



Citizens-Save-Libraries

*A Power Guide for
Successful Advocacy*

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Introduction

Libraries all across America are at a crossroads. If you are using this guidebook, you are worried about the future of your own library. Chances are you've heard the chorus of excuses from your local leaders about why your library can't be adequately funded. Times are tough, they will say – everyone has to sacrifice. They will ask, “Why do we need libraries when we have the internet?” They will tell us straight out or in carefully couched terms (no one, after all wants to be seen as “anti-library”), that libraries, while nice, just are not relevant anymore. After all, the marketplace is full of e-books, music downloads, streaming movies, and, of course, the internet.

Interestingly, libraries have not always had to fight so strongly for adequate funding. This may be because up until the late 1980s, municipal and county budgets were fairly stable. Additionally, the costs of running a library were stable as well. Essentially, libraries had a single stream of service revolving around books. Reference services, youth services, and adult services were all book based. Sure there were records and film strips, and later video, but these were seen as secondary services and very often as “draws” to get new people in to use the library and discover books.

With the introduction and very rapid explosion of information technology, libraries had the opportunity to greatly expand the world of information for their communities in ways never imagined before. The service stream for libraries has multiplied. Not only are we offering books, but computers, internet access, full-text databases, and MP3 players, Nooks, Kindles, and iPods for digital books. As each new information delivery system is introduced, libraries are there to capture that stream and make it available to their community.

While our patrons understand the power of the library and its centrality to our communities and their lives, funders often do not. Because they see many other avenues available for the same resources we offer, they feel that libraries are no longer filling a unique niche. They are, of course, wrong.

Libraries today are doing what they always have done which is to gather, collect, and organize the world of knowledge, literature, information, and stories, making it freely available to the communities they serve. And even though there is apparent competition in the marketplace for e-books, music, internet access, and print resources, these services are not free, and as in the days gone by, there are very few people who could afford to avail themselves of the wide world of information and knowledge in all its various formats that they'll need for lifelong learning. Not only that, but because of the burgeoning information avenues and their concomitant expense, the gap between the information haves and have-nots is growing deeper every day.

This Power Guide is designed to provide an advocacy team with a blueprint for immediate action to shore up the library's budget or pass a referendum or bond issue. The Guide will help the team develop a timeline for a campaign, develop strategies with deadlines for completion of set goals, assist in identifying and recruiting community members to help implement the strategies, and put in place oversight to encourage and support their completion.

In addition, this Power Guide will provide direction for continuing promotion of the library in the community in a politically powerful way. It is no longer the case that a onetime campaign, however successful, will be enough to keep your library running smoothly and effectively into

the future. Because dollars seem to be scarcer than ever and because it *appears* that libraries have a lot of competition from the private sector, politically astute promotion and public relations will have to become ongoing roles for libraries and their supporters.

The good news is that even if you are a non-profit or 501(c)(3) organization, you can engage in advocacy – or as the IRS refers to it – lobbying. There are limits to how much you can spend as a non-profit, but certainly your right to free speech is not eliminated simply because you may be considered a charitable organization by the government. The limits on what you can spend are outlined in a United for Libraries Fact Sheet called “Advocacy Campaigns: Legal Limits on Spending for Non-Profits.” The link to this resource can be found under “Online Resources” in Appendix C.

United for Libraries, along with the Neal-Schuman Foundation, believe strongly that advocacy can and does work. We’ve seen evidence of it from coast to coast in all types of libraries at the local and the state levels. Developing an advocacy campaign, as you will soon see, is not rocket science but it does take dedication, hard work, a core group of people who are passionate about the cause and the support of many, many people in your community. This guide will take the mystery out of advocacy, provide you with an organized step-by-step approach, and allow you to develop a set of strategies that will motivate your community to pressure funders to support the library or in the case of a referendum or a bond issue – to vote “yes.”

There is power in the voices of the people. Change only occurs when those voices are united, loud, and strong. Perhaps Margaret Mead said it best when she said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Happily, you don’t have to change the world, just your small and important corner of it!

Getting Started

Leadership Team

Margaret Mead was right. You do not need a core group that comprises huge numbers of community members. A small leadership team that includes library supporters, trustees, and administration (even if the administration is working behind the scenes) can be highly successful. While the leadership team may consist of, say, ten people, these ten people will, through implementation of strategies, be reaching out to many more library supporters for help with specific, time discrete tasks that will enable you to implement the strategies you’ve designed. Those on the leadership team must be committed and engaged throughout the entire campaign.

The role of the leadership team will be to design the campaign, develop strategies, determine due dates and internal timelines for the strategies, develop talking points, and recruit supporters to accomplish the strategies. The leadership team will ensure that volunteers are well educated about their roles, are equipped with the campaign’s talking points, and are assigned both tasks and timelines. In addition, the leadership team will oversee the work done by various strategy task forces, ensure that timelines and schedules are being met, and are available to assist as needed.

Among the leadership team, one person should be appointed treasurer. This person should have access to the resources that are available for the campaign. If the Friends of the Library are supporting the campaign, their treasurer might be the best person for this job. The campaign treasurer needs to work with the team to establish a budget for each committee and their task forces, pay bills and invoices that are incurred by the campaign, and keep track of expenditures so that regular reports of expenses and revenues can be made to the leadership team.

There will be weekly meetings – some in person, some virtual – and perhaps even bi-weekly meetings as the campaign progresses. The campaign will be short (see timeline below) but it will be intense. If someone is not sure they can commit this time, they should be asked to help with tasks later on but should not be on the leadership team. The exception to this would be a VIP in town who is willing to be the titular head of the campaign but not able/willing to get into the nitty-gritty. Such a person may be a member of the city council who supports you, the mayor, a well known author in town, the college football coach, or a large donor to various civic causes - in short anyone who is well known and well respected.

Who has committed to be on your leadership team?

