competition, we need our marketing to sell our programs as more gratifying, satisfying and useful in the long run. Let's remind ourselves that good marketing is not manipulative. Community based literacy offers excellent programming for learners and we deserve to win out against the competition.

3

Marketing Circle Introduction — Part Three: Marketing Mix and Positioning

The next logical step in this process is to develop strategies and tactics to reach and retain your target market. This is your marketing mix, the next section in the marketing circle. What we achieve with our marketing mix is called positioning. Positioning is all about outcomes. It is the result of designing an appropriate marketing mix for the selected target. Marketing mix is how we plan, develop and implement our marketing strategy based on our knowledge of the target. Positioning is the result; it is how the program is perceived in the mind of the target as a result of the marketing mix. To make the distinction clearer, think about this analogy.

Job Interview Analogy

You have been selected for a job interview. You have excellent skills and you really want the job; therefore you decide to do everything in your power to get it. In this case *you* are the product that needs to be marketed. You want to achieve excellent positioning with your target market. Who are you marketing yourself to? You are focusing your attention on your future employer, and more specifically, the interview committee.

These might be the steps you take to market yourself to the interview committee:

- 1 You find out everything you can about your prospective employer and re-write your resume with their needs in mind.
- 2 You prepare for interview questions and develop a few of your own.
- 3 You scope out their current employees and decide that you need to wear your best suit for the interview.
- 4 You arrive a few minutes early for the interview, well prepared, groomed and well dressed.

This is your *marketing mix*. It is what you do to capture the interest of your target market, (the interview committee) who represents your prospective employer's interest.

The interview committee greets you. They see someone who looks like one of them, and immediately they feel more comfortable. They like your responses to the interview questions and they like the questions you ask. Your resume has already impressed them. They see someone who will fit in well in their workplace, someone they would like to work with and who fulfills the needs of the job.

Their response is your product's *positioning*, i.e., how you the product is perceived in the eyes and mind of the committee members. Remember that positioning is all about perception. To continue the analogy, if a second interviewee arrives after you, who has not researched the employer, he or she is unlikely to get the job even with skills equal to yours. The second interviewee has not given enough thought to the marketing mix and hence fails to attain positive positioning in the mind of the prospective employer. The second candidate may be able to fulfill the needs of the employer, but does not fully satisfy their wants, i.e. a colleague who is going to fit into their workplace ethos.

Need and Want

The distinction between need and want is a marketing essential, one that successful corporations understand very well. The fashion industry provides the best example of this distinction. Need may be about getting your teenager a good quality hooded sweatshirt. Want is about getting the right label or logo. As a parent, you know what's needed, but if the sweatshirt isn't the wanted make, it will probably remain in the closet! You can argue about its superior quality and design to no avail. If a fashion manufacturer does not pay close attention to their markets' wants, they will not have good positioning, which will be reflected in poor sales.

When it comes to our programs, it is just as critical to pay attention to learners' wants as it is their needs. In community literacy we have done very well in responding to the needs, but have not always paid the same attention to the student's wants. Sometimes, when we are working with lower level learners, we see that their wants can be unrealistic. What can we do when their wants are clearly beyond their abilities? One solution might be to introduce these learners to other avenues and options. Sometimes they choose "veterinarian" as a goal because they are not aware that they can be a veterinary attendant. Honouring learner wants as well as needs is critical in designing programs to suit them. Ignoring learner wants can sever or stall their progress in

*Honouring learner wants as well
as needs is critical in designing
programs to suit them.*

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our programs. They may quit long before they have reached their learning potential, or they may remain as fixtures in our programs.

When adults have further training at the college or an apprenticeship as a goal, they may *need* upgrading in one of our programs, but they may not *want* it! Often satisfying a learner's wants in our program is a far greater challenge than meeting their needs.

Positioning is about making your program exactly what your target market wants and needs; the marketing mix is how you go about it. Marketing mix is what we do; positioning is what the target sees and experiences as a result of our marketing.



POSITIONING — The Community Based Challenge

Creating good positioning in prospective students' minds is one of the most challenging marketing activities we face. Many of our community based agencies do not have good positioning. Despite our excellent programs, our marketing has failed to generate a positive response in our prospective learners' minds. Literacy comes with a stigma.

It's time for a new marketing mix. We may never fully overcome this stigma, but many agencies are working towards changing their image in an effort to improve their positioning, and it's working.



INNOVATIVE PRACTICE — Peel Literacy Guild Name Change

The Peel Literacy Guild took this stigma very seriously and decided to meet with learners, board members, staff and volunteers. Learners especially did not like their program's name because it included the word "Literacy". As a result, the Literacy Guild is now known as Skills for Employment, Life and Family, or SELF. Not only are learners more "pleased and proud" to be part of the Peel program, but they're also more willing to be associated with it. Now learners willingly hand out business cards and talk to their friends about Skills for Employment, Life and Family.

The Four P's of Marketing

In marketing terminology, the marketing mix is comprised of the four P's: product, price, promotion and place. We will use this terminology in the following examples of marketing mix that is targeted to specific segments in community literacy's target market groups. For the purposes of our example, we will continue with the segment of learners that we targeted in our earlier example: male learners who are willing to make a two to three month commitment to upgrade math in order to attend college. (See Target Example, pp 18-19.)

This example continues from the scenario above. We have already researched and discovered that this target market’s commitment is strong at the beginning of the program and falls off rapidly after two to three months. From follow-up with students we discover that the time commitment is too much for them. They felt like they were not progressing quickly enough. We decide that we want to retain these students and that our program can adapt to suit their specific needs and wants. This is a very important consideration. Sometimes we might like to keep a certain segment of learners yet be unwilling or unable to adapt our programs to accommodate them. For our example, we plan a program that we believe will suit them. They **need** math and they **want** to go to college! How do we satisfy these learners? The four P’s will help us solve this dilemma by enabling us to look at our marketing from various angles.

Product	Our “product” is a specifically designed math program that learners can take for college readiness. It is designed in modules so that students can pace themselves and have a sense of progress.
Price	We think of our programs as free, but the student pays in terms of time, commitment and perhaps self-esteem. How much of their time and commitment does attending our program require of them? What is reasonable? In our example, many of these learners committed until November and then lost interest. Therefore, we decide to create a twelve week program. We help with self-esteem by linking this program closely with the college, using as much college language as we can to help learners realize that our program is just one step to their long-term goal.
Promotion	We decide how best to reach the target and research where they go for information about further education. Because we are looking for college-bound students, we might want to give this program a name that links it with their college goals. Also, we will be sure that any promotional materials we produce are in the places where these prospective learners are most likely to see them. We’ll make sure that our college and Job Connect partners are aware of the program and have appropriate information and promotional materials. We will consistently emphasise the program-college link.
Place	Place includes the where and when of the target market’s program. Is the time and place convenient to them? Are the college-bound students in the same class as learners who have other goals? What do learners see when they arrive at a community based agency? How will “place” affect their learning and your positioning?



BEST PRACTICE — A Place for Adult Learners

The Timmins Learning Centre (TLC) offers both adult learning and an after school homework club for children in a shared space. TLC is fortunate to have a good location for their programs with two doors that give access to the centre. During the day only one door is open, and it leads to the adult learning environment. After school this door is closed and the Homework Club door becomes the entry point. Once inside the centre, both sides are accessible, but learners receive a positive and reassuring first impression by entering through the right door.

“When I give new adult learners a tour of the centre, I always explain the Homework Club to them,” says Executive Director Sheila Marshall. “Otherwise, they can be put off by the juvenile posters and books. Usually once they realise that the child-centred materials have nothing to do with them, they’re very impressed that we’re doing this work in the community. Some learners have even brought in their own children to the Homework Club.”

Once we have come up with the right mix, we are ready to let the target market know about our programs. The point is, with a target market to focus on, we have a much better chance of developing specific, crystal clear materials that get the message across to those who need and want to hear it. The benefit to our agencies is more successful learners. The benefit to learners is that our programs become more targeted, hence more relevant to their needs and wants. This mutually beneficial link between our agencies and learners is the marketing relationship or exchange.

Features and Benefits

While we are developing our marketing mix, another important distinction to think about is the difference between features and benefits. *Features* are the special or unique characteristics of a program or agency. *Benefits* are features articulated as advantages for our target market.

The two entryways are a *feature* of the Timmins Learning Centre. The benefit to adult learners is that they enter through the door that gives access to an adult learning environment.

We may have a computer class that begins with the absolute basics for people with zero computer experience. The *feature* is the computer class. The *benefit* is that self-conscious learners can learn about computers in a non-threatening class. Converting features to benefits is one way of ensuring that marketing mix has good positioning in the target’s mind. It also helps us to think through our marketing. What would be the point of

promoting a basic computer program to pre-college students? Chances are that this group's knowledge of computers is highly sophisticated and they would fail to see the *benefits* of such a program. Therefore, this feature of our programming is not one that we would promote to younger students upgrading to enter college.

The section on marketing mix and positioning is extremely dense; it's the real nuts and bolts of marketing. We have briefly discussed needs and wants, the four P's and features and benefits. It is important to see how all of these concepts fit into the marketing circle, but don't worry if it is not all perfectly clear. We will examine all of these elements in greater detail later in Chapter Three.

4**Marketing Circle Introduction — Part Four: Buy-In**

Whereas marketing mix is a process, buy-in represents a single moment in time. When you have selected the right marketing mix and have good positioning in the mind of your target, then the target will “buy-in” or commit to the program. In the corporate retail world this is “the sale”, the culminating moment when the cash drawer flies open and the clerk says, Will that be cash or credit? In community based literacy, this is the point where the prospective learner signs up, convinced that your program will best serve his or her needs and wants.

Therefore, buy-in is not always the same as intake because intake is not necessarily the beginning of commitment. When we intake new students, all of our programs have a process that helps both them and us to reflect on our program's fit. Because we are rounding the marketing circle, a good marketing mix will have done a lot of this work for you. At the point of buy-in, the student should be affirmed in his or her choice.

Let's revert to the retail sales example for a moment. Imagine buying a jacket in an upscale clothing store. The fit is great and it has the right label. The price is high, but you're willing to pay it, because the jacket suits you and you are thinking that this kind of quality makes a good investment. You're escorted to the sales desk where your sophisticated sales associate departs and leaves you with a person who takes your money without comment and crams your jacket into a plastic carry bag. Fit, label, quality go out the window. You might expect this kind of “service” in a discount department store, but it is out of place in high-end retail. Suddenly you begin to wonder about the wisdom of buying the jacket. You may even change your mind and leave the jacket sitting on the counter.

Similarly, intake may be a small moment in the larger picture. However, we need to maintain a consistency of service, so that the learner is reassured that he or she is making the right choice. Continuing with our male student example from earlier, if the learner

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expresses an interest in going to college, what he experiences at intake should not make him feel that he is in the wrong place or that we don't appreciate the investment of time and commitment that he is making.

“Is the place easily accessible? Is it set up in such a way that is welcoming to the client; makes him/her feel at ease? Does it provide privacy for the client? Etc, etc. The “place” portion . . . , if done incorrectly, can undo all the other aspects of the marketing plan.”

— Professor Jay Handelman,
Queen's University School of Business
and advisor to CLO's marketing project.

The buy-in is the culminating moment of all of our reflection and research, targeting, and marketing mix to this point. If you have ever confused sales and marketing in the past, the marketing circle should convince you of the importance of all the activity that takes place prior to the sale, or in our case, the buy-in.



BEST CORPORATE PRACTICE

Without all the steps that precede the sale — without all the tasks involved in fitting the product to the market in terms of features, price, packaging and distribution (or availability), and without all the effort involved in developing awareness and interest through advertising, publicity, and promotions — without these, even the best sales effort stands only a fraction of a chance for success.

From *Small Business Marketing for Dummies*, 2nd edition

We can also apply this principle to our intake. Targeting our marketing and developing the best marketing mix, will ensure an even greater success in intaking and retaining new learners.



5 Marketing Circle Introduction — Part Five: Customer Service

Once we sell our product, we have to deliver it. In community literacy, customer service is about fulfilling our side of the contract and meeting the needs and wants of our target with our excellent programs. Our program delivery builds on every segment in the marketing circle that we have worked on so far. What we provide must accurately reflect what we have “sold” to our stakeholders and it must also reflect the needs and wants of our target.

Marketing language can remove us from the sometimes worn grooves of literacy programming and help us to see ourselves and our markets in fresh new ways.

We might not be comfortable interchanging the word “customer” for learner or student. However, like marketing, the word “customer” can be helpful in reminding us of the exchange that is taking place between our programs and learners. Marketing language can remove us from the sometimes worn grooves of literacy programming and help us to see ourselves and our markets in fresh new ways.

Remember that our program (or product) is one of the four P’s of marketing. As we develop programs and services for the target market, we need to make sure that we can deliver them. That is, we have to have the materials, expertise and environment to fulfill our part of the marketing exchange. While the learner takes part in the program, we need to make sure that he (to continue with our example) is satisfied that his needs are being met. We cannot leave this to chance. Encourage staff and volunteers to get into the habit of asking students about their experience at your agency. Give students every opportunity to participate in decision making where their program is concerned. When we do these things, benefits accrue on both sides. Our target succeeds in the program in the expected time and we have positive statistics to report. As well, we will get good word of mouth marketing from the learner. The college will become a stronger partner as we send them students who are ready for their college preparatory programs. We will have the satisfaction of knowing that the learner is able to move forward with his goals and objectives because of our service.

6**Marketing Circle Introduction — Part Six: Follow-Up**

Follow-up is the last segment of the marketing circle, concluding the process and at the same time influencing the reflection and research that will begin the next round. Essentially, follow-up is about learning from our experience and making appropriate adjustments to our marketing for the next target. It is about gathering more information so that we can make more informed decisions about our marketing. Our current tool for follow-up is the learner satisfaction survey. However, we are not limited to this survey only. We can create questionnaires, journal questions, open discussions — any mode of

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communication that helps learners articulate what they really think about the program and how they might change things or keep them the same if they were to start over again.

When our students move on to further training or employment, they are often entering institutions with sophisticated tracking methods. Ask learners for permission to track their progress so that you can begin to build a database of success stories.

Follow up on the success of your marketing circle. Make notes along the way and decide what changes you will make for the next time around.

CONCLUSION

With the marketing circle completed you are ready to start again. Which group of learners (or other stakeholders) will you target this time? Perhaps you will want to focus on reaching more funders or volunteers. You can target more than one segment at once providing you are able to consider their needs individually. For example, if your program is at capacity, you may want to focus on volunteers and partnerships. You will need one marketing circle for each group as well as the resources to carry out your marketing strategies.

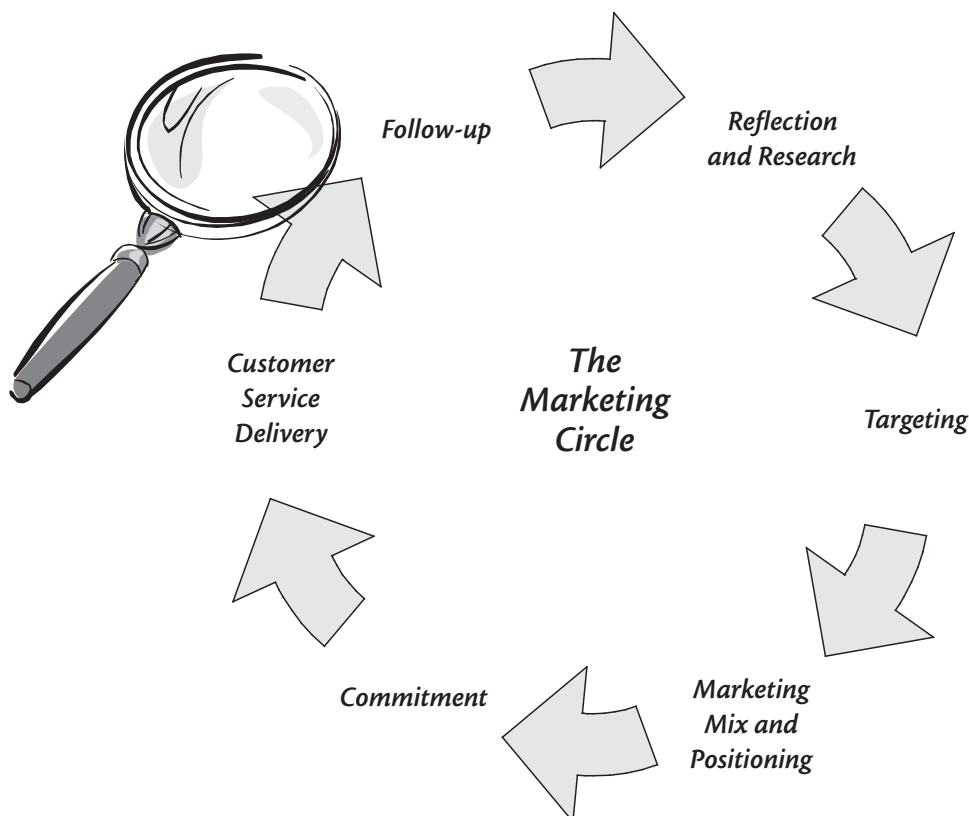
This chapter has provided an overview of the marketing circle, using male learners who need math upgrading as our working example. In the next chapter, we will examine sections of the marketing circle more closely and use examples from our other market groups: funders, partners, volunteers and the community.

Marketing Ourselves

CHAPTER—III

The Marketing Circle In-depth

Despite its simplicity, the marketing circle manages some very complex tasks. Each segment allows for varying degrees of complexity in our approach to marketing. In this chapter we will examine and highlight some aspects of each section. In the first section of the circle, Reflection and Research, we will take a look at the correlation between mission statement and marketing. In both the Targeting and Marketing Mix segments, we will work with examples from each of our market groups to get some practice with these essential marketing activities. Then, we will reflect on what Buy-In means for our various market groups. In Customer Service we will reflect on the importance of quality materials for our delivery. Finally we will see how follow-up provides the necessary closure for one Marketing Circle while providing the basis of Research and Reflection for the next.





Marketing Circle In-depth — Part One: Reflection and Research

It might seem that we spend so much time looking at things from the target market's point of view, we are in danger of losing sight of our own purpose and goals. How can we keep track of our own interests if we are constantly focused on those of our targets? This is why strategic thinking is so important in the reflection and research portion of the marketing circle. We touched on this briefly when we spoke about aligning our marketing with our mission statement or purpose. In this more in-depth discussion you will be able to see how everything we do in the marketing circle follows a plan that brings us closer to our own purpose and goals.

The mission statement is a pre-developed tool that we bring into our marketing plan. As you know, the mission statement's purpose is twofold: it is a public articulation of your agency's goals, and it determines whether or not new program ideas fall within the scope of your particular community based agency. A mission statement should help to define the guidelines for a marketing plan, and in turn, the marketing plan should implement the mission statement. Marketing brings the mission statement off the plaque and into the three-dimensional realm of execution.

All of our agencies have mission statements that reflect our visions and program values within our unique communities. In the business world, current popular thinking suggests a statement of purpose or mission should be under twenty-five words. Most corporations are making theirs even shorter. This approach has advantages in literacy. How many of our mission statements can be read and understood by learners?

If you have not revisited your mission statement for a while, perhaps it is time. Try to read it objectively. Ask staff members or volunteers who were not part of the mission statement development process if it speaks to them about the purpose and vision of your community based agency. In the light of new strategic planning, marketing, and Employment Ontario, you may conclude that your mission statement no longer conveys the vision and purpose of your agency. There are many excellent websites on developing mission statements, and Community Literacy of Ontario has a new module on Strategic Planning on its **Literacy Basics** website (www.nald.ca/literacybasics).

If you plan to review your mission statement, you might want to consider the following suggestions as entry points to change. These have been adapted from *The Free Management Library: a Complete Integrated Online Library for Nonprofits and For-Profits* at: www.managementhelp.org/plan_dec/str_plan/stmnts.htm.

Rethinking and Revising Your Mission

Consider any changes that may be needed in wording of the mission statement because of any new suggested strategies during a recent strategic planning process.

Is your strategic planning taking you in new directions? Have you out-grown or shifted directions from your mission statement?

Ensure that wording of the mission conveys some order of priorities in how programs are delivered.

Can you tell from your mission statement what is the first priority in your agency?

When refining the mission, a useful exercise is to add or delete a word from the mission to realize the change in scope of the mission statement and assess how concise is its wording.

If you can remove words or phrases without changing the meaning of your statement, how important are they?

Does the mission statement include sufficient description so that the statement clearly separates the mission of the organization from other organizations?

Imagine your mission statement hanging on the wall of another LBS organization or one of your partners who works with your clientele. Would it also serve their purposes? How is your mission in the community different from theirs?

Working with a Mission Statement

If your mission statement satisfactorily defines your place and purpose in your community, what comes next? As a working example, we'll use the following mission statement:



(OUR COMMUNITY BASED AGENCY) PROVIDES MEANINGFUL LEARNING FOR LIFE AND WORK TO OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

The next step is to set **clearly defined** goals that will enable us to fulfill our mission. We may want to set goals for each of our target groups and then prioritize them. In setting our priorities we will likely consider importance, cost, time commitment and other constraints and opportunities surrounding our various goals. Perhaps to begin our marketing plan we might write, "If we do nothing else this year, we will..."

For illustration purposes, we will say that your agency's goal is "to serve more learners with employment goals".

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After setting the goal, you need to review it. Does it work to fulfill your vision as outlined in your mission statement? Is it consistent with other strategic thinking that has contributed to your marketing goals? If so, you can go on to the next step. If not, you may need to re-think your goal. Alternatively, perhaps your mission or strategic thinking need more work.

The next step is the objectives, which are the measurable components of the goal. Depending on many variables including the size of the objective, time and money, you may need to set several objectives. For the purposes of our example, we will set three objectives:

- ▶ We will seek to form a partnership with Job Connect.
- ▶ We will acquire workforce curricula.
- ▶ We will participate in our community's job fair.

Strategies come next. These are the practical and action-oriented activities that ensure the success of our objective. Each of the above objectives will have a set of strategies developed to make certain that the objective is achieved. The strategies are very specific and include dates and the names of people who will perform the activity. Let's use the objective, "form a partnership with Job Connect" as an example.

Action	Who	When
Visit the Job Connect agency and pick up written information and staff business cards	Mary	early Jan.
Research the Job Connect website	Mary	by mid-Jan.
Talk to Bob Jones (in Beth's class) who was turned down by Job Connect	Beth	by mid-Jan.
Kathy to meet together with Mary and Beth to discuss and collate information	Kathy, Mary, Beth	late Jan.
Prepare literacy program information specifically related to Job Connect	Kathy	late Jan.
Make an appointment to speak to _____ at Job Connect	Kathy	end of Jan.

