

Introduction

There are 93 public libraries in Virginia, not counting the Library of Virginia. Questions were e-mailed to a listserv accessible to all library directors. Of the 93 libraries, only 14 responded.

Due to the open-ended nature of the questions, responses were not uniform. When comparing answers, some numbers were rounded. For example, a response of “a half percent of our total budget” was grouped with less than 1% and 0.26% was considered equal with 0.3%.

The answers created more questions, which are not addressed here. The information compiled here is intended to be a starting point, not a source of comprehensive understanding, and the gaps in information and inadequacy of parts of the compilation are freely acknowledged.

Questions Asked

What kind of advertising, marketing, and promoting do you do beyond fliers and social media posts? Facebook live? A PBS spot? Radio ads? Professionally made TV commercials? In-house produced billboards? Sky-writing? Sign twirlers? Show choir?

What percent of your budget do you devote to marketing?

What percent do you want to give?

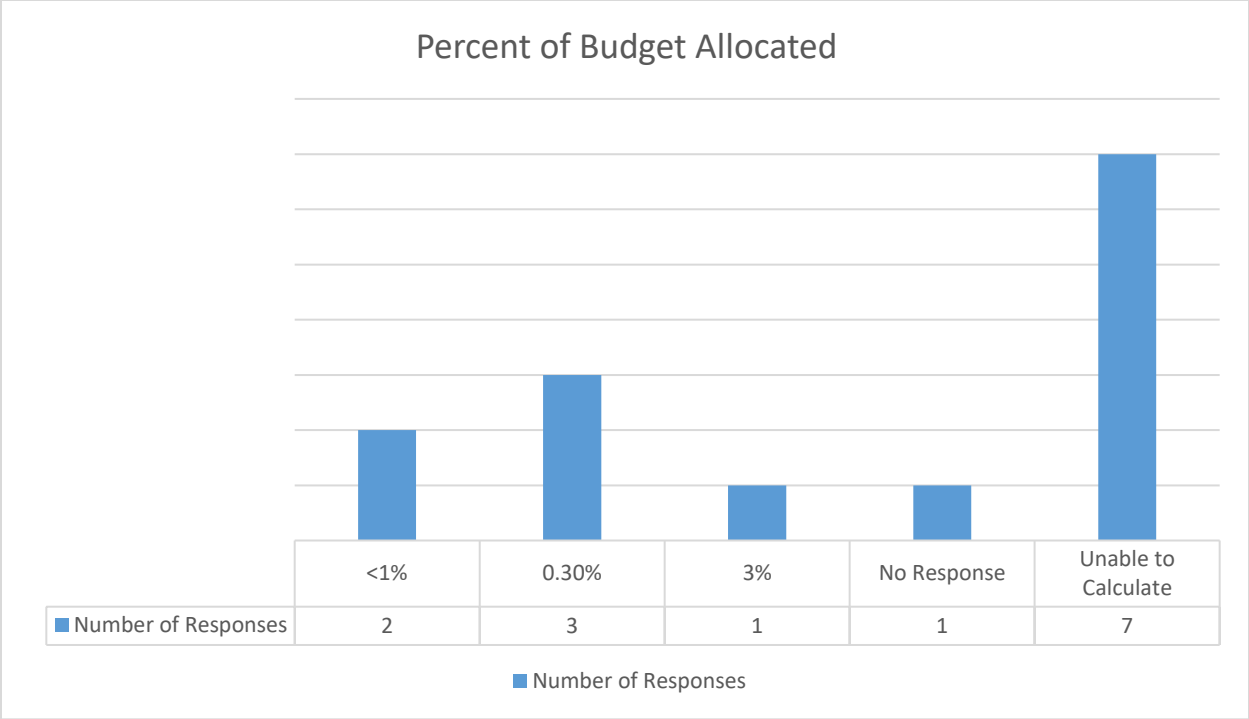
How do you fund your marketing?

How do you find affordable professional services (e.g. someone to write your captivating TV commercial)?

