

The FDLP Promotion Plan
Government Information at Your Fingertips:
Now and for Future Generations

The FDLP Promotional Plan

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Promoting the FDLP: The Why, What, Who, When, Where, & How

WHY should we promote the FDLP?

The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) provides a unique and important service to the American public. No matter how stellar the knowledge and service of FDLP librarians and no matter how impressive the tangible and online collections, this significant Program cannot flourish and grow without the awareness of its availability by the American public.

Promoting the FDLP will...

- Increase patronage, civic engagement, and support for your library;
- Build relationships in the community with both patrons and non-depository libraries;
- Help ensure that your library continues to meet the needs of your patrons;
- Help promote your depository's parent organization;
- Promote an informed citizenry, which is critical to the foundation of democracy and keeping Government accountable;
- Provide further evidence as to the impact libraries have in the community, why they continue to be relevant in the 21st century, and why it is critical they continue to be funded;
- Encourage participatory engagement with Government, which is possible now through web 2.0;
- Increase awareness of the wealth of current and historical information available from the Federal Government;
- Connect citizens with expertise provided by librarians to find what they are looking for; and
- Provide collaborative opportunities to connect with others on training initiatives in depository librarianship.

Promoting the FDLP and FDLP libraries is essential in ensuring that the FDLP continues to be a viable Program, now and for future generations.

WHAT is our goal?

The goal of the FDLP Promotion Plan is to provide Federal depository libraries with the tools they need to promote the FDLP to the American public, non-depository libraries, and to parent organizations responsible for library funding and support.

WHO should be working on this effort?

In order to ensure the success of the FDLP Promotion Plan, GPO and Federal depository libraries across the nation must continue and strengthen their partnership to increase awareness of the FDLP. FDLP

librarians know their patrons and the local needs of the communities they serve. Who better to carry out this task?

WHEN should we start?

NOW is the time. The digital age is now, which has given FDLP libraries many new tools and opportunities to help patrons navigate Federal Government information; the digital age has also presented new challenges for FDLP libraries in arguing their relevance, an argument that cannot be lost with the right tools.

WHERE should we promote the FDLP?

Promoting the FDLP and your depository must happen at your library, in your community, and online. Additionally, promoting the depository is also important within your own library, to non-depository staff and administrators.

HOW can we promote the FDLP?

The FDLP Promotion Plan includes:

1. The introduction of a new promotional campaign for the FDLP
2. The introduction of GPO-provided tools to help carry out the campaign and Plan
3. Tips and ideas for how FDLP libraries can utilize the campaign tools to promote their depositories to all audiences

GPO's Role in Promoting the FDLP

In order to assist FDLP libraries in promoting themselves, GPO has developed/is developing the following tools.

1. New Promotional Campaign and Slogan

GPO is proud to introduce a new FDLP promotional campaign and slogan. Art and graphics have been developed to support this campaign and will be included in promotional and educational brochures, other promotional products, and online for use by GPO and depositories.

The new campaign slogan is:

Government Information at Your Fingertips: Federal Depository Libraries



GOVERNMENT INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS
FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARIES



GOVERNMENT INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS
FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARIES

2. Promotional Brochures

GPO has introduced a suite of new promotional brochures for free order or download by depositories. The newly available brochures are:

- GPO's Federal Digital System (FDsys): A promotional and educational brochure that describes FDsys, its capabilities, and its benefits to users on one side and educates users about the four ways to navigate FDsys and how to work with FDsys search results on the other side
- Federal Depository Libraries: A promotional brochure that describes the FDLP, what patrons can access at a depository, and how depositories benefit the public
- Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP): A promotional brochure that describes the CGP, how to utilize it, and its features

3. Screensavers/Multi-Media Displays

GPO is creating new screensavers and multi-media images for public access workstations and announcement monitors/display screens at Federal depository libraries. These images will include information about the FDLP, the CGP, and FDsys.

4. Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

GPO is creating two new public service announcements: one to promote the FDLP and the use of nationwide depositories and one to promote FDsys. These PSAs will be made available for download as mp3 files, for free to anyone. GPO will work with depositories and radio stations in each state to increase circulation of the PSA.

5. Nationwide Media Promotion

GPO has contracted with North American Precis Syndicate (NAPS) to launch a nationwide print and radio campaign for the FDLP. As part of the contract, NAPS will distribute public service announcements about the FDLP to FM radio stations nationwide, as well as promotional articles to print and online publications.

6. Depository Signage¹

GPO is creating new depository library signage for free order by depositories that will make the FDLP more visible in the library.

- Adhesive signage (with FDLP eagle logo) that will direct library patrons to the depository (This sign will serve as a replacement to the current eagle emblem that can be affixed to library doors or cabinets.)
- Table tents (with FDLP eagle logo) that will alert patrons of the depository services available in the library

7. FDLP Testimonials

GPO is working with members of Congress, leaders in the FDLP community, and depository library patrons to develop a collection of testimonials on the value of Federal depository libraries. These testimonials will be made available on fdlp.gov for promotional use by depositories.

8. Announcement & Press Release Templates

GPO is creating announcement and press release templates for libraries that will be accessible from fdlp.gov. These templates can be used to announce new programs or educational opportunities at the library, new titles or databases available for patron use, and commemorations/special events.

9. Digital Promotional Materials for Web Sites²

GPO is creating a repository of digital images and logos that can be utilized by depositories for promotional use on their Web sites.

¹ Pursuant to [Legal Requirements and Program Regulations of the Federal Depository Library Program](#): Regulations 25, 28, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, & 39.

² Pursuant to [Legal Requirements and Program Regulations of the Federal Depository Library Program](#): Regulation 38.

10. Educational Posters

GPO is designing an educational FDsys poster and FDLP poster, sized to fit most library stacks. The posters will be available for free order by depositories.

11. Bookmarks

GPO is designing a two-sided bookmark that will feature the benefits of depository libraries on one side and the benefits of FDsys on the other.

12. FDLP Community Site Promotional Forum

GPO is offering a forum on the FDLP Community site for depository colleagues to share promotional and marketing ideas among one another. GPO will offer themes of discussion related to promotion, i.e. promotion of online publications, depository anniversaries, social media, and more.

13. Reaching Federal Government Web Resources

GPO is reaching out to Federal Government Web resources such as usa.gov, publications.usa.gov, and nextgov.com to help raise awareness of the FDLP. Additionally, GPO is working to revamp the information on its agency Web site (gpo.gov) to bring greater visibility to FDLP information.

14. Reaching Library School Students

GPO will be undertaking an outreach effort to library school professors and students to spread knowledge of the FDLP.

15. Educational Sessions on FDLP Promotion

GPO is developing webinars for FDLP libraries on promoting their libraries and the FDLP.

16. Promotion Through GPO's Social Media/Networking Channels

GPO will utilize its social media/networking accounts to provide FDLP-related information, news, and updates to its public subscribers.

The FDLP Community's Role in Promoting the FDLP:

Spread Awareness

Your voice, as a depository librarian, is critical to promoting the FDLP. As the information experts, depository librarians are the best promoters of Government information.

Target Your Audience

Keep your audience in mind when you are creating promotional efforts. Tailor messages and benefits for each audience. Remember, college students and senior citizens will respond to different messages and mediums. Serving your audience at their point of need is important. Local collections are a huge strength of depositories. Emphasize your localized collections.

Reaching your Online Audience

In recent years, there has clearly been a shift in the way people communicate. Using social networking and social media is an inexpensive and effective way to reach users and potential users of your depository collection. Social networking sites, blogs, and other social media are used by people from all demographics. Businesses, nonprofits, and other organizations use these tools to reach their audiences with great success. Depository operations can also benefit from the use of these tools.

