CHAPTER-3

MARKETING OF INFORMATION:
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3.1 INTRODUCTION:

Information transfer and dissemination has been recognized as an essential element or input for all research and developmental activities in developing countries since a long time. Thus, libraries and information centers have been putting considerable efforts in designing of information products and services and distributing the same effectively.

The recognition of information as a basic research for development is comparatively new. Information has always been a resource, but considering it in the same economic context of materials or products is a recent recognition. “Putting information into work” has put this vital resource as an essential commodity, which unlike other commodities is not perishable. Creation of information is based on the utilization of existing information. It is considered a vital input to the economic, cultural and sociological development of human being. More and more attention is paid on its access and use. This necessitates the concept of marketing equally applicable to the area of information.

The library professionals can solve their problems of under utilization of library resources and services and user satisfaction by implementing the Marketing Techniques in library and information areas. Now it is very essential for library professionals to understand the concept, principles, strategy and
techniques of marketing so that they can implement these in libraries in appropriate manner.

The value of information is now more important than ever before because of the information explosion.

The two components, which have brought about the increased awareness of information and its role in society, are the computer and unprecedented improvement in telecommunication technology.

In fact the most important single factor, which has crystallized information, as a commodity has been the evident of the computer based on-line bibliographical database developed within the last decades.

Today the information industry has developed characteristics means of exchanging it, and are now widely recognized as being limiting factors in the economic and social development of peoples.

Information has been called a "commodity", "Public goods" one of the few things that does not diminish in value in proportion to the number of people who use it.

Information is needed for and affects all aspects of nation's life: cultural, social, economic, educational, scientific and technological. Without information, countries cannot develop, nor can they stay developed.

3.2 Information Marketing:

With this trend of development, it is inevitable that the concept of information market has been accepted. Weinstocks definition is much pertinent.
He says "marketing is a comprehensive, generic term dedicated to all the process and interactions resulting in both satisfaction of users' wants and the information firms requirement for profitable, growing revenues over the long term. In the case of the nonprofit information firm, the marketing aims may be the same; the difference arises in the difficulty of applying objective measures for measuring the "success" of the nonprofit venture". This means that marketing can be regarded as the link between institutions, which have goods and services to offer, and customers with needs and demands to satisfy.

With the advent of information technology (IT) the university libraries and information center have witnessed the speedy growth and importance of information in every corner of education. The use of information is now considerably increased then ever before. The two significant reasons, which have brought about the increased awareness of information and its role in university library, are computer technology and availability of information in electronic format. Thus, information, which is a dynamic factor for all decisions and policies, has rapidly changed due to, technological change. Information has been called a "commodity" a "public goods" one of the few thing that does not diminish in value in proportion in the number of people who use it.

The core of marketing in libraries is to provide its information services and products for the benefits of the library users. Librarians and information professionals are now more concerned about the design of information products, packing and delivery to the end users. Kotler and Leavy advances the thesis long back in 1969 that "marketing is not just a business function – it is a valid
function for non-business organization as well – and that all organizations have marketing problems and all need to understand marketing. And libraries are not an exceptions. After ten years of above statement Kotler\(^3\) (1979) again stressed, it appears that marketing for non-profit organizations is an idea whose time has come. Marketing offers a framework for organizing some information science problem. Its user oriented approach can contribute.

3.3 Meaning & Definitions:

Several definitions are available for marketing in the standard literature of business administration. While defining term marketing the Chartered Institute of Marketing at UK “marketing is the management process which identifies, anticipates and supplies customer requirement efficiently and profitably.”

Weinstock’s\(^5\) definition is more realistic, when he says “Marketing is a comprehensive, generic term dedicated to all the process and interactions resulting in both satisfaction of users’ wants and the information firm’s requirement for profitable, growing revenues over the long term. In case of the non-profit information firm, the marketing aims may be the same; the difference arises in the difficulty of applying objective measures for measuring the ‘successes of the non-profit venture’

In other words, it can be said that the marketing is a link between university libraries and its users, the former have goods and services to offer, and later with needs and demands to satisfy. Proposing a model for marketing of information based on the common group between information work and network
Mozota\textsuperscript{6} emphasis that information professionals still suffer from a restrictive definition of marketing and should re-orient themselves from product to market and then to strategic marketing based on relationships and exchange. Modern definition of marketing is an on-going process of:

1- Discovering and translating consumers needs and desires into products and services (through planning and producing the planned products);

2- Creating demand for these products and services (through promotion and pricing);

3- Serving the consumer demand (through planned physical distribution) with the help of marketing channels; and

4- Expanding the market even in the face of keen competition.

