Utah Division of Archives and Records Service

OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY GUIDE

October 2020

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Intent Statement

This guide defines what we mean when we talk about "outreach and advocacy" and its application at the Utah State Archives and Records Service. It provides context for why we commit to a coordinated approach to outreach, and how we execute it effectively. This report is intended to educate Archives staff and stakeholders, and help ensure that we have a shared understanding and vocabulary when it comes to the goals of outreach and advocacy.

Guide Details

The information in this guide is compiled from discussion and planning that was conducted at the first Archives Outreach and Advocacy Summit, which was held virtually on May 21, 2020. Participants were selected based on the roles they hold as program and team managers who interface with unique user groups served by the Utah State Archives. Participants at the summit (including their roles) were:

- Ken Williams (Director)
- Jim Kichas (Assistant Director)
- Lauren Singer Katz (Outreach and Advocacy Program Manager)
- Alan Barnett (Local Government Program Manager)
- Lisa Catano (Records Center Program Manager)
- Rosemary Cundiff (Open Government Program Manager)
- Gina Strack (Digital Archives Program Manager)
- Heidi Stringham (Reference and Access Program Manager)
- Kendra Yates (Records and Information Management Program Manager)

DEFINING OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

Outreach and advocacy raises awareness, educates, and helps train audiences on what the State Archives is, what we do, and what we can do for them. This is crucial for building and supporting relationships with key stakeholders. We use outreach methods to educate users on why certain mandates, restrictions, and rules exist and how to stay compliant with those regulations. When done well this has the intended effect of building support and goodwill with our various audiences, which then facilitates the work that we are mandated to do.

Successful outreach is central to our mission of getting the right information, to the right person, at the right time. Consistent and coherent messaging offers the opportunity to communicate our mission and allows us the opportunity to connect it with our vision of improving government transparency and accountability. When done correctly, outreach delivers a clear and coherent message that is communicated effectively to the right audience at the time they need it.

We rely on effective outreach as a primary tool for building credibility with the users and advocates whom we depend on for ongoing support and funding. Taking a strategic approach to outreach is critical for laying the groundwork for advocacy efforts with our evolving audiences. It creates inclusivity that is foundational to our institutional mission of documenting the history of Utah and all of its citizens.

We see outreach as a critical bridge-building tool. It is the primary instrument whereby we connect and interface with diverse communities. Constructive and thoughtful outreach and advocacy provides the means for entering into inclusive dialogue with these communities. This engagement is critical for future-proofing our organization. By committing to outreach as it is outlined here, we are committing to an iterative process of engagement, listening, and improving.

Outreach fulfills an important strategic directive by allowing us to meet our users where they are, in their workplaces or communities. It allows us to build messaging to our users that we are a service that improves their lives in measurable and meaningful ways.

Ultimately, outreach and advocacy efforts are essential to breaking down stigmas of inaccessibility to information. We use outreach and advocacy to connect citizens with their government and educate them on government transparency and accountability. We also use outreach to educate and inform government (through records officers and administrative officers) of its obligations to record keeping, government transparency and accountability.

COMMITTING TO OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

Outreach helps reduce reputational risk and build positive consistent/coherent messaging and relationships. It helps us tell our story, and raise awareness of the vital services and access to the historic record of Utah we are uniquely equipped to provide.

Everyone on staff has a part to play in this, and the role of outreach as an administrative service is to help coordinate and amplify those efforts. It is critical that everyone on staff is clear in what message we want to convey to users about our agency so that we are all working towards that in a consistent and coordinated fashion. See Outreach Action Item 1 for how we will facilitate this.

When done right, outreach as an administrative service should streamline and professionalize certain processes and increase efficiencies in the organization.

SPECIFYING OUR METHODS FOR OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

There is a distinction between outreach as an action and outreach as an internal service program. The former is done by any member of our staff, anytime they are engaging with anyone outside of the Division. It is useful to think of this as a holistic and fundamental part of our institutional "way of being." This is distinct from the Outreach and Advocacy Program which exists to coordinate and amplify this inherent part of who we are as an organization.

All staff members have a role to play in thinking through and defining whom we are trying to reach, and in developing a variety of methods that we can use as an institution to effectively engage and meet the needs of those target audiences. Our user groups are broad and have very different needs. Our approaches and methods need to be effective and flexible enough to meet these unique user groups where they are. We need to acknowledge the difference (and different approaches needed) between our different constituencies of users and potential new audiences. See Outreach Action Item 2 for how we will facilitate this.