After we have finished setting goals, objectives and strategies, it is a good idea to revisit our mission statement to ensure that we are animating it as we begin the marketing circle.

By using our mission statement as the beginning of our strategic marketing process, we will make certain that all of our marketing activities will be working for us as well as for our targets.



Marketing Circle In-depth — Part Two: Targeting

In the example that we worked through in the introduction to the marketing circle, we targeted a specific learner group — male learners who wanted to go to college and needed only math to get there. This was a good way to begin because the target market of adult learners is the most familiar to us. Now let's see how we might choose targets from our other market groups.

CHOOSING A FUNDER AS A TARGET

Segment

Most of our programs have no difficulty segmenting their funders! However, many programs have more than one funding source or have sought funds from Trillium or other organizations for special projects. When segmenting, write down all of the funders you have received money from or would like to receive money from.

Select

For most of us our most important funder is MTCU (the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities). While some of us receive funding from other organizations, we all depend heavily on MTCU for our core operating costs. Therefore, if we have not maximized our relationship with MTCU via our field consultant, we should think of them as an important target market to begin with. It is vital that we do not skim over the marketing exchange with MTCU. Core funding is critical to our operations. Our part of the marketing exchange is fulfilled when we value MTCU as our best funder in much the same way as business values its biggest customers. No source of funding is so fixed that we can forget our half of the marketing relationship. For example, are you sure that MTCU fully understand the excellent work you do? If not, this is in part a marketing issue.

Our part of the marketing exchange is fulfilled when we value MTCU as our best funder in much the same way as business values its biggest customers.

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Of course we may have an excellent relationship with MTCU and yet still plan to approach another source for special funds. Interestingly, Community Literacy of Ontario's 2007 Human Resources survey results showed that on average, 31% of the annual operating budgets of community literacy agencies came from other (non-MTCU) sources of funding (55 agencies responding).

Study

It is time to look at our funder from a new perspective. If MTCU is our target, we need to gather data from web sites, memoranda and most importantly, program visits and their overall mission and purpose. If we have chosen another funder, we need to study closely their criteria for allotting funds. This would likely include web research and if appropriate, connecting with someone in the funding organization. We could also find another successful applicant in the literacy field to discover what kinds of projects have received funding. Cultivating a relationship with a funder is a long-term endeavour.

After segmenting, selecting and studying your funder, you are ready to begin designing a marketing mix for this target market.

CHOOSING VOLUNTEERS AS A TARGET**Segment**

Many agencies do not segment when they are seeking new volunteers. However there are specific groups in all communities that have more time for volunteering. For example, teens are fulfilling community hours and seniors and retired people have more time available than those who work full time. Think of all of those highly skilled baby boomers just poised to retire! Segmenting means focusing your efforts on the groups that are most likely to yield a greater number of volunteers specific to your agency's purpose.

Select

Your selection process will become easier if you are clear about what your volunteers will be doing. If you need more one-to-one tutors, then the teen group will not be an appropriate choice. However, if you need volunteers for other activities like website development, office work or basic computer maintenance, then the teen group would be a good choice.

Study

Competition for good volunteers is stiff, so it is a good idea to know what your target group values in the volunteer experience.

Choosing a target for volunteers may not always be necessary. But if you struggle to keep up sufficient numbers of volunteers, it might be worthwhile for you to target your marketing and draw on a group that will most benefit from a marketing exchange with your agency. For more information on this important market group, check out the Volunteer Management module on CLO's **Literacy Basics** training website.

CHOOSING A PARTNER AS A TARGET

Segment

We all have many opportunities for partnering with other organizations that provide services to the same client group as we do. When segmenting, it is useful to divide partners and potential partners into categories according to what they need and want from a literacy agency. For example, Job Connect and Apprenticeship are looking for literacy providers to teach foundational skills. March of Dimes and Community Living often look for independence skills. If you have several partners or potential partners in one group, your marketing may be effective for more than just one organization. However, it is a good idea to focus on one partner and allow the others to become secondary targets. That way, you can be sure that your energy, time and money are moving in the same direction.

Select

In selecting your target, look at both halves of the equation. Are they likely to be a good referral source for you? Can you satisfy their wants and needs? More research at this juncture is indicated if you are not familiar with the mandate of a potential partner. In this instance, the "study" section could also precede selection.

Study

Know your potential partner well. Take a look at their website and the materials they hand out. Meet with someone from their agency and find out what they would like in a partner. If it furthers your mission, be what your partner needs for success.

The lines are blurring between training and education. Opportunities are arising for innovative partnerships that address these needs for many groups. In particular, literacy agencies will have to consider the new partnership opportunities and needs within the Employment Ontario system. The best source of up-to-date information on Employment Ontario can be found at: www.eopg.ca.

CHOOSING YOUR COMMUNITY AS A TARGET

We often target our community at promotional events. We could be looking for partners, volunteers or new learners, but we are also looking to be a recognizable and positive presence in our communities. We want people to identify our agency and our work in a way that furthers our mission. Targeting our community is like a long term investment, a concept which we will examine more closely in Chapter V.

Segment

The community is a different kind of target than the other groups. That is, there is only one community to target, so segmenting will be more about singling out aspects of your community. This might translate into participating in some community events and not others. If you determine that something important is missing in your relationship with your community, you will want to participate in those events that will best rectify this situation.

Select

For example, if you do not feel that your agency is well known in the business sector in your community, you might want to have a presence at events sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce or job fairs. You select this aspect of your community to target.

Study

Visit the Chamber of Commerce and find out who is sponsoring the job fair. Be sure that you will fit in well with their themes. Find out through community contacts other ways of gaining access to your community's business sector.

CONCLUSION

As we become increasingly strategic about our community based agencies, developing a target market will be a natural outcome of our research and reflection.



Marketing Circle In-depth — Part Three: Marketing Mix and Positioning

It is worthwhile to go through a few examples of marketing mix for our various target markets. Remember, marketing mix is how we plan, develop and implement our marketing strategy based on our knowledge of the target. We used the example of a

learner group (male learners needing only math to get to the college) as our target market in Chapter Two, An Introduction to the Marketing Circle. Here we will examine the marketing mix in relation to funders, volunteers, partners and the community. When you practise these on your own, you may find that you struggle to fill one of the four P’s for a particular target. These labels are meant to help us to think outside traditional literacy programming categories, but they are not rigid. You will see in the examples below that Product, Price, Promotion and Place are not equally important for each target market. However, before dismissing any category, make sure you think it through as thoroughly as you can. Remember to step inside the target market’s shoes and ask how they might view your marketing mix. Most important, you want to achieve the best positioning possible with the marketing mix you create.

As a word of caution, these examples are not meant to completely exhaust the potential marketing approaches to the given targets. They give ideas and insights into how you might think about creating a marketing mix for your target markets. Because each of our communities is unique, what works well in one might not in another.

EXAMPLE ONE: FUNDERS

In this first example, we will assume that MTCU is our target funder. Logically, we might ask why we have to market to MTCU. After all, they are already funding us. It is useful to recall that marketing is an exchange. We are getting our funding from MTCU. What are they getting from us? Have we ever thought about what they want? If we try to look at our agency from the perspective of MTCU, what do we see? What is missing and what would they like to see more of? These are the kinds of questions that are helpful when we want to begin a marketing mix.



**BEST PRACTICE —
Targeting a Funder
from Job Connect,
Durham College**

If you are in any doubt that MTCU or our other funders can also be a target market, click on “Mission Statement” on Durham College’s Job Connect website. Among other things, they commit to providing comprehensive resources to **MTCU**, “In the delivery of an effective and efficient customer driven service within the parameters of continuous improvement.”

www.jobconnectontario.org/newsite/html/autogen.html?page_id=4&schild_id=16

Job Connect at Durham College recognizes the essential marketing exchange between themselves and their funder.

Target Review

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Before you begin your marketing mix, be sure to spend some time reviewing the target. Go over memos, meeting minutes, telephone conversations, and communiqués. Review program evaluations. Check out the MTCU website to see where they are putting their focus and money. At the same time, don't forget to include a scan of Employment Ontario as well.

Needs and Wants

You will have a clearer idea of MTCU needs and wants by perusing your program monitoring form from your program visit. Look critically at the areas for improvement. How can you convert these into assets? Now look at the areas where you meet or exceed expectations. Can you do these things better? Can you do more of the same? Speak to your field consultant; she or he is also a resource person. In general, some of MTCU's wants and needs include: accountability, focus on job training, focus on essential skills, effective partnerships. In effect, they want a clearly linked paper trail between their funding and our activities. Funders always want to know in concrete ways that their investment has made a difference.

“Track the results and then showcase them.”

—Vicki Trottier,
Community Literacy of Ontario's AGM, 2007.

Positioning

How do we want MTCU to see us? We want to be seen as an integral link in LBS delivery, equal in status and value to school board and college based programs. Equally important, we want to be seen as a key deliverer of foundational skills to our other partners within the Employment Ontario system (Job Connect; Apprenticeship, etc.). Is something preventing this vision? Dina Gowan of Tri County Council has some words of advice:

“Believe that what we do has value and is worthy of the funding we are asking for. Believe that we are really making a difference in our communities. Selling ourselves short with meagre expectations is poor marketing, because we are the message.”

Competition

We may not have to compete for MTCU funding; nonetheless, all LBS programming is funded from the same pot. How do we both compete and partner? How do we share resources yet showcase our unique contributions to LBS programming? Our best course of action is to know our strengths vis-à-vis our LBS partners and showcase our unique contribution, which is preparing learners with foundational skills to move on to further training, employment or independence.

The Four P’s of Marketing and Funders

<p>Product</p>	<p>What makes our program more attractive to MTCU? What makes our product unique? What kind of product is going to fulfill their wants and needs? Document and give evidence through concrete statistics. Focus on current MTCU initiatives. Review the results of your program visit and make critical changes. Think carefully about the implications of operating in the new Employment Ontario environment. What will fill their wants and needs?</p>
<p>Price</p>	<p>We already know what MTCU is paying for our programs. How do we think they perceive their return on investment? We know that literacy is a great investment, but in MTCU’s opinion, are they getting value for their dollars? How can we clearly show them this? Marketing makes the links between their investment and our programs. It is up to us to show MTCU that they are getting good value for their money.</p>
<p>Promotion</p>	<p>How do we promote to someone who is already investing in us? In the business sector, corporations not only invest in selling their products but also in retaining clients’ loyalty. MTCU probably does not always receive the impression that we value our relationship with them. The essence of “Relationship Marketing” is a focus on maintaining and improving committed relationships. Next program visit, employ the values of relationship marketing.</p>
<p>Place</p>	<p>Perhaps the only opportunity we have of promoting our place to MTCU is during a program visit. Think about where you deliver your program. Step into MTCU shoes and do a walk through. What do you see? Are the aspects of your program that are important to them highly visible? Do they see that you are using their investment wisely and innovatively?</p>

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Marketing to our funders is different from marketing to other groups. We need to see the four P's from different angles and think creatively. Our funders are not philanthropists who can donate money without strings. MTCU, Trillium and other major funders are responsible to others about how they distribute their dollars. Again, it is vital to see things from their point of view. Who are they answering to? Like us, they have people to please. It is important that what they do with their apportioned budget looks like the best possible allocation. It is up to us to convince our funders that more spent on us would also benefit them. This is the marketing exchange.

EXAMPLE TWO: PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are perhaps the easiest to see in the classic marketing relationship. We each do something that can benefit the other. Maintaining a healthy partnership means making sure that the relationship works for both. We want to make sure that our partners are as happy with us as we are with them. We become better partners by doing our part in meeting their needs.

We can segment our partners or the partners we would like, in a number of ways. For example, most community based agencies partner with organizations that refer students. We may want to make each partner a segment in itself or join a few together as one segment. For our example, given our closer relationship within Employment Ontario, we will use Job Connect as our target market.

Target Review

If you have not already done so, visit the Job Connect website at:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/apprentices/jobconnect.html>

Seek a meeting with your local Job Connect office, and ask questions about what they do in your community.

Wants and Needs

Job Connect has similar wants and needs to our own, although their goals for clients are exclusively job related.



**BEST PRACTICE —
The YMCA Career
and Development
Centre, Burlington**

The YMCA Career and Development Centre (a community literacy agency in Burlington) collaborates closely with Job Connect. Like many community based programs, theirs was suffering from low enrolment. Their partnership with Job Connect has increased their numbers to capacity. How did this happen? Executive Director Christine Vandegraaf sees literacy skills as a crucial missing link in the Job Connect suite of programs. Job Connect works closely with employers and with workers who are not moving ahead or whose work is clearly suffering due to literacy issues. The YMCA Career and Development Centre offers targeted upgrading and “Just in Time” services that meet the workers’ specific requirements in as short a time as possible. The Career and Development Centre runs flexible programs that meet the worker’s job needs; they are not focused on literacy criteria for success. Marketed as a service offered through Job Connect, literacy is seen as just another employment tool, an auxiliary service. It is less stigmatized and more work centred.

Should we partner with Job Connect? Christine Vandegraaf responds, “In Employment Ontario World, you should have a good relationship with Job Connect. You can’t afford not to.”

Take the lead and visit your Job Connect agency. Market your literacy programs as a value added service that develops key foundational skills. Find out what is missing in Job Connect, what literacy skills and programs their clients need, and offer them. If your community has no Job Connect office you can search for other Employment Assistance Services through the Employment Ontario website at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/search.html>. Job Connect is just one of a number of Employment Assistance Services within Employment Ontario.

Competition

Social agencies may decide that they have only so much time and energy for partnerships. They may also decide that some of what community based literacy does, they can do too. What we want is for our partners and potential partners to see their relationship with us as one that works exceptionally well for them. We are experts in the field of literacy. Let’s assure our partners that our participation will make their jobs easier for them because their clients will experience higher success rates.

The Four P's of Marketing for Partners

Product	Do you have a program that would work for Job Connect? Find out where the holes are in their programming (usually with clients with lower skills and education) and create alternatives. Sell yourself as offering key foundational skills that will increase the success rates of their clients.
Price	Partnerships usually require an investment of time and trust. If you have never partnered with Job Connect before, they may wish to start small. Our responsibility is to make sure they get excellent value for their investment.
Promotion	Job Connect is strictly about employment. Therefore, any promotional materials created for Job Connect should have a training or upgrading for training focus. We need to promote ourselves as the logical place to go with learners who do not yet meet the literacy expectations of employers or job training.
Place	Remember that Place is about the where and when of delivery. In partnering with Job Connect, we may need to be more flexible about place than we have been in the past.

When forming a new partnership or strengthening one that is already established, we must discover what it is that our partner requires us to provide and then do it well. If we are committed to the success of our partner's endeavours, then we are fulfilling our part in the partnership. We will benefit with a higher community profile and more referrals. In an environment where we are often competing for funding, we need to operate with as high a level of integrity as possible with our partners. Trust is essential to good marketing. This is nowhere more apparent than in our strong partnerships.

EXAMPLE THREE: VOLUNTEERS



BEST PRACTICE — Hamilton Literacy Council

Twice a year the Hamilton Literacy Council uses a specially licensed space to stretch an enormous banner across Main Street in front of City Hall. The banner reads: "Teach an Adult to Read" and gives their phone number. Executive Director Val Sadler says that they gear up to these two weeks per year by preparing materials and the time slots for training new groups of volunteers.

In community literacy we spend a lot of time, effort and money in marketing to volunteers. Volunteers are so essential to the success of our agencies, **Literacy Basics** has an entire module devoted to this topic. If you have not seen the module, it is a must read, and if you have it is worth a re-visit. Check out Volunteer Management at www.nald.ca/literacybasics/volunt/profile/01.htm. In this example we will use seniors as potential volunteers.

Target Review

Research and reflect on your community. Where are the seniors’ apartments and activity centres? Many seniors attend church and are members of service clubs. One innovative community literacy agency stopped by McDonald’s for coffee around 10:00 a.m. periodically because seniors typically meet there at that time. She took this opportunity to talk up volunteering at her agency. Think about where seniors are in your community and how best to reach them.

Needs and Wants

CLO’s research states, “The single most important reason for volunteering expressed by literacy volunteers was to make a difference in another person’s life.” (from **Literacy Basics**, Volunteer Management) Clearly, this is a very strong motivator for senior volunteers, many of whom do not have family connections in their community.

Competition

There is a lot of competition for volunteers in all of our communities. For instance, health related issues and hospitals have enormous numbers of volunteers driving and visiting patients, making phone calls, and fundraising to name only a few activities. How can we compete with these much bigger profiles and budgets? Try developing literacy as a special volunteer niche. You may have an advantage as a smaller service that can adapt your marketing needs to the seniors in your community.

The Four P’s of Marketing for Partners

Product	What are we “selling” to potential senior volunteers? Remember our earlier discussion of features and benefits. What are the benefits to seniors volunteering in a community based agency? The “product” for senior volunteers is a variety of perceived benefits, probably most especially the fact that they will be making a difference in the lives of others.
Price	Volunteers give of themselves and their time. Does your program help them to feel that their time and talent is well spent? Is there a healthy exchange taking place?
Promotion	Think about what you will highlight about your program to seniors. Where do other organizations advertise for senior volunteers? Try large print tear off phone numbers in hospitals, churches, seniors’ apartments and grocery stores. Also, post an ad on your local community cable channel.
Place	How and where will they deliver their volunteer service? Is your location accessible? Are your hours convenient to seniors? Are you close to a bus route or walking distance from a central location like downtown or the mall? Do you accommodate the seasonal availability of snowbirds? These are all features of your program that you can convert into benefits.

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EXAMPLE FOUR: COMMUNITY

As we have already observed, the community is a very large target market. Nonetheless, many communities have a collective self-identity, and it is this that we are trying to reach with our marketing. In larger cities like Toronto, self-identity is probably more associated with a neighbourhood rather than the city itself. Marketing to a large entity can be different than marketing to individuals or organizations. Let's see how the four P's adapt to marketing to our community.

Target Review

Think about issues of civic pride, of major employers and events that the community really supports. What is your community known for? How can you support that identity in your marketing message to the community? How does your agency honour and reflect diversity in the community that it serves? How do you think that your community perceives your literacy agency?

Wants and Needs

Communities like to be perceived as great places to live with excellent opportunities for their members. Are you able to contribute to this vision?

Competition

In our communities, we compete with other social service agencies for a positive profile. Are other organizations always in the news? Are you competing with one of the new fee for service training businesses that are popping up everywhere? Having a clear identity, solid partnerships and a presence at community events all serve to support your vital role in your town or city.


**BEST PRACTICE —
Tri County
Literacy**

Tri County Council has very successful and high profile positioning in the eastern Ontario city of Cornwall. They send out press releases regarding activities like open houses, new programs and other literacy events. Executive Director Dina McGowan and other LSP members release an annual Community Report that generates lots of interest and media coverage. The result? Tri County Literacy is perceived as an advocate for their community. The city is aware that their literacy levels are below the provincial standard and they look to Tri County Literacy to keep literacy front and centre as a political and social issue.

The Four P’s of Marketing for Partners

Product	The product is your agency as a community member. Is your agency identified as a positive contributor in your town or city? Do you consciously contribute to civic pride?
Price	The community pays in loyalty. This translates into good press, positive word of mouth and partnerships. It can also mean help from businesses who see supporting your organization as bringing them more good will with their customers. Politically, it can mean that literacy has a platform in your municipal elections.
Promotion	Promotion is about your presence in the community. Do you attend and participate in community events? Does your community know that your agency and programs are uniquely theirs, designed to meet their specific needs and wants?
Place	Does your place enhance or detract from your community’s appearance? Signs and doorways should be clean and welcoming. Let your community know that your “place” is an investment in their future.

The very shape and programming of our agencies should reflect the communities in which they function. We market best to our communities when we are seen as adopting their causes and priorities.

CONCLUSION

Focusing on the four P’s makes sure that our marketing is intentional and aimed at our current target. The more we practise stepping into our target’s shoes and looking at our agencies from their perspective, the better our mix will be.



The Marketing Circle — Part Four: Buy-In

There is an important difference between the word “buy” and the phrase “buy-in”. If we were operating a business, this culminating point in the marketing circle would be about the sale. But for us, it is more like someone is signing up for a lease. Whichever target market we happening to be focusing on, we want a long term commitment from them. For learners, they need to buy-in to their program and stick with it until they have successfully exited. We hope that partners will work with us for as long as the relationship is mutually beneficial, perhaps for many years. We put enormous amounts of time and energy into seeking and training volunteers and therefore we want their buy-in to last a long time. Certainly we need our funders to buy-in and remain committed to supporting

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our programs. Finally, we look to our communities to buy-in to our community based agency and see it as their own.

In each of these circumstances there is the point at which the decision is made, papers are signed and the official relationship begins. This is the buy-in. However, how we maintain the relationship and ensure that our markets remain committed is more about customer service. Having a “customer service” attitude towards learners, volunteers, partners, funders and our community will ensure that we remain alert to the inherent marketing relationship we committed to at buy-in with each of these groups. A great example of this is the regional network, Literacy Link South Central, based in London. Literacy agencies are the main stakeholders of LLSC. Accordingly, this innovative regional network decided to celebrate and honour the literacy practitioners and volunteers working in their various stakeholder agencies. With their own resources and time, LLSC planned a celebration event for practitioners. This was a great way to show a stakeholder group that they matter!



The Marketing Circle — Part Five: Customer Service

Delivering our programs links us with all of our market groups. Learners use our programs. Partners depend on them for their clients. Volunteers help deliver them. Funders fund them. Our community supports them. Therefore, in marketing terms, we can speak about the programs and services we offer as our products.

To illustrate this point, consider the materials we use in our programs and their role in customer service. The materials we use are the “visuals” of our programs. How new, current relevant or work-related our materials are will influence all of our marketing relationships. Yet many of us depend on the same old materials we have been using for years. We are comfortable with them. We know which series, book numbers and book levels are just right for whom. However, if we hope to clearly link learner progress with Essential Skills and other job related skills, it might be time to search for new and unfamiliar materials. If we want to market our programs successfully and offer excellent customer service, we cannot allow our materials to be more about us than about our clients.

How can we convince—

- ▶ the learner who reads and answers questions
- ▶ the volunteer who lends support in the classroom
- ▶ the OW caseworker following up on her client
- ▶ the funder who arrives for a program visit

— that an exciting adventure story and the accompanying content-driven questions will further the job readiness of the learner?

