

Library Marketing: Education & Practice

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Abstract

Marketing and outreach services are an increasingly important part of library services. The main objective of this research project is to study library marketing and outreach, both in education and in practice, and to propose changes to the field at large and in the sub-field of library marketing to ensure a more sustainable future for library and information science institutions. The key questions of this project are: what is the demographic landscape of public library marketers; what is the ideal educational and professional background for public library marketers; what processes and methods are used by public library marketers; and what institutional setup, framework, and support helps facilitate successful library marketing. For the purposes of this project, successful library marketing is defined as library marketing activities performed by library professionals who: (1) engage their patron base in an active dialogue; (2) demonstrate the value and importance of their library to their community & stakeholders; and (3) use innovative and creative methods for promotion and outreach.

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1. Introduction

Libraries are increasingly expected to prove their value and worth to their communities and stakeholders. One key component to turning passive positive regard into active championing of libraries is to engage in an active marketing cycle wherein library professionals collaborate with their patron bases to find out how the library can serve their needs more fully. Librarians must create marketing plans that focus on more than just the promotion of events; they must engage in active dialogue with patrons to understand how the library can better serve their needs. However, despite its importance, library marketing is not an educational priority in the field of library and information science (LIS). And professionals who recognize the importance of library marketing practices are often stifled by a lack of financial resources, institutional support, and educational opportunities.

Marketing education within library and information science education institutions is not yet widespread; most classes offered are electives and few are offered regularly. Thus, many of the instructive and educational books, articles, tools, and resources about library marketing are written with the assumption that library professionals do not have marketing knowledge or skills (e.g. *The Accidental Library Marketer*, *Bite-Sized Marketing: Realistic Solutions for the Overworked Librarian*). There is also still an element of backlash towards marketing concepts in many areas of the field/profession; marketing is often thought of as being inappropriate in a public, non-profit setting (Dowd, 2013; LaGuardia, 2014). However, when librarians are exposed to marketing ideas, through experience or education, they are more likely to appreciate and value marketing activities and practices (Shontz, 2004, p. 71). Library marketing professionals inhabit a variety of roles within libraries and are responsible for a multitude of duties, yet their importance and value are often challenged. Thus, a study of the educational and professional

backgrounds of library marketing practitioners, as well as the methods and practices they regularly use and their places within their institutions is a necessary addition to the literature. For the purposes of this research project numerous library marketing resources and texts were consulted to establish a definition of “successful library marketing.” One of the problems that plague the sub-field of library marketing is a lack of coherent vocabulary and universally employed definitions. Successful library marketing, as defined by Bizzle (2015), Canzoneri (2015), Dempsey (2009), Giuliano (2009), Potter (2012), and Smallwood, Gubnitskaia, and Harrod (2012), and analyzed and summarized by the researcher, was determined to be: (1) active engagement with a patron base; (2) the effective demonstration of the value and importance of the library to the community and stakeholders; and (3) the use of innovative and creative methods for promotion and outreach. This research project includes: a study of library and information science program websites to determine the current state of marketing concepts within LIS education; an online survey of public library marketing professionals to better understand the landscape of library marketing professionals, their duties, and their institutions; and in-depth interviews with four public library marketing professionals to better understand the factors that contribute to library marketing success.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Library Marketing Education

Marketing is slowly becoming a more accepted and valued aspect of librarianship. Despite a moderate amount of backlash from those who are hesitant to embrace a more business-like model (Dowd, 2013; LaGuardia, 2014), efforts to increase awareness and knowledge of marketing techniques and practices are ever-present. Yet most of these efforts are retroactive in nature – they seek to fill a gap in LIS education with workshops, books, and training sessions for practicing LIS professionals. Glynn Harmon (2002) wrote a piece on “The Importance of Marketing in the Library & Information Science Curriculum” that traced the evolution of LIS education and expressed the need for more marketing-focused course offerings: “information educators presently have a long way to go before they can bridge the divides between institutional or technological approaches and clientele marketing approaches before they can lay claim to an authentic marketing orientation within their curricula” (p. 66). Mark Winston and Gretchen Ebeler Hazlin (2003) conducted a brief survey of LIS program course offerings in management and marketing. Their study focused on marketing as a “leadership competency” and found that while most schools offer a management course, some of which had a marketing component or unit, only 40% of schools surveyed offered a separate marketing course (p. 184). They found that while marketing had been identified by professionals and employers as a leadership competency,

the study of marketing is not a major area of focus in graduate LIS education [...]

Marketing and the related area of public relations do not appear to comprise a significant area of study either on their own, in stand-alone courses, or as components of management courses. (p. 185).

Sarah Jane Giuliano (2009) outlined the components of a library marketing course and advocated for core courses in marketing for LIS programs: “Despite the many benefits marketing can bring to libraries, many librarians fail to implement marketing strategies. One of the most significant obstacles is that most librarians graduate [from library school] without ever taking a course on marketing” (p. 1).

2.2 Library Marketing Professionals

While some studies have covered the topic of marketing in LIS education programs and many books, articles, and seminars/webinars have covered the practical aspects of library marketing activities and implementation, less has been written about library marketing professionals. Karen Okamoto and Mark Aaron Polger (2012) conducted a survey of marketing and outreach job advertisements in academic libraries in the United States from 2000 to 2010; they found that the number of job advertisements for marketing and outreach positions had grown by 500%, indicating the increasing importance and value of marketing positions and activities in libraries. A study by Timothy McClelland (2014) investigated marketing positions in public *and* academic libraries and found that 37% of job listings analyzed included marketing-related content, while only 11% of those listings also mentioned experience or training in the marketing field. Analyses and studies of library marketing professionals in the field have also been conducted, though mostly in reference to *academic* library marketers (Johnsrud, 2014; Adebonojo, Campbell, Ellis, 2009; Polger & Okamoto, 2013); they focus on the specific job duties and responsibilities of academic library marketing professionals. Thus, in an attempt to broaden the literature, this research project was focused on public library marketing professionals.

There are currently many continuing education and professional development opportunities available for public library marketers. The American Library Association, Public Library Association, and numerous state and local level library associations offer webinars and seminars (often at conferences) on marketing topics such as marketing plans, branding, and social media engagement. Professional associations also offer a number of toolkits and resources for demonstrating library value to administrators and constituents. A small number of groups devoted specifically to library marketer networking have formed (primarily online); examples include: the Library Communications Conference (which evolved from the Association of Library Communications and Outreach Professionals), the Library Marketing and Outreach Interest Group within the Association of College and Research Libraries, and Illinois Libraries Matter (a blog run by the Illinois Library Association Marketing Committee).

3. Methods

This research project was approved by the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board in February 2015.

