



Creating and Marketing Library Programs for Millennials

Introductions



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Musical Interlude



Agenda

Introduction

Programs

Book Clubs and Beyond

“Geeks”

“Oh! Those Creative Types”

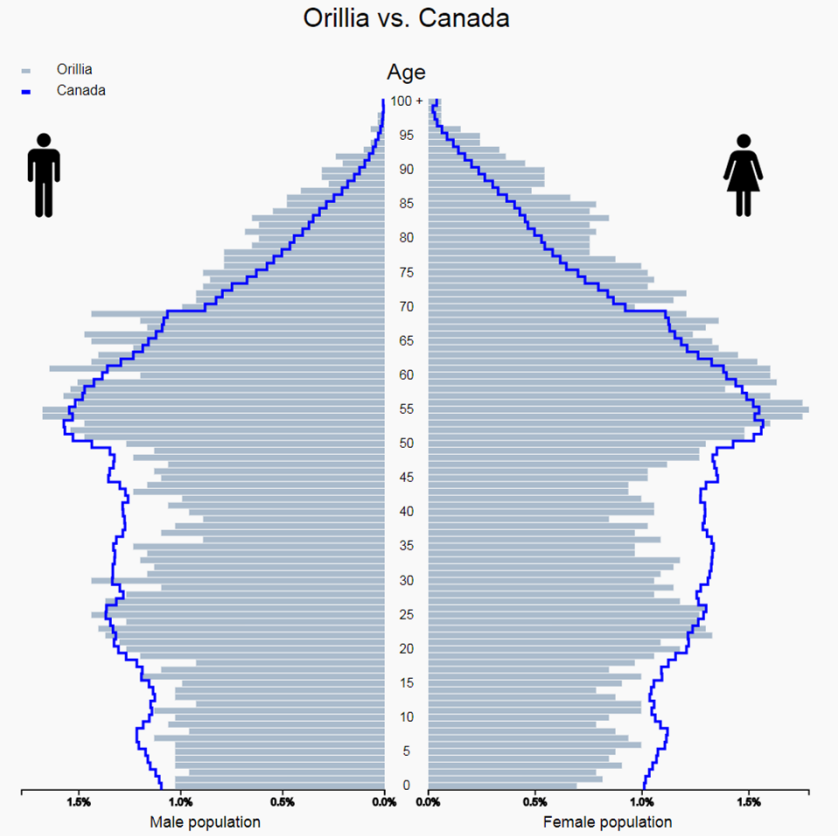
Bridge Programs

Marketing

Questions



Age Comparison Pyramid



Who are Millennials

Born 1980ish to 200?

In general Millennials are:

- Less institutional or religious affiliations (seeking communities elsewhere)
- Highly educated, many with post secondary education
- Financially strained (high housing costs, high debt loads, unstable work etc.)
- Strong sense of “self”
- Digitally literate
- Technology-enriched, not technology focused
- Aware of library services



Our Top 5 Tips!

1) **Keep it fun** - People like having fun!

2) **Keep it easy** - Every choice you make is a trade off. Make it easy for them to choose you!

3) **Make it social** - Surveys show that millennials like social time!

4) **Know YOUR millennials!** - Orillia is a town of geeks and artists (and geeky artists), so we try to make our stuff geeky and arty. What are your millennials like?

5) **Meet them where they are**- Use partnerships to tap into and solidify existing communities.



