



# Marketing of information services and products in university libraries of Punjab and Chandigarh (India)

Marketing of  
information  
services

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## An attitudinal assessment of library professionals

Received 2 February 2008  
Reviewed 24 February 2008  
Accepted 12 April 2008

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### Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to determine the attitude of library professionals towards the concept of marketing and also how it is applied in practice to marketing of university library products and services.

**Design/methodology/approach** – For the purpose of the study, library search concerning the subject was made to examine the findings of earlier relevant studies. To collect the relevant data, a questionnaire was designed and distributed to the subjects under study. Interviews were also conducted with the librarians/professional staff to fill in any gaps in the questionnaire.

**Findings** – The librarians/professional staff have positive attitudes towards the marketing of library information services and products and admit that each library should have a mission statement and a full time professional to handle marketing-related activities; but in practice, no library under study has its own logo, mission statement or a specifically designated personnel for marketing-related activities.

**Originality/value** – The study explores the possibility of adopting marketing strategies in university libraries to provide value-added, need-based and user-oriented services/products.

**Keywords** Information services, Information media, Marketing management, University libraries, India

**Paper type** Research paper

### Introduction

Marketing which for the years has been used successfully by the profit making sectors of the economy to promote demand for products and services has now been considered equally related and relevant to the management of library operations. In fact there are several factors that have compelled the librarians to get themselves involved in a formalized effort of this nature. The advent of information superhighways, dwindling library budgets, increasing user needs, complexity of information requirements, emphasis on accountability, competition from the private vendors and outflow of information are forcing the information professionals to adopt marketing techniques to optimize the use of library resources and services.



Library Management  
Vol. 29 No. 6/7, 2008  
pp. 515-537

© Emerald Group Publishing Limited  
0143-5124  
DOI 10.1108/01435120810894536

University libraries invest huge amounts on the collection development, processing and storage of information resources. These resources, which are so expensive often remain unutilized resulting in the wastage of money, time, energy and space. The libraries can solve their problem of underutilization of resources and services by applying marketing principles.

Marketing is basically an approach towards consumer satisfaction. To market information services, the librarian must be sensitive to the needs of both the staff and the users, and provide services which really meet the patrons' needs. Sensitivity does not come if one is not positive about it. The marketing concept will fail to work if the environment in which it is applied is not conducive and the librarian is not positive and enthusiastic about it. A positive change in the attitude of the librarian towards marketing is a prerequisite for making it successful in the library. Hence the issues to be tackled are those relating to the individual psychology and attitude of the librarians/professional staff on the utility and relevance of the marketing concept in the university libraries.

### **Concept of marketing**

According to Kotler (1994):

The marketing concept holds that the key to achieving organizational goals consists in determining the needs and wants of target market and delivering the desired satisfactions more effectively and efficiently than the competitors . . . . The marketing concept rests on four main pillars, namely target market, customer needs, coordinated marketing and profitability.

Smith (1995) states:

Marketing is a stance and an attitude that focuses on meeting the needs of the users. Marketing is a means of ensuring that libraries, librarians and librarianship are integrated into both today's and tomorrow's emerging global culture. Marketing is not separate from good practice. It is good practice.

Bushing (1995) says:

Marketing offers both a theory and a process by which libraries can link products, results and roles. Marketing can assist libraries in determining their future and in identifying quality products – services, programs and materials . . . .

In terms of libraries, the concept of marketing means a sufficient change in the traditional attitude of the librarians towards acquisition, organization, processing and retrieving information. The basis of library services should be to help its users in solving their information gathering and processing needs. This the library can do only if it relies on systematic information collection, procedure and policies and adjusts its products, services and organizational policies and procedures to the demands of the users. Under the marketing concept, the patron is the focus and not the librarian, for the patron is the reason for the library professionals being there. Marketing is concerned with customers and the satisfaction of their needs with appropriate products and services.

### **Review of related literature**

Amaral (1992) carried out a survey of managers of geosciences and mineral technology libraries in Brazil to determine their knowledge about marketing techniques and the

adoption of the same in the libraries. The results showed that they had insufficient knowledge of the subject, and that marketing was confused with advertising, publicity and sales or promotion.

