



Strategy of Marketing Library Services

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Abstract

Marketing of products in industries is very much essential to increase sale and consequently to gain the profit, however in academic environment like university and colleges promotion and marketing of library and information sector is required to aware the library services. This paper enumerates the concept of library promotion and marketing of library services. Academic libraries are having all type of collections. & focuses on Challenges & Strategy of Library Marketing Services

Keyword- Marketing, Price, Strategy, Promotion, Product, Library Services etc.

Introduction

By now you must have accustomed with the concept of information services. Generally, it refers to libraries and information services. Libraries essentially are social institutions and have contributed significantly towards the betterment of society by offering variety of resources and services. They, as information service provider, are under pressure due to various reasons such as: they have to mobilize resources, compete with the Internet and Internet support services, meet the rising user's expectations, improvise the professional image, etc.

Therefore, library and Marketing of Information Services information centers need to evaluate their activities with respect to the external environment, get in touch with the users' needs and integrate them into day-today working of the library as well as offer / adapt services as per users' needs to integrate the concept of marketing in libraries. The first requirement for effective and successful implementation of marketing in library and information service is that the librarian should have a clear appreciation for what marketing is all about and how it can enhance the value of library and information services. People usually relate marketing with increase of sales, profit, market share, etc. As you know that library and information services are non-profit services, therefore, there is a general perception that libraries do not need marketing. But the fact is that marketing is all around us and it is essential for all kind of organizations and individuals. Professionals like lawyers, accountants and doctors also need to use marketing skills so as to create and manage the demand for their services.



Therefore, the libraries and information service providers should make efforts to: inform users about their role as an information service provider; attract users, understand users and their needs; motivate users to use the resources and services in different formats; and educate users with the help of latest tools and techniques in managing information in libraries and information centers. If a librarian is performing all the above stated functions, one can say without any doubt that s/he is thoroughly involved in the marketing of information services.

Definition

According to Stanton,

"Marketing is a total system of interacting business activities to plan, price, promote and distribute want satisfying products and services, and present to potential customers."

According to Dragon neatly

"Defined the concept of marketing and outlined its major aspects as "follows. "Marketing is a systematic approach to planning and achieving desired exchange relations with other groups. Marketing is concerned with developing, maintaining, and/or regulating exchange relations involving products, services, organizations, persons, places or causes."

Challenges of Marketing in Library and Information services

To accept the challenges, libraries have to conduct surveys of the users and on the basis of these surveys they have to analyzed the needs of their users and accordingly acquire the reading material, products, online databases, eBooks etc. To make the collection is heavy user, libraries have to convert their print collection into electronic media and made it available to their users by considering the copy right issues. There is lack of financial budgetary provisions in the libraries. Every year budget is not increased proportionately. Continuous training programs are to be organized for students and staff of the library.

Strategy of Marketing Library Services

There are seven Criteria of marketing Library Services are also applicable to Library and Information services.

These are as Follows-

1) Product :

Academic Libraries are providing good number of services to their users through various ways e.g. List of Additions (Whatever material added to the library it is communicated to users either printed list of through email). Now OPAC is accessible to all users through internet. Current Content Service, SDI service, Web based services etc. These services are the product of libraries. Hence library professionals have to promote and market their products among the users.



2) Price :

Price factor is important from the point of view of the budget of the Institution. Without budgetary provision, no library cannot purchase reading material. No library cannot self-sufficient. By considering the academic out of the institution, faculty improvement, students growth institution has to make the provision in their budget. Not even for the reading material but for providing qualitative services, it requires financial provision. Internet connectivity should be provided to students with no extra cost.

3) Place:

Services are intangible; they cannot be normally stored, transported or inventoried. Services production cannot be separated from selling. In case of library services, personalized services like SDI are provided to the selected users by collecting what are the areas in which they require information. Library instructions shall be conducted either in the library or computer laboratory to provide hands on training to all segments.

4) Promotion:

Promotion is another important phenomenon in marketing. It requires mechanism by which target groups are informed about the resources available in library and Information Centre. Promotion of what we have in the library. Users may not be aware or familiar with the library system. Hence it is essential that every year new students are joined with the library and at the beginning of the academic year, they must be provided awareness programmes. The primary promotion tool is library instructions in the form of workshop, seminars, lectures etc.

5) Participants :

The success of any programmes is depend on the feedback of the participants hence participants involved in promoting and marketing of the library services provided by library professionals, their feedback will help to get the lacunas in the system and it will help to improve the services and library system.

6) Physical Evidence :

According to Shostack “ a physical object is self-defining ; a service is not “ Hence in educational sector the marketing task is “ defining for the services what it cannot define for itself “ Evidence for the service can be both peripheral and essential. Physical evidence can support the marketing programmes by providing adequate service to the library users. It can make the service tangible.

7) Process:

process is related to the process management, it consists of process planning , control, operation planning, facilities to be available with users, scheduling, quality of services etc.



Conclusion

Librarians and library staff are trying to find out the appropriate ways to respond the contemporary requirements of the students and faculty to fulfill their goals, meet the needs of existing and potential users. Librarians are building the image and value of the libraries. The limited budget provision and the advent of new technology and its application in libraries have opened new vistas for marketing of library resources, products and services.

NAAC while accessing the institution or University more weight age has been given to library services. Now days many libraries are preparing for marketing of library services and created a record for each event for accreditation. Therefore academic libraries, public libraries should plan their marketing and promoting the resources needs careful planning and policy and its execution on regular basis.

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