

A Universe of Images

When Words Alone Just Won't Do

It is often said that a picture is worth a thousand words. In reality, a picture is worth....



This is especially true when we carefully combine images with short bits of text and data, particularly in today's world of social media. Images provide a powerful method to promote libraries.

For example, let us assume we are holding a program where a dozen young attendees will build and launch model rockets. Here is a paragraph promoting such an event:

*Join us on July 1st at 9:00 am as we learn about, build, and launch model rockets.
We have room for 12 young engineers in this exciting program. Register today!*

Better yet, how about an infographic style of promotion:



Using a photo might be better. We can even add a little humor to grab the attention of people and to tell the story of the event:



Images can be just as useful in sharing information about the library and to highlight previous events. Using images of the library, or photos from the events, makes the information more compelling.

An example of this can be found in the first image below, one of many created to inform voters ahead of last year's budget vote and trustee election at Gloversville Public Library. The second image below celebrated the results of that vote.



Video is even more important than images these days, especially on social media. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a two-minute video recorded at 60 frames per second must be worth....



All joking aside, the impact of a video can be particularly impressive. For example, a "Welcome Home" video MVLS created for Gloversville Public Library, celebrating the completion of their renovation project, garnered nearly 100 times the engagement of a typical MVLS social media post. Video offers more opportunity to connect with viewers. The visual and audio content within a video provides greater flexibility for establishing an emotional connection with viewers.

Check out Gloversville Public Library's "Welcome Home" video here: <https://youtu.be/HqwLkh3RtAY>.

MVLS also created a video connecting the 2019 Summer Reading Program's "A Universe of Stories" theme to the historic landing of Apollo 11 that took place 50 years ago.



That video serves as a template that could be modified and personalized for individual libraries to use in promoting their Summer Reading Programs. By replacing some of the video's stock photos with footage or photos from a particular library, the connection between the library and its patrons can be strengthened.

Check out the link to the video here: <https://youtu.be/NC6QSt1HTu0>. Contact MVLS if you want to personalize a version for your library.

Using images and videos generated “in-house” is often preferable to using stock photos or footage, especially from a copyright standpoint. Of course, this assumes that permission was obtained for the use of anybody who appears in the footage or photos.

However, there are times where finding and using stock images or footage is useful. For example, the “template” video described above uses stock footage of the Apollo 11 mission.

Fortunately, there are many sources online for free images, video, and even audio. However, users should be aware that even though the use of such materials might be free, there may be copyright issues to overcome or requirements to provide credit to the creator of the material.

Here are some of the tools used by MVLS, (not an all-inclusive list):

- [Pixabay](#) – contains free images and video.
- [Pexels](#) – contains free images and video.
- [Free Music Archive](#) – contains an array of music that can be added to videos as background music or for other purposes. (Pay particular attention to copyright requirements.)
- [Canva](#) – used to create a wide range of graphics. There are free and paid versions of Canva. The paid version has more capabilities, but in most cases, the free version may suffice.
- [Blogs like Hootsuite](#) – contain useful information and suggestions about making the most of social media.

Finally, we can use hashtags to promote the images and messages that we create. Using hashtags increases the ability of libraries to make their social media posts more accessible and searchable. Here are some examples for the upcoming Summer Reading Program, and individual libraries can create and use their own hashtags to promote their events:



Only one question remains.

How will you use images and video to promote your Summer Reading Program?

