
LIBRARY MARKETING AND CHANGE PERCEPTION: AN INTER CO-RELATED APPROACH

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Abstract :

Marketing of library and its products is very essential in the current scenario. Due to development and application of ICT the users have many options to avoid library and its services. Now the user can manage his/her requirements without approaching library facilities. The time is behind when a user came to library for getting information, now the scene is totally different. If a library wants to maintain its consistency and wants to develop then the library should approach to the users directly with a proper marketing strategy. The present study reveals various marketing aspects and correlates with library concepts by which a library can survive and maintain the status in the high-tech era.

KEYWORDS :

Library Marketing, Change Management, Marketing Plan, Marketing Strategy, Promotional Techniques, Strategic Planning, Marketing Mix etc.

INTRODUCTION

Today's world is following the 'Change' philosophy of life. Change in living standard, change in technology, change in thoughts, change in every aspects of life. Changes refer something new approach in our daily routine life. In other words, what is being done by us, should be done in different manner using different aspects, for e.g. use of mobile phone instead of basic landline phone. Any kind of changes affects the human activities and society; library is also a service oriented organization which is directly related to human being. What kind of changes required by the users, the library professionals should be prepared themselves according to users' needs.

CONCEPT OF CHANGE PERCEPTION

Change is often a scary concept for any organization. Change requires we step outside of our comfort zone. In fact, change implies that comfort zones may be a thing of the past. However, in our modern society, resisting change as our environments evolve will simply lead to failure. Hence, it is essential for any organization like library to understand the role of change and how to deal with its effects on both the organization and its customers/users. Change is a universal truth. Any person/society/organization that refuses to change usually eventually stagnates and dies.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN LIBRARY

Basically the concept of 'Change Management' is related to business organizations but it has also links with service oriented institutions like banks, universities, libraries and many more. Many theories have developed about organizational change, e.g. Kurt Lewin, Chris Argyris, Peter Senge etc given various theories related to change management. According to the 'Oxford English Dictionary (2009)' change is defined as "the fact or act of changing; substitution of one thing for another; succession of one thing in place for another". We can define change management as "management of change and development within a business or similar organization, especially the management of people adapting to new conditions" (Oxford English Dictionary-2009). In the libraries change management may comes due to:

Change in leadership
 Change in technology
 Change in infrastructures
 Change in users needs

Change is always accepted for betterment in organization and the library is also a service oriented organization, therefore, the concept of change management cannot be ignored.

Marketing and the Concept of Library Marketing

For a long period, the libraries had been known as storage house of information materials, but in last few years this concept has totally changed libraries became as an information centers with modern amenities for providing information sources and services and the library professionals have understood the concept that it will be beneficial only if it is used by the community or society. Now the concept of traditional library system has completely changed and to make worth of library it is necessary that libraries should approach to its users to provide services. Today's generation is very sharp to get information through technology, thus, if the library keeps to maintain its existence and wants to grow, the concepts and techniques of 'marketing' should be adopted like any other business organization.

What does marketing means? In simple words marketing is about identifying and meeting human and social needs or we can say it art and science of choosing target markets and getting, keeping and growing customers through creating, delivering and communicating superior customer value. In today's materialistic scenario we can also say that marketing is an art to promote people to use those things which are not needed by them. Finally marketing means to define your products or services in well manner and communicate it to end users if the products or services fulfill users' requirement will be sold itself.

In context of library, marketing can be defined as a tool by which a library can show its potentiality among the scholar community. If a library does not inform its products and services to the community, if the library staff do not have people coming in the door, the library will eventually lose its entity. Many library professionals believe that marketing of library is not essential because it has itself worth in the society, but it not completely true. Now the library has to adopt and apply marketing concepts and its approaches to survive in today's competitive era. Marketing concepts focuses on exchange of information between the organizations and the customers. It does not educate, does not change behavior or values, but may influence behavior.

Now the question is what is to be sold in forms of products and services. Basically there are some types of entities like goods, services, events, experiences, persons, places, properties, organizations, ideas etc. for which marketing is needed. The Figure-1 is showing the various areas about library for which application of marketing techniques are required like any business organization for their promotion among the community. It is important for libraries to look at exactly what is meant by marketing because marketing is needed for the library to be proactive and to meet its users' needs.