3.1 Survey of LIS Program Offerings

A survey of marketing courses offered in library and information science programs in the United States and Canada was performed in the spring of 2015. The survey encompassed LIS graduate degree programs that are accredited by the American Library Association. Different branches of a single school that each offered MLIS programs were considered separately (e.g. Indiana University at Bloomington and Indiana University at Indianapolis). Where available, information on course offerings, descriptions, and content was gathered from school websites. If only some information was present (for example, a course description was listed in the online catalog but there was no information on the professor, when the course was last taught, and how often it is offered) then an effort was made to contact the relevant faculty member or administrative office via email. Variables considered for each school (when information was available) were: location; iSchool or not; presence of marketing course (with marketing in the title); in classroom vs. online format; semester the course was last offered; how often the course is typically offered; the regular professor for the course; the catalog description for the course; any required textbooks; the course content. Course syllabi were downloaded and analyzed when available.

3.2 Online Survey

An online survey was conducted in the spring of 2015 (see Appendix A for a copy of the online survey questions). The sampling for the online survey was targeted to experts – an

invitation to participate in the survey was posted to a variety of professional listservs (e.g. prtalk, which focuses on librarians who engage in promotional activities) and other online library marketing groups. Potential participants had up to one month to complete the survey, after which it was taken down. In an effort to increase response rates, participants were contacted multiple times (one initial email to each listserv or group and then one follow-up). Also, an incentive to participate was offered (a chance to win a \$30 Amazon gift card). No personal information was requested in the online survey; thus, participants remained anonymous. Voluntary consent for the online survey was obtained on the first page of the online survey. For simplicity and brevity, only responses from participants working in public libraries in the United States were analyzed. Participants were asked if they currently work in a public library in the United States and if they answered in the negative, they were redirected to a page thanking them for their interest.

3.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

In-depth interviews with four library marketing professionals were conducted in the spring of 2015 (see Appendix B for a copy of the interview protocol). The sampling for the interviews was purposive – the online survey included a question about interest in interview participation; those survey respondents who indicated interest in being interviewed were investigated for their potential as interviewees. Also, successful library marketers (e.g. winners of library marketing awards; librarians responsible for successful, widely-known campaigns) were contacted individually, via email, and asked to participate in the interviews. Potential interviewees were selected on the basis of their achievements in library marketing (e.g. John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award winners, successful marketing efforts featured in library and mainstream news, etc.). Each interviewee gave written and verbal consent to being recorded.

4. Results

4.1 LIS Education

All ALA-accredited LIS programs in the United States and Canada were surveyed; sixty program websites were searched for course catalogs, offerings, and content in the spring of 2015. Twenty-four of the sixty programs are iSchools. Table 1 presents the distribution of schools by geographic location and by iSchool designation.

Table 1. LIS Schools Examined in Spring 2015 (N=60)

	USA	Canada	Total
iSchool	21	3	24
Not iSchool	31	5	36
Total	52	8	60

Websites that did not have course descriptions or catalogs in English were translated using Google Chrome. Of the 60 schools examined, 28 (47%) had a marketing-specific course listed on their online catalog, current course offering schedule, or recent courses list. Courses primarily about another topic (e.g. management) with a unit on marketing were not considered, unlike the Winston and Hazlin (2003) survey. Table 2 illustrates the distribution of course offerings across iSchools and non-iSchools by how recently the course was offered, how often the course is offered, and whether the course is typically offered on campus or online.

Table 2. LIS Marketing Courses identified from school websites

	Marketing Course Offered (N=60)	Offered in Last Year (N=60)	Offered every year (N=60)	On-campus option (N=60)	Only online (N=60)
iSchool	14 (23%)	6 (10%)	5 (8%)	6 (10%)	5 (8%)
Not iSchool	14 (23%)	8 (13%)	8 (13%)	3 (5%)	7 (12%)
Total	28 (47%)	14 (23%)	13 (22%)	9 (15%)	12 (20%)

Fourteen schools (23% of all schools; 50% of schools with a listed marketing course) showed evidence of offering a marketing-specific course within the last year (Fall 2014, Spring 2015, or summer 2015 semesters). Thirteen schools (22% of all schools; 46% of schools with a listed marketing course) showed evidence of offering a marketing-specific course at least once every academic year (showed evidence of offering the course at least once a year for at least the last two years). Of those schools that offered marketing courses, 9 schools (15% of all schools; 32% of schools with a listed marketing course) clearly offered the option of taking the course on campus while 12 schools (20% of all schools; 43% of schools with a listed marketing course) clearly only offered the course online. iSchools, which accounted for 40% of the schools surveyed, comprised 50% of the schools with marketing courses. Non-iSchools, which accounted for 60% of the schools surveyed, comprised 50% of the schools with marketing courses.

4.2 Online Survey

The online survey received responses from 60 participants. Of those, 37 were from professionals who currently work in public libraries in the United States. All of the following results and percentages are from the data set of 37 US public library respondents. Table 3 presents the responses to question 1: What is the population size of your library’s service area?

Table 3. Library Service Area Population (N=37)

Under 10,000	0 (0%)
10,000-24,999	5 (13%)
25,000-49,999	6 (16%)
50,000-99,999	9 (24%)
100,000-249,999	7 (19%)
250,000-499,999	5 (14%)
500,000-999,999	1 (3%)
1,000,000 and over	4 (11%)

Over half of the respondents work in public libraries with service area populations between 25,000 and 249,999 people.

Respondents exhibited a variety of educational and professional backgrounds. Table 4 presents some of the responses to question 2: What is your educational background?

Table 4. Educational Background (N=37)

Bachelor's in Marketing	12 (32%)
Master's in LIS	16 (43%)
Bachelor's in Marketing and Master's in LIS	3 (8%)

Some respondents had an educational background in LIS: 43% had a Master’s in Library & Information Science. Others had a background in marketing: 32% had an undergraduate degree in marketing. A small portion (8%) had both a Bachelor’s in marketing and a Master’s in LIS; this combination of degrees is rare, but beneficial, as is discussed in some of the semi-structured interviews. All respondents had at least a Bachelor’s degree level of education. Table 5 represents the answer to question 3: Before your current position, did you have any professional work experience in libraries?

Table 5. Previous library experience (N=37)

Yes	18 (49.5%)
No	18 (49.5%)
Did not respond	1 (3%)

Responses were split in half regarding previous professional experience in libraries. Each answer could represent a variety of situations, such as a “yes” indicating a marketing professional working at a library for the first time *or* a library professional in their first position out of library school. Table 6 represents the answer to question 4: Before your current position, did you have any professional work experience in marketing and/or outreach outside of libraries?

Table 6. Previous non-library marketing experience (N=37)

Yes	27 (73%)
No	10 (27%)

Respondents were more likely to have previous experience in marketing, outside library settings (73%), than they were to have previous experience in libraries (49.5%).

Support for marketing ideas and initiatives varied. Table 7 represents the answer to the question: Does your library have funding specifically for marketing and/or outreach activities?

Table 7. Marketing-specific library funding (N=37)

Yes	31 (84%)
No	5 (13%)
Did not respond	1 (3%)

The majority of respondents worked in a library with funding specifically set aside for marketing and/or outreach activities. However, these resources did not always translate into marketing planning and strategies. Table 8 represents the answer to question 6: Does your library have a written marketing plan?