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

Setting the Goal

Once the leadership team has been assembled, they must articulate the goal. Will your campaign be designed to stave off a predicted budget cut, to increase the budget, or to pass a referendum or a bond issue? The goal should be specific – exactly how much money are you asking for? If anticipating a cut, are you asking that the budget be left fully intact or that the budget reduction be less than what is being predicted? Are you asking for enough money to keep a branch from closing? Are you trying to protect hours? Are you working to decouple the library’s budget from the town/city/county’s budget creating a separate millage or line item? Whatever your goal, it must be very specific.

The goal of this campaign is to:

Determining the Campaign’s Timeline

The next thing you need to determine is when the campaign must culminate to be successful. Obviously, if you are passing a ballot measure, the culmination of the campaign will be clear – the day of the vote. If you are advocating for an increased budget or to stop a cut in the library’s budget, the culmination date for the campaign will be determined by the date the funders use for determining their own budget (which includes the libraries budget) to present to the public.

Determining when you need to finalize making your case for your budget within the overall community budget can be a bit nuanced. Who has the most sway in the development of the budget within which the library’s resides? Is it the council, the mayor, the city manager? When are the initial discussions taking place (you’ll want your “demands” on the table from this point on) and when is the final decision being made?

In almost all cases, it’s too late to attend the public hearing on the budget en masses to make the library’s case. It is entirely likely that those who work on the overall budget have spent weeks and even months getting to the point of the public hearing. It’s not likely that they’ll go back to the drawing board for the library – though they may make some concessions based on public input. It is much better to alert the powers that be that the library must be fully supported as they begin their work.

Once your team has determined when the campaign will culminate to have the highest impact, you must then determine when the campaign will go public based on the final date. Working back from the deadline, you will want to consider how long the campaign should run.

Though it might not occur to you from the outset, it is an important strategic decision about how long the campaign will last and paradoxically, the answer is not – the longer the better. In these days of high resistance to any increased taxes or spending, it’s entirely possible and even likely that opposition will coalesce against you. You want to design a campaign timeline that will:

- Allow you to successfully implement your strategies.
- Ensure that the larger community is aware of the campaign, understands why it’s necessary, and can be persuaded.
- Reduce the time opposition might have to gain strength against it.

Typically, a public campaign that might engender opposition is best left to no more than two to three months. This does not, however, mean that you don’t begin working on it until three months out. Indeed, there is much to be done behind the scenes to work on the development of strategies and to position the campaign to be fully fledged on day one.

The campaign will culminate on _____
(Date)

Engaging the Honorary Campaign Chair (VIP)

The leadership committee should take time at the beginning of the campaign process to determine and invite a VIP in town to become the honorary chair of the campaign. This person should be asked to be a media contact for the campaign, give several quotes to be used in the campaign, write or sign off on an op-ed or letter to the editor, and generally be the public leadership “face” of the campaign. He or she does not need to be actively involved in the campaign but should be seen as the lead endorser of your goal. This person should be well known and well respected in town.

The chair of the leadership team should be tasked with asking the persons you’ve listed (in priority order) to become honorary chair. Of course, if you have determined a VIP who is well known by another member of the leadership team, he or she would be the best person to make the ask.

Persons to approach for this role include:

-
-
-

Deadline for securing honorary chair: _____

Developing the Message, the Slogan, and Creating Talking Points

The message matters. It is very important that you develop a message and talking points that tell exactly what you are asking for and why it matters. By developing the message and talking points to underline the message, you'll go a long way to ensure that everyone involved in the campaign is essentially saying the same thing and that what they are saying is accurate. If you are asking for a 1% increase that translates into \$300,000 more for the library, you don't want anyone representing you saying you want \$1,000,000. Discrepancies and inconsistencies in the campaign will undermine your credibility and you definitely don't want that!

Message

The message should be the foundation for your campaign. It should directly address what you're asking for and why it matters. If you are asking for money to support a new addition, for example, the message might be crafted regarding the dynamic environment in which libraries now operate and how new technologies and patron expectations are rendering the current amount of space insufficient. What would a new addition provide? More computer access, community space, "Maker Spaces," programming, quiet Wi-Fi spaces for those who are bringing in their own devices? And why is this important? Do others in the community offer this freely to the community? What would be the consequence of not having this additional space? These are all questions to ask and answer enabling you to distill these answers into a meaningful and clear statement(s) about the value and criticality of a high functioning library.

Similarly, if you are seeking a budget increase or working to stave off an announced budget cut, you must ask what these cuts will mean for not only the services you offer, but especially to your community members. Again, will the reductions result in shorter hours and if so, what will that mean for users? Will you have to eliminate access to technology and what are the consequences of this? Think about the overarching value of the library – especially in the digital era – and work that value proposition into your message.

The message will guide you as you make the case for your library. It will inform your talking points (see below) and even help you develop the slogan with which your campaign will be identified. As always, the message should be focused not on what you do but rather on:

- ✓ why what you do matters.
- ✓ how your services are unique.
- ✓ how the community is enriched by your services.

Use the space provided on the next page to record the message for your campaign.

Our message is:

Slogan

If you look at the examples at www.ala.org/united/powerguide, you will find that many campaigns have a brief one sentence or less “tag line” that immediately identifies the campaign. A brainstorming session of the leadership group should help you develop a powerful and persuasive tag line. As you know, this is very common in commercial advertising campaigns, and there’s a reason for it – it can encapsulate the key “thing” about the product and it becomes clearly identifiable with the product. Consider “It’s the real thing,” “We bring good things to life,” “Not just tough, built Ford tough,” and “You are now free to move about the country.” These slogans are not only quickly relatable to the product; they also imbed a reason for choosing them. This is what your slogan should do as well.

Consider what you’re asking for and why it matters and see if you can shape that into a powerful slogan that can be used on all your campaign materials. Depending on your resources, you can combine this slogan with a logo that will be used in all your correspondence and materials.

