Assessment of Marketing Strategies Used for Marketing Information Resources and Services in University of Nigeria Library, Nsukka

[1]**Abdulsalami T. Lucky, [2]Isaac Mamo Umar**

[1]Department of Library and Information Science, Lafia, Nasarawa State. Nigeria.
[2]College of Agriculture, Lafia. Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Corresponding Author: luckyabdulsalami@gmail.com

Abstract

This study was carried out to assess the marketing strategies used for marketing information resources and services by the University of Nigeria Library, Nsukka. To achieve this, three research questions were raised and answered: What are the information resources and services available in UNN libraries, Nsukka?, What are the marketing strategies used in UNN libraries, Nsukka?, What are the challenges encountered in marketing the information resources and services to users in UNN libraries, Nsukka? Survey research design was adopted for the study and questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. 146 respondents were used for the study. The study discovers that: the major strategy used in marketing of the information resources and services are the use of librarians to inform their colleagues (faculty members) and students, library notice board, electronic mails, library website and mobile phone. The study recommends that librarians should be taught marketing concepts through workshops and in-house training. This should be done regularly and the University library should as a matter of urgency organise a user education programme, this could be in form of a course in all the departments within the University while orientation programme could be organised for students.

Keywords: Marketing Strategies, Information Resources, Services, University, Library

Introduction

University libraries by their very nature according to Aguolu, (2009) are expected to acquire, process into retrievable form and make available the much needed information to the academic community and the public at large who may require them for their various teaching and research activities. The accomplishment of this function depends on the available stock of information products in the university libraries. Such information products include textbooks, journals, indexes and abstracts, monographs, theses and dissertations, newspapers and magazines, government publications, research and technical reports, encyclopedias, manuscripts, publications of international organizations, patents and standards as well as microforms. The efficiency and effectiveness of the library as a tool of Research and

Learning is determined by the success of providing patrons with relevant and timely information. Previously, libraries measured their successes based on completeness and balance of collection. In recent times, the focus has changed towards technology driven service delivery. Dadzie (2005), asserts that for information to be optimally used, it must have the following qualities: relevance, accuracy, timeliness, currency, completeness, clarity and cost effectiveness.

Marketing of Library and Information Services is the process of planning; pricing, promoting, and distributing library products to create "ex-changes" that satisfy the library and the customer. Kotler (2007), states that 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. It relies heavily on designing the organization's offering in terms of target market's needs and desires and as using effective pricing, communication and distribution to inform, motivate and serve the markets."

Marketing is frequently viewed as a set of strategies and techniques that belong to administrators other than librarians. However, librarians are involved in the process of marketing. Marketing is the management process which identifies, anticipates and supplies customer requirements efficiently. Thus, the essence of marketing involves finding out what the users want, and setting out to meet those needs. Librarians participate in this process of assessing their users' needs and trying to fulfill them. Thus, we are already marketing our library information skills. However, in order to do this effectively librarians need to embrace the total marketing function involving market research and analysis, service planning and promotion.

Problem Statement

Information professionals must understand that it is essential to actively market their services. Library marketing is critical for any information professional in order to spread the word about their library. It does not matter the library type, or how large or small the library is, the library needs to draw the attention of their users to the library, and to their products and services. It is important to understand the organization's mission to produce effective marketing material that will build the library's brand and image and differentiates library from its competitors. Today, libraries and information organizations have to act as important agent to attracting the users. Therefore, marketing is the way forward in transforming libraries for the future. Organizations such as museums, academic libraries, special libraries, public libraries etc. need to market their courses and their products to gain political and social support as well as economic support. Marketing is a means of ensuring that libraries, librarians, and librarianship are integrated into both today's and tomorrow's emerging global culture.

In most libraries today users have migrated to the use of Internet. Internet has become their preferred point of call when they need information. Most staff have

internet connection in their offices while students rely on the internet connectivity of their library or their modern or hotspot of their mobile system. Users most times find it difficult to visit the library. This state of affair is further compounded by the library itself as it has failed to notify its users of its collections; both print and electronic. The library has acquired and subscribed to more information resources and databases and the users are yet to be aware of these developments. The marketing strategies the library uses in notifying its users on the availability of information resources and services include putting such information on Notice Boards in the library, the use of Banners and fliers, and in some cases exhibitions that take place in the library. These strategies are all applied in the library premises and users rarely come to the library. Perhaps an assessment of these marketing strategies would provide an insight into ways of bringing these information resources and services to the notice of the users.

Research Questions
The following are the research questions raised for this study:
1. What are the information resources and services available in UNN libraries, Nsukka?
2. What are the marketing strategies used in UNN libraries, Nsukka?
3. What are the challenges encountered in marketing the information resources and services to users in UNN libraries, Nsukka?

