



Promoting E-Resources in a Noisy Digital World

Best Practices in Digital Marketing for Libraries

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Objectives

- ▶ Understand digital marketing strategies
- ▶ Promote underutilized e-resources
- ▶ Measure and improve impact



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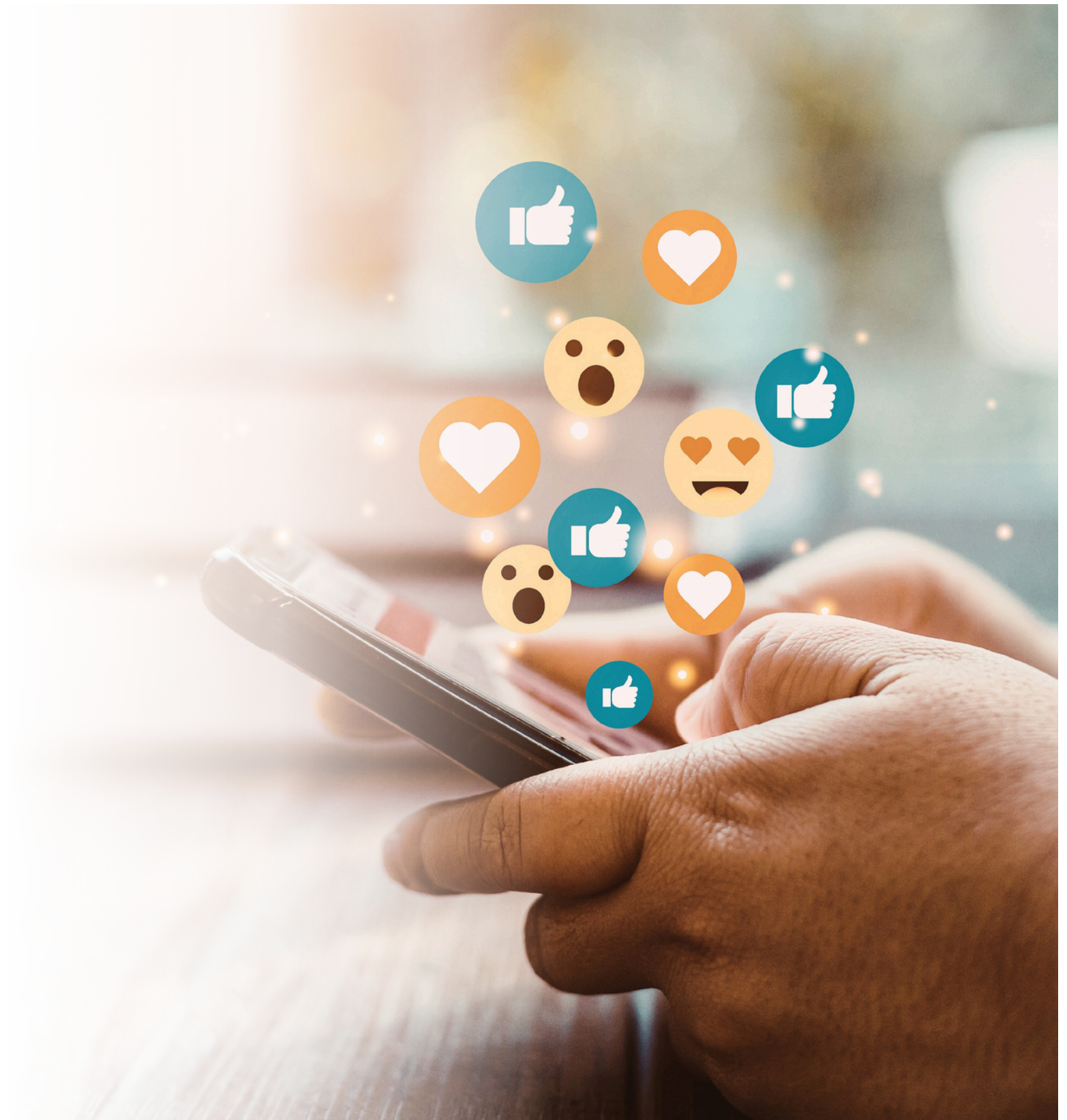
The Challenge: Why “Noisy”?

