

It's Good for Business: How to Make Library Collaborations Yield Dividends

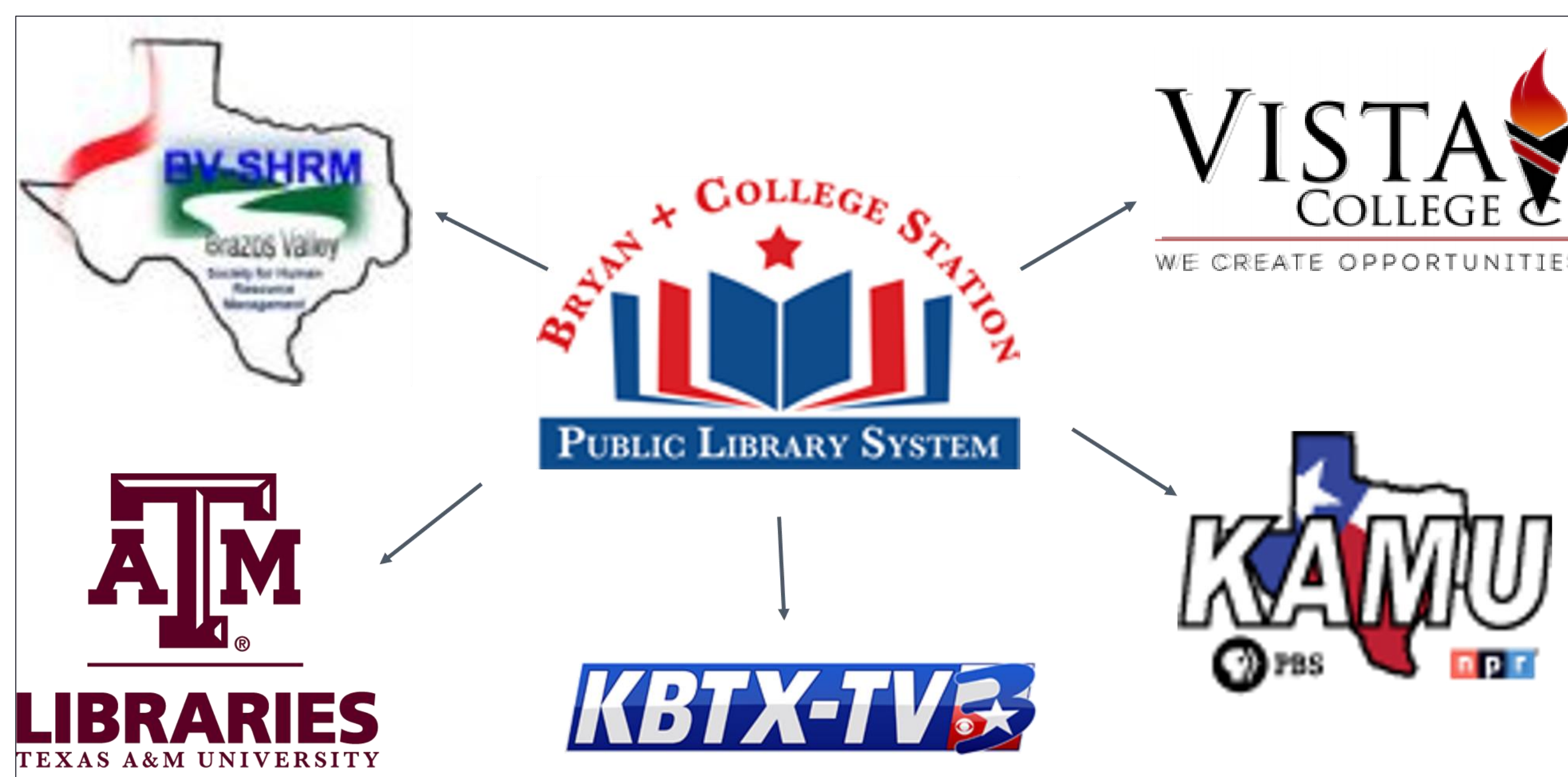
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INTRODUCTION

An initiative by the Bryan + College Station Public Library System (BCSPLS) sought to increase public awareness of library programs and bring in new and larger groups of patrons. A main focus on financial literacy and entrepreneurship led in several collaborations with local non profit organizations and educational institutions.

The partnerships and program offerings resulted in increased program attendance, strengthened community bonds, and an increased awareness of library resources.



BACKGROUND

BCSPLS librarians felt that their adult programs did not resonate with all library patrons. Past programs, such as adult coloring and crafts, were primarily attended by the same group of people. The adult librarians wished to offer programming that would draw in larger and more diverse crowds. Financial literacy and entrepreneurship programs were developed along with STEM and all-ages programming.