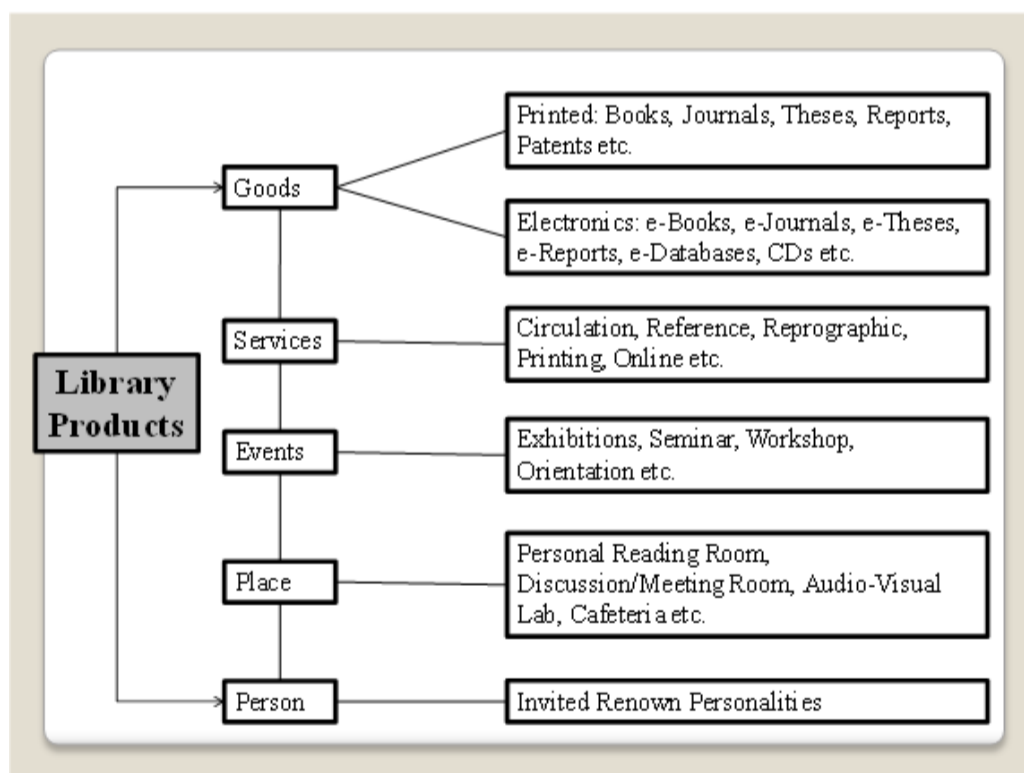


Figure-1: Products of Library

If a library has a huge range of resources but the end users don't know those resources then it will be the worst situation for library to sustain its identity. A business organization promotes those things or products which are being

produced or manufactured by its production unit, but in case of library, the nature of products will be differ, here, the information sources and services will be the product and library has to promote the these products among its users. Print/electronic books, journals, theses, reports, proceedings, patents, maps, databases etc. may the products of library and circulation, reference, Xeroxing, audio-visual, current awareness, digitization also may be classified as product of the library. A library must spread the information about its products to its users by using marketing concepts as per the needs of the library.

Smart Way of Library Marketing

Different kinds of libraries (academic, public, special etc.) need different types of marketing strategies depending upon the various factors like purpose or nature of library, types of users, financial support etc. It depends upon the library that how it can make everyone aware about the products available in the library. There are many ways to communicate library's products to the community as showing in Figure-2