3.4 NEED

The need of application of marketing in university libraries and information centers are accentuated by the reality the “librarians are asked to downsize, economize and streamline, while they are simultaneously expected to provide the fastest and most expensive hardware and software so as to make the information marketplace accessible.”\textsuperscript{7} Marketing is a process of finding and encouraging marketer to market their product. Marketing concepts and techniques can contribute a dynamic approach to total strategy development, which will ensure effective management, the achievement of goals and creation of a confident blueprint for the future\textsuperscript{8}. Librarians and information professional must harness marketing concepts and techniques to their other very considerable powers if
their services are to survive and prosper\textsuperscript{9}. Marketing requires managerial commitment and an organizational structure capable of achieving carefully formulated objectives\textsuperscript{10}.

In university library marketing is equipment for strategic change. Marketing is a planned approach to identifying and gaining the support of the community and then developing appropriate services in a manner that benefits the users, and further the aim and objective of the information service\textsuperscript{11}. The reading material of the past experience shows that libraries and librarians have an enormous capacity to change and adapt.

\subsection{3.5 Objectives}

Objectives are plans that state how attainment of a goal is to be measured and judged. The role of objectives is to satisfy a direct observable and quantified result. University libraries are major academic community whose purpose is to enable and encourage individuals to gain unbiased access to the book, information, knowledge and work of creative imagination. The objectives of information marketing are:

i. To provide information to users to make positive contribution to the development of a learning society;

ii. To provide information to develop the capabilities, the enterprise and interpersonal skills of students;

iii. To provide updated information to users so that they become effective information handlers and independent learner;
Assured or brings about success to the organization but ‘promotional activities’ duly equipped with marketing tools and techniques are equally important.

In the same way university libraries realized that library services are valued more highly by the users then the quality of the collection. University libraries are now recognizing that library users must be made aware of the range of available library services/product. The difference between selling and marketing is an important issue for the library services because many libraries are still selling-orientation rather then marketing-orientation. Most of the university libraries do not back-up this interest in needs by an integrated marketing endeavor—a marketing strategy in which all library department recognize the need to create, retain and satisfy library users and top management develops strategies to achieve them.

3.6 Attributes of marketing:

Attributes of marketing are the important factors, which played an important role in formulation of strategic market plans of a non-profit organization like university library. The basic attributes of information marketing and its services/products for university library are as listed below:

- Consumer / User
- Product
- Promotion
➢ Price
➢ Profit
➢ Proper feedback
➢ Budget
➢ Acquisition and dissemination of new product and services
➢ Stimulation for the use of new product and service
➢ Expenditure
➢ Cost effectiveness
➢ Updates of information

3.7 Information Agents:

The term “information agent” is not alien for libraries it is frequently used in information science literature. The emergence of the ‘information agents’ may be attributed to two fundamental charges in the information science. First and foremost due to technological development, which enable information to be processed quickly and be delivered to the end user in a very short time. The second thing is to change in research tendencies from discipline oriented to mission-oriented and to what Richard Boss referred to as problem-oriented research\textsuperscript{12}.

Cuadra\textsuperscript{13} mentioned in 1967 “another change that I see in the area of pointing to information is more economic than technological”. I see information brokerage becoming a viable type of business. An individual broker will have a clientele whose interest keeps track of and then provides particular bits of
information on for each of these individuals, using the year 2000's equivalent of scissors and paste Cuadra's forecasting becomes unrealistic, for this new species of information specialists are today actively providing what they call information on demand to a variety of information users^{14}. These developments might facilitate the resources of the information agent.

3.8 Target Market.

The term 'Target Market' in LIS is used for the people using the library. The market forces of university library are clienteles they serve. Target market is specific group of people whose needs and wants have to fulfill within the market segment. The marketer keeps in mind that products/services should be specific and fit for the needs of individuals within the market segment; select a right size of market; with cost-effective ways and means to reach to the target market; awareness about the potential changes over a time due to current needs and entrant of new IT; uses different methodology and promotional method to identify a target market. Stressing the importance of a target market Wood^{15} suggested five rules for identifying a target market:

a) Be Specific

b) Think big

c) Be realistic

d) Remember the future

e) Identifying multiple options
3.9 Need of Target Market:

