

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

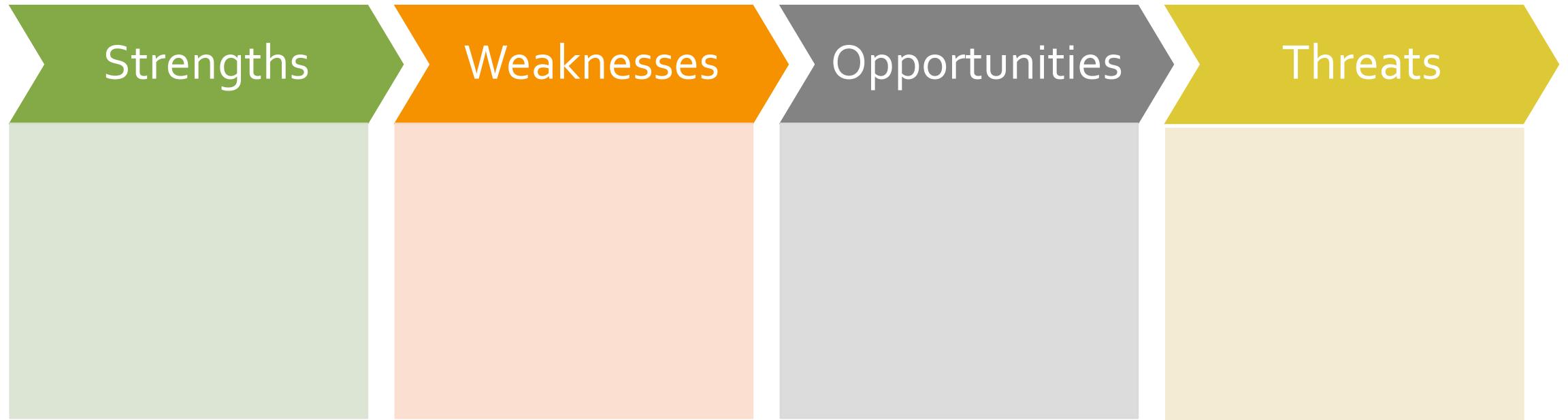
Opportunities

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

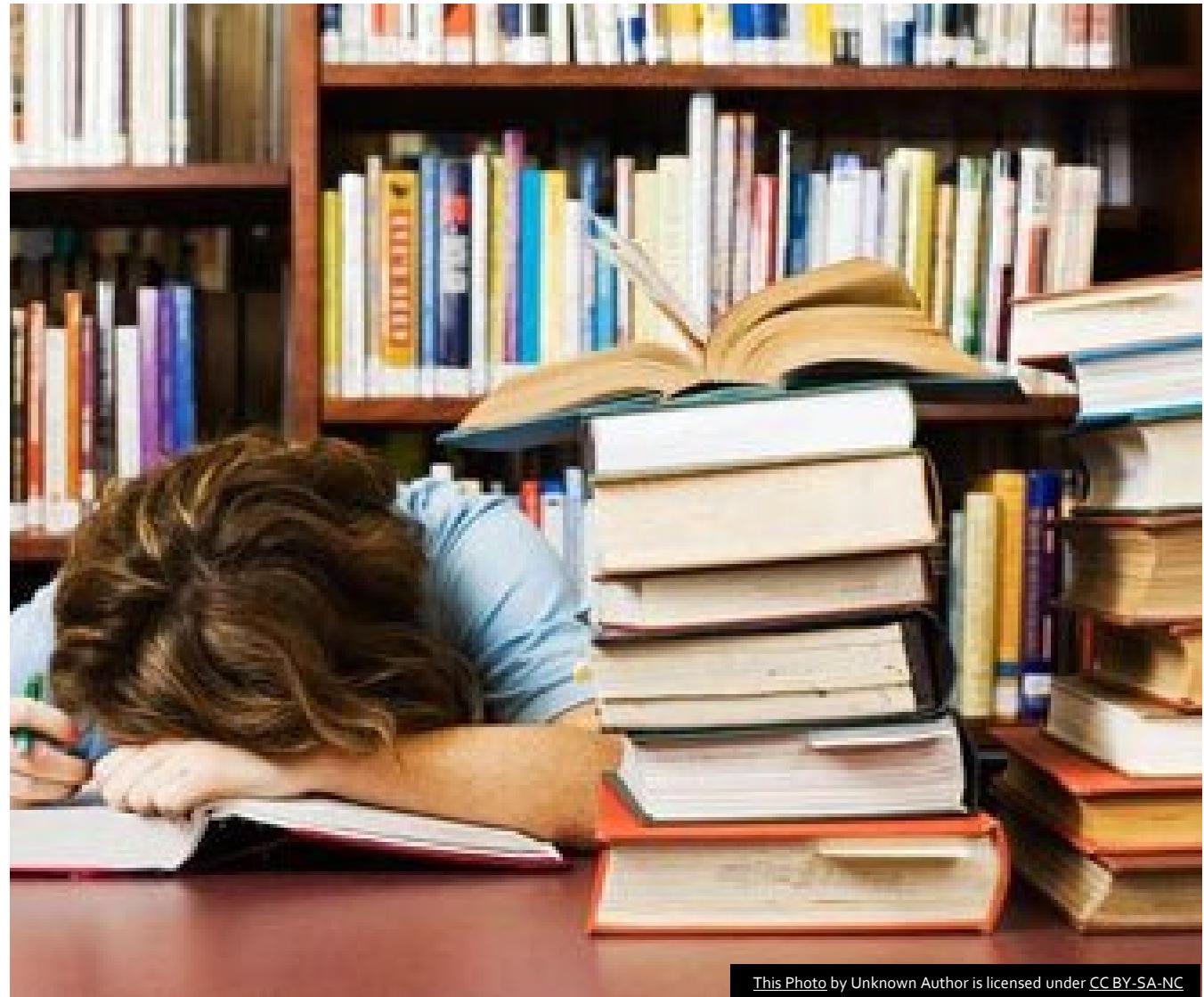
SWOT Analysis



