USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING OF LIBRARY SERVICES

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ABSTRACT

In this research, we aim to investigate the various ways in which social media can be utilized to promote library services. The influence of social media on marketing efforts related to information has significantly transformed conventional marketing methods. A wide range of applications that make use of information and communication technology (ICT), particularly through social media, are accessed by millions of people worldwide. Presently, a considerable portion of the population is familiar with social media platforms such as Facebook, Myspace, WhatsApp, Twitter, and various blogging sites. By leveraging these social media tools, libraries can effectively address the needs of their patrons in a timely manner. This study aims to outline the strategies for systematically utilizing social media to enhance the marketing of library services and offerings.

Keyword: Social Media, Marketing, SMT, Library Product, and Web Technology

Introduction

The contemporary landscape emphasizes the necessity for high-tech and rapid access to information. Individuals can readily obtain information through the internet. Consequently, information professionals must initiate the marketing of their services. Social media and networking platforms have gained significant importance, enhancing the library profession globally. These social networking tools facilitate connections among community members, allowing libraries to repackage their services and products for greater visibility. As noted by Suraweera, social networking involves the establishment of relationships among individuals with shared interests In the

contemporary landscape, it is rare to find individuals who do not possess smartphones or tablet computers. Consequently, libraries—be they traditional, digital, general, or specialized—are required to adjust to these technological advancements and formulate strategies for disseminating information through these platforms. This adaptation is essential for maintaining accessibility to users and capitalizing on the advantages offered by these technologies. A primary objective of libraries is to deliver pertinent information services that fulfill the needs of their users.

Objectives of the study

1. Enhance public understanding of the diverse array of services, initiatives, and events provided by the library.

2. Advocate for the library's digital resources and support systems.

3. Motivate patrons to fully engage with the library's available resources.

4. Leverage social media platforms for promotional purposes to evaluate the existing condition of library resources and services.

5. Recognize the obstacles encountered by library staff in the effective use of social media within library settings.

6. Collect insights from library professionals to improve the

promotion of library services and informational products via social media channels.

Why need of marketing for library services?

Marketing encompasses a range of strategies and techniques typically associated with administrators; however, as librarians, we also play a crucial role in the marketing process. Effective marketing serves as an optimal approach to increase the utilization of library services. In contemporary times, libraries allocate substantial funds towards the collection, processing, and storage of information resources. Given the rising costs associated with information, there is a pressing need to promote and utilize these resources, thereby underscoring the importance of marketing.

Advantages of Marketing

➤ Enhanced fulfillment of consumer needs.

➤ Expansion of services to prospective users.

➤ Optimized resource utilization.

➤ Augmented resources that enhance the market value of the organization.

Traditional Vs Social Media Marketing

Traditional Marketing	Social Marketing
Time Consuming	Time Saving
Expensive	Cost-effective

Monotonous	Exciting and Stimulating
Limitation to reach to community	Reachable to the community instantly
Static	Creative
Limited means for marketing	A range of Social Media channels for marketing
One – way	Collaborative
Time – bound	No time limitation

Advantages of Social Networking

- ➢ Economically efficient.
- ➢ Social media plays a crucial role in marketing library resources.
- ➢ It facilitates the promotion of library services and the direct dissemination of information to users.
- ➢ It fosters closer relationships and greater interaction with library patrons.
- ➢ Social media has the potential to attract new library users.
- ➢ It aids in gathering feedback to improve user services.
- ➢ Social media provides alternatives that surpass conventional methods of marketing library offerings.

Limitations of Social Media:

- ➢ Too many social media tools to learn
- ➢ Lack of time to use social media
- ➢ Lack of privacy and identity theft

- ➢ Confidentiality of Information
- ➢ Lack of knowledge how to use
- ➢ Inadequate funding for libraries
- ➢ Insufficient Library staff
- ➢ Low interest of librarian in learning and utilizing social media
- ➢ Insufficient training opportunities for library staff
- ➢ Slow internet speed
- ➢ It is difficult to cope up with the rapid growth of such website
- ➢ Lack of security and Privacy
- ➢ Lack of advance IT skills

Importance of Social Media in marketing of Library Services

- ➢ SM Marketing assists students, faculty, and researchers in effectively utilizing library resources.
- ➢ It enables library professionals to establish connections, contribute, and disseminate information among various libraries.
- ➢ Furthermore, SM Marketing enhances the accessibility of libraries to their users.
- ➢ It addresses the challenges posed by geographical and temporal limitations in communication.
- ➢ The exchange of knowledge and information becomes more streamlined and user-friendly.
- ➢ Additionally, it promotes the sharing of knowledge and keeps

users informed about new acquisitions and library events.

➢ SM Marketing also plays a crucial role in advancing distance learning initiatives

Type of Social media using by Libraries

1. Facebook
2. WhatsApp
3. Blogger
4. Twitter
5. LinkedIn
6. Flickr
7. Wikis
8. You tube
9. MySpace
10. RSS
11. Printerest

Social Networking Tools

Facebook stands out as the most widely used social networking platform, as it connects a vast number of individuals who frequently engage with their Facebook accounts on a daily basis. This characteristic renders it particularly advantageous for libraries, as it offers various services such as updates on new arrivals, information about newly released books, and details regarding awareness programs. Additionally, users have the capability to post announcements on the Facebook page. This platform enables students and faculty to share book titles and other relevant information. Furthermore, Facebook is conducive to

librarians, featuring numerous applications such as JSTOR search and World Cat, which facilitate interaction between librarians and users to better understand their informational needs. Libraries could consider integrating some of these specialized library applications with Facebook. By establishing a dedicated Facebook page, libraries can enhance student engagement with library activities.

