

# Take Your Academic Library's Marketing & Communications to the Next Level

Cordelia Anderson Consulting

Tweeting:

@cordeliaba

#librarymarketing

# Introductions:

## Cordelia Anderson

- Accredited in Public Relations
- 20 years in Marketing & Communications; 15 in libraries
- 2016 *Library Journal* Marketer of the Year
- Two-time John Cotton Dana winner
- Consulting Business launched in 2018
- Experience with academic libraries as advisory board member and consultant



# Introductions:

Your turn!  
Please use the  
Chat window  
to introduce  
yourself

- Name
- Title
- Organization



Poll: What do you think is the biggest communications challenge for academic libraries?



# Academic Libraries: a SWOT Analysis



## Strengths

- Built-in audiences
- Location
- Tradition/history
- Funding
- Library staff
- Existing relationships
- Brand loyalty

## Weaknesses

- Lack of awareness
- Complex organizational structure
- "Turf" issues on campus
- Antiquated policies/processes
- Lack of staff buy-in
- Brand disloyalty
- Reluctance to hire M&C professionals
- Hard to make your communications stand out

## Opportunities

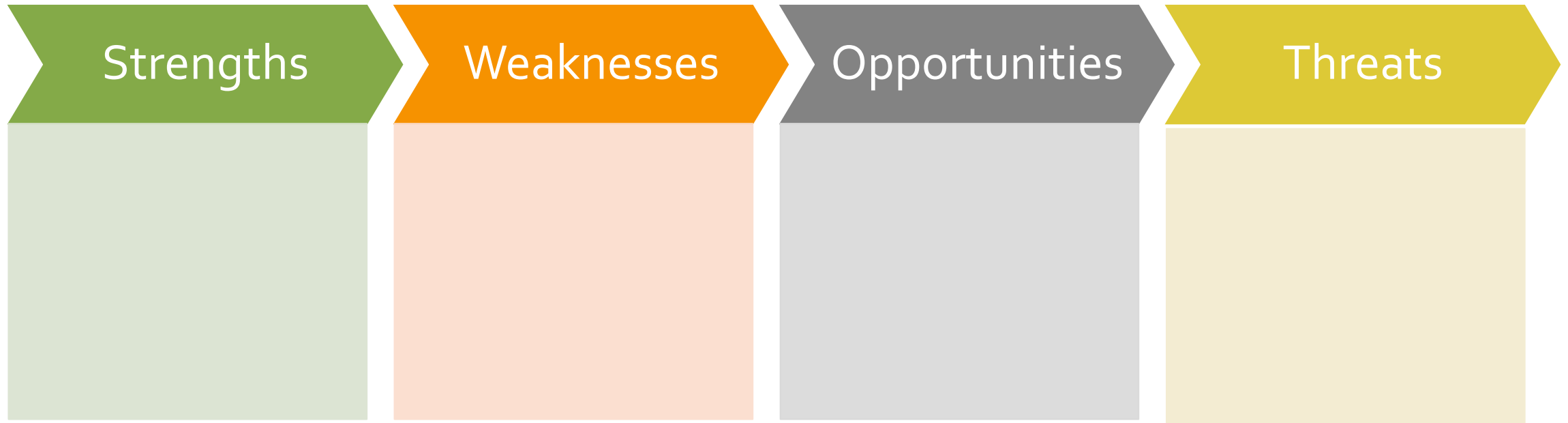
- Captive audience – already there
- Institutional brand alignment
- Partners and collaborators
- Funding opportunities
- Diverse partnerships across campus
- Brand alignment

## Threats

- "What about Google" and other questions
- Campus encroachment
- Lack of broader community awareness
- Overall mindset – self-imposed limitations
- Employee attrition
- AI
- Other information sources – i.e. Google
- Centralized accounts under University, not library