Old materials are about our comfort zones, not the learner's. To get serious about marketing, we ought to re-think our materials from our markets' points of view. This is another time-consuming but necessary component of our marketing strategy. We should be continually searching for new materials that fit the needs of our target markets, not our needs. It is time to look very critically at all of those resources sitting on our shelves. How long have they been there? What do they say to the learner when we hand them to him or her? What do they say to our partners when we explain how we prepare learners for further training or employment? What do they say to MTCU who assumes that we have a collection of workplace materials?

Many of our old materials do the job—after all, the skills we teach are transferable—but what is important is the *perception* of our target market. We do not have to toss out all of our old materials; however, we need to think very carefully about what our materials are saying about us to our markets.

New work-related materials can be challenging for us to use. We are not familiar with their content or how to assess our learners when they use the new materials. Here are some tips to get you started using new materials.

- ▶ Make a decision that you will add new materials to your program on a regular basis.
- ▶ Enlist the support of instructors and volunteers to go over new materials.
- ▶ Put out a call on the CLO AlphaCom discussion. Be specific about what you are looking for. For example, ask for work-related materials that teach math levels two and three rather than just workforce materials.
- ▶ Train yourself to look for authentic documents when you are out in the community.
- ▶ Check out the workforce curricula developed by Literacy Link Eastern Ontario and Literacy Network Northeast as well as websites like Demonstrations Ontario and Workplace Essential Skills.

http://www.lleo.ca/LLEO_pages/resources.html

<http://www.nt.net/literacy/CTWDemonstrations.htm>

<http://demonstrations.alphaplus.ca/>

http://srv108.services.gc.ca/english/general/home_e.shtml

Learners with independence goals also appreciate materials related to their lives in the community. Collect info sheets from around your community and develop lessons from these authentic documents.

Many agencies are already using new and innovative materials to provide excellent customer service, that is, program delivery. Materials provide the graphic representation

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of the programs that we are delivering and are an objective indicator of the quality of our products as perceived by our prospective targets.

Of course, materials are only one example of how customer service plays an important role in community based agencies. For a customer service model to a funder, you might also refer to the preparation for a program visit by North Channel Literacy as outlined on page 52. Think about extending volunteers and partners this same kind of care and consideration and you will be on your way to delivering excellent customer service.



The Marketing Circle — Part Six: Follow-Up

Follow-up is primarily about the learner target market because they flow through our programs on to independence, jobs or further training. Nonetheless, we can seek follow-up information from our other market groups about specific activities, experiences or clients. One of the most effective follow-up tools we have is to *ask*. Ask your target market if you can improve your service to them in any way. They will appreciate the question.

The MTCU field consultant's report on her agency visit is follow-up. It should definitely influence our marketing strategies towards our core funder for the coming year.

We may seek follow-up information from a partner after we have provided service to a client. Ask for both critical and positive feed back. Ask how we could improve the service to make things easier for our partner. This is valuable information for our next go-round on the marketing circle.

Follow-up with volunteers at the summer break or after they have finished working with a class or learner. Find out whether or not they feel they are using their gifts and abilities.

THE MARKETING CIRCLE — CONCLUSION

Now that we have disassembled the marketing circle and examined its component parts, we should put it back together. The circle is meant to be used as a complete tool. The marketing circle as a whole safeguards against endless speculation in the research and reflection phase and hair-splitting in segmentation and targeting. It does this by propelling us toward the marketing mix and positioning, which encourages us to action. After buy-in we are galvanized into activity, delivering what we have promised in our marketing mix. Follow-up provides us the opportunity to correct and fine-tune so that the information upon which we reflect directly affects the implementation of our marketing plan.

Marketing Ourselves

CHAPTER—IV *Target Practice*

Professional marketers agree that understanding your target markets is the key to success. We can deploy the best marketing strategy ever, but if we do not pay close attention to our target, we'll be firing it off in the wrong direction. This chapter looks at some tools that will help us to better analyse and understand our target markets.

First, we will examine more closely the twin concepts of **features and benefits** and **wants and needs**. These are powerful marketing distinctions that help us to understand and influence our target's thoughts and feelings about our programs.

Next, we will look at the marketing continuum, which plots the target on a line somewhere between awareness and commitment. It represents to us how our marketing mix unfolds into positioning in our targets' minds. This tool helps us to see where our marketing needs more work to succeed.

Needs and Wants

Understanding customers is the heart of marketing. All the major failures in the history of marketing can be traced to a lack of knowledge about customers' needs and wants. If you don't know the needs and wants of your customers, how can you possibly satisfy them?

—*Marketing 101* Don Sexton, PHD

There are many examples of the difference between needs and wants from the world of corporate marketing. One of the clearest examples is about watches. We buy a watch because we *need* to know what time it is. Do we go out and buy the first watch we see? Unlikely. Within reason, we buy the watch we want. One person buys a Rolex for status and prestige and another buys a Timex for economical dependability. The person who can afford the Rolex will look at a variety of styles and eventually choose the one she wants.

Targeting, Community Engagement and Branding

The same goes for the Timex customer. As a rule of thumb, needs are more objective (I need a watch and only have so much money to spend), and wants are more emotionally driven. In another example, I need fruits and vegetables; I want dessert. When has a stick of celery satisfied that place in your soul that is soothed by Belgian chocolate? Think about the last time you had a piece of chocolate or some other food you want and enjoy but don't really need. Your response to that food is usually an emotionally satisfying one.

As consumers, we justify our buying decisions by stating a need: I need a new pair of shoes! If a business sets out to meet this need, they will likely not succeed, because I don't really *need* the shoes: I want them. Therefore, the successful business hears that I need shoes and sets about meeting my wants.

It's easy to see the role that *wants* play in retail purchase decisions. However, the same principle is in effect when we are involved in any marketing exchange. The same people who buy watches and shoes based on wants also volunteer, upgrade skills, form partnerships and provide funds. No matter how logical the needs are, it is wants that tip the scale in favour of the purchase or buy-in.

Ethically, we might like to argue that we should be meeting needs and not wants in our literacy programs. Needs may be more immediate and fundamental, but people expect to have them met. It is a bit like going out for a meal with our sole criterion being that we are full when we leave the restaurant. In fact we want a lot more than that! It is our wants that drive the decision about where we are going to eat and what we feel like eating. Similarly, we need to address the wants of our stakeholders as we are able to meet them. For many of us, focusing on wants requires a major shift in thinking.

As community based literacy agencies, we might assume that we have an advantage over many corporations that strive to create need for completely inessential products. People really do need literacy skills after all. However, need does not automatically create a successful market. The fact that we offer a product—literacy upgrading—that is stigmatized, makes our marketing even more challenging than if we were selling a frivolous but popular program. As literacy statistics bear out, need has very little to do with the potential success of our programs. At the same time, needs and wants are linked. If I need to tell the time, I may buy a clock instead of a watch, but it's unlikely that I'll purchase a compass. Our market groups know their needs. At the same time, we need to identify the wants that are linked to those needs and meet them.

As literacy statistics bear out, need has very little to do with the potential success of our programs.

Fortunately, marketing offers a solution to this quandary: identify the segment of the population that has a need for your service but whose wants are not being met or not met well. Then ask the following questions:

- 1 What wants are my competitors already filling?
- 2 How can I meet a different set of wants?
- 3 Are there wants I can fulfill more effectively than my competitor?

Let's look at our market groups and reflect on these questions.

Learners

It is easy for us to understand the wants and needs of learners. They need literacy skills; they want a job, further training for a better job, or independence. Therefore, when we market to learners we do not talk about literacy, we talk about satisfying employment or perhaps using an automated banking machine. We have many competitors who are satisfying clients' wants, but none of them have what we have to offer in literacy and basic skills. What set of wants can our community based agency fulfill? For learners with further training or employment goals, we might appeal to their desire to reach their goals as quickly as possible. Through integrative partnerships we can emphasise the one-stop feature of our agencies and a smoother transition to the next level of training or upgrading. Our programs might also be convenient and flexible for these learners. These are wants that we can meet.

Volunteers

Except for students who require their community hours, people do not even need to volunteer. To market successfully, we must focus solely on the wants of our volunteer target group. Community Literacy of Ontario's **Literacy Basics** Volunteer Recruitment training module has this to offer:

Consider these two recruitment messages:

"ABC Literacy Organization urgently needs volunteer tutors."

"The learners are ready, the pencils are sharp, the computers are humming...but where are the volunteer tutors? Come join the ABC Literacy Organization's team of volunteers and gain the rewarding experience of helping someone learn to read. You could make an important difference in someone's life."

— *Literacy Basics: Volunteer Recruitment*

Which of these appeals to the wants of potential volunteers? It is nice to be needed but infinitely more satisfying to be wanted.

Targeting, Community Engagement and Branding

Volunteers have enormous choices when it comes to the kinds of volunteering they can give to their communities. Know what other volunteer supported organizations are offering in your community and offer a unique alternative.

Partnerships

Like us, many of our partners are very aware of their needs vis-à-vis their funding driven mandates. Is there a place for meeting their wants? Of course. If you could choose between two partners offering similar services, which would you prefer: the partner with poor social skills who is chronically late for commitments or the pleasant, efficient community based literacy agency? It sounds trite, but we would all prefer to work with pleasant people who share a similar work ethic. Know your partner and what they appreciate about their work associates.

Funders

We are already aware that our funders support other service providers in the community. Therefore, it is imperative that we come up with ways to meet their wants in unique and innovative ways.



BEST PRACTICE — North Channel Literacy Council

Executive Director Cheryl DeNeire loves her program visit. “It’s like a strategy game,” she explains. “We look on it as an opportunity to convince our field consultant that what we’re doing is working, and that what we’re doing is exactly what she wants us to be doing.” Before the field consultant arrives, Cheryl and the staff meet to go over the questions on the program monitoring form. They review areas they want to highlight and discuss how they will broach areas of potential confusion or conflicting ideas. “We always pick out two or three things to focus on,” says Cheryl DeNeire. “When we’re ready we send our field consultant an agenda about what we’ll be talking about and when, so the day is set up.” For the actual program visit Cheryl and the staff pull out everything they plan to talk about. They use colourful folders, and everything is clearly labelled and neatly arranged on a large table. Cheryl DeNeire particularly focuses on outcomes — because that is what MTCU likes to see — by laying out relevant statistics and IMS tracking for every month. It’s all within sight and very accessible.

Cheryl DeNeire has heard other executive directors talk about dreading their program visits. “It’s important to understand what she [the field consultant] is here for. She isn’t the big bad wolf, she’s part of the team.” When MTCU visits the North Channel Literacy Council’s Learning Centres, they know they are receiving value for money.

Essentially, all funders, government or otherwise, are seeking credit and recognition that the funds they have invested in our agencies have paid off. We need to take the time to clearly show through statistics and anecdotal evidence that their funding has made a difference and give them clear credit at community events.

Community

It is very important for us to reflect on what our community wants from us as a community based agency. Because all of our communities are full of non-profits seeking the good will of their citizens, it is vital that we discover a market niche that is uniquely ours. Reflect on the services in your community and how they are marketed. What can you do differently to capture and maintain the interest of community stakeholders?

Consider the marketing niche created by the popular “Word on the Street” community literacy festival held in Toronto, Kitchener and across the country each September.

Word on the Street — Toronto Mission Statement



TO UNITE THE COUNTRY IN A NATIONAL, ANNUAL, ONE-DAY CELEBRATION OF READING AND WRITING THAT PROMOTES CANADIAN AUTHORS, BOOKS AND MAGAZINES, AND HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF LITERACY IN THE LIVES OF ALL CANADIANS. THE WORD ON THE STREET FESTIVAL IN TORONTO FOCUSES ON PROMOTING TORONTO AND ONTARIO AUTHORS AND LITERACY ORGANIZATIONS.

<http://www.thewordonthestreet.ca/>

Shifting from needs to wants demands a radical adjustment in our thinking. It requires us to be more engaged with our markets and to really try and understand what they want. Our markets know that we can meet their needs. It is up to us to convince them that we also have what they want.

Features vs. Benefits

Features and benefits are the other marketing duo that is considered as two halves of the same coin. A *feature* is an attribute or characteristic of a product or service. A benefit is the value of the attribute or characteristic to the target. To better understand the distinction, think about some sales ads. Advertisers are very sophisticated about the difference between features and benefits. Often the product that they are selling does not even appear in the ad; they focus entirely on the benefit received from using that product.

Targeting, Community Engagement and Branding

If customers buy benefits, what is the use of features? Benefits must be supported by features to be credible. For example, if your agency offers a twelve-week math upgrading program for apprenticeship, then the features of the math course need to support this. The features could be that this math course is divided into twelve modules, which would clearly indicate to the learner or other stakeholder that you are able to deliver the material within the stated period. Backing up the benefits you promote with the solid features of your agency will build your reputation and positive word of mouth marketing.

Focusing on Benefits

Focusing on the features of our programs is an easy trap to fall into when we plan our marketing. One easy way to prevent this is to state a feature of your program, add “which means” or “so that” and finish the statement with the benefit to your target. This is an important exercise because the benefits of what we do are so obvious to us, we do not often think of translating them for our stakeholders.

Example for prospective learner:

We offer an introductory computer course *so that* you will feel comfortable as a student who has never used a computer.

Another method you can try is to craft your marketing message and then step into your target's shoes and read it. If you aren't clear on the “So what?” then you have not adequately expressed the benefits in your message.

Example for OW partner:

“We can offer your clients programs to upgrade their skills.”

So what?

“We can offer your clients programs to upgrade their skills *which means* that your clients will be more self reliant and able to find employment more quickly.”

If you have ever visited the OW website at the Ministry of Social and Community Services, you will know that self-reliance and short routes to employment are very important within their mandate. <http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcsc/english/pillars/social/programs/ow.htm>. Speaking your target's language is another effective marketing tool.

Three Categories of Benefits

Benefits usually fall into three basic categories: money, time and ego needs. Therefore, our programs should appeal to our target markets on the basis of at least one of these motivators.

Money: We need to let people know that our product or service will save or make the stakeholder money or prove a good investment. We might suggest that our program will help a learner upgrade for a better job and better income. We can show our funders how our programs are a wise investment. We can show our partners how our programs improve their success rates for clients, which means better statistics for their funders.

Time: We can promote our programs as a valuable way for volunteers to expend their time. We can promote our programs as the most efficient training for clients who need foundational skills before they can seek employment or further training.



**BEST PRACTICE —
The YMCA Career
and Development
Centre, Burlington**

The YMCA Career and Development Centre offers targeted upgrading and “Just in Time” services to meet workers’ requirements in as short a time as possible.

Ego needs: Volunteers can feel good about the value they contribute to learners’ lives. We can encourage our communities to feel good about our services.



**INNOVATIVE
PRACTICE —
Tri-County
Literacy, Cornwall**

Dina McGowan at Tri-County Literacy refuses to focus on the stigma of literacy. “If we keep it in the forefront, literacy will lose its stigma,” she says, “No matter how you look at it, our community is suffering. Now we are seen as community advocates.”

As well as advocating for the literacy needs of our communities, we can also address the ego needs of learners by offering confidentiality as a feature with the benefit that the learner does not need to tell anyone that he or she is a literacy student. We can also focus on the benefit of increased self-confidence that is derived from improved literacy skills.

“The Centre has helped me to read and write...until now, I never thought I could.”

—An adult literacy student in Ontario, CLO website

Converting Features into Benefits for Different Target Groups

The features of your program must be marketed as different benefits to different target groups. If we think about an upgrading math program for a learner moving on to Job Connect, the benefits might look like this:

For learners	An effective route to getting into apprenticeship or job training
For Job Connect	A way that our partnership helps them to improve their number of successful clients
For our funder	A direct link between our programs and employment
For our volunteers	A specific set of materials that they can use to effectively teach an adult student

The clearest way to understand the distinction between features and benefits is to think in terms of outcomes. Benefits are the outcomes of the features. Understanding the benefits that will accrue to your target market as a result of a particular feature of your program or agency is a key ingredient to your successful marketing.

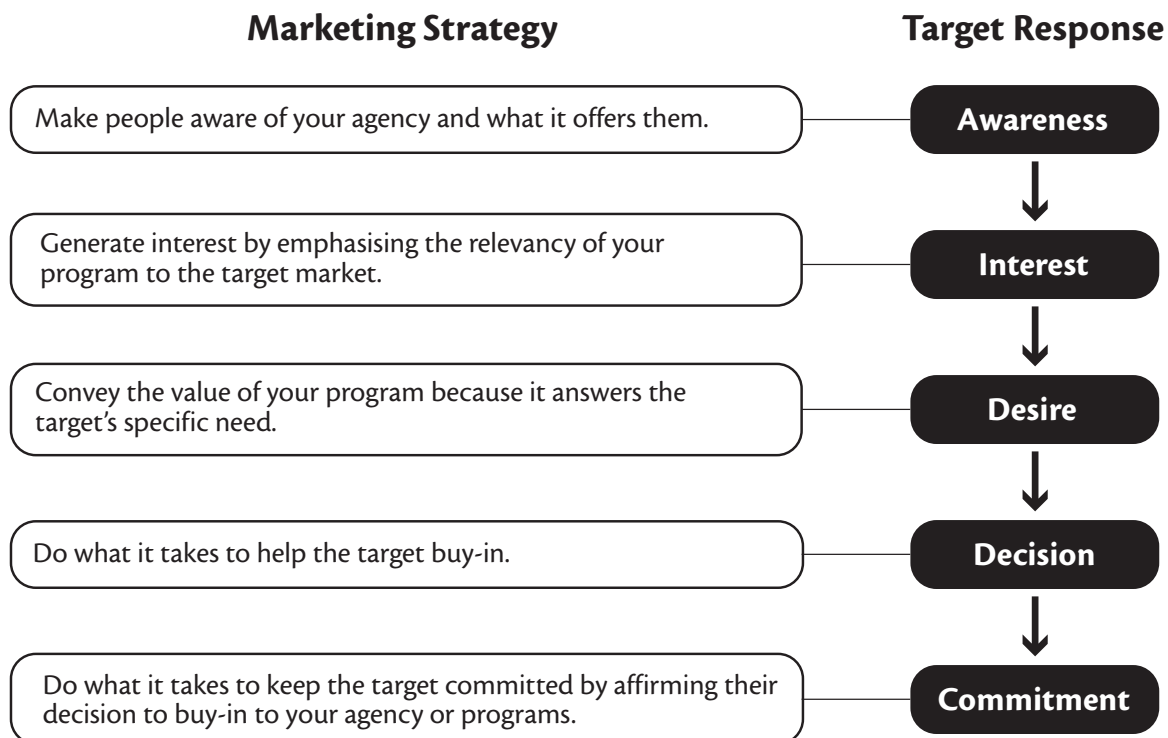
The Marketing Continuum

Now that the cyclical nature of marketing has been firmly established with the marketing circle, we are going to shift to linear thinking. The marketing circle is a useful tool for us, but our target markets are not interested in the circular and repetitive cycles of our marketing strategies. Our target markets are looking for ways for their wants and needs to be met. We would like our target market to see benefits to them as expressed in our marketing mix. If it is successful, our marketing will generate awareness, interest, desire, decision and a commitment to our programs. This progression from awareness to commitment is known as the **marketing continuum**.

What this means is that our target markets begin with an awareness of our programs and our marketing directs them to where they commit to a marketing exchange with us.

Once we have our target market's attention, they are somewhere on a continuum between Awareness and Commitment. This is a free flowing current and not an assembly line that the target is obligated to remain on. Good marketing keeps the target flowing through the steps, generating momentum to the point of buy-in and on to commitment. Poor or incomplete marketing is likely to cause a break in the continuum with the target not following through the process.

THE MARKETING CONTINUUM



Much of the marketing that we have done in the past keeps us at the first or second stage in the marketing continuum, i.e. of awareness and interest. We even speak generally about “creating awareness” of our programs. Awareness is good—as long as we recognize that it is just the first in a series of connected stages.

Ideally, it is the appropriate marketing mix we have developed that will keep our target on track from awareness through interest, desire and decision to commitment. If our target is coasting along the continuum, then we know that our marketing has been successful, and we have achieved the right positioning. Customer service will affirm the decision and keep the target committed to a marketing exchange with us. If the target loses interest at some point, then our marketing may very well be faulty. The marketing continuum can help us to assess how well our marketing mix and customer service are working.

For example, think about learners who have not made it past a phone call, intake, or the first month. Where were they on the continuum? At what point in time did they decide to leave our stream and move in another direction? This simple flow chart gives you a structure within which to reflect and then act on these weaknesses in program marketing.

In their “Who Wants to Learn” study (2001) ABC CANADA found that less than half of those who contact a literacy organization actually enrol in a program. Forty-three percent of those who do not enrol cite program/policy related problems as the reason. Not being called back, long waiting lists, inconvenient course times, wrong content or teaching structure and unhelpful program contact are the major reasons cited for not enrolling.

—(From *Literacy Basics: Learner Recruitment*)

Using the marketing continuum, let's reflect on these learners who contact our agencies but do not enrol. We know how difficult it is for many learners to make this initial call, so we can assume that they are at a point of interest or even desire and not awareness only. While we might feel that we are not able to make changes to some areas of program and policy, issues around call back, content, teaching structure and unhelpful contact are usually comparatively easy to fix.

Let's look at another example of how we might use the marketing continuum. Imagine that you have set up a booth at a community fair where you hope to target retired professionals as volunteers. You set up your signs and put out your brochures. Throughout the fair, people stop to chat, look at your materials and pick up your brochures. Successful, right? The following week, you await the calls but only receive a very few, and these do not seem very promising. What went wrong? You were able to generate interest because people picked up your brochures, but you were not able to generate desire. In this instance, the answer is obvious; you need to take a very good look at that brochure! Clearly, the message that people were looking for was not contained in its folded pages. It's time to re-think the features and benefits of your program and your target market's wants and needs in relation to what you have to offer.

A quick and useful guide to use before creating any communication tool is presented on page 59.

We can also reflect on partnerships within a marketing continuum. Think about partnerships that fizzle out after a few referrals. We know that there was an initial interest and possibly desire as well because we received those first referrals. If they dry up, it could be for a number of reasons that have nothing to do with our marketing. However, if we give the referral agency a call and arrange to meet, then we can hear from their point of view how the partnership is working. We can correct any misconceptions and address areas for improvement. Even showing interest and concern at this point can get things back on track if their lack of referrals was just a matter of poor communication.

Targeted Marketing Communication

I Before creating any kind of marketing communication determine **what** you are trying to accomplish.

Identify whom you are trying to influence

Clarify what actions you want your target to undertake

Define the message you will promote to accomplish your aim

Use this template to target your communication goals.

This (*ad/brochure/flyer/presentation*) **will convince** (*target market for this communication*) **that** (*describe the action you hope to achieve*) **will** (*describe the benefit your target will realize*) **because** (*state the facts that prove your claim*).

