

Outreach Artifact and Plan

Harry Potter Night at the Library Outreach and Marketing Plan

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November, 13, 2016

INFO 210

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Introduction

Libraries are always finding new ways to get users to visit the library, and one of the best ways to do that is to host a fun, literary themed event at the library. Sometimes called literary fairs, these events can boost a library's visibility in its community, and create a sense of wonder and excitement that can build momentum for future library programs. For this project, I wanted to create an outreach and marketing plan that would show how a literary event can target multiple age groups, invite new partnerships, and encourage community support of a library.

One of the most popular book series of all time, Harry Potter, is experiencing a resurgence in popularity, because of a new book (play) out this year, and an new movie franchise opening this month. As fans clamor for more ways to celebrate this ever-popular fantasy book series, the opportunity for a library to capitalize on this popularity for an all ages event, since fans are many different ages, is a great way to engage patrons, and find new users who might come to the library because they love the series, and then be exposed to new services. In this way, a library can do outreach to the community, positioning itself as a fun, safe place to celebrate the love reading, and even find a little magic.

Hosting a library event, that celebrates reading, can be a way to engage users, and encourage patrons to discover new resources at their local library. For this event, simply titled, Harry Potter Night at the Library, I wanted to start by identifying my objectives, target audience, and community partners.

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Overarching Objectives

1. Introduce the library to new users who might attend because of the popularity of the theme.
2. Promote the library as a space for fun and reading for all ages.
3. Promote library services and programs to the community.
4. Increase engagement with teens, parents, and grandparents by introducing cross-generational programming.
5. Build relationships with local businesses, the school district, and civic departments in the community.
6. Recreate the library image as a fun place, with opportunities for art, cosplay, STEM activities, and all-ages programs.

Intended Audience

1. Primary Audience: Tweens (ages 8-12), Teens (ages 13-18), and Young Adults (ages 18-30).
2. Secondary Audience: Parents and local community members with an interest in fantasy, family programs, and cosplay.
3. Tertiary Audience: Civic Leaders, Local Business Owners, Teachers

Community Partners

- City leaders, specifically the Mayor and Chief of Police
- The Anacortes School District
 - High School Chemistry Teacher for a Potions/STEM activity
 - Middle School teacher for target age group

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- Retired elementary school teacher and current School Foundation board member.
 - School librarians
- The Friends of the Anacortes Public Library
- Local business owners, including the two bookshop owners, a design firm, and a costume shop.
- The Anacortes Community Theatre
- Class Act, the local theatre in schools program.

Goals of Program

The goal of this program is to reach new users, and create a fun program at the library for all ages, that encourages discovery, engagement with community resources, and encourages people to come discover the library.

Message Summary used in Social Media

All ages event at the library celebrating the magical world of Harry Potter.

Costumes are encouraged. Crafts, Potions, Divinations, Photo Booths, and Trivia will be happening throughout the library. Try your hand at indoor Quidditch, make a wand, and test your wizarding knowledge. Get your cosplay on, and enter to win fun prizes, or just come soak up the magic and find new magical reads on our fantasy book displays. Join us for a night of fun for all muggles, witches, and wizards of every age.

Grant Request Intro Used in Securing Funding

In 2016, for our second all-ages event at the library, we chose the theme of Harry Potter, because the world of J. K. Rowling inspires so many fans of all ages,

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and we decided to capitalize again on an upcoming film. Our poster and event design was provided by a local high school graduate, who hand lettered the poster during her internship with a local graphic design firm, who again donated their design services to the event.

This year, to encourage civic engagement, we're inviting the Mayor, Chief of Police, and many other civic and community members to dress up as characters, in a community-wide effort to promote the fun parts of reading. Early publicity has already resulted in student volunteers from the middle and high schools, as well as teachers, in grade school through high school, that are coming in to the library to get their new student card, and see how they can be involved with the event. Harry Potter is a fantasy series that entices a lot of reluctant readers, which means that the series is popular with parents, teachers, and students. A central goal of our event, is to show readers that there are other series they can try, that are fun as well, as well as show off some of the other great resources the library has to offer.

