

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES – Page 15-1

Lead: Communications Chair

Contributors:	Program Chair	Local Arrangements Chair	WLA Webmaster
	Registrar	ALKI Editor	Conf. Webmaster
	Conference Chair	WLA Public Relations Committee	Link Editor

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Responsibilities

The *Communications Chair* is a member of the conference committee and is responsible for developing budget and expending communications funds to achieve the conference communications goals.

Assures that all conference communications and graphics are well designed, in a manner that presents the professional image of the WLA. Designs or coordinates design of conference logo. Assures that the logo appears on all conference communications.

Establishes a firm communications schedule for the conference committee, identifying deadlines for receipt of information as well as anticipated dates for media releases, etc. In order to assure that content is complete and accurate, coordinates with all committee members, Association Coordinator, and others.

Designs, or coordinates the design and production of all conference forms, stationery, brochures, programs. May design conference website or work with a webmaster.

Produces, or provides for, all conference related printing from meal tickets, to conference program, to stationery. Coordinates with appropriate people to review materials.

Produces, or provides for, large signs, poster boards, bulletin boards, etc.

Assures that WLA members, library trustees, Friends of the Library, and others receive a variety of communications publicizing the program and the benefits of attending conference.

Provides information about the conference, key speakers, award winners, and special events to local media as well as the library press.

Manages arrangements for media photographers, reporters, etc., who may attend conference presentations, or may wish to interview speakers.

Prepares a final report within thirty days of the close of conference. Includes two samples for all materials in order to update the *Conference Manual*.

Relationship with WLA Public Relations Committee

This WLA standing committee, which consists primarily of library communications specialists, is charged with developing information about the WLA and its activities. It is also responsible for reviewing official WLA communications.

Their role is to provide an “outsiders viewpoint“ using their professional skills in order to assure that communications are focused, clear, accurate, and well designed. Generally, the committee meets quarterly but the Chair can request committee members to review and respond in the interim. It is important to communicate with the PR Committee Chair and read the PR Committee communications guidelines.

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POLICIES AND GUIDELINES, continued

Relationship with ALKI

The committee submits registration and conference program information to several issues leading up to conference in order to highlight the programs and encourage attendance. The ALKI annual conference issue includes photographs, commentary, and copy of selected speeches. The official photographer is funded by WLA, not the conference budget.

Logo Must Be Effective in Print and Electronically

The logo must be designed to be effective on everything from conference stationery to the conference website. Test it to be sure that it will fax, photocopy, and download clearly.

Use the Logo/theme on All Conference Communications

All conference committee communications should include the logo and conference theme. Previous conference communications have included:

- Correspondence.
- WLA website.
- Press releases.
- Conference posters: for library bulletin boards, meetings of other associations.
- Forms: memos, report forms, reimbursement request form.
- Contracts: paid and volunteer speakers.
- Conference and pre-conference registration mailing, brochures.
- Notepads advertising the up-coming conference.
- Logo and theme printed on registration packet or tote bag.
- Conference program.
- Annual conference at-a-glance program planner.
- Conference handouts such as errata and the rules for WLA business meeting.
- Name badges.
- Ribbons, or text on badges that identifies speakers, guests, exhibitors, and others.
- Signage:
 - Posters listing meeting room schedules if not supplied by hotel.
 - Place cards for head table and guest tables.
 - Conference office identification if not supplied by hotel.
 - Registration desk identification if not supplied by exhibits decorator.
 - Exhibits vendor map and alphabetical list of exhibitors.
 - Recognition of vendors who are sustaining members.
 - Special events.
 - Recognition of vendors sponsoring events or donating services.
- Tickets: meals, drinks, social events.
- Buttons, book bags, or other giveaways.

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES, continued

E-mail Signature for Conference

Develop a standard signature to be used for all conference related e-mails.

Publicity at Prior WLA Conference and to Other Associations

Traditionally a notepad, post-its, or other handouts are included in the prior year WLA conference program packet to announce the upcoming conference theme, date, and place.

The WLA president often has the opportunity to announce conferences and invite participation during meetings of other associations. Brochures or registration packet inserts may be needed for these occasions.

Duplicate Registration and Other Basic Information in Print and on Website

Many potential conference attendees do not have easy Internet access, so it is important to supply identical registration and program information in print as well as electronically.

Generally Avoid Unusual Mailing Sizes

Be sure to evaluate whether an unusual size or format for the registration packet will result in additional postage or printing costs.