Example:

This **brochure** will convince **retired professionals** that **volunteer tutoring at our community based literacy agency** will **add meaning to their own lives and make a difference to our learners** because **this is the experience of almost all of our tutors and we have the testimonials to prove it.**

II Next, develop a *creative brief* to explain **how** you will communicate your goals.

Who is our target prospect?

Be clear about who you are communicating to with your marketing. In our example, the target audience is retired professionals.

What do they currently know or think about our agency?

Are you trying to reinforce an impression or change minds? Is there any misconception that you need to undo? Do you need to tell them what you do?

What do we want them to know or think — and do?

Write a single sentence desired outcome. Ensure that your entire communication is focused on this outcome.

“As a result of reading our brochure, prospective volunteers should want to become volunteer tutors for our agency.”

Why should they believe us?

Give supporting facts about benefits and outcomes your programs provide. Be sure to include volunteer testimonials and speak in terms of benefits and satisfying wants.

How will we evaluate this marketing effort?

State what you expect to accomplish with this brochure so that you can measure the success of your marketing communication.

— Adapted from *Small Business Marketing for Dummies*, 2nd edition

Targeting, Community Engagement and Branding

When we apply for new funding, we are very aware of the marketing continuum. We know that we have to interest the prospective funder in a new project or worthy program that needs financial support to work. We craft our proposals very carefully and have no difficulty envisioning the enormous gulf between interest and commitment. We spend lots of time in that middle ground, persuading Trillium or the United Way or whomever, that we are the right organization to fund. If we do not receive the funding, many funders will actually tell us where we failed on the marketing continuum.

We may feel some relief or complacency that MTCU funds us wherever they are on the marketing continuum. However, with the recent structural changes we have been experiencing as literacy moves into the Employment Ontario environment, we cannot assume that this will always be the case. It is just as important to keep all of our funders committed to our programs as it is our other target groups.

Ideally, we want all of our target markets to remain committed to us for as long as the exchange is mutually beneficial. Not all circumstances are within our control; we are not always able to analyse why a certain marketing exchange is no longer working very well. Sometimes our marketing has nothing to do with a completely unilateral decision others may make to quit a program, allow a partnership to flag, volunteer elsewhere, or fund another program. But if we can reflect on where our target markets are on the marketing continuum, we have a useful tool for analysis and action.

Marketing Ourselves

CHAPTER—V

Community Engagement and Branding

If you implement it, the marketing circle will improve the effectiveness of your literacy programs by addressing the needs and wants of your learners, partners, volunteers and funders. We have also discussed our fifth target—the community at large. It fits into the marketing circle, but somehow the idea of target does not completely capture the collective entity that is our community. In fact, there is more to our communities than can be segmented as a target market. Our relationships with our communities require an added approach.

Community Engagement

Certain nonprofits have adopted the idea of community engagement, which was originally developed in reaction to hard-nosed marketing practices. Of course, marketing has come a long way, and now it can be argued that the distinction is one of terminology rather than means and ends.

“Community Engagement is the process of building relationships with community members who will work side-by-side with you as an ongoing partner, in any and every way imaginable, building an army of support for your mission, with the end goal of making the community a better place to live.”

—(Community Driven Institute: www.Help4NonProfits.com)

Targeting, Community Engagement and Branding

What makes community engagement a useful marketing concept for us is that we have a very distinctive relationship with our communities that sometimes goes unexplored and under-utilized. As community based literacy agencies we link to our communities via our board of directors, our volunteers, our involvement of learners in all aspects of our operations and our personal community participation. Our community is our market niche, and we are the literacy provider most able to respond flexibly to our community's needs.

Community Literacy of Ontario's 2003 Human Resources survey revealed just how closely we are linked with our communities. The percentages are based on approximately 60 respondents. (The 2007 survey results will be covered in chapter nine.)

Community literacy agencies participate in the following types of community events:

- ▶ Community presentations = 90%
- ▶ Community fairs and special events = 87%
- ▶ Promotional events such as open houses, Scrabble® tournaments, etc. = 77%
- ▶ Writing articles in the local newspaper or submitting press releases, etc. = 84%
- ▶ 24% participated in other promotional activities

Community literacy agencies have the following types of partnerships:

- ▶ Local employers = 45%
- ▶ Local referral agencies = 68%
- ▶ Local community agencies = 90%
- ▶ Local community service clubs = 50%
- ▶ Ontario Works = 77%
- ▶ Other literacy agencies = 75%
- ▶ Other types of partnerships = 40%

As we have seen with other target markets, communication is the key to successful marketing. How we communicate our marketing mix determines whether or not we have successful positioning with our target. The promotional materials we create have to convey our message with clarity and proficiency. But how do our carefully targeted materials affect our community? Will they notice the brochures we have specifically developed for partners? Will the flyers we post for learners have a positive impact on the community at large? Will our volunteer orientation sessions have any wider effect? Just

as we are intentional about creating materials for other groups, we have to think about communicating via media and methods that best serve our community and help them to understand and commit to our community mission.

As community based agencies we are convinced of the importance of connecting with our communities. The question is, what do we say? How do we impart a consistent message about our literacy agencies that speaks to our entire community? Interestingly, we have to return to one of the most central concepts of marketing to find the answer.

Branding and Competition

While the state envisioned by community engagement advocates in the quote on page 61 sounds idyllic, in reality, our community partnerships are rarely so altruistic. We know that while partners like OW and Job Connect are happy that their clients are successful in our literacy programs, their focus is understandably on their own mandates. They will form partnerships and work “side-by-side” with us so long as there is something in it for them. This is perfectly sensible; we feel the same way. We all know how frustrating it is to have clients referred to our programs who are well outside of our own parameters of delivery.

But there is an even muddier aspect to our relationships with many of our partners: we are actually competitors. We compete with non-profits for additional sources of funding, for clients, for volunteers and for our community’s interest and commitment. How do we distinguish ourselves from other non-profits in our community with whom we share so much?

On the provincial level, it doesn’t get any better. We compete for MTCU funds with other members of Employment Ontario. There is only so much money to expend on adult education programs, and our proportion is very modest. In fact, community based literacy is a very small fish in the big EO pond. How do we maintain our identity and established position in the face of the new EO environment?

The most important thing we can do is to keep on marketing. Marketing is an ever-evolving exercise in self-identification. The issue of self-identity brings us full circle to Chapter One and the identity crisis we identified. Marketing ourselves will generate a bigger, stronger identity. When we market ourselves, we emphasise

One of the best tools to confront competition and build self-identity is brand marketing. Branding differentiates us from our competition.

Targeting, Community Engagement and Branding

who we are and what we do in relation to other groups with whom we share the same resources. One of the best tools to confront competition and build self-identity is brand marketing. **Branding differentiates us from our competition.** In our non-profit community and Employment Ontario, our competition means everybody else. How can we both work with these groups and compete at the same time? This isn't as difficult to answer as we might imagine. Think of the analogy of a swim team. As individuals, they compete against one another for times, places in a medley, for sponsorships and scholarships. But they also work together as a team, forming firm friendships and experiencing meaningful camaraderie. Life is like this for community based literacy agencies: we compete for funds and positioning in our communities, and at the same time we partner with these same organizations. Knowing and exercising our significant abilities not only makes us a good competitor, it also adds to the strength of the team. Competition is healthy.

Branding distinguishes us from our competitors and helps them (and others) to understand who we are, what we stand for and how we do it. Therefore, branding builds respect while fortifying relationships.

As community based agencies, branding is a crucial marketing strategy for us to ponder both as individual agencies and as Community Literacy of Ontario. Building a strong brand is a long term project, one that should be closely allied with strategic planning. By marketing ourselves we are putting in place the key elements that will help us in any future branding process. In the meantime, the rudiments of a strong brand will be taking shape as we strengthen our positioning with our target market groups. Beginning the marketing process with the marketing circle will enable us to start reflecting on branding. The more we practise marketing, the more clearly we will be able to identify who we are and what we do and translate this into a powerful message for our communities.

The more we practise marketing, the more clearly we will be able to identify who we are and what we do and translate this into a powerful message for our communities.

CONCLUSION

Keeping up a steady flow of communication will increase awareness in our communities about what we do. When we encourage staff and learners to spread the word as well, we will be putting a face on literacy, and people will make the connections between literacy issues and their community. Learners can provide effective marketing by being ambassadors for our programs. As the face of literacy, they are able to convey the success

and meaning of our programs in ways that elicit an emotional and proactive response from community members. This is the best marketing of all.

**BEST PRACTICE —
Marketing to Our
Community in
Belleville**

Executive Director Marsha Roadhouse’s decision to have their learners become more civically engaged has resulted in some great marketing. Learners at the Quinte Adult Day School in Belleville have helped out at the annual Winterfest and the Santa Claus parade as well as volunteered at a local church which sponsors weekly community meals and a very popular annual Christmas Dinner. Marsha realized that learners who participated would be acquiring great new transferable skills. For many of their learners this was the first time they had been involved in volunteering and recognized for their contribution to the community.

Another unexpected result transpired: community members became interested in the Quinte Adult Day School and supported it through recognition such as increased volunteers and funds. One community business, which supported QADS’ Snowball Event at Winterfest, actually employs two of their former learners. “This higher profile has made a huge difference,” says Marsha Roadhouse. “Now, others in our community come to us both seeking and trying to place volunteers. The learners feel empowered as a result of participating in their community”.

°The Quinte Adult Day School is building its brand as a literacy organization that has a meaningful and active role in its community. Whether we eventually decide to brand our agencies individually, or opt for a central brand that empowers us all, this kind of community engagement strengthens us both at a local level and provincially within Employment Ontario and beyond.

Marketing Ourselves

CHAPTER—VI

Survey Results and Analysis: Outreach to Learners

The first part of *Marketing Ourselves* has focused on the fundamentals of successful marketing for our community based agencies. We've explored marketing as an essential skill, the marketing circle, targeting, and community engagement and branding. All of these subject areas work toward aligning our thinking with a marketing perspective and approach.

The second part of *Marketing Ourselves* examines what community based agencies are already doing in marketing and outreach. To do this we will be looking at the results of Community Literacy of Ontario's *Marketing and Outreach Survey* conducted in May 2007. A total of 55 community literacy agencies responded from all over the province, and they represented all sizes of agencies serving all levels of LBS learners. Therefore, the survey results accurately reflect community based marketing activities.

In 2007 Community Literacy of Ontario developed and distributed a survey to Ontario's community based agencies that became the basis of the internal research contributing to this project. In community based literacy, our marketing efforts are generally directed at two distinct groups. The first is our learners and the second is our community. The surveys that agencies filled in for this project indicated that these two kinds of marketing are often done quite differently. This is entirely appropriate because the marketing message that these two groups needs to hear is very different. Stop and think for a moment. If you are creating a marketing message for a potential adult learner, what should that message contain? How and where should it be delivered? If you are creating a marketing message for your community stakeholders, you might ask yourself the same questions, but the answers will be different, depending on whether you are seeking out partnerships, volunteers or sources of funding.

Survey Results and Analyses

This part of the resource guide looks at the kinds of marketing and outreach already taking place in our community based agencies. After each section there is a list of suggestions about how we might improve this kind of activity. These suggestions are not exhaustive but are meant to get us all thinking about different ways to successfully market ourselves.

This chapter is about outreach to learners. The survey results are grouped together under general headings. Then some tips are given to improve or encourage your marketing in these areas.

Chapter VII is on marketing to our communities. Again the survey results are grouped under general headings and each heading contains a summary of what we do and how we might do it better.

Chapter VIII is on successful promotional events we participate in. This pie graph shows special events or activities that are not considered part of our usual marketing plan or are annual events. Some agencies listed special events and activities and others included annual events.

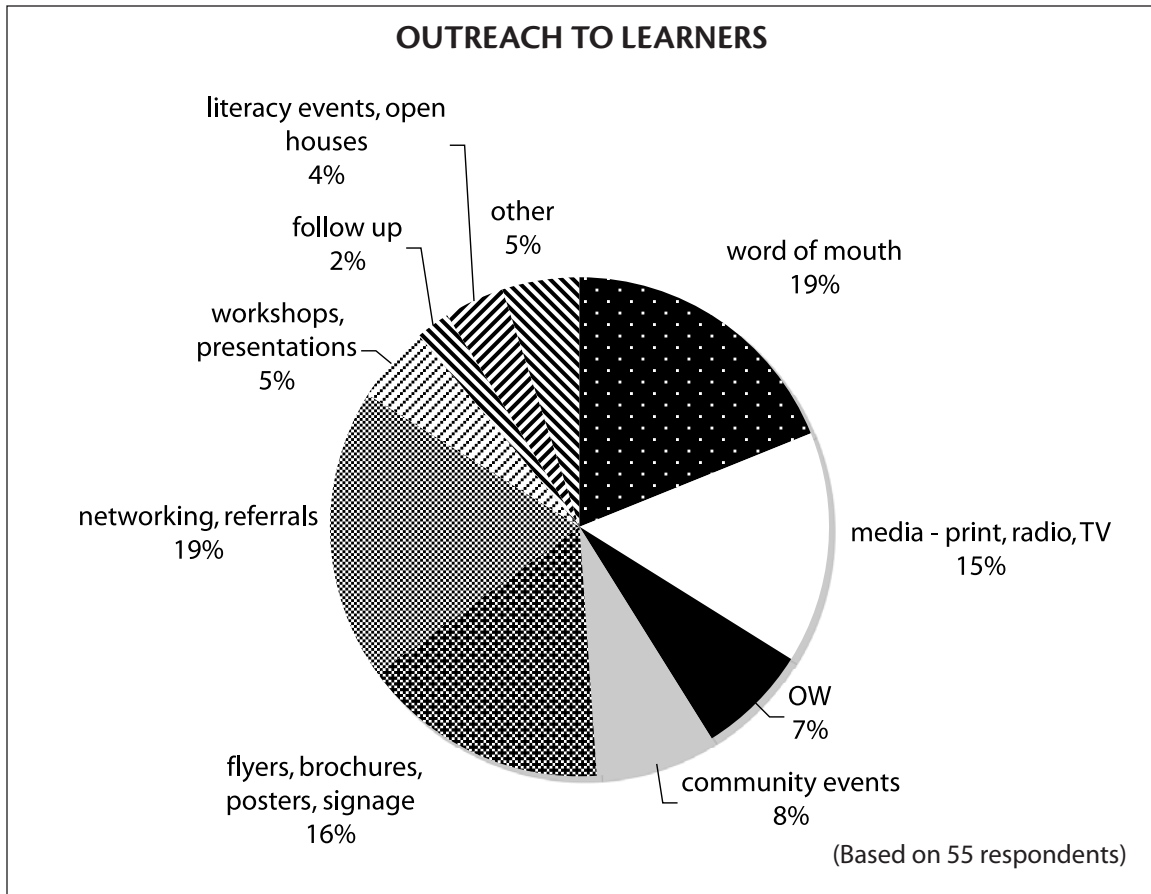
Outreach to Learners

A vital marketing question is asked in CLO's *Learner Recruitment* training module of **Literacy Basics**: "Where is Everybody?" It addresses the discrepancy between the literacy needs of citizens in our communities and the actual numbers of people we serve. We know that marketing to learners is essential because we need to find ways of encouraging them to enrol in literacy programs and upgrade their skills for life and work.

As part of Community Literacy of Ontario's 2007 marketing survey, community based agencies were asked to "Please list the three most effective ways that you conduct outreach to ADULT LEARNERS in your community." The results of the survey are summarized in the pie graph opposite.

The largest portions of the pie are represented by:

- ▶ Word of Mouth
- ▶ Media, which includes paid advertising in print and on radio and TV as well as Public Service Announcements
- ▶ Flyers, brochures, posters, signage
- ▶ Networking and referrals



The three next sizable slices of the pie are:

- ▶ Community events
- ▶ Referrals from Ontario Works
- ▶ Workshops and presentations

In the final sliver of the pie we have:

- ▶ Learner follow-up
- ▶ Literacy events and open houses
- ▶ Miscellaneous other methods

These sections are analysed below. Hopefully, you will find some new ideas for your agency to implement. There are added suggestions, called *Doing It Better*, after each section.

Word of Mouth

What We Do

Community Literacy of Ontario's marketing survey found that one of the most effective ways to conduct outreach to adult learners is by word of mouth. This means of course that in community based literacy programs the chances are very good that when you are in-taking a new learner and ask how he or she has heard of your program, they will tell you they heard about your program from a friend or relative. Many marketers consider that word of mouth marketing is among the best: it's free, fast and effective. But if positive news about your program travels fast, bad news will travel even faster. Business marketers estimate that a negative experience is shared on average three times more often than its positive counterpart. Foresight is the key. Recognize that your learners are going to talk to their friends and relatives about the program, and its staff and volunteers. The unique fit of your program to the learner, professional staff, and well-trained volunteers will help ensure that the word of mouth marketing remains positive.



INNOVATIVE PRACTICE Kenamatewin, Kenora

Word of mouth was taken to new levels in Kenora when they re-named their community literacy agency Kenamatewin, which means "a place of learning" in Ojibwe. This was the name by which the Kenora Literacy Centre was known by its clients. Kenamatewin was named by one of the many transient street people whom the agency serves in Kenora. Kenamatewin is usually at capacity because the word on the street is that it is not only a place of learning but a place of safety and acceptance as well.

Doing it Better

To some extent, Word of Mouth marketing has a life of its own, but that doesn't mean that we can't influence it. There are several ways that we can positively affect this valuable marketing method.

- 1 **Encourage learners to communicate.** Many learners lack the confidence to give an unsolicited opinion. Sometimes your first indication that the learner is not happy with the program is your last: one day he or she just stops coming. Foster a spirit of dialogue. Ask and then listen. If learners are encouraged to articulate what is valuable to them about the program, chances are good that they will repeat it.



**BEST PRACTICE —
Preparatory
Training Program
Toronto**

The Preparatory Training Programs in Toronto offer an impressive variety of programs for students across the greater Toronto area. Therefore, the word “community” has a whole different meaning there. “We create a community here in the classroom,” explains ED Barbara McFater. When enrolment numbers dip below comfortable ranges, the instructors encourage students to tell friends, acquaintances and family members about the program. They are given learner friendly flyers to hand out or post in their neighbourhoods. They are familiar with the PTP website and its learner links and are encouraged to share its contents with people who might be interested in joining the program. Because they value the community they experience at PTP, learners think carefully about who they invite, and their outreach is often successful. Barbara McFater says, “We are very intentional about word of mouth marketing.”

2 Give learners tools for communication. Does your program offer built-in mechanisms that allow learners to give their opinions? These might be:

- ▶ a comment box with easy fill-in forms
- ▶ a regular journal question
- ▶ an open discussion that takes place monthly

Be intentional about collecting learners’ opinions and comments.



**BEST PRACTICE —
CLO’s Literacy
Basics, Learner
Recruitment
Module**

“An extremely effective recruitment strategy is to involve adult students in promoting your literacy program. Adult students are a wonderful inspiration to the community at large as well as to potential learners. Word of mouth also relies on family and friends highlighting the need for literacy instruction and the availability of programs. ABC CANADA’s “Who Wants to Learn?” research further confirmed the importance of family and friends when it found that 32% of potential learners heard about literacy programming from family and friends.”

3 Encourage criticism of your program. Create structures wherein learners feel safe and capable of offering their criticisms. Then, let them know you are paying attention. As much as you can, address their concerns.

Survey Results and Analyses

- 4 Make sure that they have a positive experience to talk about.** Your program will have a mission statement or statement of purpose that puts first the needs of learners. Is your entire organization—board, staff, volunteers, learners and programs—aligned with this purpose?
- 5 Don't wait for exit to ask that important question.** Arguably the single most important question we ask learners on their learner satisfaction survey is whether or not they would recommend our program to others. This is a great question to ask anytime. If the learner says “No” be sure to find out why. If the learner says “Yes” but gives no reasons, help him or her to articulate them.


**ACTION READ —
Innovative Practice**

Action Read of Guelph takes advantage of learner word of mouth to improve record keeping and maintain contacts. A few years ago they went through a staff changeover and began to lose contacts. They asked their former staff member about the contacts and she said that she kept track informally of the student networks, particularly for marginalized or itinerant learners. Now the staff at Action Read jot down friends and/or family members in student files to help them support and retain these contacts.

Media, including Paid Advertising in Print and on Radio and TV as well as Public Service Announcements

What We Do

Community Literacy of Ontario's marketing survey confirmed that the media is another extremely effective tool that agencies use to conduct outreach to adult learners. Many of our community based agencies use some form of media in their outreach to learners. We use paid advertising in local papers, the yellow pages and on city buses. We have taken out radio ads, received radio and television coverage and used PSA's on both radio and cable TV.

Using media seems the logical place to start when we want to promote our programs. Using the media can be a valuable way to get the message out to a large group of people in a short space of time. Everywhere we look we are confronted with advertising, but what we don't see is the effort that precedes the ad. In many ways, the advertisement is the endproduct of one part of the marketing cycle and not the beginning, as we might imagine.

Doing It Better

Most community based agencies have very limited budgets to spend on paid advertising. Some do no advertising at all and depend on Public Service Announcements to do the job. Regardless, there are some things to keep in mind when planning your advertising or PSA.

- 1** Keep in mind that your newspaper ad is directed toward the learner. Therefore, do some research ahead of time. Ask learners in your program which newspapers they read. Even lower level learners will often look at community newspapers. Try and discover which sections are most popular. You may find that there are two or three. Eventually, you will have to decide in which section of the paper to place your ad. All things being equal, choose the page or section where the learner is likely to spend the longest time. For example, if you are targeting learners who are actively seeking work, you might consider placing your ad on the employment pages.
- 2** Try and discover the most popular local radio stations for learners. Depending on the size of your community, there may be many or just a few. You will probably find that certain age groups or genders prefer specific radio stations. Decide which group you most want to target and place your ad. Radio stations will also run PSA's, so you may be able to save your marketing budget here by running a carefully constructed PSA.
- 3** Local cable stations will also list community events and information for free. Check out Rogers cable www.rogerstelevision.com/ for your area, because each region is slightly different. Since the "Community Billboard" is free, it is worthwhile to keep your PSA updated.
- 4** Needless to say, in CLO's marketing survey none of the community based agencies opted for full-blown television advertising! However, many took advantage of newsworthy events happening at their centres to call local television for some free coverage. Whenever there are news reporters at a literacy event, make sure you have planned a brief statement. It's amazing how tongue-tied you can feel in front of a television camera! Preparing something ahead of time ensures that you will have something meaningful to say. Keeping it brief means you will likely be aired for the entire statement, not just a part, which may distort your message.
- 5** Stay current with national or provincial literacy news, because you may be able to link your agency with something important and newsworthy happening elsewhere in the country. ABC CANADA's Family Literacy Day (January 27th) and International Literacy Day (September 8th) are prime national examples. Local media would always prefer to put a community face on an important event that is happening somewhere else. Again, don't forget to prepare your media statement. You should convey how the larger issue is relevant in your community.

