

Free2 for California Libraries

BALIS (Bay Area Library & Information System) is pleased to launch its Free2 Campaign statewide and invites your library to join Free2.

In the fall of 2006, BALIS embarked on a search for a social marketing firm to create marketing campaign for libraries. Though public libraries are an essential part of American community life, insufficient funding, incomplete understanding about library offerings, and an outdated image have challenged their relevance in the Internet Age. Recognizing the need to mobilize people to reconnect with their libraries, BALIS hired BBMG (with offices in San Francisco and New York) to create an integrated marketing campaign that would appeal across cultures and generations to reposition libraries as central to our lives in the 21st century

BBMG identified the campaign goals to include: branding a campaign that resonates with our diverse stakeholders, articulate our unique value proposition, and raise libraries' profile among new audiences and inspire deeper involvement from current customers. They did extensive research with an internal audit, interviews and an online survey to learn the true value of libraries. They identified stakeholders and target audiences with the goal of changing behavior in order to change perceptions. They concluded that:

“Libraries offer unparalleled access to essential information and technology, provide a second home for people of all ages to connect, learn and play, and deliver the free services people need to lead successful lives.”

Thus, the big idea: **Libraries stand for the freedom to succeed.** The campaign was called “Free2” to reflect the flexibility and the variety that people are free to do at the library = free to explore, free to learn, free to connect, free to create, free to transform, free to achieve, and free to succeed. Free2 is a unifying concept that allows each library to maintain its unique identity. BBMG's creative team developed an entire visual language for Free2.

The campaign launched in April 2008 with PLS and SVLS joining BALIS in Free2. Since then, free2 has been used throughout these three systems in many engagement activities, including free2vote, and currently free2give.

What do you get with a Free2 membership?

Joining free2 will give you access to the free2 intranet with the style and messaging guide, BBMG visual language and brand book, and many samples of materials produced by participating libraries, such as bookmarks, vendor information and specifications for mouse pads, stickers, posters, tee-shirts, just to name a few free2 products, as well as support and ideas in using free2 successfully. Take advantage of all the extensive professional research and development behind free2 for a small fee. Just fill out the application on the back and free2 is yours!

The logo for the Free2 campaign. The word "free2" is written in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. "free" is in dark blue, and "2" is in a vibrant magenta. To the right of "free2", the word "join" is written in a lighter blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. The entire logo is set against a light blue rectangular background.