Rathore (1995) in a study of agricultural research institutes under Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), New Delhi revealed that the research institutes of ICAR had a lack of total application of marketing concept such as written statement of marketing plan, separate budget for marketing of information products/services and segmentation.

Mohan (1998) in a survey of special and university libraries and information centres of India found that though the librarians had positive attitude towards the marketing of library and information services, they perceived some barriers in applying the concept of marketing in libraries such as lack of knowledge, skills and exposure to the concept of marketing and lack of manpower and financial support.

Rajesh Singh (1999) in a survey of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) libraries and information centres of northern India showed that the librarians had positive attitude towards the marketing of library and information services and products.

The survey conducted by Manjunatha and Shivalingaiah (2001) of Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Regional Engineering Colleges (RECs), Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), national level research and development organizations, and universities in South India, revealed that 84 per cent of the total sample disagreed that marketing was concerned only with industrial or profit oriented products. Of the respondents, 91 per cent agreed that marketing principles could also be applied to library services.

Broady-Preston and Steel (2002) carried out a study of a sample of librarians of six public libraries of London using semi-structured questionnaire, unobtrusive observation and analysis of mission statements. The results of the study suggested that a planned internal marketing programme tended to improve the success of public library services.

Nkanga (2002) in a study of selected information providing institutions, in particular special libraries in Gaborone, Botswana, found that though a majority of the librarians and information officers i.e. 67 per cent were in favour of marketing their services to the users, in practice very few of them undertook formal marketing planning and prepare marketing plans. Promotion was the only element of the marketing mix to which they pay attention.

Kanaujia (2004) in a survey of Indian research and development libraries and information centres revealed that though the librarians had a positive attitude towards marketing of library information products and services, there was less evidence of the systematic and planned use of marketing in the service design, pricing and delivery of information products/services.

Kavulya (2004) in a case study of selected university libraries of Kenya indicated that although no library was reported to have been involved in any formal marketing research strategy, the librarians were aware of some of the strengths and weaknesses of the services provided. The investigator concluded that more emphasis was put on the promotion of already existing services.

Wenhong (2006) in a case study of the Library of Chinese Academy of Sciences (LCAS) – National Library of Sciences for China described in detail different tools and

methods used for applying the marketing principles in the library The researcher concluded that though there had been a lot of activity relating to marketing, the library had no marketing strategy at the organizational level and sustainable plan to do the marketing.

### Scope of the study

There are six universities in Punjab and Chandigarh, namely Panjab University Chandigarh (1947); Punjabi University, Patiala (1962); Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (1962); Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (1969); Punjab Technical University, Jalandhar (1997); and Baba Farid University of Health Sciences, Faridkot (1998).

Baba Farid University of Health Sciences and Punjab Technical University have been excluded from the study as a personal visit to these universities revealed that these have not yet been able to develop the library infrastructure good enough for the purpose of including in the present study. As a consequence, the following four universities have been included in the study:

- (1) Panjab University, Chandigarh (PU);
- (2) Punjabi University, Patiala (PbU);
- (3) Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (PAU);
- (4) Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (GNDU).

### Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the study are to:

- Assess the attitude of professional staff working in the libraries under study towards different aspects of marketing especially the “4Ps” i.e. product, price, place and promotion.
- Know the existing status of marketing of information services and products in the university libraries under study.
- Examine resources and facilities of the libraries in relation to marketing.
- Determine the extent to which the principles of marketing are put into actual practice in the libraries under study.
- Suggest ways and means for improving marketing practices in university libraries.

### Research methodology

For the purpose of the study, a questionnaire was designed. It consists of two parts. Part I consists of seven sets of statements which are designed to measure the attitude of librarians/professional staff towards different aspects of marketing of information products and services and it asks the librarians to respond on a scale as to their agreement or disagreement with each statement by using the five-point Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. Part II makes a request for providing information about certain library data such as library policies, various services provided, availability of infrastructure, time and budget spent on marketing related activities. It also contains a list of various promotional activities

which may be employed in a library. The questionnaire was pre-tested before using it with the survey population.

The questionnaire was distributed to all the 59 professionals (Librarians, Deputy Librarians and Assistant Librarians) of all the university libraries under study. Of the responses, 52 (88.1 per cent) were received out of 59. The details are given in Table I.

