

Library Skills Week 2021

Originally started as a one-day conference for the Western Michigan University campus community in February 2020, the event evolved into a one-week fully virtual program in October 2020. The majority of attendees were graduate students, although marketing was primarily targeted toward undergraduates.



In November 2021, this event was developed into a hybrid program with a combination of in person and virtual workshops. Breakout session tracks were internally created on four focus areas: citation, data, literature, and productivity.

Undergraduates made up the majority of registrants [N=114] & attendees [N=62].

Percentage Attendance by Registrant Type						
	Less than hour	Same day	Previous day	2-7 days before	1-4 weeks before	More than a month
Undergrads	49%	50%	92%	45%	27%	24%
Graduates	89%	50%	57%	47%	42%	50%
Faculty	100%		100%	33%	50%	0%
Staff				67%	31%	
Alumni					60%	
Other				0%	0%	
Unknown						0%

Table 1: Percentage Attendance by Registrant Type. Undergraduates who registered the previous day had an attendance rate of 92%. Undergraduates who registered for an event more than a week ahead of time had attendance rates under 30%. Graduate students were more likely to attend if they registered for the event within the hour (89% attendance rate), with attendance rates dropping under 50% 2 days-30 days before the event.

Advertisement Success by Registrant Type (unique)							
	Faculty/Instructor	Staff	Graduate	Undergrad	Alumni	Other	Unknown
Facebook	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
Instagram	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Twitter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Email	2	0	16	12	0	0	0
Friend/colleague/instructor	0	1	6	37	0	0	0
University Libraries website	2	2	12	10	1	1	0
WMU Events Calendar	1	1	12	27	0	0	0
WMU Today	0	1	4	5	0	0	0
Other	2	0	4	13	0	0	0
Unknown	5	4	7	21	0	0	1

Table 2: Advertisement Success by Registrant Type (unique). The majority of undergraduates who heard about this event from word of mouth, followed by the university events calendar. The majority of graduate students heard about this event from email. In general, word of mouth was the most successful form of registrants hearing about the event across all registrant types (21%) followed by the university events calendar (19%). In terms of registrants who attended the event, word of mouth was also the most successful strategy (65%).

Marketing Strategies

Library Skills Week Campaign ran 6 weeks out from event

Target Audience: Graduate and Undergraduate Students

Marketing strategies:

Less aggressive social media, more focus on campus-wide channels and outreach, email list in development (low audience, but growing). Social media call to action focus on registration. Leveraged campus channels available to students (Elearning, GoWMU).

Marketing tactics: Physical flyers and bookmarks. Digital signage, social media posts on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, emails (list and personal invites), event calendars, website.

Study P.A.W.S. Campaign ran 1 week out from event

Target Audience: Undergraduate Students

Marketing strategies:

Typically start a campaign 4 weeks out from event with the first two weeks focus on awareness and the last two weeks drive registrations. In Fall 2022/Spring 2023, the campaign was started 1 week out and focused solely on awareness.

Program offering during the same time of year, using repeated imagery (same wiener dog mascot with different outfits) to visually cue community; Multiple reminders were deployed and early registrants were rewarded with incentives at the event.

Marketing tactics: Physical flyers in library & across campus, banner sign and dog shaped sign at main entrances. Digital signage included Get Involved campus event platform posting, social media postings on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and digital sign throughout campus.

Knox Campaign ran 5 weeks out from event

Target Audience: All campus and community members (public event); Library professionals in MI and IN

Marketing Strategies:

Campus: Focus on awareness for first two weeks. Switch call to action to sign up closer to the event. Identify relevant courses and faculty to offer extra credit. Cross-promotion from relevant student organizations.

Community: Outreach to relevant community organizations, schools, libraries, etc. Collaborate with MCLS to reach state-wide libraries & interested groups.

Marketing materials: Physical flyers, handouts, and outdoor signage. Digital signage, social media posts on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, emails (list and personal invites), outreach to community organizations, website, event calendars.

Data for Event Planning & Marketing



Lessons Learned and Takeaways

- **Balance branding guidelines.** Using university branding oftentimes leads to your event blending in with other campus events. Think creatively to cut through the noise and help your advertisement stand out.
- **Consider incentives.** Free food or a drawing for completing a prize can help draw a student crowd. Offering a limited incentive like a special swag bag and requiring pick up at the event may help encourage attendance for early registrants.
- **Create digital and physical materials.** Utilize various formats, such as email, event calendars, web announcements on common platforms, and print signage (flyers, table tents, banners) to capture your target audience's attention in a variety of spaces.
- **Cultivate an email list.** This is critical for ongoing communications with people already interested in your events and programs.
- **Market for awareness and registration.** Socials are useful for awareness rather than sign-ups for student-focused events. Cross-promotion with other university and student group accounts is critical for large events. Paid socials are useful for driving registrations for community-focused events.
- **Track your data.** If your tactic directs people to a link, make it trackable with UTM codes or through a shortened URL. Ask people how they heard about the event during registration or after-surveys. Collect data about who your attendees are!

