Farmland Public Library
Marketing Plan

“Generations”
Bridging the Gap

Presented by: Carrie E. Watson
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Executive Summary

Farmland Public Library’s Mission Statement.

Farmland Public Library provides open and equal access to ideas and information to all patrons of the library and welcomes all people seeking knowledge and enjoyment through technology, print, & non-print sources.

The following Marketing Plan outlines the basis of the Generations Program. This program is designed to bring together seniors in the community with youth in the community for mutual benefit. Keeping in the spirit of the Mission Statement, this Marketing Plan hopes to encourage all members within the library district to utilize the library for any information needs. However, due to the nature of the Generations Program, the focus of this plan is on the senior members of the community.

Specific goals have been stated concerning the number of registrants in the program and subsequent participation. A six month time line has been included with specific actions items listed. Responsible parties have been assigned to each action item and include the Library Director, Circulation Director, Board Members and Friends Executive Committee and Membership.

Much thought went into the design of the Marketing Mix to be used during this campaign. A special logo was created for the program and campaign as well as the tag line “Bridging the Gap.” Materials including fliers and business cards have been created and special attention given to the program’s Kick Off Party. Public Relations activities have been taken into consideration and an Elevator Speech included in the plan.

Finally, methods of evaluation have been included to determine the effectiveness of the plans as well as my own thoughts on why I think the plan will succeed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carrie E. Watson
Theoretical Foundation

It is important to note that the methods used in this marketing plan are not new or untested. We will follow tried practices to reach our goals and implement a successful campaign.

The library wants to deliver news of its services with confidence. Therefore, an Elevator Speech has been written for this marketing campaign. The ALSC Managing Children’s Services Committee states that, “First impressions are crucial, so you need a clear, consistent message when introducing yourself in face-to-face conversations and for introductions to groups.”

Word of Mouth Marketing is also critical to the Generations campaign. We want participants to take their experiences with our program and share them in the community. “The best scenario is for a positive word of mouth buzz to be created about your products and services through natural excitement and recommendations from your customers, but deliberate efforts can be employed to start and continue word of mouth marketing.” (Spohr). We will ask our participants to share word of their experiences with others in the community and will reward them when they bring others to the program (see Public Relations section for details).

Due to budget constraints, the decision was made not to pursue advertising but rather to pursue sponsorships from other community businesses. In return for this sponsorship, contributors would be acknowledged on campaign materials. This method has been done successfully for many years. “‘Sponsorship is not a new thing,’ says Christopher T. Dunworth, president and CEO of the New World Symphony in Miami Beach. ‘Partnerships with corporations go back 50 to 100 years with some symphonies.’ For libraries, they go back most notably to the 35-year period beginning in 1889 when 1,679 public library buildings were constructed with the philanthropy of industrialist Andrew Carnegie” (Kniffel).
Market Audit & Research

Farmland Public Library serves a small rural community in Randolph County. Service areas include the town of Farmland, Monroe Township, Stoney Creek Township and Union Township. All Monroe Central School students are eligible to receive a library card regardless of residency. A contract is also offered to Green Township but Township Trustees have declined the offer to contract with the library district. The library serves a total population of approximately 6,375 (American Fact Finder, U.S. Census Bureau).

Analysis

Current & Potential Customers

There are currently 879 library card holders which represents just 13.8% of the service area population. Though many cards are issued to children, the majority of card holders are middle aged to senior adults. In the library service area there are approximately 1291 children ages 14 and younger and 965 residents over the age of 65 (American Fact Finder, U.S. Census Bureau).

Community and Competitors

There are few direct competitors to the library in the area. Monroe Central houses libraries in both the Elementary and Junior-Senior High Schools but these are available only to students and inaccessible on weekends and school breaks. Other libraries in the county are located in the towns of Winchester, Union City, Lynn and Ridgeville. Nearby Muncie in Delaware County also has three library branches. While close, a non-resident card or PLAC would have to be purchased to borrow materials. The nearest bookstore to Farmland Public Library is approximately 20 miles away in Muncie.