A depository library serves everyone, so a broad approach utilizing a wide variety of social media/networking efforts is usually the best choice. Each effort can stand alone or be part of a coordinated campaign.

1. Jump on the Social Bandwagon

Many libraries are already using social media/networking to reach out to patrons. It can be quite simple to include the depository in any rotation of blog posts, status updates, or videos that already exist. This can be done at regular intervals or whenever something interesting is happening.

Depending on your organization, the documents department can create their own social media/networking campaign. Pages and blogs can “branch off” the main library pages or stand alone. If you opt to do it this way, you will have the flexibility and freedom to post more frequently.

2. Social Networking

There is a plethora of social networking sites to choose from. *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Linkedin*, and *Google+* are some popular ones, but there are numerous others as well. These take minimal time and skill to set up and deliver a great deal of visibility for the effort. The following are things to keep in mind when launching and maintaining a social networking page.

- Look at the pages of other depositories and your colleagues. This is a good way to get ideas and to find out what works and what users want.
- “Connect with,” “friend,” or “follow” users and potential users, as well as organizations that can lead new users to your depository. These can include:
 - Student or community groups;
 - Professors and teachers;
 - Local schools and churches;
 - Congressional representatives;
 - Local depository and non-depository libraries;
 - Agencies; and
 - Colleagues.
- Post on other groups’ pages when applicable. This will increase your visibility and bring more attention to your page.
- Post as often as is feasible. A “Tip of the Day” or “Document of the Week” will keep people engaged, as they know when to expect something new from you. Enhance these regular posts by adding more sporadic posts.
- Post about:
 - Depository events;
 - New items in the library;
 - Frequently sought materials;
 - Hidden gems of the collection;
 - Library services;
 - Facts about your library/collection;
 - Links to relevant Government Web sites;
 - Special announcements and more.
- Personality is the key to any social networking effort. Entertain, use humor, hold contests, or conduct quizzes. Learn what works best for your audience, and do it.
- Include the FDLP eagle logo and new FDLP campaign graphic wherever possible. This links the logo to Government information, bringing visibility to the FDLP and to your depository.
- Ask your parent institution and colleagues to link to your social networking pages.
- Is there a staff member who is particularly savvy with social networking? Offer a class to the public on social networking and invite attendees to join your library’s social network.

3. *Blogging*

While social networking sites work well for quick updates, blogs can be great for more in-depth communication. They allow you describe and promote your collection in detail. While slightly more time consuming than the other sites, blogs nonetheless produce wonderful results for the time and effort expended on them. The following are things to keep in mind when launching a blog.

- Coordinate your blog with other promotional efforts, i.e. physical or online displays, other social media/networking efforts, library programs, community events, etc.
- Find out what people want to know and then blog about it. For example:
 - Current events;
 - Assignments; and
 - Reference questions.
- Consult with colleagues. What questions are they getting? What classes are they teaching? Subject librarians can be especially helpful.
- Consider writing a series of blogs on similar topics.
- No time for blogging? Utilize student workers or interns.
- Post to the blogs of others in the community.
- Allow the public to comment on your blogs and social networking/media pages. While this would need to be moderated to ensure appropriate content, don't underestimate the power of Word of Mouth marketing. If you happen to get a negative comment, respond openly and publicly to correct the issue.
- By the same token, provide "share" buttons on your blogs.

4. *Social Media*

Photo and video sites such as *Flickr*, *Pinterest*, and *YouTube* can also help promote your depository. Government Information departments can utilize them just as many libraries are already doing, either in cooperation with parent institutions or on their own.

Photographs of depository displays or events can be uploaded to these sites as a way to reach a wider audience. Photographs of interesting publication covers and of the library itself can generate attention as well. Videos of tutorials, tours, events, and even advertisements can range from studious to silly. Use your imagination and be creative.