The Concept of Information Resources and Services
Information is a vital instrument for planning and decision-making in any society. For information to be met and felt, marketing of information resources and services must be accurate, up-to-date, complete and relevant. Information is packaged into various formats for use by various producers. Libraries are repository of knowledge; resources (products) acquired into the library and used to render services to the various categories of users in particular type of libraries. Information resources are the procedures, the equipment and facilities, software and data which are designed, built, operated and maintained to collect, record, process, store, retrieve, display and transmit information. Alemna (2001), states that Library and information resources include materials such as books, periodical and audio visual materials that are provided for use of clientele. The materials are usually housed in a building, systematically arranged for easy retrieval.

Today, information materials which exist in organizations especially libraries will be valueless unless it is put to use. It is an item of knowledge which can be communicated concerning same particular fact, subset or event. Information is knowledge which is transferred from person to another to encourage action or decision making. Organizations can hardly survive without free flow of information in order to carry out the work. According to De Aze (2005), information resources and services which provide benefits to users and answer users' most important needs are the core business of the library and information service. These products appear as

a response to user priorities in the form of commercial intelligence, educational, leisure, recreational or social information. All of the services offered by the library: lending services, inter library loan, on-line searching, house-bound-readers services, picture loans etc. are library's products that can be marketed successfully. Product concept in information sector is spread out over three levels; core level, tangible level, and augmented level. Library can provide bibliographic information, abstracts and summaries of information, which disseminate the core level information. Books, databases, journals, bulletins, etc. represent the tangible information. Library can also augment information through quality, reliable, speedy and timely professional services. Aguolu (2005), negates that the library's product can be arranged within a three dimensional structure of the product mix, product line, and product item. Under the product mix 'collection' of the library represents as a product line. Product items include books, periodicals, videos, films, audio recordings etc. For another fact, services of the library can be considered as a product line and the circulation of library materials, Inter Library Lending (ILL), reference services, and on-line searching represent product items. Programmes of the library would be another product line where a product item comprises bibliographic instructions, displays, and lectures. Information resources, while they vary according to the scope and objectives of the library, can be identified in physical forms and intangible forms.

According to Kendadamath (2010), university libraries' products and services are books, periodicals, reports to electronic documents and circulation, interlibrary loan, reference service to international databases, online searches and CD-ROM searches respectively. Also, Kaur and Rani (2007) listed information products and services being enjoyed in some universities as current awareness bulletins, results of literature search, new additions list, bibliographical lists, information bulletins, selective dissemination of information bulletins, news bulletins, directories, abstracts, indexes and photocopying, literature search, current awareness service, circulation of periodical contents, selective dissemination of information, reference service, notification about conferences/seminars/workshop, abstracting services, notification about newly published research, translation services, indexing services, interlibrary loan, standards information, patent information repackaging and condensation, and newspaper clippings respectively. Library information products consist of books- fiction and non-fiction, serials, grey literature (printed and electronic) while information services consist of circulation service, reference service, current awareness service, selective dissemination of information, bindery and photocopying services etc.

Information Resources and Services Provision in Libraries

The most important objective to academic libraries is the provision of adequate and right resource information at the right time for its patrons. According to Abdulsalami and Dika (2017), provision of information resource does not only enhance library users ability to manage, locate and evaluate information in the libraries but it also assists them to use information for problem solving, research,

decision making and continued professional development and also making information accessible and easy to understand the goal of the library everywhere. Increased access to technology has altered the way students and other library users' use/study within and outside the libraries, while the variety of electronic resources has widened the potential resources base for all library users. These developments have reduced face to face teaching/learning in the library and the need to visit the library building for help. It has also meant that librarians need to alter the way they plan and acquire or collect information resources. A library's efficiency can be judged by its ability to provide information whenever they are required by it patrons in acquiring materials, academic librarians try to anticipate users' needs.

Librarians are information resource experts dedicated to putting knowledge to work to attain the goals of their organizations. They create and provide easy accessibility to information resources for their users such as building a dynamic collection of information resources based on a deep understanding of clients' information need and training. Since knowledge has become the driving force for societal development, the attention of the society to information and knowledge is viding and peoples demand for information and knowledge are increasing step by step. This has provided good environment for library development (Abdulsalami and Abdulsalami, 2013).