## Analysis and discussion

### *Background of respondents*

Analysis of the data regarding background of librarians/professional staff presented in Table II indicates that out of 52 respondents 51.9 per cent are males and 48.1 per cent are females; a majority of the respondents, i.e. 76.9 per cent, possess a postgraduate degree, 48.1 per cent have more than ten year experience, 84.6 per cent have not studied

University	Population	Response received	
		Number	Per cent
PU	24	20	83.3
PbU	11	10	90.9
PAU	9	8	88.8
GNDU	15	14	93.3
Total	59	52	88.1

**Table I.**  
Population and response  
received from  
professional staff

Items of the background variables	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents	Cumulative percentage
<i>Sex</i>			
Male	27	51.9	51.9
Female	25	48.1	100.0
<i>Qualifications</i>			
Postgraduate	40	76.9	76.9
PhD	11	21.2	98.1
MPhil	1	1.9	100.0
Others	–	–	–
<i>Years of professional experience</i>			
0-3 years	1	1.9	1.9
4-6 years	14	26.9	28.8
7-10 years	12	23.1	51.9
Above ten years	25	48.1	100.0
<i>Marketing concept studied in School of Library and Information Science</i>			
Yes	8	15.4	15.4
No	44	84.6	100.0
<i>Workshops or short-term courses/seminars attended</i>			
Nil	49	94.2	94.2
1-3	2	3.8	98.0
4-6	1	1.9	100.0
7-10	–	–	–

**Table II.**  
Background of  
respondents

marketing concept in their schools of library and information science, 94.2 per cent have not attended any workshop and seminar on marketing of information services and products.

#### *Concept of marketing*

Table III shows the responses of the librarians/professional staff to the statements relating to the concept of marketing. The data presented in the table exhibits that the statements 1-5 are positive and the response of respondents for these ranges from 76.9 per cent to 98 per cent. More than 94 per cent of the respondents either agree or strongly agree that the concept of marketing is equally applicable in the field of library and information science and it should form an important component of the curriculum in the library schools. Of the respondents, 84.6 per cent think that it relates not only to selling and advertising but also to customizing the services and 82.7 per cent admit that traditional view of libraries towards marketing has been in terms of promotion only.

#### *Need for marketing*

Table IV shows the responses of the librarians/professional staff to the statements relating to the need for marketing. The positive response to all the statements shows that librarians/professional staff feel the need of applying the marketing principles in the libraries in an era of global competitiveness and shrinking resources. The data given in Table IV shows that more than 90 per cent of the respondents of all the university libraries admit that planning and conducting a marketing programme offers the librarians an opportunity to assess the usage of the services/products, justify the cost involved in the production of services/products and identify the services/products which are to continue/discontinue. The library services often remain either underutilized or unutilized because these are not popularized fully and the users are often ignorant about the services provided by the libraries as is evident from statement 1 (response 86.5 per cent). This shows that if we want that the library services should be fully utilized, users should be made aware of the existence of the services provided by the libraries through promotional activities.

#### *Marketing planning*

Table V exhibits the responses of the librarians/professional staff to the statements relating to marketing planning. The response rate for these statements ranges from 84.6 per cent to 98.1 per cent. Of the respondents, 84.6 per cent agree that libraries conduct marketing programmes at random rather than develop a coherent programme. A major problem in developing the marketing programmes in the library is obtaining manpower and financial support (90.3 per cent). Positive response to all the statements clearly indicates that the university libraries should frame a "mission statement" and "marketing plan" for each product/service and user group. Immediate feedback on quality of services and products is essential for making the necessary adjustments to meet the users' requirements.

#### *First P of the marketing mix: product*

Table VI illustrates the responses of the professionals to the statements relating to the first P of the marketing mix, "product". Overall positive response rate ranges from 61.5 per cent to 90.3 per cent for the statements 1-4. It indicates that libraries must