This event not only creates volunteer opportunities, but many community members come to the library just to experience a night of imagination. While the event itself is an excuse to have some fun at the library, it also promotes creativity, literacy, and community. There will be arts, games, and crafts for children and teens, which provide volunteer opportunities for tweens, teens, and retirees, but also a safe creative outlets for families. We'll even be including some STEM fun this year, with Anacortes High School Teacher, Cody Anderson, who will be our "Potions Master," by demonstrating some fun science experiments that look like magic. With

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your help, we can make this event a memorable, inspirational event to aspiring and practicing readers and writer who love story and community.

Outreach Action Plan

Objective	Intended Outcome	Steps	Timeline
Get partnership commitments from key players in the community.	Build up community engagement, get buy-in from partners to help with marketing, both through word of mouth and because they're recognizable figures.	Identify Key Players: • City Departments: Police Chief & Mayor, as well as department heads • School Superintendent, teachers, and librarians • Bookstore owners • Design studio • Theatre Director and educational director • Local reporter from Anacortes American. Contacted each member and asked for a commitment of time, resources, or donation and secured key commitments for the night-of with prominent figures as actors, creating a win-win for them to show support of the library, and for the library to be able to use them in advertising.	12-14 months before event
Obtain Funding for the Event	As the library has no funding allocated to programs other than summer reading, all funding would need to come from the Friends of the Library, grants, private donations and contributions from local businesses.	Once the library director and board have approved the event, a grant request will be submitted by the Public Services Manager (director of the event). The library director, librarians, and PSM will each seek out donations from local businesses and service groups, to seek	12-14 months before event.

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		donations in funding or services	
Establish community partnerships with local businesses, service organizations, and city departments.	By including local organizations in the event, the library will encourage cross-promotion, get community buy-in and engagement from partnerships, and offer sponsorship opportunities for business that donate to the event.	Seek sponsorship from local businesses with services necessary for the event's success. -Design Firm will make programs and a poster for advertising. -Local business will provide decorations, such as balloons, props, and sign printing. -Local restaurant will donate refreshments. -Local theatre will donate costumes and props. -Local movie theater is donating movie tickets to see the upcoming film in the franchise that comes out the day after our event. -Bookstores will donate prizes and feature the event in their advertising to their customer lists. -Local paper will be advertising, do photos at the event, and promote themselves while their by creating a photo booth sponsored by the paper. -Explore cross-promotional opportunities with Boys and Girls Club, School, and Theatre club.	
Cast and costume all key figures of the event, to create program of magical classes with local celebrities throughout the library.	Because this is a community event, and the Anacortes Public Library is a city library, securing local celebrities to be part of the program is a large part of making this night a success. This	As a major part of the program, key figures will be dressed as characters from the Harry Potter books, and will be in costume for the entire event. They will be figures in a scavenger hunt, and participants will have a guide to the event that has	6 months before the event.

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	will aid in promotion of the program across the community.	places for them to get autographs of these characters. Events will highlight local celebrities, and show off some unique talents and skills. Key figures identified and committed are as follows: -Albus Dumbledore: Former library director, will welcome people to the library event. -Professor McGonagall: City Mayor will also welcome people to the event. -Professor Trelawney: Chief of Police, will teach a Divination class in a booth set up in the library. -Professor Snape and Sirius Black, both played by actors from the local theatre, will teach a spell dueling class, with improvisational techniques, in conjunction with a library staff member dressed as Gilderoy Lockhart. -The Minister of Magic, our Children's Librarian, will host trivia upstairs in the library, where snacks are provided by a local business. -Professor Slughorn, a chemistry teacher at the high school, will teach Potions class, with experiments and magic, including changing coins into gold, money that doesn't burn, color changing potions, and smoke filled bubbles. -Olivanders Wand-making will be featured in the	
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		children's area, with local boys and girl's club director and volunteers helping children make their own magic wands. -Teachers from the elementary and middle school, one as Madam Hooch, will teach Quidditch in the Teen Zone, using hoops on loan from the Boys and Girls club and balloons. -Anacortes American Reporters, one dressed as Rita Skeeter, will host the photo booth. -Library staff and community volunteers will float around, helping as needed, listed in the program to be found, and they include the following characters: Bellatrix Lestrange Mad Eye Moody Luna Lovegood Draco Malfoy Dolores Umbridge Molly Weasley Rubeus Hagrid	
Include Staff in key planning, and prepare them for the night of the event with read-a-likes for the Harry Potter series.	Staff buy-in is not only crucial to this program's success, but staff members have suggested this theme, and want to be involved. Each staff member will get to help the night of if they wish, and everyone will be helping to build reading lists and expand their knowledge of the fantasy genre.	-Staff members are making decorations in downtime at the desk, as well as creating projects of their own as they choose. -Staff in-service day and two staff meetings will have team building time for groups to work together on decorating projects. -Librarians and library assistants are working on reading lists and will pull books for displays.	3-6 months before the event.

