

Library Products and Services from Information Marketing

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ABSTRACT

The article considers the concept of Information Products and Services in the light of library and information services and mentions the necessity of marketing techniques in library and information centers. It outlines the principles of information products / services marketing and discusses the key steps of marketing for library and information centers. The article indicates the methods of applying marketing techniques to library and information centers and marketing difficulties to library and information services in developing countries are also discussed.

Keywords : Information Marketing, Library Services, Products, Services

INTRODUCTION

A society that consumes and generates the most knowledge and information is the strongest society. The information industry has grown dramatically in services, revenue and coherence over the last decade. Though the marketing of information services is a concept of comparatively recent origin, it has now emerged as an important area for libraries and information centers. Marketing covers those activities that connect it produces and the benefits and services. The present situation points out ; organizations such as museums, universities, libraries and charities need to market their causes and their products to gain political and social support as well as economic support. One of the major barriers to operating a profitable information business is the lack of business expertise among librarians and information scientists.

Marketing is a comprehensive term that describes all the processes and interactions that result in satisfaction for users and revenue for the information firm. Libraries and information centers have begun to realize that marketing of information products and services is an integral part of administration, especially as a means for improving user satisfaction and promoting the use of services by current and potential users. Three main factors, namely the information explosion, the technology revolution and escalating library costs are responsible for encouraging the library

profession to develop a marketing approach in its operations and services. Some information service managers feel that marketing is inimical to the nature of their activities. But with increased competition in the world of information, marketing is a factor for survival.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT CYCLE

IM is managing the processes of selection, collection building, processing, controlling and dissemination of information in an organization. IM can help an organization recognize and use the potentials of the resources of information and information technology.

Marketing is planning and managing the organization's exchange relations with its clientele. It consists of studying the target market's needs, designing appropriate products and services and using effective pricing, communication and distribution to inform, motivate and serve the market. The following are vital concepts of information marketing.

- **Marketing Activities** is an important marketing activity, which is done to obtain marketing information. It is necessary to identify the market scope to formulate appropriate policies. Market profiling should consider, User affordability, extent of use, relevance of the service to users, repeat customers, user preferences and staffing.
- **Product planning** is the marketing activity concerned with developing a product that satisfies customers.
- **Pricing** is the marketing activity that determines the price of the product on the basis of costs as well as market factors such as distribution channels, discount structure, competitor's prices, ability or willingness of customers to pay. The following questions to ask during pricing.
 - a. What are costs involved in the generation of services and products ?
 - b. What factors need to be considered in arriving at costs ?
 - c. Should the information services / products be given free ? If so, to whom and Why ?
 - d. What would be the impact in relation to the value of a product. If given free ?
 - e. What should be the criteria for pricing ?
- **Promotion** is the activity that covers all aids to sales. Promotion stimulates demand and increases sales. Usually promotion moves the product toward the customers. It involves mechanisms that inform the target groups about the resources available, services and products offered by the libraries / information centers.
- **Distribution** is the marketing activity concerned with distributing the product from the manufacturer to the customer, making the product available and easy to buy. The major channels of dissemination are Interpersonal delivery, group personal delivery strategic placement, In-house dissemination, Local depositories, Mass media, Broadcasting Mail, Telephone and computer network.

MARKETING TECHNIQUES

Management is required to control the application of a range of skills and techniques in marketing, generally derived from practical industrial experience and from modern social sciences such as economics, statistics and applied psychology.

MARKETING STRATEGY

Not all enterprises can afford to use all the marketing techniques. Furthermore, different situations require different techniques. The marketing manager must be able to select those techniques that are necessary for a particular product in a particular situation. Therefore, successful marketing includes the art of deciding which techniques to use in different situations. Marketing strategy also means selecting various techniques in proper proportion and balance.

CREATING A MARKET

The proper and active use of marketing techniques provides the possibility of creating a market.

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS FOR MARKETING

Library personnel require the following professional knowledge and skills for marketing information and library services : Perception of user needs and ability to obtain feedback from users, Technical knowledge, such as ability to use the Internet, Knowledge of various marketing strategies for promoting information skills etc.

CONCLUSION

Information is a vital resources for national development. Increasing realization of the role of information has resulted in the establishment of systems to provide a variety of information services and products. The library can be called an information market and the library user is a consumer of information. It is an essential step in the planning, designing and use of such services and products for optional use of information. Library acquisition, organization and dissemination must be based on the modern concept of marketing to achieve reader satisfaction.

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