SWOT Analysis: Your Turn

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

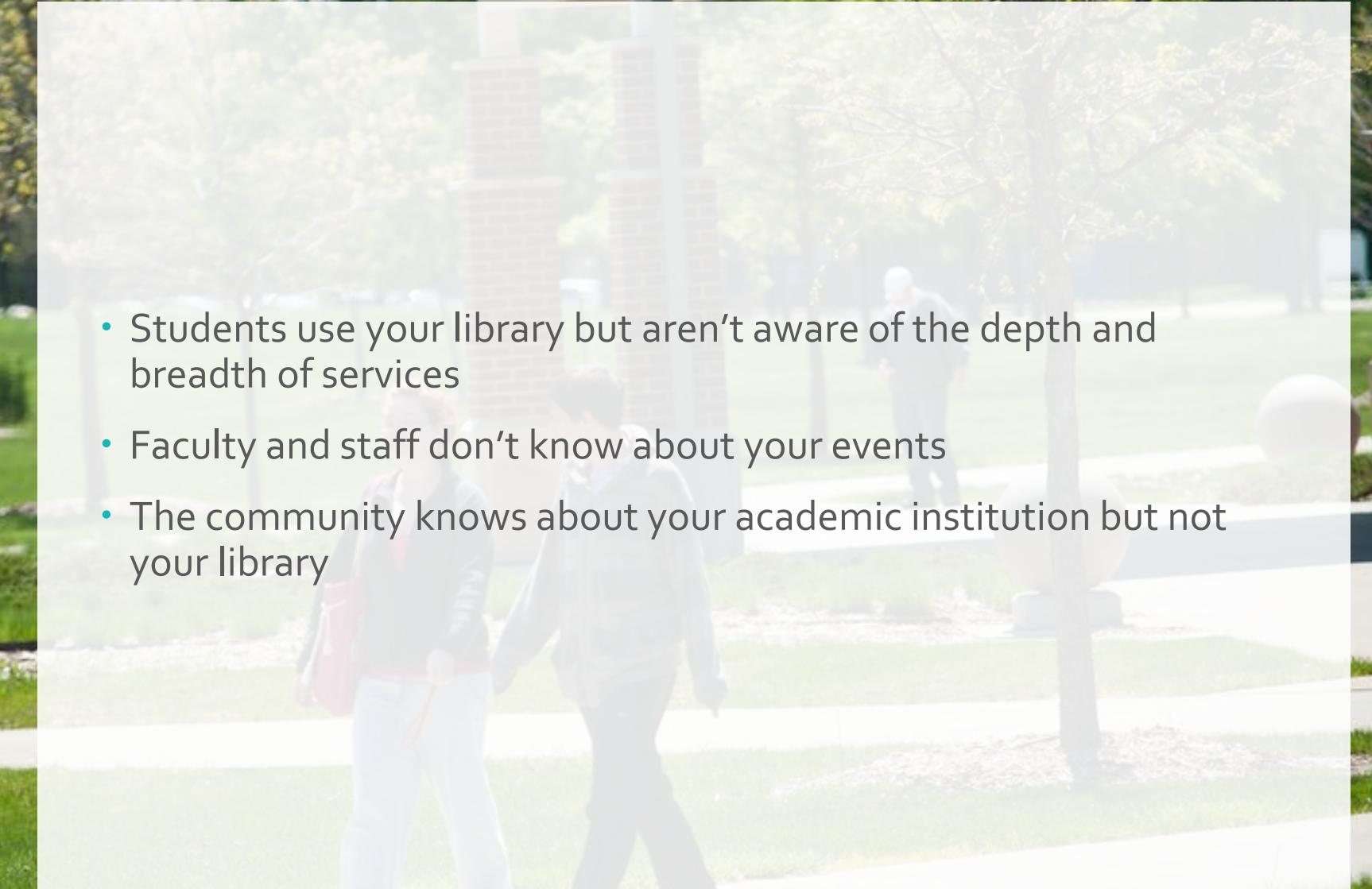
Challenges



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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