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Plan Event Schedule in conjunction with volunteers.	Once key players are cast, and staff is on board, the event will need coordinated volunteer efforts by the volunteer coordinator.	Facebook event will announce the event, inviting volunteers to sign up for ways to help, either the day of, leading up to the even, and in advertising.	2 months before the event.
Market Event	Marketing the event throughout the community, involving key players, and integrating social media will ensure this event has a high attendance, and maximize outreach efforts with the target audience groups.	-Local design firm, a key sponsor of the event, will design the poster for the event. -A Facebook Event will be created, to reach younger users who are members of the library's page. -The local paper will write an article advertising the event, letting people know it's coming up and reaching the tertiary target audiences. -In partnership with the schools, teachers will receive an email and poster for the event, and the school clubs are advertising for the event, since many are involved in volunteering at it. -Local businesses that are sponsoring the event will post fliers, and posters throughout town. -During the city's main Halloween event, the design firm that did the poster will display it prominently at their studio, where more than 1000 people will see it as they come through for their annual holiday photo.	1 month prior to the event.
Prepare Facility for Event	Plan for additional staffing for library operations, as well as contingencies for a large turnout, so safety	-Map out locations throughout the library of events, so staff knows -Meet with Fire Chief to ensure that safety	2 months before the event, through the night of the

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	measures are taken, the event is well organized, with activities and stations clearly marked.	regulations are met, particularly with the Potions/Chemistry Station. -Reserve the meeting room for Potions, and block the study rooms, with warnings to users that that night won't be as quiet. -Plan out trivia questions, book displays, and interactive white-boards with anagrams in expected wait-zones in case of lines. -Organize staff workflows and schedule so that staffing allows for event management and library operations.	event.
Evaluate Outcomes and share results with staff and key players	By evaluating the outcomes of the plan, and feedback from attendees and staff, the library can assess the effectiveness of the event to demonstrate to sponsors and stakeholders that the event had a good return on investment. This will be measured through attendance numbers, and subsequent performance of future programming. This will also be useful in securing funding for similar events in the future, as well as community engagement, and for helping plan similar events in the future.	-Hand out surveys at the door and in lines for activities, encouraging users to fill them out when they're at other stations. -Collect and record door counts for the day of the event, and compare weekly, monthly, and yearly attendance with previous years. -Analyze demographics of attendees, with staff members paying attention, and with well documented photos taken by volunteers and library staff throughout the event. -Each station will keep a tally of what activities were popular, or not, for future planning of similar events. -Schedule follow-ups with thank you notes for all community partners, and find out how they felt marketing and participation	Within one month of the event.

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		had worked for them. -See how numbers of circulation in the fantasy genre, and YA and Juvenile fiction changes, if at all, using data analysis. -Follow up with front-desk staff to see what users are saying, and report back to all participants on success of event, with article in the paper, as well as a report for the library, Friends of the Library, and city department heads meeting, to show how the program aligns with strategic goals.	
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Conclusion and Lessons Learned so far...

Coordinating an event like this takes a lot of staff time, even if it doesn't have a large budgetary impact, which is how I pitched the program initially. In order to have collaboration, and involve other community members in the way outlined above, countless hours have been spent, over the past year, to get investment, commitments, and donations from many different partners. Below are some images from the event, which were all donated, that show some ways the program is structured, and how it has been carefully thought out to include organization, a theme, and make the partnerships one of the main parts of the event.