Sr. no.	Statements	SA	A	Total SA + A	U	D	SD	Total D + SD
1	The concept of marketing is applicable not only to business organization but to library also	13 (25.0)	38 (73.0)	51 (98.0)	1 (1.9)	-	-	-
2	Marketing is something beyond selling and advertising	18 (34.6)	26 (50.0)	44 (84.6)	6 (11.5)	2 (3.8)	-	2 (3.8)
3	The traditional view of libraries towards marketing has been in terms of promotion only	7 (13.5)	36 (69.2)	43 (82.7)	3 (5.8)	6 (11.5)	-	6 (11.5)
4	Lack of knowledge and exposure on the concept of marketing discourages librarians from adopting it in the library environment	6 (11.5)	34 (65.4)	40 (76.9)	5 (9.6)	7 (13.5)	2 (3.8)	9 (17.3)
5	Marketing concept should be an important component of the curriculum in library schools	23 (44.2)	26 (50.0)	49 (94.2)	1 (1.9)	2 (3.8)	-	2 (3.8)

**Notes:** SA = strongly agree; A = agree; U = undecided; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree; figures in parentheses are percentages

**Table III.**  
Attitude about the  
concept of marketing

**Table IV.**  
Attitude about the need  
for marketing

Sr. no.	Statements	SA	A	Total SA + A	U	D	SD	Total D + SD
1	Library users are often woefully ignorant of the full range of services available to them.	17 (32.7)	28 (53.8)	45 (86.5)	2 (3.8)	5 (9.6)	-	5 (9.6)
2	Planning and conducting of marketing programme offers the librarian an opportunity to assess services/products and to justify the cost involved in the production of services/ products	17 (32.7)	32 (61.5)	49 (94.2)	2 (3.8)	1 (1.9)	-	1 (1.9)
3	Marketing planning process helps us to identify which services/ products to continue/discontinue	18 (34.6)	30 (57.7)	48 (92.3)	3 (5.8)	1 (1.9)	-	1 (1.9)
4	Increasing resource constraints and shrinking library budgets have made it imperative for the libraries to employ marketing techniques in their operations	18 (34.6)	33 (63.5)	51 (98.0)	1 (1.9)	-	-	-
5	The electronic information age and global competition has forced librarians to consider using the concept of marketing in the libraries also	15 (28.8)	28 (53.8)	43 (82.7)	6 (11.5)	3 (5.8)	-	3 (5.8)

**Note:** Figures in parentheses are percentages



Sr. no.	Statements	Total						Total D + SD
		SA	A	SA + A	U	D	SD	
1	Every library must have a mission statement	15 (28.8)	36 (69.2)	51 (98.1)	1 (1.9)	-	-	-
2	The library should have a marketing plan for each product/service and user group	14 (26.9)	33 (63.5)	47 (90.3)	4 (7.7)	1 (1.9)	-	1 (1.9)
3	It is ideal to designate a full time professional to handle the marketing effort	23 (44.2)	26 (50.0)	49 (94.2)	3 (5.8)	-	-	-
4	Libraries conduct marketing programmes at random rather than develop a coherent programme	8 (15.4)	36 (69.2)	44 (84.6)	6 (11.5)	2 (3.8)	-	2 (3.8)
5	A major problem in developing a marketing programme in the library is obtaining man power and financial support	15 (28.8)	32 (61.5)	47 (90.3)	3 (5.8)	1 (1.9)	1 (1.9)	2 (3.8)
6	Immediate feedback on the quality of services/products is essential for making the necessary adjustments to meet users' requirements	13 (25.0)	35 (67.3)	48 (92.3)	4 (7.7)	-	-	-

**Note:** Figures in parentheses are percentages

**Table V.**  
Attitude about marketing  
planning

**Table VI.**  
Attitude about the first P  
of the marketing mix –  
“product”

Sr. no.	Statements	SA	A	Total SA + A	U	D	SD	Total	
								D + SD	D + SD
1	The success of all marketing planning and promotional efforts hinges directly on the quality and excellence of products/services which are designed/delivered	11 (21.1)	32 (61.5)	43 (82.7)	6 (11.5)	3 (5.8)	-	3 (5.8)	
2	There should be an opportunity for users to participate in the designing process of any new service/product which is targeted at them	15 (28.8)	25 (48.1)	40 (76.9)	6 (11.5)	5 (9.6)	1 (1.9)	6 (11.5)	
3	Libraries must constantly introduce new products and services to remain viable	12 (23.0)	20 (38.5)	32 (61.5)	10 (19.2)	9 (17.3)	1 (1.9)	10 (19.2)	
4	The library needs to evaluate its information products/ services constantly to determine if they need to be continued, modified or withdrawn.	15 (28.8)	32 (61.5)	47 (90.3)	3 (5.8)	1 (1.9)	1 (1.9)	2 (3.8)	

**Note:** Figures in parentheses are percentages

constantly introduce new products and services to remain viable and should evaluate them constantly to determine if these need to be continued, modified or withdrawn.