Our slogan is:

Talking Points

Libraries have powerful messages for helping the community and especially library funders understand the enormous value and importance of libraries. In setting up talking points, it’s important to share not what we do, necessarily, but why what we do matters. The talking points should be powerful, imply if not outright state the return on investment that comes from healthy budgets, and easily repeatable. These talking points will keep everyone on message and if repeated over and over in your various strategies, will really gain traction within the community.

Here are some areas where we can show the value of libraries to the community.

- Literacy
 - Early childhood
 - Teens – summer reading
 - Adult
 - English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)
 - Other: _____

- Citizen Development and Participation
 - Government information – local, state, national
 - Reference services
 - Referral services to other agencies
 - Other: _____

- Business Development – Economic Development
 - Incubator space for start-ups
 - Business resources
 - Entrepreneurial support
 - Other: _____

- Workforce Development
 - Practice test resources
 - Online access for job search – including email address set up
 - Resume assistance and support materials
 - Interviewing support materials
 - Other: _____

- Community Value Improvement (homes and neighborhoods)
 - Curb appeal
 - Visible investment in community enrichment
 - Home values increase with proximity to libraries
 - Other: _____

- Lifelong Learning
 - Computer literacy for all ages
 - Cultural heritage – all ethnicities
 - Local history
 - Leisure reading
 - Self guided studies in all areas
 - Other: _____

Based on areas of service areas above, develop a minimum of 10 talking points below and continued on the next page. See “Return on Investment Statements” in appendix A at the end of this workbook for examples.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

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11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

Determining Strategies

This is actually the fun part! You have a message to get across and you have people to persuade. Whether you are trying to generate grassroots support to pressure funders, working to influence the funders themselves, or getting a majority to vote yes, your strategies should be designed to be compelling, informative, and ubiquitous. You must try to reach as many people as you can in as many different ways as you can. This will include old-fashioned strategies such as calling people, writing letters to the editor, putting out yard signs, sending letters and postcards to funders, and launching a petition drive.

In today's world, there are additional ways to reach even more people than was ever possible before. Using tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest (for posting campaign buttons and signs), email, YouTube, websites, and other digital communication will serve you well. This technology has the ability to go viral, which will help ensure that everyone in your community can get the word about what you are asking for and why.

If your library has done an excellent job in promoting the value of the library to the community, you will be ahead of the game – you'll have to spend less time educating people about why the library is an essential community service. If you haven't had such a promotional campaign, it will be important to try to incorporate the message of your value to the community into your campaign messaging. In either case, however, it is wise not to assume that everyone in your community understands why today's library is still important (more so!) in the digital age.

In order to reach and influence as many people as you possibly can, you should develop as many strategies as you can based on your capacity and people-power to carry them out. Following is a list of typical strategies that you may choose to develop, but don't be limited by them. You may think of even more clever and persuasive tactics. Also, see www.ala.org/united/powerguide for sample ideas from other campaigns across the country.

- Flyers
- Yard signs
- Buttons
- Letters to the editor
- Meeting with newspaper editorial board
- Radio and television Public Service Announcements (PSA)
- Newspaper advertisements
- Petitions
- Postcards
- Speakers bureau
- Phone bank
- Each one reach 10 or 50!
- Web presence
- Email campaign
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Pinterest
- Other:
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -

Forming Committees

To make the accomplishment of the strategies efficient and achievable, you may choose to break them down into over-arching areas such as:

- Social Media Committee
 - YouTube videos
 - Email blasts
 - Pinterest postings
 - Website announcements, buttons, links, etc.
 - Twitter
 - Facebook
 - Other _____

- Personal Approach Committee
 - Engaging titular campaign chair (VIP)
 - Speakers bureau
 - Meeting with local newspaper's editorial board
 - Petitions
 - Phone bank
 - "Each one reach one" (or more!) – where all involved in the campaign commit to personally reaching out friends, relatives, work-mates, to ask them to support the campaign.
 - Other _____

- Traditional / Print Committee
 - Flyers
 - Yard signs
 - Buttons
 - Letters to the editor
 - Postcards
 - Other _____

Role of the Committee Chair

Each of the areas above should comprise separate committees to accomplish the tasks you've decided to employ. A reliable person should be asked to chair each of the committees you've developed. This person will have to commit for the duration of the campaign. He or she will not have to launch each strategy by him/herself, but rather engage the appropriate number of people needed to accomplish each task assigned to the committee.

The committee chair for each area should be required to assign duties, provide the budget necessary to accomplish the tasks from the campaign's financial resources, establish deadlines for completion of each task, and report on a regular basis back to the leadership team.

Prior to the final launching of each task, the committee chair should review the product (be it a flyer, poster, yard sign, YouTube video, initial tweets, e.g.) to ensure that they are in keeping with the campaigns "message." Anything that is at all questionable should be sent (via email, e.g.) to the Leadership Team for their approval or modification.

A small task force should be appointed for each strategy. This is a great area in which to expand your volunteers and campaign supporters. While a potential volunteer may not have the time to serve on the Leadership Team, he or she may well be able to join a task force with the singular assignment to design, print, and distribute postcards for the campaign, for example.

Each task force should be provided with both the expectations for accomplishment and a deadline for completion.

Each committee chair should be extremely clear about the goal of the campaign. He or she must know the campaign's slogan and be familiar with and have access to the talking points that have been developed for the campaign. In addition, he or she should know about the quotes database (see Appendix B) to use in completing tasks as is practicable. The slogan and talking points will ensure that no matter how many people are involved in the campaign, everyone is on the same page and sending out the same message! The committee chair should also be assigned a budget to accomplish the tasks assigned.

Breaking It Down

Assuming you will be using the committee structure suggested above, the following is an implementation design for each area. By using many people for simple tasks that have specific time tables for completion, each can be easily and efficiently accomplished.

