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# MARKETING YOUR MAGAZINE TO LIBRARIES

## SHOULD YOU SEND DIRECT MAIL TO LIBRARIES?

It's almost certainly not worth your while to mail a subscription promotion to a an unqualified list of libraries (i.e. without knowing whether — and how — they purchase magazine subscriptions). If you know the library already subscribes to other magazines directly rather than through an agency, they may be interested in your magazine too, so don't eliminate libraries that happen to be on other magazines' subscriber lists when you rent or exchange mailing lists.

In fact, when mailing to other magazines' subscriber lists anyway, consider requesting that the other magazine include libraries that subscribed directly through the publisher. Likewise, when sending out your subscriber list to other publishers on rental or exchange, offer to exclude libraries that ordered through agencies, and retain the direct-to-publisher libraries.

## SHOULD WE ADVERTISE OUR MAGAZINE VIA EBSCO?

Ebsco does publish a Librarian's Handbook that includes [advertising](#) and your ad will stand out in that catalog. The cost of advertising here is relatively low. However, librarians are now apparently much less likely to refer to the printed catalog than in previous years. They may be more likely to search the Ebsco website, or their own internal lists of titles, when deciding about magazine subscriptions, so they may not even see your ad in the catalog!

Librarians can access the Librarian's Handbook [online](#) before making any advertising decisions. You might want to ask your Ebsco contact for any usage statistics they can provide for their printed or digital catalogs, compared with pageview stats on online advertising opportunities with Ebsco.

## SHOULD YOU MAIL RENEWAL NOTICES TO YOUR LIBRARY SUBSCRIBERS?

If they ordered through a subscription agency such as [Ebsco](#), probably not; these customers will renew through their subscription agency almost all the time, but never directly with the publisher. If they have subscribed to your magazine directly in the past, you will definitely want to keep them informed as their subscription expires, but with an abbreviated renewal series that may be somewhat less "aggressive" than the renewal series you mail to individuals.

## LIBRARIANS PRIDE THEMSELVES ON RESPONDING TO REQUESTS

Those times you walked up to the desk and asked if that library carries a certain magazine? Librarians remember those requests. It's part of their job. Some libraries even keep track, and compile such requests systematically, whether within the branch or when passing along requests to a central branch's annual review of magazine subscriptions to consider adding to their collection.

## ENCOURAGING MORE LIBRARY VISITORS TO REQUEST YOUR PUBLICATION

Why not suggest to your website visitors (most of whom probably aren't paying for a subscription anyway!) that they ask for your magazine by name the next time they're visiting their favourite library? Or even provide website visitors with an online, printable request form (example [here](#) and [here](#)) they can give to their local librarians. Other suggestions include:

- Providing links to the libraries' own sites; [Example1](#) and [Example2](#)
- Running an ad within your print publication, encouraging readers to ask for your magazine at their libraries
- Including cards and buckslips titled "Library Request Form" in direct mail packaging. This will prompt prospective readers to give it to their librarians. Test this idea carefully to avoid reducing the number of direct mail subscription orders.

## LIBRARIANS ALSO PUT FORWARD THEIR OWN SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW MAGAZINES TO ADD TO THEIR COLLECTIONS

You may want to offer librarians a free sample copy of your publication, or even send a copy to them unsolicited, perhaps with a cover letter. You can address it to the serials librarian by name, explaining why you believe your magazine would be a good "fit" for that particular library.

 [DOWNLOAD MORE HOTSHEETS AT magazinescanada.ca/cultural/hotsheets](http://magazinescanada.ca/cultural/hotsheets)

Some librarians also say they might be particularly receptive to receiving a small bundle of noteworthy titles for their consideration —perhaps a bundle of new magazines (or a “themed” selection of magazines) sent out cooperatively by a few magazines ‘ publishers working together on a joint promotion.. Bundles might “stand out” amidst the flood of direct mail and renewal letters they often receive.

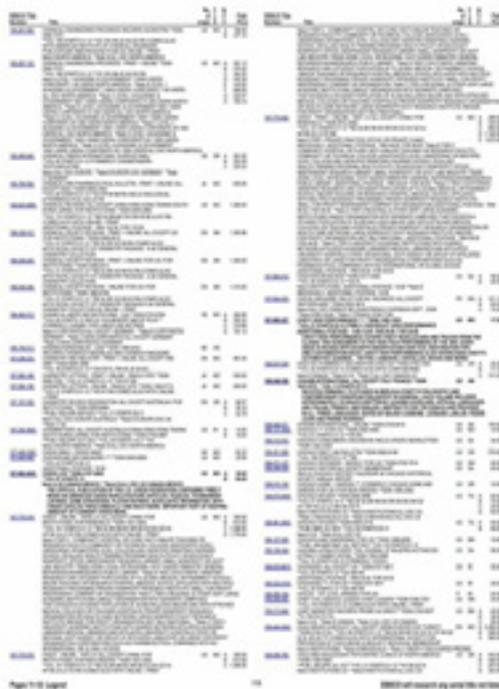
Displaying your magazine at a library conference may also help increase librarians’ awareness of your title, especially if you can attend in person and meet librarians while giving away sample copies. Any individual promotion of your title may have limited effect, but cumulatively, as librarians are reminded of your magazine increasingly often, the more likely they’ll add your magazine to their collection.

**LIBRARIANS ARE WATCHING YOU**

Librarians are very knowledgeable of their visitors’ activities, either based on the number of times magazines were borrowed, or by determining which magazines were being perused in the reading area because they weren’t on the shelves when the librarian went through the rack and scanned the library’s internal barcodes (that they put on each magazine’s cover). Librarians refer closely to usage statistics in determining which subscriptions to renew. This also means that you cannot cheat the system by getting your readers to ask the library to subscribe to your magazine, if they will not read it at the library later on. Librarians will know this too ... eventually.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?**

To ensure libraries remain loyal subscribers to your magazine, you hope more library visitors are reading and borrowing your magazine. Publish a list on your publication’s website of the libraries that have subscriptions. Perhaps even create a Google Maps “mash-up”, as some [magazine publishers](#) have started doing for newsstands carrying their title. Some [provincial libraries](#) also make such geo-mapping tools available.




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