

## Marketing of Library and Information Services in University Libraries: A Practical Experience

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**Abstract:** *At present, libraries and information centers are facing a time of unprecedented change and challenge. Marketing concepts itself is changing and has different meaning form different renowned people. The concept of marketing is widely applicable in library and information environment. Now marketing is whole organization concept which requires years of continual activities. Marketing of library services is the effective execution of all the activities involved in enhancing satisfaction of users by providing maximum value of them. It is a total solution for library and information centers. There have been enormous developments in marketing of library and information services around the world. The present research paper aims to explore the discipline of marketing for librarians. Practical solutions are provided on how to implement a marketing strategy and plan with particular emphasis on the value of using information resources in libraries to the users.*

**Keywords:** Library Marketing, Information Services, Perception and Librarianship.

**Introduction:** Libraries are playing vital role to market their information services for the benefit for their users to use new technologies, to anticipate the trends. Libraries and information centers have become profit making organizations due to new technological storage, processing, retrieval & services. Instead of the user's approaching for information services in the libraries or information centers, the information must reach the user's place of work, whether it is a classroom, the research laboratory, the home or any other place of activity in any field of life (Kotler and Andersen, 1995). Marketing is an integral part of library service, because it has to do with basic principles of librarianship i.e. to develop good collection and user-oriented services. Marketing aims to identify the client base, and to determine and fill its needs, wants, and demands by designing and delivering appropriate and services. Under the umbrella term marketing, this study concepts like building customer relationships, branding and corporate identity, marketing communications, servicing policy, collection development policy, marketing policy & planning and information literacy policy for enhancing the library and information services at the right time to the right users.

### Review of Related Literature

Review of literature plays a vital role and important unrefined materials for building up a total infrastructure of a specific subject area in any type of research study. It is conducted to get a clear

understanding about the specific field of study. The literature review is prepared on emerging themes directly drawn from the literature, thematically and chronologically within this study. It aims to identify the changing perspectives, the present challenges, and the benefits offered by examining information science specialists' views.

Martey (2000) stated that: "Libraries must survive and thrive because they still have a role to play in the community. Librarians like all other professionals have to adapt and cope with the changes taking place in the environment in which they operate".

Aguolu (2002) posited that university libraries are integral part of the university system. He added that they should not exist as inertia of knowledge, but as dynamic instrument of education to enable their parent institutions to achieve their goals.

Gupta (2003) stressed the importance on library services rather than manage collection, staff and technology. According to him the notion of services has changed, from basic to value added, from staff assisted to self-service, from in-house to outreach, from free to price. He divided the existing appendices into four categories, namely: selective bibliographies that list bibliographical information, annotated bibliographies that contain descriptive or evaluative comments, web biographies that consist of web-based resources, and critical reviews of the literature.

Kanaujia (2004) describes the assess to nature of the relationship between different aspects of marketing; the attitudes of certain personal, specialized and organized features; to examine the resources and facilities of libraries in relation to marketing; to gather information about the products/ services with charging patterns; and to determine the extent to which the principles of marketing are put into actual practice in libraries. The paper provides a reminder of the four Ps of marketing identification.

Mi (2006) gain basic classic marketing principles to appeal and better serve new generations of users its emphasis is not only marketing library services but also user satisfaction with library services, those services must determined not by what libraries have but by what users need. Author then provide brief idea about branding, information seeking, determining the information seeking behavior of users, thinking and education process. "Branding" is here seen as to get librarians on their way with labeling further library marketing. The paper reviews classical marketing texts and current user studies for applicability to library service.

Mu (2007) suggests approaches for marketing academic library resources and information services to assign international students. It looks also at what information literacy programs and activities are suitable to accommodate the information needs. Cuiying Mu identifies that academic libraries need to market their services and resources proactively and librarians need to consider patrons appearances, language expertise, learning styles and their subjects of interests. The main focus of every library is customer service, which is an approach of marketing.

Munshi (2008) conducted a case study of marketing approach aimed at determining the needs, wants and demands of the target clients through designing and delivering appropriate products and services more effectively for the purpose of achieving organizational goals and objectives. It was an attempt to conceptualize the strategic approaches of marketing mix to library and information centers. Finally, it recognized some benefits of proposed marketing plan.

Gupta (2010) surveyed the introductory studies remarked on the definition of marketing, the evolution of library & information services (LIS) marketing was explained. The author found that the research described that how marketing was applied to LIS over the years. Marketing was also related to other concepts used in the management of LIS. The major finding of the survey revealed a useful fact about the role of professional associations in diffusing marketing theory was portrayed & the importance of education addressed. The entry ends with a reflection on the future on marketing for LIS.

Makori (2011) conducted a study of marketing of information products & services in research libraries in Kenya. The author found that the literature survey were currently published articles & the researcher's professional experience. The major finding of the survey reveal useful facts about the marketing was basic and essential management process for promoting information products and services in university research libraries. The study emphasized the marketing avails university research libraries were unique opportunity to provide quality, demand based, and user oriented information products / resources & services.

