

FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS ANALYSIS OF MARKETING IN LIBRARY RESOURCES & SERVICES IN DIGITAL ERA

Mahipal Dutt

Dy. Librarian | Chitkara University | Baddi

Dr. Rupesh Gaur

Librarian | Indira Gandhi National College | Ladwa

ABSTRACT

The paper reviews the role of marketing in the context of library and information services in present digital era. Different ways and means of marketing techniques have been highlighted and the applications of these techniques to promote library services and resources usage are discussed. Different functions of marketing like selling, buying, storing, transportation, grading and standardization, risk taking and financing etc are also discussed. It is found from the literature review that marketing in libraries is not a popular concept. It is also found that a relationship between library functions and marketing can be established and usage of library resources and services can be maximized by applying marketing techniques. So the need of the hour is to promote library services among its users by application of marketing strategies and technologies.

Keywords: Marketing, marketing culture, marketing functions, relationship marketing, library operations

INTRODUCTION

Marketing can be described as the approach to achieve users 'satisfaction. First of all Kotler spread and formulated not-for-profit marketing idea¹ But only after publishing a series of articles in the field by eminent scholars during 1969 – 1973, the idea of applying the concept of marketing in academic libraries took momentum. To enhance the usage and reputation of library, promotion and marketing of library resources play a major role. But positive attitude of library professionals is a must for marketing library resources, products and services². The concept of marketing in LIS is described in maximum research published, but practical aspects of marketing and the attitude of library professionals towards marketing are discussed only in a few studies³. Various methods of marketing to enhance the usage of library sources and services can be fostered like Twitter, Wiki, Facebook, Flickr, blog, YouTube, instant messaging, etc. libraries must adopt these tools and techniques to market and foster library services and resources. In order to promote library resources more effectively, these tools and techniques have provided us an opportunity. Using these is the need of the hour as new trend in libraries is digitized⁴.

If we relate marketing functions with that of a library, we can find that all the functions of marketing in case of any organization, are performed in libraries. Some library functions include offer benefits to users what they need, reduce hurdles in use and access, awareness and information about the library services being offered and plan to satisfy users need excellently. Marketing is not a separate function but a central dimension of the library functions.

MARKETING INFORMATION AND DIGITAL SERVICES CONTEXT

There should be a clear plan for marketing digital and information services of the library. Several studies, which look into the aspect, have been conducted. Instead of scattered approach, libraries have to adopt a coherent one. Further, utmost importance must be given to the fact that the right service to appropriate users at the right time, right place and in a cost effective manner must be provided⁵. Therefore, it is the need of the hour to formulate marketing strategies for libraries. It will lead to fulfill the five laws of library science. Libraries must be ready to adopt the digital, financial and societal changes.

Commercial ventures may evolve and grab, if libraries do not work up to the users expectations. The National library of Scotland (NLS) introduced effective marketing relations to aware about library sources and services among its stakeholders to counter the situation⁶. Harrington & Li⁷ studied thorough examination of competitors are required for marketing initiative. Identification of suitable methods, assigning the right responsibility to the right staff and assessing the methods used on a periodic basis are required. Adoyoyin⁷ stated that because of its scope, marketing library services is important as organizations pay hefty amounts to provide these services. The marketing of services have implications as the demand for the service is fluctuating. Bhardwaj & Jain⁸ defined marketing as user-centered, profit centered and it anticipates the changes through time.

NEED OF LIS MARKETING

In simpler terms, marketing in LIS means libraries promoting information services to its users effectively by improving available services, developing new services, timely procurement of information products like books, journals, proceedings, reports etc. make it useful to all stakeholders.

To understand user needs, service requirements libraries need marketing techniques to achieve the levels of highest user satisfaction with minimal financial requirements.

By applying effective marketing strategies, libraries can expand their services to the other users and can offer Institutional membership, personal membership, visiting membership.

We have to show our sensitivity, flexibility, freedom and responsiveness, to the users for different daily activities while providing library services. Marketing library services is by instinct and not by accident as being libraries and information centre managers; we have to market library services in our routine work.

Thereby marketing becomes a natural tendency which has been performed by the library and information professionals in some way or the other without recognising its existence or without any logical beginning or even when formal training in marketing did not exist.