Marketing and Outreach have been key factors in planning this event, especially as the library has build up relationships with the school district and city departments. Interestingly, most of the time, people only needed to be asked, and they were thrilled to be included in this kind of event. It's inspiring imaginations and creativity, and getting people excited about reading, all of which are goals of our

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library's new strategic plan. Most advertising has been donated, and realistically all of the design would have cost thousands of dollars to have custom made for us, but otherwise, our main marketing has been online and locally through word of mouth. Thus far, the event has been seen on Facebook by more than a thousand people, and it's been shared almost 60 times, which is far more than any other program we've ever done. The combination of using local partners, inviting businesses to participate, and marketing in schools and with targeted design and branding will hopefully demonstrate how this kind of program can promote the programs and services of the library in a whole new way.

Reflection

I chose to organize this event because up until last year, our library had never had an all-ages event. That first time, I was able to do a smaller event with fewer partners and activities, and the turnout was more than 200 people, which is more than double any of our programs have gotten in any recent data we can locate. Based on that data, and a survey I made during the night of the event, we received overwhelming feedback that people wanted fun, free, family friendly events, that still had something to offer to older fans of genres too. Costumes and food were important parts of the feedback, and since that event coincided with the new Star Wars film, doing another similar event as a new Harry Potter film is being released seemed like an obvious next attempt. Also, it was important that an all ages even be family focused, because research shows that "one of the most significant predictors of library use is the presence of children in the household" (Oliphant, 2014). Further research showed that marketing an event as fun, with incentives like prizes and

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giveaways, could get people in the doors who otherwise might not visit the library, (Thorpe & Bowman, 2013). This, combined with my experience from the previous year, was enough evidence to convince the management team at Anacortes Public Library that having another all-ages event was worth the time it would take to plan.

We selected Harry Potter because it has cultural significance, appeals to a wide age range, and inspires so many fans. We have tried to reach as many people as we can to get community participation, and through partnering with schools and businesses, we've created some strong relationships. Using social media, we've tried to expand our advertising, and reach a more diverse part of the population. Social media doesn't just promote library programming, it builds community, something libraries are always striving for, that is even more in line with public library's values and mission than marketing for promotional gains only. Engaging with people in every way we can, outside of and in the library, as well as through social media, will hopefully promote the library as a place everyone in the community starts to think of for fun and community.

As we had in the previous event, we started by getting prizes donated, and community members on board, and then began finding what volunteers we could so that this time it wasn't entirely on me to organize. We did secure more funding, in part to create an event that encouraged outreach to our community. By partnering with business and public figures on something already popular, our library has a chance to show it's relevant, and fun, and get some much needed publicity. It seemed logical to me, if a community has a library with resources that are available to them, that part of the budget allotted to the library should be ensuring the

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community hears about those resources, and in some libraries, spending money to market is considered “revolutionary” (Bizzle & Flora, 2015). But we have applied our community and library resources to making this event an all ages event, that embraces our newly adopted mission to empower discovery, and not lose our sense of fun.

Core Competency D: Apply the fundamental principles of planning, management, marketing, and advocacy.