Library Objectives

The library's objective is to provide services and resources to all residents in the library service area. Farmland Public Library strives to match library resources and programming to the appropriate audiences within the service area for maximum benefit to patrons.
Programs

The library offers limited programming to the community. Story time is offered the second Tuesday of each month to all children elementary aged and younger. A Summer Reading Program is offered to this same age group. In 2013, an Adult Summer Reading Program was offered with dismal participation (one person) and an author visit was arranged with less than twenty people attending. Competition to library programs include extracurricular activities offered by the schools, 4-H and sports. Work, church and other obligations limit adult participation in programs.

Current Marketing Activities

The library currently has no budget for marketing. The limited marketing that occurs includes story time fliers that are provided to the school through the Friends of the Farmland Public Library and occasional Facebook posts regarding library activities and new materials that have been added to the collection. Other informational fliers are sometimes posted in public areas such as the post office, community center and in the library.

Environmental Scan

Political/Legal Factors

The library offers contracts to four townships in the area. Three townships signed contracts for 2013 while Green township declining the offer. The decision by the township trustees to forego the contract removes approximately 874 people from the library service area. Stoney Creek Township implied they were considering not signing the contract for 2014 which would take another 870 people (13%) out of the library service area. Township residents have been encouraged to contact their trustees concerning these contract decisions. Lack of contracts also affects the library’s operating budget.

Economic Factors

The recent economy has increased patronage at the library. More residents have needed the library’s computer services to access government sites for unemployment and other assistance. The library does not typically receive large monetary donations. Donations of craft supplies, snacks, etc. do not seem to be effected.
Social Factors

The demographics of the community have not changed dramatically in the past several years. However, the population is quickly aging. A little over 14% of the service area population is over the age of 65 with an additional 15.4% of the population or 1,036 residents are between the ages of 54–65.

Technological Factors

High speed internet is not available in all parts of the library service area and wifi connection points are limited. Tablets that are to be used for homework completion have been distributed to a number of students at Monroe Central schools. According to Les McEldowney, Technology Coordinator at Monroe Central, a recent survey showed that 16% of students lacked the high speed internet connection needed to adequately utilize the tablets from home. High speed internet access is a service Farmland Library can provide to those in the service area lacking connection availability or the funds to pay for high speed service.

SWOT

Strengths

- Central location in the service area
- Knowledgeable and friendly staff
- Public access computers
- Wifi connection available both inside and outside the library
- Strong Friends support group and community partners
- Fun programming for kids

Weaknesses

- Limited hours (24 hours a week)
- Space constraints (1,764 square feet)
- No online databases or other research tools
- Director is overcommitted and doesn’t have the time required to devote to advocacy, programming and building partnerships in the community
- No computers designated for children’s activities
Opportunities

- Reach out to the school as a partner to offer wifi to students without high speed internet connections
- Reach out to the large percentage of residents who do not have library cards
- Reach out to the large percentage of elementary students who do not participate in library programming
- Partner with local preschools, daycares, churches and senior care centers to offer services and programming

Threats

- Disinterested population
- Townships declining contract opportunities
- Access to e-books and movies from home
- Other programs such as Bible School, 4-H, sports, Boy Scouts and other clubs
- Budget restraints/cuts ($4,000 was cut from the proposed 2014 budget bringing total budget for 2014 down to $52,056)

Original Data

A mixture of survey and personal interview would be used for data collection.

Personal Interview

The Director and Circulation Director would conduct personal interviews with library patrons during patron visits. The goal would be to determine what current patrons have an interest in the program, their willingness to participate in the program and what talents or insights they could contribute to the program.

