

RAILS Member Engagement Report

November 2021

Introduction

RAILS defines member engagement as a mixture of communications, marketing, customer service, and training. As part of our member engagement efforts, we seek to meet with our staff from member libraries one-on-one as much as possible. We also look to create platforms for member discussion and build resources around topics that are of interest to staff from our member libraries.

Online member visits

Like in-person site visits, online members visits are a chance to connect one-on-one with libraries. RAILS frequently offers these visits to libraries where the director or main contact is new to the library or system. In 2021, RAILS has conducted 23 online member visits thus far. They fall into three different categories: general online site visits, new director welcome calls, and school library meetings. A huge thank you to Debbie Baaske who conducted all 13 school library meetings while I was on paternity leave.

Meeting type	2021
Online site visits	3
New director welcome calls	7
School library meetings	13
<i>Total</i>	<i>23</i>

Online roundtables

Online roundtables are online networking events held around a specific topic or theme. Online roundtables emphasize peer-to-peer learning and the sharing of best practices in libraries. These forums are held via Zoom online meeting software. Below are the stats from the 8 sessions that RAILS has held in 2021:

Topic	Type	Date	Registered	Attended
Trustee Update 2021	Trustee	1/20/2021	206	73
DEI Programming	Public	1/26/2021	155	75
Promoting New Titles Virtually	Schools	2/2/2021	91	70
Strategic Planning for Trustees	Trustee	5/11/2021	86	50
Adobe Suite for Libraries	Public	7/30/2021	60	25
Succession Planning for Trustees	Trustee	8/11/2021	92	46
Canva for Libraries	Public	8/12/2021	153	82
Tips for New Makerspaces	Public	8/20/2021	117	65
		Average	120	60.75
		Total	960	486

Other activities

There are other activities that fall under the member engagement heading that do not include one-on-one meetings or online roundtables. These activities often overlap with communication efforts and projects like the My Library Is... campaign. These include:

Social media activities

RAILS uses social media to frequently engage with members on a one-to-many basis. This includes activities like the weekly 10 Question/This or That feature that we run every Thursday morning via Facebook. In the past, we have also run contests and hosted giveaways through our social media channels.

Work with networking groups

Over the past year, RAILS staff have met with almost all of the [~80 networking groups](#) supported by the system. RAILS also supports these groups through Zoom licenses, email lists, L2 access, and more.

Specialized Library Spotlight

Earlier this month, RAILS announced a new project to feature specialized libraries in Illinois. As part of the My Library Is... campaign, RAILS will host a series of video interviews called the [Specialized Library Spotlight](#).

My Library Is... Advisory Team

The My Library Is... Advisory team is made up of 12 staff from libraries in Illinois who are interested in library marketing/advocacy. Each of these team members publishes blog posts for the My Library Is... blog. They also participate in small group work to help move projects forward.

Orientation Video Project

Coming soon! RAILS is developing a video project to help staff from member libraries utilize system benefits. These short videos will demonstrate practical topics like accessing L2, RAILS E-News, email lists, networking groups, etc. Look for more info in 2022.