The emergence of computer technology and computing capabilities, knowledge is still considered more important resource for development than raw or unprocessed data and information. Moreover, as information resources have become an important productive factor for the modern economic system, the society will inevitably require intensified management of information resource. It is now the duty of academic librarians to strategize mean of providing quality and effective resource management to library users in the digital age. Similarly, to Eden (2010), the librarians are expected to continuously enhance their capabilities and strategies in order to improve productivity, efficiency and competitiveness in the knowledge of economy in order to meet the changing needs of library users. In the provision of the right information resources and services by libraries, the libraries need to take in consideration the needs of its users.

Marketing Strategies for Information Resources and Services in Libraries

Marketing is the management process which identifies, anticipates and supplies customer requirements efficiently. The essence of marketing involves finding out the users want, then setting out to meet those needs (Sharma and Bhardwaj, 2009). Satisfying the customer need is the primary concern in the marketing process. According to Ravichandran and Baba (2008), marketing of library and information services is the process of planning, pricing, promoting, and distributing library products to create exchanges that satisfy the library and customer. Librarians must therefore, strive to meet the needs of users rather than just providing products and services. The concept of marketing library and information services and products is catching on in many libraries worldwide. It has now been realized that marketing information services and resources is essential for all

information providers if they are to continue to exist (Alemna, 2001). Alemna further stated that, many profit-making organizations are now involved in the provision of information services and products on a scale equivalent to that being done by the libraries. This phenomenon has slightly increased the number of competitors in the information market. The emerging technological challenges and societal changes also pose an unprecedented threat to the continued survival of libraries as worthy information providers.

According to Nwegbu (2005), the essence of marketing as applicable to libraries is designing and presenting the library books and non-books materials in terms of the needs and desires of the users of the library and using effective techniques to motivate, inform and service the library clientele both present and potential. According to Makori (2010), marketing helps university libraries to market and promote information products and services, provide innovative products and services, understand the needs and demands of the information audience or user population, plan service provision, and provide efficient and effective information products and services. Although the idea of marketing library services is still new to the Nigerian scene, it has become clear that libraries have no other choice than to market their products and compete in the electronic information market. Academic libraries in Nigeria need to aggressively pursue the issue of marketing information products and services in ensuring maximum use of needed resources by library patron. Effective marketing of information products and services in libraries and information centers face some challenges.

According to Alemna (2001), "many librarians still hold myopic view that their services and products are so essential that people will use them as they have always done without any additional effort on their part". They erroneously assume that users' needs are also satisfied because they come to use the library. Librarians must wholly adopt the concept of marketing in their activities since marketing focuses entirely on the users. Kumbar (2004) opined that, "most librarians do not market their libraries, and those universities that tend to do so, do not know how to market, or do not know how to do it well". No matter the case or cases, librarians and informational professionals must adopt marketing techniques into their daily activities.

Availability of Information Resources and Services

Traditionally, libraries are repositories of information and knowledge, and librarians served as mediators between the users and the information in their custody. Ifidon (2005), argues that "handbills, user education, billboards, signs for direction, print and electronic media to be identified announcements, films and cassettes, lectures and talks were used in some Nigerian universities in promoting their products and services". Popoola (2008) discovers that, faculty members do not have sufficient knowledge of those library products and services pertinent to their teaching and research activities in Nigerian universities. Effective marketing provides the means by which users are made aware of the services of the library and

their value. Promotional techniques are the various means of making products and services availability made known to the various users or customers in an organization. Production of brochures and posters, campaign to Business Corporations, library tours, library and advertisements in newspapers, business magazines, television and radio and participation in the trade or business exhibitions are various promotional strategies being used in the promotion of Information Technology products.

Library as an aspect of public relations incorporates the interaction between the library and its customers. Public relations involve the interpersonal contact, which is to develop the communication of trust, mutual respect, perception, attitude and opinion to communicate the benefit of the library and its products. This associates a wide range of practice like editorial coverage of press, publishing of in-house journals, staff magazines, newsletters, and other publications. Library's image is developed through calendars, logos, letterheads, etc. Relationship with media is an important vehicle for the publicity and library personnel can produce seasonal press releases. Media interviews, bookmarks, posters, and displays are also tools for the publicity (Abdulsalami and Abdulsalami, 2013).

Customer Care according to Abdulsalami and Dika (2017), is another tool for the promotion of the library. This implies the training of staff to take client's attention to the library. Needs are fulfilled by setting priorities than insisting to apply the rule. Customer-care deals also with complaints and, this causes the user to become more loyal advocate of the service. As another tool for promotion of the library, personal selling involves the presentation of conference papers, seminars, lectures, demonstrations, exhibitions, and other presentations. Sales force should be carefully recruited and administrated. Library promotes its services through extension services such as library visits, ceremonies, seminars, book exhibitions, contests, rewarding functions, get-togethers, and sponsorship programmes. User education and current awareness services play the role of advertising and personal selling. Library can communicate through various modes of messaging through oral, written or electronic (Abdulsalami and Salami, 2013).