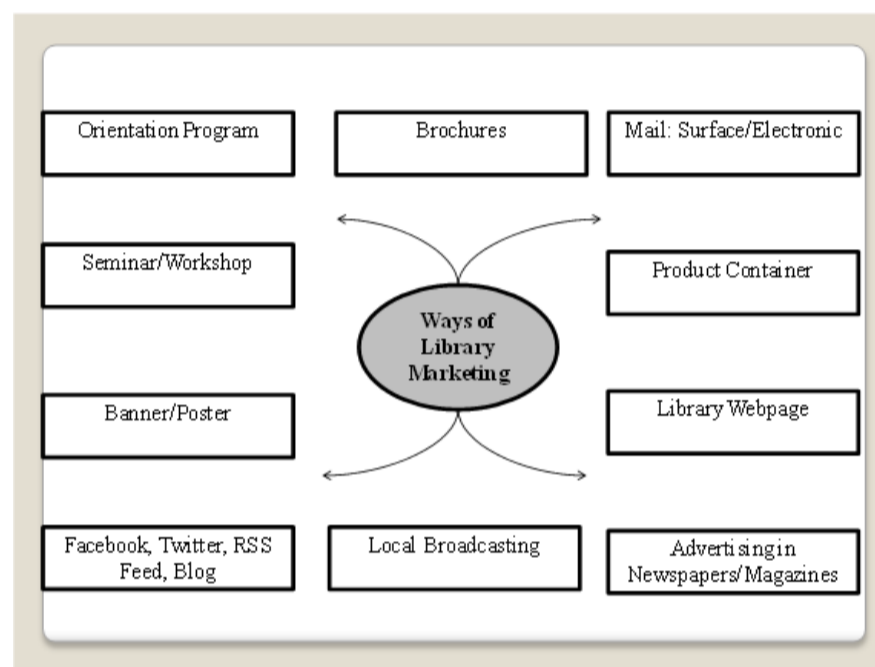


Figure-2: Modes of Library Marketing

Each of the different type of communications has its own quality. It depends upon the library to choose which mode of communication will be beneficial for it to aware the community for using library sources and services. Each type of library will have a different openness to the various means of marketing as well. Like any other business organization there are several things of library products for which marketing techniques are essentials for their promotion among the community or users. It is important for libraries to look at exactly what is meant by marketing because marketing is needed for the library to be proactive and to meet its users' needs.

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) completely become the part of library system so it can't be ignored in marketing aspects and now the libraries have also adopted ICT for its product promotion. The Figure- is showing the formulating the ways of library marketing through ICT.

Related Studies

Suresh Kumar studied the marketing strategies for the university libraries in Kerala and he found that "libraries had been putting considerable efforts in the design of information products and distributing the same effectively. The study also suggested various strategies for the repositioning the university libraries in Kerala state for marketing".

The study of Brock was "aim to detail the results of the class-faculty-librarian collaboration. He found that students became strong advocates of the library as they became familiar with its resources, collections and its overall value to them. It also showed that students learning interest and engagement significantly increased with the opportunity to solve real-world problem".

Robinson suggested in his study the\at "libraries must adopt a marketing orientation in order to remain viable into the future. It is imperative libraries understand what their customer values and needs in order to develop services and provide resources to meet these needs".

The purpose of Wade's study was to "explore the impact of strategic planning, marketing and external relations, and shared services on library development. It was revealed that the introduction and development of strategic planning had provided a clear basis through which the National Library has defined and achieved new role within and beyond Scotland".

Chan explored that “advertising strategies that draw upon the social features of facebook were more effective than traditional approaches. The result of his study provided further support for the view that social network advertising had the potential to be a cost-effective means of marketing academic libraries”.

The purpose of Garoufallou’s study was to “provide an overview of the literature on the incorporation of marketing notations and the implementation of marketing techniques in library management. The study examined and clarified the existing misunderstanding and difficulties in library and information services marketing, and stressed the importance of its adoption in this contemporary competitive environment”.

The purpose of Henderson’s study was “to give some insight into how marketing techniques can be applied in the digital library context. The study explored that relationship marketing offers specific benefits to libraries and can be applied to particular effect in marketing digital library services”.

Kanaujia reflected in his study “the role of library and information centers including marketing approach, need and application of a marketing program. He revealed that librarians had a positive attitude towards the different aspects of marketing of library’s products and services. The study also recommended that currently efforts for increasing users’ awareness and separate financial support were requisite for efficient marketing”.

Spalding found that “academic libraries in USA were successful in gaining visibility and support for its marketing efforts and the users were more successful in gaining service available to them to meet the academic and research needs”.

Jia Mi examined “the role of marketing to new generations of library users. He suggested that libraries can apply classic marketing principles to attract and better serve new generations of users. He suggested libraries to offer value-added services”.

The purpose of Shontz’s “was to identify attitudes of public librarians towards the marketing of library services and relate these attitudes to select independent variables. Most of response had generally positive attitudes toward library marketing with some statistically significant differences”.

Kavulya examined “the methods used by the university in Kenya to marketing their services to different categories of users and the problems experienced therein. He suggested that although efforts had been made to achieve this, more emphasis must be put on promotion of the already existing services and therefore on the need for university libraries in Kenya to adopt more systematic techniques in collecting data on their user needs”.

Adeloye explored “how information professionals and librarians can ensure a vibrant use of the library and information centre in their organizations. He argued that library professionals should embrace marketing as an ally and use it to promote their work in a structured way both within and without the organization. Some practical ideas also presented to ensure that information and library units justify their existence within an organization”.