**Partnerships are
fun!**



Programs

Book Clubs and Beyond: Books on Tap

What we did:

Single-book book club

Met after-hours

Met off-site

What we learned:

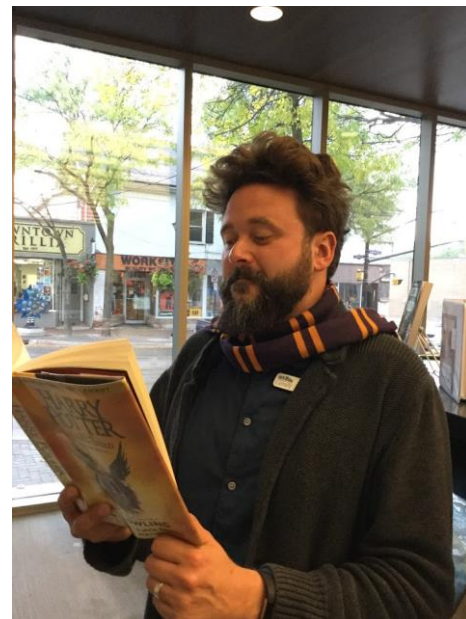
People come for community

Variety is key

People don't want to pick a title

Patios only sound like a good idea

You cannot predict attendance



Nerf Battle

What we did:

After hours Nerf capture the flag battle!

Incorporate a “fandom” theme

Why it worked:

Nostalgia

#geeklife

Play is not just for kids



Whoops! That was a Fail: Podcast club

Why we did it:

Initiated when S-Town was at its peak

Following the success of Books on Tap

What we learned:

People didn't feel confident accessing podcasts

Market saturation



Tabletop Games Night



What we did:

Partnered with local games shop (Fanboy) to run a monthly games night

Games provided by Fanboy. Space and advertising provided by the library

18+

Why it worked:

Drew from pool of people already interested in tabletop gaming

Facebook events effective marketing tool!

Geeks abound! And they like hanging out together



CREATIVITY



Creative expression
is a great way to
build community
and self-confidence!

SO HOT RIGHT NOW

imgflip.com

Whoops! That was a Fail: Songwriter Circle

What we did:

Monthly Songwriting Circle with group lesson

Open to all skill/experience levels

Met in the cozy 'Fireplace Room' on the upper level of the library, during regular hours



What we learned:

People were afraid they were bothering patrons by singing/playing during regular library hours

Large variance in skill levels made it difficult to prepare lessons

Several people commented on wanting some 'talent juice' or 'liquid courage' to perform

Library Programs: Open Mic Night

What we did:

After hours Acoustic Open Mic

Beer

Why it worked:

Tapped into an existing community with partnership advertising

Libraries are not so stuffy after all!



Paint Night

What we did:

Partnered with a local artist

All supplies provided

Offered hot chocolate and snacks

Why it worked:

Craving to create. millennials are not all about digital after all!

Fun for all skill levels

It was easy, fun, social, trendy and cheap!

All ages is ok too!



How-To Festival

What we did:

One day event featuring 44 different workshops.

Open to all ages.

What we learned:

Saturdays work!

Truly an all ages event. Millennials could participate with their kids!



Taking Better Photos with Your Smartphone

What we did:

Attempt to create a “tech” program for millennials, riding coat-tails of popular How-To Festival session

Lead by professional photographer/staff member

Chose Saturday afternoon to make it possible for working people to attend

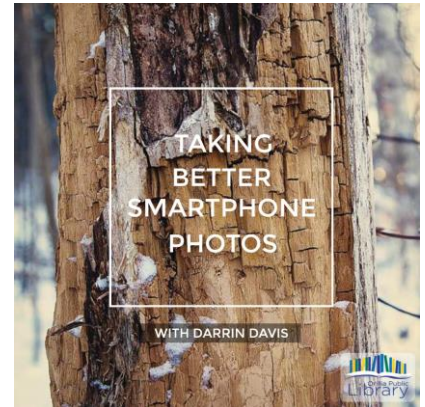
What we learned:

Great success, but not the way we planned!

Millennials wanted to “drop-in” rather than to register

50+ loved this class.

Future goals: Taking Better Photos of You r Kids with Your Smartphone



Hot Detox with Julie Daniluk

What we did:

Partnership with local health food store “Gaudaur Natural Foods”

Talk by popular author/TV personality



Why it worked:

There is a large contingent of health foodies in Orillia

Partnerships helped with the advertising legwork

Provided the organizer with a status boosting selfie for social media

What's Your Motivation?

