

The Librarians Role in Information Marketing

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Abstract: - *Taking into consideration the changing role of academic library and librarianship in teaching learning process, it is essential to know the concept of Librarianship. Librarianship is a bridge between 2 entities; people and information. Librarians consider who this may need bridge, when and where a bridge is needed, how it is to be built, how it can be best utilized. Librarianship is the discipline and profession that is concerned with helping individuals to obtain reliable information to increase their knowledge in all spheres of their lives from the cumulated information store of mankind. Keeping in mind the emerging trend of teaching learning, the academic librarianship is required to play vital role. To play this role adequately, it is implied that librarians are required to have a clear understanding of the needs of the user as well as the knowledge and availability of relevant information resources ability to convert it as per users' requirement. Therefore, the academic librarians in the 21st century are required to obtain various skills for catering the emerging need of user community. The current study looks at the marketing skills that librarians need to acquire in order to make themselves be in better position in order to able to meet the emerging challenges of changing user community and changing technologies.*

Keywords: Library, Marketing, Information

1. Introduction:

In the changing paradigm, information is the power and library and information centres (LICs) are the reservoirs of this information. The concept of marketing is very familiar in relation to business and industries, but LICs are also now

becoming profit seeking service industries and their key product is information. Due to multimodal activities of the society, the demand for information products and services is widely expanding. Side by side, the factors of rising cost, increasing threats to the emerging information

industry and changes in information demand asking the use of the marketing techniques in libraries.

2. Definition of Marketing:

Marketing means working with the market to actualize potential exchanges for the purpose of satisfying human needs and wants. It is the systematic gathering, recording and analysis of data about problems relating to the marketing of goods and services. According to Smith marketing is a stance and an attitude that focuses on meeting the needs of users.

Philip Kotler, the marketing guru, calls *Marketing* '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. Kotler defines *marketing concept* as that the marketing concept holds the key to achieving organizational goals, consists in determining the needs and wants of target market and delivering the desired satisfactions more effectively and efficiently than competitors.

3. Marketing Principles:

a) Active attitude towards market-

The libraries must have an active attitude towards the market. It cannot expect users to buy a product simply because it is produced. The management must actively study the market, persuade customers, promote the product and organize distribution.

b) Importance of function –

Marketing is to be given at least as much importance as other basic functions such as administration, production and finance.

c) Decision making-

The marketing function must be integrated, which means that the various marketing considerations must be taken into account in the decisions of all the managers and officials.

4. Marketing Activities -

Marketing activities include market planning, product planning, pricing, promotion and distribution of information products and services. They can be

a) Market planning

Market planning surveys the environment, chalks out the marketing opportunities and decides the ways to be followed in following those opportunities. Library marketers need to identify users and determine their information needs. Demand analysis is a very important part of market planning.

It includes:-

- a) Market demand requirement studies
- b) Market distribution planning
- c) Detailed product or service feature planning
- d) Market research programs
- e) Product program reviews
- f) Manufacturing cost estimating

b) Market profiling

Marketing profiling is done to obtain marketing of information. It is necessary to identify the market scope to formulate appropriate policies for library. It takes into consideration

many factors like user affordability, extent of use, repeat customers, user preferences and the staffing pattern of a library.

c) **Product planning**

Product planning is another activity which is concerned with developing a product which can satisfy the customers. In case of library, the librarians have little control over the production of documents. But this is applicable in case of library services. Apart from the usual services, some other services products like Additions list, local documentation list, SDI, tailored services for user satisfaction are the various areas which can be stressed upon.

d) **Pricing**

Price is one of the most important variables in the marketing mix. Its importance has increased substantially over the years because of environmental factors like recession, intensity of inter-firm rivalry, and the customer becoming more aware of alternatives.

e) **Promotion:-**

It includes:-

Advertisement – the main purpose of advertisement is to stimulate primary demand and then selective demand of a product. A leaflet describing newspapers and periodicals received in a library can be distributed. Talks in radio and television are important promotional tools.

Displays– Displays of new arrivals, book exhibitions of best, rare, important and local historical collections can be an effective tool.

Shows – It may consist of documentary film shows on the library in the library itself.

Organizing special events for children on some remarkable occasions, on some special events is important.

Exhibitions – Long term book exhibitions, exhibits of artists, topical exhibitions or centenary exhibitions are promotional tools.

Book fairs – May be of national, district, state, town level, through which contact between publishers and users can be established through libraries.

User education – Through lectures, with audio visual aids and demonstrations is a primary promotional tool.

Mobile book exhibitions- Through this system, not only does the library reach each and every user at their doorstep, but membership is increased at a large rate.

Distribution

Distribution is the marketing activity which is concerned with distributing the product, the publisher to the user, making the product available to the user. The major channels of distribution concern inter personal delivery, strategic placement, in-house dissemination, local depositories, mass media, mail, and telephone and computer network.

5) Difficulties of market information system :-

a) Low level of knowledge:-

The relatively low level of knowledge and lack of agreement on user requirements, wants, and needs.

b) Value estimation problems :-

There is a virtual impossibility of estimating the value contributed by information products and

services to the efficiency and conduct of research and development and the advancement of scholarly pursuits.

In the changing paradigm, need to recognize the value, importance and utility of marketing of information products and services is unavoidable. Marketing is not only a tool to achieve economic results but to achieve total information results. Library and Information Science schools should emphasize courses that teach technical skills, including computer programming, in the context of building collections, disseminating information, and spreading the word about new databases or increased functionality.

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