Marketing and Promotional Means of Academic Library Products and Services with Reference to WEB 2.0 Tools

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ABSTRACT

Libraries and information centers have been created to realize that marketing of information products and services are an integral part of administration, especially for reader's satisfaction at their expected level. Keeping this in view, the study reveals all the processes and strategies that can be involved while practising the marketing of information products and services. Moreover, it investigates the purpose, usability and actual use of Web 2.0 for the marketing and promotion of library services and resources. Whenever we think about library operations, the concept of marketing does not come into mind. But due to rapid growth of literature and application of information technology, marketing has become an important tool to promote library services and products. An academic library is a service agency set up to further the cause of education. To improve the quality of education, the importance of libraries has rather increased. Therefore, library service and products must be promoted among library users. Librarians and Information professionals must start to market library products and services.

Keywords: *Academic libraries, Information products and library services, Marketing skills, Marketing strategies, Marketing mix, Web 2.0 tools, ICT*

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of educational institutions to fulfil the objectives of higher education. The importance of libraries in these institutions has rather increased in view of the trend towards improving the quality of education as per the quality control mechanism established by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). The academic library is established to further the cause of education which goal it has been serving since long. Academic library, by definition, is a service agency in which users have been the first priority. However, the present emphasis on service suggests a proactive stance rather than a reactive one. The library services therefore must be promoted among their users not only to increase awareness as to what their library is offering but also to give quality services. This leads the librarian toward marketing the library services in support of the teaching and research objectives of the academic institutions.

BACKGROUND STUDY

Definitions

According to American Marketing Association (AMA) "Marketing is the performance of business activities that directs the flow of goods and services from the producer to the consumer or user".

According to Stanton (1981), "marketing is a total system of interacting business activities to plan, price, promote and distribute want satisfying products & services and present to potential customers".

Blaise Cronin (1992) defines marketing as a management style based on a service philosophy with the following characteristics -

- User/client oriented rather than product oriented.
- Concern for quality rather than quantity.
- Emphasis on effectiveness rather than efficiency.
- Stress on benefits to be derived by the user rather than intrinsic merits of the service offer.

According to Philip Kotler (2007), "Marketing means working with markets to actualize potential exchanges for the purpose of satisfying human need and wants".

History of Marketing

- a) **Attempt by USA:** During the last quarter of the 20th century, the United States started to market the library products by extending the opening hours of the libraries, display of new books, exhibitions, production and issuance of library guides etc.

- b) **Contribution by Swett Green:** a founding figure in America's public library movement. advocated marketing the library through reference services in his article, "Personal Relations between Librarians and Readers", which appeared in 1876 in the American Library Journal (later known simply as Library Journal). Later on portable libraries were established to meet offshore reading needs, where books were selected from a quality book list appropriate to the readers.
- c) **Contribution by Melvil Dewey:** He and few others also advocated for traveling libraries which were small rotating collections that provided a means for extending library service to rural areas. These small libraries are either located in a post office or store with a volunteer acting as the caretaker of the collection. This type libraries also prevailed in India, Canada, France etc for concrete marketing efforts.
- d) **John Cotton Dana,** an American library and museum director was a pioneer in public relations, marketing, and other promotional activities. He was an early practitioner of needs assessment, defining target audiences, goal setting, planning, and evaluation. He saw performance in numbers and in customer satisfaction.
- e) **S.R Ranganathan's** famous Five Laws of Library Science was published in 1931. The Five laws have been discussed in the light of marketing by many authors. Interestingly, these laws can be said to be relatively well aligned to marketing theory.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Baquee & Sevukan (2019) assessed the efforts of Indian Central University Library in the marketing of library products and services through their websites by thoroughly examined the use & present status of those library websites. Jain & Vkkm (2019) narrated the marketing techniques of the corporate library and its customized library and information products and services. The study of Balaraman & Srinivasan (2018) was to identify the attitude of LIS professionals on the concept of marketing, their vision on the purpose & need of marketing. The study of Hazam (2017) dealt with the basic overview, need & importance of marketing of information products and services of Allama Iqbal Library of University of Kashmir. Busari et al. (2015) attempted to establish a conceptual analysis of the relationship between marketing (as a strategy) and academic library (as an information service provision centre). Kopperundevi (2013) conducted a study to analyze the feasibility of marketing information products and services in college and university libraries among the librarians with the help of a survey through questionnaire method. Navik & Amin (2012) tried to explore how librarians and information professionals use social media networks (mainly Facebook, Twitter & Wikipedia) for marketing library services & information products. Whereas, the article of Islam & Islam (2009) indicated the methods of applying