(It should mostly be vanity and selfies)



Bridging the Gap: Programs for Millennials 16-25

Bridging the Gap



What is Bridge Programming?

Bridge Programming encompasses youth who are both teens and early adults.

Most of our bridge programs have been for youth 16 to 25 with the exception of partnership programs.

Why is Bridge Programming important?

Young adults who've just graduated high school often enjoy the same programs that they did before they graduated. They may also have friends still in high school.

While there isn't a single defined age range for youth some organizations define youth as up to age 29.

Helps with transition from youth to adult programming.

LGBTQA Youth Connection

What we did:

Partnered with the Gilbert Centre to offer a twice monthly LGBTQA Youth Drop-In program for youth 13 to 23 years old.

Over the course of this four year partnership we have supported the group by attending and participating in meetings, offering readers advisory support and hosting an LGBTQA art show.

What we learned:

We were the first in our community (outside of local high schools) to offer a safe space for LGBTQA youth to meet.

Over the course of this four year partnership attendance has been excellent. Many youth now use your space and services before and after the program.

We later offered a 23 + drop-in program for adults. This program lasted for one year before relocating.



Simcoe Community Services



What we did:

Partnered with an organization called Simcoe Community Services to offer a quarterly library program as part of their G.E.T. Out (Orillia Ultimate Thursday) program for special needs youth 13 to 21.

We are now in our third year for this partnership.

Youth receive a library tour, support in accessing library services, an opportunity to experiment with art materials, play games and hang out in our dedicated teen space.

What we learned:

Many of these youth had never participated in a library program or used a library service.

Since attending a library program many of these youth have begun to use library services on their own or with a support worker.

Youth Summit

What we did:

Partnered with The Transition Age Youth Simcoe-Muskoka System over the course of two years to host a program called Youth Summit. The TAY organization created Youth Summit after meeting with youth across Simcoe Muskoka to discuss what matters in their lives and what they would like to see in an event completely dedicated to youth.

We provided the venue, coordinated speakers and offered a program for youth during breaks between speakers.

This program targeted youth age 14 to 29 and involved a wide variety of community organizations that service youth. Attendance both years was over 80 youth.

What we learned:

A significant amount of youth attending the program were not existing library users. This was in part because youth were coming from surrounding communities.

Meeting other community organizations that service youth helped me be better understand their services.

Youth have a lot to say about the types of services and programs they want to participate in!



Dungeons and Dragons

What we did:

Connected with an existing group of youth who were using the library to play Dungeons and Dragons.

Recruited three players to each lead a group on a weekly basis.

We purchased all the required materials, advertised internally and on social media.

Snacks provided! Including a monthly pizza party.

As part of our March Break programming we offered a day long D&D Raid that was very successful.

What we learned:

This was the first program we offered that combined both teens and adults in their early 20's.

We initially advertised the program for youth up to 22 but later added a lower age restriction of age 16. This was done because of some of the mature language and topics that was part of the game narrative.

Attendance in this program ranged on average from 12 to 22 youth weekly.

Supervision was a must due to the large group size.



Inklings

What we did:

Many of the youth frequenting the teen space and attending the Dungeons and Dragons program were looking for more programs that were for youth 16-22. In response we created a colouring program called, “Inklings.”

We purchased a variety of, “adult” colouring books and good quality markers for this weekly program.

What we learned:

There was an interest in programs for youth within the 16 to 22 age range.

Attendance with this program was consistent but small with only 5-10 youth in regular attendance.



Paint Night

What we did:

Quite some time after both the Dungeons and Dragons and Inklings program were cancelled we decided to try another bridge program.

We partnered with a local artist known for facilitating amazing paint night programs to offer one at the library after hours for youth 15 to 25.

We decided on a group theme of Van Goh's, "Starry Night" with a nerdy twist. Each participant was allowed to ask for a silhouette of an object from their favourite fandom. Participants chose images such as the Star Trek Enterprise, the TARDIS, and Totoro.