Social Media Committee

Website Development

All libraries have websites and many Friends groups do as well. Websites can be a great place to provide information about your campaign, put out your campaign message and slogan, and let visitors know exactly what they can do to help further your cause. Some libraries will be a direct city or county department and as such their websites local government property. It may be that campaigning for the library will not be possible on the library's website.

That's where Friends of the library come in. Friends, especially those that are a separate 501(c)3 entity, have full leeway to educate visitors about the campaign and even to ask them to vote yes or call decision makers. If the Friends' site is part of the library's site, now might be the time to either move it into a separate space (there will be a small charge to acquire your own URL) or create a separate campaign-only website. Someone who is used to working on websites will be

ideal for helping the campaign. Be sure that the front face of the website is clear about the campaign and in what you are asking of those visiting the site. See Appendix D for helpful information about advocacy campaign websites.

- Person(s) responsible:
- He or she reports to:
- Deadline for review:
- Deadline for launch:

Email Blasts

While letter writing campaigns are still being used – especially locally – the email blast has the potential of many, many more signing on. And that’s key. In order to be effective, emails sent to decision makers must be plentiful and they must remain on message. The best way for this to happen is to create a template for supporters that includes the message and a place for the supporter to enter his or her own comments and then the email is automatically sent to decision makers.

If you are working to generate votes, then you will want to craft a single message to voters telling them what the library is asking for and why it is so important. Be sure to let them know the day / time of the vote and give them a phone number to call for more information (this might be to a member on the Leadership Team or to a designated member of the library staff).

- Person(s) responsible:
- He or she reports to:
- Deadline for review:
- Deadline for launch:
- Frequency of blasts:

E-Petitions

These drives can be effective if (and only if) you are able to get a significant number of supporters to sign on. You want to ensure the petition drive goes viral and then ends up with the budget decision maker(s) who should see the high level of support. For example, if you are trying to convince the city manager, mayor, or council to approve a budget increase, the signed e-petition should arrive in their inboxes at least 2-3 weeks prior to their initial work on the budget. If this is a grassroots campaign to influence the vote, the e-petitions can be posted on Facebook, the campaign’s website (or Friends, or library’s if allowed), and the numbers tweeted out again, about 2-3 weeks prior to the vote.

- Person responsible for creating petition:
- Person(s) responsible for circulating petition:
- Person(s) responsible for sending the petitions to decision makers:
- Deadline for developing and launching petitions:
- Deadline for decision makers to receive the petitions:

YouTube Videos

Some YouTube videos have had the great luck of going viral; maybe yours can, too! At least a couple of YouTube videos highlighting the library and its quest for a better budget or a new bond issue can be a great tool for widely distributing your message. New to YouTube? No worries. It's a lot easier than you might imagine – that's why there are millions of videos out there. You might want to get a group of teens or young adults together to create a couple that are fun, creative and yet effective. Boring won't cut it on YouTube. The good news is that all it really takes (minimally) is a phone with video capabilities, a fun script/idea, and an upload to YouTube. Even better, videos can be created with a special camera and perhaps a tripod for the "talking head" portion. Once the tapes are uploaded, your team will want to use every avenue of marketing open to them to ensure that they are watched. Email chains, anyone?

- Person(s) responsible for video creation:
- He or she reports to:
- Deadline for review:
- Deadline for launch:
- Person responsible for promotion:
- Deadline to begin promotion:

Pinterest

Relatively new, Pinterest is a social media network that gives people a place to post their pictures, favorite recipes, or anything they find interesting and think others will, too. Acting as a digital bulletin board, posters can not only "pin" their own things, but re-pin others that have been posted. This network will allow you to pin visual items from your campaign such as your slogan, buttons, flyers, or even quotes about the importance of libraries – and yours in particular.

- Person(s) responsible:
- He or she reports to:

- Deadline for review:
- Deadline for launch:

Facebook

If the library or Friends group doesn't already have a Facebook page, now is the time to create one – and it doesn't have to cost you anything but time. Once set up, you can invite as many people as possible to “like” your page and the task force working on this can ensure that information stays frequent and up-to-date. Every time you post something on Facebook, the post will automatically go to your Facebook fans! See Appendix D for information on setting up a Facebook account.

- Person(s) responsible:
- He or she reports to:
- Deadline for review of types and content:
- Deadline for launch:
- Frequency:

Twitter

Using Twitter will give your campaign a chance to repeatedly tweet about your campaign's progress, any new quotes from sources such as president of the trustees or newspaper editor, and information about what supporters can do to help. See Appendix D for information on setting up a Twitter feed.

- Person(s) responsible:
- He or she reports to:
- Deadline for review of types and content:
- Deadline for launch:
- Frequency:

Personal Approach Committee

Each one, reach 10 (or more!)

This is a simple and effective way for your campaign to get the traction it needs quickly. Every single person who volunteers to help with your campaign should be given a copy of your campaign's slogan, the main message of your campaign, and the campaign's talking points.

These can be provided on a simple flyer and should include lines numbered 1-10 (or more) for recording names and contact information of those whom the campaign volunteers have contacted. The flyers should then be turned over to the Leadership Team to add to the database of supporters – this will be especially important for last minute emails and phone calls right before action needs to be taken.

Each volunteer should be asked to reach out to at least 10 or more family members or friends letting them know about the campaign, asking for their support (be specific), and asking for their contact information – especially email. A date should be set (approximately six weeks prior to the culmination of the campaign would be good) for all the flyers to be collected. The contact information on the flyers can be used for e-petitions, to send out “like” requests for Facebook, and for all general email blasts. You can also use these lists to recruit more volunteers!

- Person to design flyer:
- Deadline for flyer:
- Person(s) to distribute flyers:
- Deadline for flyer distribution:
- Person(s) to collect flyers:
- Deadline for collection of flyers:

Phone Bank

This may seem like a less attractive strategy because it seems no one likes to give or receive “cold calls.” However, it remains an important and effective strategy for political campaigns and what you have to sell – the library! – will likely to be seen as a lot more palatable than politicians.

