

Library marketing with social media: Mash-up services

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Abstract

As the library marketing and promotion always help libraries to reach to its end users. Libraries are always using various media like brochure, newsletters, broadcasting etc to promote its services and products. Due to Information and Communication Technology (ICT), libraries entire face change and also users demand change. Social media is widely used by community to interact, communicate, share and send information to each other. Social media is integral to market library resources and services, this paper will enlighten us with more detailed study on related techniques.

Keywords: Library Marketing, Social Media, Face-book, WhatsApp, Google+

1. Introduction

Library marketing and promotion always help libraries to reach to its end users. Libraries are always using various media like brochure, newsletters, broadcasting etc to promote its services and products. Due to Information and Communication Technology (ICT), libraries entire face change and also users demand change. Social media is widely used by community to interact, communicate, share and send information to each other. Social media is integral to market library resources and services. It offers more than just traditional ways of marketing and promoting of library services. It allows users to create, connect, converse, contribute, vote and share information. By using social media libraries can spread news about events of libraries and also alert users about publicized new acquired material by libraries. Different applications of social media are useful for libraries for obtaining their patrons feedback and to ensure the maximum engagement of their users in promotion of their product and services.

2. Need of Marketing

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. Marketing may be instrumental in maximum utilization of information products for which information centers have been investing huge amount of money, man power and time. Communication, visibility and customer orientation are key factors in successful marketing.

3. The Four P's of Marketing

According Wood the four Ps of customer-cantered marketing are product, price, place and promotion. This is also called the marketing mix.

- **Product:** The library's products include not only the books and materials that circulate but also information services, friendly professionals, comfort, and life-enhancing.

- **Price:** The price is what it actually costs to bring the product or service to the customer. "There is simply no profit-oriented business that does not know exactly what costs are involved in producing a product; such information is critical in order to establish a price tag for each item."
- **Place:** Place concerns where the product is offered. For libraries, place is obviously a building, but it also includes other points of access to library services including a bookmobile, the library's website, and accessibility for handicap patrons.
- **Promotion:** Promotion is the aspect of marketing which is most familiar to librarians. Promoting refers to getting the target audience to notice what the library has to offer them. Newspaper advertisements, flyers, mail-outs, and radio and TV commercials are part of promotion.

4. Traditional Way

Traditional media for marketing and promoting of library and information services and products are as follows.

- **Library Brochures:** It gives users outline about library, its services, products and rules of library.
- **Newsletters:** Newsletters give specialized information to limited audiences on a regular basis with short articles written in an informal style.
- **Posters:** Posters can often be first point of contact for a potential customer. They can be used for highlighting a particular services or event for a sustained campaign of information drip feeding. The idea is to broadcast a clear message to a group of people simple and cheaply.
- **Advertising:** It is an important tool for promotion of library and information services and product. The purpose of advertisement is to persuade people to act, by contacting you to talk about how you can help them.
- **LIS open sessions:** It is one effective way of raising the barrier between customer and service for special events out of our meetings, a chance to glass of wine. Customer meets to information staff to one to one basis and staff is able to concentrate their efforts on introducing explaining

the services that are of particular relevance to the customer.

- **Broadcasting:** It is good medium to use to get to a large audience at relatively little cost to LIS. Local Radio channel and TV can help in this matter.

5. Social Media Way

Social media is the interaction among people in which they create, share, or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Social media bring different community of people together in one centre place like libraries done and where they can share communicate with librarian hence we can say that in today's ICT era social media play an effective role for marketing and promoting library and information services.

Following are the some social networking sites which helps librarian to market and promote its product and services beyond the boundaries of libraries and hence it increases active participation and communication of library.

