



Communicating FDLP Value: Purpose, Perception, & Persistence



- Kelly Seifert, Strategic Communications Coordinator, LSCM, GPO
 - Lara Flint, Outreach Librarian, LSCM, GPO



- What is value?
- Value vs usage
- Purpose, perception, & persistence
- Why be a Federal depository library?
- Perception vs reality
- Persistence – strategies for communicating value
- User stories
- Articulating FDLP value





“We need webinars for directors/administration to learn the value of FDLP.”

“We need tips about making the case to stay in the FDLP”

“More on publicity, outreach, local collaborations”

“Bringing on docs out of silos - working with others to prevent coordinators being a one-person show. Too many institutions lack robust staff expertise in this area. how do we help others feel more comfortable and interested in Gov info. Incentives for programming and outreach - While collection management is huge, I think there needs to be more weight placed on programming and outreach.”



FEDERAL
DEPOSITORY LIBRARY

CONFERENCE

#FDLConference

2019

OCTOBER 21-23
ARLINGTON, VA



**“the regard that
something
is held to deserve;
the importance,
worth,
or usefulness of
something”**





FEDERAL
DEPOSITORY LIBRARY

CONFERENCE

#FDLConference

2019

OCTOBER 21-23
ARLINGTON, VA



“Use has nothing to do with support.”





FEDERAL
DEPOSITORY LIBRARY

CONFERENCE

#FDLConference

2019

OCTOBER 21-23
ARLINGTON, VA



PURPOSE

PERCEPTION

PERSISTENCE





Why be a Federal depository?

- Providing free access to official Federal information demonstrates your library's commitment to a core democratic value.
- Enhance your collection with official, primary source materials from the U.S. Government, including books, periodicals, maps, brochures, websites, databases, and more.



Why be a Federal depository?

- Provide a wider range of resources of value to the adults, students, and children that visit your library.
- More information leads to a more informed citizenry.



Why be a Federal depository?

- Serving as a Federal depository and official partner of the U.S. Government elevates the prestige and credibility of your library and enhances the political goodwill of your institution's designated members of Congress.



FEDERAL
DEPOSITORY LIBRARY

CONFERENCE

#FDLConference

2019

OCTOBER 21-23
ARLINGTON, VA





PERCEPTION

~~“My patrons don’t ask for
Government information.”~~



- Healthcare problems, access to affordable medicine, insurance issues
- Dietary guidance
- Welfare assistance programs (ex. SNAP)
- Environment and climate change
- What is happening on the Hill
- Extreme weather events
- Trade/tariffs
- Food safety and recalls
- Consumer safety and recalls
- Crime and safety statistics
- Education statistics and programs (ex. Tuition reimbursement)
- Fact checking



PERCEPTION

~~“In today’s day and age, we
only need Google.
Everything is online”~~



- Primary Source Materials
- Authentic, official information
- Expertise of FDLP librarians

VS

- Hacked websites
- News you can trust
- Counterfeit Government documents
- Fabricated statistics
- Unreliable sources
- Speculation and theories presented as fact



PERCEPTION

~~“Government documents are dry and boring. We can’t generate interest in that.”~~



- Historic WWI and II publications and posters
- Comics and activity books for kids
- Tumultuous word-for-word debate from the floor of Congress
- Space exploration materials from NASA
- Cookbooks and nutritional guides
- Infant and child care materials
- Speeches, recordings, journals related to pivotal moments in History
- Guides, posters, and art books from the National Parks Service
- Historical maps
- U.S. Senate historical prints and engravings



PERSISTENCE

The Herman B Wells Library at Indiana University:

...Creates and sends an annual report “to other librarians and staff on the happenings of the FDLP and GPO. It has become quite apparent that to truly supply our patrons with the Government documents and data they need (even when they didn’t know they needed it!), we must ALL be educated on new resources, preservation efforts, and changes within the program.”



PERSISTENCE

For library administration

- Prepare a packet of 5 examples of cool pubs the administrator can look at/hold.
- Make a list of patron interactions/needs and what Government docs you used to help them.
- Note any weeding projects and how it helped streamline the collection/space.



PERSISTENCE

For library administration

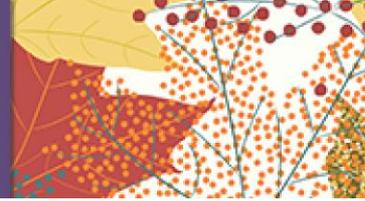
- Note any GPO partnerships you are a part of and show where that generated publicity, either on FDLP.gov, GPO.gov, GPO press releases, etc.
- Put together a collage of physical or online displays or features you have put together, as well as LibGuides.



PERSISTENCE

For library administration

- Compile a list of national news events that has Government data or info behind it.
- Link your depository to the library's mission.
- Coming soon: New Handout on the FDLP for library administrators



PERSISTENCE

For local, non-depository libraries
in your region

- Memphis Public Libraries





PERSISTENCE

For patrons

- Reach patrons WHERE THEY ARE
- Appeal to local needs
- Feature documents based on holidays, commemorations, seasons, etc.
- Focus on unique aspects
 - Formats
 - Variety of resources
 - Historic vs current



PERSISTENCE

For everyone



- We can help you!
 - Guidance
 - Idea exchange
 - Free promotional materials
 - Strategies on how to reach a particular group



User Stories

- Each story highlights an imaginary user
 - What sources or actions could help them?
 - What value does the FDLP provide to them and to your institution?
- The stories illustrate that there is Government information out there for basically any need – that is one of the biggest value aspects of the FDLP!
- How do you explain what value these users got out of the FDLP after you helped them?
 - Value can be to them, to the community, to you personally, to your institution, to your administrator, etc.
- Can you spot the common theme among the user stories?