The conversation should start with a brief overview of the program leading into an inquiry as to whether the patron would have interest in participating in the program. Would they like to be paired with one child that they would meet with regularly or would they prefer to work with different children in the program? What activities would they like to see offered? This would be presented as an open ended question in an attempt to gather more ideas. Activities not mentioned can then be mentioned to help determine interest. “Those are all great ideas! Would you have any interest in working puzzles or a Lego building contest?” The patron would then be asked if there are any special skills or talents they could share with the group such as crocheting, whittling or playing a musical
instrument. Patrons should be asked if they have any other ideas or comments. Contact information should be given to the patron in case they have other ideas they’d like to share at a later date. Finally, the patron should be thanked for their time.

_survey_

To reach individuals who are not current or frequent library patrons, surveys would be administered. The survey would be available online through the library web-site. However, due to low traffic on the site, surveys would also be distributed in local churches, day cares and at Monroe Central Schools. Survey questions would mimic the personal interview questions. Questions would be presented in a yes/no/maybe format and activities would be rated on a scale of 1–5 to determine interest levels. Blanks would be provided for survey takers to write in other activities, ideas, etc.
Market Segmentation

The *Generations* program depends on the participation of both senior and children members of the community. Because the library already has a base in children participation in other library programs, seniors will be targeted for this marketing plan.

Seniors are in search of companionship and activity. Their days used to be filled with work and raising families and taking care of the home. These activities and relationships gave them a sense of accomplishment and pride. Many of these same people are now lonely. They may have lost a spouse and their children moved away. Even if children and grandchildren are nearby, their busy lives may not allow for much interaction with the elderly members of the family. Some of the seniors of the community have downsized and no longer have large yards and garden space to tend. Hobbies have been curbed due to income restraints or physical ailments.

Real life example: Joy Norman was married for almost 50 years. She helped her husband run his business, raised four children and babysat for others for over 30 years. Joy’s husband passed away in 2009. Since then she has been forced to sell her home in the country and move to an assisted living condominium in Winchester. She no longer drives at night which has taken away activities such as quilt guild, Sunday night church services and card club. She also does not drive in bad weather. Her children and grandchildren no longer live in the county and rarely come to visit. During the winter months she sometimes goes days at a time without seeing another person. She is lonely and feels like she has no purpose. Joy craves companionship, the opportunity to share her many talents with others (quilting, painting, crocheting) and misses the interaction with and affection of children.
Service Identification

The Generations program is designed to bring together the youngest in the community (those 14 and younger) with the oldest in the community (those 65 and older). Seniors and youth gather at the library at designated times. They can participate in group activities such as games, puzzles and story time or work one on one. One on one time allows youth who need to practice reading skills the opportunity to read aloud to an impartial, friendly senior. Seniors can teach interested youth skills such as crocheting, knitting, whittling or model building. These activities provide the companionship and interactions that the seniors desire while reading assistance and skills teaching provide them with a sense of purpose. The children also benefit from building these relationships and doing activities outside their normal realm.

On an Ansoff Matrix, the Generations Program would be located on the border between Product Development and Diversification. It is a New Product being offered to an Existing Market. However, the library also hopes to reach out to non-patrons in the community which would then move Generations toward the Diversification quartile.
Mission

Farmland Public Library provides open and equal access to ideas and information to all patrons of the library and welcomes all people seeking knowledge and enjoyment through technology, print, & non-print sources.

Objectives

The objective of this campaign is to introduce the Generations program and encourage support and participation in the community.