- ▶ **Your e-resources are competing with TikTok, Netflix, email, and news alerts.**

Average ads seen per day?

- Information overload
- Low visibility of e-resources
- Competing digital platforms

NB: The core problem is access does not equal awareness.



Why Promotion Matters

- ▶ Increase usage
- ▶ Demonstrate library value
- ▶ Support teaching and research



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The Mindset Shift

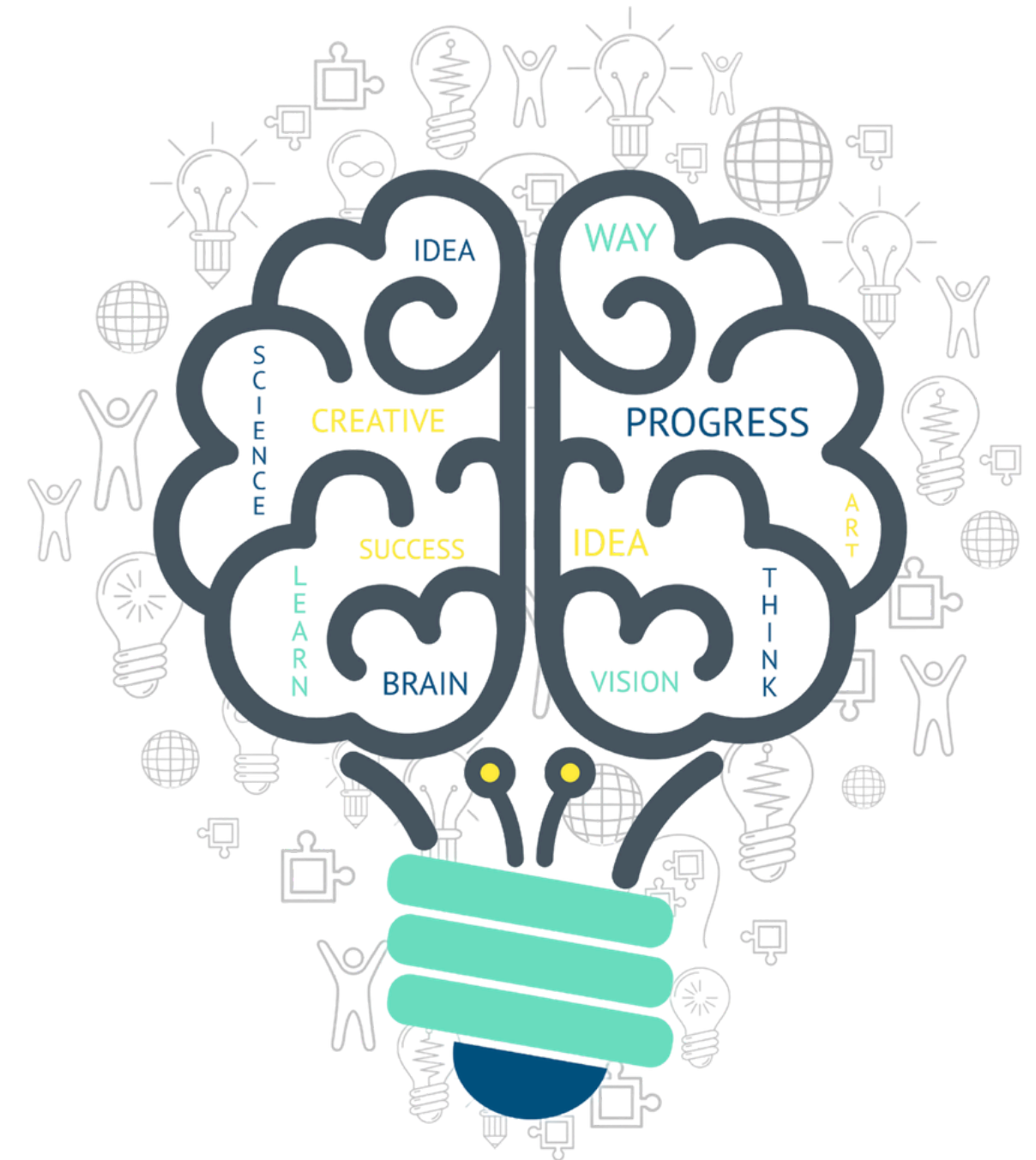
► From:

- “We bought it. They will come.”
- Promotion = One email blast.

