



Significant role of library: Market needs and Competencies

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Abstract

Libraries are considered as treasures of knowledge. It is also known as storehouse of knowledge. It is true that all libraries in the world are full of reading material which consist books, journals, films, images, manuscripts, Audio visual materials etc. which has knowledge, recorded by peoples, eminent writers and eminent personalities. Preservation of this knowledge is a prime task of all libraries and Information Centers; however, it is a need to market these resources which possess by the libraries. Now a day with the help of Information technology many libraries and information centers have their own websites on which all kind of material is accessible with its bibliographic details and mechanism to promotion and marketing of services.

In information exposition coupled with the electronic or virtual era has brought a great change to libraries and its working environment. In today's working environment the role of libraries and librarians changed from storehouse of information caretaker to information manager and at the same time the forms and distribution of information also took a new shape in a new way. This is due to the advancement of ICT as well as contemporary societal need. Due to this change, library and information science professionals also need a number of special skills and competencies along with the basic skills and competencies. The present study is an attempt to explore the variety of discussions and ideas about the various aspects of skills and competencies, competencies of LIS professionals for various types of libraries and also focuses on the existing and required competencies of LIS professionals in the contemporary information system. 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. To promote the collection in use it is necessary to market library products. This paper suggests practical solutions, ways and means of marketing the library services

Keywords

Skill, Competencies, , 21st century, LIS professionals, Information and Communication Technology.

Introduction

Library from time immemorial has been considered as a social institution". It has an immense role in the modern society and regarded as the gateway of knowledge" for the community. With the generation of new information sources including web-based resources there is a huge change in the role and form of the libraries. Today people in every sphere of the society irrespective of their age, profession, etc. from child to adult, from teacher to politician, businessmen to housewives use the libraries. Everybody uses and need the services of a library. In today's age of information both print and non-print materials are kept in a library. Conventional documents like books, journals, newspapers as well as nonconventional documents such as maps, charts, etc. are maintained together in a library. Marketing in case of libraries is necessary to offer benefits to users' want, reduce barriers to use and access, persuade and inform the users, and carefully plan to satisfy users' needs effectively. Libraries are both a creation and a servant of society. A library operates routinely with a known set of customers. A library also operates on trust. When a client walks into the library, he trusts that he will get the material or information that he needs. The library, in turn, trusts that the client will return the items within the specified borrowing period. The specific structure of a library with its strict requirements as to efficiency demands a focus on the quality of value-adding processes. If a library is to be managed according to quality criteria, quality needs to be defined and made measurable. The indicators found must be captured in a measuring system for the sectors "cost and performance", "customer satisfaction", and "staff satisfaction" that facilitates quality controlling and provides staff with controlling parameters for everyday work.

The most important condition of effective library services is to support continuous enriching dialog between the library and society by agreeing upon quality targets, which relate to the maintenance or improvement of quality standards. The library staff carries the responsibility for the results of their work and for reaching the agreed targets. Marketing is a central dimension of the entire library. It is the entirety of the library's operations and services seen from a point of view of its final result, that is, from the customer's point of view." Gupta and Savard, 2010). A library without users is useless, there is need to let the users be aware of the benefits of the library in provision of information resources and services in order succeed. To attract clients, generate non-user awareness, and raise awareness of available services and resources, libraries need to find ways to promote services and resources to clients as effectively as possible. As such, promotional approaches are used to convey the availability and value of services and resources to target markets and should be designed to cause library users and non-users to act

Objectives: -

The objectives of this article are to present an in-depth review of existing literature related to the problem under study. To be precise, the aim of this review is:

- To narrow and to more clearly outline the research problem.
- To locate the skill gaps of LIS professionals.
- To identify the various aspects of existing competencies of LIS professionals and also identify the areas needed to develop in the contemporary information system.
- To explore a new idea or approach in planning of this investigation.
- To develop a firmer understanding to the practical implications of this area.

Definition:

- Library is Collection of information resources in print or in other forms that is organized and made accessible for reading or study. (Encyclopedia Britannica)

- A library is a collection of sources of information and similar resources, made accessible to a defined community for reference or borrowing. It provides physical or digital access to material, and may be a physical building or room, or a virtual space, or both. A library's collection can include books, periodicals, newspapers, manuscripts, films, maps, prints, documents, microform, CDs, cassettes, videotapes, DVDs, Blue-ray Discs, e-books, audio-books, databases, and other formats. (Wikipedia)

- Dr. S. R. Ranganathan's, father of Library Science, describes the library as the public institution or establishment charged with the care with the collection of books and the duty of making them accessible to those who require to use them

Need of Library Marketing of Library services-

To promote the use of available reading material in the library and create awareness among the users. To optimize the use of information within limited resources and manpower. Limited Budget for library needs to market services and generate funds for library to improve the image of the library. Due to information explosion, readers require precise and correct information for their research and study. Unless and until what is available in the library, how it would be accessible and disseminated to the users of the library. The Users do not aware the resources available in the libraries. Now days libraries are investing huge amount to purchase reading material and subscription to periodicals and online databases to fulfill the needs of their students, faculty members and research scholars. Investing such amount for the resources, the usage of these resources should also increase. Libraries should think and work out the cost benefit analysis of this investment. Therefore, it is quite necessary to literate people about the services providing by libraries and promote its use. There are several ways to promote the usage and marketing of services. Organization of Information Literacy program on regular basis at various level. Organization of workshops/ training programs about awareness of resources available in the libraries and Information centers. Organization of Training programs to library staff with modern technologies and expertise people. Attract the people by organizing book exhibitions of new books with the help of vendors or the material available in the library should be displayed at prominent place.