Ask student workers or interns to create fun promotional videos about your library. This can be done at a very low cost using just a Smartphone. Air the videos on college /local access television stations, the library's Web site, through popular social media/networking sites, etc.

Keep in mind that photos and videos are online content, so label them completely with titles and descriptions.

Remember your library's photo policy before posting photos online, and keep in mind that you will need permissions from anyone in your library who appears in a photo before posting.

5. *Apps*

Library patrons are increasingly accessing library materials, catalogs, etc. via their phones and mobile devices rather than conventional personal computers. Serve those patrons at their point of need by creating your own app. Apps can search library catalogs, reserve materials, find locations and hours, take virtual tours, view video, and more.

6. QR Codes

Quick Response (QR) Codes can be a fun and interesting way to promote your depository to potential users. QR Codes are a type of barcode that can allow users to access library Web sites, guides, catalogs, and other information from their mobile devices by scanning a two-dimensional image that can be displayed practically anywhere.

QR Codes are an emerging technology that will likely see more use as time passes. The costs associated with this technology are minimal, and the applications for libraries are limitless. So use your imagination and reach out to users!

Some examples of ways to use QR Codes in your depository are:

- Place at the end of a run of tangible documents where they “go electronic” to show users where to access later editions.
- Place in the stacks where documents change SuDoc number to help patrons locate materials.
- Put on handouts and other educational materials to provide further information.
- Include on business cards and bookmarks to enable users to easily contact you.
- Place on the shelves of other collections in the library to link users to Government documents on similar topics or your library guides.
- Add to promotional materials that are displayed at other libraries, academic departments, and community organizations to make it easy for new users to find you.
- Work with your colleagues to ensure that codes that link to depository resources are included in all relevant library materials. Subject liaisons can be especially helpful.

7. Your Library's Web Site³

Library Web sites are perfect for promoting all the depository has to offer. It is often challenging to share Web page space with parent institutions, but there are many things you can do to elevate awareness. Ask yourself these questions, and work with your Webmaster on solutions that are beneficial to all areas of the library:

- Is it easy to determine from looking at the library's homepage that you have a Government Documents collection?
- Is it easy to determine from looking at the library's homepage that the depository is open to the public?
- Does the homepage display the FDLP eagle image or language to indicate that free Federal Government information is available here?
- Does the depository have its own Web page linked off of the main library homepage?
- Does the depository Web page include a thorough description of what is available within the depository; the expert assistance with the materials that is available, both in-person and

³ Pursuant to [Legal Requirements and Program Regulations of the Federal Depository Library Program](#): Regulations 33 & 38.

virtually; supplemental Web resources, i.e. GPO's Federal Digital System (FDsys); and a visually appealing element, i.e. featured or interesting titles, images or photographs, virtual displays, links to video, etc.?

- Is the depository page being updated regularly? Rotating features, weekly blog links, daily updates, etc. all offer the patron a reason to return to your Web page.
 - Create a list of collections, publications, services, etc. and highlight a new one each month through your Web site. Coordinate with holidays and observances, college exams, elections, etc.
- Are associated social networking and social media pages being linked from the library's Web site? How about blogs and apps?
- Is there an event calendar for your library or parent institution? Make sure depository events are included. Create your own Depository Event Calendar.
- Is there contact information for how to get more information? Consider developing a generic library email address to post online to avoid spamming.

8. *Email Distribution Lists*

Are there existing email distribution lists associated with your library, perhaps at the parent institution or educational institution? Ask list administrators for guest posting rights, and tailor your message to the audience. There is something for everyone at a depository library. Showcase that.

Reaching *your* Audience in *your* Community

There is a lot to be said to promote "the old-fashioned way." Even in the midst of the digital age, there is great value in reaching patrons right there at the library and in your community.

