

Books By Mail Meeting 2/4/09 at Gloucester County Library

Karen Shiles, Bob Wetherall, Holly Coons, Nancy Pulhamus, Peter Bromberg (recording) Karen Hyman, Molly Connor, Sarah Thomson, Gail Sweet

1. Progress

a. Review of Action Items from previous minutes

- i. Billboard (Gwen): Molly says Marketing committee is looking into it
 1. In Gloco, billboards are not popular
- ii. Domain names:
 1. Would be good for billboard or television
 2. Burlco and GloCo will consider. May or may not act upon
- iii. Advertising (Gail)
 1. Burlco will be putting advertising on mailing bags. Post office says to use caution that it doesn't look like the ad is the address. Burlco will be moving forward on this.
 - a. Burlco is thinking that the advertiser will buy the actual bags.
 - b. Timeline: Will implement when we next need to reorder bags

b. Review of Progress Reports: Both libraries say it's going so smoothly. Gail, "It's like we've always done it."

- i. GloCo
 1. GloCo has expended approximately \$17,000 and change
 2. Over 3000 packages (over 4200 items) to customers in 27 zip codes
 3. Avg postage per circ is \$1.71
 4. 23% of all holds are being mailed.
 5. Time: 3-4 hours a day of Holly's time with help of a volunteer (5 days/wk). Monday is the big day.
 6. Going very smoothly.
 7. Books are 78% of total. DVD's are 13% of mailed items (DVDs are 22% of total circ)
 8. Mostly fiction. New bios. New DVDs. Children's material.
 9. Pleated Tyvek bags are working well (.23 cents for small bags, .40 for larger?). They hold a lot and they expand (9x12 and 10x13)
 10. Very happy with Endicia. Using ACH—federal automated clearinghouse—to put money in the account. There is no fee. 3-5 days before money shows up.
 11. Will be surveying everyone in Endicia address book (which is kept by Dazzle software).
12. PR
 - a. 2 Press releases to media; several stories printed
 - b. Article in LJ
 - c. Program Flyers have been distributed to each branch
 - d. Bookmarks for service placed in each hold pickup
 - e. Paid ads in Gloc Times (paid from grant). Story was picked up in several papers.
- ii. Burlco
 1. Has stats broken down by types of books/materials
 - a. 3/1 books to dvds in last quarter (75% is books)
 - b. 2/1 adult books to Children's books
 2. Endicia functions beautifully! Burlco Uses "stealth" postage which is \$40/month (as opposed to \$15/month) so customers don't see how much it costs. Burlco might change this—what's the advantage of stealth? Maybe it's better if customers DO see how much it costs.
 3. Burlco uses padded bags. Large ones (14 x 20) have doubled in price from .56 to \$1.32 a piece.
 4. Evesham is the highest user. Branch has seen reduction in circ. Pete suggests looking at stats of returns: Have returns to the branch stayed the same or gone up? This would give a picture of the actual circ activity

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generated from Evesham customers (assuming they return mailed items to the Evesham branch.)

5. Burlco has spent \$27,000 and change (\$13000 of which is prepaid postage which hasn't been expended yet)

- iii. SJRLC will amend contract to allow expenditure past June 30 deadline.

c. What's happened since going live?

i. Mailing Packaging

1. Burlco: Bags are holding up beautifully
2. Boxes: GloCo is buying. Burlco is using Baker and Taylor boxes

ii. Workflow/postage

1. **GloCo:** Post office lost one item
 - a. Happy with the Post Office they come a few times a day.
 - b. Holly drives packages to PO once/day
2. **Burlco:**
 - a. Mailed items rarely come back (due to bad address)
 - b. Uses "stealth" postage which is \$40/month (as opposed to \$15/month) so customers don't see how much it cost. Burlco might change this—what's the advantage? Maybe it's better if customers do see how much it costs.
 - c. Burlco uses padded bags. Large ones (14 x 20) have doubled in price from .56 to \$1.32 a piece.

iii. Marketing Promotion:

1. Gloco: Will be sending survey to all users (\$600)
2. Burlco: Did survey in September. Will send again in Feb/March.

2. Surprises, challenges, questions, other issues

- a. Karen Shiles from GloCo is presenting at Joint CODI/UUGI Conference in Dallas on April 6-8. Karen will work with Gwen and Ray at Burlco to get slides and FAQ for the conference.

3. NJLA and other presentations. Possible structure: (50 minutes)

- a. **Discussion of NJLA Program:** What can we do to make it likely that others will consider trying this?

i. Have handout with stats/comments through Feb 28. Handout contains

1. How many hours/day
2. Cost of supplies. Cost of postage
3. Avg # of items/bag
4. Avg sent per/day
5. What are people borrowing, broken up by percentage.
6. What packaging
7. Explain Endicia
8. Survey Data / comments could be separate page done by April 1st

b. Who will speak at NJLA

- i. GCLS: Bob would speak with Nancy (Public Information Coordinator.) Holly would be available. Karen will also be available to answer technical questions.
- ii. BCLS: Sarah Thomson, Project Director. Molly Connor, consultant.
- iii. Gail will introduce Powerpoint
- iv. Structure:

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1. How are you doing it (as handout) and/or as powerpoint, "Day in the life of a book" showing the process. (Burlco/Gloco will work together on show). Gail will do intro to powerpoint (will do dvd as distributional)
2. Pete Moderates and asks: (Bob, Gail, Nancy, Sarah, Karen, Molly)
 - a. **Why do it?** (Ask Bob and Molly)
 - b. **Who's using it?** (Nancy and Sarah)
 - c. **What are people saying?** (Nancy and Sarah)
 - d. **I've heard you say, this is a more efficient use of the materials you buy. Can you tell me about that** (directed to Molly)
 - i. **Cost? Savings?**
 1. Books are getting there next day
 2. Every hold circs (20% of normal holds don't)
 3. Won't have to add 2nd bookmobile.
 4. Efficient use of materials. Lowers cost of collection

(MOLLY, WERE THESE YOUR ANSWERS?)

- e. What's circling?
- f. Why did you use Endicia?
- g. Marketing?
- h. Was this difficult to set up technically? (Sarah)
- i. Recommendation for Getting Started? What's the upfront cost?
- j. Handout FAQ
 - i. Mailing issues
 - ii. Tech issues
 - iii. Stats
 - iv. Customer Feedback

4. Other Discussion

- a. Pete will put together website and seek feedback throughout Feb

5. Next Steps

- a. Burlco/Gloco will work together on powerpoint show. Burlco will take the lead creating the powerpoint framework and it to GloCo by: **(nail down intermediate dates)**
 - i. **Karen Shiles needs for April 6th conference.**
 - ii. **Suggested Intermediate Deadline: Burlco will have draft of ppt to GloCo no later than March 13th**
- b. Burlco will work on putting together DVD.
- c. Burlco will look into tech options to get Bass River connected to circ system
- d. Pete will put together website and seek feedback throughout Feb
- e. Pete/Karen will draft structure of NJLA program and distribute Feb 28
- f. SJRLC will amend contract to allow expenditure past June 30 deadline.
- g. **Next meeting: April 14 10-12 at Burlco.**