# SWOT Analysis

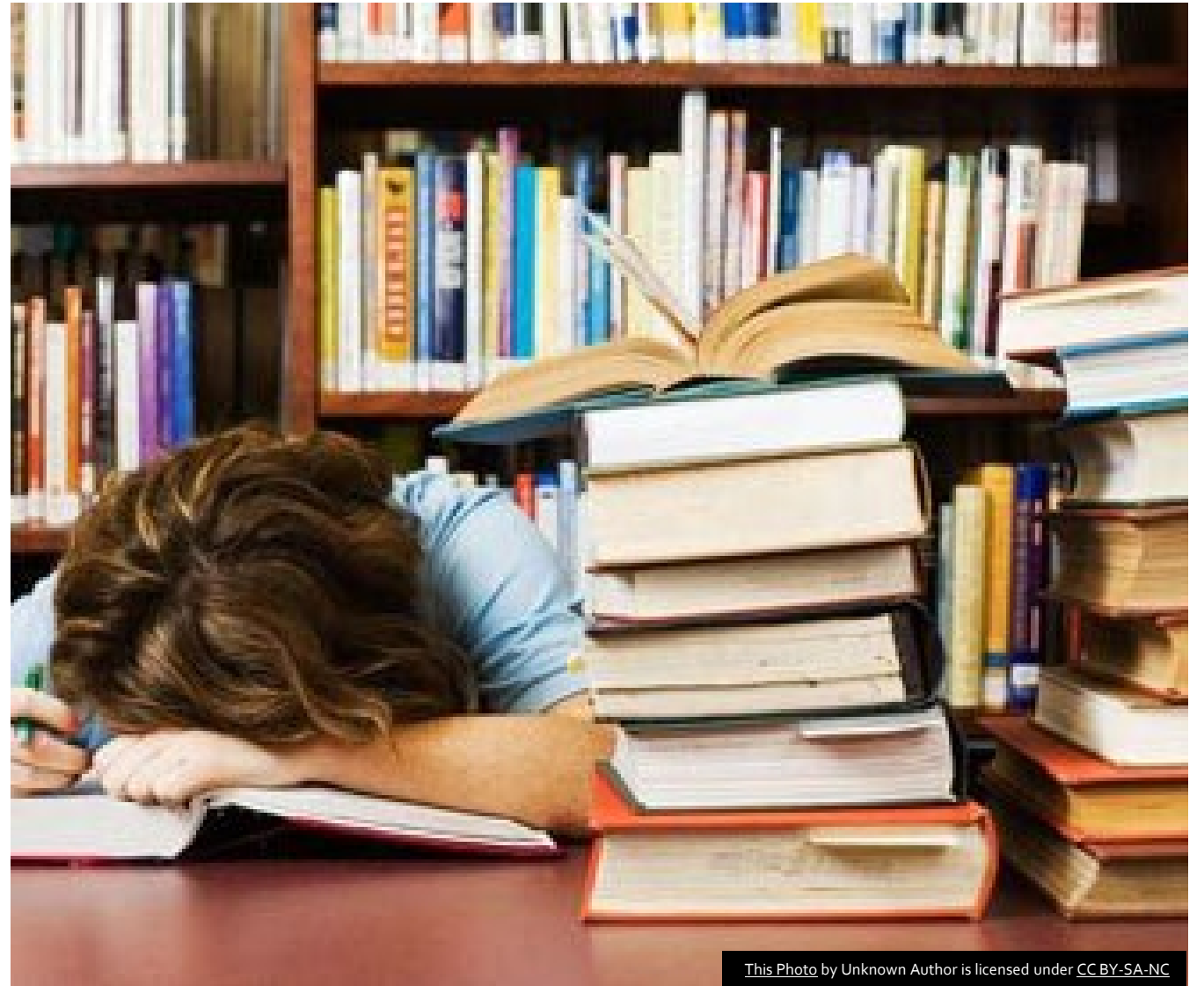




## SWOT Analysis: Your Turn

Take this opportunity to provide your own examples of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats at your library.

# Challenges



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# Lack of awareness

- Students use your library but aren't aware of the depth and breadth of services
- Faculty and staff don't know about your events
- The community knows about your academic institution but not your library

# Complex organizational structure

Lots of school, departments, entities share audiences

Distribution lists held by different offices

Layers of approval required

Slow pace of progress





# “Turf” issues on campus

- Central communications office: how much should go through them vs. individual departments?
- Departments, schools vying for resources
- Everyone has their own goals and objectives

# Antiquated policies/ processes

Access to student, faculty or staff emails for communications

“Opt in” vs. “opt out”

CRM (customer relationship management) limitations



# “What about Google” and other questions

- How many times have you found yourself at a party or gathering, and when you tell someone you work at a library, they ask one of these questions?
  - “Are libraries still relevant?”
  - “Don’t students just use Google?”
  - “Aren’t you just a place to study?”