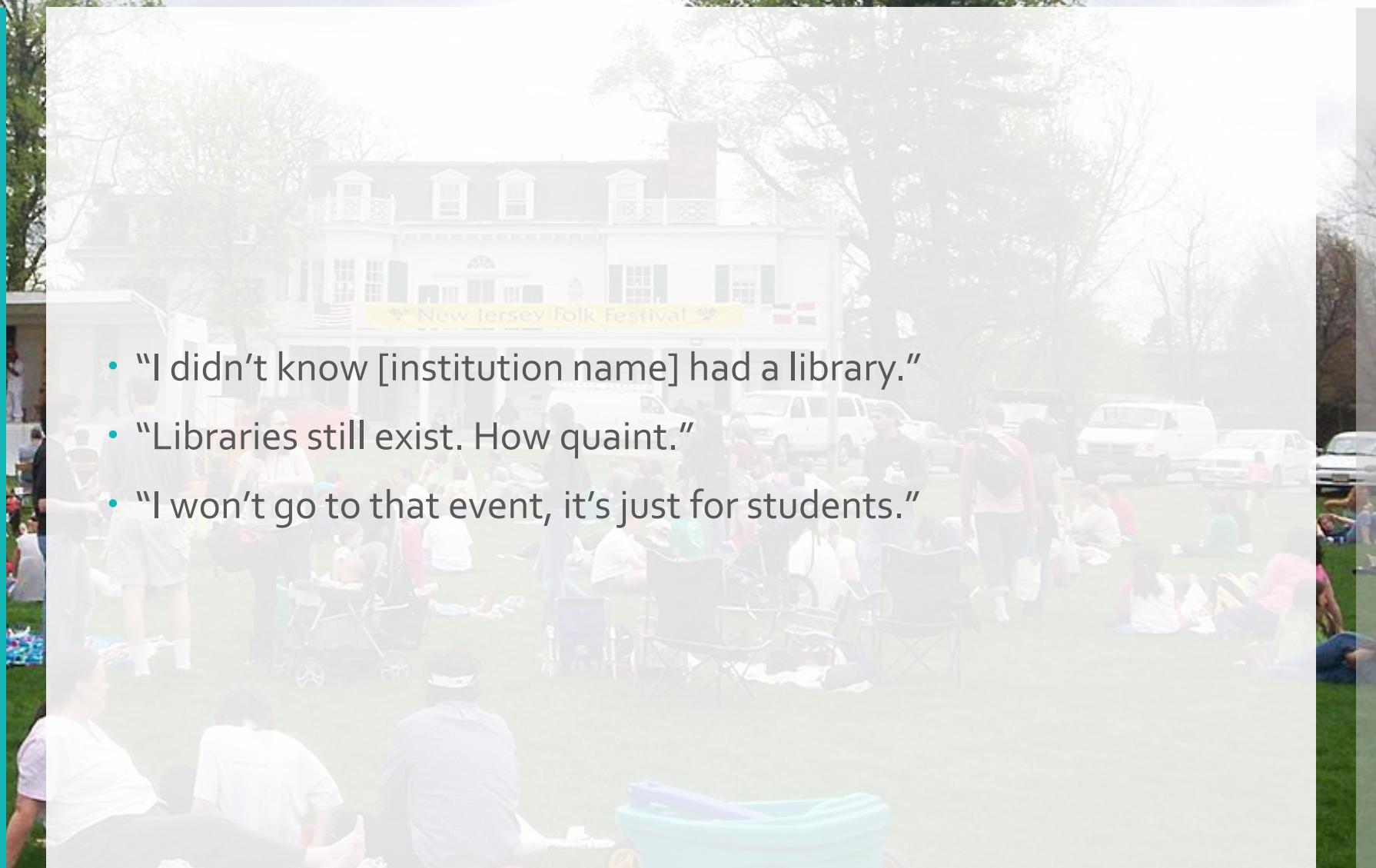
Meeting rooms

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

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?