Good outreach needs to take into account all of the places that users might be and to employ a variety of methods to saturate and reach as many of those users/audiences as possible. Good outreach should highlight high-impact, meaningful experiences. This includes highlighting instances when we have provided great service, but in an indirect manner. Some services are designed, through hard work and planning, to help people find what they are looking for, while never actually engaging with us (aside from showing up as a use statistic).

In these cases where effective outreach is "invisible," we need to look for methods that measure indirect engagement. This requires ongoing engagement and utilization of tools (like Google Tag Manager) and methodologies (like surveys) that can help us continue to learn more about our users and their information-seeking behaviors.

Overall success for outreach as an administrative service will come when outreach is team-driven, and when programs and teams have engaged with the Outreach and Advocacy Program in planning that leads to actionable goals and outcomes that meet unique program and audience needs. In this model, the Outreach and Advocacy Program Manager is a subject-matter expert on outreach methods and services, and should be seen as a resource to assist teams in determining the best approaches and goals for their individual outreach strategic plans.

In addition to outreach planning happening at the program and team level, there is a parallel need for planning and collaboration to be institution-wide. An Outreach Steering Committee will be established to meet this need (see Outreach Action Item 3).

It is critical that we balance what we want to do against the realities of our institutional capacities. Establishing clearly delineated and understood roles and responsibilities is an ongoing challenge that requires constant communication to overcome. The Outreach Steering Committee and individual program and team meetings will serve as the places to address shared goals and establish effective communication channels.

Ultimately, planned programming and outreach events should be program- and team-driven, with the Outreach and Advocacy Program Manager providing logistical support. The event-planning methodology we will use places the responsibility for program content development in the hands of a Program Committee, and for logistical arrangements in the hands of a Local Arrangements Committee, with the Outreach and Advocacy Program Manager as its head. The responsibilities of each committee are unique and distinct, but they rely on each other (and must communicate effectively throughout) in order for an event to achieve maximum effectiveness. See Outreach Action Item 4 for information on how this will be addressed.

Archives staff enjoy participating in planned events and should be given opportunities to do so. It offers them a chance to learn about parts of the business that they may not be exposed to on a regular basis. This ongoing interest needs to be balanced with a shared understanding of the level of professionalism that we require from any staff member who is doing outreach and engaging with outside audiences. The Outreach and Advocacy Manager is responsible for setting expectations for this participation, recruiting staff who are expected to adhere to all set standards, and communicating expectations and standards to participating staff members.

Finally, outreach as an administrative service has a centralized role to play in the creation of all branded and marketed publicity materials created by our organization. All publicity is expected to adhere to certain branding elements that are overseen by the Outreach and Advocacy Manager. Staff are the content-subject experts and are expected to collaborate with the Outreach and Advocacy Manager on the creation of any branded marketing or publicity materials for our institution. See Outreach Action Item 5 for information on how this will be addressed.

OUTREACH ACTION ITEMS

1. Creation of this Outreach and Advocacy Guide synthesizes the high level planning and provides formal statements on what outreach is, why we do it, and how we achieve our outreach goals as an institution.
2. Schedule meetings between programs and the Outreach and Advocacy Program Manager to develop unique outreach strategic plans for those programs. Create individual program outreach guides based on these meetings that will be added as addendums to this guide.
3. Establish an Outreach Steering Committee. The purpose of this group is to engage in sustained strategic planning, coordinate and collaborate on institution-wide outreach initiatives, and provide a forum for the Outreach and Advocacy Program Manager to share outreach outcomes and successes. Regular committee meetings are intended to serve as a forum for attendees to learn and discuss successes and continue to refine what effective outreach looks like at our institution. Initially this group will be composed of the attendees from the summit (with adjustments made as necessary).
4. Utilize the Outreach Steering Committee to revisit and refine the Event Planning Policy (as well as all other relevant outreach policies) for maximum clarity and effectiveness.
5. Develop and publish clear branding standards and expectations and a process for approval that ensures professional, coherent, consistent publicity (in all forms) for our agency.

TEAM-SPECIFIC OUTREACH PLANNING

The following summaries provide specific information and outreach strategies for individual teams. They help define stakeholders and the unique audiences served by these teams. They highlight the services and topics that each program delivers to its audience(s). The plans clarify outreach methods that have been successful in the past, and outreach methods that may be utilized to improve future interactions. And, finally, these plans document the communication strategies that will keep the team connected with the Outreach and Advocacy Program Manager.