What we learned:

We had never done a program with such a wide age range before. Because this was a small supervised program we decided on a wider age range and our attendance was more successful because of that choice.

Three families with siblings who were both teens and adults were able to attend the same program.

There was a great deal of interest in a repeat of this program.



Challenges



Challenges:

As often as we've had a successful bridge program we've had to cancel one due to lack of registration.

Adulting 101: **CANCELLED**

After hours program with unique adulting challenges done in an escape room style. Not a single person registered.

Make-It-Monday: **CANCELLED**

Monthly evening program with beginner level DIY craft projects. Cancelled twice due to lack of registration (only three people registered).

What we learned:

Start with developing community partnerships with existing organizations that service youth both under and over the age of 19.

Program for your existing users first (when possible).

Don't be afraid to put a new program out there even if you're unsure if it will garner enough interest to run.

Choosing an age range can be hard! Consider how much supervision the program has.

Ask your users what they want!

After a Program Fails

Programming for youth is hard! You're competing against after school commitments, extracurriculars, jobs, and their peers. Sometimes even a great program will fail.

Evaluate why the program failed. Was there poor weather? Did you try and host a program during exam time? Is the program appropriate for both teenagers and early twenty adults?

Do you have existing partnerships that encompass teens and early twenty adults? If not this would be a great place to start!

Was the program marketed well? Do you use social media to advertise your programs?

Do you have an inviting, safe, inclusive space for teens and early twenties to gather? I strongly believe that offering such a space helps to build a strong foundation for the success of future programs.

In our teen space we have board games, weekly drop-in programs, and great furniture! The space is closely monitored by staff to ensure the space is used appropriately and is safe.

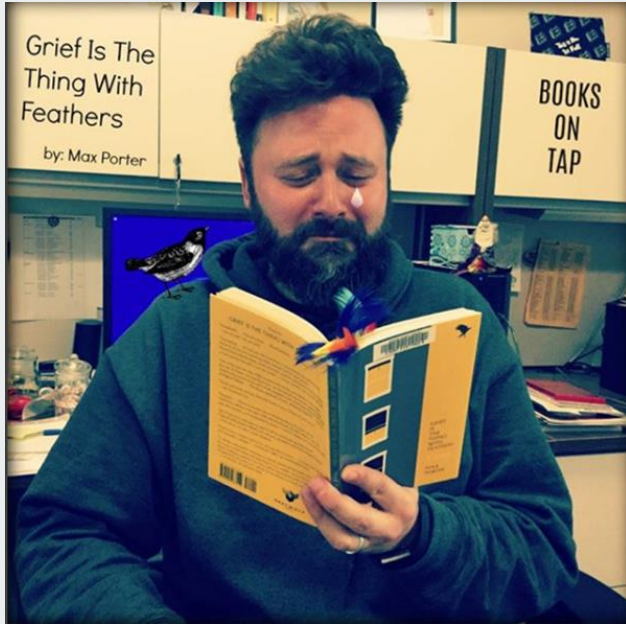
While it is a dedicated teen space I don't card every youth who comes into the department. Many youth who use the space hang out in mixed age groups.





Marketing

Top Marketing Tips



1) Create programs with marketing to millennials in mind.

2) Find your audience and tailor your material to your platform

3) Don't be afraid to be creative. A little humour never hurt.

4) Don't underestimate word of mouth. Get the right people talking!

5) Get outside the library!

Bonus! Get organized!

Programs as Marketing/Outreach

The Haunting & Feast of Thrones

What we did:

Take portable green screen to local events

Cost of the picture was included with the ticket price

What we learned:

Opportunity to connect while having fun

Create a personal connection



Marketing Bridge Programs

What we do:

Snapchat is currently where most teens and early twenties are learning about our programs.

Incentives for people to follow!

We track our snap responses in a binder (accountability).

Snap challenges.

Readers advisory.

Challenges:

Be prepared for bad snaps.