► To:

- **AIDA Framework:** Attention → Interest → Desire → Action.
- Always Be Testing: What works for nursing students fails for history faculty.
- Attribution: Know which touchpoint drove the click.

NB: You are a marketer who happens to have an MLIS



Digital Marketing Foundations

- ▶ Increase usage
- ▶ Demonstrate library value
- ▶ Support teaching and research



Best Practices

1. Social Media Campaigns - Not just posts!

▶ Themed, timed campaigns

- **“Database of the Week”** (Every Tuesday, same hashtag) – Resource Spotlight
- **“Citation Rescue”** (Show how to use a resource to fix a broken citation)
- **“Faculty Takeover”** (A faculty demos their favorite e-resource in 60 seconds)-User Testimonials



Platform Priority

▶ LinkedIn/ Facebook

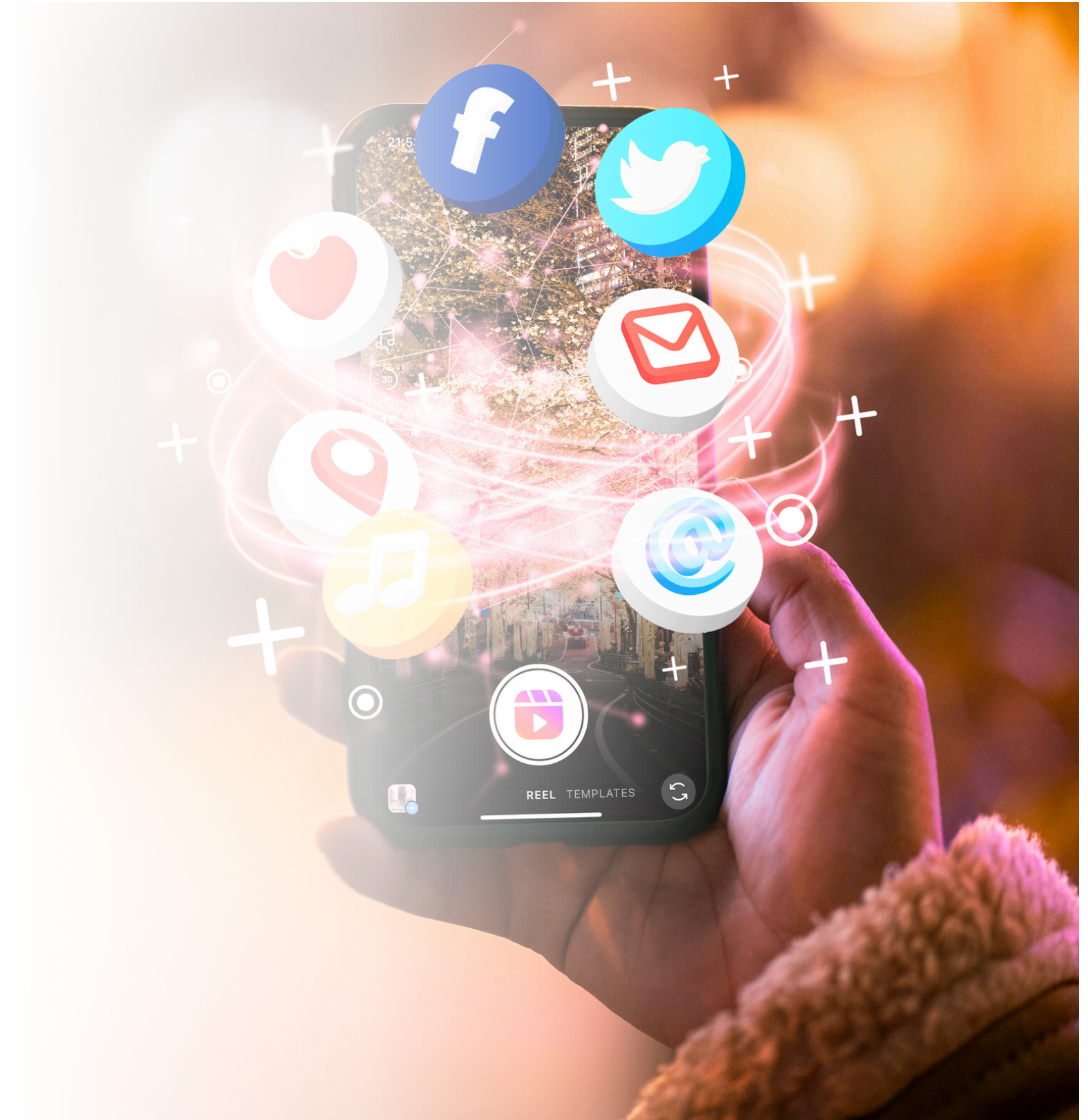
- Faculty & Staff

▶ Instagram/ TikTok

- Undergrads & other lower levels

▶ Twitter/X

- Librarian peers & professional networks



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Social Media – Creative Tactics That Work

▶ “Use the Stump”

- Post a real reference question and ask followers to find the answer using a specific database.

▶ Error 404 Humor

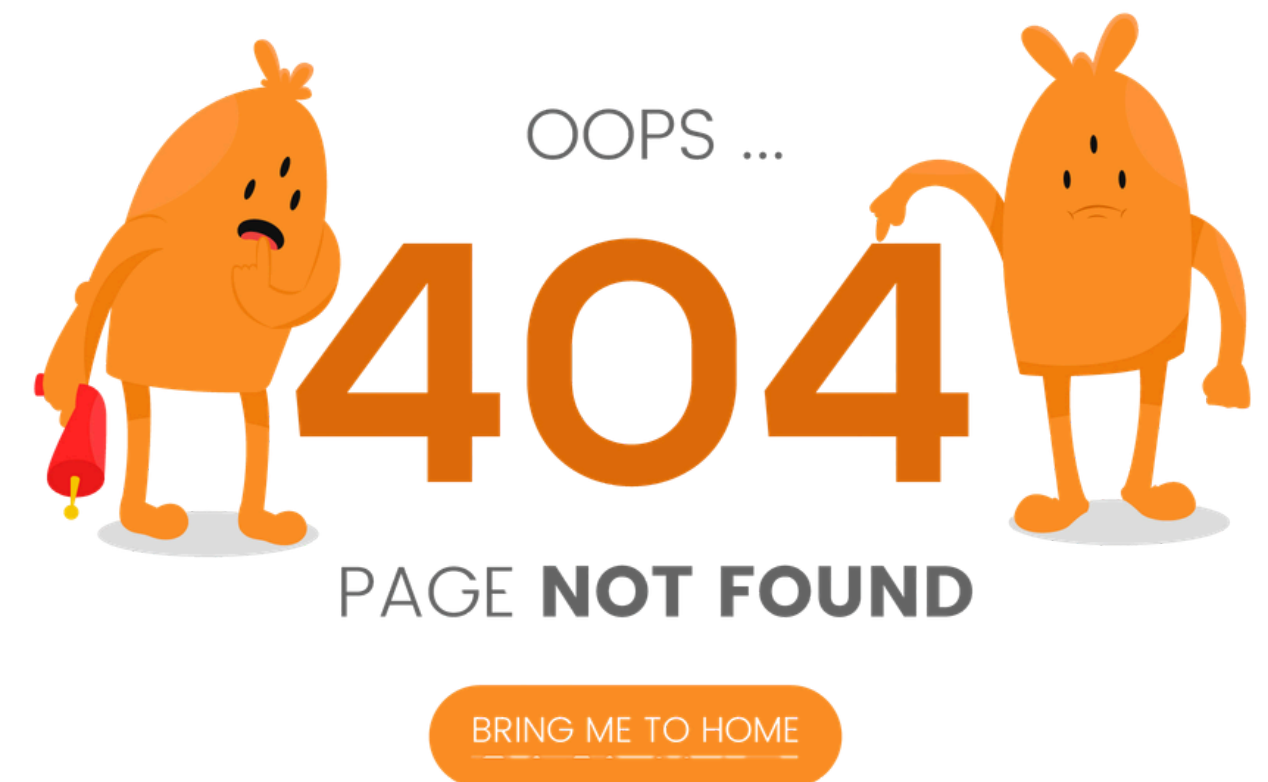
- “Don’t get a 404 on your thesis. Use [Database Name].”