#### *Second P of the marketing mix: price*

Table VII shows the responses of the professionals to the statements relating to the second P of the marketing mix, "price". It is apparent from the table that there is a mixed and split response for these statements. Overall response shows that 76.9 per cent of the respondents agree with the statement that economics of new technology has made it difficult for the libraries to offer services free of cost. More than 50 per cent of the respondents agree that user charges prevent misuse of library services but they also want that these should not become a barrier to use. Table VII highlights the confusion prevailing among the professionals about whether to charge or not to charge for the services/products provided by the library. 84.6 per cent of the respondents are in favour of charging only nominal fee from the users as is evident from statement no. 4.

#### *Third P of the marketing mix: place*

Table VIII exhibits the responses of the librarians/professional staff to the statements relating to the third P of the marketing mix, "place". The data given in Table VIII demonstrates positive responses for all these statements. A total of 90.3 per cent of the respondents of all the university libraries accept that if the access to the material and services is inconvenient or presents emotional problem to the user, the usage will be reduced considerably. This positive response shows that in this information technology environment, library staff should deliver the services in the right format, at the right time and at the right place. Access to the products and services should be convenient to the users to increase their use.

#### *Fourth P of the marketing mix: promotion*

Table IX exhibits the responses of the librarians/professional staff to the statements relating to the fourth P of the marketing mix, "promotion". The data given in Table IX depict that all the respondents either agree or strongly agree with all the statements about the fourth P of the marketing mix, "promotion". This shows that professionals accept that promotional efforts such as user orientation programmes (100 per cent), user surveys (88.5 per cent), preparation of brochures and sending them to the target groups (92.3 per cent), publicity and contact programmes (92.9 per cent) are essential to increase the library usage.

### **Marketing-related activities**

#### *Marketing planning*

Table X gives information about marketing related activities in the university libraries under study. It shows that no library has its own logo, mission statement and specifically designated personnel for marketing activities. All the libraries have a marketing plan of some sort, system of fines for over-due materials and publish annual report and newsletter. All the libraries allow outsiders to use the library by charging nominal fee.

Table XI indicates the budget and time spent on marketing related activities. PbU, PAU and GNDU spend less than 1 per cent of the budget on marketing related activities which is very insufficient to introduce planned marketing in an effective way. Only PU

**Table VII.**  
Attitude about the second  
P of the marketing mix –  
“price”

Sr. no.	Statements	SA	A	Total SA + A	U	D	SD	Total D + SD
1	The economics of new technologies has made it difficult for libraries to offer services free of cost	11 (21.1)	29 (55.8)	40 (76.9)	7 (13.5)	4 (7.7)	1 (1.9)	5 (9.6)
2	User charges prevent misuse of library services/products	5 (9.6)	23 (44.2)	28 (53.8)	6 (11.5)	17 (32.7)	1 (1.9)	18 (34.6)
3	Fees should never become a barrier to use; everyone deserves equal, unrestricted access to information	1 (1.9)	26 (50.0)	27 (51.9)	7 (13.5)	13 (25.0)	5 (9.6)	18 (34.6)
4	Charging the users with only nominal cost will motivate them to use the services/products repeatedly	14 (26.9)	30 (57.7)	44 (84.6)	4 (7.7)	4 (7.7)	–	4 (7.7)

**Note:** Figures in parentheses are percentages

Sr. no.	Statements	SA	A	Total SA + A	U	D	SD	Total D + SD
1	If access to material and services is inconvenient or presents emotional problem to the users, the usage will be reduced considerably	13 (25.0)	34 (65.4)	47 (90.3)	4 (7.7)	1 (1.9)	-	1 (1.9)
2	Advances in information technology have raised the users' expectations of information provision in terms of both quality of service and speed of delivery	14 (26.9)	32 (61.5)	46 (88.5)	5 (9.6)	1 (1.9)	-	1 (1.9)
3	Information explosion and development of significant new technologies are creating a strong demand for innovation in the channels of distribution	8 (15.4)	31 (59.6)	39 (75.0)	8 (15.4)	4 (7.7)	1 (1.9)	5 (9.6)