# Campus encroachment

Faculty looking for office space

Meeting rooms

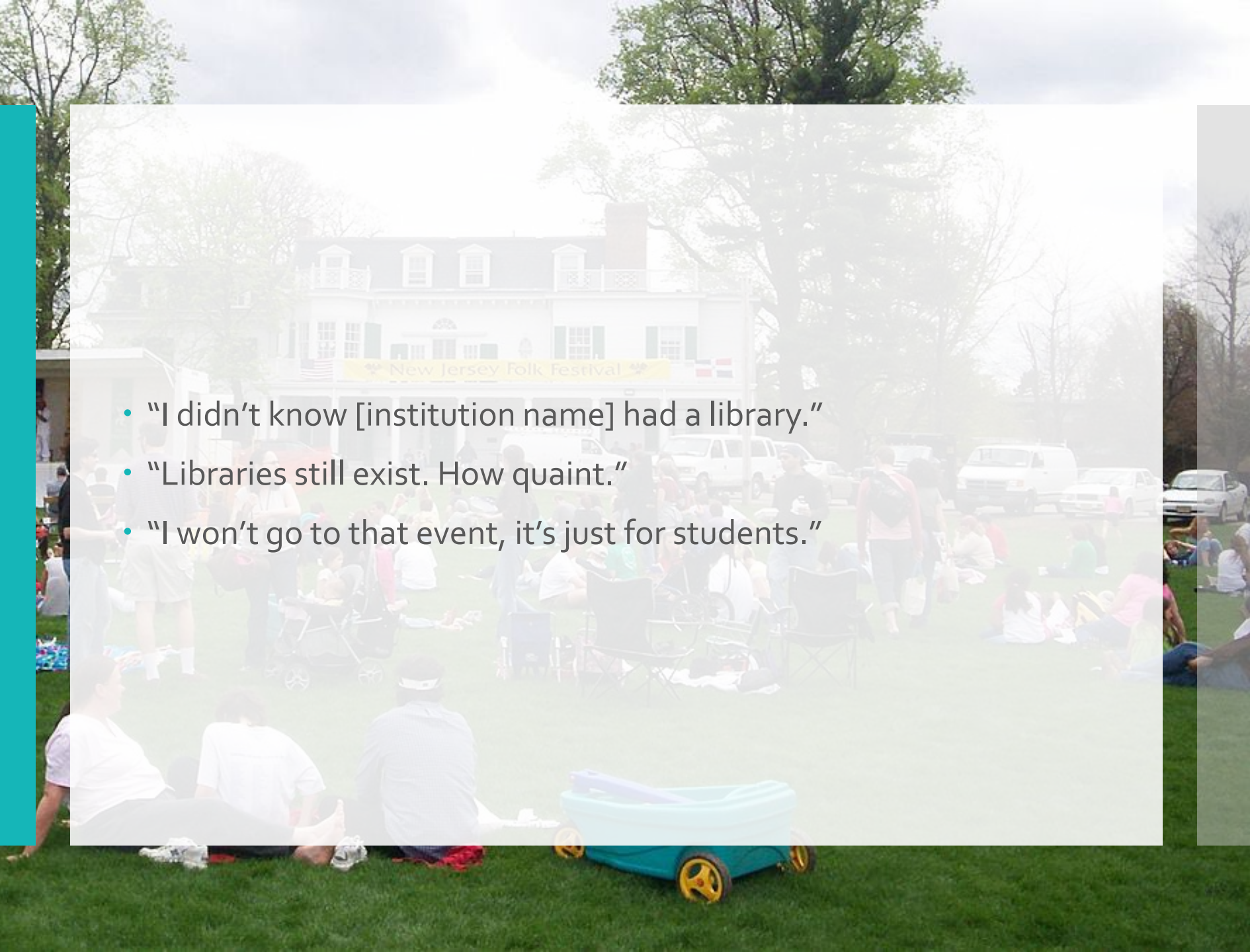
Other campus needs





# Lack of broader community awareness

- “I didn’t know [institution name] had a library.”
- “Libraries still exist. How quaint.”
- “I won’t go to that event, it’s just for students.”