The bibliographical literature clearly shows that marketing is necessary for growing and diverse range of activities in libraries relation between marketing and has been proved the growing and diverse range of marketing activities in libraries⁹. To understand the idea more precisely, other reviews¹⁰⁻¹³ discussed different areas for marketing library and information services in different times. These studies clearly indicate the changing nature, scope and terminologies of marketing over a period of time. In order to bring qualitative changes in the library and information centers services, understanding the functions of marketing and relating them with the library operations and activities is necessary.

BARRIERS / CHALLENGES TO MARKET LIBRARY SERVICES

The main challenges or barriers in marketing the library services can be described as following:

Funds and personal attitude: Nowadays, getting sufficient funds to provide and market library services, mainly digital services is the major hurdle library professionals have also been slow to adopt a marketing attitude towards library services.

Training and education: Shontz¹⁴, et al., conducted a study in which they surveyed different public libraries in New Jersey to understand 623 library professional's attitudes on marketing library services and resources. They found that library professionals with a training, workshop or course prioritize applying the concept of marketing in their respective libraries. Library professionals themselves are not educated towards marketing library services. No proper training or education is provided to library staff for adopting the marketing techniques in libraries.

Variety in Products and clientele: there are different products and services a library provides and also each library has its different type of clientele. Therefore, it is difficult to market some of the services in different types of libraries.

Lack of perception and casual approach: In their study, Grunenwald, Felicetti & Stewart¹⁵ concluded that many library professionals are unwilling to adopt and implement the concept of marketing in the libraries. They believe that it is unnecessary to market library resources and services and it is also unsuitable for libraries. Hence, the perception to adopt the concept is lacking, but it also varies from professional to professional.

WAYS TO MARKET LIBRARY SERVICES

Academic libraries should actively market their services. Information needs of library users must be kept in mind while marketing library resources. More systematic technique should be adopted while assessing the users' needs to provide the best services in libraries. There are different ways to market library services:

DIRECT MARKETING

Digital ways:

- Marketing via Website
- Marketing via Web 2.0 tools
- Marketing via Mobile Phone
- Marketing via Video

Traditional ways:

- Newspaper
- putting posters on the notice boards
- annual reports and institutional magazines
- Subject coverage, and the location of the documents
- Recent acquisitions, staff changes, change in opening hours, etc
- Conducting exhibitions
- User orientation

Indirect marketing

- Behavior & personal appearance of the staff
- Internet & library website are major tools
- Moderate library building with all amenities
- Satisfactory personal service ; efficient and prompt service
- Fulfilling the needs of each department equally
- New services and arrivals information regularly

FUNCTIONS OF MARKETING & LIBRARIES

Singh¹⁶ examined the Finnish research libraries in his study and found three kinds of marketing cultures namely strong, medium, and weak. Germano¹⁷ advocated that the services should develop with a valuable plan. The marketing techniques must be applied automatically while fulfilling the user needs. By this, a strong sense of value will be established among libraries and its users which will create loyalty. In his study, Singh¹⁸ communicated that an organization ought to know its marketing culture before going for branding information sources and services.

Robinson¹⁹ advised that, libraries must understand their users' needs and must adopt a marketing orientation to remain relevant and update in this fast changing world, Garoufallou²⁰ in his survey in Greece in 151 central and departmental libraries found that the libraries have recognised the marketing concept but have not adopted in their activities. Gupta²¹ has explained the functions of marketing and library and found that marketing techniques are very relevant in library activities. He has explained these as in the table below:

Table 1: marketing and library functions (Gupta²¹)

Marketing function	Explanation	Library function
Buying	Acquiring goods/products/ raw material to meet customer demand	Acquisition
Selling	Offering goods/product to match customer demands	Dissemination/ Circulation
Transporting	Movement of goods from seller to buyer	Access
Storing	Holding goods until customer need	Preservation and Conservation
Standardisation and grading	Sorting product according to size, quality, weight, etc.	Organising
Financing	Arrangement of finances and credit for conduct of various marketing activities	Financing
Risk taking	Dealing with uncertainty of consumer purchases and market	Risk taking (to meet future demands)
Market information function	Gathering, organising and analysing consumer, market data and information	Statistics

CONCLUSIONS

The review study of functional analysis of marketing and libraries proves that marketing is integrated in libraries and marketing strategies can be applied to enhance library services. It is clear from studies that librarians are positive but very slow in adopting marketing in libraries. Compared to other emerging areas in library and information science field, research on marketing in libraries is also slow. It is the need of the hour to promote and market the resources as it has become essential for libraries. So the libraries ought to formulate a marketing plan to enhance and maximize the usage of library resources and services.

