

# LIBRARIES &

MESSAGE ► STRATEGY ► RESULTS

# COMMUNICATION SERVICES

► SINCE 1984

## A WINNING COMBINATION

### We know libraries.

Drawing upon more than 20 years of success in creating integrated marketing services for public and private institutions, Communication Services is now focused on helping libraries position themselves for growth as essential community services.

Since 2005, **Communication Services** has worked with dozens of libraries throughout New York State. Our approach is targeted and effective.

- > We rebrand a library using our community-values model and emotional branding concepts so that the library is a reflection of the community it serves and, conversely, the community sees itself in the library. This approach builds a strong bond between the library and its community and, more importantly, the patrons who are registered voters.
- > We develop a marketing campaign that positions the library as an essential service in the community—on par with fire, police, health care and education.
- > We segue the marketing campaign with an aggressive Vote Yes campaign for whatever ballot initiative a library wants to pursue.

Our strategy—which is proven true time and again—is that you can't ask people to vote yes without giving them a reason why. And, it works—we have a 91% success rate winning library votes.

### In 2009, we were six for six!

- > We rebranded the **Jervis Public Library** in Rome, NY and then successfully positioned it to pass a school district ballot in May. It had been close to 10 years since the Library last asked the voters for support. The increase was a whopping 700 percent—from, on average, \$4 per household to \$29. The vote passed with over 75% of the vote. Continuing to work with us, they were successful in turning those yes voters into grassroots library advocate to impact their local budget process because, as an association library, Jervis still depends on the City of Rome and Oneida County for significant funding. After implementing a postcard mailer campaign, both the City's and the County's 2009-10 proposed budgets maintain Library funding at last year's levels—which is what the Library had asked for.
- > We rebranded the **Woodstock Public Library** and then successfully positioned it to pass its annual budget in September of this year with over 70% of the vote after losing the budget vote in 2007 and 2008.
- > We ran an aggressive vote yes campaign for the **Finkelstein Memorial Library** in Spring Valley to mobilize its supporters after losing its 2008 budget vote in the face of organized opposition. The Library quadrupled the yes vote to over 2,000 while the opposition could only muster an additional 50 no votes. The Library's \$6.4 million budget passed in April of 2009.
- > We rebranded the **Pawling Library** and then successfully positioned it to pass its first 414/municipal ballot since 2001. On Election Day 2009, 68% of the voters said yes to increasing the Pawling Library's funding from \$170,000 to \$390,000.

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- > We ran an aggressive Election Day 2009 vote yes 414/municipal ballot campaign for the **Hudson Area Association Library** and increased their funding from City of Hudson residents from \$48,000 to \$120,000 with 69% of the vote.
- > We consulted with the **Elting Memorial Library** in New Paltz where they had just opened a newly renovated building but needed enhanced local funding to meet the community's needs. After following our advice and campaign formula, Elting won their Election Day 2009 414/municipal ballot with close to 60% of the vote.

## Our Strategy

**Communication Services** takes a collaborative approach to its projects. While we're doing our work, we'll also be training the library board and staff to embrace their roles as ambassadors and advocates for the library in the community.

We begin our work with a series of SWOT/Message Development focus groups. Our approach to SWOT sessions is unique. Internally, we look at the strengths and weaknesses of the people and the programs of the Library. Externally, we look at the opportunities and threats to the position of the Library in the public arena. These sessions last approximately one to two hours and are held with various library constituencies including:

- > Staff
- > Board
- > Library patrons
  - Moms
  - Teens
  - Adult Users
- > Community leaders
- > Volunteers/Friends
- > Non Users

A maximum of 15 people participate in each session.

Once the information from these sessions is compiled, **Communication Services** then presents its branding and messaging recommendations in a formal PowerPoint presentation that includes:

- > Brand foundation
- > Marketing strategies
- > Organizational recommendations
- > New tagline
- > New logo options

Once the library embraces the recommendations and picks a new logo, **Communication Services** develops a community-based marketing campaign to launch the library's new look and brand. This campaign is instrumental in repositioning the Library as an essential community service which, in turn, paves the way for voters to feel more connected to the Library when it comes time to vote yes on the budget.

Once the marketing campaign has been launched, we turn our attention to the vote yes campaign. Winning is not a simple task but it is infinitely doable if the Library develops a campaign plan. **Communication Services** works with the Library's campaign committee to:

- > Develop a campaign plan which covers all the elements of this effort including:
  - Overall strategy for success
  - Outline of roles and responsibilities
  - Overview of political landscape

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- > Research with specifics on budget costs, ramifications, etc.
- > Determining key audiences
- > Campaign messaging
- > How information will be managed
  - Campaign database
- > How to communicate with key audiences/voters
  - Field Operations: phone banking, door-to-door
  - Direct Mail and/or other paid media
- > Public/press relations
- > Building community support
- > Get Out the Vote effort
- > Campaign calendar
- > Fund Raising

Additional campaign activities that **Communication Services** provides are:

- > Conducting a campaign planning workshop for the board and campaign committee so that everyone goes into the process knowing what will happen and what is expected
- > Determining the campaign's messages
- > Writing and producing all of the campaign's direct mail and voter contact materials
- > Working with the Library's designated campaign manager to execute the campaign
- > Consulting on raising money for the campaign, if necessary
- > Maximizing the Library's relationships with local media
- > Developing public relations materials for the Library to use, including but not limited to, talking points, press releases, op-ed pieces and letters to the editors
- > Providing on-going guidance and consulting as the campaign progresses

Along with branding, marketing and campaign services, **Communication Services** provides training for library staff and boards as well as library systems. Our trainings include:

- > Positioning Your Library as an Essential Service
- > Library Campaign Institute (a four-part workshop series)
- > Speaking with One Voice: Branding, Marketing, Public Relations and Development for Libraries
- > Customer Service Training
- > District and Funding Options
- > Integrating Capital and Referendum Campaigns
- > Libraries and Social Networking
- > With a Little Help from Our Friends—Starting and Revitalizing Friends Groups

**We know libraries.** Whether it's a building referendum, budget vote or charter change, **Communication Services** has the expertise and proven skills to help your library reach its goals. We would love the opportunity to meet with you to discuss your library's needs and how we can help you achieve success.



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