Table 8. Library has written marketing plan (N=37)

Yes	17 (46%)
No	20 (54%)

While 84% of respondents' libraries had marketing funding, less than half (46%) had a written marketing plan.

Respondents were very forthcoming with details about their marketing activities, time commitments, and assessment practices. Table 9 illustrates the percentage of the respondent's job that is devoted to marketing activities.

Table 9. Marketing as percentage of job duties (N=37)

1-20%	5 (13.5%)
21-40%	5 (13.5%)
41-60%	6 (16%)
61-80%	6 (16%)
81-100%	15 (41%)

Over half of the respondents (57%) devote the majority of their time to marketing activities.

Respondents were also asked to report the average number of hours per week they devote to marketing activities, as show in Table 10.

Table 10. Hours a week on marketing activities (N=37)

10 and under	7 (19%)
11-20	9 (24%)
21-30	7 (19%)
31-40	11 (30%)
Over 40	2 (5%)
Did not respond	1 (3%)

Not surprisingly over half (54%) of respondents spend over 20 hours a week conducting marketing activities. However, 45% of respondents spent less than 20 hours a week – many of these respondents were part of a marketing or social media “team” and contributed towards such efforts as a minor part of their position. Also, some do not hold full-time positions.

Librarians who engage in marketing activities are responsible for a variety of marketing duties, as illustrated in Table 11.

Table 11. Marketing projects & activities (N=37)

Social Media	24 (65%)
Posters/Flyers/Signage(incl. digital)/Giveaways	21 (57%)
Newsletter/mailings for patrons (print or email)	14 (38%)
Public/media/community relations	14 (38%)
Visits in community	12 (32%)
Press Releases	11 (30%)
Advertising	10 (27%)
Website Management	10 (27%)
Marketing Plans (incl. for specific events)	7 (19%)
Graphic design	7 (19%)
Brand management/support/standards	6 (16%)
Internal communication/training	5 (14%)
Marketing committee/group projects	4 (11%)
Fundraising	3 (8%)
Programming/program planning	3 (8%)
Partnerships w/other orgs	3 (8%)
Customer complaints/suggestions	2 (5%)
Communications Plan	2 (5%)
Advocacy	1 (3%)
Surveys	1 (3%)
Focus Groups	1 (3%)
Managing Library web presence	1 (3%)
Media Interviews	1 (3%)
Event management	1 (3%)
Displays/Bulletin Boards	1 (3%)
Cardholder Reengagement	1 (3%)
Research	1 (3%)

The two most frequent marketing activities were social media engagement (65%) and the production of marketing objects in the form of posters, flyers, brochures, handouts, signage, and giveaways (57%). Over 25% of respondents engaged in eight activities: social media (65%), production of marketing materials (57%), writing newsletters or other mailings (38%), engaging in public/media/community relations (38%), engaging in outreach activities outside the library (32%), writing press releases (30%), advertising (27%), and website management (27%).

Assessment of marketing activities involved a variety of different practices and metrics, as displayed in Table 12.

Table 12. Assessment & Metrics (N=37)

Program attendance	25 (68%)
Service Use (incl databases)/Circulation	13 (35%)
Social Media Analytics	10 (27%)
Surveys	8 (21%)
Visibility	6 (16%)
Media mentions	5 (14%)
Community feedback	5 (14%)
Asking patrons "how you heard"	4 (11%)
Engagement	4 (11%)
Software/ analytic tool	2 (5%)
Website analytics	2 (5%)
Focus Groups	1 (3%)
Advertising Value Equivalency (AVE)	1 (3%)
Staff Feedback	1 (3%)
Outcome-based evaluations	1 (3%)
Return on investment (ROI) analysis	1 (3%)

The three most common forms of assessment were: taking attendance at programs (68%), measuring the use of services (e.g. circulation statistics, database usage statistics, etc.) (35%), and social media analytics (27%). Multiple respondents expressed their desire to engage in more marketing assessment and/or that their institution's assessment practices were inadequate.

Lastly, respondents were asked about their use of the three strategies for successful library marketing: engaging patrons in an active dialogue, demonstrating the value and

importance of their institution to the community and stakeholders, and using innovative and creative methods for promotion and outreach. Table 13 illustrates the responses to these questions.

Table 13. Strategies for Successful Library Marketing (N=37)

	Yes	No	No Response
Engage patrons in active dialogue	19 (51%)	17 (46%)	1 (3%)
Demonstrate value and importance to community & stakeholders	31 (84%)	6 (16%)	0
Innovative and creative methods for promotion & outreach	28 (76%)	9 (24%)	0

For each category over half of the respondents indicated that, in their opinion, they use the strategies: 51% said that their library engages patrons in an active dialogue, 84% said that they demonstrate the value and importance of their library to their communities and stakeholders, and 76% said that their library uses innovative and creative methods for promotion and outreach.

4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

Four librarians who engage in marketing and outreach activities in public libraries in the United States were interviewed over the course of the spring of 2015. Most of the interviews lasted approximately an hour and interviewees were asked a variety of questions from the interview protocol in Appendix B. Some interviewees were survey respondents who expressed interest in being interviewed, while others were contacted separately by the researchers after being selected based on the criteria in the methods section. Their positions and job descriptions varied: Marketing Specialist, Graphic Designer, Outreach Librarian, and Head of Community Engagement. Most are part of a team or department of professionals devoted specifically to marketing, outreach, and/or community engagement. The interviewees also represent a variety of educational and professional backgrounds: Subject A has a Bachelors in Marketing, an MBA in Marketing Research, and a Masters in Library and Information Science; Subject B has a

Bachelors in Visual Communications; Subject C has a Bachelor's in English, a Master's in Urban Planning, and Master's in Library and Information Science; and Subject D has a Bachelor's in Telecommunications and a partially completed Certificate in Integrated Marketing. Both interviewees without a Master's in Library Science explained that it was something they had considered pursuing but did not feel that it would benefit their current position:

A while back before I started working for the library I contemplated whether or not it would be a good idea for me to have a Masters in Library and Information Sciences and I kind of approached it with the idea that I might want to pursue that as well as additional education. But I've since come to feel that it's not really important to my position as a designer. I thought it might do me a greater scope of understanding of what librarians think. But I work with them every day, I hear their stories, I don't really feel like I have to be sitting in a chair to appreciate some of the work that they do. If I need to know something from them about their job I can ask. But I don't really know if I need to spend the money on the degree. So I feel like I have the benefits of their experience right there handy to me without actually having to be a librarian myself. (Subject B, personal communication, April 6, 2015)