CONCLUSION

‘Library’ and ‘Marketing’ both seems a contradictory aspect, but in today’s scenario, wherein a library deals with new generation of tech-savvy users, marketing has become an important weapon to promote library and its products and services to users. The explosion of electronic/online resources and application of ICT has created many challenges for libraries. Now the users have so many options to get information through ICT so the relevance of the library to users is also a question for library professionals. It has become necessary for libraries to adopt adequate marketing techniques by formulating a good strategic marketing plan according to library’s needs and also evaluate the results. Figure-3 and Figure-4 are exploring the effective marketing plan and its components which are essential to consider for making and implementation of successful marketing strategy for the libraries.

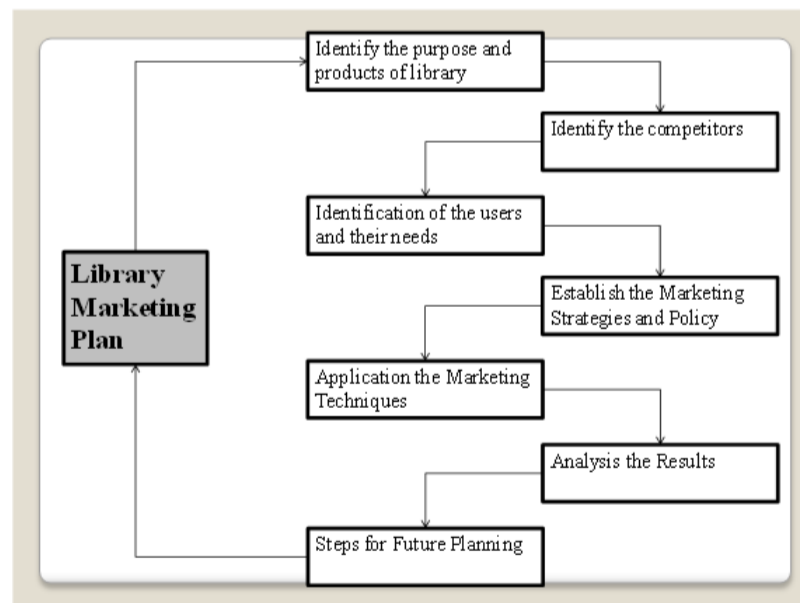


Figure-3: Marketing Plan of Library

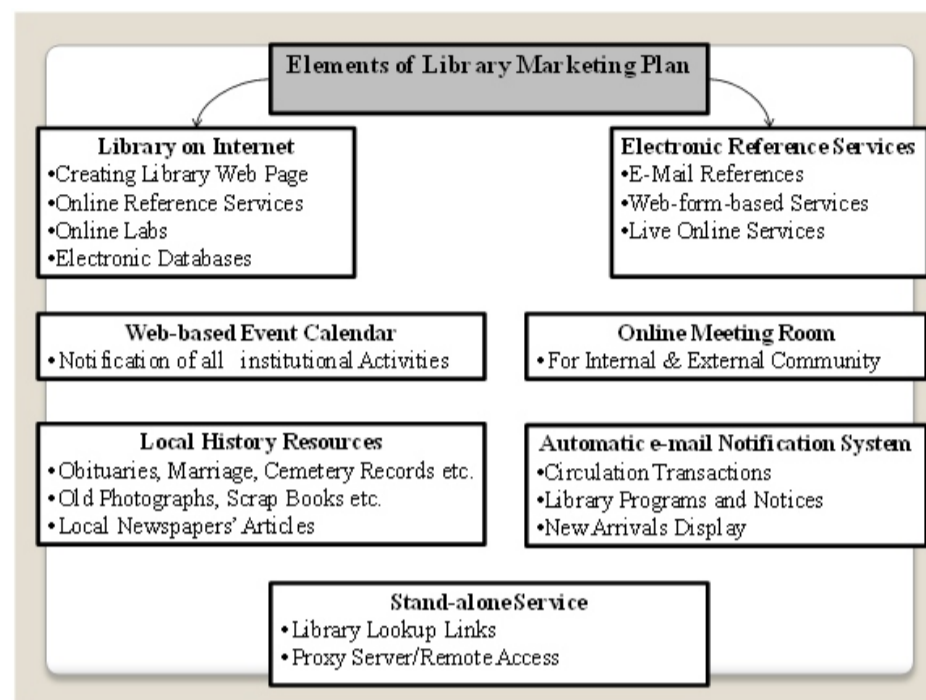


Figure-4: Elements of Library Marketing Plan

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