

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting  
ALA Annual Conference, Washington DC  
June 24 - 29, 2010**

**Topic:** Communications Update

**Background:** YALSA's Communications Specialist has provided a communications report for the first three quarters of FY10. The report includes information about publications, which is a key revenue stream for YALSA. Marketing information is also included in the report, which is one of five goals in YALSA's strategic plan.

**Action Required:** Information

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Communications Report to the Board of Directors  
Stephanie Kuenn, YALSA Communications Specialist

### **YALSA Publications**

#### **Books**

YALSA debuted two books at the start of this summer: *Risky Business* by Linda Braun, Jack Martin, and Connie Urquhart, which

Sales figures from ALA Editions, Neal-Schuman and our self-published books are attached to this report.

## **Periodicals**

### *Young Adult Library Services*

YALSA continues to experience excellent service and more robust production as it enters its second year of its contract with Cadmus Communications. Cadmus will be introducing software in 2010 that improves the editing and review process; YALSA may consider this software as it could reduce its current production time from a 10-week period to as little as 8 weeks.

FY2010 expenses for *YALS* are currently \$23,856 (the costs of two issues, including but not limited to journal copyediting, typesetting, production and mailing). By contrast, expenses at this point in FY2009 were approximately \$30,255. In FY2010, *YALS* expenses were budgeted at \$62,434. Depending on costs of our final issue of the year, *YALS* will be \$15,000-\$18,000 under

*YAttitudes* evolved from a quarterly email newsletter to a monthly e-newsletter beginning in April 2010. Editor Erin Downy Howerton finishes her term this month and we are grateful for her help. I will be editing the newsletter going forward, to use it more as an avenue for promoting awareness of YALSA news to the membership at large.

In addition, *YAttitudes* had a robust year for advertising. At present, ad revenues are at \$3,000. By taking the editing in-house and increasing the frequency, *YAttitudes* costs will be kept to a minimum (largely data processing fees) while offering more opportunities for advertising. *YAttitudes* could grow into a significant revenue source, particularly as many advertisers turn to online advertising rather than in print.

For an update on *YAttitudes*' editorial content, please see Erin Downy Howerton's editor's report.

### **YALSA's Social Media**

YALSA now has more than 3,000 fans on Facebook and 4,000 followers on Twitter.

The YALSA Blog continues its standard of excellence, achieving significant pageviews and averaging five posts a week. The YALSA Blog was also nominated for Best Group Blog in the Edublog Awards and is under consideration for an award from Salem Press. YALSA plans to create a commenting policy for the blog in the upcoming fiscal year. For more specific information on blog statistics and editorial content, please see mk Eagle's blog manager report.

In Fall 2010, YALSA will launch a new blog focusing on teen literature. Sarah Debraski will be this blog's manager. In June 2010, YALSA launched a contest (Name That Blog!) to select a name for the blog. The winning participant will receive a box of books and swag from YALSA.

In addition to its current strategic use (simulcasting blog posts, important announcements, and deadline reminders), YALSA has used its Twitter account to give away seats in its webinars and to advertise special pricing for Twitter users. While we have used Twitter to promote our events, we have also used it to promote our special pricing for Twitter users. While we have used Twitter to promote our events, we have also used it to promote our special pricing for Twitter users.

YALSA approved artwork for a website redesign in 2009. In March 2010, Jodi Bollaert of Blue Sun Works began work developing a new information architecture for the YALSA site. In April, she and I conducted a site walkthrough, in which I indicated the importance of various features from a staff perspective and discussed issues such as user needs and integration with social media. In May and June, she conducted a content analysis and interviewed YALSA members (public librarians, school librarians, and MLS students) regarding the YALSA website to better understand the needs of our primary audience. We continue to expect to launch the new IA and the new look for the website in late 2010.

In January 2010, YALSA launched a new forms engine and is still in the process of moving most of its forms to this new system. The forms are powered by PHP and use MySQL, rather than the formmail application that YALSA previously used (which is no longer supported by ALA ITTS). The forms are now built on a database that saves the data on an external server, allowing for more security and for easier download. The forms were built by Thiruchelvan Selvanayagam, a programmer and YALSA intern, and allow for easier use by YALSA members, both those who receive data from forms (as one can now download results in a spreadsheet) and for those filling out forms (as you can save form data to your computer and you receive a confirmation email upon successful completion). As ALA moves to a PHP-based content management system, this will make for easier conversion.

ALA will be moving to a new content management system in FY2011. ITTS expects to announce which service it will be in September, likely. Reportedly, Drupal is the front-runner.

## Marketing

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YALSA launched its webinar series in March with a free webinar. Subsequent webinars have cost \$39 for members and \$49 for nonmembers, and while we have aggressively promoted it through multiple channels, attendance has been somewhat lower than anticipated. Based on member feedback, YALSA has announced upcoming webinars months in advance, in hopes of allowing potential participants time to plan and budget for the webinars. In addition, YALSA has expanded its media kit to include webinar sponsorship, in hopes that this can help support webinar revenues.

### **Media Relations**

President Linda Braun was quoted in the March issue of *Family Circle* and will be featured in an article by the Associated Press on LGBT books for youth. Linda also conducted interviews with the *Houston Chronicle*, *Newsday*, *AnswerBag.com*, *Children’s Writer*, and *Leap Books Blog*.

YALSA hired Newman Communications, a publicity firm with significant experience promoting literature and nonprofits, to help promote the Printz awards, due to the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. With Newman’s help, Linda Braun was quoted in the *Sacramento Bee* discussing award-winning literature, as well as on Kansas Public Radio and with radio stations in Texas, Michigan, Washington D.C., and Philadelphia. Despite reaching out to upwards of 10,000 contacts, Newman’s staff indicated that interest in literature stories was adversely affected in January and early February due to high-profile news events like the Haiti earthquake and that many print publications had cutbacks in their newshole, resulting in less space for stories like the Printz anniversary.