



MARKETING OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES OF KARNATAKA STATE: A STUDY



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ABSTRACT

Discusses the importance of marketing of library and information services in a competitive environment enumerates the role of library professionals in improving information services by using new technology for satisfying the user community, studies the trends which have affected. On the management of library and information centres and forcing professionals to adopt the marketing tools and techniques in their operations concludes that there is a need of marketing activities in library and information service centre in a fast growing information environment.

KEYWORDS : Information marketing, information services, user needs, information environment



INTRODUCTION :

Today marketing of library and information services is importance in library in a competitive environment and the librarians and information professionals are the persons who are responsible to improve the information services of their user to use new technology to anticipate the trends competencies which are the part of promoting marketing of library services to achieve this libraries and information professionals should be familiar with the availability of electronic information

resource such as internet, web based electronic resources online retrieval techniques, and digitization of resources which are helpful in satisfying the user community.¹

Marketing as a strategy (skillful management) in getting the better the opponent a philosophy and a way of life libraries to be a successful information centre marketing helps the staff in discovering the needs wants and demands of users this is gaining importance in an information environment. Due to the process of liberalization and globalization and unanticipated technological, developments in information flow their arise need of timely pin pointed correct and reliable information which is needed before.²

In information society in which we live has created information explosion which develops interest in using information services and products are increasing (Sing, 2003). According to Spalding and Wang (2006) libraries all over the world are facing with rising cost and dwindling budgets which is because of technological advancement and today's economic climate made the libraries to adopt marketing concepts in their library operation.³

Information which is treated as a marketable commodity gets economic importance when it is produced sold and consumed as a tradable commodity which is exchanged in the market in the form of information products and services.⁴

Librarianship is experiencing rapid change in technology which creates new ways for information services, information products and services which are in different formats have made libraries and information centres more competitive and alert libraries are subject to significant pressures from the information revolution challenges of budget cuts increased user base the rapid growth of material rising costs, networking demands competition in information requirements are forcing the professionals adopt marketing to improve the management of library and information centre.⁵

In an information environment information handling becomes difficult for library professionals and are facing stiff competition by other competitors in the market at the same time there is a increase in users who seek information then before so transformation has taken place in converting libraries from information centers to marketing and profit making centers with the advent of information superhighways has made the libraries and information centers more competitive and alert. The challenges faced by the professionals towards budget increased user base, competition by the private vendors, outflow of information requirement are forcing the professionals to adopt marketing tools for the betterment of the management of library and information centers.

Marketing concept was belied as profit sales and advertising and related to business firms for production activity for profit this was the concept exist and regard as low status activity Philip Kotler and Sidney J. Levey expanded the concept from physical products to customer satisfaction.⁶

To gain self sufficiency in resources and provide maximum level of services to reach more users and encouraging them to use the library resources. This leads to product or service orientation for this different marketing concepts provide libraries with the tools for collecting and analyzing useful data about information needs of customers which assists in designing developing and delivering appropriate services. In a library there is a need to develop customer based and strategic marketing planning which is a part of library management.

University libraries invest huge amount on collection development processing and storage of information resources. The resources which are expensive remain unutilized leads to wastage of money time energy and place. The librarians apply marketing principles in solving the problem of under utilization of resources and services.⁷

Libraries and information centers are facing a time of unprecedented change and challenge recent technological developments are creating new forms of information and new ways of providing information by passing traditional institutional such as libraries these are forcing libraries to become self reliant now libraries are transforming into customers with rising expectations diverse needs and wants and choices. Now the duty of the information professionals in library is not to manage the collection staff and technology but to turn these resources into services. The concept of services changed from basic to value added from staff assisted to self service from in house to outreach from free to priced from reactive to proactive and from mass customization to individual services.⁸

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Review of literature is an early step for conduct research. It helps to avoid the duplication of research work and broadens the understanding of the research problem. A number of relevant studies have been carried out on the marketing of library and information services.

