

TARGETED MARKETING EFFORTS A NECESSITY, NOT A LUXURY, FOR TODAY'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES



Fall 2022

Today's changing consumer landscape requires a thoughtful and sustained marketing effort to attract new library users and keep the ones you have.

This white paper is the second in a series from OrangeBoy, Inc. to provide insights to help public libraries build thriving communities with high impact. To view all white papers, please visit our website.

Introduction

Many organizations are facing the same strategic challenge - acquiring, retaining, and nurturing customer relationships. Across the public library sector specifically, we hear every day about the concerns to get customers back and resume new cardholder acquisition efforts after COVID closures.

We are in an era where it takes great effort to attract a consumer's attention, let alone convert them to a customer. New marketing channels pop up almost every day, and the competition to get noticed is fierce. This is true for popular consumer brands as well as public institutions like libraries.

This trend does not bode well for public libraries, who, for years, were able to take a more nuanced approach. There were built in mechanisms for people to initiate contact with the library, and the burden for getting a library card was more on the user than the institution. This approach no longer works.

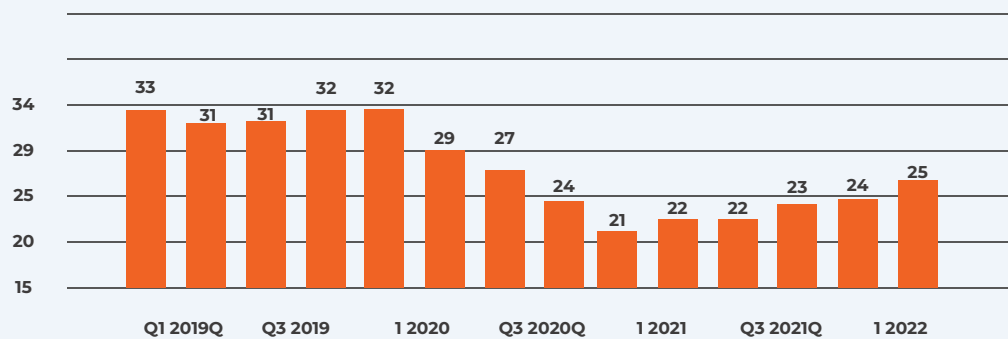
Despite challenges to gain and keep library customers, there is good news. By and large, interest in library services remains high in communities, even as library service areas grow more diverse, and interests become more segmented. The success lies in employing marketing fundamentals to identify right audiences with the right message and the right product or service. OrangeBoy calls this R³.

This white paper outlines a strategic marketing approach to attract and retain library users that has been successful in dozens of public libraries across the country. A 'one and done' approach is too passive and will not cut through the clutter to deliver the results that grow the library user base. Successful results come from a consistent and sustained marketing effort that aligns with the library's strategic priorities, targets the right audiences, employs the right programs and services, and is measurable.

MARKET PENETRATION TOOK A NOSEDIVE DUE TO PANDEMIC

OrangeBoy Inc. analyzed more than 200 public libraries on its Savannah platform to see the effects of the pandemic. The analysis revealed an alarming trend—market penetration¹ had dropped 12 percent, hitting an all-time low in March 2021 – one year after the start of the COVID closures.

MARKET PENETRATION



ORANGEBOY CREATES STRATEGIC MARKETING CAMPAIGNS TO REVERSE THE TREND

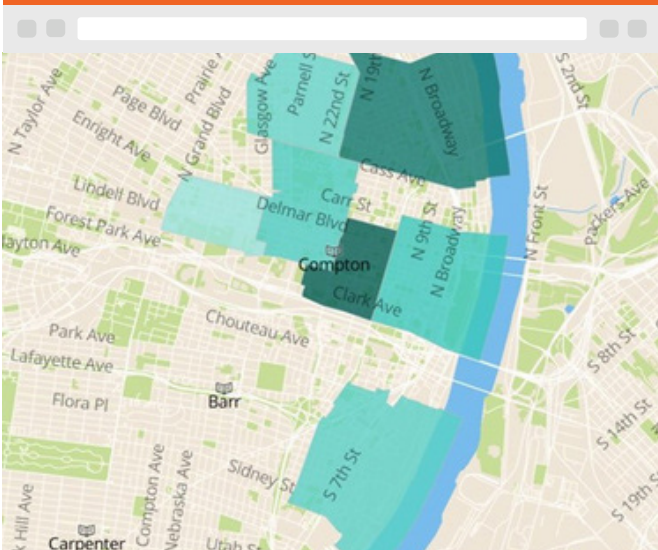
The OrangeBoy team combined its data analytics know-how and marketing savvy to create a Strategic Marketing Campaign service offering. As any good marketer will attest, we worked with several public libraries to pilot the offering in 2020. As word has spread and the success of the campaigns have been shared, the number of campaigns have increased significantly over the past 18 months.

