



Management and Marketing of Academic Library Services in Digital Era

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Abstract:

Academic libraries are the libraries of universities, colleges and other institution associated with institution of higher education .The two main objectives of an Academic library should be to support the Academic Institution's prescribed set of course and to support the research activities of its academic community. This paper attempt to highlight marketing concept, need ,purpose and benefits of adopting marketing in academic libraries ,the various methods, strategies and media that can be used in Academic libraries for marketing its services to attract academic community . some suggestions are also provided at the end of the paper.

Keywords: Marketing, Library Marketing, Marketing of Library of services, Management.

Introduction:

Managing and marketing of library collection has become very essential to increase knowledge acquisition and gain by the users. Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably. Thus the core of marketing lies in the fact of finding out what the users want, then setting out to meet those users requirements which can also be practiced in Academic libraries by providing the right book to the right user at the right time which could help the users to manage their time effectively. Librarian must understand the users desires, plan their services, promote those services deliver them efficiently and effectively In digital era for given better user oriented

services requires skills and knowledge of multidimensional areas of works along with well marketing strategy based on technology.

Objectives:

1. To present the purpose of adopting Marketing in academic libraries
2. To study the Benefits of adopting marketing in academic libraries
3. To presents the various marketing strategies that can be used in academic libraries for marketing.
4. Mention about different modes of Marketing of library services
5. To discuss challenges in academic library marketing and make suggestions.

What is Marketing ?

According to Philip Kotler , ‘ The term Marketing is defined as a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering and exchanging products of value with others.’ “ Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating & satisfying customer requirements efficiently & profitably.” –The UK’s Chartered Institute of Marketing .

According to Wikipedia, ‘marketing is about communicating the value of a product, service or brand to customer or consumers for purpose of promoting or selling the product service or brand.

Library Management and Marketing:

An important aspects of library management is planning, organizing, leading and maintaining library facilities . Planning is about objective based library goals, organizing are assembles and coordinate the resource to achieve the library goals, leading are about human effort towards goal achievements,, maintaining about all library operations, services and resources.

Marketing is to raise awareness of library resources and services to their users for maximum utilization. Each organizations invest huge amount to increase library resources like books, print periodicals, online journals and databases to fulfill the needs of students, faculty and research scholars. Librarian can use data to analysis of this investment for better management, marketing and future decisions.

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Why Marketing in Academic Libraries?

Academic libraries usually offer many services and products. So each library has to identify what are the services that need to be marketed and how the marketing has to be done.

Marketing provides a theoretical framework within which to address the specific library & information science questions facing public, school & academic libraries in both the public & private sectors.

Research is a key element of marketing. Effective marketing requires quality research in order to judge what the library has to offer, what the users want and how to match the two and the success lies in the ability of the Academic librarians to do so.

Marketing is the enduring process of creating a connection between the library and its users. The basic aim is to create demand & interest among readers to use the library resources & services

Marketing can help manager of Library & Information Centre in achieving their objectives of improving access to their clients & reaching financial self-sufficiency.

Marketing can assist libraries in determining their future & in identifying quality products, services, programs, and materials. Marketing also boosts the image and status the libraries and library professionals.

Medium for Marketing in Academic Libraries:

Marketing activities can be in many forms which could depend on the

nature of the users and on the objectives of the services to be promoted.

Orientation Program :

Orientation program is an important services, which every library needs to conduct . It is a kind of marketing strategy that promoting ourselves to the new comers. Orientation program, will facilitate the fresher's to understand more about library system and services. Library collection, working hours, rules & regulations, services offered etc. can be communicated through a power point presentation, by which the new comers can understand more about library.

Book Exhibition:

Book Exhibition is an another form of marketing , the library can adopt this service to reach the unreached. Leading publishers and book sellers have to be invited for the exhibition. This is an important opportunity for the staff, students and research scholars to go through hundreds of titles on their domain under one roof. When the library conducts book exhibition, it gets the attention of end user.