Ontario Works

What We Do

Community Literacy of Ontario's marketing survey found that Ontario Works is a principal partner for many community based agencies. This makes sense because we have a significant overlap in the clientele we serve. In our survey, agencies reported:

- ▶ Regular presentations to Ontario Works clients
- ▶ Referrals from OW
- ▶ Working with OW staff
- ▶ Flyer and brochure inserts included with OW cheques to clients
- ▶ OW partnerships
- ▶ Joint projects with OW (e.g. skills development, job fair)

Doing It Better

Many agencies have good relationships with Ontario Works in their communities. Because many of our student referrals come from OW, we need to:

- ▶ Make sure that we stay current with Ontario Works' mandate in our communities.
- ▶ Maintain up to date relations with a contact person in their organization.
- ▶ Speak the language of OW when we are communicating with them. For example, we might use the word "independence" to describe a learner's goal while OW would use "self-reliance".

Take the time to visit your community's Ontario Works office. Check out their posters and brochures to see the image they are striving to create. Make it easy for them by showing that you can support their endeavours with clients referred to your agency.

Visit the Ontario Works website at the Ministry of Community and Social Services

<http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcss/english/pillars/social/programs/ow.htm>

to understand their structure and goals. Align your efforts with theirs when working with their clients.

Community Events

What We Do

Community Literacy of Ontario's marketing survey clearly showed that community literacy agencies shine with a very high profile at local events. This is our comfort zone, where we hope that our non-threatening visibility will encourage learners to seek us out. Agencies reported mounting displays at sidewalk sales, fairs, and malls. They put up signs, hand out literature and hold draws. People are available at their booths to answer questions. Not surprisingly, our agencies have a strong community presence.

Doing It Better

- 1** Think about attending community events with your target market (learners) in mind. What specific group of students are you trying to target? Which community events are they likely to attend? These might not be the same ones as you have traditionally supported. Find out what events your community is sponsoring outside of your comfort zone and that learners are likely to attend.
- 2** In the same vein, consider carefully what materials you will display and hand out at a community event. Your literature should be of interest to them, not you! If you find yourself at a NASCAR race because this is where your target is, you might want to prepare some easy read sheets on car specifications. What does your target market want to know? Make it easy for them, and have the materials ready. Ensure that everything you hand out has your agency's name and phone number printed on it. Include a brief message that lets your target market know you have what they want.
- 3** Think about who is representing your agency at the event and how they're dressed. Will the non-verbal message that this staff member or volunteer gives be non-threatening? Will they convey what the prospective learner wants to hear?

Sometimes our presence at community events is something like a classroom-based activity. Yes the material is there, but is it relevant? We can apply the same principles we've learned about meaningful learning material for learners to community events.

Flyers, Brochures, Posters and Signage

What We Do

As clearly indicated in CLO's marketing survey, our agencies are very creative when it comes to getting the word out. Flyers and brochures about our programs have appeared everywhere from libraries to grocery bags. They've been inserted in with Ontario Works cheques and hydro bills. They're in doctors' offices and social service agencies. Many of the designs are simple, clear and eye-catching.

Doing It Better

- 1 What is most important about getting the word out to our target market? It is making sure that the "word" is relevant to them. Take a critical look at your promotional materials. What is the message that the learner receives?
- 2 You may decide that you cannot afford to print brochures for every target market you have. Think about which of your target markets is most likely to read a brochure. Perhaps for your other groups a less expensive flyer will do.
- 3 Partner for better quality and targeting. If your budget is tight, consider joining forces with one of your partners to produce a more professional and targeted brochure or signage.



BEST PRACTICE — YMCA Career Development and Learning Centre

When YMCA Career Development and Learning Centre (a community literacy agency in Burlington) received the one-time funding from MTCU (in winter 2007) to enhance the ability of agencies to operate effectively in the new Employment Ontario framework, they decided to partner with Job Connect to produce a very professional brochure. Clients who seek training really get the idea that YMCA Career Development and Learning Centre literacy program is a service option that will enhance their employability skills.

- 4 If you don't have a budget for brochures, try partnering with other organizations that serve your target market. Offer your expertise to develop some clear language pamphlets for them. Include your agency's name and number as a source for more user-friendly documents.

- 5 Printing and distributing brochures is an expensive and time-consuming activity, and you'll want to know what works best. If you've opted for a generic brochure aimed at learners, make sure you're able to track its use. Include something in the brochures (perhaps a free draw) that encourages learners to hold on to them. Take some time before distributing the brochures to colour code them with markers or office dots. This is a nearly free way of doing market research. If the yellow dot brochures went in the OW cheques and the red dots in the grocery bags, you'll easily discover which method of distribution is more effective.
- 6 Another way of checking your distribution system is to record the number of brochures you leave at various outlets, stores and offices. Go back after a week or two and count them. Are there any missing? Are they visible? Dog-eared? Dusty?
- 7 Before spending money on posters and signs, spend some time finding out whether or not they say what you want them to. Ask learners already in your program. Include a mock-up of a sign or poster at a community event and take a poll. Listen to what people have to say with an open mind.

Networking and Referrals

What We Do

CLO's marketing survey revealed that Networking is the single most significant category of outreach to learners within our agencies. It is these relationships that make us *community* literacy. This is where we have the real marketing edge. Businesses need to create strategies and budgets for this kind of relationship marketing, and it's something we've been doing for years. We need to congratulate ourselves that here, we are in the forefront of marketing! In the survey responses, agencies reported that they form partnerships, make presentations to interested groups, give workshops, run collaborative programs, have personal contact with key referral agencies, and as one agency put it, "network everywhere!" We enjoy long-term relationships in our communities and have formed recent partnerships as well. Can it get better?

Doing It Better

As we are all aware from interpersonal relationships, we can't change the other person, we can only change ourselves. This same principle applies to our community partnerships. If we want our community partners to work harder for us, we need to work harder for them.

Survey Results and Analyses

- 1 Find out who works for your partner's agency. Get to know the names of the people you will be working with. If it's appropriate, meet for coffee to discuss your agencies. Do more listening than speaking.
- 2 If your partnership is more distant and formal, use their materials to help you understand them. Pick up their flyers and brochures. What are they emphasizing? What is important to them? If they have one, check out their website. Discover their mission statement and goals. Take the time to discover their mandate.
- 3 Once you understand them better, put yourself in your partner's shoes. What would you want and need from your agency if you were them?
- 4 Ask them what you can do to make their job easier.
- 5 Follow through. Go that little extra distance to make your relationship run more smoothly.

It is human nature that we prefer to work with those with whom we have a good rapport. Strive to make your agency the one your partner thinks of first.

Workshops and Presentations

What We Do

In Community Literacy of Ontario's marketing survey, many agencies in community literacy reported giving workshops and presentations to prospective partners and funders. Others reported that they give workshops to prospective students. Workshops to the former groups tend to focus on what we do. Workshops to learners are more varied in their content. Workshops have been offered on learning computer and job skills and on topics of interest to learners.

Doing It Better

The successful planning and delivery of workshops and presentations must take into account the target market. This is an easy area to understand the concept of target market because it's the same as your audience. If you are making a presentation to the Rotary Club you will have a very different message than one you would deliver to a group of OW clients. Taking the time to know your target audience's needs and wants will ensure that your presentation is relevant and meaningful to them. You will have a greater likelihood of achieving your own objectives if you acknowledge and relate to those of your target.



**INNOVATIVE
PARTNERSHIPS —
Kenamatewin**

When we think of forming partnerships, certain standard agencies usually spring to mind. In Kenora, more unconventional partnerships were sought out and formed to meet learners' unique needs in their community.

Not long after Executive Director Katherine Shine arrived at the agency in Kenora, she began to see how the systems in the community were failing her students. "They didn't know their rights," she said. "They would be brought to Kenora from the most isolated communities in the North, go to court, be sent out on a conditional release, go to the transition house and then sent to Ontario Works who referred them to us. Often at LBS level one, they didn't understand the process or even what their obligations were," says Katherine Shine. Many students would be in breach of their various obligations as a direct result of frustration and lack of understanding of their rights and responsibilities of conditional release or Ontario Works compliances.

So Kenamatewin began a program to continue the delivery of Literacy and Basic Skills to their students in the Kenora District Jail. Then they decided to short-circuit this punitive procedure and developed informal partnerships with clients' lawyers, the Kenora Community Legal Clinic and Aboriginal Legal representatives. Clients were encouraged to attend the Kenamatewin programs while on conditional release. Because advocacy began to eat into staff time, Kenamatewin arranged for community service providers to come into the programs and speak directly to students about their rights and responsibilities as OW recipients, as tenants and as recipients of other social service benefits. Eventually, other organizations like Job Connect, Probation and Parole and the Northwestern Health Unit came to Kenamatewin to speak with the students. Katherine Shine says, "It is very empowering for students to have the service providers come and speak to them directly about services and issues that are important to them."

Kenamatewin's unconventional partnerships have also paid off for the judicial system, which finds their work easier because of Kenamatewin's commitment to its students.

- 1 Know the organization to which you are presenting. Find out what is important to them. If you don't know them, look them up on the Internet or in your local newspaper. Ask people about them. Just as you wouldn't offer learning materials to a student without an assessment, don't present your program without first assessing your target.

**BEST PRACTICE —
Preparatory
Training Program
Toronto**

PTP in Toronto relies heavily upon its partnerships to keep its enrolment high. If it needs to increase contact hours PTP calls its partners to arrange to come and speak about its programs. PTP makes sure that it is regularly invited to make presentations at organizations like OW and Job Connect. Staff have their “spiel” well-organized and under ten minutes in length. It informs other employment and service agencies about what PTP does and how its services fit in with the partner’s mandate. PTP stays well connected with the Community and Labour Market Manager at Ontario Works whose mandate is to bridge the gaps between the community and their clients.

- 2 Pitch your presentation so that it addresses the issues and concerns that your audience favours. If you are talking to the Chamber of Commerce you will be talking about pertinent aspects of job training, not independence. Mark clear pathways that connect your activities with their needs and wants. Show how what you do will make life easier for them.
- 3 When speaking about your program, contextualize it within a framework that your target understands. As much as possible, use their terminology and reference points.
- 4 Bring along appropriate materials, including your business card, to hand out after the presentation.
- 5 Presentations to students are much trickier, because it’s best to avoid the L word. Literacy is not a student’s goal but a springboard. If you are making a presentation to a group of OW clients, for example, don’t focus on your program, because they may not be interested. Instead, make the connections for them, and help them to see that the programs you offer will open new doors and create new opportunities.
- 6 Workshops for learners should not be about what you do, but about some topic of interest to them. Again, know your target so that you don’t end up wasting time and money.

Learner Follow-Up

What We Do

Learner follow-up is a very thin sliver of the effective outreach strategies pie. Of course all literacy agencies conduct learner follow-up as part of the regular activities as it is a required function. However only a few agencies find it to be successful in terms of community outreach. They make follow-up calls or write letters to find out why students have left the program and to assure them of the open door should they wish to return. Follow-up is often unsuccessful in community literacy because of the sometimes uncertain circumstances of many learners' lives.

Doing It Better

- 1** Follow-up should be a regular part of a literacy program and not something that is saved for the end.
- 2** Similar surveys to the Learner Satisfaction Survey can be issued once a month or on a schedule that works for your agency. Create your own "How Are We Doing?" questionnaire.
- 3** Ask your students how they are coping in the program. Then listen.
- 4** Use the daily attendance sheet as a tool. There are usually indicators (lates and absences) that reflect the student's dissatisfied or unsettled state of mind.
- 5** Often a learner's decision to leave has little to do with the program. Make sure that they know that there is a place for them when the circumstances of their lives permit it.

More valuable information on learner recruitment can be found at in CLO's Learner Recruitment module on **Literacy Basics**:

www.nald.ca/literacybasics/recruite/where/01.htm.

Also, you could take a look at CLO's Exit Learner Follow-up module on **Literacy Basics** as well: www.nald.ca/literacybasics/exit/exit/01.htm.

Marketing Ourselves

CHAPTER—VII

Survey Results and Analysis: Marketing to Our Communities

Our communities comprise the principal target markets of community based literacy in Ontario. Our best hope for successful marketing outcomes is in knowing our communities well and responding to their uniqueness, which translates into a real marketing advantage.

Community literacy agencies are very active in their communities and help raise the profile of literacy. The various initiatives that they undertake, such as open houses, mall promotions and booths at community events increase public awareness of literacy and programming options.

(<http://www.nald.ca/clo/agencies.htm>)

Our marketing purpose in the community is threefold:

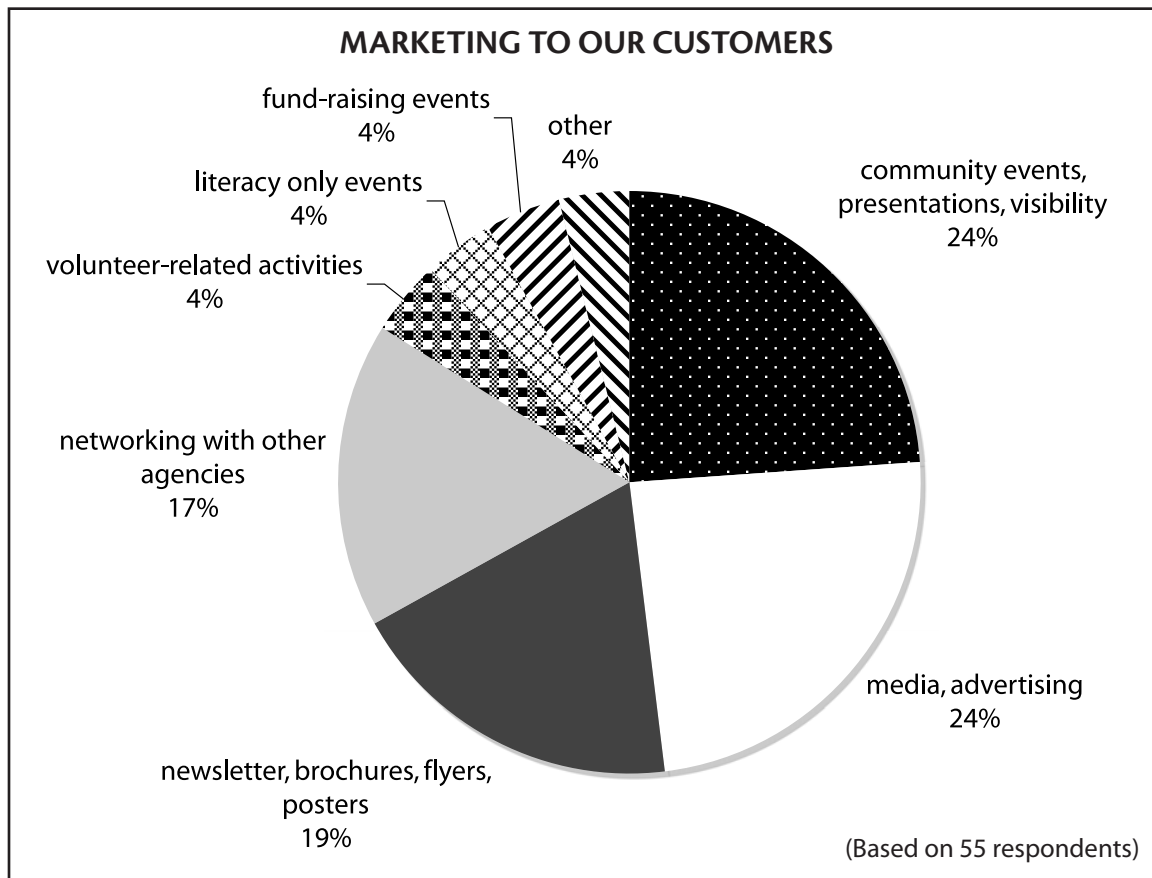
- ▶ To raise the profile of literacy
- ▶ To increase awareness of literacy
- ▶ To increase awareness of programming options (<http://www.nald.ca/clo/agencies.htm>)

In terms of outcomes, we hope that this community marketing will do much more. As a result of our marketing, we would like:

- ▶ More diversified funding
- ▶ More referrals
- ▶ Good partnerships
- ▶ Volunteers

Survey Results and Analyses

Community based agencies market to their communities in a variety of ways. As part of CLO's 2007 marketing survey, community based agencies were asked to "Please list the three most effective ways that you market your literacy agency to your COMMUNITY." The results of the survey responses from 55 literacy agencies from across Ontario are summarized in the pie graph below.



Methods of marketing are as diverse and eclectic as the communities themselves but can be divided roughly into eight categories. The first four make up about 85% of the pie graph:

- ▶ Community events and presentations
- ▶ Media and advertising
- ▶ Newsletters, brochures, flyers, posters
- ▶ Networking with other agencies

The smaller sections are made up of:

- ▶ Volunteer related events

- ▶ Literacy only events
- ▶ Fund-raising events
- ▶ Other

This graph represents our *ongoing* marketing in the community as opposed to special events, which will be covered in the next chapter.

Community Events, Presentations and Visibility

What We Do

Community Literacy of Ontario's marketing survey clearly shows that many agencies plan to be part of high profile community events as part of their annual marketing strategy. Across Ontario, community literacy agencies participate in hundreds of these community events including job fairs, festivals, and mall displays.

Doing It Better

Agencies are tuned in to the unique characteristics of their communities. Marketing that is effective in a Northwestern Ontario town might have little effect at all in another part of the province. Knowing our communities helps to ensure that our marketing is relevant. Fortunately, despite our distinctive communities, there are some useful generic tips to keep in mind. You are probably already doing some of these, so try adding something new.

- 1 Remember your target market.** If you have a limited budget for marketing and must choose from a number of community events, focus on the one that is most in keeping with your marketing strategy and your targeted market.
- 2 Make the event work for you.** You probably have a good idea ahead of time what sector of your community's population is likely to attend an event. Be prepared with appropriate materials so that you are ready for the community members who come to the event.
- 3 Hand out free stuff.** Everybody loves to get something for free. Hand out literacy related items like pens and pencils, rulers and pads of paper. If you can afford it, get your name embossed on these items. Sometimes printers will do this for a low cost or for free in exchange for naming them as your benefactors. Free giveaways will bring people to your display.

Survey Results and Analyses

- 4 **Hold a draw.** Instead of just asking for a name and address on an entry form, include a very brief questionnaire or tick boxes that are directed towards your target market.
- 5 **People your display.** Again, think of your target market. For example, if you are at a mall event and targeting your display to volunteers, try to have one or more volunteers there to talk to people. If you are at a job fair, have an experienced instructor there and try and get a learner to help at your booth or table who has successfully moved on to employment. Remember that the people at your display are your biggest marketing asset.
- 6 **Use good signage.** Make sure that your signs are clear and eye-catching. If you need to, borrow signs from your centre so that your display is professional and up-to-date looking.
- 7 **Try something new — or old.** Don't get into a rut with your events. Sometimes we attend events because we always have, without thinking about the return on investment. Get out of your comfort zone and try a new event. Try an old event too. We or someone else might have decided in the past that a certain event wasn't for us. Yet our programs change over the years and so do community events. You might decide that you would like to participate again.
- 8 **Work the floor.** Job fairs in particular provide excellent opportunities for networking. Make sure that you have sufficient staff at your table so that you or another staff member can check out the other displays. Have your work-related materials and your business card at hand; you may form some new partnerships.

**BEST PRACTICE —
Welcome to
Timmins Night**

This is an annual event that is sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Timmins. The Timmins Learning Centre has been participating in it for the past five years. Executive Director Sheila Marshall believes that this event works well for TLC because of the kind of people who attend. "These are people who want to find out about the community and get involved," she explains. The TLC booth hands out free items for kids — who bring their parents in tow. Over the years TLC has improved their participation by targeting their materials to volunteers, making sure that there are two staff to answer questions and regularly updating displays. Another incentive for TLC to participate is that this event is free except for their time, the draw and the giveaways.

Media and Advertising

What We Do

Despite our modest budgets community literacy agencies use the media to good effect. In CLO's marketing survey agencies indicated their involvement in a variety of such activities including: paid advertising in the paper and on radio, press releases, guest spot on radio, letters to the editor, published news articles, community and cable television advertising, TV coverage of events, and Public Service Announcements (PSAs).

Doing It Better

Marketing through the media can be challenging, intimidating and costly. At the same time, there is nothing like media for getting the word out to members of our community whom we cannot reach in other ways. OLC has a good section on their website about engaging the media that you might want to investigate: www.on.literacy.ca/newslet/dec04/01.htm.

As well, don't forget the Community Literacy of Ontario classics, *Creative Outreach Strategies of the 21st Century*, published in print in 2000 and *A Happy Media*, www.nald.ca/clo/resource/Happy_M/1.htm published both in print and online in 2000.

Here are some more tips and ideas about making your media marketing a good investment. Some of these are already found in the outreach to learners section.

- 1 Find out what your paper wants in a press release and deliver it.** As a community member, your local newspaper is one of your target markets. You won't want to develop an entire strategy to address this target, but you will want to make use of some principles. Remember that marketing is an exchange and that you want to see things from the target's point of view. What does the paper look for in a press release? Make sure that your subject matter is appropriate, well-written and that you are within the word count.



BEST PRACTICE — Tri-County Literacy Council, Cornwall

At Tri-County Literacy, all of the staff participate in writing press releases. Consistency is maintained because one person has been assigned to oversee all of the marketing that leaves the agency. Executive Director Dina McGowan says that they write press releases about open houses, new programs and special events. Because their writing is consistently clear, succinct and interesting their press releases are published regularly; usually, they have something in the paper every week.

- 2 Newspaper Ads—Build a Collection.** We do not have much money for paid advertising, so we want to be sure that our ads are the best they can be. Here are five

tips from Getting Attention! Helping Nonprofits Succeed Through Marketing: www.gettingattention.org.

- ▶ The ad should have clear value for the reader.
- ▶ The writing should be clear, accessible and succinct.
- ▶ The ad should be formatted for quick and easy reading.
- ▶ Insist on strategic placement in the paper.
- ▶ Encourage readers to save the ad by including information they want to keep.

Whenever you see a particularly effective ad, cut it out and save it in a special file. That way, when you're ready to launch your own advertising campaign, you will have clear examples of what you think will work for your agency.

Similarly, keep a file of your own ads to keep track of the various markets you have targeted. Consider including your agency logo or mission statement with your ads to help readers easily identify who you are.