If you choose this strategy, you will have several tasks to accomplish before you recruit volunteers and launch this strategy. These include securing phone lists and developing a script for volunteers. The phone script should be based on the goal and the talking points. The script should be friendly and very short. Most important, it should specifically let the person you reach know what you’d like him or her to do. This can include the following:

- Vote yes
- Call the mayor (have the number ready)
- Talk to friends and neighbors
- Post something on their Facebook page or tweet about it
- Place a sign in their yard
- Circulate flyers in their neighborhood

Whatever you are asking them to do, be sure that telephone volunteers have reporting sheets that include the recipient’s phone number and what they are willing to do. Tasks that need volunteers should be included in the script. The tasks can include all of those listed on page 11. These

sheets should go back to the committee chair who will ensure that there is follow through regarding the supporters' willingness to engage and how they will engage. The committee chair can do this him or herself or assign follow through to another volunteer who can be counted on.

- Person to secure phone lists:
- Person to write script:
- Person script writer reports to for review:
- Persons to call for volunteers:
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
- Deadline for beginning calls:
- Deadline for completing calls:
- Deadline for reporting sheets be collected:
- Person to collect reporting sheets:
- Persons to call those who agreed to volunteer:
 -
 -
 -
 -
- Deadline for calling volunteers:

Meeting with the Local Newspaper's Editorial Board

Meeting with your local newspaper's editorial board may be a task for several members of the leadership team, but can be done by anyone who is well versed with the campaign, its goals, why it's important (talking points), what it will accomplish for the library, what your timeframe will be for the campaign, and what your various strategies will be. The people who request an appointment with the editorial board should also be comfortable asking for the newspapers support of your efforts – perhaps reminding them that you have the goal of literacy, lifelong learning and the importance of an informed citizenry in common. It probably won't hurt to let them know that your campaign intends to take ad space in the paper promoting the library as one of the strategies if that is the case.

- Persons to make an appointment and meet with the editorial board:
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
- Deadline to meet with the editorial board:

Speakers Bureau

This bureau should include a number of library supporters who are willing to give one or more talks to civic organizations, clubs, other nonprofit organizations, and affinity groups (such as literacy organizations, educational organizations, business development groups, realtors, etc.). Each person willing to be on the speakers bureau should use the established talking points, be assigned an organization(s) with whom to speak, and be charged with setting up the engagement within the campaign’s time frame. Good prospects for this bureau are active members of the friends, trustees, library administrators (if they are not “at will” employees and prohibited from doing so), loyal patrons – including teachers, homeschool parents, regular meeting room users, patrons who are also active in the groups/clubs you wish to address.

- Persons to approach for speakers bureau:
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
- Persons to make requests and give brief training/instructions to potential speakers:
 -
 -
 -
 -
- Deadline for lining up speakers:
- Deadline for all presentations to be made:

Petition Drive

An old-fashioned petition drive can have great impact because it is tangible. If you get a large number of signatures, you will have a large batch of paper to deliver to the decision makers. It is always best to make the delivery of the petitions to the decision makers a public event – get on the agenda of the city council, for example, and be sure to notify the press.

The petition statement should be kept simple – something like “I support a 3% increase to the Anycity Public Library in 2014” will suffice. Once the statement is determined, hundreds of copies should be made with signature lines below the statement that includes the signer and their address. The only ones to sign should be residents of the library’s service jurisdiction.

This task force could decide to do a comprehensive one-day signing campaign or a multi-day strategy – perhaps deciding to gather signatures for four Saturdays within the campaign’s timeframe. The task force will need to recruit sufficient volunteers to stand outside each library branch, at various points downtown, at the local mall, at movie theaters, in the park, wherever people gather. There should be a pre-established goal for how many signatures each volunteer should try to obtain. Again, this strategy will backfire if it looks like there is little support for the campaign’s goals.

Note: some towns, cities, and counties have polling restrictions for government sites. It might be possible that libraries are included in these restrictions. Be sure to know where you can recruit petition signatures without violating any ordinances.

- Date(s) to engage in petition drive:
- Number of persons needed for each day:
- Person to develop and make multiple copies of the petition:
- Persons responsible for recruiting volunteers:
 -
 -
 -
 -
- Persons to be asked to help with the drive (include trustees, friends, patrons, and their family members):
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -

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-
- Public presentation of the petitions will be arranged by:
- Media will be contacted about the presentation by:
- Deadline for presenting the petition:

Traditional / Print Committee

Letters to the Editor

You have the power of the press when you use your local newspaper to write letters to the editor. You will want to sign up as many people as possible for this job and you'll want to include as many community VIPs as possible to write letters. Certainly the president of the board of trustees should write one (or an op-ed if the local paper will allow it).

All those asked to write letters to the editor should be given a list of talking points along with the campaign message and slogan. Then each letter writer should be encouraged to use their own stories to make the point about why the library is so important and still essential in the digital age. The more diversity you have in the letter writers and stories, the more compelling they'll all be.

Some types you might want to include are senior citizens, new parents, teenagers, teachers, business people, realtors, and entrepreneurs for example. Be sure, as well, that your letter writers reflect the ethnic, economic, and age diversity of your community.

Most newspapers will not publish all the letters they receive on the same topic but that shouldn't stop you from lining up as many volunteers as possible for this job and work to spread them out over the course of the active campaign. The more letters that come in, the more the paper will print and the more likely it will be that the paper itself will come on board with their endorsement.

- Persons to line up letter writers:
 -
 -
 -
 -
- Deadline for securing letter writers:
- Persons to distribute talking points and instructions:
 -

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-
-
- Deadline for distributing talking points and instructions:
- Persons to follow up with letter writers:
 -
 -
 -
 -
- Deadline for following up with letter writers:

Flyers

These are easy and inexpensive ways to get your campaign's message out. As you look at examples from other library campaigns – see www.ala.org/united/powerguide – you will get some good ideas about what is attractive and powerful. Flyers can include the information about the campaign, what supporters can do to help, and why it is important. Flyers are a good place to include library quotes (see www.libraryquotes.org).