- Administration
- Digital Archives
- Digital Preservation
- Local Government
- Open Government
- Records and Information Management
- Records Center
- Reference and Access

Administration Outreach Summary

1. Who is on this team?
    a. The Outreach and Advocacy Program resides within Archives Administration. The Outreach and Advocacy Program Manager interfaces with the Director and Assistant Director (and others as needed) to plan and coordinate outreach in a variety of areas.
2. Who is your audience?
    a. Archives staff, programs, and teams.
    b. Department of Administrative Services Executive Directors Office.
    c. Other governmental state and local government agencies.
    d. Friends of the Archives.
    e. Archival and records management professional communities.
3. Primary topics, services, etc. that you want your audience(s) to know about?
    a. Outreach and communications supporting the Archives COOP Committee.
    b. Communications around operational logistics and internal messages and communication from the Director to staff.
    c. Outreach programs and initiatives that support institutional mission and values.
    d. Outreach initiatives that cross collaborate with other state agencies (particularly divisions within the Department of Heritage and Arts).
    e. Outreach for high level event planning at the institutional level (for example the 2021 Best Practices Exchange Conference).
    f. Connecting our outreach efforts to great DAS initiatives.
4. How do you generally connect with your audience(s)? What methods have worked well and what methods would you like to change or adopt?
    a. Email
    b. Blog
    c. Social Media platforms
    d. Face to face interaction with agreed upon talking points.
5. What are the most effective ways for your team to maintain communication with Lauren?
    a. Email
    b. Monthly Outreach Steering Committee meetings that include the Director and Assistant Director.
    c. Regular meetings between the Director, Assistant Director, and Outreach and Advocacy Manager.

Digital Archives Outreach Summary

1. Who is on this team?
    a. This team is composed of the Digital Archives Program Manager and archivists and reformatting specialists involved in program work.
2. Who is your audience?
    a. Genealogists
    b. State agencies
    c. Legislative Researchers
    d. Legal professionals
    e. General public seeking court records (criminal, civil, and probate), including:
    f. Victim advocates
    g. Adoption records
    h. Public defenders
    i. Heirs researching mineral rights
    j. General history researchers
    k. Environmental consultants and resource firms
    l. Academic researchers
    m. Information professionals
    n. Government watchdogs
    o. Journalists/media
    p. Academic community including:
        i. K-8 students
        ii. High school students
        iii. University students
        iv. PH.D. candidates
        v. Teachers
3. Primary topics, services, etc. that you want your audience(s) to know about?
    a. Source attribution
4. How do you generally connect with your audience(s)? What methods have worked well and what methods would you like to change or adopt?
    a. Tabling (especially where genealogists are)
    b. Targeted online pushes to genealogical groups on social media
    c. Mailing lists
    d. Targeted blog series (understanding these need to be planned out well in advance)
    e. Public newsletter that provides info on finding aids and any new digital content.
    f. Blog updates for new collections
5. What are the most effective ways for your team to maintain communication with Lauren?

a. Email
b. Newsletter reminders
c. Quarterly meetings with the Reference and Access team since there is so much crossover in audiences.
d. Gina’s (or designees) representation on the larger Outreach Steering Committee.

Digital Preservation Outreach Summary

1. Who is on this team?
    a. Representatives from the Digital Preservation Steering Committee.
2. Who is your audience?
    a. AROs
    b. Legislature
    c. Public
    d. Professional Community
3. Primary topics, services, etc. that you want your audience(s) to know about?
    a. Digital preservation is resource intensive and needs to be acted on early on in the life cycle of any record.
    b. Migration guidelines and policy.
    c. Specifics about digital preservation.
    d. Basic elevator speech on the importance of digital preservation that anyone in our organization can deliver effectively.
4. How do you generally connect with your audience(s)? What methods have worked well and what methods would you like to change or adopt?
    a. ARO and public newsletters. Possible “Digital Preservation Corner” feature.
    b. Blog posts.
    c. Training videos.
5. What are the most effective ways for your team to maintain communication with Lauren?
    a. Email
    b. Meetings as needed

