

Marketing eResources and Demonstrating Their Programming Potential

Follow up questions from the January 20, 2021 webinar

Q: What are the best free resources to get social media feedback (e.g. best time to post)?

A: There are a few free resources available, and many that charge a fee. These are the two we think offer the most value. They each have a free offering of educational support resources as well as a fee-based offering.

Resource	What's available
HubSpot	Their "Education" area has a lot of great resources. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blog• eBooks, Guides, and more• Free courses & certifications (HubSpot Academy)
Sprout Social	They have a robust offering of free resources, templates, and guides. Check out these notable areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resource Center• Guides• Always Up-to-Date Guide to Social Media Image Sizes• Platforms Center for detailed specifics to navigate Facebook, Twitter, and much more

Q: What do you mean by micro credentialed? I'm not familiar with this term.

A: A microcredential is like a mini-degree or certification in a certain topic area. They are sometimes referred to as digital badges, mini-degrees, or micro-certifications. Earning a micro credential typically requires learners to complete a certain number of activities, assessments, and/or projects related to the topic area. Used to demonstrate to others that the learner has mastered a specific skill, micro credentials are useful advantages in job interviews and opportunities for advancement at work.

Q: How large is your team?

A: Our Michigan eLibrary team is 6 people. There are 3 Library of Michigan employees and of those 3, the MeL Coordinator is the only full-time member. The other 2 members are involved on a half-time basis. The remaining 3 people work for a contractor that the MeL Team hires to provide training and support services for all of the components of the Michigan eLibrary.

Q: How often do you promote theme-related material over any one quarter and have you found a happy medium between the frequency of promotion and audience engagement?

A: It depends on the channel. With our blog and email newsletter, we promote the theme 100% of the time during any one quarter. On our social platforms (Facebook and Twitter), it's more of a mix. I would say approximately half the time we're promoting the theme on social during any one given quarter.

Finding a happy medium is an ongoing process. We're always evaluating engagement and making adjustments. Posting once a day on Facebook seems to work pretty well for us. The more timely our content is, and the more engaging (images and/or videos) the better our posts seem to do.

Q: How often do you post on social media?

A: Our goal is to post on our Facebook and Twitter accounts at least once a day. The MeL team is short-staffed at the moment, so we're down to once a week right now.

Q: What are some differences between using Niche and using MeL training resources?

Our Niche content covers a wide range of material. Not only do we offer access to the Niche created eResource tutorials, we also have mined the Niche Marketplace to find content from other libraries that we feel will help the library staff in Michigan. Essentially we have three clusters of content available in Niche: 1) tutorials from Niche staff, 2) tutorials from other libraries across the country, and 3) our own content. In the content we create for the Library of Michigan, we have the MeL training resources. Coming this summer, this is where our micro-credential course, the MeL Maven Badge, on information literacy and eResources will live.

Q: Where can I find the microcredential class?

A: The microcredential class is still in development. We anticipate it's release during summer 2021.

Q: As it pertains to our patrons, how can we increase engagement as we navigate the digital activity platforms? What ideas do you have for promoting our programs?

A: We'd like to recommend some resources to help with engagement and library program promotion ideas. These are just a few suggestions to get you started. Youth librarians might explore the resources available through [YALSA](#) (Young Adult Library Services Association) and you might also consider reaching out to your state library for ideas and support.

- [The Library Marketing Show](#) by Angela Hursh
- [ALA's The Programming Librarian](#)
- [How to Increase Social Media Engagement: A Guide for Marketers](#) (from Hootsuite blog)
- [How to Improve Your Social Media Engagement](#) (from Sprout Social)

Q: Did EBSCO help you with those attractive LearningExpress promos?

A: No, we contract with a marketing agency to help us with graphics and occasionally post copy.

Q: Did your marketing campaign include video tutorials about how to use a given online resource? If so, were those effective?

A: Yes, we always include tutorials in our campaigns. They don't show up in every channel but typically listserv posts, blog posts, and email newsletters include links to tutorials. On social media, sometimes we link to tutorials and sometimes we don't. Putting multiple links in a social post can be tricky so instead of trying multiple links, we'll spotlight tutorial/training resources separately.

Q: Do you find that as your digital resources are utilized your patrons tend to check out more physical materials?

A: At the state library, we don't have data that would show a relationship between eResource usage and a circulation increase of our own physical materials. Local libraries would be in a better position to gather data about this to determine if there is a correlation.

Q: Do you use tools like Hootsuite to organize and schedule posts?

A: We have experimented with using Hootsuite, but find that we prefer using the scheduling tools directly in Twitter and Facebook.

Q: Are your overall database usage stats statewide, going up or going down, over time (say past 3-5 years)?

A: We've been using content marketing since Fall 2019. Despite the pandemic and schools and libraries being in various stages of 'open this year', our numbers for 2020 show modest growth.

Q: You mentioned looking up keywords earlier. I understand that you google that however, can you give examples of keywords?

A: Here's an example of how we used a keyword search to find related keywords for some of our New Year, New You content, specifically a series of blog posts.

Some of my content will focus on healthy eating. I did a Google search for "healthy eating" and discovered results that used the following keywords:

- Health
- Diet
- Eating/Eat
- Healthy Eating
- Healthy Diet
- Health Foods

If I want my blog post to be more findable and rank higher than other content online, I should incorporate these words into my blog post.

Q: Are there any specific resources/tools you promote specifically to businesses?

A: Yes, we curated a selection of our subscription eResources specifically for businesses. You will see this on pages 20-21 in our [MeL Connections for Adult Programming](#) guide.