March 2008

Marketing of Library and Information Services and Products in University Libraries: A Case Study of Goa University Library

M. Madhusudhan
University of Delhi, India, mmadhu@libinfosci.du.ac.in

Marketing of Library and Information Services and Products in University Libraries: A Case Study of Goa University Library

Dr. M. Madhusudhan
Department of Library and Information Science
Floor, Tutorial Building
University of Delhi
Delhi-110007, India
Contact No.: 011-27666656 (O), 011-27604034 (R), 09818587229(M)

Introduction

Librarians and information specialists have debated the idea of marketing for the information sector. Several things have compelled us to learn about marketing and begin doing it. Librarianship is experiencing rapid change. Information technology has created a new gateway for information services. Information products and services in a multiplicity of formats have made libraries and information centres more competitive and alert. Libraries are being subjected to significant pressures from the information revolution. The challenges of budget cuts, increased user base, the rapid growth of material, rising costs, networking demands, competition by database vendors, and complexity in information requirements are forcing the professionals to adopt marketing to improve the management of library and information centres.

Marketing aims to identify the client base, and to determine and fill its needs, wants, and demands by designing and delivering appropriate products and services. The main focus of the concept is the client, and the goal is client satisfaction. Rowley (2001) calls marketing, the management process which identifies, anticipates, and supplies customer requirements efficiently and profitably. Kotler (1999) says, that marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of goods, services and ideas to create exchanges with target groups that satisfy customers and organizational objectives. Under the umbrella term marketing, we study concepts like building customer relationships, branding and corporate identity, marketing communications, price and pricing policy, collecting marketing data and marketing strategy and planning. For the purpose of this paper I will restrict the scope of the subject to pricing information products and services.

Importance of information

Information is an indispensable factor for promoting the development of society. Kemp (1976:101) observes, that information has been called, the fifth need of man, ranking after air, water, food, and shelter. Luck, et al., add that information is the life blood of planning, directing, and controlling any enterprise (Luck et al, 1981:20). It makes the satisfaction of the demands of the population possible in an efficient way.

The present age is rightly characterized as the age of information, where it success in any activity is based on the amount and accuracy of information available. The fact that information is a key resource for the progress and development of a nation (Raina, 1998:3) is nothing but the socio-economic, cultural, and political development of its citizenry. Information is a commodity or economic good of worldwide

"Marketing of Library and Information Services and Products in University Libraries: A Case Study of Goa University Library," Dr. M. Madhusudhan. *Library Philosophy and Practice* 2008 (March)

1

significance, which contributes to the national economy. Information has become a commodity that people buy. The criteria that determine power have shifted from industry ownership to the information ownership, as the global economy has shifted from industry-based to information-based. The quality and quantity of the information resources of the country are two of the parameters for development. Countries with adequate information infrastructure and information technology can create artificial demand for superfluous products and use it as a weapon against the economy of other countries. Information is an indispensable input for technological and economic development. It is a negotiable product that moves about in international markets. In today's international developing economies, a country that is incapable of providing information to its citizens will lose autonomy and be at the mercy of developed countries for information.

Information Marketing in University Libraries

Libraries and other non-profit organizations have only recently become aware of the need to market their products and services. Library and information products and services are now being recognized as commodities that can be sold, exchanged, lent, and transmitted. University libraries rely on their host organizations for operational costs. To gain some self-sufficiency, university libraries think seriously about not only recovering the costs incurred but also making a profit through their services. Narayana (1991:187) points out that the, "survival of a library depends among other things on its image in the minds of the users and the fund allocators. This image should be the outcome of the quality and effectiveness of the services, the ability to anticipate the desires and requirements of actual and potential users and their fulfillment. Marketing is the instrument through which these library objectives can be fulfilled. Vishwa Mohan, Srinivas, and Shakuntala (1996:16) observe that marketing is essential, because those who lack information may not even be aware of this need.