▶ Swipe to Reveal (Instagram Stories)

- “Swipe to see the peer-reviewed article vs. the blog post.”

▶ Pro Tip

- Use URL shorteners with UTM parameters (e.g., **bit.ly/database-fall24**) to track clicks from each platform.

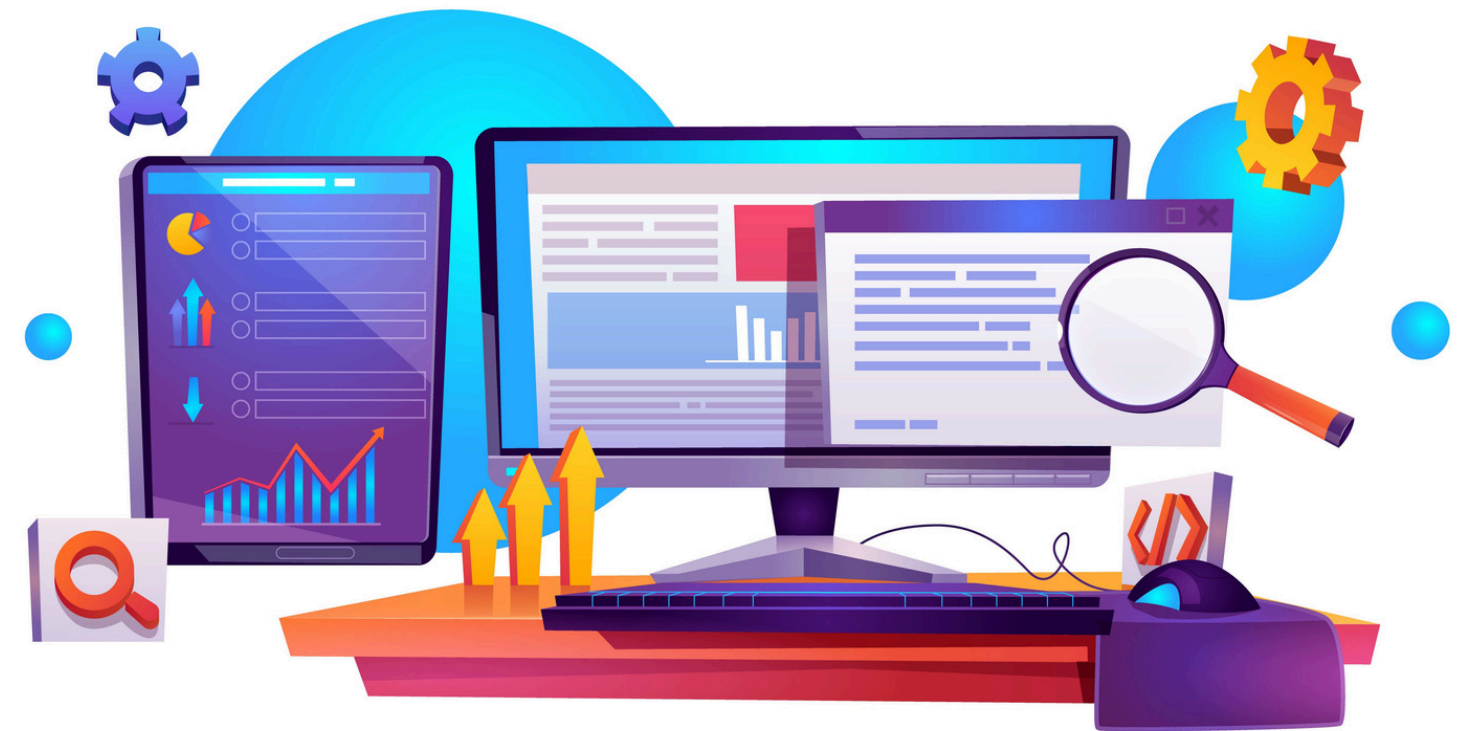


2. Embedded Librarianship

Moving from **“ask a librarian”** to **“we are where you already are.”**

► **Where to Embed:**

- LMS (Canvas, Blackboard, Moodle): A librarian module in every course site.
- Research software (NVivo, SPSS, Zotero): 2-min help videos inside the tool.
- Slack/Teams channels for academic departments.