Rilla the Administrator



As a library director I would like all this content to either be used, exhibited in a way that enhances my university's prestige, or put into offsite storage to make space

- Age: 54
- Graduated from Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario, Canada) with a master's degree in Public Administration
- Previously worked at a library that is an FDL, but did not work with the depository collection there
- Also previously worked for the City of Milwaukee
- Hobbies: gardening, Marvel comics, motorcycling, crochet



Tips for Helping Rilla

- Identify a good space and topic, and plan an exhibit
 - No space? Could you do an online exhibit or webpage?
- Collect and share some reference success stories
- Make space
 - What can you on or supersede if you need or want to?
- Communicate
 - Be familiar with your regional depository coordinator and what the specific processes are in your region in case you need to weed
 - Get prepared with some statistics on offsite storage
 - Have a couple of peer institutions in mind that are doing it so you can compare



What is the FDLP value?

- Getting an administrator to understand the program better, feel some investment in it, and feel that it helps the university's academic standing
- Showing that you are managing the collection effectively





Walter the Genealogist



As the great-grandson of an immigrant, I would like official records so I can document how my family came to the U.S. and where they lived in the 1890s

- Age: not sure, impolite to ask
- Looking for: passenger ship records, land records, military records, or anything else



Tips for helping Walter

- Do you have anything in your collection?
 - How familiar are you with your collection? If it's not in the catalog, do you know the basics of what you have?
- Will the Census records help this patron and can you help him find the right ones?
- If you don't have anything in your collection, what kind of referral can you make?
 - To the regional depository, would they have anything?
 - To a Federal agency, can you help them find the right agency and the right contact address, email, or phone within that agency?



What is the FDLP value?

- Helping someone find exactly what they need
- Engagement with the community





Cordelia the Undergrad



As a student, I need a primary source for a paper because my professor requires it. The paper is due in two days.

- Age: 19
- Paper topic: The Canada-U.S. trade deficit
- Came to the reference desk



Tips for helping Cordelia

- Thinking broadly, what Federal agency or agencies might deal with this topic?
- Which Federal documents can be considered primary sources?
- Are there any Congressional Research Service reports on the topic?
 - Nice way to get a background and potential sources from the bibliography



What is the FDLP value?

- Broadening people's understanding of what the depository collection contains
- Enhancing students' searching and critical thinking skills





Matthew the Grad Student



As a grad student, I need quality data so I can write a fantastic paper and get published so I can get an academic job after graduating

- Age: 23
- Research topic: Wants to mash up K-12 education data with Census data and environmental to try to prove that attending an elementary or high school in close proximity to a superfund site has a long-term impact on the earning power of those students
- Found your email on the library website and contacted you



Tips for helping Matthew

- What Federal agencies produce this kind of data?
 - Look at data.gov
 - Center for Education Statistics
 - Census
 - National Center for Health Statistics
- Do you know that each state has a Census data center?
- The EPA maintains the list of superfund sites – have you checked with the EPA library? We can put you in touch.
- Have you thought about how you are going to maintain and store the data you create yourself? Do you need a data plan with this project?



What is the FDLP value?

- Helping researchers access quality data
- Enhancing the understanding that even skilled researchers benefit from the expertise of a government information librarian
- Illustrating the breadth and scope of free information available from government databases (as opposed to paid ones)





Thoughts on Value from the FDLP Community

- The high degree of transparency of U.S. Government information as opposed to other areas of the world
- The value of Government information as hard research data and primary source material. The extensive range of topics covered by Government information.
- Not everything is online or can be found online by a non-expert
- Being leaders in the field and the community; the privilege/prestige of being in the FDLP
- The FDLP community of support and expertise, and free training



Thoughts on Value from the FDLP Community

- The free marketing materials
- The ability to build the collection without paying anything out of pocket
- FDLP participation frequently meshes extremely well with and supports the mission of the institution
- The value and importance of serving the public, especially when an FDL is the only one in the area
- Civic engagement



FDLP Buzzwords

access
accurate
authentic
awareness
benefit
budget
civic
collaboration
community
connection
democracy
demographics
depth
educate
engagement
enrich
essential
expert
expertise
facilitate
free
freedom
future

guidance
historical
information
longevity
mission
official
opportunities
participation
partnerships
power
primary
privilege
provide
public
reference
relationships
relevant
reliable
reputation
research
resources
responsibility
robust

scholarship
share
social justice
standards
statistics
support
training
transparency
trust
trustworthy
truth
unique
valuable



The Essential FDLP

- Gathering stories, testimonials, and short videos about the importance, value, and vital nature of the FDLP
- Based on a revamp of 1993's 'Fulfilling Madison's Vision
- Libraries encouraged to submit testimonials and ask patrons to do the same
- FDLP.gov > 'About the FDLP' tab

“Our rural community college library is the only library in our town. Our collection of tangible government documents allows a community that has very little contact with federal governmental agencies to gain insight and understanding into the vast, intricate, and important work the federal government does on our behalf.”

—Lisa Pritchard, Director of Library Services, Jefferson College Library



