

Alman, Susan Webreck. *Crash Course in Marketing for Libraries*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2007. 177p. \$30.00 (ISBN:978-1-59158-430-8)

Susan Webreck Alman has written a book for the “Crash Course for Libraries” series entitled “Crash Course in Marketing for Libraries.” The book gives a brief but very clear and concise overview of how to develop, fund and execute a marketing campaign for a public library. Additionally the author expresses the importance of marketing knowledge for new librarians in the field. The author emphasizes that this book is especially helpful for smaller libraries but Alman’s outline of a marketing plan would fit nicely into any size library’s beginning campaign because it is laid out so clearly and covers many strategy points and techniques. The book has a unique arrangement in that the planning and explanation section is just a third of the book while the rest of the book consists of valuable appendices chock full of marketing materials, sample reports, outlines of various techniques and a marketing bibliography for further marketing plan research. The author starts with the commonsense beginning of gathering information about your community in order to plan an effective marketing strategy. She provides great ideas on how to identify these needs including surveys, focus groups and the “NGT” approach where all individuals in a group are able to contribute to a discussion. The “NGT” approach is especially useful as it creates a non-threatening environment for group members to share their ideas so that everyone can contribute and be understood in a group setting. In the section on methodology, Alman does not assume that every library will have ample funds to carry out the marketing plan and appreciatively discusses three scenarios which cover many situations; “Lots of Time and Money,” “Some Time and Some Money,” “No Time and No Money.” The rest of the book deals with the fleshing out of the plan details, getting the message to the public, and fund-raising. As brief as the overview of her marketing plan formulation is, Alman really covers all the high points in a reader-friendly manner, presenting the information in such a way that librarians and library administrators can understand and make and carry out the plan without needing a marketing executive to explain jargon or techniques. From Alman’s book, libraries can really get a clear idea of how to build, finance and carry out an effective, albeit simple marketing plan for their library or library programs.

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