Unfortunately because I don't have my library degree that does change what some people think of the library, but primarily my job involves marketing and programming, which isn't necessarily what you learn when you go to library school. I looked at the possibility of getting my library degree but I'm not sure that it would benefit my position for what I'm doing. Because I'm not cataloging and I'm not at the reference desk. It's sort of a different aspect of the library. We

do all of our stuff in house and I'm proficient in Photoshop and In Design. I'd actually say I'm expert level in both of them. And now the way we market programs is all online, and digital, and on TV screens in the library, and being posted at the school on electronic e-boards. So that's not the kind of things you're learning in library school. So it's a very different set of skills that I have. Not to downplay that library degree because like I said I'm not sitting at a desk referencing materials like the librarians are so that's why I don't have those skills, I'm not really doing that. (Subject D, personal communication, April 20, 2015)

Subject B and Subject D felt comfortable in their ability to market the library and get any information they needed about library services they did not already know directly from their librarian coworkers. Subject A and Subject D had marketing education and expressed the need for specific marketing methods skills: "I already had background in writing surveys, which I don't know how many people in a library marketing position necessarily do, but with my MBA in marketing research, that's something I learned how to do" (Subject A, personal communication, April 6, 2015); "I went to school and took concentrated classes in marketing and telecommunications, so I have so much more knowledge in how to keep going with that, how to take the results and analyze them" (Subject D, personal communication). The one subject with both marketing and library degrees expressed the importance of having both:

Well I think they did try having a marketing person in my position before me. But he had no library knowledge at all. So he came at it from a vastly different background. So I think it's important to have both the education and the experience in both marketing and libraries [...] I think having both is definitely an asset for this position because I understand how a library works. It's not like you

couldn't gain that knowledge once you're in the position, but I already had some of it. I'm not sure how many people you're going to find with both degrees and experience in both. That's best if you can find it. (Subject A, personal communication)

Thus, opinions on the necessity of different educational and professional experiences varied.

All interview subjects expressed the importance of continuing education and professional development. Most interviewees focus as specifically as they can on library marketing topics when choosing how to spend their professional development time and resources, citing webinars, conference attendance, and professional reading. Two subjects expressed that attending the American Library Association conferences were interesting, but hard to justify in terms of finding library *marketing* offerings: "It's hard sometimes at the American Library Association conference to find enough marketing sessions to justify them sending me" (Subject A, personal communication); "If [I] wanted to join the ALA then [I] would be surrounded by librarians but there wouldn't be anything really geared towards designers per se so much" (Subject B, personal communication). But some did express finding more relevant marketing information and sessions at smaller conferences:

I would say at ALA I found less things – I just went to Midwinter – less things that I thought were useful than I did at the [state-level conference] because the [state-level conference] had smaller sessions and a lot of them had a focus on programming and community outreach that were more small examples. At ALA I

felt like there was only... the Ben Bizzle¹ presentation that I went to was probably the only thing that I would say I walked away, like, loving. I did attend the Harwood institute seminars. I was very excited to attend those because I also host community conversations here [...] Unfortunately the Harwood Institute sessions lasted way too long and I felt like they were really dry. (Subject D, personal communication)

Thus, smaller local and state level library conferences seem to offer a venue where library marketing professionals can make the most of their time and resources for professional development and continuing education.

Many of the interview subjects also expressed participation in webinars, mostly from library associations and groups, and professional reading, including: *Start a Revolution: Stop Acting Like a Library* by Ben Bizzle, *The Library Marketing Toolkit* by Ned Potter, *Say it with Data* by Priscille Dando, *Evaluation the Impact of Your Library* by Sharon Markless and David Streatfield, and books by Nancy Dowd (e.g. *Bite-Sized Marketing: Realistic Solutions for the Overworked Librarian* by Nancy Dowd, Mary Evangeliste, and Jonathan Silberman) and Kathy Dempsey (e.g. *The Accidental Library Marketer*). Most interview subject expressed that they tried to seek out library-specific marketing educational materials and reading as much as possible, when available.

¹ Ben Bizzle gave a talk titled “Start a Revolution: Stop Acting Like a Library” at the 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting from 11:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, January 31, 2015, in Chicago, Illinois.

The importance of a professional network of other library marketing professionals was also stressed. Many of the interviewees belong to formal and informal groups of library marketing professionals, and use these connections for inspiration, institutional comparisons, networking, and support:

We meet at least 4 to 6 times a year. We'll have a topic for the day. [...] So it is nice to have that professional network. We've had presentations on the illusive non-user, we've talked about crisis communication, we've talked about marketing plans. So it's nice to have a subject that we're going to have a presentation or discussion on. But then also people will bring up: "We're doing this; what do you think?" So it's nice to have a sounding board of other library marketers. [...] So it's nice to have someone I can call up and say, "Hey, I have a question: What would you do if it was this?" You get to know what other libraries are doing. So we'll say: "Hey, bring whatever materials you have." We kind of have a sharing table, so we all bring our newsletters and promotional pieces. So it's nice, sometimes you get ideas for programming or for marketing programs. (Subject A, personal communication)

I do think that networking with people from other libraries gives you a chance to talk to people who are facing the same problems you are and what you can get from that experience is frankly support and technical expertise. So I just think that that is the bomb and I would say that I continue to talk to these people even during a period when I did not see them. [...] I think it is really fabulous that people can get help through the Facebook page of [local-level library association]

and people can get help through the prtalk² list. (Subject C, personal communication, April 8, 2015).

One of the interview subjects expressed *not* having a professional network to turn to and what a detriment it has been:

I like to share and that's why when I first became a designer for the library [...] I was hoping to make connections with people and see what they were doing and use their work as a benchmark to see how my work was. [...] But that never happened and only a couple of people have contacted me or I've contacted other people for very specific purposes and it hasn't really extended beyond that. But I think that would be great. (Subject B, personal communication)

Thus, the importance of a professional network, formal or informal, of library marketing professionals was evident from all of the interviews.

Another element of library marketing professional practice that all interview subjects stressed the importance of was institutional support. Interview subjects stressed the importance of having a budget specifically for marketing materials and of working under an administration that understands the importance of marketing activities:

Well I think before you even can look at how successful you are you have to have the support from the board, from the administration. I can't imagine – and I know it happens – being in an institution where they're questioning whether marketing

² prtalk is an ALA listserv for librarians engaged in promotion and marketing activities.

is necessary. So the first part of marketing being successful is to have the support.
(Subject A, personal communication)

The reason I even exist here is because the board and my director put as a strategic initiative to hire a marketing person. So I am part of the strategic plan, so I think that's fantastic. They realized the need to get outside of the walls of the library. (Subject D, personal communication)

One subject expressed that they do *not* have the full support of their administration, which is often a hindrance:

[When I started my] administration seemed completely uninterested in marketing the fiction collection. And this very week [...] I'm going to write a proposal for buying some small relatively inexpensive display units. And I hope that that proposal will be accepted and I have no idea if it will. I think that part of the personal aspect of this is that on the one hand this has been a passion of mine, on the other hand at our library there are a lot of folks who've been there many, many, many years. And I think that while that could be a plus, in this case maybe it's a little bit of a negative. People who have been doing this so long are not spending that much time thinking about new trends, whereas folks who come straight out of grad school are full of interests and eager to implement them. [...] I would have to say that I personally don't feel supported by administration.