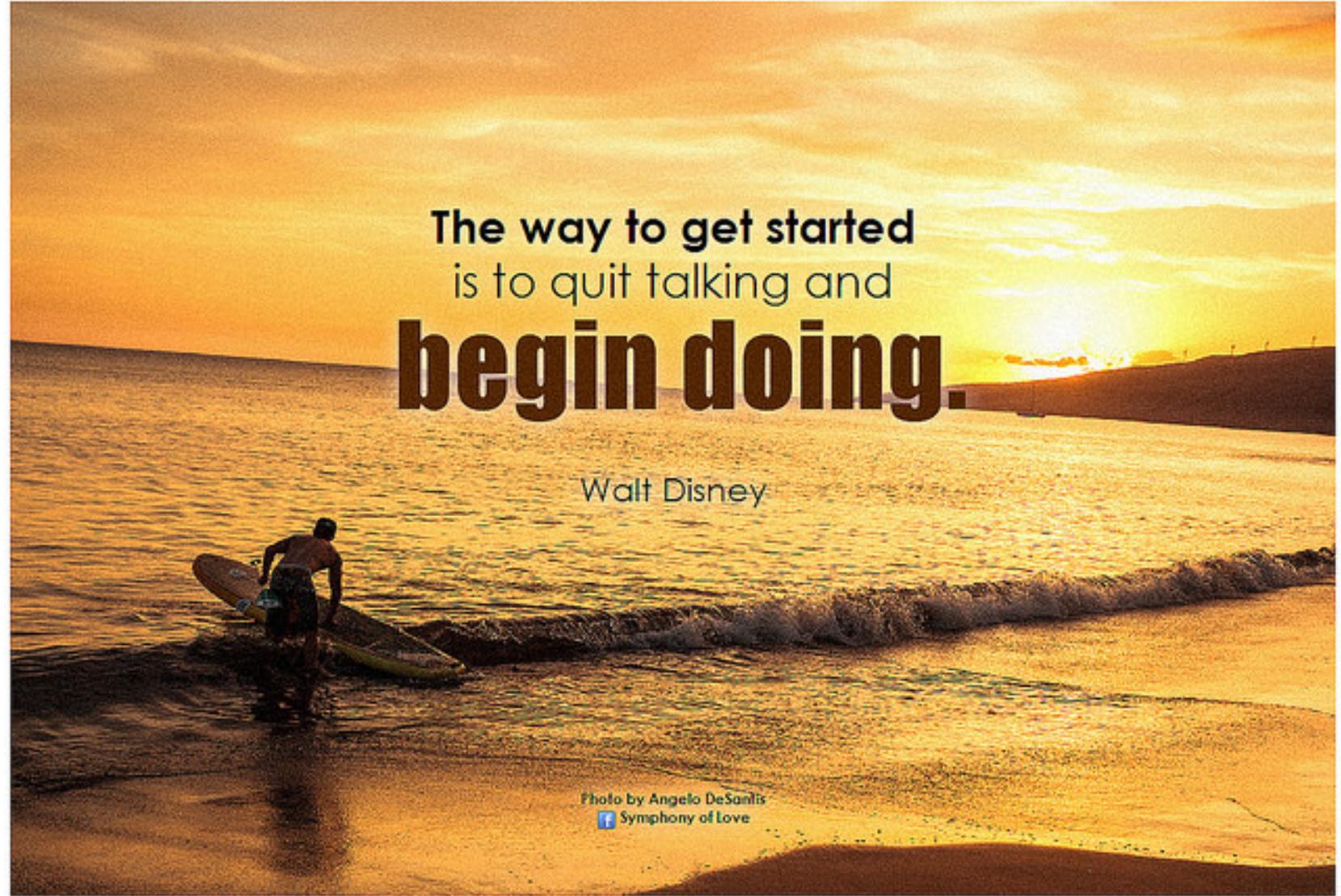
Flesh out your communications plan

Goals & Measurable Objectives

Key Messages

Strategies & Tactics

Get started!



**The way to get started
is to quit talking and
begin doing.**

Walt Disney

Photo by Angelo DeSanis
Facebook: Symphony of Love

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

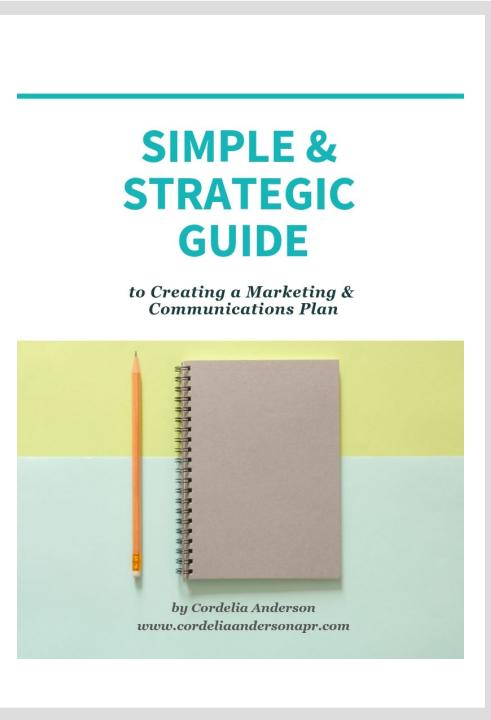
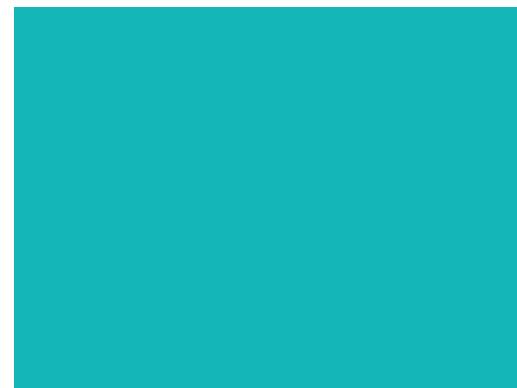