# Overall mindset – self-imposed limitations

Instead of starting with all the reasons that you *can't* do something, begin with the assertion that you *will*.



# Challenges: Questions and Discussion

- **How do we make the public aware that events are open to them?** See possible solutions on the following pages, such as:
  - Partners with community organizations to tap into their audiences
  - Identify key allies such as local media reporters
- **How do we make the library welcoming, but balance that with space boundaries?** See possible solutions on the following pages, such as:
  - Design spaces with library users' needs first (see anthropologist example)
  - Put your most welcoming activities and spaces in your most high-traffic areas

# Solutions



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## Built-in/ captive audiences

- Take advantage of foot traffic
  - Plan events and services for people who are already there first
  - “Pop-up” programs and information tables
  - Incentives such as food, freebies
- Do an analysis of who’s there and how they’re using you
  - Ex: UNCC anthropologist
- Co-locate with other popular services, amenities
  - Ex: Information in café, student union

# Location

Many academic libraries are centrally located on campus

Take advantage of this:

- Good signage

- Clear parking instructions and map

- Well-marked entrances





# Tradition/ History

- Academic libraries have a legacy
- Take advantage of this:
  - Capture alumni memories/stories of impact
  - Share historical pictures, #TBT
  - Remind people why your library was founded, what it stands for
  - Connect the present to the past



# Funding

Every funding situation is unique

Tie your communications strategies to your funding

Ex: If funding is tied to student enrollment, how are you supporting admissions and recruitment?

Ex: If you rely on donors, how are you communicating your value to them?





# Institutional brand alignment

- Institutional brand has power
- Do your best to align with and complement larger branding
  - Brand standards
  - Website
  - Social media
- Ex: "Communications Toolkit" presentation by Montgomery College at LMCC.  
<https://libguides.montgomerycollege.edu/c.php?g=852755&p=6103865#s-lg-box-wrapper-22766935>

# Partners and collaborators

Turn hurdles into alliances

Who has access to your internal customers? Ex:

- Academic affairs
- Student government
- Faculty association

Who do you want to partner with in the community? Ex:

- Chamber of Commerce
- Local alumni chapter
- Public schools
- Other



Opportunities:

Questions and  
Discussion

# Next Steps



Internal	External	Funder
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Faculty</li> <li>• Staff</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family and friends of students</li> <li>• Family and friends of faculty</li> <li>• Family and friends of staff</li> <li>• Local community</li> <li>• Region</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public funders</li> <li>• Donors</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>

## Map Out Your Audiences

Who do you need to reach and why?



## Identify key allies

Who “owns” your audiences?

Who is your contact person?

How do you reach them?

How much lead time is needed?