Goals

- Register 25 seniors for the program
- Register 35 youth for the program
- Have participation from at least half of registrants at each scheduled activity

Actions & Timeline

December
- Complete online survey, physical survey and sample questions for personal interviews. (Library Director and Circulation Director)

First Week of January
- Link to online survey from library web site (Library Director)
- Distribute physical surveys to local churches, daycare centers, schools, etc. (Library Staff)
- Begin personal interviews (Library Director and Circulation Director)

Third Week of January
- Push for web survey participants – mention in newsletter, post to Facebook, offer an incentive for completion (Library Director)
- Remind physical survey recipients to complete and return surveys (Library Staff)

February
- Compile survey results (Library Director and Circulation Director)
March

- Based on survey results create calendar/schedule of activities to begin during third quarter. (Library Director, Circulation Director, Friends)
- Create fliers, posters, Facebook posts, Newsletter articles, etc. about program (Library Director)

April

- Begin distribution of fliers, run Newsletter article, begin weekly Facebook postings about the program (Library Director, Friends)
- Contact newspaper to see if they will attend the May information session

May

- Continue distribution of materials (Library Director, Friends)
- Host an information session for interested participants (Everyone)
- Begin registration (Library Staff)
- Distribute July activity calendar (Library Director, Friends)

June

- Final push for registrations (Library Director)
  - Additional Facebook posts
  - Send a press release to the newspaper
- Contact registrants to remind them of the upcoming activities (Library Director, Circulation Director)

July

- Launch Program / Kick Off Party

Budget

The Farmland Public Library has a limited budget for programming and almost no money set aside for Marketing. The budget for this campaign will be capped at $200 half of which will be contributed by the Friends of the Farmland Public Library.

- 1 – 18” x 24” poster $40.00
- Copies of Fliers, Calendars, etc. $30.00
- Refreshments, etc. for Kick Off Party $130.00
Communication. The Marketing Mix

To reach the most number of potential participants as possible, a number of tools and resources will be used to promote the Generations Program.

Promotion

The campaign will focus on what the library can do for the target audience. The library can fulfill seniors’ needs for companionship. Pictures of happy kids with smiling seniors will be used on materials with the idea that participation in the program can bring smiles to the faces of the participants as well. The newsletter article will outline the basics of the program and focus on the benefits to seniors as well as children. The fliers will highlight the fun to be had by both age groups and the benefit to all involved. Facebook posts will include “teasers” of activities and the resulting feeling of contentment for having been involved.

The Kick Off Party will be designed to give participants a complete overview of the program and many activities that are planned.

- **Get to Know You Game** – Senior participants will be paired with a youth participant and given a game board. The game board will consist of tasks such as “Find someone who served in the military.” When that person is located, participants will introduce themselves and sign the game board. This allows for a senior to work individually with a child and also for everyone to mingle as they try to fill their board. First one to complete the game board wins a prize.

- **Story Time** – Because reading will be one of the main activities of the program, story time will follow. A library staff member will read a children’s story to the group. The story will be one that the seniors remember from their childhood. At the end of the story, seniors will be asked to share memories of the story such as a mother reading in front of the wood burning cook stove in the kitchen or Santa delivering the book during a blizzard in 1937.

- **Break Out Time** – Activity stations will be set up throughout the library. Participants will be encouraged to walk around and pick the activity they would most like to do. Choices will include puzzles, Legos, a simple craft, reading, etc. This will allow seniors and children to see who likes the same activities and give them a chance to interact with someone with similar interests.

- **Build It Snack** – The snack will be interactive such as decorating a cupcake or building finger sandwiches. Children and seniors will again be paired to allow for one on one interaction and give seniors the opportunity to assist the younger children with the snack.
- **Singing** – Danny and Donna Mills will be asked to sing to the group while they eat their snacks. A few songs from the 30’s, 40’s and 50’s will be selected to introduce the youth to the songs the seniors are most familiar with. Annette Skeen will be asked to follow with children’s songs.

- **Wrap Up** – The Library Director will thank everyone for their attendance, answer questions and remind everyone to RSVP for the next activity.

*TRAP*

**T** – Timely

When seniors read the marketing materials and make the decision to participate, they will have a number of options for immediate action. A website will be provided for online registration which will also be accessible through a link on Facebook. A phone number will be listed to call the library to sign up over the phone. In the library, registration forms will be available at the circulation desk.

**R** – Relevant

Materials will include real world stories of people who will participate and benefit from the program. Joy Norman’s story that was included in the *Market Segmentation* portion of this marketing plan is an example.