- 3 Radio Ads** Researchers who poll radio listeners have discovered that radio advertising is experienced more as a one-to-one relationship and is more emotions driven. Radio speaks to people as individuals as compared to TV and print, which focuses on groups. Therefore, it is more vital than ever to target radio advertising because a generic ad is unlikely to appeal to anyone.
- 4 It's free on cable.** Local cable stations will list community events and information for free. Check out the Rogers cable website for your area, because each region is slightly different. Since the "Community Billboard" is free, it is worthwhile to keep your PSA up to date. Try developing a different message for each of your target markets and rotating them.
- 5 Free coverage for local literacy events.** Don't be afraid to call your local television and let them know about an important event at your agency. Be ready with a pre-planned brief statement and spokesperson to deliver it. Preparing your statement ahead of time ensures that you will have something meaningful to say. Keep it brief so that you will likely be aired for the entire statement, not just a part, which may distort your message.
- 6 Stay current with national or provincial literacy news.** You may be able to link your agency with something important and newsworthy happening in the country. Local media would always prefer to put a community face on an important event that is happening elsewhere. If it's possible, compare local statistics with national or provincial numbers to highlight your community's literacy issues. Again, don't forget to prepare your media statement. You should convey how the larger issue is relevant in your community.

Newsletters, Brochures, Flyers and Posters

What We Do

According to CLO's marketing survey, for many community based agencies, this is where we spend our money and effort in marketing. Well-designed literature is a good investment: it's portable, lasts a long time and can serve many functions. Sometimes it is the design and placement of signage alone that brings in new learners and volunteers to our agencies.



BEST PRACTICE — Hamilton Literacy Council

For two weeks every year the Hamilton Literacy Council has rented space from the city to stretch an enormous banner across Main Street and in front of City Hall. The banner reads, "Teach an Adult to Read" and displays the agency's logo and phone number. Val Sadler, Executive Director, says that the banner generates huge interest in her program. She prepares for volunteer training sessions immediately to capture the already heightened motivation and interest of potential volunteers.

Doing It Better

- 1 Invest thought and planning.** Brochures, posters and signage require careful thought and planning because they will be representing your agency for an extended period of time. Ask the following questions each time you create materials that will represent your agency in the community to ensure meaning and consistency.
 - ▶ What is the message?
 - ▶ Who is the message for?
 - ▶ What is the desired response from the community?
 - ▶ How should the material look and feel in order to obtain the desired response?(adapted from the WK Kellogg Foundation Communication Toolkit www.wkkf.org)
- 2 Resist the Temptation of the All-Purpose Brochure.** A brochure cannot be all things to all people. Consider carefully which market group would be most effectively reached with a brochure.
- 3 Develop a piracy policy.** When you see flyers and brochures that make a good impact, pick them up and put them in a folder. You'll have them ready when you want to design your own materials.

- 4 **Follow clear language principles.** There are many excellent materials and websites on clear language. One of the best is CLAD—Clear Language and Design at: www.eastendliteracy.on.ca/clearlanguageanddesign/. Your regional literacy network may also have valuable resources on clear language and other tools for creating effective marketing materials.
- 5 **Share your mock up with others.** Always get input and constructive criticism from someone else in the literacy field and among your target market.

Networking with Other Agencies

What We Do

According to Community Literacy of Ontario's marketing survey, networks and partnerships play a major role in community based literacy, strengthening and validating our place in our communities. To effectively network with other agencies, we attend inter-agency meetings, sit on committees, give presentations, educate and personally visit all our referral agencies.

Doing It Better

The value of face to face communication is more important than ever, and meeting with real people in our community is an essential marketing practice. Networking in our wider communities can save time and generate valuable contacts that can lead to referrals, volunteers, partnerships and even funding. Within the literacy community networking can:

- ▶ help you to problem solve
- ▶ be a source of motivation and support
- ▶ generate new thinking
- ▶ regenerate you with feelings of energy and enthusiasm for your work
- ▶ keep you up-to-date with current trends within the literacy field

Stay connected with your regional literacy network. If you have been putting off literacy events or networking as inconsequential activities, think again.

Ideally we should be attending at least one networking event per month. These could be anything from women's business and networking meetings to trade shows and job fairs. Check the community events column in your newspaper or ask friends, volunteers, partners or business people. The better organized the event, the greater the chance for networking. Look for those that provide name tags or opportunities for people to briefly introduce themselves and say what they do. Take notes!



**BEST PRACTICE —
Professional
Marketer Susan
Sommers**

When you are at the event, here are ten rules to follow for successful marketing by Susan Sommers, a leading Canadian marketing and media relations consultant, trainer, and speaker.
10 Rules for Networking

1. Develop And Rehearse Your 20 Word Description

It is important to have a 20-word description of your business (or elevator speech) for networking events and contacting the media. The description includes the following information:

_____ (name of business) is a _____ (where you are located and type of business) that offers _____ (products and services) to _____ (target markets). This is not an ad or a mission statement, but a straightforward explanation of what you do and who your target markets are.

2. Get Out Of Your Cocoon

For many people, networking is not fun or easy. It is difficult to make small talk with strangers. However, the benefits far outweigh the discomfort!

3. Set Goals For Yourself

Instead of trying to meet everyone in the room, be realistic about the number of people you can meet and have a meaningful conversation. In a two to three hour session, try to connect with three to six people. That way, you will really listen and make a contact.

4. Trade Information

Networking is a great opportunity to give out information. If you know someone is looking for a graphic designer and you work with a wonderful person, give out the information. The more you give, the more you get.

5. Play Host To The People You Meet

Also, if you know that someone across the room is a graphic designer, take the time to introduce the person who is looking for those services.

6. Talk First, Eat Later

Either eat before you get to the event or wait until after you have made several contacts. Don't try to talk while you are eating (and juggling a plate).

7. Approach A Loner

Often, if you see a person standing alone, they might be shy or uncomfortable with a room full of strangers. Go up and introduce yourself. In one of my workshops, a woman told me that she stands alone as a marketing strategy. She knows that someone will approach her! It is true that it's easier to start a conversation with a person standing alone than it is to break into a group.

8. Exchange Business Cards

Make sure to write on the back what you say you will do for or with the person.

9. Follow-Up With Your Leads

The day of (or the day after) a networking event, e-mail three people you met to tell them how much you enjoyed meeting them and that you would like to keep in touch or get together. The follow-up is really important, and I find that if I don't email right away, it probably won't get done.

10. Build On-Going Relationships After The Events

(From http://www.acqyr.com/Articles/Marketing_and_PR/1012.php)

Survey Results and Analyses

Networking outside of our usual pathways and comfort zones will ensure that we forge some new links in our communities.

Volunteer Related Activities

What We Do

Volunteers are essential to the success and viability of community literacy in Ontario. Though less effective than some other methods, according to the results of CLO's marketing survey, some agencies also find volunteer-related activities to be beneficial in terms of community outreach. Among other activities, volunteers sit on our boards, tutor learners, fix our computers and help with promotional events. Most agencies take the time to celebrate and thank their volunteers for the value they give our programs. We recruit volunteers from volunteer fairs, community events, flyers and postings, Internet and paid advertisements.

Doing It Better



BEST PRACTICE — Community Literacy of Ontario

Literacy Basics suggests:

Treat volunteering with your organization as an opportunity, not an obligation. Sell it as:

- ▶ An opportunity to make a meaningful contribution in another person's life
- ▶ The chance to make new friends
- ▶ An opportunity to contribute to literacy
- ▶ The chance to get out and have a bit of fun
- ▶ An opportunity to learn new skills / share your skills with others
- ▶ An opportunity to "give back" to the community

When we market our literacy agencies through seeking volunteers we are letting them and the wider community know that:

- ▶ Our agency is an integral part of our community.
- ▶ When they work with us, volunteers contribute to the well-being of their community.
- ▶ We value our community members and appreciate their gifts and skills.

Literacy Events

What We Do

Holding literacy events give us the opportunity to showcase our programs and successful learners, to raise awareness and to generate interest in literacy issues. While less popular as a community outreach strategy overall, according to Community Literacy of Ontario's marketing survey, a number of agencies surveyed reported that holding literacy events and open houses are among the most successful ways they market their programs to the community at large.

Doing It Better

Successful literacy events will depend on your positioning in your community. Is literacy perceived to be your central focus or are you more closely aligned with employment training and upgrading? Some agencies are concerned about the stigma of literacy and do not seek to promote that aspect of their programs.

Therefore, if you plan to hold a literacy event to raise your profile, consider which face you want to present to your community. Recent initiatives have expanded our programs and our understanding of what is encompassed by literacy. If you are concerned about the literacy stigma, an event might give you the opportunity to expand your community's awareness of what your agency provides.

Fundraisers

What We Do

While this strategy was less popular than others, according to CLO's marketing survey, some agencies recognize the important function of fundraisers as marketing events and have reported that they are significant opportunities to market to their communities. Fundraising events are often as unique as the communities that support them. Events that are wildly successful in Elliot Lake might not get off the ground in Kingston. Some agencies are reluctant to think of fundraisers as marketing, but in reality, any time we participate in our community, we are marketing.

Doing It Better

Fundraisers may vary from place to place, but essential principles of successful fundraising remain the same. The following "truths" come from experts in the field of fundraising and may help all of us approach our fundraising in more effective ways.

THE NINE BASIC TRUTHS OF FUND-RAISING

- 1. Organizations are not entitled to support; they must earn it.** No matter what an organization's good works, it must prove to those who support it the value of those works to the community and the efficiency with which the organization delivers them. The primary key to fund-raising success is to have a first-class organization in every sense. There are no entitlements in the nonprofit world.
- 2. Successful fund-raising is not magic;** it is simply hard work on the part of people who are thoroughly prepared. There are no magic wands, spells, or incantations. Whenever you hear that someone has the magic fund-raising touch, laugh. Otherwise, the joke is likely to be on you. Fund raising is simple in design and concept, but it is very hard work! It is planning, executing, and assessing. It is paying attention to detail. It is knowing your organization and what it needs. It is knowing who has the money, and how much they can give.
- 3. Fund-raising is not raising money; it is raising friends.** People who don't like you don't give to you. People who know little about your organization give little at best. Only those people who know and like you will support you. Raise friends and you will raise money.
- 4. You do not raise money by begging for it; you raise it by selling people on your organization.** No matter how good your organization, how valuable its services, how efficiently it delivers them, people will not give money unless they are convinced to do so. Fund-raisers function much as sales and marketing people do in the commercial world. So, be ready, willing, and able to "sell" your organization and the programs for which you are raising money.
- 5. People do not just reach for their cheque books and give money to an organization;** they have to be asked to give. No matter how well you sell people on your organization, no matter how much money they have, no matter how capable they are of giving it, they have to be asked to give. There comes a point when you have to ask for the money. And by the way, make sure that you are asking for a specific amount. Don't leave it up to the donor to recommend how much to give. People with money to give are accustomed to being asked for it. The worst thing that will happen is that they will say no, and even then, they're likely to be supportive, even apologetic.
- 6. You don't wait for the "right" moment to ask; you ask now.** If you are always looking for the right moment -- the "perfect" time -- to ask for the money, you will never find it. You have to be ready, willing, and able to close the solicitation at any time. You have to take the risk of hearing no. If that happens, don't take the rejection personally. They are saying no to the organization, not you. Once you have presented your case, ask for the money. Don't wait. Either close the solicitation, find out what the objection to giving is and overcome it if possible, or get your turndown, and move on.
- 7. Successful fund-raising officers do not ask for the money; they get others to ask for it.** The professional fund-raising officer is the last person who should ask prospects for money. The request should come from someone within the prospect's peer group. It is the job of the professional development officer to design, put together, and manage the campaign. Volunteers who are themselves business executives, well-off individuals, community leaders, or board members, are the ones who should ask their counterparts for donations.
- 8. You don't decide today to raise money and then ask for it tomorrow;** It takes time, patience, and planning to raise money. Make the decision to initiate a fund-raising campaign before the need becomes dominant. It takes time to develop a campaign and its leadership. With each prospective donor the chances are you will get only one chance to present your case. Be prepared. If you present a poorly prepared case, you will be told no.
- 9. Prospects and donors are not cash crops waiting to be harvested;** treat them as you would customers in a business. No successful businessperson deals with customers as if they had a responsibility to buy. Prospects and donors have to be courted as you would court a customer. They must be told how important they are, treated with courtesy and respect, and if you expect to do business with them again, thanked.

There are, of course, exceptions to each Basic Truth, but if you rely on the exceptions to support your organization, you will find them to be few and far between and dollars in short supply. In the end, we raise money from people who:

- ▶ Have it
- ▶ Can afford to give
- ▶ Are sold on the benefit of what we are
- ▶ Wouldn't have given it to us unless we had asked
- ▶ Receive appreciation and respect for their gifts

It doesn't take a genius to raise money. The process is a combination of common sense, hard work, preparation, courtesy, commitment, enthusiasm, understanding, and a belief in what you are asking others to support.

The Nine Basic Truths About Fundraising By Tony Poderis, Fund Raising Forum at www.raise-funds.com/121603forum.html

Marketing Ourselves

CHAPTER—VIII

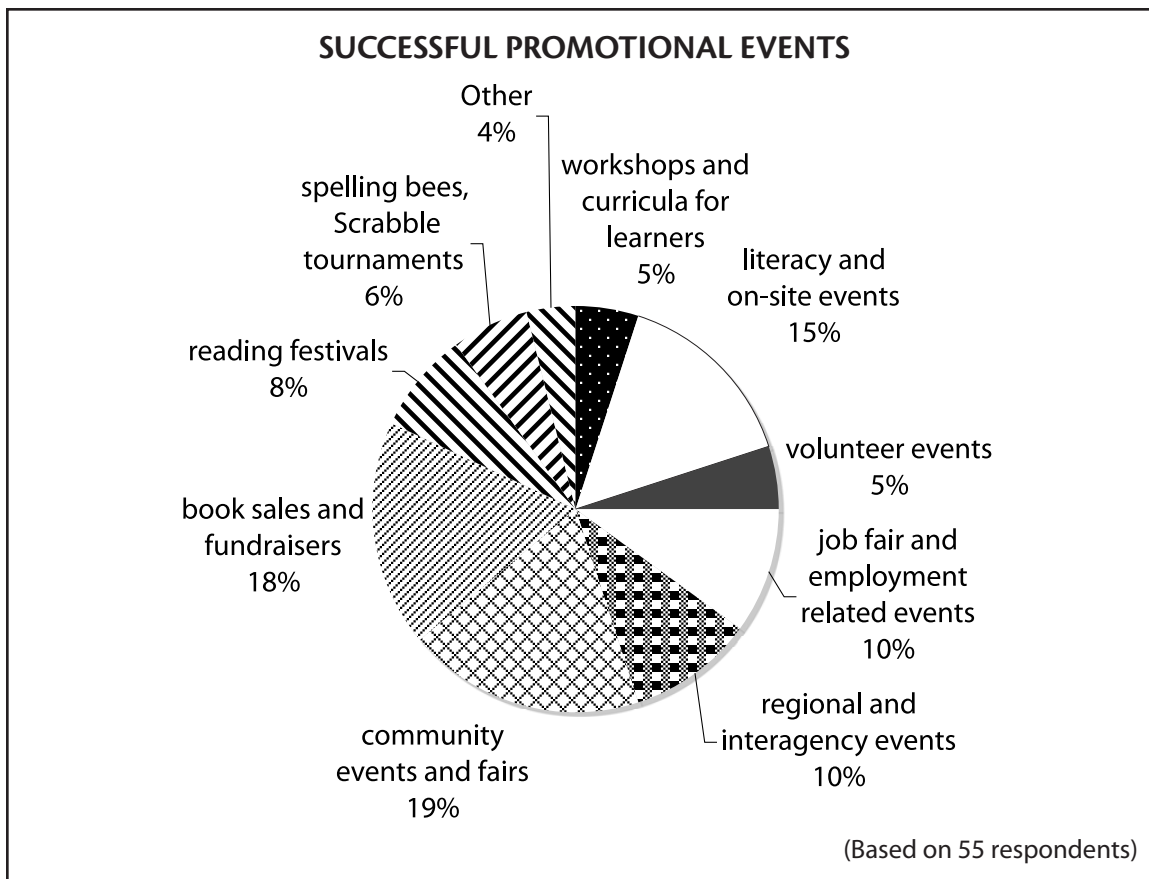
Survey Results and Analysis: Successful Promotion

We have differentiated “Successful Promotional Events” from “Marketing to Communities” because it gives us an opportunity to highlight some once-off or annual events that make such a difference to our programs. Some agencies who responded to the survey questions put the same event under both “marketing to our communities” and “successful promotion”, thus acknowledging the dual purpose of many of our activities. Therefore, there will be some overlap between what some programs describe as special events and others say is marketing to their communities.

In Community Literacy of Ontario’s 2007 marketing survey, community based agencies were asked to: “Please list three successful promotional events your agency has participated in that have increased your profile in your community.” The chart opposite summarizes their responses.

Community Literacy of Ontario received feedback from 55 community literacy agencies from all around Ontario (more than 50% of the total number of agencies) about outreach, marketing and promotional events in their communities. There were nearly one hundred promotional events listed in total, and about 20% of these were duplicated in various communities. For example, nine agencies reported successful job fair events, eight reported Family Literacy Day promotions and seven said their spelling bees were very popular in the community. Setting the duplications aside, there were close to eighty events listed that were unique to their communities. It is reasonable to assume that, had everyone responded to the survey, this number would almost double.

Survey Results and Analyses



These statistics translate into some interesting facts about community literacy in Ontario:

- ▶ Successful promotions are not always events. They include anything that raises the profile of the community based agency in their community and beyond.
- ▶ Community based agencies are able to see and seize opportunities for promotion quickly.
- ▶ Promotional events reflect the uniqueness of the communities that support them.
- ▶ Community based agencies are incredibly creative when it comes to promoting their programs.

The most popular fundraising events listed were book sales and fundraisers and community events and fairs. Literacy and on-site events, job fair and employment events, and regional and interagency events followed in popularity. Finally, reading festivals, Scrabble® and spelling bees were next in popularity. There were also a reasonable number of “other” promotional events listed, which did not seem to fall in to any of the above categories.



**BEST PRACTICE —
The Thunder Bay
Literacy Group**

The Thunder Bay Literacy Group (TBLG) hosts Scrabble® Magic, an annual Scrabble® tournament that is heading in to its tenth successful year. The tournament both raises funds and the profile of TBLG. Players may pay to play or collect pledges for a minimum of thirty dollars. Hasbro donates a case of deluxe Scrabble® games every year and local businesses contribute prizes. Executive Director Jean Fairbairn says that Scrabble® Magic often receives front page coverage in the daily newspaper, the Chronicle Journal.

Schools are encouraged to hold tournaments and there is also a celebrity tournament that is played at the central Scrabble® Magic location: Intercity Shopping Centre. A large area is made available to TBLG for the tournament and they also set up booths and displays to educate the community about their programs. The Thunder Bay Literacy Group always signs up new volunteers as a result of this excellent community exposure.

If you want more information on Scrabble® Magic, visit the TBLG website: www.tblg.org/ and click on the Scrabble® board!

While promotions are unique to individual communities, there are always ways of ensuring that your events are as successful as they possibly can be.

If you have ever planned an event only to discover to your horror that the United Way or some other high-profile non-profit has a similar promotion planned on or around the same date, you will know the importance of strategically planning your event. Nowadays many people are too busy to attend all of their community’s events. They can be very expensive to organize and take up precious dollars as well as hours of staff and volunteer time that might be better spent elsewhere. If you plan to have a special event, here are some important considerations to keep in mind.

- 1 Clearly define the goals and objectives of your event. Are you trying to fundraise, attract media attention, reward volunteers, attract learners, raise your profile or launch a new location? Trying to do too many things at once will ensure that nothing is as effective as it could be.
- 2 If you have a newsworthy event have a “media preview” where media are invited an hour before the general public. Have some food and one or two speakers on hand for a question and answer session.
- 3 Identify your key audiences for the event. Are they learners, the community, funders, partners or volunteers? Who do you want to participate in this event? How will your targeted audiences further your goals and objectives?

Survey Results and Analyses

- 4 Consider partnering. Would one of your partners share similar goals and objectives as well as the target audience for this event? Combining resources can mean less work and money spent on a better promotion.



**BEST PRACTICE —
Organization
for Literacy in
Lambton and
the Need to Read
Festival**

The Organization for Literacy in Lambton is very involved in the wider community's Need to Read Festival. Authors visit the area and speak in schools and libraries. While many of the activities take place in the schools, the Organization for Literacy in Lambton gets involved to make sure that both adult and family literacy enjoy some of the limelight. Adult learners also donate their time to the event. They wrap books in newsprint for the community "book hunt" and hand out "Caught You Reading" coupons to community members who are seen reading. In the past the Organization for Literacy in Lambton invited community poets to submit their work. Then they laminated the poems and strung them along the river walk in the park. For 2008, they will be publishing a group of short stories themed around "How have words affected your life?" The publication of this anthology will coincide with the Need to Read Festival in the first week of May, 2008. The Festival is funded by the Canada Arts Council. Check out the website for the Need to Read Festival below.

www.tcln.on.ca/main/articles/needtoread/needtoread.htm

- 5 Define the most appropriate event for your goals and target audience. This could be anything from a swanky silent auction with decadent desserts to a network breakfast or even a computer seminar.
- 6 Decide on the best time and location for your event. Check community calendars and make some calls to other non-profits in your community.
- 7 Prepare a realistic budget for the kind of event you would like.
- 8 Plan the publicity and advertising. How will you get the word out? Be sure to include some advertising dollars for the event.
- 9 Make notes as you go and be sure to hold a post-event discussion with everyone who worked on the event. Use the simple but effective "Stop, Start, Continue" method of analysis below. Record your findings and keep them in a file so that you will have them on hand for next year.

Stop	What did we do at the event that did not work well and should be changed or discarded for the next event?
Start	What should we put into place that would improve the event?
Continue	What worked well and should be continued at the next event?



**BEST PRACTICE —
Hamilton Literacy
Council**

The Hamilton Literacy Council held its first ever book sale last year. It was a successful event, and they have decided to make it into an annual sale. Executive Director Val Sadler says that they would do a few things differently this time around. Like every event that HLC runs, staff know the time to get feedback is immediately afterward. “We use ‘Stop, Start, Continue’ and write down staff and volunteer comments for future events,” Val Sadler says.

What they will stop for next year: Sorting the books as they unpacked them for the sale was not successful. This year they will pre-sort the books at the warehouse.