Infrastructure:

Infrastructure is one of the important aspects in marketing strategy, it influence a lot among the users. Library infrastructure must facilitate for longer reading by providing right seating arrangements with more natural light. In this internet age, every higher educational library are connected with wi-fi, hence the library should have the facility for power

charger, so as to enable the users for uninterrupted access. Library infrastructure includes reprography facility, printing, scanning, browsing and other ICT enabled services.

Library Talk :

The library can arrange “Library Talk” in every month or on any special day .Eminent personalities canbe invited to discuss on key topics. Library users should be invited for this program, by which the come to know about library activities. This is also a kind of marketing.

Library Best User Award :

The library can institute ‘Best User’ award to those who utilize library systems and services at most.To motivate such user and others to follow, he,/she can be acknowledged with a small write up and displayed in library notice board and other prime places. library best user can be given certificate during annual day of the Institution.

Institutional Repositories:

Academic libraries can build Institutional Repositories which can be used to endorse the library services and products. Institutional Repositories can hold its Institution's examination papers, syllabi, synopses of theses, faculty lectures notes, notable power point presentations all of which will definitely bring in large swarm of users to its premises.

Library Blog:

Blog is a discussion and information site published in internet. Being a service organ, the library should

also have an account to communicate its users about the latest developments. The younger generation are mostly spend time on online, and hence, the library can have touch with them by having its own blog. The blog has to b updated regularly with relevant information.

Library Portal:

Portal is one of the important medium of modern day communication. Being higher educational library, it should have a web portal to reach wider users. The portal should have the details about library, working hours, rules and regulations, membership details, sections of the library, details about digital library, new arrivals, services, collections, staff details etc..

Social Media:

Social media is a vital tool for marketing library services in the digital age. Face book, Twitter are online social media sites that can use to communicate with the audience. Promote library events, solicit feedback, and build relationship. It can also use to collaborate with other libraries, organizations and influencers in library field.

Challenges in Academic Library Marketing:

In the last decade, significant changes have taken place all over the world .and they have been posing challenges to various library professions and professionals.

Lack of training and education:

Librarians do not promote library services well due to lack of training and knowledge of marketing tools and techniques.

Complex and complicated task :

Marketing is a complicated problem for libraries because of their wide range of products and services from books to Internet access.

Pricing :

Pricing of information products and services has been a much discussed issue. There is no one standard way to price information products and services.

Attitude :

The attitude of the library director and the staff they interact with customers is what shapes customers' experience and 'markets 'the library to those customers.

Old expectations :

Librarian and libraries are limited by their traditional image, that libraries offer books for lending and provide programming.

Fear :

Librarians are often reluctant to borrow from the private sector. They have a fear of commercial publicity and see marketing as manipulative, a waste of time and resources, and unprofessional.

Lack of budget:

Lack of budget provision for marketing Academic library services.

Suggestions:

1. Make separate budget provision for marketing of library services.
2. To strengthen the marketing of library services, the marketing strategies training should be provided to the library staff.
3. Academic librarians have to motivate their library staff for the professional approach.
4. Create pleasant atmosphere in the library.
5. Develop personal relations with the users. Keep smile of the face when approaching to the users.
6. Need to use various tools and metrics such as analytics , surveys, feedback forms and testimonials to evaluate library performance and outcomes.
7. Marketing library services in the digital age requires creativity and innovation. Librarian should try for new formats and channels to reach and engaged their audience .For exam

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librarian can use webinars, podcasts, e.books , online courses to deliver library’s content and services.

8. Need to update websites regularly with fresh and relevant contents such as news, events , blogs & resources .

Conclusion:

Every library should reach its customers to utilize its collections, particularly educational libraries. Because these libraries are spending huge amount in buying books, journals, databases etc. Eminent publications are charging enormous amount for their print and online publications. Being Academic libraries it is necessitating having such collections to meet the academic and research needs. But these resources must be utilized, and then only spending such huge amount will have justification. Therefore the library should adopt some marketing strategies to reach the unreached customers.

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