Nelson Edewor²² found in his study that librarians are using social media such as, Facebook, e-mail alerts, blogs, Twitter less for marketing library activities. There are some major barriers like ignorance on the content, i.e., what to market, absence of marketing plan, lack of sufficient funds and related facilities are some of the major barriers in marketing the services of library and information centers. Accreditation agencies of academic institutions ought to consider the marketing plan of libraries in grading and evaluation. Librarians must be more interested to integrate marketing in

library activities. Institution funding agencies must also formulate guidelines for library marketing to maximize the usage of resources and services of the library.

REFERENCES

1. Kotler, Philip & Sidney, J. Levy. Broadening the Concept of Marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 1969, 33(1), 10-15.
2. Singh, R. Does your library have a marketing culture? Implications for service providers
3. Rowley, J. Information marketing: Seven questions. *Library Management*, 2003, 24(1), 13-19. doi:10.1108/01435120310454476.
4. Yi, Z. Australian academic librarians' perceptions of effective Web 2.0 tools used to market services and resources. *J. Acad. Lib.*, 2014, 40(3-4), 220-27. doi:10.1016/j.acalib.2014.02.009.
5. Adeyoyin, S.O. Strategic planning for marketing library services. *Library Management*, 2005, 26(8/9), 494-507. doi:10.1108/01435120510631783.
6. Wade, M. Re-inventing the library. *Library Reviews*, 2013, 62(1/2), 59-66. doi:10.1108/00242531311328177.
7. Harrington, D.L. & Li, X. Spinning an academic web community: Measuring marketing effectiveness. *J. of Acad. Lib.*, 2001, 27(3), 199-207.
8. Bhardwaj, R.K. & Jain, P.K. Marketing of Library Resources and Services: A Structured Literature Review. *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology*, 2016, 36(3), 119-125.
9. Gupta, Dinesh K. Bibliographical literature on LIS marketing. *Annals of Lib. and Inf. Stud.*, Dec. 2008, 55(4), 308-316.
10. Kleindl, B. Marketing practices used by the emerging American Public Library System from inception to 1930. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 2007, 27(1).
11. Renborg, Greta, Marketing library services: How it all began. In *Adapting marketing to libraries in a changing and world-wide environment*, edited by Savard, Réjean, De Gruyter Saur, Munich, 1999, 5-11.
12. Gupta, Dinesh K. & Jain, Abhinandan K. Marketing library and information services: A study of periodical literature. *Annals of Lib. and Inf. Stud.*, Dec. 2009, 56(4), 217-26
13. Gupta, Dinesh K. & Savard, Réjean. Marketing library and information services. *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Sciences*, Ed. 3, 1:1, 2009, 3553-560.
14. Shontz, M.L.; Parker, J.C. & Parker, R. The library quarterly: Information, community. *Policy*, 2004, 74(1), 63-84.
15. Grunenwald, J.P.; Felicetti, L.A. & Stewart, K.L. The effects of marketing seminars on the attitudes of librarians. *Public Lib. Quart.*, 1990, 10, 3-10.
16. Singh, R. Does your library have a marketing culture? Implications for service providers. *Library Management*, 2009, 30(3), 117-37. doi:10.1108/01435120910937302.
17. Germano, M.A. Narrative-based library marketing. *Bottom Line*, 201, 23(1), 5-17. doi:10.1108/08880451011049641.
18. Singh, R. Branding in library and information context: the role of marketing culture. *Inf. Serv. and Use*, 2004, 24(2), 93-98.

19. Robinson, C.K. Peter Drucker on marketing: application and implications for libraries. *The Bottom Line*, 2012, 25(1), 4-12.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/08880451211229153>.
20. Garoufallou, E.; Zafeiriou, G.; Siatiri, R. & Balapanidou, E. Marketing applications in Greek academic library services. *Library Management*, 2013, 34, 632-49.
doi:10.1108/LM-03-2012-0012.
21. Gupta, Dinesh K. Everything is Marketing: An Analysis of Functional Relationships of Marketing and Libraries. *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology*, 2016, 36(3), 126-130. DOI: 10.14429/djlit.36.3.9888
22. Edewor, N.; Okite-Amughoro, F.; Osuchukwu, N. & Egreaajena, D. Marketing library and information services in selected university libraries in Africa, *Inter. J. of Adv. Lib. and Inf. Sci.*, 2016, 4(1), 291.