



REPORT TO THE LIBRARY BOARD

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, December 12, 2007

Session:	Public Session
Subject:	"The IMAGINE Campaign" Annual Appeal
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Purpose of Report:	For Receipt and Information Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Library Board receive this report.

Issue / Opportunity

In 2006, London Public Library introduced a new Fund Development Strategy, which identifies and sets out the processes, sources and activities for realizing incremental financial resources for LPL to fund value-added services that are in demand from our community. In addition to revenue-generating opportunities like facility and meeting room rentals, merchandising, corporate sponsorships, government grants and our ongoing positive relationship with the Friends of the Library, there exists an enormous opportunity for LPL to develop an annual giving program to support incremental value-added initiatives that do not fall within the scope of core service funding. This program would include an annual appeal campaign, planned giving, major gifts, special fundraising events and overall donor development and stewardship.

LPL has traditionally run an annual appeal, "Lasting Treasure", in the fall-winter each year, which raises between \$60-80k on average, consisting of:

- A mailing to current donors;
- A stuffing campaign in branches; and,
- Small in-branch activities to raise awareness and funds.

However, the overall approach to the appeal has been somewhat inconsistent, in terms of timing and branding.

Focus groups and interviews conducted in early 2007, both internal and external, revealed the following about the appeal:

1. The brand "Lasting Treasure" did not resonate with all audiences, in both its connection to the Library and as an annual fundraising campaign.
2. The Library donor population is extremely homogenous, comprised mainly of individuals in the 60+ age demographic, majority female.
3. Many staff experienced discomfort around the in-branch fundraising aspect of the campaign.
4. The Library is a very well-respected institution that both users and non-users value and see as a critical institution in the community, and though many non-users do not fully understand the breadth and depth of Library services, they would consider supporting the Library as a fundamental community institution.
5. The Library is competing with all other charity organizations, both literacy and learning focused and otherwise, necessitating a strong case for need and an emotional connection that will resonate with a wide audience.

The opportunity to redesign the campaign, with a consistent look and feel and as part of a larger annual giving program, was readily apparent.

A redesign was undertaken with an internal team of public service staff and supervisors in September 2007, with the following goals:

1. To develop a multi-faceted approach to the appeal that incorporates a variety of mechanisms to support community awareness and giving.
2. To develop a brand that could be consistently applied to the annual appeal each year, and be used as part of an overall annual giving campaign, and that positioned the Library as a fresh, relevant and dynamic community destination.
3. To increase awareness, resonance and relevance through the development of a strong case for need and a compelling look and feel, resulting in a donation lift for current donors, the reengagement of lapsed donors, and the engagement of new donors.
4. To provide staff with the necessary supports, procedures and volunteer resources to empower them as an important part of the LPL fundraising equation.

Background & Review

Lasting Treasure Appeal becomes **The IMAGINE Campaign!**

The IMAGINE Campaign is focused on the inherent potential in individuals that is brought to life by London Public Library. The values associated with IMAGINE are creativity, vision, hope, imagination and potential, all values in line with our goal to support our customers "throughout life's journey!"

IMAGINE will be rolled out across the LPL system and into the community in December 2007. Like our branding and experiential marketing campaign "My Library", IMAGINE focuses on the real stories of Library customers and the very real impact being made on their lives as a result of Library programs and services. This year's creative (see Appendix A) focuses on quadruplets Amy, Olivia, Natalie and Owen, as an icon of the thousands of London children and families that benefit from London Public Library. The messaging focuses on their "magical" experience of discovery and learning, and the importance of literacy to these, our future leaders. The campaign incorporates:

- A phased plan to utilize a variety of promotional and development activities, including direct mail, point-of-sale appeal and in-branch activities, media relations, special events and corporate engagement.
- A new, fresh and contemporary brand that can be applied across LPL's annual giving campaign ("Imagine *our Library with your Support!*")
- Emotional resonance and a relevant and compelling case for need (centered around children and families.)
- A look and feel consistent with current Library marketing (My Library campaign.)
- A "toolkit" for staff, including procedures, helpful hints, fundraising ideas and a checklist of materials and volunteer needs for associated activities.

Our goal with The IMAGINE Campaign, which will run from December 2007 to March 2008, is to raise a minimum of \$100,000 for London Public Library.

It is our hope that the 2007-08 IMAGINE Campaign will have 100% support and commitment from the Library Board.

Samples of the direct mail appeal and point-of-sale brochure will be supplied at the December Board meeting.