Information marketing by university libraries in India is essential in order to:

- Promotion of the use of information resources;
- Create perception of need and thereby create demand;
- Ensure the optimum use of information.
- Improve the image and status of the libraries and library professionals.
- Tackle the problems of rising costs of reading materials, journals, and databases;
- Cope with the information explosion;
- Introduce cutting-edge information technology systems in library services;
- Balance shrinking funds;
- Save libraries from devaluation
- Save libraries from declining reader-support;
- Uphold the dictum that information is power.

Information Marketing in Goa University Library, India

Marketing is an integral part of library service, because it has to do with basic principles of librarianship i.e. to develop good collection and user-oriented services. Goa University Library (GUL) is using most of the skills of information marketing to satisfy the needs of its clientele. The Goa University Library and Information Centre (GUL&IC) was created in 1985. It is housed in a magnificent building that includes stacks, reading rooms, a periodical area, computer centre, administrative division, reception, and circulation area. The collection has about 1.5 million volumes covering a wide range of disciplines, particularly microbiology, marine science, environmental science, computer science, geology, and management, and including a special collection on Latin America and the Caribbean . The library also has a large collection of titles in Konkani, the state language of Goa , and a foreign language section that includes titles in Portuguese, French, and Spanish and continues to grow at more than 2,500 titles annually. The library subscribes to around 450 periodicals covering more than 40 disciplines and receives more than 150 gift periodical subscriptions from various organizations and institutions. Back volumes of all important journals are available and the task of filling gaps in important serials is being actively

pursued. The Chemical Abstracts Society has recently commended the library with a plaque for its complete collection of chemical abstracts. Readership has now crossed 5,000 mark from the academic community in and around the state of Goa . The GUL is also a partner in the nationwide Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET), a programme of University Grants Commission (UGC). In addition to contemporary holdings, the library also houses a collection of rare historical documents from the collection of more than 52 donors that include the noted historian Dr. P.S.S. Pissurlencar and the eminent Portuguese scholar Mr. Nuno Gonsalves, dating back to 16th Century and encompassing fields such as Indo-Portuguese relations and the history of Goa. The library is also officially designated as repository for nearly 4,000 United Nations publications since 1996.

GUL uses the following methods to design a market mix for ensuring a catalytic role in the modern information community:

- product development;
- physical distribution of information;
- promotion of products and services; and
- price.

Product development

A product is anything that can be offered to a market to satisfy a need. A large assortment of materials, services, and programmes constitute the library's product. A library offers goods, either tangible (e.g. books and Internet access) or intangible (e.g. personal assistance, or value of the library as a premier community institution). De Aze (2002: 5) says that, "products and services which provide benefits for users and which answer users' most important needs are the core business of the library and information service" (Aze de Elliot E.2002: 5). Seetharama (1998) considers that, without products no organization has reason to exist, there is no task to perform; hence product is the most important factor in marketing, and Weingand (1995:307) asserts that, the library's product can be arranged within a three dimensional structure of the product mix, product line, and product item. Programmes of the library are a product line where product items consist of bibliographic instruction, displays, and lectures.

GUL is ready to develop the products to meet the needs expressed by the users. The library has automated its functions under the Library Automation Programme with the financial assistance of INFLIBNET. The bibliographic database of the library collection is available online, with barcodes for circulation, and rare archival and special collections materials have begun to be digitized and stored on CD and the Web to enable scholars in Goa and in other countries to access these resources.

Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC): The searchable digital catalogue of library holdings is available on the campus-wide intranet and on the Web at: http://goalnet.unigoa.ac.in/gulibrary/.

Digital information services: The library offers access to reference materials such as general and subject encyclopedias.

COPSAT: The library subscribes to the Contents Pages of Science and Technology (COPSAT) of more than 40 journals in each of eight science disciplines from INFLIBNET, a UGC project. GUL has developed a web-based application using WWWISIS software that queries this database and offers a search service from its website.

