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MARKETING LIBRARY SERVICES AND PRODUCTS IN LIBRARY BUSINESS AT IISER BHOPAL



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ABSTRACT

Competition is the trend of any market. Among various available products in the market, a particular product has large sales figures depending upon the publicity and marketing strategies adopted to reach out to their target customers. Moving in the same way, libraries also realized that to reach out to their users and making them aware about the services being provided for them by the library, it is necessary to adopt few basic strategies of the commercial market , as ultimately both aim at the same goal that is to reach to their target customers and users. This paper discusses the principles of marketing and how it is been taken care of in using these strategies at IISER Bhopal.

KEYWORDS :Marketing, library services, library products, users, customers.

INTRODUCTION

Rowley (2001) calls marketing, the management process which identifies, anticipates, and supplies customers requirements efficiently and profitably. Kotler (1999) says that, marketing is the process of planning and execution of conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of goods, services and ideas to create exchanges with target groups that satisfy customers and organizational objectives. All types of libraries are aware of the need of marketing their products on which they are spending so much money to acquire and services for which the staff is putting their best efforts. Library and information products and services are now being recognized as commodities that can be sold, exchanged, lent, and transmitted.

Information marketing is actually essential in order to promote use of information resources, create perception of need and thereby create demand, ensure the optimum use of information, improve the image and status of the libraries and library professionals, tackle the problems of rising

costs of reading materials, journals, and databases, cope with the information explosion, introduce cutting-edge information technology systems in library services, balance shrinking funds, save libraries from devaluation, save libraries from declining reader-support, uphold the dictum that information is power.

Laws of Marketing in libraries interpreted from basic laws of library science by Dr. S.R. Ranganthan

1. Books are for use which should be read as 'Every product in the library is for use': Library staff should take initiative to attract their users to read more and more books. It is the talent and skill of any library professional that how he/she manages to attract their customers/users to come to the library to read when already they are getting everything on their desktop.
2. Every Reader his book which should be read as 'Every customer/user should get the product of his interest: Library staff should be motivated to satisfy each query of the user/customer and take best efforts to provide his information of interest.
3. Every book its reader should be read as 'Every product should reach to its customer/user: Library staff should be aware of the needs of the customers/users coming to the library, only then they can hand over the right product/book to the right customer/reader. Basic behind it that whatever have been acquired in the library should be utilized and librarian should always try to satisfy the queries of the users/customers with a smile.
4. Save the time of a reader should be read as 'Save the time of the customer': This is the fundamental of marketing that how you provide the best service in minimum time as the time of the customer/user is very precious.
5. Library is a growing organism should be read as 'Library is a growing company with quality assurance': Libraries should focus on quality acquisition and e-resources in the form of e-journals, e-books should be given emphasis so that to fulfill other mentioned above laws of the marketing in libraries.

7 Ps of marketing mix in terms of libraries

Marketing in terms of library deals with

- + What a company or library is going to acquire to serve the community?
- + How much it is going to spend?
- + How it is going to deliver products or services to the customer/users?
- + How it is going to tell its customers/users about its products and services?

Traditionally, these considerations were known as the 4Ps — Product, Price, Place and Promotion. As marketing became a more sophisticated discipline, a fifth 'P' was added — People. More recently, two further 'P's' were added — Process and Physical evidence. Originally formulated for the service industry, they are just as important in other sectors like libraries. In the 1990s, as experts realised that business had to become more customer-centric, an alternative '4 Cs' of marketing was proposed. Correlating almost directly with the original 4Ps, they were: Customer, Cost, Convenience and Communication. The 7Ps model, however, has endured and more than adequately incorporates today's customer-first marketing world.

P1 Product Resources available in or outside library in print or digital format. Need based products/books and other materials should be acquired in the library so that to assure the maximum use of that particular resource/product.

P2 Pricing Pricing is the only element of the marketing mix that generates revenue — everything else represents a cost to you. Everything that the customer/user sees must be consistent with these higher quality expectations — packaging, environment, promotional materials, website, letterheads, invoices, etc.