Challenges of Marketing Information Resources and Services

Librarians are dealing with strategic important resources called "information" and are well recognized for services. They have users who have the needs for information and are willing to use the library whenever the need arises. Eden (2010), acknowledges that they are satisfied with the service, and can recommend others to use the library that pay attention to their needs. The library and its users are natural partners. But, the customer does not see what he or she will get prior to being presented with the information. On taking the enquiry, the information provider may not know for the fact that the information being requested is available. Libraries are the best institution for marketing among non-profit service organizations. Here, the important thing is to see the benefits from the point of view of users and communicate in the way they can understand.

The public image of the library comes through experiences or moments of truth when users really come into contact. All promotions, advertisements and promises, will be wasteful if we are unable to transform these experiences into pleasant ones and that too from user's point of view. The deciding factors are our own attitude and our commitment to the community. Those who work in the library are the greatest marketing forces in the libraries. Marketing helps show a library staff's expertise, further an organization's mission, promote productivity quickly and efficiently finding the right information at the right time, and add value to an organization's products.

Methodology

Survey research design was adopted for this study. This is because descriptive study uses the sample data of an investigation to document, describe and explain phenomenon being investigated. The entire library staff of University of Nigeria, Nsukka, comprising about 146 is the target populations. Because of the manageable size, the researchers used all the population as the sample size representing 100%. The descriptive statistical tools were used and analyzed the data collected. The data analysed were presented using distribution tables, frequencies and percentages

Results and Discussion

Response Rate

The respondents for this research were randomly selected with the aim of providing an accurate marketing view of staff of the library. Out of the one hundred and forty-six (146) questionnaires distributed for this research, only one hundred and thirty-two (132) were properly filled and returned for analysis. The responses were presented on the tables below

Table 1: The Information Resources and Services Available in University of Nigeria Libraries, Nsukka

Options	Responses	Percentage
Print book, references materials	132	100
Total	132	100
Non-print, films, videos, Audio cassettes etc.	132	100
Total	132	100
Electronic databases, library websites, computer, radio, TV etc.	132	100
Current awareness services, Exhibition service, Film show services, Orientation/instruction services, Use of referral services	132	100
Total	**132**	**100**

Table 1, indicates that there are print books, non-print, electronic information resources and Current awareness services, Exhibition service, Film show services, Orientation/instruction services, Use of referral services exist in University of Nigeria library. This is because 100% of the respondents agreed to all the options of information resources and services that existed in UNN library.

Table 2: **Marketing Strategies Used in UNN Library**

Options	Responses	Percentage
colleagues (course mate)	30	22.72
Library notice board	28	21.21
Library websites	16	12.12
Mobile phone	10	7.57
Library newsletter	4	3.03
Face to Face with Librarians	12	9.09
Electronic Mail	15	11.36
SMS	17	12.87
Total	**132**	**100**

Table 2, shows that 30(22.72%) of the respondents opine that most students that patronize the university library are notified of new available arrivals (information resources) in UNN by the librarians to students and from students to their colleagues or course mates, 28(21.21%) respondents posit that library notice board are used to notified clients of resources of the library, 17(12.87%) through the library SMS. 16(12.12%) through the library website. The table further shows that electronic mails consisting 15(11.36%) are used. 12(9.09%) opine using face to face conversation with clients, 10(7.57%) opine the use of mobile phone, while 4(03%) opine they use the library newsletter to market library products to their users.

Table 3: Challenges of Marketing Information Resources and Services in UNN Library

Challenges	Responses	Percentage
Library notice board	15	11.36
Library websites	14	10.60
Mobile phone	13	9.84
Library newsletter	7	5.30
Electronic Mail	10	7.57
SMS	12	9.09
Power Failure	17	12.87
Non-current information	12	9.09
Motivation (staff)	10	7.57
Training and retraining	9	6.81
Reviewing Library Policy	13	9.84

Total   132   100

Table 3, shows some challenges encountered in providing/marketing information resources and services to the clientele of University of Nigeria Nsukka., according to the data collected one of the major challenges is the power failure 17(12.87%) noted that interruption of power supply has prevents librarian most times from marketing its products to her customers: This was followed by 15(11.36%) library notice board, Low bandwidth 14(10.60%), library web site 13(9.84%), mobile phone, bad network failure (SMS) 12(9.09%), Electronic mails and staff motivation 10(7.57%), 9(6.81%) adduce that librarians need training and retraining on new modern marketing system and Library newsletter 7(5.30%). relationship between users and staff.