Study P.A.W.S.

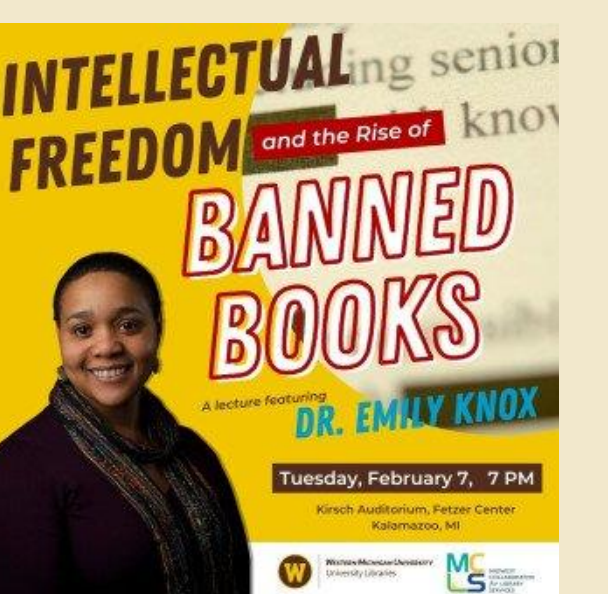
Study P.A.W.S. is a well established 8-year partnership with Faithful Friends organization (an animal-assisted therapy ministry), offered twice yearly at midterms and finals. The longevity of the event meant that days and times were adjusted for maximum attendance. Due to logistical issues in Spring 2023, event promotion occurred only one week in advance. Despite the reduced promotional window, the Spring 2023 midterm event had the fourth highest turnout ever, with 222 participants during the one day event.



Undergraduates made up the majority of attendees in Spring 2023 [N=159].

Knox Lecture

WMU invited Dr. Emily Knox to speak on the history and rising trend of book challenges and bans in communities across the U.S. The event included a public lecture and workshop for academic, public, and school librarians. The lecture was held in person on WMU's main campus in Kalamazoo, MI and live-streamed for remote attendees. These events were developed in collaboration with the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services (MCLS).



In-state community members made up the majority of registrants [N=93] and participants [N=27], followed by undergraduate participants [N=20].

Percentage Attendance by Registrant Status						
	Less than hour	Same day	Previous day	2-7 days before	1-4 weeks before	More than a month
Undergrads	71%		50%	100%		33%
Graduates	67%		100%	50%		0%
Faculty	100%		100%	60%		21%
Staff	100%		100%	50%		38%
Alumni	100%		100%	100%		50%
Retiree			100%	0%		
Other	50%		80%	100%		50%
Community		0%	33%	33%		26%
External	100%		33%	100%		21%
Unknown	78%	0%	25%	20%		42%

Table 3: Percentage Attendance by Participant Status. Undergraduates who registered in the week before the event had an attendance rate of 100%, followed by 71% for past hour registrants or walk-ins. Undergraduates who registered for an event more than a week ahead of time had attendance rates of 33%. Graduate students were more likely to attend if they registered for the event the previous day (100% attendance rate), with attendance rates dropping to 50% a week before the event.

Advertisement Success by Registrant Type (unique)											
	Faculty/Instructor	Staff	Graduate	Undergrad	Alumni	Retiree	Other	Guest	Community	External	Unknown
Facebook	0	2	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0
Instagram	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Twitter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Email	6	2	0	5	5	1	4	0	0	0	0
Word of mouth	3	1	1	2	1	0	7	15	0	1	0
University Libraries website	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WMU Events Calendar	0	0	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
WMU Today	1	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	2	1	1	3	1	0	7	0	0	0	0
Unknown	8	11	1	20	0	2	2	0	93	64	38

Table 4: Advertisement Success by Registrant Type (unique). The majority of undergraduates who heard about this event from an unspecified source, followed by email. The majority of graduate students heard about this event from the university events calendar and Instagram. From the known sources of advertising, word of mouth was the most successful form of registrants hearing about the event across all registrant types (9%) followed by email (7%). In terms of registrants who attended the event, the weekly email newsletter of campus events was the most successful strategy (67%).

Extras

A guide on what event data to collect and how to replicate our analyses.