Searchable full text e-journals and databases: GUL provides the access to searchable full text of thousands of e-journals and databases through the UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium, providing 34 broad subjects and other e-journals and databases from publishers/vendors such as: ACS Publications, Jstor, Emerald, Blackwell, Institute of Physics, American Physical Society, American Institute of Physics, Cambridge, Springer Link, Nature, Science Online, Elsevier's Science Direct, STN, Royal Society of Chemistry, Taylor and Francis, Annual Reviews, and Project Muse, etc. on the campus-wide intranet. In

addition to the above, the GUL website provides links to trials and free access to thousands of e-journals and databases in 24 broad subjects. This will provide the best current and archival periodical literature from all over the world to the university community and mitigate the severe shortage of periodicals faced by university libraries for many years, due to the widening gap between the demand for literature and the limits of available resources.

NISCAIR services: GUL is a regular user of the the National Information Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR) services such as Contents, Abstracts and Photocopying Services (CAPS), the Standing Order Abstract Services (SOAS), and the Full Text Journal Services (FTJS). These services serve to reduce the financial burden of subscribing to expensive journals without compromising access to these resources.

DELNET services: GUL is a member of Developing Libraries Network (DELNET). DELNET offers access to web-based databases. GUL uses the Interlibrary Loan (ILL) system to make ILL requests from a union catalogue of books (more than one million records), periodical article database, and the database of thesis and dissertations. GUL is also a member of institutions such as National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), Pune and Indira Gandhi Institute for Development Research (IGIDR), Mumbai. These institutions specialize in particular subjects and send photocopies when requested by GUL.

Current awareness bulletin: GUL provides contents pages for subscribed journals and has created a new monthly newsletter, which contains links to resources and information on developments in subject areas.

Library Website: The library website is to guide to the physical facilities that delivers detailed information about the library as well as providing access to all computer based services. GUL Website <http://goalnet.unigoa.ac.in/gulibrary/> also provides links to reference sources, tutorials, library projects, and presentations.

GUL has launched *Remote Access Service.* A Remote Access Service (RAS) Server has been installed for networking with affiliated college libraries of Goa University and other institutions. Services such as OPAC, querying, ILL management, and electronic mail-based alert services have been provided. It is hoped that a separate dial-in-server will ease the bandwidth difficulties during peak hours.

Physical Distribution of Information

Corrall and Brewerton (1999) describe acquisition as getting the raw materials and sending that out. GUL has acquired documents as gifts from 52 different donors. There are collections from Dr. P.S.S. Pissurlekar, Mr. Nuno Gonsalves, as well as government publications. To fill in the gaps in collection, the library also has exchange relations with universities all over India and a few foreign universities. Of course, the library also lends material to clients, locally and through ILL. There is a reading room that holds 50 students that is open around the clock. Nearly 400 students at a time can use the stacks. Students and faculty members of affiliated colleges of Goa University , Goa, and research scholars from different universities/institutions of India and abroad can also use the library's collections.

Promotion of Products and Services

GUL users can be divided into three segments: individuals, including post-graduate students, research scholars, faculty members, research associates and assistants, project assistants, and non-teaching staff; corporate and institutional members; and other libraries. Each segment has different needs. The services that the library offers must be made known to as many users as possible, so that they think of the library when they need information. The promotion plans used by GUL are discussed below.

