

Chapter 16

Innovative Marketing Strategies in Academic Libraries: An Overview

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ABSTRACT

Advancements of Science and Technology have made a tremendous impact on all walks of life. Library and Information centers are no exception. The ICT-based marketing techniques are employed in libraries in an innovative way to maximize the usage. A similar approach can be followed in academic libraries, especially in higher educational institutions with an intention to maximize the use library resources to user's satisfaction. In this context, the chapter analyzes the various facets of marketing techniques in academic libraries. This chapter highlights the intention of academic libraries to use the resources at maximum level. The library home page in the institutional websites and links provided in them to the variety of e-resources play a pivotal role. Social Medias, blogs, and other promotional materials are extensively used as innovative marketing strategies in academic libraries. Efforts to familiarize the library professionals in adopting different marketing strategies help to use the resources at optimum level.

INTRODUCTION

In the present scenario the Disruptive Technology (DT) which disrupts and replaces an existing technology making it obsolete, has affected the academic libraries and has transformed them into new digital era libraries. With the support of the DT, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Internet, the users can access the information sources at their fingertips. These technologies provide opportunities to access information very easily and to make use of the academic libraries, resources and services to the maximum level. Technologically some of the academic libraries have moved far ahead in the recent years. The academic libraries have to move according to the signs of the time and adopt innovative marketing strategies suited to the academic libraries in order to render effective and quick services and satisfy the users.

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ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Libraries are the store house of knowledge and information, which collectively act as the driving force for the progressive development of a society. Knowledge and information are identified, collected, organized and stored in the form of both print and digital version and made accessible to all those who have thirst for knowledge. There are different types of libraries and each performs different kinds of functions to meet the needs of their users. These libraries are of various types, namely – public, special and academic libraries. According to S. R Ranganathan (1940), “A library is a public institution or establishment charged with the care of collection of books and the duty of making them accessible to those who require using them.”

“An academic library is an integral part of a college, university, or other institution of post-secondary education, administered to meet the information and research needs of its students, faculty, and staff” (ODLIS, 2002). Academic libraries have emphasized to focus less on physical collections and more of digital documents. Academic libraries play effective roles in supporting the objectives of the academic environment of learning, teaching and research service. The success of the academic libraries depends on a variety of services to the users’ level of satisfaction. The purpose of a library is to make accessible reliable information to their users in an appropriate, precise and applicable manner. With the introduction of ICT which allows easy and fast access to information in a suitable form, the traditional methods of accessing library services has been altered. The ICT has fashioned and created numerous changes in the way people live and access library resources.

MARKETING

The concept and practice of marketing originated in circa 35 C.E. and in the 18th century it has become a full-fledged subject. In the *Oxford English Dictionary* the word ‘marketing’ is revealed as “to buy or sell”. Initially marketing was applied in commercial organizations and businesses. The meaning of the word “marketing” is the action or business of promoting and selling products or services, including market research and advertising. (Suresh Kumar, 2010). Philip Kotler, the guru of marketing defines, “Marketing is the analysis, planning, implementation and control of carefully formulated programs designed to bring about voluntary exchanges of values with target markets for the purpose of achieving organizational objectives” (Kotler, and Mindak, 1978). Marketing is therefore all about recognizing the users’ needs and mounting strategies and services to reach out to them. It is a long-term innovative process that is entrepreneurially driven.

Marketing is the key to gain the goals of any organization or institution. The four elements of marketing concept are target market, satisfying needs and wants, co-ordinate marketing and organizational goals. Through the process of marketing the services and products are made accessible to the patrons from their point of origin. The modern way of marketing is the digital way of marketing of the products of any institutions. Social media like WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter etc., are more frequently used for marketing.

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