Through this tool service of library efforts to activate communication with the different users who use different modern communication means, to meet their needs. This service will contribute in enabling users to communicate with the Library wherever they are and whenever they want to make use of the Library services; it also enables them to have a direct contact with the information specialist for asking any question and get its answer that helps them in doing scientific researches or special woks related to syllabi. It also enables the Library to define its services and subscriptions in databases and periodicals.

Blogger

The most beneficial application pertains to library news, which necessitates frequent and straightforward updates. This application enables us to promote library events, foster support for our committed users, and enhance

community engagement. As librarians, we belong to a professional community that gains from the exchange of best practices and experiences. A blog serves as an effective platform for providing timely advice and commentary on contemporary library matters. Users are encouraged to share their insights through these blogs. On Blogger, librarians can regularly publish messages, disseminate information on specific topics or issues, and invite user contributions to the content. They can compose articles and news on relevant subjects, anticipating prompt feedback from their audience.

This serves as a free online encyclopaedia that provides foundational knowledge and definitions of various concepts. Over 32% of internet users engage with this platform. Twitter, a rapidly expanding and complimentary messaging service, presents an opportunity for libraries to effectively communicate with patrons without requiring significant time or effort. Through this medium, libraries can disseminate a wide array of information that interests their users. Brief messages can convey details about events such as readings, lectures, book exhibitions, new acquisitions, newly available resources, or changes in library hours. The platform facilitates user access, editing, and

contribution to content, functioning as a collaborative web space for content development. Librarians can leverage this tool to deliver timely information regarding ongoing national elections. Additionally, users can send instant messages to express concerns or inquire about specific issues, receiving immediate feedback via Twitter.

Librarians have the capability to facilitate connections between patrons and experts in their specific areas of interest through LinkedIn. This platform enables librarians to provide specialized services, including Strategic Dissemination of Information (SDI).

Librarians can utilize this platform to disseminate and share new visual content related to library collections. The cover pages of newly acquired books and journals can be effectively distributed to users through Flickr. This website serves as a tool for managing and sharing photos and videos, allowing users to upload and share content up to 20 MB per month at no cost. It functions as a powerful marketing resource. Librarians can leverage it to promote various library services to their patrons. Many students and users remain unaware of the diverse services offered by the library, including book reservations, reference assistance, and Strategic Dissemination of Information (SDI). Flickr serves as an effective medium to raise

awareness about these services. Additionally, it can facilitate current awareness regarding library offerings. The platform provides users with the opportunity to engage with library content by enabling them to upload images to specific collections and curate user-generated content on particular subjects (Potter, 2013). Furthermore, Flickr may enable archives and libraries to develop new avenues for interaction with their patrons, thereby expanding the reach of their heritage to a broader and more varied audience (Thanuskodi, 2011:70). The Flickr platform can also be employed to share photographs of library events and significant historical moments (Walia & Gupta, 2012).

Wikis

A free online encyclopaedia serves as a resource for foundational knowledge and the definition of various concepts. It provides a platform where users can access, edit, and contribute content. This collaborative webpage is designed to facilitate the development of web content. A wiki is essentially a page or a collection of web pages that allows anyone with access to easily contribute to or modify the content. Wikis are frequently utilized to create collaborative websites and to foster online communities. In the business sector, wikis are employed to establish intranets and knowledge management systems. In educational settings, they enable students to collaboratively co-create documents and research topics. The collaborative encyclopedia Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page) stands as the most prominent example of a wiki in contemporary use. Through wikis, students can engage in collaboration and share their work effectively.

YouTube

YouTube serves as a free video-sharing platform that offers significant promotional opportunities for library collections, events, resources, and services. In various institutions across India, critical information, including key highlights from inaugural lectures, conferences, and workshops, is shared through YouTube.

Librarians can utilize this platform to create short instructional videos demonstrating how to effectively navigate library resources. These videos can cover accessing e-books, searching the library catalogue, and using electronic journals.

Pinterest

Pinterest is a free, Visually – oriented and rapidly growing social media platform. It functions as "an online pinboard that enables users to organize and share various items." This platform offers significant opportunities for marketing library resources. Libraries can establish their own profiles and create boards to pin

images and videos that highlight their offerings. Additionally, libraries can share their DVD and CD collections with users.

Academic institutions can leverage this platform, which includes features such as a calendar, custom catalog search tools, and blogging capabilities, to enhance student engagement. Myspace serves as a social networking site where individuals can establish personal accounts and invite fellow students to participate in groups. This tool facilitates the sharing of information among users and allows for the solicitation of suggestions aimed at improving service quality.

Conclusion

In summary, a social networking service serves as a platform for individuals to establish social connections or relationships based on shared interests, activities, or real-life interactions. It enables users to exchange ideas, images, posts, events, and interests with others within their network. Libraries have a great opportunity to enhance the visibility of their services, resources, events, and communication efforts through social media. To effectively utilize social media, it is essential for librarians to receive training and education focused on strategically using these platforms for marketing library services and addressing potential challenges. Taking a proactive approach is

crucial for libraries to overcome obstacles related to social media engagement and ensure that library staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to successfully promote library services through these channels.

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