

COMMUNICATIONS

Whether your communications are supported by a team of experts or off the side of your desk, strategic communications is a key component of advocacy.

HOW TO: Make the Most of Social Media

You can help raise your library's profile through social media engagement. A post on social media can be used to share the impact of libraries in your community, to demonstrate your support for libraries, or raise awareness of the issues confronting the sector.

DO

- ☑ Tell your story and celebrate all the amazing things you're doing in your library.
- ☑ Be FUN, be moving, be inspirational – make people feel something about what they are hearing.
- ☑ Be visual – make the most of good photos, GIFs, and video to capture attention. Share a picture of your latest display or your programs in action.
- ☑ Be succinct – keep your message clear and focused. People engage more with short, easy-to-understand posts.
- ☑ Keep it current – use social media to share and respond to developing news stories.

Setting up Google Alerts for library-related news in your community is a great way to stay on top of stories.

- ☑ Engage – use social media to connect with people in your community, not as a one-way messaging board for promoting the library's programming.

Social media is an opportunity to connect with your community and be part of the conversations that matter.

- ☑ Work within larger channels – if you are a smaller public library or a library within an institution, use your municipality or institution's social media channel.
- ☑ Use hashtags like #ILoveONLibraries, #LibraryLove, #SchoolLibraryJoy, and #LibrariesForLife to join the broader conversation in the library community.

DON'T

- ☒ Be combative or negative – use social media to foster positive relationships with your community.
- ☒ Use social media only for announcements. It is great to promote your library's events, but social media should also be about engagement. If you are ONLY using social media to promote your programming and services, you are missing a crucial opportunity to build relationships with your community.
- ☒ Bite off more than you can chew – if you have limited resources to dedicate to social media, choose your engagement wisely. Be selective about which platforms you use, and how and where you post.

Ideas for Social Media Content

- Showcase your spaces.
- Highlight items from your special collections.
- Give a window into your work with “behind the scenes” content, such as curating book displays.
- Capture events and learning in action – author visits, workshops, Forest of Reading winner celebrations, etc.
- Highlight value and impact of programming with stories and profiles from your community.
- Write articles or blogs to share on social media.
- Tie your content to current events, trends, or cultural moments, like doing a [“Stacked Poetry” exchange](#) during playoffs with your city’s opponent’s library.
- Lean into viral online trends and memes to capture youth audience.
- Use video and visual storytelling strategically. Short-form video (e.g., TikToks), carousels, and GIFs tend to outperform static posts.

TIP

There is some great library-related advocacy content on [EveryLibrary’s Facebook](#) page.

What Makes an Effective Media Release?

A strong media release is concise, informative, and easy for journalists to use. It typically includes:

- Concise, attention-grabbing headline
- Strong opening paragraph that summarizes the key points (who, what, when, where, why)
- A timely or newsworthy angle (e.g., links to current events, trends, or community priorities)
- Quotes from key voices (e.g., library staff, partners, or users)
- Contact information for follow-up or interview requests
- Links to additional resources, if relevant

HOW TO: Write and Share a Media Release

Every library is full of great stories. A well-crafted media release is a powerful tool for sharing those stories with local media—news outlets, radio and TV stations, community publications, and podcasts—helping you reach a broader audience.

What’s Your Story?

Most media outlets receive far more stories than they have space or time to publish, so your media release needs to be clear, relevant, and engaging. What sets your story apart and makes it interesting enough for readers, listeners or viewers to care? Ground your media release in storytelling fundamentals:

- **Compelling characters:** Who is at the heart of this story? Highlight the individuals or communities impacted by your program, service, or initiative. This could include students, researchers, patients, educators, or community members, depending on your library sector.
- **Interesting plot:** What is happening, and why does it matter? Most good plots involve some tension, like a challenge or obstacle, and show the characters navigating that tension and achieving resolution or a path forward.
- **Strong visuals:** Include high-quality photos or video where possible. Visuals help bring your story to life and increase the likelihood of media uptake.

Who's Your Audience?

Consider who you want to reach and tailor your media release accordingly. Do you want parents to understand the role of the library in post-secondary readiness? Raise awareness about a copyright issue impacting academic libraries? Your audience will influence both your messaging and where you distribute your release.

Where Should You Send It?

Identify media outlets that align with your audience and goals. This might include local newspapers, community radio, education or health publications, or sector-specific outlets.

Many organizations publish staff directories (mastheads) on their websites. Look for reporters, editors, or producers who cover relevant topics. While some outlets accept general submissions, targeting a specific contact can improve your chances of coverage.

Sharing Your Media Release

Distribute your media release via email to your selected media contacts. You can paste the release directly into the email or attach it as a document. Keep your email brief and professional, clearly indicating why the information is relevant to their audience.

You can also amplify your release by sharing it through your library's website, social media channels, and partner networks to extend its reach beyond traditional media.

TEMPLATE: [Download the Media Release Template](#) →

Internal Communications

Not all advocacy happens publicly. For many libraries, particularly in academic, health, and special library settings, some of the most important advocacy takes place within the institution itself.

Internal communications focus on ensuring that library value is clearly understood by leadership within your organization.

This can include:

- Presenting usage data, outcomes, and impact reports to leadership or governing bodies
- Sharing brief updates that connect library services to institutional priorities
- Contributing to strategic planning or program review processes
- Highlighting user stories or service impacts in meetings or newsletters
- Providing evidence to support budgeting, staffing, or service decisions