zotero  slack  moodle



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Embedded Librarianship – The “Invisible” Promotion

Students associate the resource with immediate help, not just a link.

Instead of	Do this
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Use JSTOR”• “We have data sets”• “Ask a librarian”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Here is a JSTOR permalink to the exact article your prof cited last week”• Paste a ready-to-use CSV into the chat• @mention the librarian by name with a direct answer



5. Webinars & Training (Not Boring Lectures)

Why webinars fail: 45 minutes of “click here, then scroll down.”

Library webinar formula that works:

- **10 minutes:** “The problem” (e.g., “Finding peer review is hard”)
- **15 minutes:** Live demo of 1 resource solving 1 real assignment
- **10 minutes:** “You try it” (attendees share a search in chat)
- **10 minutes:** Q&A + next steps

Promotion: Require faculty to offer points for attending.



Webinars – Repurposing for Reach

One webinar = 5 Assets:

- The recording (upload to YouTube – unlisted)
- 3 short clips (60s each) for TikTok/Reels
- 1 infographic of the workflow
- Transcript (searchable on your LibGuide)
- Email follow-up with the direct link to the database

Metrics: Registration-to-attendance rate (target >40%).
Clip views on social (target >500).

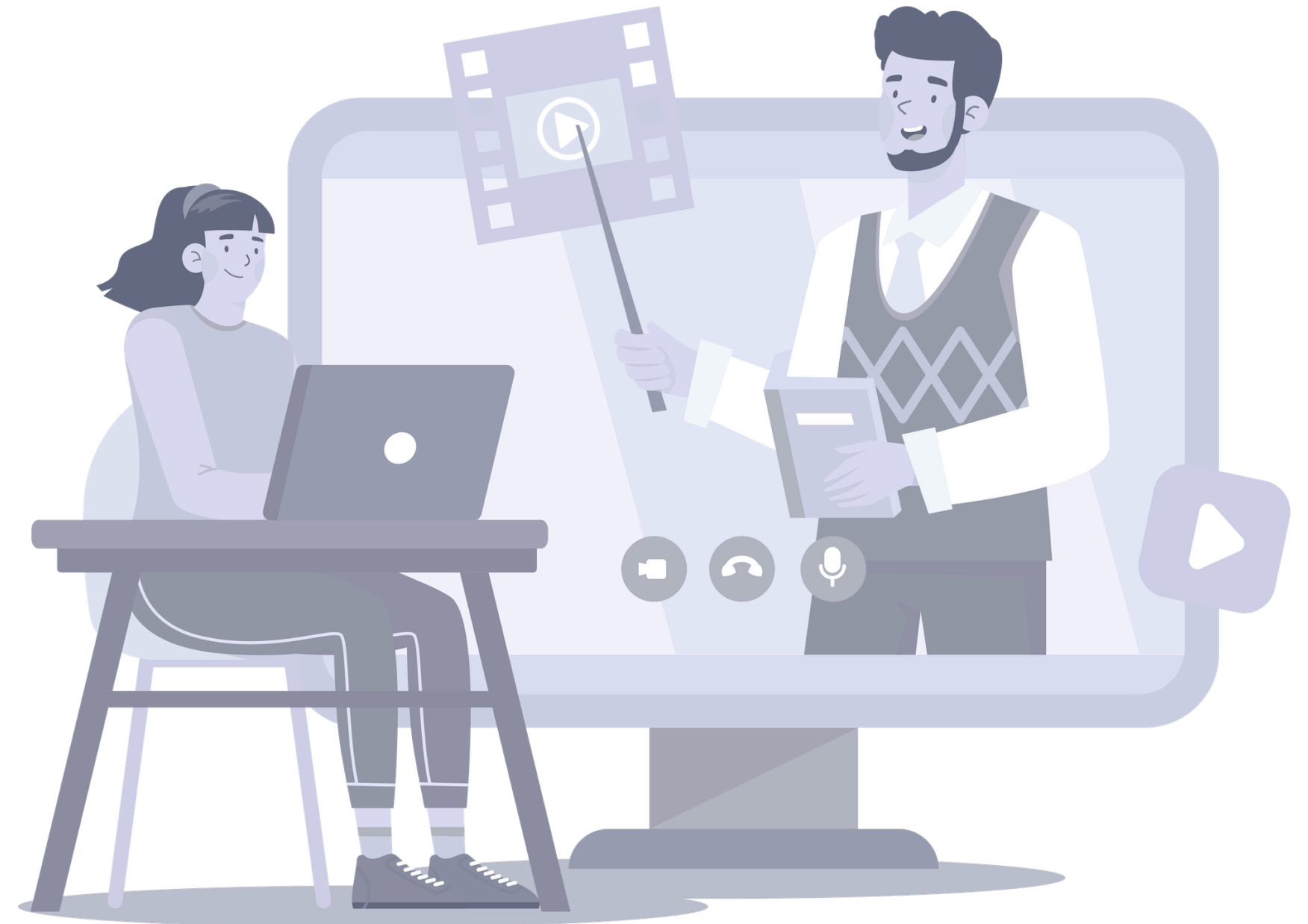


6. Instructional Videos

The 90-Second Rule: After 90 seconds, attention drops 60%.

Video templates that work:

- **“Answer in 60”** – “How to find one peer-reviewed article on climate anxiety in PsycINFO.”
- **“Mistake & Fix”** – Show a wrong search, then the right search.
- **“Phone First”** – Vertical video, captions on, no library jargon.



7. Usage Incentives

- ▶ Contests
- ▶ Gamification
- ▶ Reward Systems

Key rule: Incentive must reward meaningful use, not volume.



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Measuring Promotional Impact (Beyond Clicks)

Vanity metrics: "Our post got 200 likes."

Actionable metrics:

Metric	What it tells you