**Note:** Figures in parentheses are percentages

**Table VIII.**  
Attitude about the third P  
of the marketing mix –  
“place”

**Table IX.**  
Attitude about the fourth  
P of the marketing mix –  
“promotion”

Sr. no.	Statements	SA	A	Total		U	D	SD	Total D + SD
				SA + A	SA + A				
1	It is necessary to inform the users about the utility and benefits of information products/services of the library, when their usage is missing	13 (25.0)	35 (67.5)	48 (92.3)	4 (7.7)	-	-	-	-
2	Conducting user orientation programmes is an important activity of a library for the promotion of its products/services	19 (36.5)	33 (63.5)	52 (100.0)	-	-	-	-	-
3	User surveys and personal interviews should be conducted periodically	13 (25.0)	33 (63.5)	46 (88.5)	3 (5.7)	3 (5.7)	-	-	3 (5.7)
4	Signage, symbols, handouts and library brochures help to increase the library usage	22 (42.3)	26 (50.0)	48 (92.3)	2 (3.8)	2 (3.8)	-	-	2 (3.8)
5	Both publicity and personal contact will create awareness among the users about the existing information products/services	20 (38.5)	28 (53.8)	48 (92.3)	3 (5.7)	1 (1.9)	-	-	1 (1.9)

**Note:** Figures in parentheses are percentages

University	Logo	LH	MS	MP	Funds	Specifically designated personnel	Fines	Annual report	Newsletter	Allow outside users
PU	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PbU	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PAU	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GNDU	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**Notes:** LH = Letter head; MS = Mission statement; MP = Marketing plan

**Table X.**  
Marketing related  
activities

uses 6-10 per cent of its budget for promotional activities to attract the users to the library. PU, PAU and GNDU libraries spend 11 to 20 per cent of their time on activities related to marketing while PbU spends more than 30 per cent of its time on these activities.

Decision regarding how much time and money to be spent on marketing related activities and the services/products to be provided to the patrons is taken by the librarian in PU, PbU and PAU. It is only in GNDU where decision is taken by the library committee.

*Information services/products and their charging pattern (product and price components)*

Tables XII and XIII indicate the availability of different basic and advanced services provided by the university libraries and their charging pattern. It is clear from Tables XII and XIII that all the libraries have introduced charges for photocopying, library membership and online searches. PbU, PAU and GNDU also take nominal charges from the students for e-mail and Internet surfing and PbU and PAU for CD ROM searches also. The services such as bibliography, press clipping, list of new arrivals, contents of journals are offered free of cost. Indexing, abstracting and translation services are not available. Only PbU library is providing indexing service free of cost. All this shows that the librarians are still reluctant in introducing the charges for most of the services.

*Facilities (place component)*

Tables XIV and XV indicate the availability of basic and advanced facilities provided by the university libraries. Analysis of the data shows that all the libraries have microfiche, microfilming facility, audio visual unit, xerox facility, bar code, scanner, online catalogue LAN and Internet. All the libraries except PAU are members of UGC's network INFLIBNET. PbU is a member of DELNET also. Except the PU library, no library so far has been able to introduce full automation of its library activities. PbU and GNDU have partial automation of library activities and PAU has not initiated the work so far. All this shows that the libraries are very slow in adopting latest

	University	Budget provision (%)	Time spent (%)	Decision regarding time and money to be spent
<b>Table XI.</b> Budget provision for and time spent on marketing related activities	PU	6-10	11-20	Librarian
	PbU	< 1	> 30	Librarian
	PAU	< 1	11-20	Librarian
	GNDU	< 1	11-20	Library committee

	University	Photocopy	Bibliography	Press clipping	Inter library loan	Library membership	New arrivals	Reference service
<b>Table XII.</b> Charging pattern of basic services	PU	Charged	Free	Free	Charged	Charged	Free	Free
	PbU	Charged	Free	Free	Free	Charged	Free	Free
	PAU	Charged	Free	Free	Free	Charged	Free	Free
	GNDU	Charged	Free	Free	Free	Charged	Free	Free



University	CAS	SDI	Content pages of journals	Indexing service	Abstracting service	Translation service	Online searches	CD-ROM searches	E-mail	Internet surfing
PU	Free	Free	Free	-	-	-	Charged	Free	Free	Free
PbU	Free	Free	Free	Free	-	-	Charged	Charged	Charged	Charged
PAU	Free	Free	Free	-	-	-	Charged	Charged	Charged	Charged
GNDU	Free	Free	Free	-	-	-	Charged	Free	Charged	Charged

**Table XIII.**  
Charging pattern of  
advanced services

technology especially in the area of automation and areas relating to service delivery and channel of distribution.

