Marketing of Information Products and Services: A Study of Science Libraries in Karnataka State

by

Ravichandra Naika
Librarian, Government First Grade College Kanyoor, Puttur – 574328, D K, Karnataka

Under the guidance of
Dr. Khaisar Muneebulla Khan, Associate Professor,
Department of Library and Information Science, Mangalore University,
Mangalagangothri, Mangalore, Karnataka

Keywords Marketing, Library Services, Library Products, Marketing Strategies, Marketing Plan, Science Libraries, Marketing of Library Service, Marketing of Library Products

ABSTRACT

Introduction Libraries and information centres have began to realise that marketing of information products and services is an integral part of administration and management, especially as a means for improving user satisfaction and promoting the use of services, to existing and potential users. Marketing helps in gaining new users and serve better its existing users by developing new services, and maximising the use of library and information products and services.

In view of the above, the need is felt to make a study of the marketing of information of products and services adopted in the science libraries, the study is intended to know the extent to which the science libraries can provide products and services through marketing. Further, it was felt necessary to find out the significance of marketing the information products and services in the science libraries and also to identify the problems for marketing in science libraries. On the basis of these, to give suggestions for the optimum utilisation of resources and services by marketing them.

The title of the study is “Marketing of Information Products and Services: A Study of Science Libraries in Karnataka State”

Objectives of the Study
- To know the need and importance of marketing in science libraries
- To examine the resources and facilities of the library and information service for marketing in the science libraries under the study
- To understand the attitudes of librarians towards the different aspects of marketing
- To determine the extent to which the principles of marketing are put into actual practice in science libraries
- To study the user satisfaction relating to the marketing of information products and services in science libraries
- To suggest measures for the effective marketing of information products and services in science libraries to optimum use

Hypotheses of the Study
- H1 There exists significant relationship in the effective use of information products and services, and user education for marketing
- H2 Providing quality service, maintaining user relations, and setting up a customer friendly system is only possible from the staff that is trained in marketing techniques
H3 Lack of awareness on the marketing of information products and services has led to the under use of science libraries

H4 The marketing of information products and services has an impact on the user satisfaction of science libraries

H5 Marketing of information products and services change the traditional library system of science libraries

Scope and Limitation of the Study The study covers scientists and research scholars of the science libraries (R&D) in Karnataka state. The study is limited to the science libraries that are attached to 72 Central Government Research Institutions, including public sector industries according to the 'Directory of Research and Development Institutions 2010 published by NSTMIS Division, Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India on marketing of their information products and services

Methodology The researcher adopted the survey method along with literature search to collect the primary data needed for the study, so undertaken. To conduct the survey, a questionnaire was designed and distributed among the librarians and users. As a follow up the researcher conducted personal interviews based on the inputs acquired from the questionnaire. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was followed by the investigator as it helps to represent the population proportionately

Population of the Study According to formula developed by the 'Research Division of National Education Association, USA the sample size for 17,682 Population of the study it is 377. However, it was decided that on the basis of the ratio of total number of scientists and research scholars, the sample size to be increased proportionally. Hence, totally 1,000 questionnaires were considered as sample. The total population of the study was 17,682, including 10,173 (57.5%) scientists and 7,509 (42.5%) research scholars. A total of 1,000 of questionnaires were distributed in which 575 scientists and 425 research scholars. A total of 499 (86.8%) scientists and 310 (72.9%) research scholars responded to the questionnaire

Major Findings
- It is observed that besides Internet, the institutional library plays a very important role in providing information to the users of science libraries
- Maximum number of users i.e., 575 (71.1%) respondents use the library resources to keep abreast with the latest development
- There are 320 (39.6%) respondents opined that print resources are an important source of information in fulfilling their requirements
- It is found that highest number, i.e., 278 (34.4%) respondents opined that electronic resources play an important role in providing information.
- It is noted that highest number of user i.e., 688 (85.0%) respondents are getting the benefits of user education programme
- The significant number of the respondents, i.e., 300 (37.4%) both scientists and research scholars opined that user education is an effective tool to market library products and services
- The study indicate that 31 (49.2%) of the respondents opined that they have an adequate library collection
- It is noticed from results that 38 (60.3%) science libraries do not have a planned strategy on the marketing of library products and service
- It can be seen that 47 (74.6%) library professionals did not participated in any type of training
- A total of 589 (72.8%) respondents are aware about the marketing of library and information services
- It is significant to note that 456 (56.3%) respondents expressed overall satisfaction with their institutional libraries
Findings in relation to Hypotheses
- The hypothesis (1) there exists significant relationship in the effective use of information products and services and user education for marketing is sustained
- The hypothesis (2) Providing quality service, maintaining user relations, and setting up customer friendly system is only possible from the staffs who have trained in marketing techniques is sustained
- The hypothesis (3) Lack of awareness on the marketing of information products and services has led to the under use of science libraries is not valid and therefore is not sustained
- The hypothesis (4) the marketing of information products and services has an impact on the user satisfaction in science libraries is sustained
- The hypothesis (5) Marketing of information products and services change the traditional library system of science libraries is not sustained and invalid

Suggestions
- The study suggested that the library professional should plan systematically for new products and services for optimum utilisation
- The study recommended that to provide planned user education programme regarding it’s use
- The study suggests creating awareness about library products and services by introducing new methods of marketing techniques
- The study recommended that each science library should conduct market research to get feedback from the users
- It is suggested that the products and services should reach both existing and new users
- The librarian should encourage to professional colleagues to improve their marketability and should adopt technological changes
- The parent institutions of science libraries should create marketing awareness & environment and customer friendly service oriented training programmes for the staff

Organisation of the study: The study is divided into six chapters

Chapter 1: The first chapter gives the introduction of the present study

Chapter 2: This chapter deals with a review of the literature related to the present study

Chapter 3: Chapter 3 provides an overview of the concept of marketing in libraries

Chapter 4: Chapter 4 gives the physiological and demographical features of the R&D institutions in Karnataka state

Chapter 5: The Chapter 5 is data analysis and interpretation

Chapter 6: This chapter presents the findings, suggestions, and conclusion

Conclusion: The successful application of marketing principles, marketing plan, and marketing strategies approach can assist science libraries in the task of designing, developing, and delivering appropriate information services and products. However, continuous efforts are required for customer satisfaction, and providing quality services, and active promotion is needed to ensure growth of research and knowledge for the optimum use of their services. This can be developed through staff trained in marketing and motivating the staff and maintaining standards in achieving marketing objectives. Further, the parent body of the science libraries needs to earmark an adequate budget for marketing activities in their libraries.