1. *Existing Communication Channels*

Depositories of any type can benefit from utilizing existing communication channels around the community. Utilize GPO-provided promotional templates, and reach out locally to:

- High school and college newspapers, newsletters, and bulletin boards;
- High school and college administrators to include announcements on PA systems, parent email announcements, video monitor announcement systems, news stations, radio stations, and Web sites;
- Community newspapers, newsletters, and radio stations;
- Grocery store and community center bulletin boards;
- Senior center bulletin boards and newsletters;
- Library newsletters ;
- Community calendars;
- Local county public access programming;
- City Council and Mayor's office and more.

2. *It's All About the Contacts*

Reach out to local Congressional offices, and get on their radar. Ask to be included in the newsletters and e-newsletters that they send to constituents. Make contact with your state library association and area non-depository libraries. Work together to spread awareness of each other's offerings, collections, and services.

3. *Community Contacts*

Create a mailing list or email distribution list for the depository. Collect contacts online and through a physical drop box in the library. Patrons can proactively choose to stay up-to-date with library offerings and services without having to proactively look to any specific Web site. News and updates can be delivered straight to their doors and email inboxes. With enough staff member participation, you could create a quarterly newsletter for the depository for relatively low cost.

4. *Keep it Fresh*

Create a list of collections, publications, services, etc., and highlight a new one each month through a display at the library. Coordinate with holidays and observances, college exams, elections, etc.

5. *Get on the Calendar*

Schedule meetings with school and library administrators, local Government representatives, Chambers of Commerce, etc. Offer classes and workshops for their audiences. Make the depository and its benefits known to everyone in your community and everyone with an audience that can benefit from your services. Moreover, educating those who make decisions regarding your funding and structure is key. The more they know you and your services, the more they are aware how valuable your depository is.

6. *Extend your Reach*

If your depository is located on a campus, create a campaign to show students how your services can be valuable after graduation, i.e. resources for their careers and resources to manage their lives (publications for children, information on nutrition, tax forms, etc.). Disseminate this information to professors on campus and to student unions.

If your depository is not on a campus, this type of resource can be distributed to local libraries in the area, community centers, senior centers, high schools, elementary schools, etc.

Elections are upon us. Your library can serve as a community resource for election information. Let patrons know where they can get information on major issues in campaigns. Highlight where patrons can get more information on candidates. Sponsor voter registration drives. Seek out local candidates and host debates or appearances in the library.

7. *Remember the Children*

Start capturing your patrons at a young age. Highlight the children's publications available from the FDLP. Reach out to local schools, community centers, and boy/girl scout troops. Hold art and poster contests. (Constitution Day is just one of many options.) Share [Ben's Guide to U.S. Government](#). Schedule talks at local schools and other libraries. Capture college freshmen by creating, "A Freshman's Guide to U.S. Government Documents." Make it available on your Web site, in the library, to administrators who organize orientation activities, and to professors of freshman courses.

8. *Do you have a Mascot?*

Does your library or parent institution have a mascot? Devise a catchy character and name, and solicit a charismatic library staffer to drum up interest in the community. Appearances at community fairs and local holiday events are a great way to get out and meet the community.

9. *Deck The Halls*

Everyone loves a good, old-fashioned holiday celebration. A holiday tree lighting or spooky story in history night will be sure to capture attention. Post and distribute fun statistics from the Government on Christmas trees, pumpkins, turkeys, etc. Share holiday recipes from Government resources. Advertise in local community papers, Web sites, and through flyers at grocery stores, banks, other libraries, etc.

10. *Government FAQs*

Keep track of frequently asked patron questions, and highlight those FDLP resources that can answer them. Keep a list on the Web site and a handout at the reference desk.

11. *Fifteen Minutes of Fame*

Notify local radio and television stations and local newspapers about depository events, resources, and services. Inquire about guest columns and interviews for print, radio, and television to spread the word. Create feature editorial articles for local news sources on services, collections, and resources by field/subject.