Once you have developed the flyers, be sure to distribute them everywhere you can think of like grocery store bulletin boards, doctors' offices, supportive businesses, civic organizations, and at the library itself if permitted.

- Person to develop flyer:
- Deadline to develop flyer:
- Person to edit/approve flyer:
- Deadline for final flyer approval:
- Suggested places for flyers:
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
- Person(s) to distribute the flyers:

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- Deadline for flyer distribution:

Yard Signs

These will be a little more expensive to produce, but worth it for a big campaign. Since rarely used for libraries, they are bound to attract attention and have impact. Because you will want to be sure you reach those in cars speeding by, you will have to make your yard sign message brief but comprehensive. If you are looking for a “yes” vote – it can be as easy as “VOTE YES for the LIBRARY on April 15!” If you are looking for a groundswell of supporters to make calls to the mayor, the yard sign might say “Call the Mayor at 555-5555 and tell him you support full funding for the LIBRARY!”

Hopefully, everyone working on your campaign will be willing to put up a yard sign and volunteers will place them in public spaces such as road medians and public corners. If you are limited in the number you are able to make and place, be sure that you cover all geographic/demographic areas in your community.

- Person to design yard sign:
- Deadline for design:
- Person to edit/approve design:
- Deadline for approval:
- Person responsible for printing of yard signs:
- Deadline for printing of signs:
- Person(s) responsible for distribution of signs:
- Deadline for distribution of signs:

Postcards

These are another tried and true method to get the grassroots to connect with their decision makers but like e-petitions (above) this will only work if you get hundreds or thousands sent – depending on the size of your community. In fact, if decision makers get only a few trickling in, this tactic will backfire leading those who fund you to believe that no one really cares about libraries.

Note: some towns, cities, and counties have polling restrictions for government sites. It might be possible that libraries are included in these restrictions. Be sure to know where you can hand out postcards without violating any ordinances.

If postcards are to be sent by residents to the community funders, the best way to ensure that a critical mass are sent is by pre-stamping and pre-addressing the postcards and to have residents jot a quick message (such as “I support my library – please fully fund it!”) and include their signature and return address. Once this is done, the person handing out the postcards should collect them on site and mail them him or herself.

If the postcards are going to a list of potential “yes” voters, a simple message should be included about what you are asking and why it matters along with information about where the recipient can go to vote.

In either case, the postcards should include the campaign slogan so that those receiving them will see at a glance that this is a pro-library message.

- Person responsible for postcard design:
- Deadline for design:
- Person responsible for edit/approval:
- Deadline for approval:
- Person responsible for getting postcards printed:
- Deadline for postcard printing:
- Persons responsible for addressing and stamping postcards:
 -
 -
 -
- Persons responsible for handing out postcards, collecting them, and mailing them:
 -
 -
 -
- Places to handout postcards:
 - Library outlets.
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 -
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- Deadline for handing out, collecting and mailing postcards:

Buttons

Everyone loves buttons, right? If your library already has a button maker you can use it to make buttons from blanks using a couple of volunteers. If you don't have access to a button maker, you will want to compare the price of one against the best price you can get from a button making company. You might consider this a worthwhile long term investment if you feel there will be other uses for the machine in the future.

- Person to investigate button maker:
- Deadline for reporting to leadership team, liaison and/or treasurer:
- Person to order button blanks:
- Deadline for ordering button blanks:
- Person to design button(s):
- Deadline for design:
- Person to edit/approve button design:
- Deadline for approval:
- Persons to make or order buttons:
- Persons to distribute buttons:
- Deadline for button distribution:

And, In the End . . .

If you win – congratulations! You deserve to feel great about “saving” an important educational, cultural, and civic agency – one that stands to serve every single member of your community. Go ahead, celebrate!

If you don't win or don't win everything you'd hoped for, at least know that your terrific efforts have, at least, educated the community about the important role your library plays in the digital age. It's ok to feel defeated, that's normal.

Win or lose, it will be important for the leadership team to come together one more time to document the highlights and low lights of the campaign. What worked well? What didn't? What would you do differently next time? It will be important to have this "post mortem" to give guidance and support for the next leadership team – and again, win or lose – there is likely to be a next time.

Now that you have worked on this campaign, you understand the importance of making the case for your library. This is an important skill and should be used for an ongoing and powerful public awareness campaign. Even if you won everything you wanted, the library cannot afford for you to rest on your laurels. If you didn't win – this time – a powerful public awareness campaign will help you win next time!

Appendix A

Return on Investment Sample Statements and Quotes

The hyperlinks below are available with a single click from www.ala.org/united/powerguide.

- Studies show categorically that children who are read to prior to kindergarten enter school ready to learn far more than children who don't have a book rich environment. Our library is the only organization in town [city, county, region] that offers thousands of books for preschoolers, storytimes, and resources for parents that will help them help their children succeed and that is free and open to any member of our community.

Our library is a real bargain compared to the cost of failure to succeed in school.

- In low-income neighborhoods, children start kindergarten 60% behind their peers from affluent communities, leaving them woefully unprepared. (Jump Start, "Early Childhood Education Crises" at <http://www.jstart.org/our-work/americas-early-education-crisis>)

Our library helps bridge the gap between affluent and low income children's achievement every single day.

- Studies show that students who do not read during the summer need an average of a full month remediation when school starts in September. ("What to Look for in a Summer Reading Program." GreatSchools at <http://docs.gatesfoundation.org/learning/documents/opportunityforall.pdf>)

Our library has a rich, wonderful, and fun collection of reading materials for all ages and we proudly host a summer reading program every year that is enjoyed by over _____ of our students.