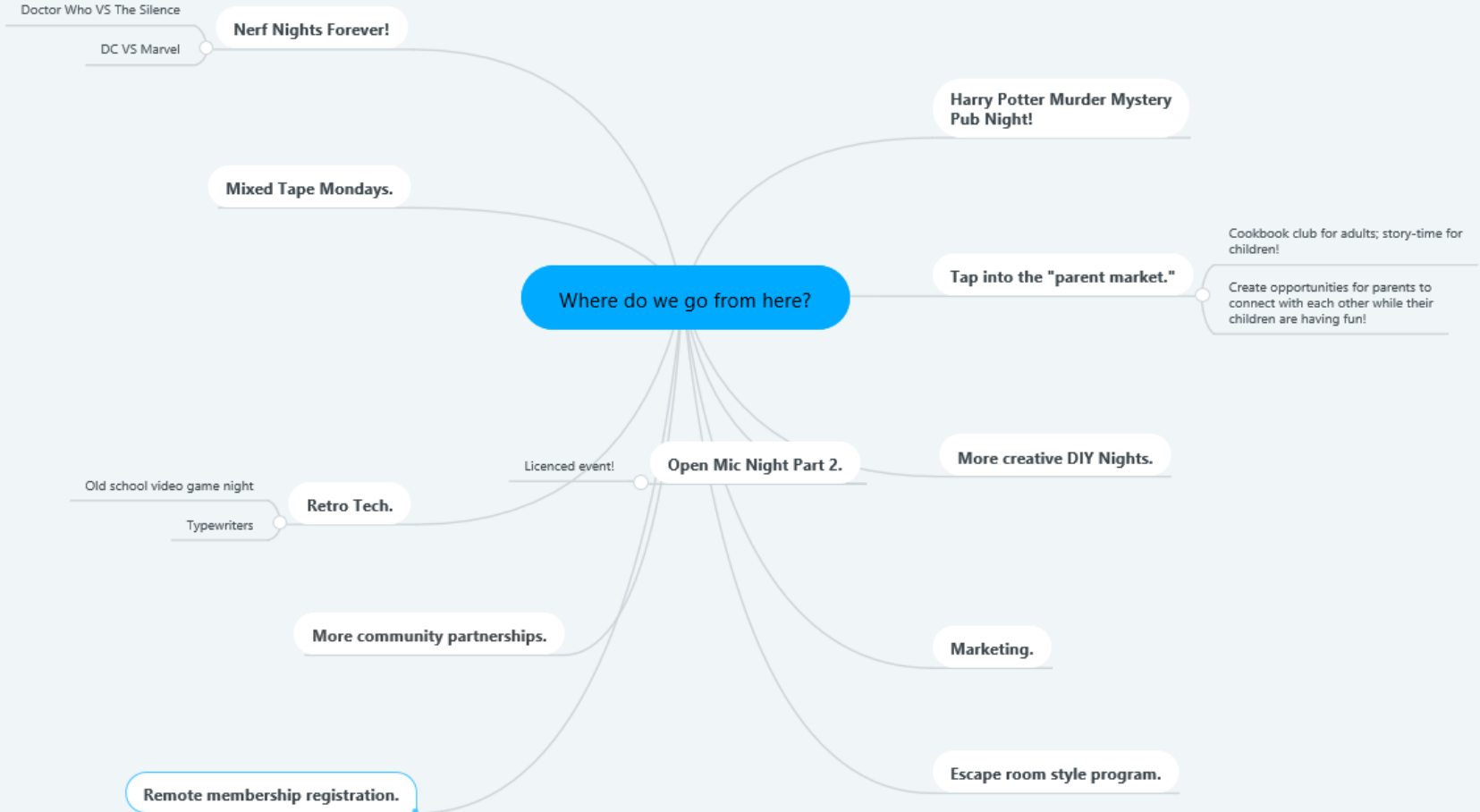
Watch your stickers (many are inappropriate).





What Next

Where do we go from here?



Questions? Comments?