P3 Place The product must be available in the right place, at the right time and in the right quantity, while keeping storage, inventory and distribution costs to an acceptable level. Not necessarily a physical location anymore. A strong web presence is necessary. Libraries are virtual as well as physical spaces now and the possibilities in both these worlds are endless.

P4 Promotion Promotion is the way a company/library communicates what it does and what it can offer customers/users. Good promotion is not one-way communication it paves the way for a dialogue with customers/users, whether in person or online. Library only have one chance to make a good first impression, so make sure that information on the site is always kept up to date and the design is updated to keep it fresh.

P5 Participants Everyone who comes into contact with your customers/users which means all the library staff will make an impression. Many customers/users cannot separate the product or service from the staff member who provides it, so library people will have a profound effect positive or negative on customer/user satisfaction.

P6 Process Process means the process of delivering the product or service, and the behaviour of those who deliver it, are crucial to customer/user satisfaction. A user-friendly internet experience, waiting times, the information given to customers/users and the helpfulness of staff are vital to keep customers/users happy. Remember the value of a good first impression. Identify where most customers initially come into contact with your company - whether online or offline - and ensure the process there, from encounter to purchase, is seamless.

P7 Physical evidence Choosing an unfamiliar product or service is risky for the consumer, because they don't know how good it will be until after purchase. In regard to library physical evidence is the environment and the ease with which the services are being provide to the customers/users coming to the library.

IISER BHOPAL CENTRAL LIBRARY

Introduction

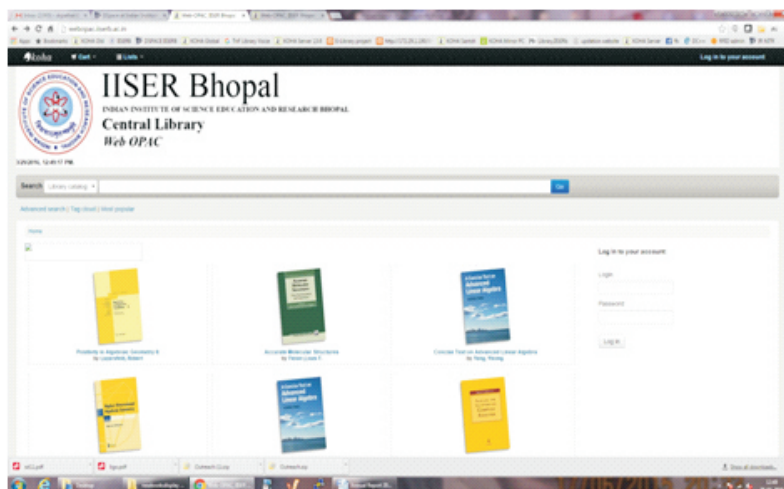
Central Library, IISER Bhopal a very special place in the IISER Campus with its rich collection of books and journals in the field of Basic Sciences and related areas. The mission of the Central Library is to provide information services and access to bibliographic and full text digital and printed resources to support the scholarly and informational needs of the Institute Community. Currently library houses around 7600 plus books, 200 plus CDs/DVDs and few print journals on various disciplines ranging from Biological sciences, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Engineering Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences and General reading. Library provides access to a large number of electronic resources on various subjects.

MARKETING STRATEGIES AT IISER BHOPAL LIBRARY

1. Library Website Website is the first impression for the customers/users for any type library. It should reflect all the products and services being provided for the users. IISER Bhopal library has taken best efforts to provide each and every information useful for the user community of IISER. The following is the URL link of the IISER Bhopal library :