Dr. Ranganathan concept of Marketing of library services through Five laws of Library Science-

Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, father of library and Information Science, philosopher, mathematician devised five laws of library science which promotes the usage of resources. This law itself promotes that each book available in the library is for use. If the books kept in lock and key without providing it to the readers, then it is a dead investment of the organization. Hence books should be freely available to each user coming to the library. Library staff should take initiative to attract their users to read more and more books. But while giving more books to the users, they should see how it comes back for further use to other readers. It is a skill of the library staff how the attract the students/customers towards the library. Books are for user promotes the use of book. Staff should tell the users what are the good books available, it should be placed on the prominent place, may be entrance of the library where every user come and see. Every Reader his book: Here Reader of the library is main factor/customer; every staff must see how library users are satisfied with the services by the libraries. We must focus to the needs of such readers and their satisfaction. It is true that library cannot satisfy each and every customer, however efforts should be taken by the staff to satisfy users' maximum. Every book its reader: According to this concept/law Dr. Ranganathan expressed that every book which is purchased by library must get reader. Here we must see what the needs of the readers are. Dr. Ranganathan expects that find a reader for every book. To find a reader for every book library staff should conduct such studies/surveys to obtain the needs of their readers. Once you identify their needs then you can promote the resources and increase the use of it. Here attitude of the library staff is more important. They should be always positive to solve the problems of the users with smiling face. Save the time of a reader: The users time is very precious, to save the time of users in the library, staff should organize the information in such a way to find it promptly. Reader should not waste their time in searching the information, searching the books and journals in the library. Of course, arrangement of library material is a scientific method which is taught to the library staff. Library is a growing organism: Here more emphasis is on evolutionary growth of the library. However, librarian must see how library collection grows with qualitatively not in quantity. Now days e-books are more popular and easier to access. Hence vendors are promoting and marketing their products in package or pick and choose model where choice of selection of required books are with faculty members.

Library Promotion Practices and Marketing of Library Services: A Role of Library Professionals-

Libraries are considered as treasures of knowledge. It is also known as storehouse of knowledge. It is true that all libraries in the world are full of reading material which consist books, journals, films, images, manuscripts, Audio visual materials etc. which has knowledge, recorded by peoples, eminent writers and eminent personalities. Preservation of this knowledge is a prime task of all libraries and Information Centers; however, it is a need to market these resources which possess by the libraries. Now a day with the help of Information technology many libraries and information centers have their own websites on which all kind of material is accessible with its bibliographic details and mechanism to promotion and marketing of services. Philip Kotler, Marketing Guru has defined marketing “as social and Managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they: need and want through creating, offering and exchanging product of value and others “. In view of the above definition, library activities are a team work or the efforts of group working I library. To attract more and more users to the library, Library staff needs to extend promotion and cooperation to users and marketing their services. The basic purpose behind promotion is to educate the students, faculty members in how to use the library and its resources and also to upkeep their knowledge by providing information appended in various sources available in the library. Like Companies promotion and marketing concept, library promotion and marketing services are different. The primary purpose of marketing of company products is to increase sales and ultimately to gain the more profit from it. The libraries are non-profit organizations; It is a social organization and service center.

Marketing in terms of Library and Information Science:-

There are seven principles of marketing; these principles are also applicable to Library and Information services. These principles are Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Participants, Physical evidence and Process. These principles are described in brief-

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.

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.

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.

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 programmers. Word of mouth campaign is the best mechanism for promoting the user of library services. The primary promotion tool is library instructions in the form of workshop, seminars, lectures etc.

Participants:

The success of any programmers is depending 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.

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 programmers by providing adequate service to the library users. It can make the service tangible.

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.

Professionals Skills required for marketing library/Information services

- Perception of user’s needs, knowledge of conducting users surveys etc.
- Ability to obtain feedback from users and skill to analyze the feedback.
- Most important quality of taking right decision at right time.
- He must have technical knowledge such as use of internet, web page design, and product design and presentation skills.
- He should have knowledge of various marketing strategies

. With these skills in hand as you enter the library profession, you are holding the keys to your new career. Marketing is the link between the library user’s needs and its resources and services; as a library marketer, you create that link. Your skills will help connect the library to its users, who know that they can get information many other ways without even coming to the library building or interacting with a librarian. With constant competition from other information providers, librarians need to communicate to their users that they can meet their needs better than other providers. As librarians, we know that libraries are so much more than traditional print books and shushing librarians; we just need to change that stereotype. Library marketing reminds users that their library is still a great choice for meeting their information needs in today’s world.

A marketing background is an excellent fit for the library profession. Marketing experience prior to entering the library profession is a highly valuable asset; in fact, it can be the deciding factor for a hiring committee. No matter the type of library in which you desire to work in the type of position you are seeking, your marketing experience can help you get the job. Use it to your advantage. 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. In case libraries and library professional's fails to catch hold the opportunities, the opportunities will be grabbed by Commercial vendors and technology specialists. 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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