What they will start: If they have the space, they would like to set up an information booth to generate more awareness of their programs.

What they will continue: Hamilton Literacy Council gave out a free bookmark with each book. The bookmarks included their agency information and the printing costs were covered by Dofasco.

Finally, how will you evaluate the event as a marketing tool? You might try circulating a survey or having a draw. Make sure to ask how people heard about the event so that you can make your advertising budget more targeted the next time around. Evaluate your event in light of the goals you set at the beginning. Did you successfully raise funds, attract media attention, reward volunteers, attract learners or raise your profile?

Other Resources

If you are new to planning events or would like to try something different, log on to the Ontario Literacy Coalition’s online Public Awareness Guide at:

www.on.literacy.ca/literacy_awareness/cover.htm

OLC says, “This guide provides the support you need to successfully plan and conduct activities that will engage adult learners, community partners, and your local media.”

Kin Canada also has an excellent *Public Relations and Media Toolkit* published in 2004 and available on PDF at: www.kinCanada.ca/members/communication/prkits.pdf

From the Kin Canada’s Public Relations and Media Toolkit

This crash course in media relations and easy-to-use “toolkit” will help your club develop skills and relationships that will serve you and your work for years to come.

Some clubs, zones and districts will already have significant experience and good contacts with their own local media. For those of you who have been generating successful media interest and coverage, this *Toolkit* may offer you some fresh ideas. For those with little experience working with the media, the *Toolkit* offers you a framework and a step-by-step approach to getting started.

The *Toolkit* is designed to offer both information and practical resources. It offers hands-on tools for turning your story into news. Learn how to write your own media materials. Learn how to plan a media event. These tools will help you now, in your current project, and with your projects in the future. Feel free to share this *Toolkit* with your fellow Kin members and with other groups in your community.

Many of the tips and ideas in this document are transferable to the community based literacy environment.

The Website as a Promotional Tool

So far, all of the marketing activities we have discussed do not require a website. Not all community based agencies are using web pages to market their programs. Not surprisingly, the web pages that are out there are as varied as the programs that have created them. Is there anything that we can say about what makes a successful web page? First of all, there are vast numbers of websites out there willing to tell you how to do it right. Here are a few distilled selections from some of the best for entry-level websites.

- 1 Websites should be easy to read.** Choose text and colours carefully. Text that is too small is difficult to read; if it's too big, it shouts. Contrasting colours should highlight but not shriek. Layout and design should be clear and easy to follow.
- 2 Websites should be easy to navigate.** Hyperlinks should be clear to visitors. Resist the temptation to use tools for effect rather than function. Always choose clarity over "cool".
- 3 Websites should be easy to find.** How well is your website linked from other sites? Does all of your printed information (business cards, letterhead, brochures, etc.) include your website address? Once on the website, your contact information should also be easy to locate and use.
- 4 Websites should be easy to download.** Organizations who track this kind of information are saying that your webpage should take a maximum **12 seconds to download**. Any longer and the visitor is likely to leave.

- 5 Websites should be current.** If you decide to invest in a website, be sure to schedule the resources for regular maintenance. Regular up-to-date postings are a great marketing tool that keep visitors coming back. Past-dated material has the opposite effect.
- 6 Websites should have meaningful content.** This may seem obvious, but it is easy to forget the importance of quality content when all one hears about is website design. Meaningful, current material will ensure that your site is visited regularly.

If you are thinking of getting your own web page, try browsing through some of the excellent web pages in community based literacy. If you haven't seen it for a while, start with Community Literacy of Ontario's newly re-designed website: www.nald.ca/clo/

Here are some others that are really worth the visit:

Parkdale Project Read's website is a great example of effective promotions. You can easily find information for learners, volunteers and supporters on programs and services offered. There also is a learner's gallery that showcases the writing of various learners as well as information on current projects. Please visit: www.nald.ca/ppr.

The website of *Literacy Plus* (Renfrew County Community Upgrading) does a great job of promoting its programs and services. It is cleanly and attractively laid-out and it is very easy to find information on who they are, what they do and what services students can receive. You can also easily obtain volunteer information, their newsletter and current news and events. Check out: www.literacyplus-renfrewcounty.ca.

Skills for Employment, Life and Family, formerly *Peel Literacy Guild* has an excellent promotional website. They clearly state their slogan, who they are, what services they offer and how learners, tutors and donors could get involved. Their website also offers interactive information such as learner stories, their newsletter and advice from tutors. It further shares important dates such as fundraisers, open houses and tutor training events. Please visit: www.peelliteracyguild.com or www.skillsforself.org.

The website of the *Hamilton Literacy Council* is another great example of a well-designed promotional website. It contains easy-to-find and plain language program information for students, volunteers and community members, as well as literacy facts, current events and even quotes from students. Note the appealing lay-out and pictures as well. Five stars! Click on: www.hamiltonreads.ca.

Marketing Ourselves

CHAPTER—IX

Survey Results: Activities and Partnerships

Community Literacy of Ontario's Marketing and Outreach survey also gauged the standing of community based agencies in current activities, events and partnerships. These statistics demonstrate that we are already intentional about marketing to our communities and partners. Once again, 55 literacy agencies from across Ontario responded to this question.

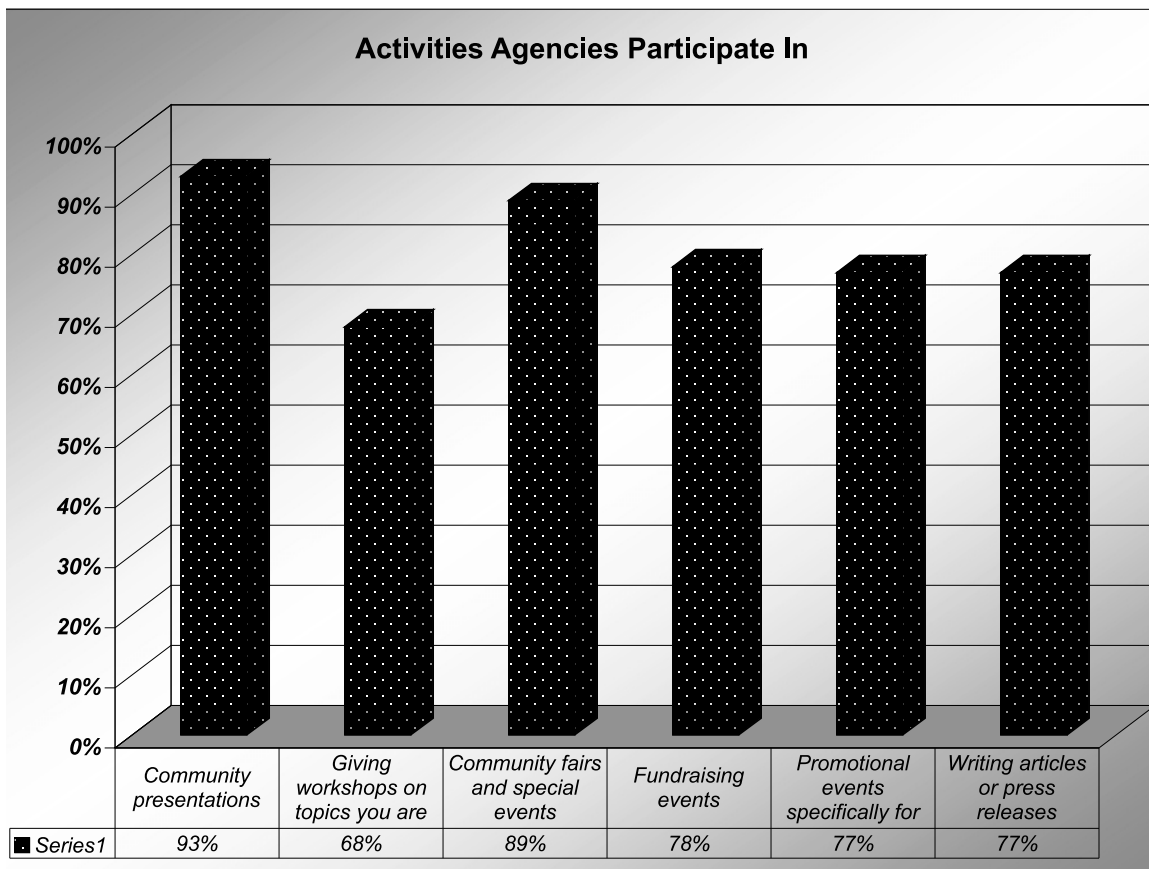
Activities

CLO's 2007 marketing survey asked, "Please indicate which of the following activities your agency participates in:"

- ▶ Community presentations
- ▶ Giving workshops on topics you are considered to have expert knowledge in
- ▶ Community fairs and special events
- ▶ Fundraising events
- ▶ Promotional events specifically for your agency
- ▶ Writing articles or press releases

The results were significant: in each of these categories total respondent participation ranged from 68% to 93%. This means that high percentages of community based agencies are participating in popular and successful events and activities.

Survey Results and Analyses



(Based on 55 respondents)

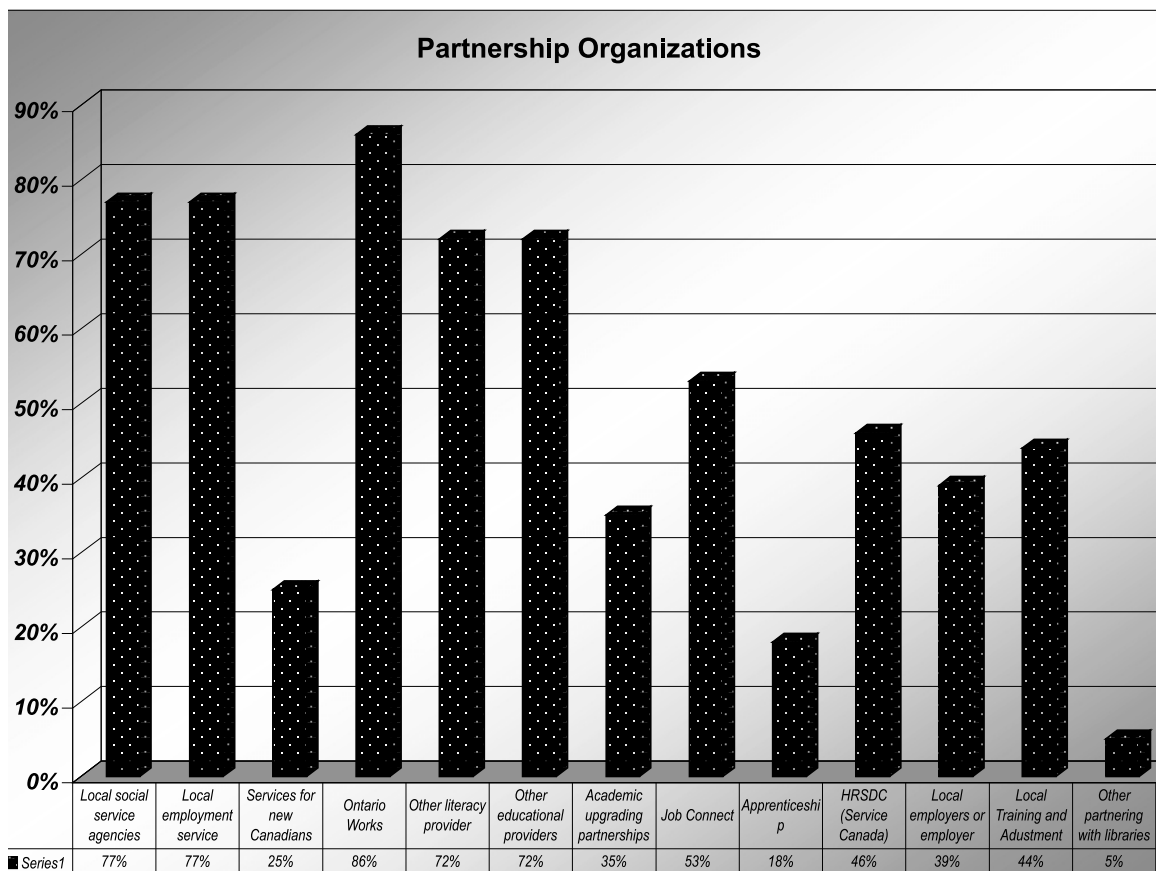
Partnerships

CLO's *Marketing and Outreach Survey* asked, "Please indicate which organizations your literacy agency has partnered with (for joint programming, shared space, shared resources, shared marketing, assessment and referral, etc.)"

- ▶ Local social service agencies
- ▶ Local employment service agencies
- ▶ Services for new Canadians
- ▶ Ontario Works
- ▶ Other literacy provider
- ▶ Other educational providers (credit programming, etc.)
- ▶ Academic Upgrading Partnerships
- ▶ Job Connect

- ▶ Apprenticeship
- ▶ HRSDC (Service Canada)
- ▶ Local employers or employer groups
- ▶ Local Training and Adjustment Boards

There was a wider range of responses to this question; nonetheless, there were a significant (greater than 50%) number of partnerships recorded for more than half of these categories. It is clear that most agencies are seeing the value in forming partnerships.



(Based on 55 respondents)

Marketing Ourselves

CHAPTER—X

The Next Steps

Marketing Ourselves is composed in two parts: the first is essentially theory, where the mindset, tools and strategies are presented. The second part is practice where we reviewed how we do outreach, marketing and promotion in our communities. **Doing It Better**, in the Survey Analyses, brings into play in a very practical way the theory from part one. Part three, we might say, is still unwritten; it is the section that our literacy agencies is still developing. We need to connect theory and practice to even more effectively market our community based agencies. The survey results are encouraging because we can clearly see that we are already using many effective marketing tools and principles. The next step, then, is to build on our strengths.

Sometimes, when we are faced with lots of new information, it is difficult to know where to begin. If you have always thought of marketing as a discrete activity, you might wonder how to encompass this much larger picture of marketing to make it work for your program. If you are not sure where to start, take something you are already doing and fortify it by applying some marketing theory from the resource guide. For example, if you are planning an event, use the tips for **Doing It Better** from the **Events** section of “Marketing to Our Communities” on page 85. If you’re embarking on a new partnership, review the section on **Networking and Referrals** on page 77 to reinforce your positioning. If you are planning to develop a new brochure, be sure to look at the **Targeted Marketing Communication** guidelines on page 59. Adding the marketing principles from CLO’s *Marketing Ourselves* to what you are already doing will strengthen your activities and ensure an even greater likelihood of success. As well, applying these new marketing skills to what you already do is excellent preparation for trying something new.

Next Steps and Research

If you are ready to embark on a new marketing activity, try out the marketing circle as a way to ensure the effectiveness and coherence of your marketing plans. If you would like to try something new and are looking for ideas, be sure to check out the innovative suggestions on the following few pages. You may recall that CLO's May 2007 Marketing Survey included a question that addressed the realm of new and innovative marketing: "If I had enough time and resources to promote our community literacy agency, I would..." Many of you threw caution to the wind as you envisioned powerful marketing and promotional schemes. Unlike the other survey results, which were graphed and analysed, the results of this question appear here essentially as they were written. Answers range from the pragmatic to the extraordinary. They are all included because even the most improbable can provide a springboard for ideas and innovation. While responses varied widely, one answer was repeated a number of times and is therefore worth addressing. A number of you said that if you had the money, you would hire an expert. Hopefully, with this resource guide, you will be willing to develop and take on your own marketing plans. While the guide won't increase your operating budget, it will increase your marketing resources by providing effective approaches that you can take right now.

Marketing Dreams and Visions from Ontario's Community Literacy Agencies

If I had enough time and resources to promote our community literacy agency, I would...

- ☺ *Create a mini booklet in clear language and full colour that would highlight a number of learner success stories*
- ☺ *Develop agency brochure and posters*
- ☺ *Develop a Website*
- ☺ *Create radio ads and PSA's and TV promotional ads*
- ☺ *Have an article in every edition of the local weekly newspaper*
- ☺ *Make sure every household knew what services we provide*
- ☺ *Visit and leave materials with every employer and community group in my local area*

- ☺ *Involve celebrities*
- ☺ *Meet with more community groups*
- ☺ *Find my millionaire*
- ☺ *Arrange for learner testimonials in front of a huge audience*
- ☺ *Not have a waiting list*
- ☺ *Open the computer lab to more people*
- ☺ *Begin an ESL conversational class*
- ☺ *Expand our services and offer more specialised classes*
- ☺ *Expand our program to more locations because there is such a need*
- ☺ *Expand part-time and evening programs*
- ☺ *Re-vamp our centres—paint, carpeting, lighting, decorating, new furniture, especially comfortable chairs for students and a comfortable place for them to hang out in*
- ☺ *Spend more time out and about in the community*
- ☺ *Visit partners and employers regularly*
- ☺ *Do more public education*
- ☺ *Find the clients that are in need*
- ☺ *Find out what really works to attract new learners*
- ☺ *Hire a full time Marketing co-ordinator who would provide professional recruitment and culturally appropriate outreach strategies to engage and build community awareness and participation*
- ☺ *Dedicate funding to a marketing position*
- ☺ *Hire a part-time community liaison who would work at raising the profile of our agency and literacy issues in general*

Next Steps and Research

- ☺ *Develop a marketing campaign*
- ☺ *Advocate for a universal advertising campaign that is used province-wide*
- ☺ *Create a provincial communications strategy to raise the profile of existing services*
- ☺ *Hold a literacy symposium in our community that would include free resources for everyone*
- ☺ *Hold a forum inviting politicians, business, public, interest groups, service providers, etc to review the situation in our community: resources, partnerships available, etc. Then set goals...*
- ☺ *Reach politicians and business people in power so they understand the importance of literacy*
- ☺ *Talk to every agency and business in town and give them a colourful and informative kit*
- ☺ *Convince more employers about the benefits of workforce training*
- ☺ *Improve our partnerships*
- ☺ *Focus on public education to raise awareness and government support for funds to expand our program*
- ☺ *Develop a "Read a Book" week where different retail stores participate and ask shoppers to donate \$1 to literacy and put their name on a book which would go on the wall*
- ☺ *Re-locate to a more central area of our community*
- ☺ *Buy a literacy van that moves from place to place raising our profile...*
- ☺ *Stop writing grants and create the most powerful marketing campaign we have yet to see in Literacy*



Marketing Ourselves

APPENDICES

Research Summary

Internal Research

A focus group was held at the CLO board meeting in May 2007 to orientate board members to the marketing project that had just got underway. Project leader Karen Farrar talked about marketing as an essential component of community literacy's future strategic planning. The board participated in two marketing exercises that they thought would be extremely useful for all agencies. In turn, they provided constructive insights about their own programs, which increased the practicality of the project tools. The focus group provided an opportunity to both increase awareness of the project goals and parameters and bring board members on side as resource people. Board members reported a real need for the tools and information the project will provide.

Research also took place at two informal round table discussion groups held at the CLO annual general meeting in 2007. About 25 to 30 members participated in a discussion of their current marketing practices and tools that they feel they need. Conversation was animated and enthusiastic about the potential of more effectively marketing our agencies. These discussions confirmed the timeliness of CLO's marketing guide and the relevance of its contents.

The most in-depth internal research was gleaned from CLO's marketing survey, which was issued to community based agencies in May 2007. The results of this survey grounded the focus and direction of the resource guide in the needs and wants of the agencies. Our marketing surveys results are included here. You can see a more detailed analysis of these results in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight. However, all of the individual activities listed by survey respondents are included below. This list of activities may give you some new outreach and marketing ideas for your programs.

Next Steps and Research

Research in the Wider Literacy Field and Non-Profit Sector

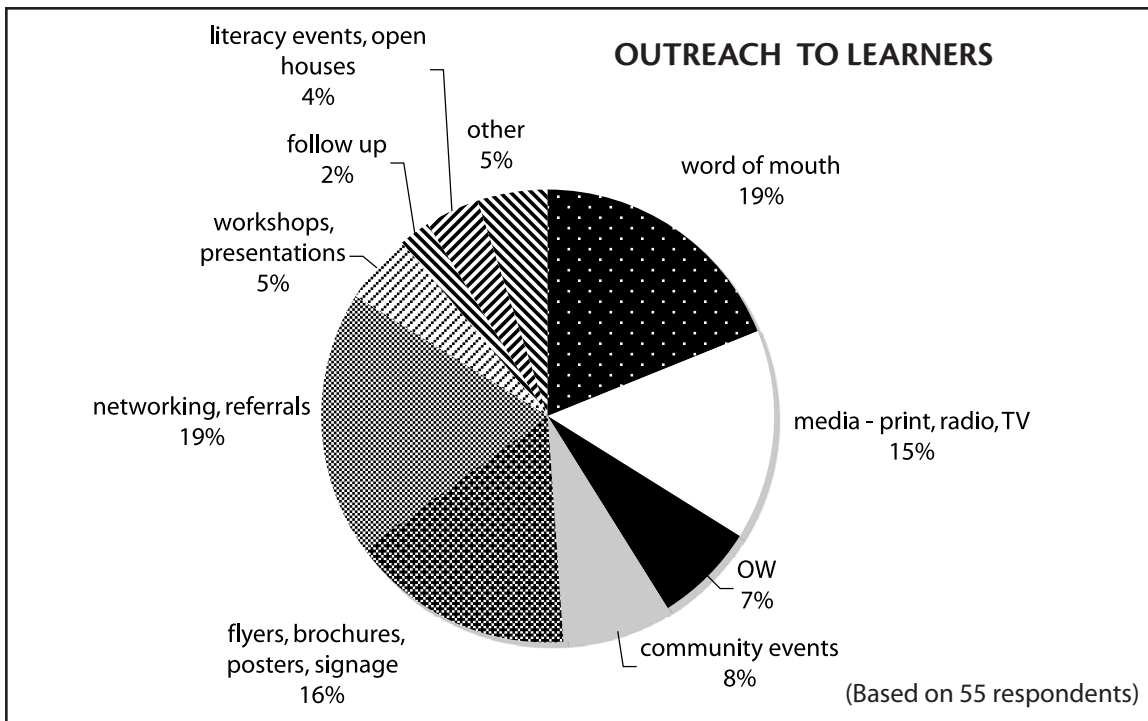
The wider literacy field was researched for resources and tools to review best practices and avoid duplication. Some of the many very useful resources are included in the bibliography. There was also extensive research undertaken of non-profit marketing practices to confirm that sound business marketing principles are used throughout the non-profit sector.

Research in Business

It is the business world that has spent billions of dollars in marketing research, so it makes sense to take advantage of their expertise. Many solid marketing principles can be adapted to our needs as community based agencies. The central marketing tool in this guide, the marketing circle, is based on a number of business models. There are several business resources listed in the bibliography.