marketing techniques & marketing difficulties of library and information centres in developing countries, with special reference to Bangladesh. Kaur & Rani (2008) determined the attitude of library professionals towards the concept of marketing and how it was applied in practice to the marketing of university library products and services. Jestin & Parameswari (2005) evaluated a general overview of marketing of library and information science product and services in India.

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The basic objectives of the study is:

- a) To examine the need & importance of marketing for non-profit organization e.g. Library
- b) To evaluate library marketing in accordance with S.R. Ranganathan's 5 laws of Library Science
- c) To study the development of marketing mix in terms of information product & library services
- d) To understand the basic skills & strategies required for library marketing
- e) To investigate the potential roles and implications of the use of ICT & Web 2.0 tools in marketing and promotional activities by libraries worldwide.

The basic goal of the study is to inculcate knowledge among the readers about what they can read, what are the resources available, how to reach the requisite information etc. Besides that, what tools or measures have to be implemented for a marketing plan in an academic environment.

MARKETING AND LIBRARIES

"Marketing is the link between the library user's needs and its resources and services; as a library marketer, you create that link." - Canzoneri (2015).

The concept of marketing in library and information science received lot of attention in the 1970s. The concept of marketing for non -profit organization was first introduced by Kotler and Levy in 1969. According to them, a non-profit organization like libraries are basically engaged in the production of services (e.g. information transfer or dissemination services) rather than goods. These services are distinct in nature, primary due to characteristics of being intangible, inseparable, variable and perishable.

Marketing of Library services and products is about getting the right services/product, to the right user, in right way, at right time (Riyazuddin, 2012); and to do this,

- identify the needs of the present and future user.
- decide what services and sources are going to be offer.

- ensure that these services can be delivered at right time.
- inform the user about the availability of those services and sources.
- determine the usage and benefit of the user by those services.

Library marketing is essential to keep users, both active & potential, aware & familiarised about the resources and services that meet their needs and interests. Effective marketing skills are required to increase awareness of the library's value and to expand the user base. In this Information Age, a vast amount of information is available freely over the internet. A user can get several thousands of results over a single query over popular search engines like Google. Thus, in this competitive environment, as an information provider, librarians need to prove themselves much more than a housekeeper of traditional print books and need to change that stereotype. Library marketing with the help of ICT & Web 2.0 tools, reminds users that their library is still a great choice for meeting their information needs in today's world.

NEED & IMPORTANCE OF MARKETING OF INFORMATION PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

- Create Awareness:** Inform the user about the availability of information sources and services offered by the information sector to create awareness among them about those sources & services, so that they can use them according to their requirements.
- Understand User Demand/User Need:** Marketing enables librarian or information manager to understand the real need of the user, which will in turn help in providing maximum information services to users more efficiently and effectively.
- Information for Planning and Decision Making:** Marketing provides information for future planning of the organization, again it also help for taking good management decision. Marketing provides information about latest demand, need and interest of user; present market position; accurate value for sources and services etc, which helps the organization to take essential steps for future improvement of its services.
- Increase Usage of the Product:** With the help of the marketing users are aware about the availability of the sources and services offered by the information sector. Thus, they use those sources and services more frequently according to their specific need. Thus, the overall usage of the product increases.
- For Mass Distribution Purpose:** Information sector create product for distributing the masses, who are diverse in their nature, characteristics, cast, gender, age, status and geographical location. For the purpose of distributing the product in mass scale marketing is the primary and most important technique.