Local Government Outreach Summary

1. Who is on this team?
    a. This team is composed of the Local Government Archivist, Local Government RIM Consultants, and the USHRAB Executive Secretary.
2. Who is your audience?
    a. Metropolitan municipal clerks
    b. Rural municipal clerks
    c. Records management support staff (not AROs)
    d. County records officers
    e. Special service district/quasi-governmental records officers
    f. Local school district records officers
    g. Administrators for all of the above (mayors, commissioners, directors)
    h. Court records managers
    i. Administrative Office of the Courts
    j. Government managed historical committees
    k. Museum and cultural heritage institutions
    l. Museum and cultural heritage partners (Arts & Museums, State History, MWDL hubs, Utah Humanities, etc.)
    m. The general public (no formal role)
    n. Legislative bodies (local state representatives, city councils, boards and commissions)
3. Primary topics, services, etc. that you want your audience(s) to know about?
    a. The State Archives has expertise in historic records preservation and care of historic records, records management and GRAMA.
    b. The State Archives is a leader in sharing professional information about archives and records management best practices.
    c. The State Archives mission is to make records accessible, but the Archives is still subject to GRAMA and records classifications.
    d. The State Archives is the most suitable repository for long-term government records preservation and care.
    e. The State Archives is the legally mandated repository for government records, if they are not being kept with the originating government agency.
    f. The Archives is already a rich resource for local history. The Archives is a good partner in helping to preserve local history.
    g. USHRAB grant money is available to help with records preservation projects.
    h. We are partnering with local entities to preserve and share their local histories.
4. How do you generally connect with your audience(s)? What methods have worked well and what methods would you like to change or adopt?
    a. Trainings
    b. Site visits
    c. Email/telephone calls

   d. Word of mouth
   e. ARO newsletter
   f. Partner email lists/newsletters (MuseNews from State History)
   g. Professional networks (MWDL, UMA and RCC)
   h. USHRAB board members
   i. USHRAB consortium list
   j. Tabling
   k. Presentations
   l. Social media
   m. Blog posts.
   n. Training videos.
5. What are the most effective ways for your team to maintain communication with Lauren?
   a. Email
   b. Quarterly meetings

Open Government Outreach Summary

1. Who is on this team?
    a. This team is composed of the Director, the State Records Ombudsman, the State Records Committee Executive Secretary, and the Open Records Portal/Public Notice Website Administrator.
2. Who is your audience?
    a. Public looking for government records for a variety of reasons (protection of legal rights, government transparency and accountability, past history of their interactions with government).
    b. Attorneys and public looking for legal counsel/advice
    c. Media
    d. Non-profit groups working on government transparency and accountability issues.
    e. Businesses looking for government information that can be repurposed into a paid service.
3. Primary topics, services, etc. that you want your audience(s) to know about?
    a. Online resources and services to easily answer commonly asked questions and functions.
    b. “Do’s and don’ts” to facilitate improved SRC processes.
    c. Resources that allow users to have better experiences on the PNW and ORP.
    d. More outreach to journalism students (high school and college).
    e. How do you generally connect with your audience(s)? What methods have worked well and what methods would you like to change or adopt?
    f. If we build effective resources (described above) how do we connect them to the various audiences described above?
    g. Recurring content in both the public and ARO newsletters.
    h. Infographics based on available data.
    i. Recurring blog content.
    j. Handouts.
4. What are the most effective ways for your team to maintain communication with Lauren?
    a. Regular assignments for content (newsletter and blog) given to the team by Lauren.
    b. Quarterly outreach meetings with this team.
    c. Rosemary’s (or designees) representation on the larger Outreach Steering Committee.

Records and Information Management Outreach Summary

1. Who is on this team?
    a. Chief Records Officer and Records and Information Management Specialists that interface with state and local governmental entities.
2. Who is your audience?
    a. AROs
    b. CAOs
    c. Urban and rural users (which have very different needs)
    d. Governmental entities of widely varying sizes and capacities.
    e. Users with past experience with us (good and bad). Previous interactions are important.
    f. Offices that are configured in very different ways.
    g. Sometimes volunteer staff (such as volunteer firefighters in special districts).
    h. Records Center customers and customers who don't use that service.
    i. Agencies with varying different functions and roles (law enforcement, education, quasi-government, etc.).
3. Primary topics, services, etc. that you want your audience(s) to know about?
    a. Basic RIM skills (legal requirements, implementation, and services that connect with them and their work).
    b. Trainings
    c. RIM consultation services
    d. General retention schedule services and training.
    e. Effective strategies for educating and influencing CAO's and co- workers.
    f. How do you generally connect with your audience(s)? What methods have worked well and what methods would you like to change or adopt?
    g. ARO newsletter
    h. Possibly posting past newsletters on the website.
    i. Conferences (our own and participation in other groups)
    j. Training (online and in-person)
    k. Consultations (virtual and in-person)
    l. Agency visits
    m. Networking and relationship building
    n. Certification test
    o. Customer surveys
    p. Blog
    q. Possible adoption of Google Group/LISTSERV for state agency ARO's to help build and strengthen that community.
    r. Handouts with service offerings.
    s. Consistent strategy to deliver these through various channels (physical and virtual).
4. What are the most effective ways for your team to maintain communication with

Lauren?

a. Quarterly outreach meetings with this team.
b. Kendra’s (or designees) representation on the larger Outreach Steering Committee.