**A** – Active

![Picture](image_url)
Pictures of smiling seniors and happy kids will be included on materials. These individuals have participated in the program and have seemingly benefited from it.

**P** – Personal

The stories and pictures included in the materials will resonate with those reviewing the literature. The stories will make them think, “This sounds like me” while the pictures depict how happy they too can be if they participate.
**Branding**

Name: Generations

Tag Line: Bridging the Gap

Sub-Tag Line: For the Young and Young at Heart

Logo:  

Main Colors: Blue 0 / 112 / 192  
Black 0 / 0 / 0  
Other Colors: Green 0 / 176 / 80  
Red 192 / 0 / 0

Typography: Andalus – Logo, Tagline and Primary Font for Communications  
CASTELLAR – Main Headings  
Appropriate to use **Bold** and *Italics*

**Public Relations**

Social Media

Facebook will be used to “tease” the program to Facebook followers. It will also be used as a scheduling/RSVP tool by posting all activities as “events” and then inviting people to attend. Reminders will be posted prior to events and a short summary will be posted after an event. Albums will also be created within Facebook for posting pictures.
Word of Mouth Marketing

Participants would be asked to share their experiences with others whether at their church, club meeting or simply with friends. Incentives would be offered for bringing an acquaintance to an event that resulted in that person registering for the program.

Elevator Speech

An elevator speech would be prepared and distributed to all staff members, Board Members and the Friends membership. These people would be asked to memorize the speech and try to use it at least once a week. Business-sized cards would also be handed out with the details of the program that would be handed out at the end of the elevator speech.

Are you a patron of the Farmland Public Library? The library has many wonderful resources such as public access computers, wifi, movies, magazines and of course a large selection of books. The library also offers outstanding programs such as our Generations program. The program is designed to bridge the gap between the generations of grandparents and children in the community. The group meets in the library on Tuesday’s at 3.30. Seniors read to the younger children who don’t yet know how to read and the older kids read out loud to the adults to practice their reading skills. There is always a puzzle on the table that people work together on and some of the adults teach the kids things such as crocheting or whittling. One woman even brings her accordion on occasion and lets the kids try their hand at it. Everyone has fun and the seniors says it breaks up the monotony of their week. I really think you would enjoy it if you came. Here’s a card with the details. I hope to see you soon!

Publicity

Fliers will be created to distribute within the library, at local churches, day care centers, schools and also hung in prominent locations around Farmland such as the Post Office, Community Center and City Building. Business cards will be created to hand out in correlation with the elevator speech. A table display will be used inside the library to show examples of activities and testimonials from participants. See Appendix for examples.
Advertising/Sponsorship

Due to the limited budget at Farmland Public Library, paid advertising is not an option at this time. Instead, sponsorship will be pursued. The Randolph County Community Foundation will be asked for funding for the program. Grants have been awarded to the library in the past in exchange for public acknowledgement of the Foundation and inclusion of their logo on materials. Old National Bank and A.G. Edwards would also be asked to sponsor the program with monetary donations.

In a small community such as Farmland, many times local businesses more willing to donate items rather than money. Pizza King and The Chocolate Moose would be asked for food donations for snacks or coupons to be given as prizes and/or incentives. Candy and Stuff has toys (Lincoln Log sets) and games (Chutes and Ladders) that could be donated for activities and the Farmland Hardware Store has items that can be used for crafts.

All sponsors/contributors would be recognized on select promotional materials.

Advocacy

As mentioned earlier, the library only has 879 card holders. Increasing patronage is a major concern for the library. This marketing plan is designed to increase patronage of the library. While some current library users will participate in the program, Generations also intends to bring in non-library users. The library will partner with local churches and organizations to recruit participants. Sponsorships from businesses will create stronger bonds between the library and the community. The library speech and word of mouth marketing campaign will also increase awareness of the library, its resources and programs. These partnerships, sponsorships and publicity techniques all fall in place with the library’s advocacy goals of increased patronage.
**Internal Marketing**

Farmland Public Library only has two employees…The Library Director and the Circulation Director and both of those employees have major roles in the organization and implementation of the program.