# Flesh out your communications plan

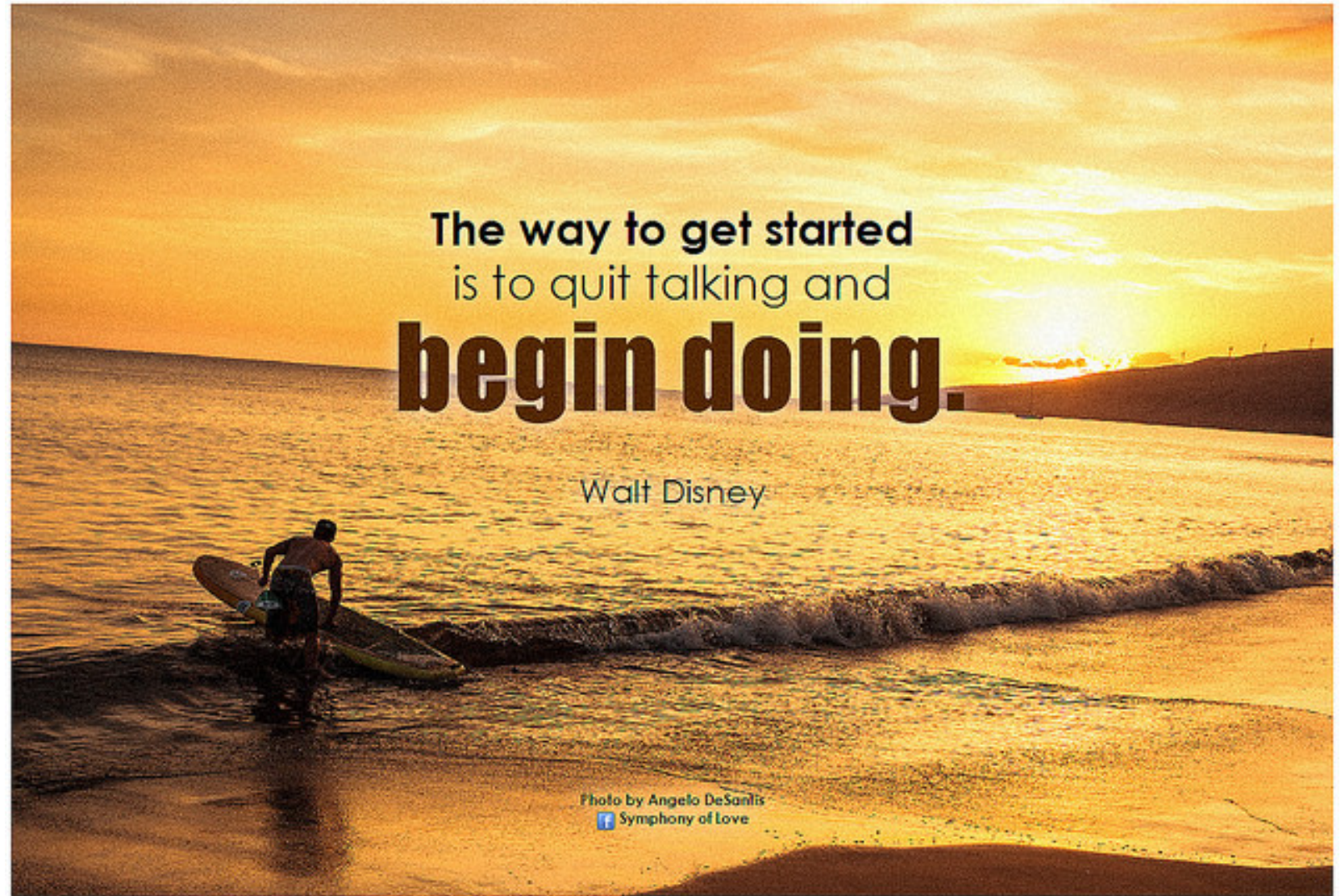
Goals & Measurable Objectives

Key Messages

Strategies & Tactics



Get started!



# Online Toolkit

- Available at <http://bit.ly/academiclibwebinar>
- Communications Plan Template, including:
  - Goals & Objectives
  - Audiences
  - Key Messages
  - Strategies & Tactics
  - Key Ally and Channel Worksheet

# Further Guidance

Step-by-Step Guide

Includes Instructions, Templates

Order Online:

[cordeliaandersonapr.com/products](http://cordeliaandersonapr.com/products)

Hard Copy: \$50

Digital Copy: \$25



## SIMPLE & STRATEGIC GUIDE

*to Creating a Marketing &  
Communications Plan*



*by Cordelia Anderson*  
[www.cordeliaandersonapr.com](http://www.cordeliaandersonapr.com)



# Consulting Services

## Marketing & Communications Jump Start

Not sure where to start? I'm here to help. I will walk you through a customized SWOT Analysis, help you identify key allies on campus, help you brainstorm key messages, and show you how to map out your audiences using the PESO method. Up to five hours of phone consultation and a free copy of my Simple & Strategic Guide for Library M&C Directors. Total cost: \$1,250.

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### **SIMPLE & STRATEGIC GUIDE**

*to Creating a Marketing &  
Communications Plan*



# Opportunity for Recognition *and* Funding

John Cotton Dana Award

Due March 29, 2019

Apply at [ebSCO.com/about/scholarship-awards/john-cotton-dana](http://ebSCO.com/about/scholarship-awards/john-cotton-dana)

\$10,000 Cash Prize

Recognition at ALA

Past Academic Library Winners: California State University San Marcos Library, The University of Tennessee Libraries, Northwestern Libraries, The Scholes Library at Alfred University





# Contact Information

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