Results have been impressive and demonstrate this approach works. Libraries employing campaigns have seen increases in new cardholder sign-ups at pre-pandemic levels or higher, and they have re-engaged thousands of lapsed cardholders, resulting in increased market

penetration. These results not only support the mission of libraries to serve as many people in the community as possible, it also reinforces the relevance of libraries to stakeholders and funders. Another success factor is a turn-key approach. OrangeBoy provides all project management, coordination, and measurement during the campaign process, with the library maintaining creative control and final approvals. In an era where there is too much to do and not enough hands to do it, the OrangeBoy team extends the library's marketing reach without burdening its staff.

[1] Market Penetration is calculated to count the number of households in a library service area with at least one active library user with activity in the past 12 months

STRATEGIC MARKETING CAMPAIGNS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:



DEFINING STRATEGIC FOCUS

The process starts with a strategy meeting with library staff to identify the focus for the campaign and the desired call to action (CTA).

TARGETED LIST DEVELOPMENT

Once the strategy is in place, OrangeBoy uses its Market Watch service in Savannah to target the geographies for the campaign. The team then pulls the households in the targeted areas and segments out households that are active, non-user, inactive with an e-mail address, and inactive without an e-mail address.

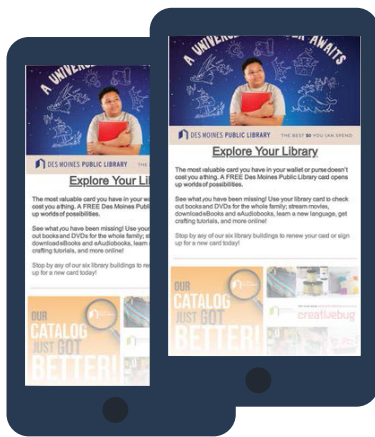


**FAMILIES COME IN ALL
SHAPES AND SIZES** | **JOIN
OURS**



DIRECT MAIL POSTCARDS

Direct mail is the channel used to reach non-user households in the targeted area, as well as inactive households with no e-mail address on file with the library. Each household receives three postcards during a campaign over an eight-week period, and the cards include a QR code that points to a website landing page created by the library.



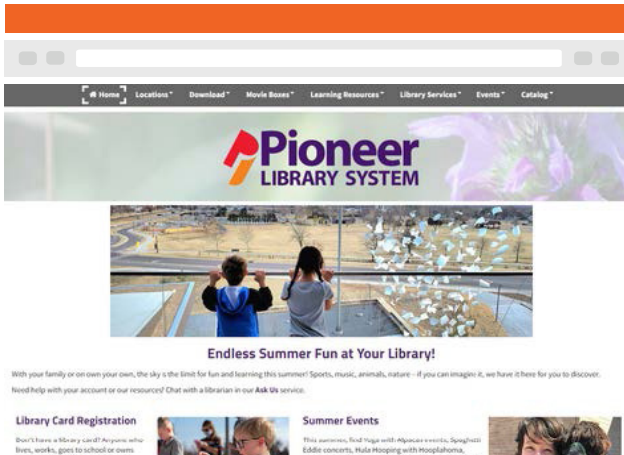
E-MAIL

This channel is used to reach inactive households with an e-mail address on file. The frequency mimics the direct mail, sending messages three times over an eight-week period.



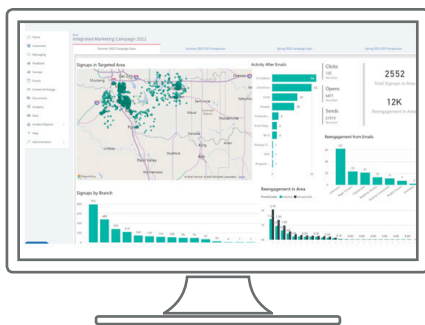
MOBILE ADS

The e-mail and direct mail efforts are supported with mobile ads in a geographically targeted area. These ads are presented in more than 100,000 popular apps on mobile devices, delivering 375,000 ads over a 4-week period.



WEBSITE LANDING PAGE

The participating library can create a separate landing page to promote specific library services, and it allows for better tracking to measure campaign performance.



CAMPAIGN DASHBOARD

OrangeBoy sets up a custom report on the library's Savannah site to track new sign-ups, cardholder re-engagement, and other relevant measures.

OAK PARK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

HERE FOR YOU!
SUMMER 2022



Prepared by:
OrangeBoy.

INTEGRATED
MARKETING
CAMPAIGN

CAMPAIGN REPORT

Upon completion of a strategic marketing campaign, OrangeBoy prepares a final report to showcase the channels, creative, and results.

LIBRARY SPOTLIGHTS

The spotlights below share a few examples of successful strategic marketing campaigns.

