THE ADVOCATE *for Maryland Libraries*

Four Easy Ways to Schedule People Electronically

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When planning a Friends event, sometimes the hardest things to do are to find dates for meetings or conference calls and to schedule volunteers for time slots and contributions (such as food, or articles for newsletters!). Fortunately, there are a number of *free* services that can help you accomplish these tasks.

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Find a meeting date with Doodle

http://doodle.com

Doodle is an easy-to-use service that is ideal for finding a date and time for a meeting. Doodle lets you suggest multiple dates, and multiple time slots on those dates, for your meeting. After you set up the poll, Doodle provides a web address you send via email to the people with whom you are coordinating. The Doodle will even notify you as selections have been submitted by those people. An account is not needed to plan away with Doodle.

Remind people about a meeting with Google Calendar

If you have a Gmail account you can send invitations to meetings via email using Google Calendar. The invitees will receive an email invitation, even those without a Gmail account. Just sign in to your Gmail account, open Calendar and click on a date and time to begin. Invite people by entering their email addresses in the "Guest" section. Your "guests" will receive an email notifying them that the meeting is scheduled. Gmail account holders have the choice of responding by clicking Yes, Maybe, or No, which will be recorded on your calendar. Non-Gmail accounts will just receive a notice of the date and time for which the meeting is scheduled. Using Calendar is very easy, but if you need a little coaching, use the Google search engine to find a Google Calendar Tutorial.

Issue 1:

- Doodle
- Google Calendar
- Signup Genius
  Google Docs

Questions?

If you have any questions about these four services, please feel free to contact me (Stuart Ragland) at sragland@dvv.com. If you would like to talk, include a phone number and suggest a time when I can follow up.

If it seems like I am pushing Google services, I am! In a future article, I will introduce Google Hangouts, a great meeting-maker when members of your committee cannot make it to the physical location of a meeting.

Schedule volunteers with **SignUpGenius**

http://www.signupgenius.com

SignUpGenius is a very convenient tool for allowing volunteers to sign up for timeslots during an event. This past September is proved its metal in scheduling volunteers from CML, the Maryland Library Association (MLA), Maryland Association of School Librarians(MASL), and the Division of Library Development and Services (DLDS) for booth duties at the Baltimore Book Festival. This service is free and easy to use; SignUpGenius provides detailed instructions.

Schedule whom and what with a **Google Doc** people can edit collaboratively

Gmail account holders can now edit online files collaboratively with any email account, not just other Gmail accounts. Sharing a Google Doc such that anyone can edit the file is as easy as 1-2-3.

1.   Click **Share.**

2.   Click **Get shareable link.**

3.   Set the link to **Anyone with the link can edit.**

Then just paste the link in an email describing what you want people to add to the file. This is superior to sending a Word file to a group of people and having to copy their separate contributions into a single file, because everyone enters their contributions in the same copy of the file. This technique would be really handy for gathering information about who will be bringing what to your next friends group picnic (food, setups, ice, etc.)