OBJECTIVES

- Raise library visibility & reputation
- Strengthen community relationships
- Increase program participation
- Spread awareness of financial and business literacy

METHODS

- Combination of previous relationships and new connections
- Created cohesive marketing message across mediums
- Variety of programs for different audiences
- Buy in from administration & management



- Collaborative program with Texas A&M University Financial Aid geared towards college-bound teens and their families.

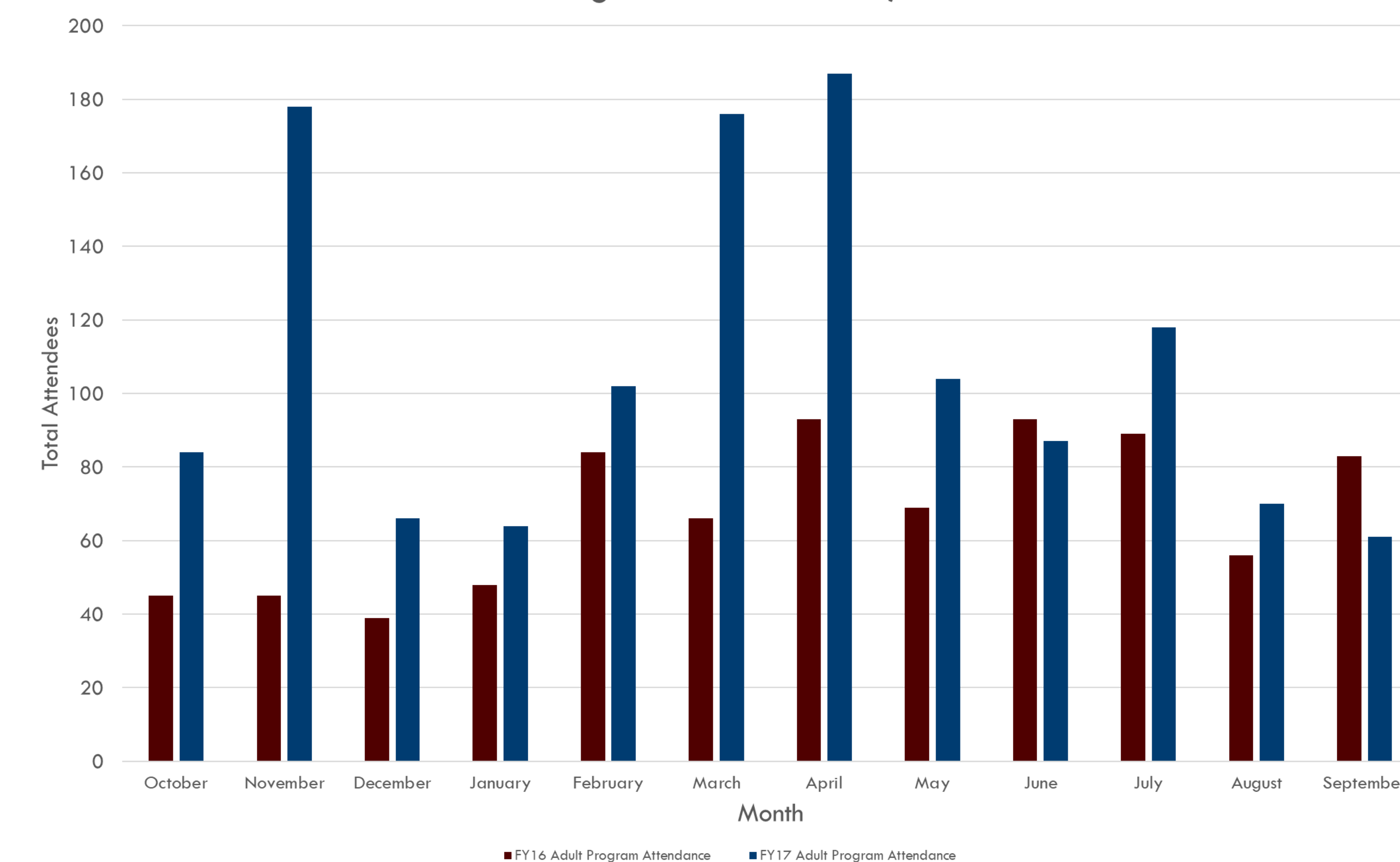


- Guest speaker from Texas A&M University Libraries introduced attendees local entrepreneurship resources.

RESULTS

- Increase Program Participation
 - Sizeable increase in adult program attendance over the previous year.
- Community Relationships
 - Several new and ongoing collaborations formed to facilitate new programming.
- Literacy Focus
 - Both the collaborative parties and attending patrons learned about available library resources.

BCSPLS Adult Program Attendance, 2016 vs. 2017



CONCLUSIONS

Collaborations involving a variety of organizations and library/librarian types can prove incredibly beneficial to all involved parties. With support from administration and a variety of outreach efforts, events brought in a larger and more diverse group of patrons. The collaborations do not need to be limited to business topics; collaborations are useful across all age groups and subject areas.