

Report: LHRT Fundraising Calendar

Bernadette A. Lear, LHRT Chair, December 2013

Introduction

For several years, some LHRT officers and members have wished to raise additional funds for LHRT's endowments and travel grants. At an informal dinner during ALA's 2013 Annual Meeting, several proposed that LHRT develop and sell a library history-themed calendar. I agreed to investigate whether this might be feasible. My recommendation and additional vendor details appear below.

Recommendation

ALA and governmental agencies have a number of rules regarding nonprofit fundraising which are likely to complicate this effort. ALA's web site does not seem to offer a "fundraising toolkit" particularly for round tables, although some divisions (such as YALSA) provide resources for their members (for example, see

http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/givetoyalsa/fundraising_guide_feb_12.pdf).

The easiest way to proceed may be for a private individual or company to take charge and donate the proceeds to LHRT. But before making this decision, LHRT should consult further with Kim Olsen-Clark and other employees in ALA's Development Office.

Of 5 vendors investigated, Staples seems to be the most economical choice if the Executive Committee or a designated party decides to create customized calendars. The unit cost per calendar is about \$3.10 (if 100 calendars are ordered) and shipping costs may be free if we pick them up at a Staples store. As the customer, LHRT can choose the background color/design, select photographs for each page, and add wording (such as a famous librarians' birthdays) to specific dates. Staples' calendar designs aren't the most attractive, but with more than 100 styles to choose from, there are several that would "work" for a library history theme.

Based on what I have learned so far, it appears the Executive Committee would need to appoint a member (or several members) to gather appropriate photographs and text, and spend substantial time laying out the calendar. Also, a group (perhaps the Executive Committee or a subset) should carefully review drafts of the calendar before it is printed. Furthermore, the Executive Committee must further investigate how to price and distribute the calendars – specifically, would we sell them "cash and carry" at a future ALA conference, or allow purchasers to buy them through the mail, both, or neither?

If LHRT purchases 100 calendars through Staples at \$3.10 each, offers them for sale for \$10.00 each (a profit of \$6.90 per unit), and manages to sell all the calendars, we could earn \$690. If sales do not proceed as well as hoped, the "break-even" point would be 31 calendars sold. I am confident we could break even, but am unsure at this point whether the effort would be worth the potential earnings. It is difficult to gauge how many units we might sell, but it's important to remember that LHRT has fewer than 500 members, and attendance at LHRT's conference programs has varied between 20 and 100 attendees. Even if the round table doubled the price (to \$20.00 per calendar) and doubled the number of units sold (to 200), revenue would still be less than \$3000, not even equivalent to LHRT's annual budget.

Vendor Details

PromoCalendarsDirect

Web site: <http://www.promocalendarsdirect.com>

Minimum order: 50 calendars

Normal pricing per unit: \$1.10 per calendar

Quantity discount pricing per unit: \$0.89 if 100 calendars are ordered; \$0.79 each if 200 calendars are ordered.

Shipping: Can pick up instead of ship?: unknown

Who designs layout?: vendor

Can customize starting month? NO

Can customize photographs? NO

Can add wording to dates?: NO

Additional notes: none of the calendar themes align with “library history” motif. Customer can only add business name, logo, and advertising message.

For more details:

- Comparison of styles: <http://www.promocalendarsdirect.com/calendars/>

Shutterfly

Web site: <http://www.shutterfly.com/calendars>

Minimum order: 1 calendar

Normal pricing per unit: \$21.99 and up per calendar, depending on size and style of calendar.

Sometimes offers sales

Quantity discount pricing per unit: \$11.96 each if 25 are ordered; \$10.00 each if 50 are ordered

Shipping: approx. \$2.67 per calendar? (\$15.99 per 6 calendars ordered)

Can pick up instead of ship?: unknown

Who designs layout?: customer selects & uploads photos, can choose various style options

Can customize starting month? YES

Can customize photographs? YES

Can add wording to dates?: YES

Additional notes: Of all the vendors, Shutterfly seems to have background styles with the most polished look and variety.

For more details:

- Comparison of sizes and styles: <http://www.shutterfly.com/calendars/wall-calendars>
- Shipping costs: <http://www.shutterfly.com/help/pop/commonShipping.jsp>

Snapfish

Website: <http://www.snapfish.com/snapfish/photo-gifts/photo-calendars>

Minimum order: 1 calendar

Normal pricing per unit: \$19.99 and up, depending on size and style of calendar. Sometimes offers sales of as much as 50% off

Quantity discount pricing per unit: none apparent

Shipping: \$1.99 per calendar

Can pick up instead of ship?: Yes, at Walmart

Who designs layout?: customer selects & uploads photos, can choose various style options

Can customize starting month? YES

Can customize photographs? YES

Can add wording to dates?: YES

Additional notes: limited number of styles available, and most are “modern.” none seem nice for a “library history” theme

For more details:

- Comparison of sizes and styles:
http://support.snapfish.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/680/brand/3/brand_host/www2.snapfish.com/
- Shipping costs: <http://www1.snapfish.com/snapfish/helppricing#calendars>

Staples

Web site: <http://print.staples.com/photo-calendars.aspx>

Minimum order: 1 calendar

Normal pricing per unit: \$5.99 and up, depending on size and style of calendar

Quantity discount pricing per unit: \$4.72 each if 25 are ordered; \$3.10 each if 100 are ordered

Shipping/handling/processing: not apparent

Can pick up instead of ship?: YES

Who designs layout?: customer selects & uploads photos, can choose various style options

Can customize starting month? YES

Can customize photographs? YES

Can add wording to dates?: YES

Additional notes: design themes are the same as Vistaprint’s; they look “desktop,” not very nice

For more details:

- <http://print.staples.com/photo-calendars.aspx?pfid=389&xnav=pricingdetails>

Vistaprint

Web site: <http://www.vistaprint.com/personalized-calendars.aspx>

Minimum order: 1 calendar

Normal pricing per unit: \$7.99 and up, depending on size and style of calendar

Quantity discount pricing per unit: \$6.59 each if 25 are ordered; \$8.65 each if 100 are ordered

Shipping/handling/processing: quoted at \$156.94 for 100 color grid calendars on premium paper shipped within 3 business days (most expensive option for 100 calendars)

Can pick up instead of ship?: not apparent

Who designs layout?: customer selects & uploads photos, can choose various style options

Can customize starting month? YES

Can customize photographs? YES

Can add wording to dates?: YES

Additional notes: design themes are the same as Staples’; they look “desktop,” not very nice

BAL, 12/23/2013