Gupta Dinesh K.R. (1996)⁹ deals with goals of all library and information service activities which

provide access to maximum user satisfaction or delight. The paper describes the importance of relationship between user and library and information centre which provides library and information managers to understand users in the best way and involves strategies to improve quality and offerings and overall committed to user satisfaction or delight. A model for user relationship in library and information centres is also outlined.

In a study Manjunatha, K. and Shivalingahah, D. (2001)¹⁰ discusses marketing of library and information services as a subject of growing interest among library professionals. Developments in information technology such as CD ROM, Internet and communication media that have challenged at one place librarians no longer would like to remain as custodian of books rather they visualize themselves as resource persons for knowledge and information dissemination. The present day librarian needs to acquire more technical and professional skills to become more effective and to employ marketing techniques in order to optimize the uses of library resources and services this made the proper understanding nature of library business its products and customers. The study analysis the attitude of librarians towards the concept of marketing level of understanding on nature of library business and its products services and the methods adopted to understand the customers' needs.

Kaur, Amritpal (2009)¹¹ deals with the application of information technology to libraries the librarians today have refined tools and techniques at their disposal to provide quicker and more sophisticated services to the users. The article discusses the evolving role of librarians/information professionals from provider of physical entities to that of information access provider negotiator intermediary organizer and preserver of digital information educator content and internet developer. It also discusses the skills and competencies required to perform their role effectively concludes that LIS education should be improved to the changing needs of the society/workplaces. It should offer such courses as provide graduate with necessary skills and competencies to perform all the roles offered to them in the new information environment.

MARKETING OF INFORMATION SERVICES IN THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES:

University libraries said to be an information knowledge provider which transforms these to the students scholars and teachers to gain academic and research distinctions and achieve the user satisfaction through speed procurement of documents their processing in good time and dissemination of the information.

Though university libraries progressed in terms of document collection and good physical facilities with financial support from the UGC all the available information in the library is not useful so there is a need of repackaging of information which has to be provided to the users should be related and appropriate to his needs. This makes marketing of library and information services essential in libraries.

The changes in higher education system in India made libraries to provide access to information not for document collection meant for education and also for research and career development.

There is a growing use of information technology. Hence, the university library adopt such emerging technologies and provide internal information services, and external access to global information living in this information age with high technologies, many of the university libraries are not playing a satisfactory role in providing services.

They only provide lending and reference service through conventional methods will not be an effective information disseminators to meet the challenge and demands of the present day information society though the library professional may be a good manager shall not become a information disseminator.

The university libraries which are under financial pressures is not in a position to offer the services free of cost. To increase their revenue, productivity and responsiveness libraries have to develop information and have to change for the same. This is an essential change required in the present information environment to handle the interests of users with more responsive and better information services.

In our society has not yet come, to point of paying for library information services. This not because that information services are of less value but because of the conventions and attitudes of our society. The users wants to get the services free of charge and there is no paying for such services.

The system of free service may still be continued in service areas like internal lending reference and readers advisory services etc. some of the services which are included in payment category such as preparation of internal current awareness bulletin, selective dissemination of information, subject bibliographies, translations inter library loans, access to national and global information through network facilities.

The contemporary information environment and the limited, budgetary provisions and other limitations lead to the crisis of identity of university libraries as they are not able to provide effective information services. Charging for library services is a suitable to face the situation. Hence, it is high time for the university libraries to accept charging as an essential part of library management.

They have to come out of their passive approach and have to adopt more proactive approach only then the greatest amount of information can be made available to a maximum number of users otherwise it is doubtful whether the library services in the age of information proliferation coupled with high costs of information.¹²

CONCLUSION:

In an age of information explosion and technological revolution made the libraries and information centres become more active in adopting the modern methods of tools and techniques in their library operations that is marketing of library and information services which is essential in the fast growing environment forced the librarians and information professionals to have more skills and competencies for the user satisfaction by providing right information at right time in right place is needed in today's environment. Presently information is treated as a commodity which is produced sold consumed as a tradable commodity which is exchanged in the market in the form of information products and services.

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