Entrepreneurship Outreach Through Research Workshops
Wichita State University Libraries

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The Entrepreneurship Research Series
In Fall of 2016, Wichita State University Libraries launched a series of workshops aimed at teaching business and intellectual property research skills to entrepreneurs and inventors—both on campus and in the wider community.

Several factors contributed to this decision:

Entrepreneurship at WSU
Wichita State University has positioned itself as a “Innovation University”. This vision entails, among other things, increased emphasis on invention, technology transfer, and small business incubation.

Entrepreneurship in Wichita
The city of Wichita has also embraced a culture of innovation and small business. A robust network of small business support organizations along with a culture of support among entrepreneurs created a perfect climate to promote the library’s entrepreneurship resources to the wider community.

Patent and Trademark Resource Center at WSU
WSU Libraries is in a unique position as the only Patent and Trademark Resource Center (PTRC) in Kansas. Since 2005, we have provided invention with resources on intellectual property, individualized patent and trademark searching instruction, and many tangible patent and trademark materials as a current Federal Depository Library and the formerly named Patent and Trademark Depository Library.

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Workshops Series Vision and Goals
Vision:
University Libraries connects business owners and inventors with resources and tools needed to protect intellectual property and conduct market research.

Goals:
- Promote use of library business resources among students and local business owners
- Increase awareness of PTRC services and resources among local inventors
- Connect entrepreneurs and inventors with WSU Ventures (technology transfer office) and other university and community resources

Workshops
- Word-of-mouth is our most effective marketing strategy, meaning that outreach at 1 Million Cups, attendance at local inventor group meetings, and communication with small business support organizations proved to be effective.
- We saw increased student and employee attendance in the Spring but guests still make up a large percentage of attendees.
- Attendees’ suggestions for topics they want to see in the future did not align with actual workshop attendance. However, in reviewing feedback, we decided to offer basic information on the patent application process in the future and have redesigned our advanced patent searching workshop.
- The amount of interest in intellectual property and market research topics has led to new opportunities to work with the Rocky Mountain Regional Office of the USPTO to offer an All Day Patent Seminar and quarterly Trade-mark Tuesday programs, as well as an invitation to give a market research presentation at the Kansas Small Business Development Center.

Workshop Attendances by User Group

- Online submission for the All Day Patent Seminar was lower than expected due to the date.

Attendence & Feedback

Marketing Checklist
- Event Calendars: Add events to university, library, newspaper, city events website, and small business support organization calendars.
- Print Advertising: Hang posters on campus, mail fliers to libraries and makerspaces, and share bookmarks at information tables, outreach, and networking events.
- Social Media: Share live tweets on social media with links to registration page or library guide and ask interested groups to share.
- Email: Send emails to librarians, employees and student event newsletters, student groups newsletters, generate an email list of former workshop attendees and patrons interested in intellectual property, and ask campus librarians to email faculty.
- Library Displays: Add events to markers in the library and create a library display with an entrepreneur focus to kick off the series.

Promotional Materials

Visit the Entrepreneurship Research Series LibGuide:
http://libresources.wichita.edu/ers