- f) **Optimum Utilization of Resources:** Library and other information sector invest huge amount of funds for creating a new product or starting a new services. If the valuable resources and services remain unused, the result is wastage of money. Marketing help in promoting those resources to user community and thus increase its usage.
- g) **Increase the Importance of the Product:** As a result of marketing, greater number of user use the product and get benefited, this increases the importance of the product on user community.
- h) **Attract Non-User Group to Become a Regular User:** Marketing create a greater visibility of the product to masses. It creates curiosity among the non-user of the product and they tested it for satisfying their demand.
- i) **Customer Satisfaction:** The success of any organization depends on the satisfaction of its customer after using the products and services provided by it. And if the rate of customer satisfaction increases, they become permanent user of the organization.
- j) **Increase the Status of the Information Centre and Information Manager or Librarian:** Marketing help to increase the status of the information centre and the information manager among society by giving them an opportunity to serve greater number of user and to show their ability.
- k) **Improvement of the Product:** Marketing provide information about the user feedback and critics comment on a particular product. This information helps the organization or information sector to improve any mistake or fault of the product.

LIBRARY MARKETING IN TERMS OF S.R. RANGANATHAN’S FIVE LAWS OF LIBRARY SCIENCE

Table 1: Library marketing in terms of S.R. Ranganathan’s
5 laws of Library Science

S. No.	Laws of Library Science	Implementation in Library Marketing
1	Books are for use	This law itself implies that all the reading materials available in the library is for use. If these cannot be freely accessible by the readers then it becomes a dead investment for the library. Thus, it becomes the duty of the library professionals, to actively market their products and services.

S. No.	Laws of Library Science	Implementation in Library Marketing
2	Every Reader his book	In this law, implication of marketing strategy lies in the fact that the staff must put much emphasis on collecting and interpreting information, and satisfactorily help the readers in getting the required information from the available resources.
3	Every book its reader	Marketing philosophy according to this law is that, the libraries should perform various activities to take the information products and services to its readers. The activities that can be performed are: publicizing the value and benefits, promotional campaigns, advocacy, public relations, personal communication, selective dissemination of information, social networking tools etc.
4	Save the time of a reader	The implication of marketing in this law enunciates that, the materials in the library should be re packaged in an appropriate format where readers needs and demands will be taken into account. It should ensure that the library offers quality services for maximum benefit of the users in a definite time.
5	Library is a growing organism	The implication of the fifth law for marketing is making the library to be usable for both the present and future days. Hence the resources should be mobilized and new services and repackaged products should be made available to the patrons.

DEVELOPMENT OF MARKETING MIX

Marketing Mix, according to De Aze (1985), “is the planned package of elements which will support the organization in reaching its target markets and specific objectives.”

The Marketing Mix refers to the set of actions or tactics, that an organization used to promote its product and services in the user community (The Economic Times, 2018). It is the key concept in the marketing task and strategy used to perform marketing functions. Marketing Mix keeps its position in the field of Library and Information service very firmly in the perceptions of their communities served - wider community for public libraries, an academic community for academic libraries, clients & customers for the specialist information services. It encourages librarians and information managers to perceive the value of different marketing mix for specific market segments or group of users. These are inter-related, inter-dependent, and also a combination of many factors. Librarian as an information manager should know all the component ideas existed in the marketing mix to find ways to satisfy the user community.