Results to Question One of Community Literacy of Ontario's Marketing Survey, May 2007

Please list the three most effective ways that you conduct outreach to Adult Learners in your community.



Word of mouth..... 19%

Media..... 15%

- ▶ Advertising
- ▶ Advertising in local paper
- ▶ Advertising on city buses in the fall
- ▶ Advertising in city published services guide
- ▶ Business card in local paper
- ▶ Newspaper
- ▶ Radio ads
- ▶ Phonebook ads
- ▶ Local cable channel
- ▶ Local TV coverage
- ▶ Public Service Announcements
- ▶ Yellow Pages advertising

Ontario Works 7%

- ▶ Ontario Works cheque inserts
- ▶ OW partnership
- ▶ Presentations to Ontario Works clients at their location
- ▶ Work with OW staff

Community Events 8%

- ▶ Attending community events (displays and being there)
- ▶ Sidewalk sales, fairs
- ▶ Mall events
- ▶ Annual fall fair—information booth

Workshops, Presentations 5%

- ▶ Speaking Engagements
- ▶ Presentations everywhere, especially referral agencies

Next Steps and Research

- ▶ Workshops
- ▶ Presentations to other groups
- ▶ Presentations to various key groups

Flyers, Brochures, Posters, Signage 16%

- ▶ Signage
- ▶ Signs in workplace settings
- ▶ Flyers
- ▶ Flyers inserted in newspapers
- ▶ Flyers faxed and posted in community centres and libraries
- ▶ Clear and simple language flyers placed strategically in the community
- ▶ Picture-based flyers in grocery bags
- ▶ Brochures
- ▶ Brochures to other social service agencies (e.g. Job Connect)
- ▶ Brochures in agencies/doctors' offices
- ▶ Brochures and posters
- ▶ Posters (signs, flyers, brochures, posters)

Networking, Referrals 19%

- ▶ Partnerships with other programs
- ▶ Networking with other education providers
- ▶ Meetings with other groups
- ▶ Education to other agencies about what we do so they can refer their clients
- ▶ Cross project e.g. Employment Assistance Services referrals and LBS-funded community
- ▶ Being at libraries and adult education centre
- ▶ Collaborative program with libraries and Ontario Early Years
- ▶ Collaborative project OW and Career Services for skills development training
- ▶ Outreach through personal contact to key referral agencies
- ▶ Referrals
- ▶ Networking with other agencies

- ▶ Services coordinated referrals with Job Connect
- ▶ Networking everywhere!

Follow-up 2%

- ▶ Follow-up on learners who have left the program
- ▶ Follow-up letters

Literacy Events, Open Houses 4%

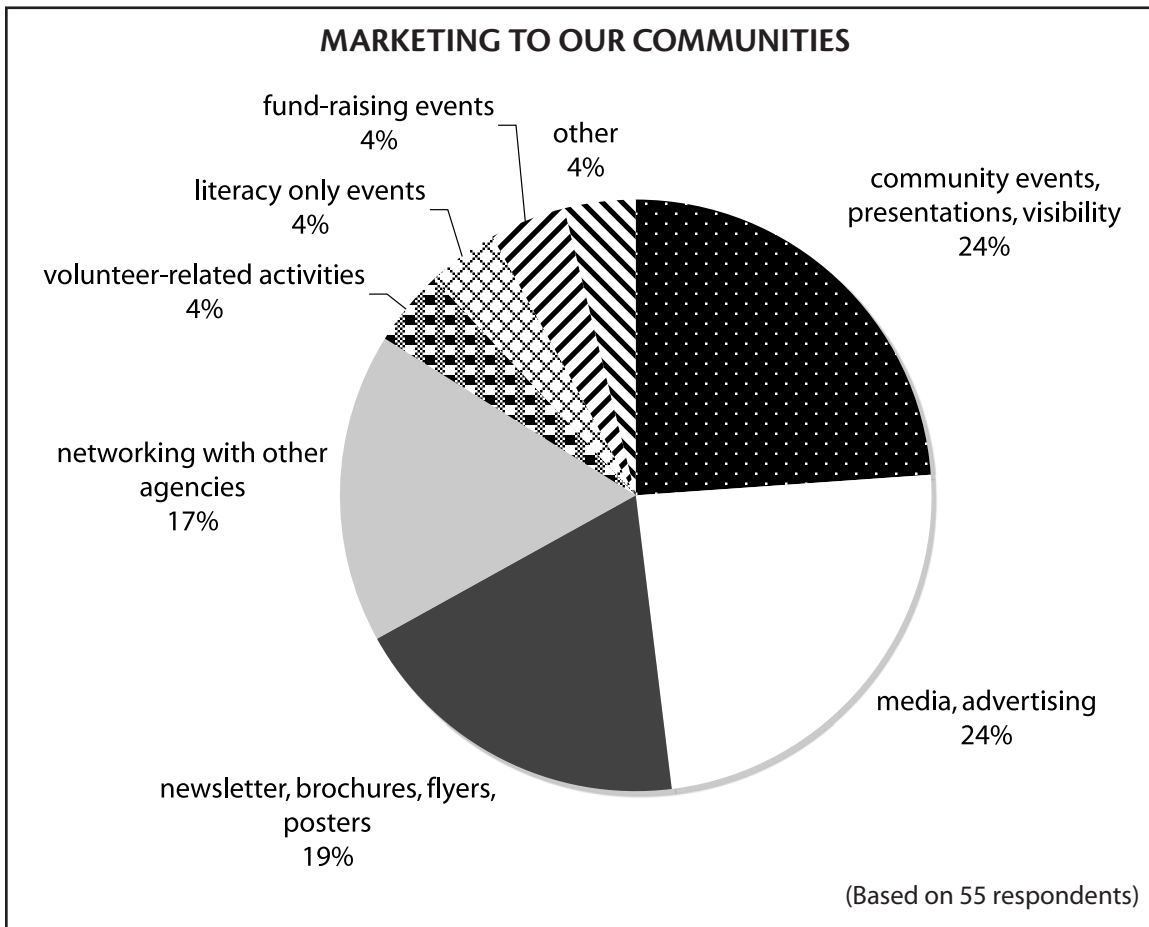
- ▶ Family Literacy Day
- ▶ Student Appreciation Day
- ▶ Need to Read Festival
- ▶ Literacy event
- ▶ Open House

Other 5%

- ▶ Ongoing outreach to schools, libraries, etc.
- ▶ Community outreach
- ▶ Off-site classes, e.g. day care centre
- ▶ Door-to-door campaigning
- ▶ Telephone
- ▶ Email
- ▶ Tutors
- ▶ Fellowship centre — where students live
- ▶ Yoga class
- ▶ We don't do learner outreach due to the capacity of our program

Results to Question Two of Community Literacy of Ontario's Marketing Survey, May 2007

Please list the three most effective ways that you market your literacy agency to your community:



Community Events, Presentations, Visibility..... 24%

- ▶ Community events
- ▶ Community presentations
- ▶ Participation in community events, e.g. job fairs, festivals, etc
- ▶ Speaking to every group, organization, agency and business in our community
- ▶ Participation in all fairs, celebrations and events targeting adults
- ▶ Speaking engagements

- ▶ Sponsorships
- ▶ Public functions — we always attend to promote our services
- ▶ Mall displays and presentations
- ▶ Presentations
- ▶ Presentations to stakeholders
- ▶ Presentations at community luncheons
- ▶ Public presentations and displays
- ▶ PowerPoint Presentations
- ▶ Presentations to community groups
- ▶ Information sessions
- ▶ Information fairs
- ▶ Community workshops
- ▶ Visits to local businesses

Media..... 24%

- ▶ Media
- ▶ Advertising
- ▶ Direct advertising
- ▶ Guest spots on radio for events
- ▶ Use of media “We’re in it all the time!”
- ▶ Press releases newspaper
- ▶ Letters to the editor
- ▶ Newspaper advertising
- ▶ News articles
- ▶ Newspaper
- ▶ Ongoing advertising on community television channel
- ▶ Ongoing announcements in newspaper and on radio for board meetings
- ▶ TV coverage of events
- ▶ Local cable
- ▶ Public Service Announcements

Next Steps and Research

Networking with other agencies 17%

- ▶ Individual meetings
- ▶ Service agencies
- ▶ Inter-service networking meetings
- ▶ Networking with other community agencies
- ▶ Workforce development Network member
- ▶ Sit on other committees
- ▶ Formed a community partners group to network with other agencies that deal with same clients
- ▶ Partnerships with other agencies
- ▶ Education of other agencies
- ▶ Personal visits with all referral agencies
- ▶ OW information fair
- ▶ Job fair
- ▶ Partnerships with workplace action centres
- ▶ Combined marketing material with Job Connect to reach potential learners and employers

Newsletters, Brochures, Flyers, Posters, Signage..... 19%

- ▶ Newsletter
- ▶ Poster
- ▶ Signage
- ▶ Posters in library branches
- ▶ Distributing EO posters to businesses and social service agencies
- ▶ Banner across Main St. for two weeks 2 times per year
- ▶ Brochures
- ▶ Brochures at displays
- ▶ Providing board members with brochures to take out to their liaisons in the community

Volunteer related events and activities 4%

- ▶ Volunteers
- ▶ Advertising for volunteers
- ▶ Volunteer recruitment (flyers, community postings)
- ▶ Volunteer recruitment—internet sites
- ▶ Volunteer fairs

Literacy Only Events and Word of Mouth..... 4%

- ▶ Our events
- ▶ Family literacy events
- ▶ Participate in any ongoing literacy functions
- ▶ Our good reputation
- ▶ Through learners and tutors
- ▶ Word of mouth

Fund-raising Events..... 4%

- ▶ Annual appeal
- ▶ Fund-raising events, e.g. golf event, tag days
- ▶ Co-hosting large scale fund-raiser (drag racing)
- ▶ Open house
- ▶ Christmas literacy book basket raffle
- ▶ Annual community book sale

Other 4%

- ▶ Mail outs to target groups
- ▶ Email
- ▶ Branding—keep your logo out there and your message
- ▶ Offer sampler classes to prospective learners
- ▶ Location, location, location
- ▶ Charity village
- ▶ Free childcare

Results to Question Three of Community Literacy of Ontario's Marketing Survey, May 2007

Please list three successful promotional events your agency has participated in that have increased your profile in the community.



Workshops and curricula for learners 5%

- ▶ Computer classes
- ▶ Occupational Curriculum
- ▶ Learners' Conference

Literacy and on-site events..... 15%

- ▶ Coffee House

- ▶ Open House
- ▶ Open house and website launch
- ▶ Community Education Open house
- ▶ Hosting lunch and learn
- ▶ Lunch for literacy
- ▶ Changing our name
- ▶ Grand opening of a new site
- ▶ Family literacy
- ▶ Celebrating Literacy
- ▶ International Literacy Day events
- ▶ LEAP (literacy education) day
- ▶ Canada Post Award
- ▶ Literacy Award
- ▶ Learner Awards

Volunteer events 5%

- ▶ Volunteer appreciation potluck
- ▶ Volunteer fair
- ▶ Nominating individuals or groups for recognition
- ▶ Annual recognition dinner
- ▶ Tutor training workshops

Job fair and employment related events 15%

- ▶ Employment Ontario events
- ▶ Partnered with OW to present employment and training workshops at College volunteer fair
- ▶ Job fair presence
- ▶ Organised a job fair with three other agencies
- ▶ Employment Readiness Fair
- ▶ Local Business promotional event
- ▶ Employer appreciation luncheon

Next Steps and Research

- ▶ Presentation of Preparatory Training Program-created apprenticeship resource at Opportunities Conference in Toronto
- ▶ Chamber of Commerce event
- ▶ Apprenticeship workshop

Regional and inter-agency events..... 10%

- ▶ Regional strategic planning events
- ▶ Inter-agency meetings
- ▶ Network coordinated events
- ▶ Network and workforce development Board event
- ▶ Network and Training Board supported literacy event — invited businesses and chamber of commerce

Community events and fairs 19%

- ▶ Health services fair
- ▶ Community Event/Fair presence
- ▶ Street festival booth
- ▶ Market Days
- ▶ Interactive Mall Days
- ▶ Presentation to town council (televised)
- ▶ Mayor proclaims March literacy month
- ▶ Workshops offered to community
- ▶ Speak at Town Council and Library Board meetings
- ▶ Forums
- ▶ Community-wide questionnaire
- ▶ Holding Information Sessions
- ▶ United Way events
- ▶ Dragon Boat Festival
- ▶ Community Sunday in the Park
- ▶ Canada Day Celebrations
- ▶ Elliot Lake Drag Races

Book sales and fundraisers 18%

- ▶ Sidewalk Book Sale
- ▶ Annual community book sale
- ▶ Fundraiser
- ▶ Chili Fest fundraiser
- ▶ Gala Fundraiser
- ▶ Variety night fundraiser
- ▶ Annual auction
- ▶ Book sale
- ▶ Ride for Literacy
- ▶ Showcase Literacy
- ▶ Literacy Book Basket
- ▶ Literacy Golf event
- ▶ Fundraising BBQ
- ▶ Hockey challenge for literacy
- ▶ Read for Literacy
- ▶ Annual Tag Days
- ▶ Car rally for literacy
- ▶ Family Literacy Day Skate
- ▶ Skate for community— with 11 other agencies

Spelling bees, Scrabble® tournaments 6%

- ▶ Spelling Bee
- ▶ Scrabble® Tournament
- ▶ Trivia Night
- ▶ Movie night

Reading Festivals 8%

- ▶ Word on the Street
- ▶ Festival of Stories
- ▶ Need to Read Festival

Next Steps and Research

- ▶ Road to Reading Festival
- ▶ Books for Brunch event
- ▶ Colour Wheel Stories
- ▶ Tongues in the Trees
- ▶ Poetry and Music Fundraiser
- ▶ Tree tour with tree specialist and input from learners
- ▶ Golden Oak Book Club
- ▶ Fractured Fairy Tale evening

Other 4%

- ▶ Diversity in Governance Award Winner
- ▶ Display at Courthouse
- ▶ Legal Aid workshop conducted for our students
- ▶ United Way event where one of our learners was their “poster” person
- ▶ Bookmark in September’s Ontario Hydro bills
- ▶ Media campaign
- ▶ AGM media coverage (through inviting a high profile key note speaker or guest)

Selected Annotated Bibliography

Print Based Resources on Marketing and Outreach

Susan Barry, *Effective Outreach Strategies From Kingston Literacy's Family Literacy Program* (Kingston Literacy, n.d.)

- ▶ Note: Example of agency using existing programs as outreach tools

Peter C. Brinckerhoff, *Mission-Based Management: leading your not-for-profit into the 21st century* (Alpine Guild Inc., 1994)

- ▶ Note: Excellent chapter, "Developing a Bias for Marketing". Very clear re: how marketing influences all decision-making

Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters and NLS, *Business Results Through Literacy* (Human Resources and Development Canada, n.d.) Also available in pdf:
<http://www.cstd.ca/networks/Johnstone-Literacy%20Awareness%20Presentation.pdf>

- ▶ Note: Excellent statistics and research. Makes a strong connection between literacy and business success. PDF format.

Community Literacy of Ontario, *Creative Outreach Strategies for the 21st Century* (Community Literacy of Ontario, 2000)

- ▶ Note: Good exercises. Many ideas can also be used in promotion

Literacy Service Planning Group, Ontario Local Board 1, *From Spark to Sustained Heat* (T.R. Leger, Prescott-Russell Reading Program, 2000)

- ▶ Note: Good Raising awareness about literacy section

Ellen Long, with Sandy Middleton *Patterns of Participation in Canadian Literacy and Upgrading Programs* (ABC Canada in partnership with Literacy BC, 2001)

- ▶ Note: Very good stats and charts

Kimberley Onclin, *Literacy Marketing, Promotion, Networking and Partnerships*, 2 vols. (READ Saskatoon, 2000)

- ▶ Note: Loads of promotional and fundraising ideas

Literacy Outreach Package (Ottawa-Carleton Coalition for Literacy (OCCL) and Alternative Learning Styles and Outlooks (ALSO), 2002)

- ▶ Note: Good resource for marketing to social agencies

Trevor Pross and Susan Barry, *Reaching Across the Barriers: Increasing Outreach and Participation in Family and Adult Literacy Programs* (Kingston Literacy, n.d.)

- ▶ Note: Very comprehensive. Especially useful re: barriers to participation. Many of these barriers extend to other market groups as well.

Next Steps and Research

Emanuel Rosen, *The Anatomy of Buzz: how to create word of mouth marketing* (Doubleday, 2000)

- ▶ Note: Good explanation of how word of mouth works and some tips on maximizing and influencing this kind of networking

Barbara Findlay Schenck, *Small Business Marketing for Dummies*, 2nd edition (Wiley Publishing Inc., 2005)

- ▶ Note: An excellent reference work. Great overview of marketing. Includes prototype of marketing circle.

Don Sexton, PHD, *Trump University Marketing 101* (John Wiley and Sons Inc., 2006)

- ▶ Note: Very good introduction to marketing and common marketing tools. Strong business, sales orientation.

Barbara E Smith Ed. D., *Marketing Your Adult Literacy Program A "How to" Manual* (Hudson River Center for Program Development Inc., Revised version, 1996)

- ▶ Note: As described, a good how-to manual with basic tips on beginning a marketing campaign and media skills.

Tri-County Literacy Network, *Evaluating Outreach Strategies and Events: Final Report March 2003* (Tri-County Literacy Network, 2003)

- ▶ Note: Good "Model for Outreach", excellent bibliography

Jane Tuer and Lorri Sauve *Making Essential Skills Work for You: A Guide to Marketing and Promotions for Literacy and Upgrading Education Programs* (Laubach Literacy Ontario, 2007)

- ▶ Note: Very good application of marketing principles to adult literacy

Jean Withers and Carol Vipperman, *Marketing Your Service, 4th edition* (Self-Counsel Press, 2003)

- ▶ Note: Good worksheets. Good section on goal setting and information on having a marketing plan.

Kristen Wolf, *Now Hear This* (Fenton Communications, Washington, DC, 2001)

- ▶ Note: Excellent resource on Non-profit promotion and advocacy

Thomas Wolf, *Managing a Nonprofit Organization in the Twenty-First Century* (Simon and Schuster, Fireside Edition, 1999)

- ▶ Note: Good sections on marketing and planning. Good definition of marketing. Effective use of business marketing principles within non-profit sector

Web Based Resources on Marketing and Outreach

“Still Making a Difference: The Impact of the Health Promotion Directorate’s Social Marketing Campaigns (1992-1993) Part VI Lessons Learned”

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/activit/marketsoc/mad-uef3/index_e.html

► Note: Good example of social marketing in action

“Steps to Competitiveness, Step 6 Marketing” (Government of Canada)

http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/site/stco-levc.nsf/en/h_qw00016e.html

► Note: Good overview of marketing, definition and principles

“What is Social Marketing?”

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/activit/marketsoc/whatis-qui_e.html

► Note : Social marketing explained in a healthcare context

“Scalable Customer Relationship Management”

<http://www.microsoft.com/business/executivecircle/content/printPage.aspx?cId=2066&subcatID=402>

“Market Innovation and Branded Differentiation”

<http://www.microsoft.com/business/executivecircle/content/printPage.aspx?cId=2069&subcatID=402>

“Best Practice ROI Marketing”

<http://www.microsoft.com/business/executivecircle/content/article.aspx?cid=2070&subcatid=402>

“Five Steps That Take Marketing to the Next Level”

<http://www.microsoft.com/business/executivecircle/content/article.aspx?cid=2071&subcatid=402>

► Note: These Executive Circle articles provide thoughtful and very current marketing practice and theory

“Creating a Vision”

<http://www.nsba.org/sbot/toolkit/cav.html>

► Note: Great tools for creating vision and mission statements

“Introduction to Community Engagement”

http://www.help4nonprofits.com/PDF_Files/ARTICLE-Marketing-vs-CommunityEngagement.pdf

► Note: Good introduction and comparison of community engagement vs. marketing

Next Steps and Research

Help for Non-Profits: Community Driven Institute

<http://www.help4nonprofits.com/index.htm>

► Note: Great general resource

Acqyr: Strategies Compatible with your Life

<http://www.acqyr.com/index.php>

► Note: Go to archived articles. Good information on marketing and PR

“Research to Practice: Marketing Adult Literacy Programs: Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century” Steve Olu Michael and Elaine Hogard

<http://literacy.kent.edu/Oasis/Pubs/0200-17.html>

► Note: Competently and convincingly sets the context for the necessity of good marketing in adult literacy. If you read only one resource from the bibliography, this should be it!

“Top Five Non-Profit Web Mistakes”

http://www.nonprofitmarketingblog.com/site/top_five_nonprofit_website_mistakes/

► Note: A very good non-profit marketing blog

Financial Vibrancy Project

<http://www.financialvibrancy.org/index.php>

► Note: Good info on marketing to funders

“The Marketing Cycle”

<http://dis.shef.ac.uk/sheila/marketing/cycle.htm>

► Note: Another marketing cycle version

The Marketing Source

<http://www.fixyourmarketing.com/index.htm>

► Note: Good general marketing resource. Some free articles

Corporate Alternatives Incorporated

http://www.missionbased.com/marketing_ideas.htm#surveys

► Note: Marketing ideas to accompany *Mission-based Marketing* (See print bibliography)

Harvard Business School: Working Knowledge — Marketing

<http://hbswk.hbs.edu/topics/marketing.html>

► Note: Great portal for articles on business marketing from highly qualified experts

“10 Tips for a Sound Marketing/PR Strategy”

<http://www.richardmale.com/richtips/July142005.htm>

► Note: Good marketing tips, easy to read format

W.K Kellogg Foundation

<http://www.wkkf.org/default.aspx?LanguageID=0>

► Note: Free downloadable toolkits from the Kellogg Foundation. This site is worth perusing

Marketing Mentoring

http://marketingmentoring.com/purchasing_decisions.htm

► Note: Good short articles on marketing topics

“The Strategist’s Toolkit”

http://www.healthworkforce.org/guide/toolkit_sec1_1.htm

► Note: Some good marketing tips and information. Alternate version of marketing continuum

“The Partnership Handbook”, by Flo Frank and Anne Smith

<http://dsp-psd.communication.gc.ca/Collection/MP43-373-1-2000E.pdf>

► Note: Excellent resource on creating and sustaining healthy partnerships

“What Learners Want” *A Summary of Focus Groups and Interviews with Adult Learners in Saskatchewan*, Katrina Ham, Learner Coordinator, Saskatchewan Literacy Network

<http://www.nald.ca/library/research/sln-ww/cover.htm>

► Note: This pdf format document provides excellent marketing research—using focus groups and interviews—on learners