Establish Conference Website

The conference may appoint a separate webmaster, but the communications chair will still be involved in planning for the website design. After the WLA board adopts the theme and logo, work with the WLA Webmaster to establish the conference Web site at www.wla.org. Update the site often, announcing speakers, adding new information about events, etc.

Send E-mail Updates to Library Community

Keep the library community aware of conference and pre-conference programs, progress, registration dates, and other information via e-mail. In order to broadcast messages, contact the WLA Webmaster, the State Library for WIIF, and associations such as WLMA and PNLA.

Role of Hotel in Communications

Review the conference contract that sets out what they will provide for program and other meeting room signage, whether they included easels to post conference schedules or lists of exhibitors, and whether they will provide directional signs.

Some hotels will provide all meeting room signage. Others assume the conference will post meeting room schedules. *Previous conference comment: Post meeting room schedules on both sides of a door.*

Recognize Donors in Program

Donors who sponsor events, speakers, or provide services such as printing, are listed in the conference program. In addition to the listing highlight sponsorship in the program descriptions. Provide posters at sponsored events recognizing and thanking the donor. The Corporate Contributions Chair will provide exact wording for donor text. The Hospitality and Gifts Committee and the Exhibits Chair might also provide an additional list of donors.

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES, continued

Contracting vs. In-house Design and Production

The conference design and printing requirements represent a major workload if the work is done in-house. Sometimes two or three libraries have agreed to divide the responsibilities in order to spread the workload. Design and printing costs are billed to the conference.

Some conferences have used a meld of in-house and local designers and printers to produce materials. Other conferences have contracted for all design and print jobs.

Previous Conference Comments:

Print early! Start as soon as pre-registration closes because that gives the best indication of numbers of meals tickets and other pieces that will be needed. Exercise quality control over all printed matter having to do with promoting the conference.

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PROCEDURES

The following schedule is based on the calendar adopted by the 1987 and 2002 WLA/OLA conferences. Each conference develops variations for their communications schedule, but all recommend that the Communications Chair *“Start early and communicate firm deadlines.”* Check the proposed printing schedule with the printer to assure timeliness. The WALE conference will need to adjust timing, but most of the activities mirror those of the annual conference.

MONTH	ACTIVITY
Summer, two years prior to conference	<p>Design several logos representing conference theme for conference committee consideration.</p> <p>Prepare estimated communications costs for conference budget.</p> <p>WLA Board adopts conference theme and logo.</p>
October – two years prior	<p>Contact WLA Public Relations Committee Chair and discuss conference communications.</p> <p>Design conference stationery, envelopes and print. Distribute to conference committee and Association Coordinator. Will be used for mailings to exhibitors, information to publications, contracts with speakers, as well as standard communications.</p>
March – prior year	<p>Prepare information to distribute at next WLA, OLA, and PNLA conferences, including notepad and other announcements of theme, date, and place.</p> <p>Also consider marketing at these conferences via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posters Banners Buttons Information sheet including program highlights and/or key speakers <p>Design conference website with WLA Webmaster and conference webmaster.</p>
May, June, July - prior year	<p>Contact WLA Public Relations Committee Chair and discuss current status of conference communications.</p> <p>Establish conference website.</p> <p>Contact Exhibits Chair and Association Coordinator to gather estimates for number of exhibitor packets that will be mailed.</p>

