Developing Sustainable Outreach Programs

Mike Adams
Museum of Science, Boston
madams@mos.org
Overview

1) Why outreach?
2) Developing an outreach program
3) Growing your market in schools and libraries
4) Five tips for making your program successful and sustainable
5) Looking at two archaeology outreach programs
6) Some additional suggestions and resources
Why Outreach?

- Extends the reach and visibility of your organization and extends your mission
- For museums: meets an increasing demand as field trip attendance decreases
  - Due to various economic pressures and increasing demands on teachers
- For CRM firms and other professional archaeologists: can be one of the most effective ways of reaching the public
Developing an Outreach Program

- Conduct marketing research and evaluation (front-end)
- Develop educational goals
- Narrow down the audience
- Decide on a program format and content
- Program construction
- Prototype and evaluate (formative)
- Refine the program and evaluate
- Program premiere and evaluate (summative)
Forging Partnerships with Schools

- Make connections with the right people
  - Finding a teacher to work with is good
  - But connecting to an entire school or district is better and more sustainable

- Contact curriculum coordinators at the district level
  - Do research on state and national frameworks
  - How does your collection or type of archaeological research connect with the curriculum?

- Also reach out to parent/teacher groups
  - Some have more say in selecting enrichment than administrators
  - Note that they may be more interested in general enrichment than curriculum based instruction
    - Do you have an “all school program” to offer them?
Connecting to Summer Reading

- National theme adopted by all 50 states
  - Collaborative Summer Library Program provides marketing materials
- Different sub-themes based on age of patrons
- Each state has its own website and reading theme coordinator
Current and Upcoming Themes

2013 - Underground
- Children: Dig into Reading
- Teens: Beneath the Surface
- Adults: Groundbreaking Reads

2014 - Heroes
- Children: Every Hero has a Story
- Teens: Unmask!
- Adults: Escape the Ordinary

2014 - Science
- Children: Fizz, Boom, Read!
- Teens: Spark a Reaction
- Adults: Literary Elements

2016 - Fitness/health/exercise/sports

Massachusetts Library System Summer Library Program Guide
* A great resource to learn more about the themes
New England Contacts

Massachusetts Library System
Sarah Sogigian
225 Cedar Hill St., Suite 229
Marlborough, MA 01752
Phone: (508) 357-2121
Fax: (508) 357-2122
sarah@masslibsystem.org

New Hampshire State Library
Ann Hoey
20 Park Street
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: (603) 271-2865
Fax: (603) 271-6826
ann.hoey@dcr.nh.gov

Connecticut State Library
Susan Draper Cormier, Willimantic Library Service Center
1320 Main Street
Willimantic CT 06226-1908
Phone: (860) 456-1717
Fax: (860) 423-5874
Susan.Cormier@ct.gov

Rhode Island Office of Library & Information Science
Cheryl Space
One Capitol Hill, 4th Floor
Providence, RI 02908
Phone: (401) 574-9309
Fax: (041) 574-9302
Cheryl.Space@olis.ri.gov

Vermont Department of Libraries
Grace Greene
Children's Services Consultant
109 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05609
Phone: (802) 828-6954
Fax: (802) 828-2199
grace.greene@state.vt.us

Maine Library Association
Annika Black, Norway Public Library
258 Main Street
NOrway, ME 04268
Phone: (207) 743-5309
Fax: (207) 744-0111
norchild@norway.lib.me.us
Summer Reading Success Stories

- Animal Invaders – What’s Buzzing at your Library, 2006
- Animal Invaders: Sharing Spaces – Going Green, 2010
- One Sky Many Stories and World of Bridges: an Engineering Tale, 2011
Five Tips for Making your Program Successful and Sustainable
1. Invest in Staff Training

- Offers greater teaching flexibility
- Increased professionalism
  - You represent your entire institution
  - You are only as good as your last program
- Develops skills to help grow your program
  - Innovative teaching
  - Curriculum development
  - Building experience
2. “Be Prepared”

Collect useful tools for your program based on your budget and needs
3. Get Organized

- Store and transport your materials efficiently and safely
  - Also come up with a storage system that works for both you and your staff

- If using consumable items
  - Consider the cost and time to replace them
  - Could you recycle for multiple use?
4. Build in Redundancy and Flexibility

Technology can fail – don’t depend on it

If you’re developing a program that absolutely relies on a single piece of equipment consider:

- Carrying a backup
- Redesigning around something else

Consider the unexpected in training

- What are the things that can go wrong?
- How can I fix it and still teach?
5. Focus on Customer Service

- Listen carefully to what schools and libraries want
- The logistics of outreach can be challenging for both you and for your customers
  - Be clear and concise in asking for what you need
  - Pre-visit checklists help; follow up to avoid problems
- Follow up programs with an evaluation to assess how you are doing and what you need to change
- As you grow, consider a database that you can use to keep track of program information, customer records, invoices and more
  - Data can help you grow your program and meet new challenges
Outreach: Science of Millstones

Opening of the Rose Kennedy Greenway – October 2008
North End Park- Boston, MA
Outreach: Spearthrower Science

Massachusetts Atlatl Field Days – September 2007
Rebecca Nurse Homestead, Danvers MA
Outreach: Spearthrower Science

AIA/ MOS Archaeology Fairs

MOS Courses

Fit for the King – Martin Luther King Jr. School, Dorchester MA
Resources: Marketing Tips

- Leverage your outreach vehicle as a marketing tool
  - Vehicle wraps (expensive) or magnets (cheap) promote your organization or a sponsor

- Get your program listed in the performer’s directory for your state library system
  - **MA** – service no longer active, **NH, CT**

- Attend regional library performer showcases or put on your own program showcase and invite representatives of the groups that you are trying to serve
Resources: Funding Tips

If you are charging for your program, be familiar with grant opportunities available for humanities programming at libraries and other non-school sites.
- It also helps if you know exactly what librarians need to apply for these so that you can have all of that info ready for them.
- Mass Cultural Council awards a lot of grants for programming.
- Other grant opportunities for libraries:
  - Some of these organizations (like Mass Humanities) may also be able to give you a grant for developing outreach programming.