

Today's Presenters



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Building voter support for libraries

Build Your Political Literacy Skills for Advocacy

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VOTELIBRARIES

The Toolbox of Our Community



About EveryLibrary

- First Nationwide Super PAC for Libraries
- Set up as a c4 rather than a c3
- 61 Campaigns to date 41 wins
- \$210+ million in stable tax funding
- Pro Bono Approach

About Lone Cone Library District

- Rural library in SW Colorado
- Service Area = 2000
- 2 Full-time, 5 part-time employees
- 2016 passed a ballot issue for operating and facility construction



Voter Data that Frames Our Discussion

“From Awareness to Funding” says...

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Library Use Does Not Matter

A voter's willingness to support increased library funding is not driven, or limited, by library use.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-2

Library as Transformative Force

[T]he library is not perceived as just a provider of practical answers and information; the most committed supporters hold the belief that the library is a transformational force.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-4

Attitude - Not Demographics

The factors that determine residents' willingness to increase their taxes to support their local library are their perceptions and attitudes about the library and the librarian.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-3

Perception of the Librarian(s)

[Voters] recognize the value of a 'passionate librarian' as a true advocate for lifelong learning.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-4

What Activates Voters?

Seven Factors:

- A Reason to Vote
- Mobilized
- Personal Contact with Candidate or Issue*
- Culture/Tradition/Habit of Voting*
- Trust in Government
- Decided to Vote
- Weather/Access to Polls



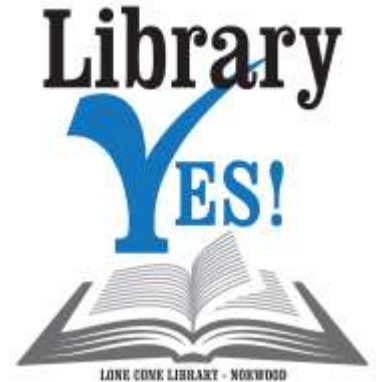
Voter Attitudes

Nationwide, of all voters:

37% will Definitely vote yes for the library

37% will Probably vote yes for the library

26% will Probably or Definitely vote no or
may vote either way.



What Activates Advocates?

1. An Identified Need
2. Personal Motivation
3. Experience of the Issue*
4. Prior Success as an Advocate*
5. Institutional Reputation
6. Made a Pledge
7. Ease of Access to Advocacy Tools



Activate in Either Context

VOTERS:

1. A Reason to Vote
2. Mobilization
3. Personal Contact with Candidate*
4. Culture/Tradition/Habit of Voting*
5. Trust in Government (pro or con)
6. Decided to Vote
7. Weather/Access to Polls

ADVOCATES:

1. An Identified Need
2. Personal Motivation
3. *Experience of the Issue**
4. *Prior Success as Advocate**
5. Institutional Reputation
6. Made a Pledge
7. Ease of Access to Tools

“Librarian as Candidate”

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What Activates Voters for a Library Measure?

The Librarian is the Candidate

The Library is the Incumbent

Library = Librarians + Community

How Candidates “Surface”

- Write the book
- Tell their story
- Be seen as an expert
- Start an Exploratory Team
- Get endorsed
- Launch their Campaign



*What is Your Book?

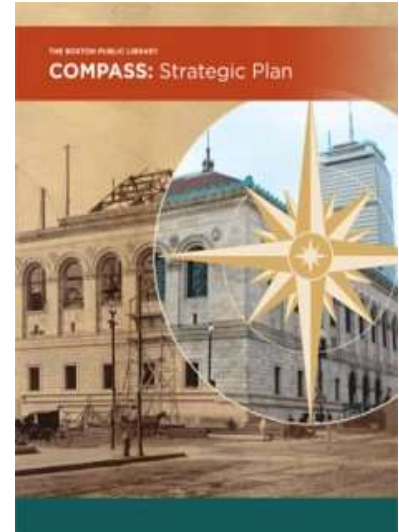
Strategic Plan

Management Plan

Service/Programs/Collections Plan

Fundraising Goals

Financials and Fiduciary



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“Library as Cause”

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Remember – Use Does Not Matter

To Library Users:

- “As you know...”
- Personal Value Proposition
- Value for Other
- Activation as a Voter

To Non-Users:

- “As you can imagine...”
- Value to/for “Other”
- Satisfaction as a Voter

What Activates Voters for a Library Issue?

- Is the reason for the tax - and process to get there - legitimate?
- Is there a difference between Plan A and Plan B?
- Where is my money going? and
Who is spending my money?

Identify Your Team with 5 Quick Questions

Q1. Why is the library important to you, personally?

Q2. What is your favorite reason to use the library?

Q3. Who does the Library serve? *

Q4. Why is the library important to those people?

Q5. What will new funding do to serve those communities?

Drink Coffee



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Drink Coffee w/ Partners

1. Educational Partners
2. Social Welfare and Religious Partners
3. Governmental Partners
4. Civic (clubs) Partners
5. Business Partners
6. Politicians
7. Media

Drink More Coffee

I Like what you're doing --->

I Support what you are doing --->

I Want to identify us with what you are doing.

In Practice: Norwood

- Be intentional in seeking out community influencers
- Recruit formal and informal advocates from different sectors
- Tailored a message for each sector of the community
- Be prepared to answer the tough questions

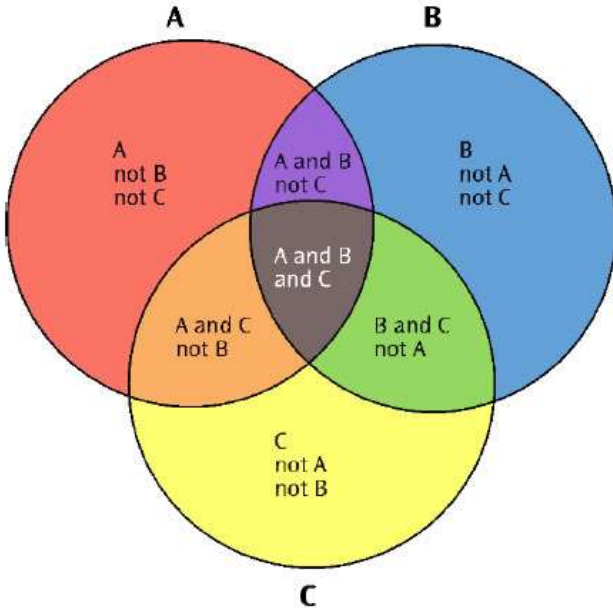


Extending Your Influence

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Venn diagram



**All Issues
are won by
Coalitions**

Extending Your Influence

What systems already exist in your community or statewide that align with libraries? Where are your natural partnerships?

State and Local Systems:

Boards and Commissions

Coalitions of Common Cause

Coalitions of Common Concern

What Coalitions are Right for You?

Economic Development

Early Literacy and Early Childhood

Grade Level Reading

Housing and Food Security

Immigration

Safety and Violence



In Practice: Norwood

- Establish library as community asset through partnership
- Other community leaders advocated for cause because worth was evident
- Resolutions of support from the School board and the Town board
- Neutralize objectors when possible





Guiding Principle: Dread Pirate Roberts

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norwood.colibraries.org



Thank You

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