(Subject C, personal communication)

Thus, external support from a professional network and internal support from library administrators and boards are essential, as expressed by library marketing professionals.

Interview subjects listed a variety of marketing activities, duties, and responsibilities carried out on a regular basis as part of the positions. In keeping with the online survey results, all interview subjects engage in social media and the creation and dissemination of marketing materials, such as posters, flyers, graphics, and giveaways. Other activities mentioned include: community outreach and tabling at local events, instruction sessions in local institutions, conducting focus groups, conducting surveys, developing programs, developing calendars, and maintaining partnerships with other groups.

Similar to the online survey responses, interview subjects had less to say about assessment efforts and metrics than they did about their activities and duties. Most mentioned some measurable or assessable goals, such as patron counts and programs and social media engagement. Subjects expressed the importance of seeking direct feedback from the community and using assessment data to make changes:

We have now, like, “How are we doing?” kind of cards. And the survey, like we’re doing a survey of our communication practices, we just did in the past month or two. So when those surveys are showing highly favorable results and the comments we’re getting on the “How are we doing?” cards are showing favorable results, it shows we’re doing something right. When most of those comments are compliments to the staff, to the programming, I think that’s sort of... we’re seen as successful. (Subject A, personal communication)

I think it is terribly important to find out what people want. And I guess I personally don’t think a survey is enough. [For one recent program] I was reading evaluation forms and talking to people after the programs. That was really important information and I didn’t have to survey the library community to find it

out. It would be great if everybody had that mindset of: “Let’s gather information informally and also use that in our planning.” (Subject C, personal communication)

In addition to seeking community feedback and maintaining a dialogue with the community, one subject also mentioned local and national library marketing awards as indicators of success in their institution.

Lastly, two explicitly expressed desires/needs became clear during the interviews: the need for better and more abundant library marketing education, and the need for more connections and collaborations between libraries with regards to marketing efforts, materials, and activities. Multiple interview subjects expressed a desire for more of their librarian colleagues to understand and respect library marketing practices and even those who expressed no desire to complete a library degree for themselves stated that library education should incorporate more marketing techniques and information:

I know that [local university] is offering a marketing class from time to time and I think that’s good but I think it’d be better if they offered it every term. I took a class called community engagement and I think that that is also part of library marketing. (Subject C, personal communication)

I am constantly explaining to [librarian colleagues] why it’s important from a marketing standpoint, because some of them don’t understand that. I started doing this “out on the town” book club. A lot of libraries do it and it’s at a restaurant pub. [...] But the librarians here tend to feel that they want to pull these very classic, discussion-type books. Whereas for this type of venue and the type of people we’re trying to draw in, they’re not necessarily wanting to read a 400 page

classic novel. They're wanting to read *Gone Girl*. They're wanting to read popular materials that aren't necessarily literary classics. [...] And I'm having the hardest time because [the librarians] were trained to recognize good literature. For them to understand that even though *Gone Girl* might not be the best literature, there's an audience in our community that wants to talk about that. [...] So that, to me, is a good example of how if they understood the marketing, the demographics that we're going for it would make all the difference in the choice of literature that you're picking. Because it's not that we're demeaning that book, but it's that the demographic and the thing we're going for is different. And as far as picking materials too, as far as choosing materials and selections, I think it's definitely something that, when you know what's hot, what's being marketed to the masses, if libraries had that they would make better choices in their selection. (Subject D, personal communication)

Thus, some interview subjects argued that marketing education would benefit library students, whether they go on to participate in marketing activities or not.

All of the interview subjects expressed a passion for library marketing and communication and an enthusiasm about the profession. While they had different experiences in terms of their backgrounds, current institutions, and specific duties, each remained stalwart in their devotion to community engagement, outreach, and successful library marketing.

5. Discussion & Implications

5.1 LIS Education

The survey of websites indicates that marketing courses are still not a priority in most library and information science programs. While the survey indicates that there has been a slight increase in the percentage of programs offering a marketing course in the last twelve years (compared to the 2003 Winston and Hazlin survey results of 40%), the total percentage, 47%, is still below half. This suggests that the commitment to offering marketing courses is not widespread in LIS programs. Only 23% of all schools offered a marketing course in the last year (Fall 2014, Spring 2015, or Summer 2015) and only 22% of all schools offer a marketing course every year (based on course offerings from Fall 2013 to Summer 2015). The limitations of this website survey method are: not all LIS program websites contain all of the considered information; efforts were made to contact administrators and professors, but responses were limited; a more complete profile of each program's offerings is desirable.

While some of the marketing courses are given a dedicated course number, others are designated as "special topics" courses (e.g. "LIS 690 – Special Topics in LIS: Marketing Library & Information Services to Communities" at University of Kentucky). Only one school, Syracuse University, listed their marketing course as a core course for one of their tracks, the Information Resources Core ("IST 613: Library Planning, Marketing and Assessment"). Many other schools with marketing courses listed them specifically as electives. This suggests that most LIS education institutions do not place a high priority on the study of marketing library services. Even when marketing courses *are* offered, they appear to be considered an extension of a management specialization of an information services track, not something that all information professionals should become well-versed in. Some schools did not offer a marketing course but

covered marketing topics in other courses on administration, management, outreach, engagement, usability, public relations, and user-centered studies. However, these units on marketing concepts tended to be brief and insubstantial.

Marketing course offerings were analyzed by the inclusion of the schools in the iSchools organization. iSchools, representing slightly less than 50% of the schools surveyed, represented slightly 50% of the schools with marketing courses. Non-iSchools, representing more than 50% of the schools surveyed, represented 50% of the schools with marketing courses. Thus, there was not a substantial difference in the likelihood of iSchools and non-iSchools offering marketing courses.

Of those schools offering marketing courses, 9 schools (32% of schools with a listed marketing course) offered the course on campus while 12 schools (43% of schools with a listed marketing course) offered the course online. The remaining schools did not specify or had not offered the course in recent years (and thus, the course format remains undetermined). Many of the online marketing courses were offered asynchronously, with student collaboration and participation conducted largely via online message boards. This could be considered a hindrance to the effective learning of marketing concepts, as real-world library marketing often involves collaboration, planning, and implementation in group or team settings. While reading about library marketing topics and discussing them online with other students can be productive, it cannot replace real-time group projects, which should be completed synchronously online or in person.

A review of available course descriptions (29 gathered from program websites) and syllabi (18 gathered from program websites and email inquiries) revealed a variety of approaches to the teaching of marketing concepts as applied to libraries. While some courses focused

primarily on readings and lectures about marketing techniques, others included more active learning elements: field observations, group projects, case study assignments, interviews with a marketing librarian, and the development of mock marketing plans. Understanding the elements and construction of a quality library marketing plan should be a learning outcome for every library marketing course. Writing a marketing plan for a library and information institution, within a group setting (whether on campus or online) is an essential learning experience for library students. Some of the syllabi surveyed included marketing audit assignments and marketing “reviews.” While these assignments are helpful and valuable, they cannot replace the act of creating a full marketing plan. Additionally, students should ideally be crafting marketing plans for *real* institutions that reflect the students’ career path interests. For instance, instead of students creating plans for fictional institutions or an entire class creating a plan for one real institution, students should ideally be able to create a plan for a real institution that aligns with their LIS interests. This adds relevance and value to the assignment and solidifies the marketing concepts and techniques.