<https://iiserb.ac.in/page.php?page=Central%20Library&pid=54>

Link for Library online catalogue : <http://webopac.iiserb.ac.in>

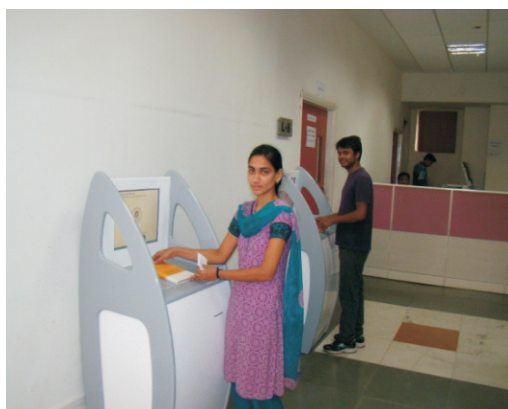


2. Library Orientation Library offers the orientation program to the new batch of students and others in the beginning of every academic year. Through this program, an effort is made to familiarize every new member with the resources, services, and facilities offered by Library and its policies to use the same. Central Library would like to promote the role of the library as a resource for lifelong learning, through this program.

3. Infrastructure at Central Library : Presently, library has been given two lecture halls. Good marketing strategy says that you provide the best infrastructure no matter in a smaller space to attract your customers. Following the same, it has been tried hard to provide all the latest technologies with healthy environment to encourage the young as well as senior user community of IISER Bhopal. The Library has implemented the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) system. This is one of the best automated library automation system used worldwide and is an effective way of managing collections of the library and providing enhanced services to the users having benefits like: self check-out, self check-in to control theft, to find misplaced reading material, sorting, inventory accuracy, stock verification procedures, security control, people counter, Smart Card issuance, etc. It is an automatic data capture technology that uses tiny microchips and miniature antennas affixed to documents. RFID plays a vital role in redefining the library processes to make everyone’s job easier right from the users to library staff.

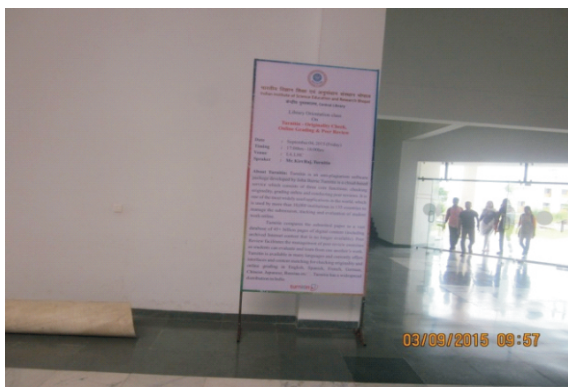


Book Drop station at the entrance



Self check-in, check-out KIOSK

4.Presentation Programmes : Various presentation programmes are arranged to make the users aware of how to use the various need based acquired products like SciFinder, Web of Science, Turnitin etc. by the library spending so much of money. Library should be very cautious in deciding the time at which such programmes should be organized so that most of the users could attend and make the best use of the efforts taken by the library staff.



User orientation class on Web of Science Turnitin Presentation information on display in Lecture Hall Complex

5.Good relations with the users : This is the basics of marketing in any field and is very important in point of view to any library. The library staff plays a major and foremost role in motivating the users to come and sit in the library for reading. At IISER Bhopal each and every staff has his/her major responsibility and specified duties, but when it comes to provide services and help to the user all are on their foot and pleased to give the right information at right time to the right user. Work pressure never overcomes the mentality of providing proper services to the user. That is why here at IISER Bhopal even in a transit space students love to come and enjoy reading and study in the peaceful environment.

Skills required for marketing library/Information services

- + Understanding the user’s subject of interest, intelligence of conducting users surveys etc.
- + Ability to communicate with the users to take out what they expect from our library.
- + Presence of mind and ability to take right decision at right time.
- + Library staff should be technically sound having sufficient knowledge of use of internet, web page design, and product design and presentation skills.
- + He should have knowledge of various marketing strategies

CONCLUSION

Library professionals are trying to discover the pin-pointed solutions to respond to the contemporary requirements of the students and faculty to fulfill their goals, meet the needs of existing and potential users. Librarians are trying to rebuild their new image and enhance the value of the libraries. Information professionals must realize the importance and understanding of marketing of services process, its theory and applications in practice such as Web.2.0 to promote activities and library mission to build a library brand name. Library profession should increase the use of new technologies and social media such as what’s up, facebook YouTube, blogs, wikis to attract the young users, and provide an opportunity for libraries to revamp services.

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