Records Center Outreach Summary

1. Who is on this team?
    a. Records Center Manager, Records Center staff, and the Chief Records Officer.
2. Who is your audience?
    a. AROs
    b. EROs (primarily in courts)
    c. Records management support staff in government agencies who are designated to interface with the Records Center
    d. CAOs
3. Primary topics, services, etc. that you want your audience(s) to know about?
    a. Unique services offered by the Records Center.
    b. Records can be recalled by the ARO's or designee and then received either digitally through our Scan-On-Demand service or by mail.
    c. We store the records at no charge to the agency.
    d. Agency has full control over their records stored in the Records Center.
    e. We manage records stored in the Records Center according to retention schedules.
    f. The Records Center is a secure offsite storage facility.
    g. Both permanent and non-permanent records are stored in the Records Center.
    h. Processes they need to follow to use our services.
    i. How to send new records to the Records Center.
        i. AROs vs. non-AROs (submitting RTF)
        ii. Delivery options
        iii. Purchasing boxes
        iv. Preparing records/boxes
    j. How to recall a file or box from the Records Center. What to do when you are ready to return the recalled file or box.
        i. AROs vs. non-AROs
    k. How to get set up to use the Scan-On-Demand service
    l. How to set up a series-specific retention schedule so they have a record series number to use in order to send boxes to the Records Center.
    m. Record destruction authorization
4. How do you generally connect with your audience(s)? What methods have worked well and what methods would you like to change or adopt?
    a. ARO newsletter
    b. Customer surveys
    c. Publicity materials
    d. "Ad" in other government newsletters and emails
    e. Highlighting positive interactions and experiences in a targeted way so that they are hitting appropriate professional groups.
    f. Webinar training on services.

g. Records Center tours. (Works well)
h. RIM Specialist informing the agency of our services during their office visit. (Works well)

5. What are the most effective ways for your team to maintain communication with Lauren?
    a. Email
    b. Quarterly outreach meetings with this team.
    c. Lisa and Kendra's (or designees) representation on the larger Outreach Steering Committee.

Reference and Access Outreach Summary

1. Who is on this team?
    a. This team is composed of the Research Center Manager and Reference and Access Archivist.
2. Who is your audience?
    a. Genealogists
    b. State agencies
    c. Legislative Researchers
    d. Legal professionals
    e. General public seeking court records (criminal, civil, and probate):
        i. Victim advocates
        ii. Adoption records
        iii. Public defenders
        iv. Heirs researching mineral rights
    f. General history researchers
    g. Environmental consultants and resource firms
    h. Academic researchers
    i. Information professionals
    j. Government watchdogs
    k. Journalists/media
    l. Academic community including:
        i. K-8 students
        ii. High school students
        iii. University students
        iv. Ph.D. candidates
        v. Teachers
3. Primary topics, services, etc. that you want your audience(s) to know about?
    a. Reference archivists are subject matters experts on UT government records.
    b. High-quality customer service we offer
    c. Transparent access of our holdings
    d. Resources we can provide to underserved communities.
    e. How do you generally connect with your audience(s)? What methods have worked well and what methods would you like to change or adopt?
    f. Utilization of surveys to better learn about our users and their information seeking behaviors (online and in person)
    g. Physical presence at conferences and events with standardized, consistent messaging and information resources. Typically we do this at genealogist-centric events, but we should be present at more government-user events, such as:
    h. League of Cities and Towns
    i. Municipal clerks conference
    j. DEQ Science for Solutions Conference

k. Utah Society for Environmental Education
l. Utah Geological Society Conference
m. Social media
n. Blog
o. Website
p. Continued enhancement and development of discovery and descriptive tools (finding aids, EAC agency histories, research guides)
q. Shared drive (and training) for resources staff encounter/develop to facilitate outreach and dialogue with underserved communities.
r. Virtual exhibits

4. What are the most effective ways for your team to maintain communication with Lauren?

    a. Email
    b. Social media
    c. Shared folders that centralize content (underserved communities, cool discoveries in the collection, etc.)
    d. Recurring content features highlighting this team and their work (blog, social media, and newsletter).
    e. Development of a FAQ that is distributed through all appropriate outreach channels.
    f. Defined processes and communication channels for using outreach to communicate team needs (for example: ASRS downtimes).
    g. Quarterly outreach meetings with this team and the Digital Archives team because of the crossover in audiences.
    h. Heidi's (or designees) representation on the larger Outreach Steering Committee.