Publicity

Wide publicity is given to GUL products and services by various advertising methods. For example, local newspapers and magazines are used for dissemination of information related to the various programmes and activities being performed by the library including the specific ventures such as conducting of the workshops/seminars/ refresher courses. The GUL conducts extension activities on various occasions such as National Library Week, Year of Books Programme, Goa Liberation Day, etc in order to improve upon the image of the library and invite the attention of the large community of the users of the library. Wider publicity is given for all the training programmes being conducted by the library in the field of information technology, library automation and networking, which is the most crucial and challenging job before the libraries in the modern world. The GUL has prepared very attractive information brochures with CD-ROM, and leaflets are distributed widely in order to catch the eye of the user community. The same are incorporated in its homepage for on-line users. GUL is one of the active partners of Million books on the web project located in Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA. Being the partner in this project, the GUL is considered favourably and its attention is being invited by the foreign universities to get the benefit of this project. GUL is also a host library of GOALNET (Goa Academic Libraries Network) and **is** monitoring searchable Union Public Access Catalogue of the member libraries in Goa and invite **s** attention from the Indian universities and institutions.

Public Relations

Mide publicity is given to GUL products and services by various advertising methods. For example, local newspapers and magazines are used for dissemination of information related to programmes and activities in the library, including the specific ventures such as workshops, seminars, and refresher courses. The GUL conducts extension activities on occasions such as National Library Week, Year of Books Programme, Goa Liberation Day, etc., in order to improve the image of the library and invite the attention of a large community of users. Wider publicity is given for information technology training programmes, and on library automation and networking. The GUL has prepared attractive brochures with CD-ROM, and leaflets are distributed widely in order to catch the eye of the user community. These are incorporated in its homepage for online users. GUL is one of the active partners of the Million books on the web project located at Carnegie Mellon University , Pittsburgh, PA, USA. GUL is also a host library of GOALNET (Goa Academic Libraries Network) and is monitoring a searchable union catalog of the member libraries in Goa.

Price

Price is important in marketing in the world of information as it is elsewhere. Kotler (1983) describes the 4 Ps of marketing: product, place, pricing, and promotion. He argued that the 4 Ps are a seller's paradigm and should be replaced with the 4 Cs of the buyer: customer value, user convenience, user cost, and user communication. Price can be expressed in currency; however, it can use goods or services. In the library, price can be used to express the value of information services: a physical product like a CD-ROM or a fee of a service or membership. Price is used to balance supply and demand, to be a stimulus, and to distribute income (Rowley 2001). GUL charges an annual library membership fee to different user groups: Post-graduate student: Rs. 400/-, M.Phil. scholar, Research assistant, Project assistant, and ex-students: Rs. 500/-, Ph.D. scholar: Rs. 750/-, General public: Rs. 400/-; Corporate and Affiliated college members: Rs. 5,000/-. An annual total of approximately Rs. 6,00,000/- is collected. A very small amount of income comes from photocopying services. GUL is considering charges for various library services. Discussions among the senior staff and consultation with the university authorities are under way to decide on pricing.

Conclusion

Libraries are being forced to explore the possibilities of cost recovery and profit potentials for their survival. Libraries must change according to changing market conditions. Libraries need to achieve an imaginative design of service and products, and develop communication methods and a feedback mechanism to improve service. Though the concept of charging for information, particularly in developing countries like India , is a difficult task, libraries must consider what funds that can be generated this way.

It must be carefully considered which services can have only a token price, which one cover a reasonable proportion of cost, and which can generate revenues. The impact of the information technology and the adoption of the marketing approach will help improve services for users and enhance the reputation of library and information services and professionals. Within 21 years of its establishment, GUL has found a place among the better known university libraries in India . After having been given a special appreciation and reward by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) of India , the library is poised to work with more zeal and dynamism to earn more on its services and achieve a special status in academic librarianship. GUL will grow and advance by watching user response. University authorities and faculty should also undertake marketing. That would strengthen the marketing plan of the library. As demands become increasingly complex, a strong commitment to marketing provides a means for the library to remain viable.

References

Corrall, S., & Brewerton, A. (1999). *The new professional's handbook: Your guide to information services management*. London: Library Association.

De Aze, E. E. (2002). Marketing concepts for libraries and information services. London: Library Association. <http://www.envisionit.com.au/Docs/gandhi.htm>, Accessed on: 4-12-2006.