PIONEER LIBRARY SYSTEM, OKLAHOMA

Pioneer Library System, serving Cleveland, McClain, and Pottawatomie counties in Oklahoma, has demonstrated the effectiveness of a long-term, sustained, targeted marketing effort. Using Savannah's MarketWatch feature, Pioneer Library System worked with OrangeBoy to identify census tracts with lower levels of market penetration and higher percentages of households with children. Their initial campaign, launched in the fall of 2021, yielded a 28 percent increase in new cardholders over the previous year.

The library followed the fall campaign with spring and summer campaigns in 2022. Results continue to be effective, and the library has put into place a spring, summer and fall campaign schedule for the next three years.



DES MOINES PUBLIC LIBRARY, IOWA

The old adage is true – it is easier to keep a customer than to gain a new one. The Des Moines Public Library wanted to capitalize on this principle.

During the summer of 2022, they employed a marketing campaign targeted at lapsed users. Messaging emphasized “see what you’ve been missing!” and highlighted branch locations and programming.

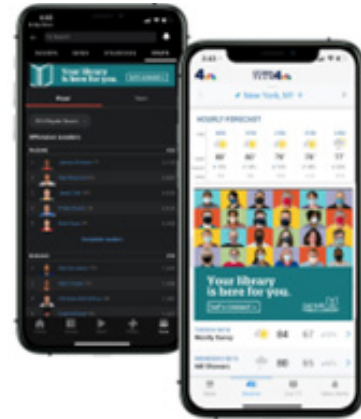
The campaign resulted in re-engaging 19 percent of targeted lapsed users, representing 5,875 cardholders.



OAK PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY, ILLINOIS

Oak Park Public Library in Illinois focused its strategic marketing campaign on diversity and inclusion, targeting more diverse areas of its service area. In 2021, Oak Park Public Library began their “Here for You” marketing campaign aimed toward underserved communities to let them know about their anti-racism efforts and highlight non-traditional library services.

The campaign was a huge success. Mobile ads resulted in a high click-through rate. More importantly, the campaign moved 365 customers, or six percent of recipients, from an inactive or occasional user to an active user.



Finally, the campaign helped the library return to pre-pandemic signup levels. In 2021, the campaign resulted in a 48 percent increase in signups over the same period in 2020. In 2022, the campaign generated an additional 29 percent increase in signups over the year before.

ENOCH PRATT FREE LIBRARY, MARYLAND

Recognizing the growing digital divide during the pandemic, the Enoch Pratt Free Library sought to re-engage their public computer users and send out messaging highlighting internet and computer access offered by the Pratt Library. Starting in fall of 2021, the Pratt Library partnered with OrangeBoy Inc. to identify customers based on four factors: public computer users that had become inactive; populations without access to internet at home; Market Penetration, and households with populations under 18 years of age. The Savannah platform enabled the Pratt Library to identify the geographies and users requiring re-engagement and they were able to target their marketing accordingly.



The campaign re-engaged 36 percent of lapsed users who were targeted in this campaign, and many resumed their computer use at library branches, evidence of the success of the content promoting library technology and internet services.

KEY LESSONS

BUILD SUSTAINED, ONGOING MARKETING EFFORTS.

Libraries that are dedicating the resources to grow their customer base are reaping the results. It takes multiple touchpoints to get noticed and move someone toward activity.

TARGET YOUR AUDIENCE.

Mass marketing is long dead, and libraries have limited budgets. A targeted approach allows focus on the geographic areas that align with the library's goals and creates a more manageable and cost-effective approach.

USE THE RIGHT CHANNELS.

The marketing channels employed in OrangeBoy's Strategic Marketing Campaigns offer the best methods to reach the right audiences, and they are measurable.

MEASURE RESULTS.

With valuable dollars allocated toward marketing, measurement is a must. Campaigns can be refined over time to ramp up under-performing segments, and those precious marketing dollars can be stretched to their maximum impact.

SUMMARY

Libraries must continue to find ways to show value in their communities, and one important measure of this is its reach, or market penetration, across its service area. Today's environment requires a consistent marketing approach that is strategic, targeted, and aligns with the vast interests and diversity of the communities it serves. OrangeBoy can help with strategic marketing campaigns to attract new users and retain existing ones.

ABOUT ABOUT ORANGEBOY, INC.

OrangeBoy has been helping clients Think in Color for more than 20 years, using customer insights to drive results. Inspired by a little orange cat named Opie, OrangeBoy set out to tackle challenging business problems by studying consumer behavior and community characteristics. Opie's colorful personality, work ethic and ability see things differently served as the basis for the company name and represents our values still today. OrangeBoy has leveraged its 15-year industry expertise to build and host Savannah[®], a software as a service (SaaS) customer intelligence platform designed to help libraries improve community outcomes by harnessing the power of data.