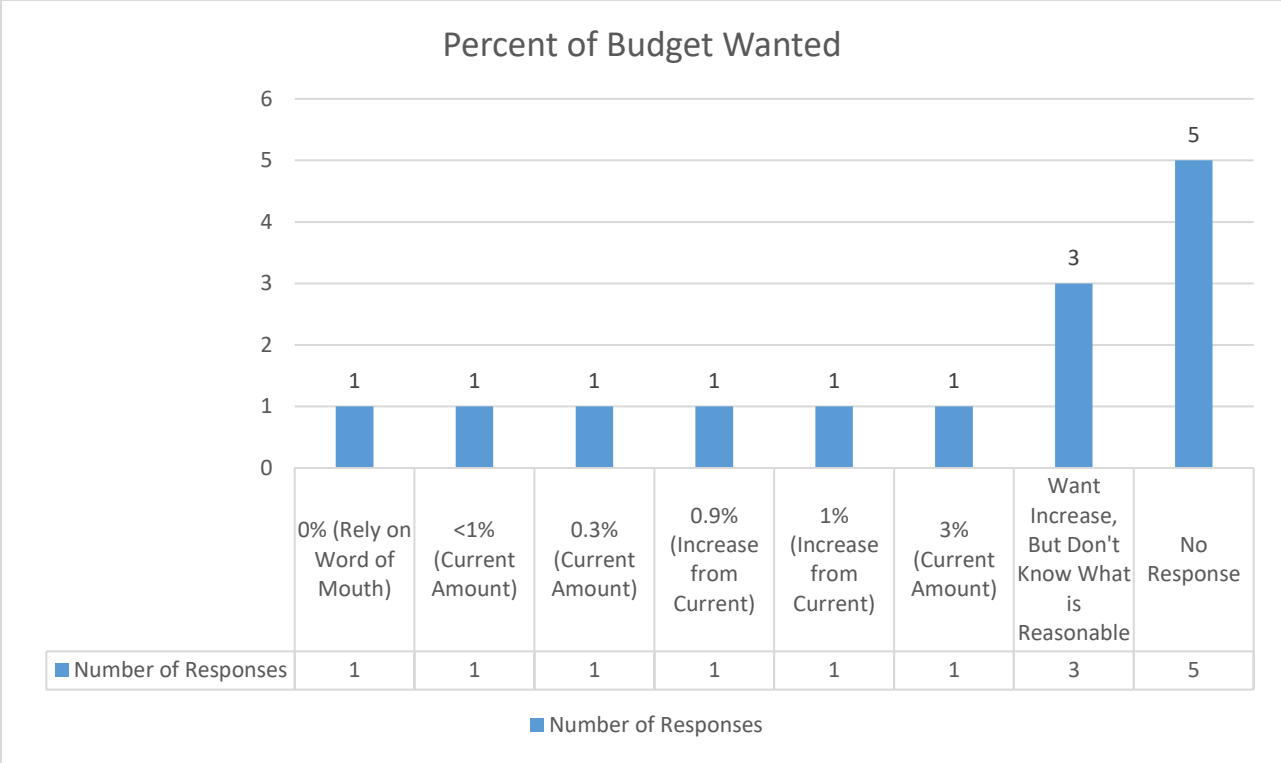
Marketing Questions, Round 1 Summary



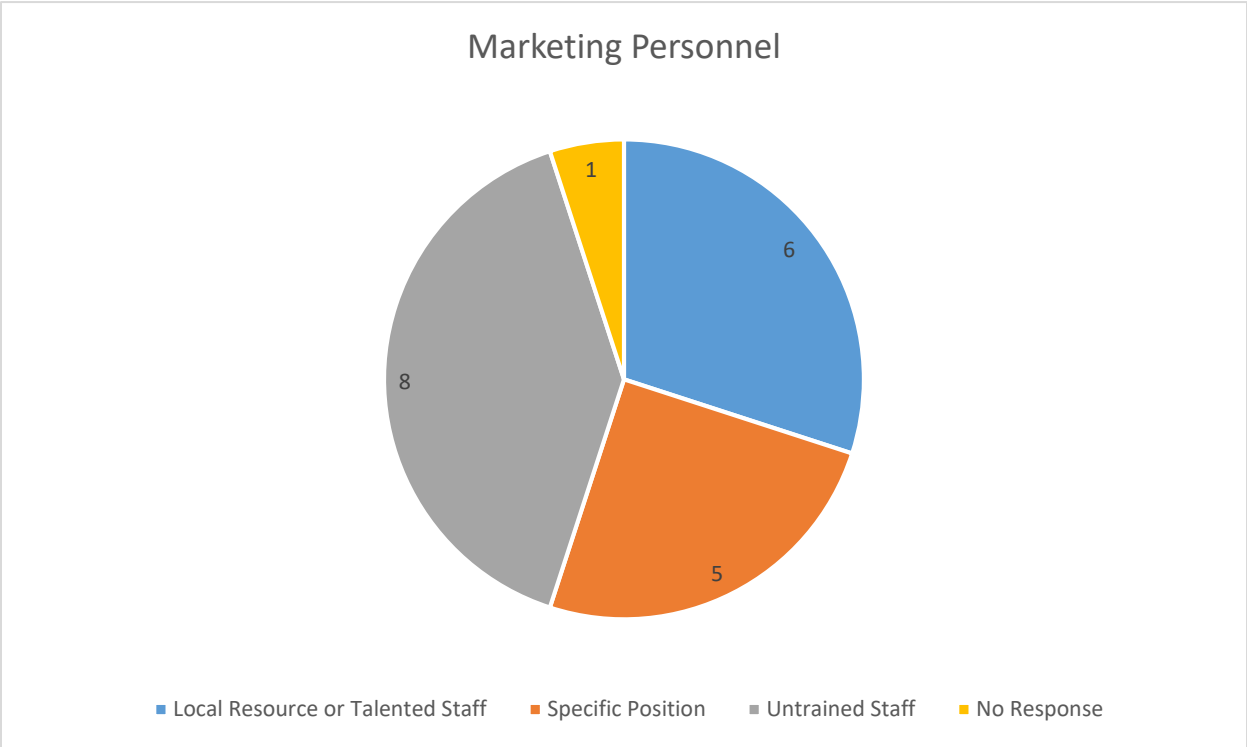
The totals in the above chart equal more than 14 because most libraries have more than one way of promoting their services and events (e.g. in-house fliers, social media, and free newspaper ads). Free newspaper posts and social media tied for the top methods, followed by fliers and other in-house advertisements.