The need for identifying a target market is rationale in university libraries primarily to enhance the capacity and capability of managing the library services in the IT environment. In university library, the main activities identify target market is:

i. Identify users unfulfilled needs

ii. Products and services

iii. Pricing

iv. Delivery

v. Communication

vi. Feedback

3.10 Major Channels of Distribution:

The information professional has to project the information service to its intended users through some distribution channels. In the modern library context, there are large varieties of distribution channels available for this purpose. Each medium has varying impact on the library users. Without distribution the library marketing cannot achieve it purpose. "Distribution" by the businessman, means distribution of information to those users who need, it serves as the bridge between information production and consumption\textsuperscript{16}. Also it means as interplay among information seekers, and the society as a whole\textsuperscript{17}. 
Saracevic and Wood have identified the following major channels of dissemination.

i. Interpersonal Delivery: Products personally delivered either on request or in anticipation of a need. It is the most costly and time-consuming method.

ii. Group Personal Delivery: products delivered to a whole group of users at meetings, conferences, seminars, demonstration, etc.

iii. Strategic Placement: products placed at strategic locations.


v. Local depositories: products through cooperative arrangements with an information system.

vi. Mass media: dissemination through newspaper, professional journals, magazines etc., and products to be in narrative style.

vii. Broadcasting: radio and television

viii. Mailing: sending of products through postal means.

ix. Telephone: telephonic quarries.

x. Computer Network: latest means of information technology such as Online access, Inter-Net, LAN, CD-ROM, e-mail etc.

The above all appropriate distribution channels can be utilized in the university libraries for effective information services.

3.11 Marketing for Users Satisfaction.

One of the important role of marketing is satisfying human needs. These needs are dependent upon the location, situation and the quality of the services
offered. Marketing is a subject of growing interest to managers of non-profit making organizations, basic marketing concept includes:

1. Customer's satisfaction.

2. Exchange of interests and the library's public

3. Organizational responsiveness and intelligent customer.¹⁹

All individuals are the ultimate authority on what will satisfy their needs, according to marketing theories, "Many librarians have failed to understand this marketing precept Cronin²⁰, an expert in information services, define the marketing as customer's satisfaction, according to him major objective of marketing "can be summed up as the process of customer-satisfaction."

So marketing can be considered by the university libraries as an activity which:

1. Monitors the needs of its users.

2. Matches itself and its products or services with identified needs of the customer, so as to satisfy them.

3. Subsequently makes itself known by communicating with customers, and

4. Finally, measures customer satisfaction in order to make any necessary adjustments²¹.

Dragon²² concludes "librarians can no longer assume that the public will continue to accept increases in taxation for the support of libraries with no promotional endeavors. Positive action using marketing techniques must be taken to attract the tax dollar. Failure to recognize need for such an approach will
lead the library to loose to other competitors like high school marching bonds and public courses.” Any library that attempts to influence the behavior of the public is involved in marketing. The market-oriented will be an important source for satisfying the needs of certain sectors of the public.

3.12 Ingredients of Marketing:

Marketing includes all those functions concerned with determining and influencing the present and potential demand of the products/services in the market place and supplying products and services to satisfy these demands. In libraries a need to carry out certain marketing functions is observed in order to achieve exchanging process more effective.

Libraries have to ensure that they have established contact in search of what library user wants, when and where they want is and simultaneously provided it. “The 4-Ps” of Marketing Mix according to Philip Kotler is the key to marketing strategy. These are consists of Product, Place, Price and Promotion. Patricia G.Olyer, in her two day workshop on ‘Library Marketing at the SNDT Women’s University Bombay (7-8 Sept.) 1992) added two more Ps and these are “Prelude (preparations) and Postlude (evaluation).

➢ Product,
➢ Place,
➢ Promotion and
➢ Price
These form what is known as the marketing mix and it is organization marketing strategy which ensures that the 'four parts of the mix are in appropriate proportions to the particular marketing situation with a full consideration of each of the tools of the marketing mix and conscious, planned, decisions as to how much of each component should be brought together order to achieve the library and information center's objectives.\(^{23}\)

In university library product refer to library services and other offered, the methods they are offered and status of service. Price refers to the whether any fee is attached to that product / service. Place refers to service point or its locations. Promotion means publicity campaign the message communicated, types of my media used for promotional activity.
Reference:


3. Ibid.


6. Mozotu B.B. A draft conceptionsal Model for the marketing of Information services (Esquissed' un model e coneption marketing data documentation) "Documentalisete" V.-34 No.- 1 Jan.//Feb. 1997, pp-4-9.


