

Margaret Finley
October 30, 2022
LIS 6523
Assignment #3- Design a Program

Currently, our library has a program called Orange Crate, which is a subscription box for preschoolers. The Orange Crate features a theme and includes books, a craft kit, and information about the library's upcoming programs for preschoolers. We have considered expanding this to other age groups. Orange Crate is a program that I run/operate, so I am familiar with all aspects of its implementation.

For an adult version, it can't be done in the same way as the preschool box, as most adults don't want to receive a box full of books they may have already read or even own, and not all readers would like to have a craft to go along with their book. The following is what I envision as the starting point, to be refined and improved as we receive feedback from patrons. I'm proposing the adult subscription box be called BookTreats.

BookTreats is a subscription, delivered monthly, for four months. Inside, patrons can expect one new release book checked out to their card, one surprise (not new release) book that is a read-alike for the main book also checked out to their card, two edible treats, such as candy and popcorn, and a few nonedible treats, designed to help the reader have an immersive experience with the book. Additionally, we will include our monthly magazine that details all library events in the county and any promotional bookmarks we are currently featuring. As with the preschool version, this subscription box is free to patrons, and is delivered to their door once a month.

Patrons can sign up for a round of BookTreats boxes online, as available. For the first round of BookTreats boxes, we would allow for 40 participants, in order to keep things manageable and see how it could scale larger if needed. This program will be marketed on social media channels (TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram) so that we can remove the posts once signups are full to avoid frustration. This also minimizes cost for marketing this program.

The idea for this version began with a concept from a company called Once Upon a Book Club. We will modify it to allow for our more modest budget but also expand on what they do with the addition of a read-alike book and snacks. It's a great way to encourage people to try new authors or genres other than those they might normally select, and to bring an element of fun into their reading.

For the patron, it would look like this: Sign up for the service online or in person. Each month, a box arrives on your doorstep. Inside is a featured new book, a gift wrapped book, 4-5 small gift bags taped shut and with page numbers written on the bags, and some treats to enjoy while reading. An instruction card placed on top tells you how to enjoy your BookTreats experience:

"This month's book is Celeste Ng's Our Missing Hearts. As you read this book, you will come across post-it notes that say "treat time!" and when you see that, find the gift bag with that page number on it and open your treat. Whatever is inside the gift bag will relate to something happening in the book and help you have a more immersive experience while reading.

When you get to the end of the book, let us know if you enjoyed this month's selection! If you did, you might also like the 2nd surprise book we have included and wrapped up. Unwrap it to reveal which read-alike was included in your box!

And of course, we've included some tasty treats as well for you. We hope this month's selection is a Treat you will enjoy."

Materials needed for each BookTreats box include: cardboard box for delivery, shipping labels for PEP (our courier service), printed post it notes saying "treat time!", small gift bags for the non edible treats, stickers to seal the treat bags, kraft paper to wrap the second book, and the gifts for the immersive experience. Additionally, the monthly library magazine, bookmark, logo stickers, and two books checked out to the patron's card would need to be gathered.

We would partner up with the graphics team to help with one or two items for each BookTreats box. For instance in the example book, one of the characters works in a university library, so perhaps we create a printed piece that is a flier for an event mentioned in the book, complete with someone's handwritten note about something referenced in the book. Or maybe a character finds an old photograph tucked inside a book- we could have the graphics department create a photo that appears as was described in the book. We would also communicate the need for additional copies of these books to the acquisitions department.

Advance preparation would include first reading ARCs that the library receives in advance of ordering books to determine which books will be featured and how we can give them the BookTreats treatment. (In other words, what 4-5 items can be included to provide the immersive experience.) Next, we would notify the acquisitions team so that enough books are ordered or leased to provide this experience for the list of participants when the book is released. At the same time, we would connect with the graphics team to schedule the production and printing of any necessary in-house created items for the gift bags. Then we would source the additional small gifts for the immersive experience. This process would start about 3-4 months before the first box ships, and this might be adjusted over time.

Next, a list of read-alikes will be compiled, primarily using Novelist. One month before the boxes are set to be delivered, we will start the process of pulling these books from the collection to be gift-wrapped and set aside for box assembly. Because we use RFID tags in our collection, these can still be checked out to the patron's card when the box goes out, even with the barcode tag covered. As the books are pulled, they are added to the BookTreats department card's account so they won't show as available in our system. This is also when we will procure the edible treats for the boxes.

Two weeks before the BookTreats boxes are set to go out, we will start assembling the items that go inside. The plan will be to select books with a release date one to two weeks before delivery. Before anything is labeled the final printed book will be reviewed to ensure that the page numbers line up in the same way the ARC did, and begin to place the post-it notes in the correct places. Next the page numbers will be written on the corresponding bagged treats.

This is also when the boxes will be assembled and pre-filled with the page-numbered gift items and treats and materials about library events. The books will remain to the side until the day they are to be picked up by our courier service, PEP (Priority Express Parcel). Any stickers that need to be included on the outside of the boxes, aside from the delivery address, will be placed at this time as well.

The day of, we will check out the two books to each cardholder who has signed up (which will transfer the books from the department in-house card to the patron's card), then place the books inside a blue plastic pouch to protect from the elements, and that blue bag will be placed inside the box with the rest of the month's materials. An address label will be placed on the outside of the box, and PEP will pick them up and deliver these boxes within the next three days.

Cost for delivery is something we have contracted with PEP for and we were not required to account for that in Orange Crate. Additionally, the blue plastic pouches are provided by PEP. The boxes themselves cost about \$1.39 each, the paper bags for packaging the gifts cost about 12 cents apiece, and needing up to 5 per box, that comes out to 60 cents per box. Printed post-it notes would cost about 25 cents per box if we order enough for the entire subscription run at once. Edible treats can be sourced for about \$1.50 total per box depending on what we select that month. That brings our total to \$3.74 per box before the gift items are purchased for the books. While the final total and items largely depend on what budget we are allotted for this, I would want to have our total be less than \$6 per box, and I think it's achievable depending on what the final gift items are. (For comparison, the Once Upon a Book Club subscription, while it does allow you to keep the book they send, costs \$50 per month.) Since the budget would run about \$240 per month, total of \$960 for the entire run, this would require special approval in the budget. I would create mockup versions of the box for each of the members of the Board of Trustees in advance of requesting the funds so that they can experience BookTreats before deciding on funding. Depending on when this initiative is requested to start, it could be part of the budget for the summer reading program for adults or it could be a separate outreach line item. Additionally, the program can be implemented by one staff member, and when the books are returned, they can be set aside for our existing Book Bundle program for book clubs.

Sources for costs:

Custom Post-It Notes. (n.d.). In *VistaPrint.com*. Retrieved from <https://www.vistaprint.com/stationery/stationery/sticky-notes>

Literature Mailer. (n.d.). In *Amazon.com*. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/4fwdudz7w>

Small Dots Merchandise Bags. (n.d.). In *PaperMart.com*. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/2m5sv3cj>

Subscriptions. (n.d.). In *OnceUponABookClub.com*. Retrieved from <https://www.onceuponabookclub.com/collections/subscription-boxes>