Kotler, P. (1983). *Marketing for non-profit organizations*. 2nd ed, New Delhi: Prentice – Hall of India.

Kotler, P. (1999). *Marketing management: Analysis, planning, implementation, and control*. 8th ed., London: Prentice Hall.

Kemp. D.A. (1976). *The nature of knowledge: An introduction for librarians*. London: Clive Bingley.

Luck, D.J., et al. (1981). *Marketing researc*h. Prentice Hall of India, New Delhi.

Lemkan, H. L., Burrows, S., & LaAugust, R. (1985). Marketing information services outside the medical center, In: M. Sandra Wood, ed. *Cost analysis cost recovery marketing and fee-based services.* New York Haworth: 143-157.

Narayan, G.J. (1991). *Library and information management*. New Delhi: Prentice Hall.

Raina, R. (1998). Information marketing. *DESIDOC Bulletin of Information Technology 18*:3 pp. 3-5.

Rowley, J. (2001). *Information marketing*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Seetharama, S. (1998). *Libraries and information centers as profit making institutions*. New Delhi: Ess Ess Publishers.

Vishwa Mohan, V., Shrinivas, V., & Shashikala, E. (1996). Information marketing. In: H.S. Chopra, ed. *Information marketing*. Jaipur: Rawat: 15-24.

Weingand, D. (1995). Preparing for the new millennium: The case for using marketing strategies. *Library Trends 48* 3: pp. 295 -316.

Benchmarking Library Consumers of information services Cloud services Expert evaluation method. This is a preview of subscription content, log in to check access.

References. 1. Wann, J.-W., Lu, T.-J., Lozada, I., Cangahuala, G.: University-based incubators' performance evaluation: a benchmarking approach. Â Amos, H., Hart, S.: International collaboration for quality: a case study of fostering collaboration across an international network of University Libraries through an activity based benchmarking project. In: 34th Annual IATUL Conference Proceedings, Purdue e-Pubs (2013)Google Scholar. 7. Rzheuskiy, A., Kunanets, N.: The concept of benchmarking in the librarianship. Coll. Sci. Keywords: Marketing; Promotion; University libraries; Information services; Library services. Introduction. Â Information products and services in a multiplicity of formats have made libraries and information centres to publicize the arrival and existence of some of their resources to clientele. Â libraries do not market their information resources and services very well; this is responsible for the low patronage and underutilization of information resources and services by library clientele observed that marketing library and information is not practiced as expected, this statement is in line with the report of Kaur, Rani [3] that library resources are so expensive, but often remain underutilized resulting in. 1 Library Philosophy and Practice 2008 ISSN Marketing of Library and Information Services and Products in University Libraries: A Case Study of Goa University Library Dr. M. Madhusudhan Department of Library and Information Science Floor, Tutorial Building University of Delhi Delhi , India Contact No.: (O), (R), (M) Introduction Librarians and information specialists have debated the idea of marketing for the information sector. Several things have compelled us to learn about marketing and begin doing it. Â Information products and services in a multiplicity of formats have made libraries and information centres more competitive and alert. Libraries are being subjected to significant pressures from the information revolution. Information is power and libraries and information centers are the reservoir of this power. The marketing of information implies transference of information to the perspective or potential user for a consideration. Marketing of information is a set of activities by which information products and services are channeled to the potential users. The core of marketing concept is user oriented. Therefore marketing and its techniques if applied to library and information services can help in vital to fulfill the expected needs of information of the users. Marketing helps in increasing user satisfacti Introduction Librarians and information specialists have debated the idea of marketing for... Â Academic journal article Library Philosophy and Practice. Marketing of Library and Information Services and Products in University Libraries: A Case Study of Goa University Library. By Madhusudhan, M. Read preview. Article excerpt. Introduction. Librarians and information specialists have debated the idea of marketing for the information sector. Several things have compelled us to learn about marketing and begin doing it. Librarianship is experiencing rapid change. Information technology has created a new gateway for information services.