Our library is a real bargain compared to a full month of educational remediation for every student in September – because even if only a few students per class need remediation – they all get it.

- After school ends each day, our library becomes one of the busiest places in town! Not only are our students off the streets and in a productive and safe environment, they are engaging with adults and resources that help them with homework assignments and provide them with a place for intellectual discovery.

Our library is a critical component of the educational network ensuring student success in our city.

- Few community services enjoy the type of public support that is generally given to public libraries. In a recent national survey conducted by Public Agenda, people were more likely to rate library service as excellent or good than the service they receive from their local police

department, public schools or their local media (“Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development,” Urban Libraries Council report http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/1001075_stronger_cities.pdf).

Our library is one of the most popular public services in town.

- The digital divide may have become narrower, but it has become much deeper for those left behind as commercial, medical, legal, and government information is increasingly available online only.

Our library provides an essential link for those without internet access and the need to connect through our free computer labs and free Wi-Fi access.

- Every day job seekers come into our library to use our computers and internet access. Today most jobs are only posted online and only receive online applications.

Our library is turning unemployed citizens into tax-paying citizens every day!

- ***Libraries play an essential, non-partisan role in providing the information that allows citizens to make informed decisions. Libraries make a difference. Libraries transform lives.*** – Stephen Abrams in *The Value of Libraries: Impact, Normative Data, & Influencing Funders*, at

http://www.imakenews.com/sirsi/e_article000396335.cfm?x=b4tcm1g,b2rpmkgk,w

- ***“From providing a place to do homework to applying to college or looking for financial aid, library online services are a key part of the educational system in our country.”*** From *Opportunity for All: How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Public Libraries*. Institute of Museum and Library Services at <http://tascha.washington.edu/usimpact>
- A study from the Institute of Education (IOE) states that, “Perhaps surprisingly, reading for pleasure was found to be more important for children’s cognitive development between ages 10 and 16 than their parents’ level of education. The combined effect on children’s progress of reading books often, going to the library regularly and reading newspapers at 16 was four times greater than the advantage children gained from having a parent with a degree.” See <http://www.cls.ioe.ac.uk/news.aspx?itemid=2740&itemTitle=Reading+for+pleasure+puts+children+ahead+in+the+classroom%2C+study+finds&sitesectionid=27>.

Libraries are the very best resources for supporting pleasure reading and thereby helping to ensure academic success.

Appendix B

Other Tools for Promoting Your Library's Value

All of these hyperlinks are available with a single click from www.ala.org/united/powerguide.

United for Libraries' collection of advocacy campaign materials from across the country at <http://www.ala.org/united/powerguide>.

Return on investment calculator at <http://www.ilovelibraries.org/getinformed/getinvolved/calculator>.

Quotes on the importance of libraries at <http://www.libraryquotes.org>.

Return on investment results from states around the country at <http://www.ala.org/research/librariesmatter/taxonomy/term/129>.

Urban Libraries Council's commissioned study on libraries and economic development of the communities they serve at http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/1001075_stronger_cities.pdf.

Rural Research Report: Public Libraries and Community Economic Development, Partnering for Results at http://www.iira.org/pubs/publications/IIRA_RRR_688.pdf.

Pew Internet and American Life Project at <http://www.pewinternet.org/Topics/Activities-and-Pursuits/Libraries.aspx>.

Toward Equality of Access: The Role of Public Libraries in Addressing the Digital Divide at <http://www.ims.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/Equality.pdf>.

Read the accompanying press release for the above study from the US Chamber of Commerce at <http://www.uschamber.com/press/releases/2004/february/chamber-joins-gates-foundation-close-digital-divide>.

Urban Libraries Report: Partners for the Future: Public Libraries and Local Governments Creating Sustainable Communities at http://www.urbanlibraries.org/filebin/pdfs/Sustainability_Report_2010.pdf.

School Library Journal: Summer Reading Programs Boost Achievement, Study Says at <http://www.slj.com/2010/11/students/summer-reading-programs-boost-student-achievement-study-says/>.

Appendix C

Additional Resources

Books and Publications

Grassroots Library Advocacy by Lauren Comito, Alique Geraci and Christian Zabriskie. ALA Editions, 2012.

<http://www.alastore.ala.org/detail.aspx?ID=3433>

Even More Great Ideas for Libraries and Friends by Sally Gardner Reed and Beth Nawalinski, ALA Neal-Schuman, 2008.

<http://www.alastore.ala.org/detail.aspx?ID=10435>

Available to United for Libraries members at a discount; visit

http://www.ala.org/united/products_services/publications.

Say it with Data: A Concise Guide to Making Your Case and Getting Results by Priscille Dando. ALA Editions, 2013.

<http://www.alastore.ala.org/detail.aspx?ID=4012>

Making Our Voices Heard: Citizens Speak Out for Libraries by Sally Gardner Reed and Beth Nawalinski. Friends of Libraries USA, 2004.

Available at no cost to United for Libraries members; visit

http://www.ala.org/united/products_services/publications for more information.

Online Resources

Advocacy University

Information, courses, and tools from ALA to help library advocates make the case at the local level.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/advocacyuniversity>

Advocacy Clearinghouse

More advocacy tools and resources from ALA.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/advocacyuniversity/advclearinghouse>

Library Advocacy Webinars

Free webinars on getting decision makers into the library, reaching policymakers, using the media, social media, and more.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/advocacyuniversity/onlinecourses>

Advocacy Campaigns: Legal Limits on Spending for Non-Profits

United for Libraries Fact Sheet at

<http://www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org.united/files/content/friends/factsheets/unitedff23.pdf>

Appendix D

Websites, Facebook, and Twitter

Websites, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites can be very effective in rallying large groups with relatively minimal effort. Several local, citywide, and statewide library advocacy campaigns have successfully used websites, Facebook, and Twitter to get out their messages.