The library will rely on its Friends organization for much of its marketing and execution of this program. It will be the job of the Library Director and Circulation Director to bring the Friends on board for the project.

The Library Director will need to schedule a special meeting with the Executive Committee of the Friends group. During this meeting the program should be explained in depth and the intended role of the Friends group be presented. This conversation should act as an offer of a partnership and a request for assistance. Assumption of financial support and volunteer hours should be avoided. Members of the Executive Committee should be asked to volunteer to help plan the program and be involved throughout the process.

Prior to implementation of the program, the Library Director along with the Executive Committee should meet with the general membership of the Friends group. At this time the program should be presented to the group and tasks be outlined and volunteers requested.

It is always important to thank individuals for their hard work and dedication. The Friends should be recognized for their work during the planning and implementation stages and throughout the program.
Evaluation

As the goals stated, the library hopes to register 25 seniors, 35 youth and have participation from at least half of these individuals at each event. These goals are easy to measure and evaluation can be completed by counting the registration forms and taking attendance at events.

To determine the effectiveness of the marketing materials other methods are required. Facebook contains a tracking tool to show how many people a particular post reached. Counting “likes” is also a way to determine how many people may have been affected by a post.

The number of newsletters distributed can determine how many people may have read the Generations article included in the newsletter.

Questioning participants either in conversation or through a short survey would also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of marketing materials.

- How did you learn about the program?
  - Flyer
  - Elevator Speech
  - Word of Mouth
  - Facebook
  - Newsletter

- What materials did you view?
  - Flyer
  - Poster
  - Business Card
  - Facebook posts
  - Calendar
  - Registration information

- What resource do you use to receive ongoing updates regarding the program?
  - Calendar
  - Announcements during activities
  - Facebook

All of this information can then be used to gauge the value of materials and make adjustments to how the library reaches its audience.
Reflection

Because the library does very little marketing, there are many aspects of this Marketing Plan that are new and exciting for Farmland Public Library.

Putting pictures of community members on marketing materials will spark conversations, “Hey! Did you see Cleo and Andi on that poster?” Using familiar faces makes the program more relevant to community members and also makes for a memorable campaign piece.

The elevator speech will draw people into discussion, “You know Paula on the Library Board? She told me about this really great program the other day.” Hearing about a program from a well-standing member of the community carries weight. People will be more likely to follow up with the library and register for the program if they are personally invited rather than just reading a flyer stapled to a wall.

I am very excited about this campaign. Not only does it promote a great program but it also gives library staff, Board members and Friends opportunities to spread the word about the library within the community. I think the excitement I feel will be infectious and everyone involved will feel a sense of accomplishment!
Sources Cited


Appendix

Business Card to Accompany Elevator Speech

Front

Generations
Bridging the Gap
For the Young and the Young at Heart
Farmland Public Library

Back

Tuesday’s, 3:30 p.m.
Connect with a child
Enjoy activities
Share your Knowledge
Attention Seniors…

Are you lonely?

Do you miss the companionship of children?

Do you have a hobby you’d like to share?

If you answered **YES** to any of the above, we have a solution for you!

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The Generations Program strives to Bridge the Gap between the seniors and the children in our community. Join us at the library on **Tuesday’s at 3:30** for projects and activities such as group story time, partner reading, puzzles, games and more!

Have a special hobby you’d like to share? Let us know and we’ll try to partner you with a child with a similar interest.

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Cleo and Andi enjoy reading together and singing silly songs. Cleo says, “My children are grown and my grandkids live out of state. Andi gives me so much joy. Tuesday is my favorite day of the week!”
Table Display

Including activities and testimonials