Table 2: Development of Marketing Mix (15 P's of Marketing)

S. No.	Category	Marketing Mix	What it is?
1	Classical Marketing Mix	Product	Product or services is anything that the library or information centre offering or would offer to its users.
2		Price	All information processing involves costs, but all information products or services may not involve a price for the users (e.g. non-profit organization like library don't charge money to its user for providing services).
3		Place	where the product is made available to user community and clients. Right placing is important for proper distribution of product or services so that supplies are not delayed.
4		Promotion	Promotional activity involves mechanisms by which users are informed about the resources available as well as services and product offered by library and information centers.
5	Extended Marketing Mix	People	People are the staff who occupy the key position in influencing user's perceptions about library product & service quality and facilitate further improvements.
6		Process	Process is a group of activities by which the products and services are delivered to the user.
7		Physical Evidence	It is the environment in which the service is delivered and any tangible evidence that facilitate the performance and communication of the service.
8	New Age of Marketing	Privacy	Privacy from unwanted spam, junk and telecommunications provides users with a sense of anonymity and allows for more selective forms of marketing.
9		Personal Interest	Personal interests are becoming an increasingly important decision-making process for users, particularly in the case of choosing an information product.
10		Personal (e.g., Social) Networks	Personal networks generate a new form of marketing, known as social media marketing, virtually free of cost or a minimum amount of cost.
11		Public Commentary	It is important in the age of online trading and entrepreneurship.

S. No.	Category	Marketing Mix	What it is?
12	Techno-madic Age of Marketing	Personalization	Increasing interaction with the user via emerging social media and development of Web 2.0 applications, now there is a greater degree of customization of information products and library services.
13		Participation	This allows users participation to detect the right direction of the product flow & right style of advertisements.
14		Peer to Peer	Peer to peer (P2P) marketing allows active users to engage other groups of users by advocating friends or associates for an information product or library service.
15		Predictive Modeling	This refers to the neural network algorithms used in applied marketing problems, where detection theory is used to predict the best probability of an outcome.

HOW AND WHAT LIBRARIES CAN MARKET?

Librarians need to possess some basic skills and strategies to promote the information products & library services among the users in a sophisticated way.

Skills for Marketing:

- a) **Analytical Skills:** A librarian should understand the need of a particular users. For this purpose, a librarian should possess two basic analytical skill i.e., Product Analysis & Market Analysis.
- b) **Planning Skills:** The librarian must possess various planning skills like product development, distribution, promotion etc to provide best services with minimum time and cost.
- c) **Organizing Skills:** The marketing of information products and services should form an important part of the strategy of the company. Marketing staff should be professionally trained and qualified.
- d) **Control Skills:** These types of skills require controlling the market. The librarian should keep himself/herself informed of the behavioural responses to the ever-changing demands of the users.
- e) **Promotion Skills:** Use promotional medium such as voice messages with proper communication channel and deliver it to potential users

Marketing Strateg

As the marketing strategy focuses on user needs and wants the producers also produce such products and services as would be meeting their information needs. To develop a marketing strategy for libraries and information centres, they would use certain analyses and tools. The main components in any strategic plan are as mentioned below:

- a) **Market Analysis:** The market analysis will help in knowing the potential markets where exchange may take place. For library and information services, the market constitutes of end users like the clients, the parent institution, the government, and other funding agencies. Once the market is identified, its size may also be determined which is likely to affect the demand for information services.
- b) **User Analysis:** User analysis will help the library staff to know about library users in detail. It will be established as to which user group or/and individuals shall be making use of information services and products. The users can even be further categorized to make the services more useful to them.
- c) **Organizational Analysis:** Library being an organization in itself, knows well its market of users. Accordingly, it designs its services to offer to different user segments. This analysis would be based on the available resources, attitude of authorities, experience of staff, and so on. Such an organizational analysis helps the library to know its strong points which it may ultimately turn into opportunities of marketing its services and products.
- d) **Competitive Analysis:** In this competitive world, libraries also need to know, like other organizations, about their potential competitors in similar other institutions. Libraries, for example college libraries, compete with one another in getting more and more amount of grants for fresh acquisitions, more staff, more equipments, and above all for providing more services. While understanding competitive analysis the user segment as well as information services/ products of competitors must be evaluated. Such an analysis will help to compare user needs and wants, and thereby designing library services.

