YA Digital Book Trailer Contest

Montclair Community Library

Young Adult

YA Digital Book Trailer Contest

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$51-100

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Byline

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In 2016-17 and 2017-18, Montclair Community Library hosted a YA Digital Book Trailer Contest for students in grades 9 through 12. Students read a YA book, then created and produced a trailer to inspire others to read the book. The trailers could be live action, animation or stop-action, with voiceover, music, narration and special effects.

Trailers were aired on the library webpage, social media and in the school. Library users voted online to determine the top three trailers, and prizes were awarded at an award ceremony. All students participating received volunteer recognition

certificates and community service hours for providing reader’s advisory.

We collaborated on this contest for our Virginia Library Leadership Academy project. We realized that students from nearby Forest Park High School (FPHS) used our group study rooms to work on assignments. Although FPHS and Montclair are located in an affluent area, some of the students lacked after-school access to technology necessary to complete assignments. Montclair was awarded a $5,000 Best Buy Foundation Ignites Teen Potential through Technology grant that sponsored the contest. It also enabled us to purchase additional materials for our digital media lab, including a PS4 system, portable speakers, microphones, a GoPro, color printer, scanner, webcam, digital tablet and DVD player, in addition to the green screen and iMac desktop we already had.

Advanced Planning

We wanted to promote literacy, technology skills and information-seeking and retrieval skills through this program in partnership with FPHS. We began planning in April 2016 for a March 2017 completion date.

We began by attending the Virginia Library Leadership Academy in April 2016. Ursula developed the idea and, as a team, we put it into action by developing a charter, timeline and focus. This was invaluable in keeping us on track for planning the award ceremony (e.g., booking the community room, ordering food, arranging media coverage).

In spring and summer 2016, we met with the high school and Prince William Public Library System administration to get buy-in. To promote our project, we attended school events, made class visits and publicized through the library's Office of Community Engagement. We provided guidelines, copyright information and guidance for students in scheduled meetings.

With a new source of funding, the program is ready to be replicated annually at Montclair and implemented at other branches across the system.

Marketing

We began marketing the contest shortly after the school year began in September 2016. We promoted the event in print at the branch and encouraged participation through the library's online platforms and at school events. We relied on the Office of Community Engagement to bolster marketing of this event by issuing press releases, posting to social media, and enabling our website to host the videos and the community voting.

Using a timeline, we asked for submissions through the winter and aired the teen-created videos in early 2017. The library tallied votes and had an award ceremony for our teen participants in March 2017.

In our first year, we had 331 community votes and six video entries. In the second year, we had 852 community votes and 11 video entries. We are proud of the increase in interest and are confident that trend will continue.

Budgeting

2016-17 Contest:

Prior to the first contest, we held three monthly meetings with students at Montclair Community Library, using less than $20 for snacks and drinks.

- Prizes: $175 (Best Buy gift cards, ranging from $100 for first place to $25 for third place).
- Food and drinks: $73; cake was donated.
- Decor: $92.
- Award Certificate Folders: $14.
- Total: $281.

2017-18 Contest

Ursula visited the multimedia class at the school so no monthly meetings with students were necessary.

- Prizes: Donated. (Cash, ranging from $100 for first place to $25 for third place).
- Cake: $28; other food and drinks were donated.
- Decor: Used from previous year.

- Award Certificate Folders: $28.
- Total: $56.

Prize amounts could be adjusted to lower costs. Many local grocers and business are willing to sponsor projects such as this, and may also donate prizes and or items for the ceremony. Be sure to check your library policies.

Day-of-event Activity

The main tasks prior to the ceremony were to set up and decorate the community room; ensure that refreshments and beverages were picked up; double-check the volunteer recognition certificates; double-check the publicity; set up the book trailers to loop on the big-screen TV; and make sure the speech was in order.

On the actual day of the event, the only thing to do was set up for the event, making sure that all decor and refreshments were in place. Both of us were responsible for the first contest, but Ursula planned and executed the second contest solo.

Watch the 2017-18 book trailer submissions

Program Execution

We invited students, parents, school and library officials to the award ceremony. After welcoming all guests with a brief introduction about the contest and the requirements, all students were awarded volunteer recognition certificates. The contest winners were then called to the podium individually to receive their prizes.

Students were also given an opportunity to tell the audience about the software used, music choices, challenges they encountered, etc. We took photos of students holding their awards to post to our website and social media.

Attendance for the first and second award ceremonies were 26 and 33 guests, respectively. We are confident that we met our primary goals of strengthening the professional relationship between the library and nearby school, and to encourage teens to delve into creative technology resources while promoting young adult literacy.

The grant allowed us to outfit a new digital media lab at Montclair with equipment to increase teen and community involvement and use of technology. Montclair Digital Media Lab opened in April 2018. To date, it has been used by the Manassas Museum to record interactive tour presentations and by a local blogger. In addition to programs already in place, such as green screen programs, enhanced story times, school visits and movie programs, we have an increased opportunity for technology-based programming.

With the incorporation of this project into a class curriculum, we have seen a marked increase in participation and community awareness. The project's impact could also be seen in the increase in community votes, submitted videos, participants and even an increased circulation of the books highlighted in videos in the second year of the program.

We believe this program could easily be replicated at other libraries and in other states. The contest could readily be adapted using existing animation software and websites for elementary and secondary students, too.

Advice

Use a timeline, but be flexible. Having a project timeline for each task gave us clear guidance as to what should be happening and when. Have a plan B for unexpected circumstances.

Use professional communication skills to work with and communicate needs to internal and external departments, organizations, sponsors and shareholders. Be willing and able to demonstrate the value of a project like this one to those stakeholders, in order to get community and library support.

Do the legwork with your partners. When soliciting potential partners about participation in the program, be upfront about the resources needed from them and those that the library will provide. Be visible in the schools if they are your major partner and make good contacts with librarians, school media specialists and instructors.

While successful, we faced a few challenges during the programs. One team member transferred to a different library system, so we met regularly on Skype and kept moving forward. Although we verified our guest presenter's attendance, he had

to cancel and we had to find a stand-in. We also discovered that we really needed both an emcee and an award presenter during the ceremony.

Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.

Supporting Materials

Document
flier.pdf
Document
2016_17_project_timeline.pdf
Document
book_trailer_resources.doc
Document
press_release.doc
Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

More Programs

Mar 18, 2015
Young Adult (17 - 20)+ | $$
Image



Pick-up Lines that Work

Audiences:

Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
Jun 8, 2015
Adults (21 and up)+ |
Image



Thinking Outside the Makerspace

Audiences:

Audience
Adults (21 and up)
Nov 2, 2017
Children (9 and under)+ | □□
Image



Book-to-Big-Screen

Audiences:

Audience
Children (9 and under)
Teens (13-16)
Adults (21 and up)
Intergenerational