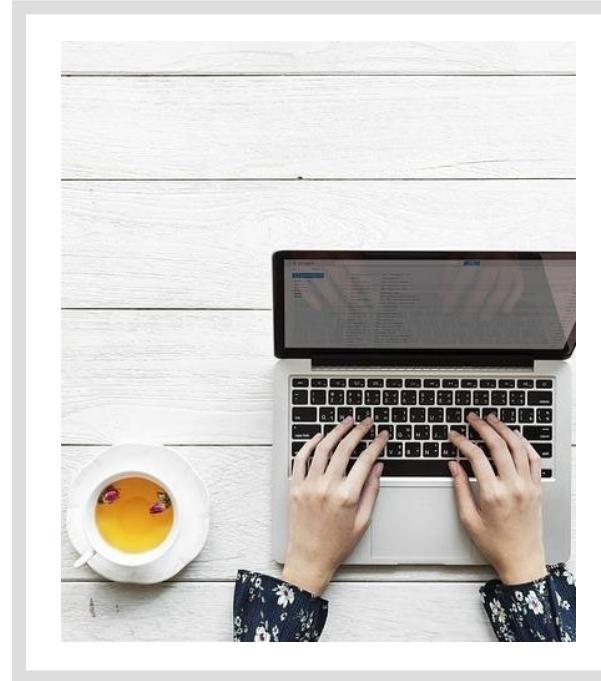
Includes Instructions, Templates

Order Online:

cordeliaandersonapr.com/products

Hard Copy: \$50

Digital Copy: \$25



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.

cordelia@cordeliaandersonapr.com



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

\$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





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