Kaushik (2012) discuss about open access initiative discovers the new way to access intellectual literature free of cost which published in miscellaneous online journals on different subjects. The study goals to identify growth and publication arrangements of marketing library and information services related literature published in LIS open access journals by various bibliographic points of view. The consequences of the paper demonstrated that maximum quantity of articles published in marketing library services, this of articles concentrated on library marketing theme.

Ronke (2013) determines some reasons for marketing library and information products, as libraries are no longer the only information services trade, online book dealers, information professionals, the Internet services providers, free web access providers and individual customers will not hesitate to market to potential library customers or users. Libraries have to market because of the necessity to maintain significance and remain connected to the communities they serve and have some bearing on the present day's occasion and real-world problems. Librarians have to market their services and products in order to improve the image of their libraries. For instance, libraries have to be exceptional in the kind of admittance and services they provide.

### Objectives

- to evaluate the gap between customer expectation and perception of the service;
- to identify information need and information seeking behavior of academic community;
- to examine the resources and facilities of the library in relation to marketing;
- to investigate the knowledge of awareness of marketing of information services.

### Significance of the study

Libraries are the best candidates for marketing among non-profit service organizations. Here, the important thing is that we can see these benefits from the point of view of users and communicate in the way they can understand. The public image of

the library comes through experiences or moments of truth when users really come into contact. All promotion, advertisement, promises will be wasteful if we are unable to transform these experiences into pleasant ones and that too from user's point of view. The deciding factors are our own attitude and our commitment to the community. We who work in the library are the greatest marketing forces in libraries.

Marketing is an integral part of library services, because it has to do with basic principles of librarianship: to develop good collection and user-oriented services. This is the very first aspect of employing effective marketing in any kind of libraries. Many librarians correlate marketing with profit and consider that libraries are not for making profits. Basically because they were not taught marketing at library schools and do not see marketing to have anything to do with running a library.

Marketing helps show a library staff's expertise, further an organization's mission, promote productivity by quickly and efficiently finding the right information at the right time, and add value to an organization's products. Without any promotional effort, some key individuals may not be supporters or even users of the Information Centre. Libraries therefore, will look impressive and the librarians will emerge as activists fostering proactive services to the users. Every service

activity must be performed with a conscious mind to meet users' needs exceptionally.

### Research Methodology

This present study has been carried out to evaluate the necessity of marketing strategy and plan for building a new user perception in libraries. To obtain this objective of the present study, researchers mostly have used secondary data from the period of 2000-2013. Secondary data collected from various relevant publications and books. It is a qualitative research and mainly focused on library resources and services among the users through the concepts of marketing.

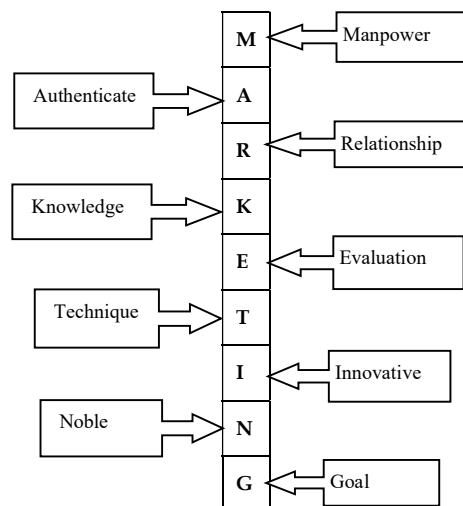
### Discussion and Realization

#### 1. Marketing in Library Perspectives

**Stanton (1981)** "marketing is a total system of interacting business / service activities to plan, price, promote and distribute want satisfying products & services and present to potential customers/users".

**Kotler (1996)** "Marketing means working with markets to actualize potential exchanges for the purpose of satisfying human needs and wants. It is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of goods, services and ideas to create exchanges with target groups that satisfy customer and organizational objectives".

**Figure 1 Marketing in Library Perspective**



(Source: Developed by the Authors)

**M**= Manpower (staffs, users, suppliers and committees)

**A**= Authenticate (confirm to provide services to the users)

**R**= Relationship (relation between users and library staffs)

**K**= Knowledge (latest information/ new arrival in the library)

**E**= Evaluation (users satisfaction level)

**T**= Technique (library service system using technology)

**I**= Innovative (modernization: automation and digitalization)

**N**= Noble (professionalism)

**G**= Goal (proper services to the right users at the right time at the right place)

## 2. Marketing Implication in University Libraries

The Five Laws of Library Science was published by the S.R. Ranganathan in 1931. The Five Laws have been discussed in the light of marketing by many renowned information scientists. Interestingly, these laws can be said to be relatively well aligned to marketing theory. From these laws logical corollaries are derived that can be directly related to marketing (Table 1 below). The reader (sometimes called the customer) is king, and is the focal point of the library; thus the whole organization (resources, services facilities, rules and regulations, procedures) becomes customer focused. As the table below demonstrates, each of these laws has important implications in regard to basic marketing strategies.