12. *Be Everywhere*

Pass out information at local schools, Chambers of Commerce, Head Start programs, Senior Centers, Recreation Centers, meetings for campus/community organizations, and Town Fairs. Gear messages toward certain groups in the community, i.e. information for retirees, homeschoolers, stay-at-home parents, new and aspiring citizens, recent graduates, etc.

Don't forget library school students! Do the educational institutions near your library have a Master of Library Science (MLS) program? Talk to administrators and professors about serving as a guest speaker in those classes. Recruit MLS students for work at your library.

13. Toot your own Horn

Celebrate your library. Take advantage of your depository anniversary to tell your story. Share photographs and stories on your library's Web site and in the library. GPO offers numerous ideas on [celebrating depository milestones](#) on [fdlp.gov](#).

14. Solicit Endorsements

Reach out to local celebrities, i.e. newscasters, local politicians, radio personalities, university athletes, and school mascots. Their endorsement can be as simple as a picture and quote on your Web site and blasted through social media. It can be as involved as having the celebrity make appearances at library events or discussing the depository through media channels.

15. Subject-Based Lists

Create subject-based lists of resources for staff to recommend to patrons, i.e. small business owners, aspiring citizens, history buffs, etc. Lists of resources on hand will make subject-based reference that much easier. With a bit of polishing, these could be posted on the library Web site and at the reference desk or shared with local non-depositories for patrons. Send these lists to faculty and subject librarians.

16. Remember to Promote TO your Library

Create "depository units" for use in library instruction sessions, both basic and subject specific. Send newly received depository items to subject specialists or other staff members for review. If the public services staff does not know what you have to offer, it is likely that many patrons will never know. But if they do, they will see the value and help you promote the collection.

17. Library Instruction

Does your library hold library instruction sessions? Advocate to have depository information added to those sessions, both basic and subject specific.

18. Educate Subject Specialists

Remember to route new items to subject specialists for review. If they know about depository resources, they can promote them! Allow subject specialists to participate in item selection and weeding. The more familiar they are with the collection, the more they can help increase awareness and use of it.

Focus your Message:

Don't just focus on FDLP publications and resources available. Play up the service you provide as experts in Government information and promote the types of information you can find (topics). Some patrons will be more "hooked" by knowing that depositories provide information on health, nutrition, science, the workings of past and current Presidential administrations, and more, rather than listing specific resources. In addition, promote the credibility of the source. A resource from the Federal Government is much more reliable and authoritative than other sources.

Some examples:

- Looking to become a US citizen?
- Always wanted to start your own business?
- Wondering what affect a new law will have on you?
- Looking for healthy eating tips?
- Interested in what the National Parks have to offer?
- Looking for a career change?
- Confused about your social security, Medicaid, Medicare?
- Need financial aid to further your education?
- Looking for information on travelling overseas?
- Interested in FDA regulations?
- Want info on the U.S. budget?

Promotional Resources:

There are many other valuable promotional resources available from GPO and FDLP community colleagues. Below is just a small sampling of those resources:

- Historical “Easy as FDL” campaign promotional ideas: [2008 and 2010 Marketing Plans](#)
 - While the “Easy as FDL” campaign has ended, the promotional ideas presented are valuable under any campaign.
- [Government Book Talk](#)
 - This GPO blog is a great resource for information about interesting Government publications. The information found throughout the blog can be useful in establishing virtual or library displays.
- FDLP Connection Guest Articles & Depository Library Spotlight Articles
 - FDLP community colleagues have been contributing guest articles to FDLP Connection since August 2011. In addition, each month, GPO honors one FDLP library as the Depository Library Spotlight. Many of these libraries’ promotional efforts are highlighted in these monthly articles. Explore [past issues](#) of FDLP Connection for promotional ideas and tips.
- GPO Conference Proceedings
 - At each year’s fall Depository Library Council Meeting and Federal Depository Library Conference, FDLP community colleagues often present on their promotional ideas and strategies. GPO maintains [Conference Proceedings](#) on fdlp.gov where copies of past session handouts and slides can be accessed.