A review of the available syllabi posted on library school websites revealed a variety of textbooks. The most popular was Kathy Dempsey’s (2009) *The Accidental Library Marketer*. Dempsey covers a variety of essential concepts and techniques, including the marketing cycle, assessment, communication, data and statistics, marketing plans, promotion, and web presence. However, Dempsey is still writing from a place of retroaction; the book targets librarians who have been thrust into a marketing role despite their lack of knowledge about the topic. Thus, while it presents an overview, it is not necessarily ideal as a textbook for a library and information science marketing course. Other instructors chose library marketing books that present some fundamental concepts but are outdated on subjects such as web presence and social

media: Susan Walters' (2004) *Library Marketing That Works!* and Patricia H. Fisher and Marseille M. Pride's (2006) *Blueprint for Your Library Marketing Plan: A Guide to Help You Survive and Thrive*. These books, like Dempsey's, provide a foundation, but they lack updated information. Other instructors chose more general non-profit marketing textbooks: Alan R. Andreasen and Philip Kotler's (2007) *Strategic Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations* and Philip Kotler and Nancy Lee's (2007) *Marketing in the Public Sector*. These choices offer a more general overview of marketing principles in the non-profit sector, but most lack specificity to a library and information institution setting. There are up-to-date, library-specific marketing books that library marketing courses could ideally be using, some of which are indeed being used in select courses. *Marketing Your Library: Tips and Tools That Work*, edited by Carol Smallwood, Vera Gubnitskaia, and Kerol Harrod (2012), and *The Library Marketing Toolkit*, by Ned Potter (2012), are two examples that are currently being used in very few library marketing courses and could be adopted more widely.

5.2 Online Survey

The online survey indicates that library professionals who engage in marketing activities do so in a variety of ways with differing levels of support, structure, and success. The major limitation of the online survey was its dissemination via listservs and online interest groups; the survey results perhaps best represent the group of marketing librarians who seek ideas and support from online groups, rather than the entire population of marketing librarians. All of the survey respondents were self-selected, both in terms of their membership in the online groups and their choice to participate in the survey. An online survey was the method deemed most easily and widely disseminated, and thus the results gathered will be used to suggest implications for the purposes of this research. Survey respondents represent public libraries large and small in

the United States, with the majority (59%) in library service areas between 25,000 and 249,999 people.

The educational backgrounds of survey respondents included marketing education, library education, and other degrees. All respondents had at least a Bachelor's degree level of education, suggesting that this is a prerequisite for library marketing positions. Under half of the respondents had a Bachelor's in Marketing (32%); under half of the respondents had a Master's in LIS (43%). And even fewer (8%) had both a Bachelor's in Marketing *and* a Master's in LIS. This suggests that, while beneficial, as discussed in some of the interviews, a combination of marketing and LIS degrees is rare. Also, as is suggested in the interviews, having educational or professional experience in at least one area is preferable, and the other area can often be supplemented by continuing education. This could explain why neither a Bachelor's in Marketing nor a Master's in LIS were represented in over half of the responses.

About half (49.5%) of the respondents had professional experience in libraries prior to the current position. Each answer could represent a variety of situations, such as a "yes" indicating a marketing professional working at a library for the first time *or* a library professional in their first position out of library school. In terms of work experience, 73% of respondents had professional experience in marketing and/or outreach outside of libraries. This suggests that those in library marketing positions are likely to have professional marketing experience (though not necessarily marketing education). Some interview subjects confirmed that professional marketing experience is important to library marketing success.

Support, funding, and structure for marketing initiatives also varied. While 84% of respondents said their libraries have funding specifically for marketing and/or outreach activities, only 46% of respondents said their libraries have a written marketing plan. This suggests a lack

of support and, more than that, understanding from library administrations. Oftentimes budgets for marketing and outreach are directed primarily at the promotional materials and items. But in addition to budgetary support, marketing efforts need to be a core ideal and value of library administrations. They need to recognize the importance, value, and cost of staff members spending *time* to engage in strategic and communications planning efforts. Otherwise, where is the specific budget in these libraries going? How is that money being spent, if not directed by a specific, actionable plan?

Survey respondents represented a variety of types of positions and levels of time commitment to library marketing activities. Over half of the respondents (57%) devote the majority of their time (61-100% of on-the-job time) to library marketing and outreach. Over half of the respondents (54%) spend over 20 hours a week on library marketing activities. This is encouraging, as it signifies that full-time positions are being devoted to library marketing, outreach, and community engagement. Many libraries and library districts do not have the budget to support a full-time staff member devoted to marketing, but some do. Again, these numbers do not represent the percentage of libraries with part- or full-time library marketers, but rather the percentage of library marketing survey respondents who have full-time positions. There are many libraries where no one is engaging in library marketing activities, even as a small part of their position. However, even the representation of survey respondents who engage in marketing activities as 1-40% of their duties (27%) or 1-20 hours (43%) is encouraging; for those libraries that cannot afford a full-time library marketing professional, distributing those duties to a team of staff members who engage in activities as a smaller part of their position *or* hiring one or more part-time staff members is a reasonable alternative.

Survey respondents listed a number of marketing activities that they engage in on a regular basis. Social media (65%) and the creation of marketing/promotional materials such as posters, flyers, signage, and giveaways (57%) were reported the most. Activities and concepts related to advertising/promotion and community engagement occurred most frequently: social media (65%), creation of promotional materials (57%), newsletter creation (38%), public/media/community relations (38%), outreach activities outside the library (32%), press releases (30%), and advertising (27%). Tellingly, the aspects of marketing *outside* the realm of promotion and outreach were much less prevalent: marketing plans, either general or specific to an event or initiative (19%); communications plans (5%); brand creation/management (16%); internal communication & marketing training (14%); seeking feedback from patrons (5%); surveys (3%); focus groups (3%); research (3%). These results suggest that library marketing professionals either do not have the time or necessary training (or some combination of the two factors) to conduct more engaged marketing activities. Their focus is weighted strongly towards the promotional aspects of marketing in their day-to-day activities and lacks regular research, information gathering, and planning.