Websites

A specific website making the case for your cause enables your group to have a centralized place on the web for your efforts. The pages below include features such as:

1. Links to donate to the cause.
2. Forms to request a yard sign.
3. Forms to sign up to volunteer.
4. Links to Facebook/Twitter pages.
5. Brochures.
6. Downloadable graphics.
7. Links to sign a petition.
8. Calendars of events.

Examples of campaign websites:

Vote for Dayton (Ohio) Metro Library
<http://www.votefordml.org>
created by Citizens for Good Libraries

Save NYC Libraries
<http://www.savenyclibraries.org>
created by Urban Librarians Unite (<http://urbanlibrariansunite.org>)

Save Ohio Libraries
<http://saveohiolibraries.com>

In a project that combined hard copy materials with technology, Urban Librarians Unite (www.urbanlibrariansunite.org) distributed more than 1,500 “Book Seeds” throughout New York City to raise awareness about the city’s proposed budget cuts for libraries. Donated books were marked with a “take me” sticker and a flyer that said “Libraries in NYC are facing a 32% budget cut. When libraries close, this could be your only access to free books.” The flyer featured a QR code that those who came across the books (in cafes and other public places) could scan using their smart phone to bring up a link to the online petition to protest the budget cuts. A QR code is a two-dimensional code that can be read by a smartphone app to provide easy access to information, such as a website or phone number.

Twitter

Unlike Facebook, you do not need to have a personal Twitter account to create a Twitter account for your group or campaign. A Twitter account is a great way to provide non-intrusive, real-time updates on your campaign. Twitter's guide for creating and using an account can be found at:

<http://support.twitter.com/groups/50-welcome-to-twitter#>

Below are examples of some advocacy campaigns that successfully used Twitter feeds.
Successful tweets:

1. Retweet messages from supporters.
2. Link to news stories.
3. Encourage followers to tweet the representatives in support of the library.
4. Use hashtags (#savenjlibraries, #savetroylibrary, #savelapl).
5. Engage with followers by thanking them for their support.

Examples of Twitter accounts:

Save Troy (Mich.) Library
<http://twitter.com/SaveTroy>

Save Nwk (Newark, N.J.) Libraries
http://twitter.com/I_Love_NPL

savethelibrary (for Los Angeles Public Libraries)
<http://www.twitter.com/savethelibrary>

In 2013, the Friends of the Phoenix (Ariz.) Public Library made the case for increased funding for essential library services in the city's budget. As part of their campaign, they used the online form builder WuFoo (<http://www.wufoo.com>) to craft a message to city council, then sent the link out to their email subscribers so they could add their own comments and submit it. (The form can be found at <http://plfriends.wufoo.com/forms/i-support-our-libraries-the-201314-trial-budget>.) They also embedded a link to the form on the group's Facebook page, and made it "tweet itself" on Twitter. The hashtag #PhoenixBudget was used by the city's mayor for the budget conversation on Twitter. So each time someone submitted the form, WuFoo automatically tweeted the following message from the group's Twitter handle:

"#PhoenixBudget: Jane Doe is #160 to support #Phx Public Libraries. Do you?
<http://bit.ly/YiKD6e>"

Facebook

In order to build a Facebook page for your advocacy campaign or group, you must have a personal Facebook account. It's best to have someone who already has a personal Facebook

account to manage your group's page as he/she will already be familiar with using Facebook, However, if you need to create a page and don't currently have a personal account, Facebook can walk you through the process:

<http://www.facebook.com/help/>

Facebook's Pages site details the steps necessary to create a page:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/create>

There are several options for creating a page. Your page can be a "local business or place" (library), "company, organization or institution" (nonprofit), or "cause or community." What you are working toward and what you plan to do with the page will determine what your library/group chooses. The examples of pages featured below indicate under what category the pages were created.

Facebook also provides many resources for nonprofits:

<http://www.facebook.com/nonprofits>

including a very helpful, detailed guide for best practices for nonprofits and causes:

<http://fb-public.box.com/s/8dxyv66biabfnesvr3jj>

Below are some examples of advocacy campaigns that utilized Facebook pages, and their likes (as of May 2013). Each campaign uses different strategies, but in general successful pages:

1. Have a title that is a call to action (i.e., Save the Library, Vote Yes for the Library, etc.).
2. Provide clear instructions about how to take action and speak out for the library (when, what to say, who to contact, what events/rallies to attend, etc.).
3. Give timely updates on the campaign.
4. Engage with fans (through comments, polls, calls for volunteers, etc.).
5. Post pictures, graphics, etc. (Images are the most commonly shared posts.)
6. Post frequently.
7. Thank supporters and encourage them to spread the word about the campaign.

Examples of Facebook campaign pages:

Save the Los Angeles (Calif.) Public Library! (nonprofit organization)

<http://www.facebook.com/savethelibrary>

15,926 likes

Yes for Spokane (Wash.) Libraries (community)

<http://www.facebook.com/YesforSpokaneLibraries>

601 likes

Protect Dayton (Ohio) Metro Library (library)

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Protect-Dayton-Metro-Library/243947310695>

1,860 likes

Save California Public Library and Literacy Funding (cause)

http://www.facebook.com/SaveCALibs?hc_location=stream

1,058 likes

Don't close the Pomona (Calif.) Library! (community)

<http://www.facebook.com/dontclosethepomonalibrary>

2,210 likes

Vote YES on Measure B! Save Fresno (Calif.) Libraries (community)

<http://www.facebook.com/MeasureB>

1,174 likes

In 2012, Multnomah County (Ore.) Library Levy Campaign Committee and consulting firm Winning Mark created and ran a “place-based” advocacy campaign to pass a library-preservation ballot measure. For information on the campaign, which incorporated social media tools such as Facebook, Foursquare, and Instagram, visit <http://www.slideshare.net/Debask/libraries-yes-placebased-advocacy-campaign>.