- **Face-book:** It is very user friendly and interactive social networking site for connecting library services to the users. With the help of Face-book libraries can advertise their upcoming events and also share the information about new arrivals and editions of books. Better and faster distribution of library newsletter uploading brochures about academic activities such as schedules of conference, seminar can be done in no time on Face-book.
- **Twitter:** It is kind of micro blogging application where short messages can be sent to destination. It helps to keep staff and user informed of the events and program of library, workshops, new arrivals and new services through short messages either through web or through SMS using a mobile phone with a limitation of 140 characters. It helps to provide online reference service. Twitter post can be linked to the home page of library blog posts, wiki, online archives for detailed information. It is highly effective for increasing library users.
- **LinkedIn:** It enables patrons to connect with subject specialists in their particular field of interest. It helps to provide selective dissemination of information service to users. LinkedIn can be used by libraries to create professional connections and to market library services among other professionals working in different libraries of the world and can also solicit their idea and professional experiences.
- **Ning:** Being an online platform Ning facilitates people to create custom social network where community web pages can be created and be connected through network. Communities on Ning can associate with online services like Face-book, twitter. People can create their own social network to build up discussion on a particular topic. Ning has a potential to converge their information professional together and thereby the marketing of information among the libraries would be much effective than ever. It works like a bride connecting librarians with users and library associations.
- **Flicker:** This application facilitates sharing images of library, cover page and content page images of new arrivals of books and journals can be diffused among the users community through Flicker. Academic events such as seminars, workshops and conferences through images may be shared to public for the awareness. Libraries can

use Flicker to upload library images and the picture of different services offered.

- **YouTube:** A popular audio visual application where videos can be uploaded, searched, accessed and downloaded throughout the world. Video clippings of documentary films of libraries and information centre give users a grid view of intact collection and environment of the library. The users can even comment on the video which may be considered for the feedback. Library products such as e-learning tutorials are promoted through virtual tour.
- **SlideShare:** It is a platform for slide hosting service. It allows users upload files privately or publicly which can be viewed by users. SlideShare has been playing a vital role in the field of education and e-learning. Sharing ideas, conducting research, connecting with others have been much effective through SlideShare. Anyone can view presentation and documents on topics that interest them, download them and reuse or remix for their own purpose. Presenting prepared slide that contain information about library products and service will notify every user who visits and shares.
- **Blog:** Here, librarians can periodically post messages; share information on a particular subject or issue, and allow users to contribute to content. They can write articles, news on topical issues and expect an instant reaction from their users.
- **What's App:** What's App Messenger is a proprietary, cross-platform instant messaging subscription service for smart phones that uses the internet for communication. IT is useful for libraries to market library reference / research services. It helps to keep staff and users informed about events, new arrival, and program of library, workshop and new services through short messages. It is also useful to send images, video and audio media messages of library program and activities using integrated mapping features.
- **Google+:** Google+ is a social networking and identity service that is owned and operated by Google Inc. It helps libraries to post upcoming events, programs of library, new arrivals of books. By Creating Circles library can send specific information to that group. User can also give their comment on library program and services. By using Hangout feature library can do video conferencing call to user to give information about activities of library.

6. Hurdles in Implementing

Most librarians in the developing countries are not aware of social networking services, even the few that are aware are still struggling to find out the productive uses of these sites for library services. Users are also not aware of the protocols involved in social communication. Many students and possibly even some of the academic staff may be unaware that there is a subject specialist in their discipline. Most institutions have limited bandwidth to support this practice. Poor connectivity can frustrate effective online participation. The low supply of electricity discourages people from participating in the online forum. Many librarians and users are afraid of handling computers. They make the traditional library services their comfort zone and are not eager to embrace change. Most librarians lack the 21st century skills that could be required to adopt the social networking tools for effective library services. Lastly, the free access to information where people copy, paste

and edit without acknowledging the authority is a serious challenge to copyright management.

7. Conclusion

Dynamics of LIS Marketing have significantly changed. Marketing is no longer confined to promotional effort but build on interaction with users, whether they are actual users or potential and are in library or outside. Social media is a vital tool for marketing and promoting of library services and products among new generation users and to creating user centered libraries. Social media helps librarian to communicate with end users and provide all information about library services and products. Social media helps librarian to satisfy the changing demand of users and save the time of users by providing user friendly interface. Social media marketing helps librarian to improve library services and increase the performance of library and its services.

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