Some Information Product Categories

The answer of “what” a library or information centre could market given by the p, “Product” of marketing mix. It covers the overall holding of the library which is meant for circulate among user. Some such information products tabulated below:

Table 3: Categories of Information Products

<i>SN</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Information Products</i>
1	Periodicals	Academic journals, Professional journals, Magazines, Newspapers, Newsletters.
2	Reference Documents	Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, Bibliographies and bibliographic databases, Directories and databanks.
3	Books	Fiction and Non-fiction books, Children story books and tales, Subject specific books, etc
4	Others	Videos, CDs and DVDs, Multimedia documents, Government publications, Corporate reports-technical and business, Patents, Conference proceedings, institutional publications, institutional projects etc.

IMPACT OF ICT AND WEB 2.0 TOOLS IN MARKETING OF INFORMATION PRODUCT AND LIBRARY SERVICES

Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) and Second generation web-based technologies (Web 2.0) such as social media and networking sites are increasingly being used by library and information centres for activities ranging from providing online-based library services, open policy making, budget allocation, user study, demand-driven acquisition and marketing of library services and information products.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Marketing:

Table 4: Information and Communication Technologies & Mediums

<i>SN</i>	<i>Technologies</i>	<i>Medium</i>
i	Communication Technology	E-mail, Voice mail, Fax, Video Conferencing, Internet
ii	Remote Control Technology	Online meeting, Web Conferences, Remote Xs Technology
iii	Social Media	Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, etc.

The services which can be delivered through the medium of ICT are:

- On-Line Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)
- Reference/ ILL Service
- Reprographic Service
- Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) Service
- Document Delivery Service
- Bibliographic Service

- Translation Service
- Database Search Guide

Usage of Web 2.0 Tools for Library Marketing:

By its very nature, Web 2.0 technologies are more interactive than the traditional models of information provision or creation of digital services. Such technologies open up a new set of benefits, costs and risks to those non-profit organizations e.g., library & information centres, who make use of these social and digital media to enhance their visibility over user community. (Sivarajah et al., 2015).

Figure 1: Web 2.0 and libraries: five essentials (Source: Xu et al., 2009)

- i. **Library Website:** Library website can be a handy tool to advertise library products and services. It helps in the significant promotion of library services for research and teaching.
- ii. **Blogs:** It can be used in libraries to broadcast library news and market other library resources. Blogs facilitate the provision of easy-to-update information for users. Web-based reference services can also be provided with the help of blogs.
- iii. **Wikis:** Libraries use wikis to facilitate personal learning and reflection, support group-level knowledge sharing and help users to locate knowledge.
- iv. **RSS (Rich Site Summary):** Another name of RSS is- Really Simple Syndication. It is designed to enable subscribed users to receive regularly changing web content of news-like sites, news-oriented community sites.. In academic libraries, users can subscribe to a library website that offers RSS feed for library information and activities such as new issues of journals, new books, and library events.
- v. **Social Networking Sites (SNS):** The SNS is a site where anyone can interact with anyone else, and where the library enters to establish

relationships with them. SNSs could serve to broaden the visibility of library services and library activities. This will create around the library a community of users, both real and potential, and through their contacts, may increase the knowledge of it in the community.

- vi. **Instant Messaging (IM):** Instant messaging is a type of online chat which offers and allows users to send real-time text messages over the internet. It provides an instant connection to a librarian and allows users to get personalized or anonymous help, without coming to the library.

Figure 2: Web 2.0 Tools (Colas, 2015)

- vii. **Tagging:** Tags are used to organize information within a personal information space. It is a term assigned to a piece of information such as the internet bookmark, digital image or computer file. Folksonomy is a system of classification derived from the practice and method of collaboratively creating and managing tags to annotate and categorize content.
- viii. **Twitter:** Twitter is a virtual social network allowing users to write short messages called tweets, that can be read by anyone with access

to their page. Twitter helps in keeping the staff and users updated on library services.