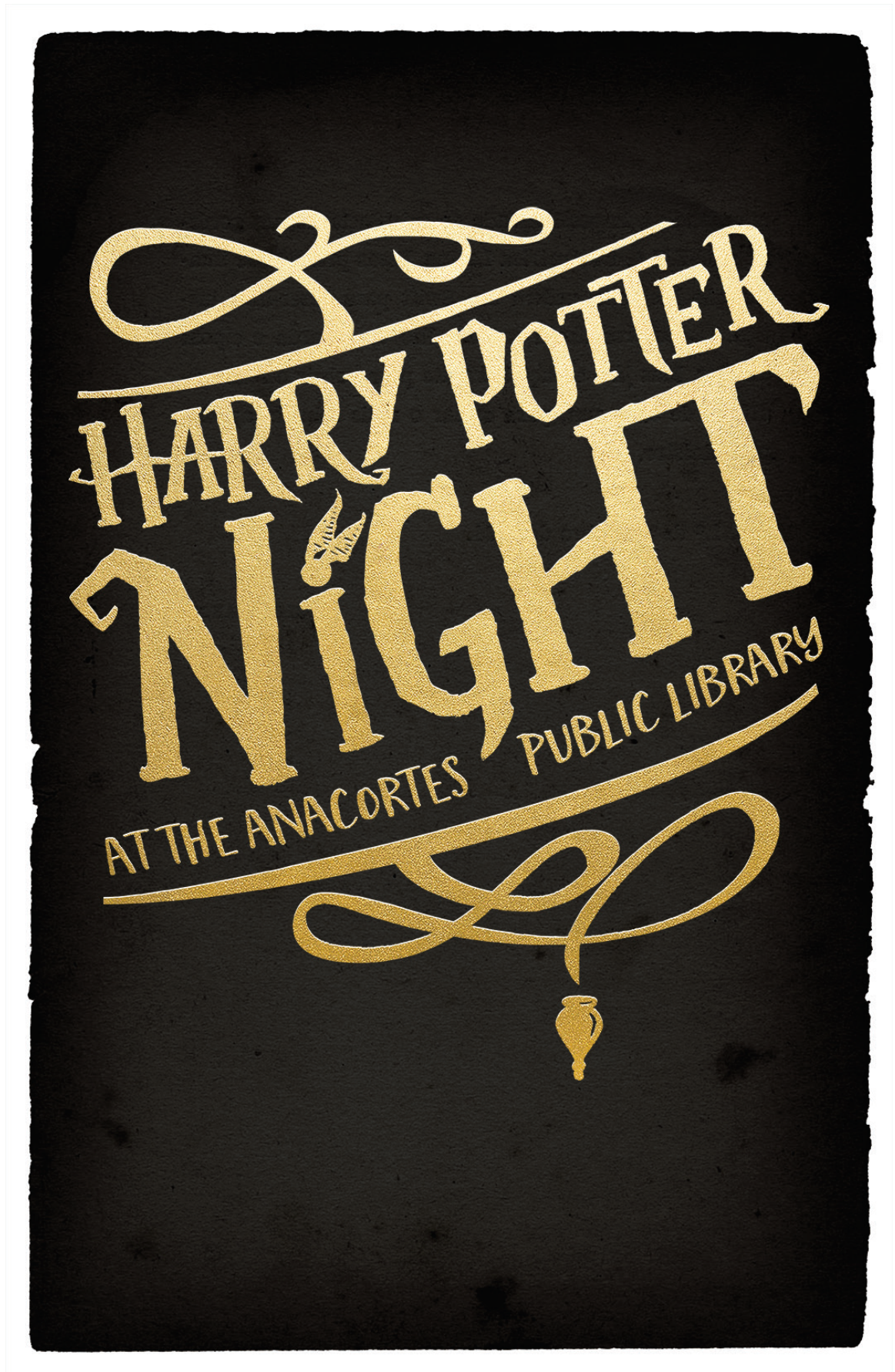
This outreach program demonstrates the implementation of the principles Core Competency D in the following ways: Planning is used, to organize and event that targets such a wide range of community members as potential audience members. Through planning, donations were acquired, partnerships were formed, and staff and volunteer time was allocated to make this event organized and effective. Management was used mostly in working with staff members to create the program, and implement it. Marketing and advocacy are were key parts of this program, because if it’s marketed well, using a variety of tools, including social media, word-of-mouth, news organizations, and library resources, it can reach a large audience, and thus advocate for more programs and services through the library. Showing how so many people can be inspired by a common theme, and targeted marketing can engage them and draw them in can help not only in the success of this and other similar events, but also in demonstrating the value of other kinds of new event ideas, and how more diverse groups can be targeted through marketing and research.