**Table 1 Five laws and Marketing Implications**

The Five Laws	Steps to be taken	Marketing implications
Books are for use	Most favorable use of resources, facilities and services	Acquiring appropriate information material and ensuring sufficient resources and services are available for the use of users. Convenient location, effective signage, and longer opening hours; helping hands for using resources and services.
Every reader his/her book	Meeting users need satisfactorily	Collecting and interpreting information, understanding the needs of users, and matching with the organizational resources.
Every book its reader	Reaching out to users	Publicizing value and benefits, promotional campaign, advocacy, public relations, personal communication, etc.
Save the time of user	User reimbursement and preferences	Repackaging information into appropriate form, availability of information when they need. Ensuring quality of services and offerings.
Library is a growing organism	Adapting to future user needs	Mobilizing resources, dealing with uncertainty about future user needs, new services, new customer groups, new environment, etc.

## 3. Marketing Strategy of University Libraries

Marketing approach is very useful to university libraries to improve their image and to attract more users. No, doubt, marketing helps the librarians to upgrade their reputation within their organizations and as a profession within the society.

**Figure 2: 7Ps of Marketing Strategies of Libraries**



(Source: Developed by the Authors)

To market a library's resources and information services is not difficult. In library marketing perspective, we can apply 7Ps in university libraries (Koontz and Rockwood's 4Ps and Rafiq and Ahmed's 3Ps) of marketing mix which is defined in Table 2. Koontz and Rockwood (2001) recommended that marketing strategy is comprehensive, integrated and coordinated plan that combines four marketing elements, commonly called the '4Ps' they are: Product, Price, Place and Publicity and '3Ps' of the marketing mix are: Participants, Physical Evidence and Process.

**Table 2: 7Ps of Marketing Strategies of Libraries**

<b>Product</b>	The characteristics of library products or services: quality, design, reputation, adoption, authority, credibility, techniques to meet the needs of information of the users /customers.
<b>Price</b>	Decide on a price strategy of library resources. It depends on quality resources and proper services to the users. Identifying the total cost of the user is a part of price element.
<b>Place</b>	This includes advertising, attending exhibitions; explore the services and reading environment (creating the right impression through the working environment). Public relation is included within promotion by many marketing people.
<b>Publicity</b>	Looking at the location (i.e. library), distribution channel (where a service is delivered), geographical coverage, telecommunication, travels, etc. we can extend the number of P's- the two, which are usually seen as useful additions for services (including information services).
<b>Participants</b>	The essential ingredient (staff/personnel) for providing effective and efficient information services among the users. Good information services are not likely to be delivered by people who are unskilled or de motivated.
<b>Process</b>	This way, in which the user gets hold of the service, i.e. the way in which a document or a search can be ordered. The library or information services for users in a convenient way, i.e. the help of information technology may be taken if need.
<b>Physical Evidence</b>	The environment in which the reference and information services are delivered that facilitates the performance and communication of the service (Koontz and Rockwood, 2001).

#### 4. Marketing Plan in University Libraries

A good marketing plan begins with a mission statement that defines the objectives of the library or the information center, which includes an identification of the target market segments. Realistic and measurable targets set should be subjected to ongoing evaluation process as part of the marketing plan, and used to adjust or revise the marketing activities.

For a library that recognizes marketing plan and has this orientation in its services will be the closest to its users. Marketing plan must be understood and implemented in a comprehensive way. No one plan will serve the purpose. Customers / users are at the heart of the library or all marketing plan. Marketing plan needs to be developed and implemented with ongoing enhancement of the services and products.

Marketing plan of the library is a set of practical techniques and proven processes

which can be applied to all aspects of service planning, service delivery and service evaluation. Effective service planning begins with market research, analysis of needs and preferences of the user community. Effective service delivery requires market awareness, a

carefully planned strategy of promotional activity.

Fisher and Pride (2007) proposed eight (8) steps for designing a successful marketing plan:



(Source: Developed by the Authors)

## Conclusion

There is a growing need for understanding and employing marketing in libraries and information services throughout the world. Libraries are being driven to explore the possibilities of cost recouping and profit potentials for their survival. Libraries must change according to changing marketing condition. Libraries need to achieve an imaginative design of services and resources, and develop communication methods and a feedback mechanism to improve service. In view of the significant role marketing library and information

services play in creating awareness in library services. Librarians must ensure that they put in more efforts in the aspect of marketing and promotion of their resources and services through advertisement, exhibitions and displays, publicity, public relations. Therefore, the marketing policy of the university libraries needs 'careful planning, structuring, execution and evaluation with regular review'. Libraries are growing organization where resources and manpower increasing day by day so marketing strategies / tools must need to promote library services among the users as well as their organizational development.

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