Assessment and metrics for marketing activities were also reported by survey respondents. The only method that the majority of respondents reported using is tracking program attendance (68%). Some respondents reported the use of quantitative metrics: program attendance (68%), service use (e.g. circulation statistics, database usage statistics) (35%), social media analytics (37%), media mentions (14%), website analytics (5%), Advertising Value Equivalency (AVE) (3%), and ROI (3%). Other reported the use of more qualitative, less tangible metrics: visibility within the community (16%), community feedback (14%), using “how did you hear about this program/service” cards (11%), surveys (21%), engagement (11%),

focus groups (3%), staff feedback (3%), and outcome-based evaluations (3%). Multiple respondents expressed their desire to engage in more marketing assessment and/or that their institutions' assessment practices were inadequate. The lack of a culture of assessment reinforces the need for more extensive library marketing training in formal methods and planning/structure for marketing activities and initiatives. With more expertise, librarians would be able to implement more active feedback-seeking methods and research practices. Additionally, with the firm grounding of a periodically updated marketing plan, assessment efforts could be more targeted, systematic, and measurable. With higher quality and more frequently collected assessment data, librarians would then be able to plan, market, and promote library collections and services more effectively.

Lastly, respondents were asked about the three strategies for successful library marketing: engaging patrons in an active dialogue, demonstrating the value and importance of their institution to the community and stakeholders, and using innovative and creative methods for promotion and outreach. For each category over half of the respondents indicated that, in their opinion, they effectively utilize the strategies: 51% said that their library engages patrons in an active dialogue, 84% said that their libraries demonstrate their value and importance to their communities and stakeholders, and 76% said that their libraries use innovative and creative methods for promotion and outreach. These results are in keeping with the rest of the survey results: respondents were less confident about their libraries' abilities to engage in an active dialogue, but reasonably confident in their libraries' abilities to demonstrate value and use creative methods for promotion. Library marketers seem to be missing the education, tools, and research methods to be able to engage their patron bases actively. A lack of institutional support

for high engagement, feedback, assessment, and subsequent implementation may also be a key factor.

5.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

The semi-structured interviews that took place over the course of the spring of 2015 illuminated a number of issues and complexities within the sub-field of library marketing and outreach. The main limitation for the semi-structured interviews was that the pool of subjects was small; it is difficult to make generalizations about all LIS professionals who engage in library marketing activities based on the experiences of four library marketers. However, the interview subjects represent a variety of experiences, backgrounds, and ideas; thus, themes and implications were derived from their responses. Interview subjects had a combination of educational and professional experiences in library and marketing institutions/settings, with current titles of Marketing Specialist, Graphic Designer, Outreach Librarian, and Head of Community Engagement.

The consensus on the desirable background for a library marketer was that experience in libraries *and* marketing was preferred. All acknowledged that the combination of marketing and library *degrees* was especially rare and that a degree in one area could be supplemented by experience and continuing education in another. Those with marketing education and formal training did stress the importance of learning formal techniques, such as survey and focus group methodology. Thus, library education programs should consider how to structure marketing courses and how to incorporate meaningful assignments and experiences that explore these methods. Additionally, one interview subject commented on the importance of a user-focused mindset and usability training:

You have to be a library user for me to think you can be an effective library marketer. If you're not using the library then you can't market it. And I think sometimes this is true even with people who work in the library; they don't necessarily go to their local library and use it. [...] They don't go to programs in their libraries because they're in a library all day long. So I actually think you need to be a library user outside of your job to really understand the best way to market everything. I also think you need to be maybe... I honestly think I have an advantage over the people that went to library school because often you learn all the language and jargon of how the library runs from a professional standpoint. But the user of the library, the general public, doesn't usually use that jargon and doesn't usually see things the same way as someone who has been trained to do it sees it. [...] I think it's really important to step in like an outsider to try and find, "How would I find it if I had no predisposed idea, if I came walking in and I wanted to know if we have the James Patterson novel?" [...] Being an outsider to the library world definitely helps me in marketing the services to the public.

(Subject D, personal communication)

This subject illustrates a problem that almost all librarians face: putting themselves in the shoes and mindsets of their users and trying to use that experience to enhance their librarianship. This also has implications for LIS education: more course offerings related to user experience and user-centered design would be beneficial for all library professionals, but would especially enhance library marketing education.

Interview subjects expressed the importance of continuing education, professional development, and professional networks to their library marketing practice. Most of the

activities, resources, and networks that subjects reported taking advantage of where within the LIS field, and as often as possible related specifically to library marketing. Subjects expressed that they were more likely to find relevant and meaningful opportunities related to marketing at smaller, local or state-level conferences. Networks of other library marketers, including formally organized groups, were very important to most interview subjects; multiple subjects expressed a desire for more networking and sharing of resources between library marketers and institutions:

There are a few organizations for [library] marketing and I'm even a member of them but I don't see much information coming out of them. There's not a big exchange going on. (Subject B, personal communication)

To me, libraries could really band together and do so much more than they're doing by sharing resources more and by communicating better. [...] Even your neighborhood libraries next door, some neighborhood people might be going to one or the other, but you're catering to your community, so technically you're not in that much competition. So I think it's such a fun thing to market, in a way, because you have such a set demographic. Your community is your tax base. You're also marketing libraries overall. You're the image of libraries, an image that's international. It's a really interesting thing to market. (Subject D, personal communication)

Thus, another implication from these interviews is that library marketers benefit from local and more broad-based networking. Smaller, local networks can be most helpful for their supportive atmospheres, idea exchanges, and development opportunities. And a larger, more broad-based network could provide a clearinghouse for promotional materials, facilitation of the creation of local-level groups, nation-wide networking, and training/educational opportunities. Existing

organizations, including library groups and those specifically focused on library marketing, should try to tailor their services for library marketers and offer the aforementioned resources, networks, and opportunities.

Another key element of library marketing success is institutional support, as expressed by all interview subjects (both those who currently experience supportive atmospheres *and* those who do not). This has huge implications for LIS education as well as library marketing professional practice. The majority of management/administrative level positions in libraries require a Master's in LIS. Thus, if marketing was a regular and/or core part of most library school curricula, more library students would be exposed to marketing concepts and terms, as well as the *importance and value* of library marketing activities, as explained by one interview subject:

Obviously I know there are classes and stuff that people can take in library school about how to market and I think those are amazingly important because they do need to see it and understand it in some fashion [...] I think the [marketing overview] classes are so important because [librarians] have to understand the process of why people pick the materials they pick and things like that – that's all marketing. (Subject D, personal communication)

For library marketing initiatives to thrive, library administrators need to make them a priority, in terms of time, resources, staffing, and strategic planning. Thus, raising the profile of marketing activities within library school would help to insure its increased importance in the eyes of future library administrators. This will aid in not only creating positions and teams devoted to marketing activities, but will also hopefully lead to administrators who institute cultures of engagement, marketing, feedback, assessment, and implementation in their libraries. In the case

of library marketing professional practice, library marketers need to have the skills to advocate for *themselves* and their initiatives. Their local and broader networks could aid in these efforts, as suggested by one interview subject:

[I have] been in the position of trying to sell things to my library director and having my proposals being met with distrust and opposition. And I thought that having someone in a place of authority present these ideas [at a state-level conference] instead of me might mean that they might be accepted. (Subject C, personal communication)

Thus, library marketers needs to be equipped with the skills and messages to advocate for the importance of their positions and activities.