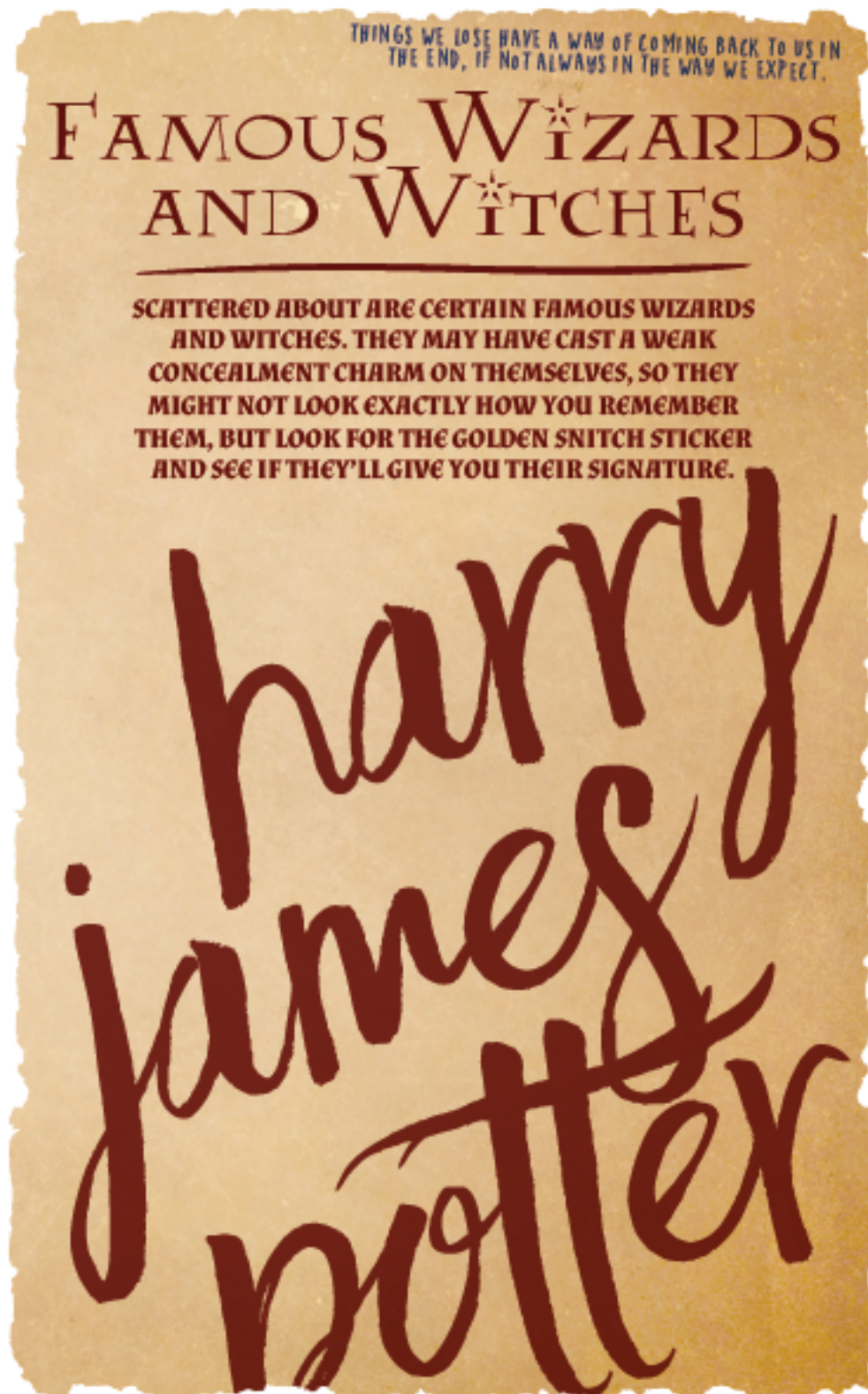
Core Competency N: Evaluate programs and services using measurable criteria.

This program relies heavily on feedback and evaluation, from previous programs, of which there has only been one, and in contributing to data in future program research and implementation. Measuring attendance, circulation data, and community response will all help the library in future program planning, so it can evaluate programs, compare data, and adapt as needed in future programs.

Images from Marketing and event programs:

Below are four images from our marketing, including the initial poster design, which included the date, time, and a few teaser details in the final version. The rest is from the booklet that will be available on the night of the event. The first page, things to do, is modeled after the Marauder's Map in the Harry Potter films, and tells attendees where they can find things in the library during the event. Our idea to involve local celebrities turned into the autograph search, which I've included the introductory page of, and lastly, and of course most importantly, is our thank you page, which highlights our sponsors and volunteers.





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EMILY SCHUH

MOLLY STROHSCHEN

NICK WALSH

TO ALL OF OUR INCREDIBLE VOLUNTEERS, THANK YOU!

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