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Return on promotion• Click-to-full-text ratio• Faculty forward rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• $(\text{New uses due to campaign}) \div (\text{staff hours} \times \text{rate})$• Did they find what they wanted?• % of faculty who reshare your alert

6. Measuring

The Pre/Post Campaign Test

- **Pre-campaign (2 weeks):** Measure baseline usage of target e-resource.
- **Campaign (2 weeks):** Run social, alerts, webinar.
- **Post-campaign (2 weeks):** Measure usage again.

Calculate lift: $(\text{Post} - \text{Pre}) / \text{Pre} = \% \text{ lift}$.

Example: 150 uses → 450 uses = 200% lift.

That's your ROI for the board.



Putting It All Together

The 90-Day Promo Calendar

Month 1 (Foundation):

- Segment patron lists (students by year, faculty by dept)
- Create 5 short instructional videos for top unused databases
- Set up UTM tracking on all links

Month 2 (Campaign):

- Launch “Database of the Week” on Instagram
- Send 2 faculty alerts (one STEM, one humanities)
- Run 1 live webinar (record it)

Month 3 (Measurement & Iteration):

- Calculate lift for each campaign channel
- Double down on top 2 tactics
- Present one-page impact report to library leadership



Common Pitfalls & How to Avoid Them

Pitfall	Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting 20 databases at once• Using library jargon (“aggregator,” “index,” “embargo”)• No call to action• Measuring nothing• Stopping after one try	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feature 1 resource per week• Translate to student language (“full text,” “today’s articles”)• Every post/email must have 1 clickable next step• Pick 3 metrics before you start• Repeat the best campaign every semester (students rotate)

Your Action Plan – Next Week's First Step

- Pick 1 underutilized e-resource (usage <10% of potential).
- Choose 1 channel from today: social campaign, faculty alert, or 90-second video.
- Execute & measure
- Report back to this group (or to your supervisor) with one number: lift.



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