Summary of Findings
The summary of the findings were drawn in line with the research questions:
1. That print and non-print information resources (references materials, textbooks, films, videos, Audio cassette) and Current awareness services, Exhibition service, Film show services, Orientation/instruction services are available inUniversity of Nigeria library, Nsukka
2. Notice board, SMS, library website and electronic mails are the marketing strategies used by the UNN library, Nsukka.
3. The challenges encountered by UNN library in marketing information resources and services are power supply, library notice board, less effective of library web site due to low bandwidth,

Conclusion

Libraries have been considered essential to educational and research endeavors and have relied on institutional financial support for their continuing operations. Librarians, directors of libraries are competing with multiple demands for funding on their campuses. From the responses of the respondent. There are print books, non-print, electronic information resources and Current awareness services, Exhibition service, Film show services, Orientation/instruction services, Use of referral services exist in University of Nigeria library. Librarians also notify clients of new arrival through colleagues/students, library website, library SMS and electronic mails. The noticeable challenges are power failure, students' removal of information from library notice board, Low bandwidth among others.

Recommendations
The researchers recommend that:
1. The UNN Library should continue to provide more information resources in different formats and services for its users. This will project more the image of the library and the university in general.
2. The UNN Library should train its staff with marketing concepts through workshops and in-house training regularly. These will equip

them with the marketing skills and strategies for better marketing of information resources and services.

3. The UNN Library should improve on power supply by providing good standby generator, good notice board, highly effective websites, and high bandwidth for marketing its resources and services.

Reference

Abdulsalami T. Lucky and Paulina F. Salami(2013) Marketing Information Services inPolytechnics Libraries in Nigeria. I.l S T.E. (JEP) United Kingdom 4 (1) 10- 20.

Abdulsalami T. Lucky and Dika, Sunday I.(2017) Social Media in Marketing Public Relation in Academic Libraries. Global Best Practices inLibrary and Information Science.Dept. of Library and Information Science.UNN, 2017.

Aguolu, C. C. (2009) "Libraries, Knowledge and National Development" Inaugural LectureSeries 2008/2009 Session. Maiduguri: University of Maiduguri Press.

Alemna, A.A. (2001). The need for marketing and total quality management Strategies in   libraries inGhana. *INSPEL* 35 (4).

Dadzie, P. S. (2005). Information Literacy: assessing the readiness of Ghanaian Universities. *Information Development*; Vol 23(4).

De Aze, Eileen Elliot (2005), Marketing concepts for libraries and information services,London, Library Association.

Edem, N. B. and Ani, O. (2010).Knowledge Management in Academic Libraries in Nigeria. A paper presented at 48th National Conference and AGM of NLA, held on18 – 24 July, 2010.

Ifidon, E.I (2005). Fee based service, a means of making library materials more available to   Nigerian university users. Communicate: *Journal of Library and Information Science*, 7 (1&2), 47-48

Kendadamath, G.C. (2010). Marketing of library and information services. Retrieved April 1, 2011from http://agropedia.htk.ac./openaccess/sites/default/files/ws%2013.

Kotler, P. (2007). Marketing management 12e, Prentice-Hall of Indian private limited. New Delhi – 110001, pearson, p.30.

Kumbar, R.D. (2004). The importance of marketing and total quality management in libraries. *Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship*, 5 (2-3). Retrieved March 24,   2011from http://southernlibrarianship.icap.org/content/v05n02/kumbar_r01.htm.

Makori, E.O. (2010). Marketing university libraries in Kenya the destination for the user population. Retrieved on April 1, 2011 from mhtml:file\\Users\Owner\D esktop\marketing university

Nwegbu, M.U. (2005). Marketing library services in selected Nigerian Universities. *Global Review of Library and Information Science* (1);68.

Nwezeh, C.M.T. (2010). Public relations in Nigerian university libraries the case of HezekiahOluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University. Retrieved May 13, 2010 from   http://www.emeraldinsight.com/journals.htm?articleid=1 839511&show=html

Popoola, S.O. (2008). Faculty awareness and use of library information products and services. *Malaysian Journal of Library and Information Science* 13 (1);91-102.

Ravichandran, M and Baba, S. D. (2008).Marketing of library and Information services.RetrievedApril 1, 2011 from mhtml:file://C:\Users\Owner\Desktop\ Marketing of Library and Information Services.mht.

Sharma, A.K and Bhardwaj, S. (2009). Marketing and promotion of library services Retrieved April 4, 2011 from crl.du.ac.in/ical09/papers/index_files/ical_79_7 3_172_2_RV.pdf.