6. Conclusions & Further Research

The results of this research project indicate that marketing is still not a priority in LIS education, despite slight gains over the past twelve years. Even when library marketing classes are offered, they are oftentimes not offered regularly or in interactive mediums that allow for experiential learning. In terms of library marketing professional practice, many library marketers are expected to accomplish activities without a clear marketing plan to follow. Lack of institutional support and organizational structures are commonly faced challenges. In addition, many library marketing professionals, for lack of time, resources, support, or education, are not conducting marketing research or high-engagement research and feedback-gathering activities. Key factors for library marketing success are institutional support, familiarity with and study of marketing methods and practices, and professional networks for support and the exchange of ideas. Recommendations resulting from this project include: increasingly offered marketing courses within LIS education program; tailoring marketing courses to include marketing methodology (going beyond just promotion) and the aforementioned strategies for marketing success; increased support from library administrators for marketing activities; and an increased number of networking opportunities and groups for library marketers, at the local and national levels.

While this study resulted in many implications and recommendations, there are still many areas for further research and study. Little has been studied or written about in terms of the ways that library marketing practices differ and overlap across different types of LIS institutions; much could be gleaned from attempting to learn from one another within this sub-field. Also, more could be done in the way of investigating the larger support and administrative factors that affect library marketing, both in education and in practice: a survey of LIS education program

administrations to gauge the importance of marketing in LIS education and determine reasons why course offerings are still uncommon and infrequently offered; a survey of LIS institution directors to determine how they value library marketing and what qualifications they seek in library marketing professionals. More generally, additional research on the methods and strategies used by marketing librarians as well as their reported instances and levels of effectiveness would be beneficial and informative.

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Appendix A: Online Survey

1. Are you currently employed at a public library in the United States? Y/N [If N, survey ends]
2. What is the population size of your library's service area? Please check one:
 - Under 5,000
 - 5,000-9,999
 - 10,000-24,999
 - 25,000-49,999
 - 50,000-99,999
 - 100,000-249,999
 - 250,000-499,999
 - 500,000-999,999
 - 1,000,000 and Over
3. What is your educational background? Please check **all that apply**:
 - Bachelor's degree in Marketing/Communication
 - Bachelor's degree in **anything besides Marketing/Communication**
 - Master's degree in Library Science
 - Master's degree in **anything besides Library Science**
 - PhD or other advanced degree
4. Before your current position, did you have any professional work experience in libraries? Y/N
5. Before your current position, did you have any professional work experience in marketing and/or outreach outside of libraries? Y/N
6. Does your library have funding specifically for marketing and/or outreach activities? Y/N
7. Does your library have a written marketing plan? Y/N
8. How much of your job description is devoted to marketing activities. Please enter a percentage between 0-100%.
9. Please describe typical marketing and/or outreach projects and activities that you perform:
10. How many hours a week, on average, do you spend on marketing activities? Please enter a number of hours between 0-60.
11. Please describe how you/your library determines whether or not a marketing effort or activity is successful:
12. In your opinion, does your library: engage their patron base in an active dialogue? (Y/N)
13. In your opinion, does your library: demonstrate the value and importance of the library to the community & stakeholders? (Y/N)
14. In your opinion, does your library: use innovative and creative methods for promotion and outreach? (Y/N)

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

[*Brief greeting including additional verbal consent for voice recording following ad hoc verbal greetings.*] Hello, [interviewee]. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this research. I want to begin by once again verifying your permission to record this interview. You are free to (a) discontinue participation in the study at any time, (b) request that the audio recorder be turned off at any time, and (c) pass on any question you do not want to answer. Do you consent to this interview?

[*Also, affirm consent to include individually identifiable information in project dissemination, if interviewee consented to such in consent form.*]

I want to also verify that you consent to your real name and workplace being used in the final research document. Do you consent?

[*Not all questions are asked of all participants depending on their role and responses.*]

Q 1. Position.

Could you please describe your position?

1.a. How long have you been in your current position?

1.b. Has the position changed at all since you began?

1.b.i. Have you taken on new responsibilities?

1.b.ii. Have older responsibilities been phased out?

Q 2. Background/Education.

Please describe your educational background and how it contributes/influences your current position.

2. a. Please describe your degree(s) and where you received it/them.

[*Depending on response, go to appropriate 2.a follow-up(s):*]

2. a. i. Did you have any professional experience in libraries prior to this position?

2. a. ii. Did you have any professional marketing/outreach experience prior to this position?

2. a. iii. Do you feel like you would have benefited from more marketing education/experience prior to this position? [*Explain.*]

2. a. iv. Do you feel like you would have benefited from more library experience/education prior to this position? [*Explain.*]

2. b. In your opinion, what is the ideal educational background for a library marketer (e.g. someone who completes library marketing and outreach activities as part of their position)?

2. c. Do you participate in any continuing/ongoing education efforts (e.g. conferences, webinars, professional reading (including magazines, journals, and blogs), formal courses)? If so, please list and describe.

Q 3. Institutional Support.

How does the [*institution*] administration support your position?

3. a. What is your reporting process like?

3. a. i. What is the title of the person you report directly to?

3. a. ii. How often do you report?

3. b. How is your work/your office's work assessed?

3. c. How does your budget process work?

- 3. c. i. How much control do you have over the budget for marketing activities?
- 3. c. ii. What is the process like for requesting additional funding? How likely are you to receive additional funding when you want it?
- 3. d. Do you feel like your position/work is valued by [*institution*]? By your administrators? By the rest of the staff?

Q 4. Projects.

Talk about your some of the projects you've worked on in your current position and how you come up with project ideas.

- 4. a. Please describe 5-6 key duties of your current position.
- 4. b. What is the creative process like for most of your projects?
 - 4. b. i. Do you come up with project ideas or is a team of people responsible (if team, who is involved)?
 - 4. b. ii. Do you ever rely on outside resources to facilitate your creative process (e.g. other library marketers, LIS or marketing publications (journals, books, or blogs))?
- 4. c. What is your favorite library marketing/outreach project you've worked on in your current position?
- 4. d. Can you talk about a project that turned out differently in execution than you anticipated (for better or worse)?
- 4. e. What do you think has been the most successful project you've worked on in your current position? Please describe your metric for "success" in this case.
- 4. f. In your opinion, how is successful library marketing accomplished?

Q 5. Network.

Are you in contact with other library marketers?

- 5. a. Do you know other library marketers?

[Choose appropriate 5. a. follow-ups based on response.]

- 5. a. i. How did you meet them?
- 5. a. ii. How do you stay in touch?
- 5. a. iii. What do you get out of these relationships (e.g. project ideas, empathy/solidarity, professional networking opportunities)?
- 5. b. Do you wish you knew more library marketers?

Q 6. Added Comments.

Do you have any additional comments that you would like to add?

Thank you very much for your time. If you have any questions for me, please feel free to ask them.