Several libraries use funds from other line items or rely on free sources and therefore were unable to calculate what percentage of their budget goes to marketing, promotion, and advertising. Not enough answers distinguished between personnel and other costs to provide comparable data.

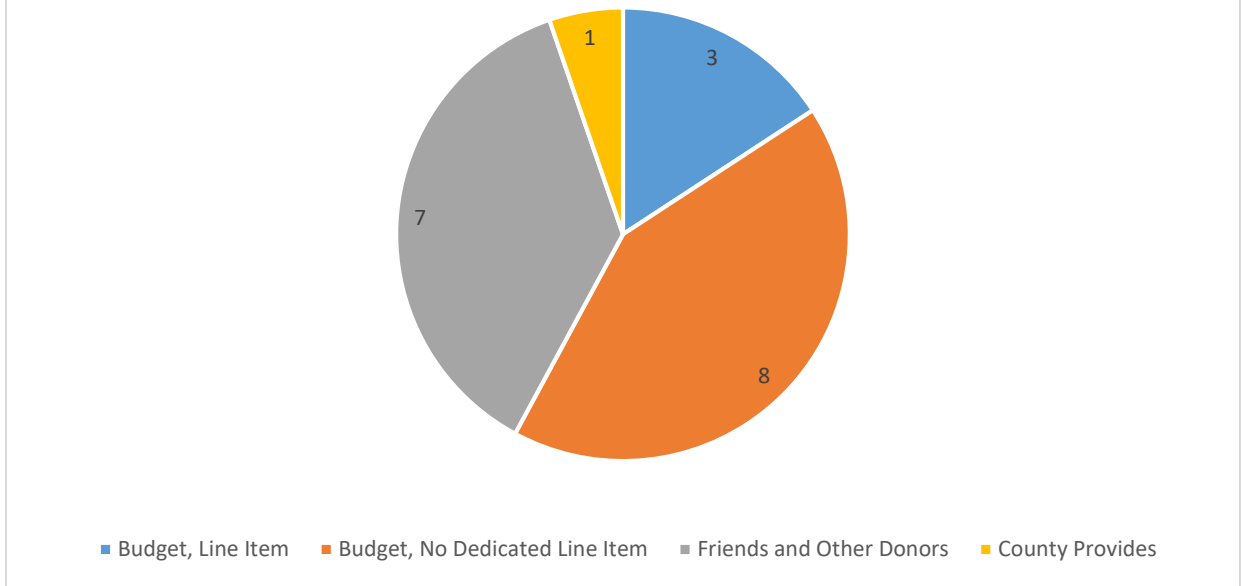


Five respondents indicated they saw a need for more funds devoted to marketing, but three of those did not know how to determine how much of the total budget should be allocated. The large number of no responses could suggest that other libraries are uncertain how to determine what percent of their budget should be dedicated to marketing.



The totals in the above chart equal more than 14 because some libraries have more than one source of marketing personnel (e.g. untrained staff supplemented by a local resource).

Where Funds Come From



All respondents answered this question. Several had more than one funding source, usually from the library’s budget plus donations. One responded that the county provides marketing help. This respondent did not specify if the library paid for this service. Only three out of the 14 libraries said they had a dedicated line item only for marketing and advertising.



The total responses equals 15 because one library uses Fiverr in addition to asking for donations.

Sources

Email/Discussion with Alicia Hilliard, Library Director, Lunenburg County Public Library System, Victoria, VA, February 2018.

Email/Discussion with Chandra McPherson, Library Director, Heritage Public Library, New Kent, VA, February 2018.

Email/Discussion with Clint Rudy, Library Director, Suffolk Public Library, Suffolk, VA, February 2018.

Email/Discussion with Dana Smook, Library Director, Essex Public Library, Tappahannock, VA, February 2018.

Email/Discussion with Diantha McCauley, Library Director, Augusta County Library, Fishersville, VA, February 2018.

Email/Discussion with Jay Stephens, Library Director, Halifax County –South Boston Public Library, Halifax, VA, February 2018.

Email/Discussion with Jennifer Carrol, Library Director, Mary Riley Styles Public Library, Falls Church, VA, February 2018.

Email/Discussion with Julie Goyette, Library Director, Rockbridge Regional Library, Lexington, VA, February 2018.

Email/Discussion with Karim Khan, Library Director, Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library, Christianburg, VA, February 2018.

Email/Discussion with Kevin Smith, Library Director, York County Public Library, Yorktown, VA, February 2018.

Email/Discussion with Lisa Tuite, Library Director, Pittsylvania County Public Library, Chatham, VA, February 2018.

Email/Discussion with Martha Hutzal, Library Director, Central Rappahannock Regional Library, Fredericksburg, VA, February 2018.