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<p>August through November – prior year</p>	<p>Copy deadline for exhibitor mailing packet. Print for a late August or early September mailing (Note: Exhibits chair may print and mail the packet, but needs to coordinate and review with Communications Chair.)</p> <p>Begin preparation for registration packet mailing. Determine who will print the registration forms, programs, and mailing envelopes.</p> <p>Design, or arrange for design of, cover graphics, select fonts, colors, etc.</p> <p>Contact Association Coordinator for current numbers of WLA members to receive registration mailing. Estimate additional packets needed for trustees, Friends, and requests from interested persons, based on historical data. Project number of registration packets to print.</p> <p>Determine with Registrar who will mail registration packet. Arrange for use of a library bulk-mailing permit or contract with a commercial mailing service and ensure that return address printed on the registration packet mailing envelope matches the permit.</p> <p>Compile list of media and association publications to send press releases.</p> <p><u>Deadline for annual conference program information for registration packet should be mid-October</u> in order have adequate time for program to be typeset, proofed, and sent back to printer ready to print by the end of November. Requires extensive coordination with conference committee.</p> <p>Mail or e-mail final draft of registration booklet program and accompanying forms for proofing to Conference Chair, Program Chair, Registrar and others. Proofing due back by mid-November.</p> <p>As programs are finalized, Program Chair will create conference program schedule and subject tracking grid. Based on the schedule, and the descriptive information from the <i>Program Proposal Forms</i>, edit text and start laying out the design for the registration booklet. Remember that text will also need to be designed so it is easy to read on the conference website. Work with Program Chair and Conference Chair to assure accurate and complete text.</p> <p>Coordinate with Registrar in completing design of the <i>Registration Form</i>. Test form on committee members and people not associated with the conference to assure clarity as well as collecting all required information.</p> <p>Mail or e-mail final registration program and accompanying forms for proofing to Conference Chair, Program Chair, Registrar and others.</p> <p>Contact Public Relations Committee Chair and discuss status of conference communications.</p>
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<p>December, January – Prior year and four months prior to conference</p>	<p>In December, print registration booklet. This will include registration form, program information, and information about hotel reservations. Have available to mail during first week in January.</p> <p>Send announcements about registration packet mailing to the library websites and library publications.</p> <p>Plan for printing of name badges with Registrar. Provide logo stock to Registrar for name badges if needed.</p> <p>January: Notify conference committee of mid-February printing deadlines and requirements for final text for conference program. Request preliminary text by mid-January.</p>
<p>February – Three months prior to conference</p>	<p>First week in February: Final date to request, review, or submit text for program publication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome from President and Conference Chair. Descriptions of conference social and other activities. Speaker biographies and photos. Pre-conference descriptions. Special events. Program descriptions. Program subject track grid. Photos or other graphics for program. Conference highlights/overview. Interest Group/Round table acronyms. Local attractions. Conference committee member list. Hotel/convention center map with meeting rooms identified. Exhibitors list and description of materials or services offered. Exhibits hours. Special events. Sponsor and donor listings. Other special acknowledgements. Current WLA board members and committee chairs. Annual conference-at-a-glance. Map and driving directions for any off-site events. <p>February Mid-month: Final design and initial typesetting of conference program. Distribute to conference committee and Association Coordinator for proofing.</p> <p>Last week in February: All corrections due back to Communications Chair.</p> <p>Continue to actively draw the attention of the library community to the conference, speakers, early registration dates, information about new programs, changes, etc.</p> <p>Update conference website.</p> <p>Print miscellaneous forms and conference handouts.</p> <p>Print WLA conference business meeting rules.</p> <p>Acquire maps of conference facility meeting rooms and exhibits area to print in program.</p>

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<p>March – One month prior to conference</p>	<p>First week in March: Correct program information with final assignments for meeting rooms and program times. Correct exhibitor information for program. Send conference program to printer.</p> <p>Post final program on the conference website. Update conference website with news about speakers, local attractions, special events, etc.</p> <p>Print meal, events, and drink tickets for Registrar as soon as early registration closes and quantity can be estimated. (May consider using pre-printed and numbered tickets for drink tickets instead of printing.)</p> <p>End of March or early April, depending on date of conference and final booth assignments: Print large poster/map of exhibits hall with the booth assignments arranged by number and another arranged alphabetically by exhibitor company name.</p> <p>Final deadline to request, review, or submit text for: Special meeting room signage. Place cards, reserved signs, etc. for meals. Sustaining Member recognition located at their exhibits booths. Signs recognizing sponsors of events or services. Registration desk signs, conference office, etc. Announcement bulletin board.</p> <p>E-mail announcements about conference to the library community.</p> <p>Write press releases and send. Send information about speakers and award winners to their local news media. (Note: send copies to the library director of persons receiving awards)</p>
<p>April, month of conference</p>	<p>Receive program from printer, or have it delivered to site where it will be stuffed in conference tote bags or packets.</p> <p>Provide other printing and photocopying for registration packets. Materials will come from several sources but Communications Chair generally supplies the following: (See <i>Conference Manual</i> Registration Section for entire process.) Conference program. Annual conference at-a-glance schedule if not in printed program. Changes from printed program for meeting rooms and times. Meal and other event tickets. Publicity for special events. Notepads or other information advertising next year conference.</p>

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Conference week	Send press releases, contact newspaper and other media highlighting possibility for coverage of local speakers. Print any last minute meeting room or time changes.
Day before Conference and during Conference	Post freestanding and other signs for special events. Be available to solve last minute communications needs. Host media personnel.
Following Conference	Complete final report to Conference Chair including two copies of the following for the WLA Conferences notebook: Stationery, envelopes, notepads, etc. Registration packet, announcement brochures, etc. Conference program. Sample of meals or other tickets. Copies of newspaper or other articles about conference. Other.