- ix. **Podcast/Vodcast:** A podcast is an audio recording which can be played on computers or MP3 devices that are broadcasted on demand. Podcasts are frequently used to broadcast speeches and interviews of important personalities. A vodcast is the video matching part of a podcast. Libraries can offer podcasts to promote recordings about library services, programs and activities.
- x. **Social Bookmarking:** Social bookmarking is the practice of saving bookmarks to a public Web site and tagging them with keywords. To create a collection of social bookmarks, register with a social bookmarking site, which allows users store bookmarks, add tags of choice, and designate individual bookmarks as public or private. Social bookmarking is a user based online system in which individuals tag their favourite web content and store it in one place, sharing it with others.
- xi. **LinkedIn:** LinkedIn focuses on professional information, encouraging users to construct an abbreviated CV with no information about hobbies, political or religious affiliations to establish connections. LinkedIn can be used by the libraries to create professional connections as well as market library services among other professionals working in different libraries of the world.
- xii. **YouTube:** YouTube is a video sharing site which allows people around the world to communicate and interact, making it a distribution point for user created content. Academic libraries can use YouTube to promote services, host lectures, and provide information literacy demonstrations for highlighting best practices for conducting research and navigating through specific databases.
- xiii. **Virtual 3D Games:** Virtual 3D games create a virtual environment and allow players to respond to multiple users simultaneously over the network, including the creation of their own identity through the so-called Avatars. The most popular virtual 3D game for libraries is Second Life (SL). Second Life is an immersive 3D environment that can be used for entertainment and educational purposes.
- xiv. **Web Mapping:** Web mapping is designed to allow users to obtain information concerning map products available on the World Wide Web. A Web Map Service (WMS) is a standard protocol for serving geo-referenced map images over the Internet that are generated by a map server using data from a GIS database. The received map data is an image taken from satellites and an XML application. Web mapping services include GoogleEarth, NASA Worldwind, Erdas, and FourSquare.

- xv. **Flickr:** Flickr is a photo sharing website which allows users to store, sort, search and post photographs and to create discussion groups. Besides posting materials for promotion purposes, information professionals can post photos of the organization and staff to provide a virtual tour of their agency. Flickr can be used by academic libraries to display historic photographs of library or university facilities, record annual events, social functions, services offered and document original exhibitions held at the library.
- xvi. **Mashup:** A Mashup is a web page, or website that uses and combines data or technology from two or more sources into a single integrated tool that helps a user when they log in to create a new user experience. It allows the user to edit OPAC data and metadata, saves the user's tags, conversations with librarians, wiki entries with other users and catalogues all of these for others to use. Again, libraries can collaborate with various commercial database vendors to linkup their catalogues with them.

GUIDELINES AND SUGGESTIONS

- ◆ Create a welcoming environment in the library so that readers are much attracted to it.
- ◆ Always be alert and proactive.
- ◆ Build a good cordial relationship with the readers so that they feel free to ask for their needs.
- ◆ Attend academic lectures in order to prepare us for certain demands by the authorities.
- ◆ Increase our communication skills in order to deal with readers from different cultures.
- ◆ Create a library webpage for the readers.
- ◆ Certain links to "Help" services from all appropriate library web pages must be created.
- ◆ E-mails containing new library resources and tips on finding information must be shared
- ◆ Organize information literacy programme on a regular basis.

CONCLUSION

With the availability of varied new teaching and research practices in the present day, libraries must respond to its promotion and growth and indulge themselves in various activities to advertise their products and services. In order to do so, they must themselves be many alerts and develop skills in marketing products. Marketing of library services and products is a much need of the hour because many libraries are deprived of the required items or documents as demanded by the users. The Web 2.0 tools and technologies

should be adopted for the guaranteed survival and continuous growth of academic libraries. This will bring about a collaborative, interactive and web-based library customer services to satisfy their users.

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