*Promotional activities (promotional component)*

To test the extent of promotional activities performed in libraries, respondents were given the list of 12 promotional activities and asked to indicate the frequency with which they perform these tasks by circling one of the four alternatives: never (N), rarely (R), occasionally (O) or regularly (R). The results given in Table XVI indicate the position of promotional activities in all the university libraries. All the libraries perform activities relating to statements 1, 3-6, and 9-11 regularly. Except for GNDU where user surveys are conducted occasionally in all other libraries these are conducted rarely.

A question was asked from the librarians/professional staff whether they use the results of user surveys to change/modify services or to provide new services/products to the users. All of them responded in the affirmative. But the problem is that user surveys are conducted only rarely or occasionally and not regularly in all the libraries under study.

### Findings

The findings of the study are as under:

- The librarians/professional staff have positive attitude towards marketing of information services and products of the library. It is only the lack of knowledge and exposure on the concept of marketing that discourages them from adopting the marketing principles in the library environment. Amaral (1992), Rajesh Singh (1999) and Kanaujia found similar results in their surveys.
- More than 90 per cent of the respondents admit that marketing planning offers the librarians an opportunity to assess the usage of the services/products and to justify the cost involved in the production of services and products and helps them to identify which products/services to continue/discontinue. Kanaujia (2004) reached similar results in his survey.
- More than 90 per cent of the respondents think that the university libraries should have a mission statement; marketing plan for each product/service and a full time professional to handle the marketing activities, but none of the libraries has its logo, mission statement, separate funds and specifically designated personnel for marketing related activities. Rathore (1995) and Kanaujia (2004) obtained similar results in the studies carried out by them.
- Of the librarians/professional staff , 61.5 per cent are positive about introducing new products and services and 90.3 per cent for doing evaluation to determine

University	TV	VCR	Telex	AV Unit	Microfiche	Microfilming	Fax	Xerox
PU	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PbU	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
PAU	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GNDU	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

**Table XIV.**  
Basic facilities

University	DTP	UNIX	Barcode	Scanner	Full automation	LAN	Online catalogue	V-SAT	Inter net	Network
PU	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	INFLIBNET
PbU	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partial	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	INFLIBNET DELNET
PAU	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	INFLIBNET
GNDU	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partial	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	INFLIBNET

**Table XV.**  
Advanced facilities

**Table XVI.**  
Status of promotional  
activities in the  
university libraries

Promotional activities	PU			PbU			PAU			Gndu		
	N	R	O	N	R	O	N	R	O	N	R	O
1 Signs, symbols, hand-outs and instructions are kept at appropriate places in the library	✓			✓			✓					
2 Organize tours of the library	✓			✓			✓					✓
3 Notify users about the status or availability of materials/services	✓			✓			✓					✓
4 Arrange formal lectures on library resources in a particular field	✓			✓			✓					✓
5 Give demonstrations of various systems like public access catalogue, CD-ROM, E-mail, On-line services, etc	✓			✓			✓					✓
6 Conduct user-orientation programmes	✓			✓			✓					✓
7 Arrange user-group/focus group meeting	✓			✓			✓					✓
8 Conduct user surveys	✓			✓			✓					✓
9 Arrange library committee meetings	✓			✓			✓					✓
10 Display the latest arrivals	✓			✓			✓					✓
11 Prepare brochures and send them to target groups	✓			✓			✓					✓
12 Suggestion/complaint box is kept in the library	✓			✓			✓					✓

**Notes:** N = never; R = rarely; O = occasionally; ✓ = regularly

their usefulness but in actual practice user surveys are conducted rarely to know the views of the users about the usefulness of the services/products. Kanaujia (2004) found similar results in his survey.

- Of the professionals, 76.9 per cent favour the involvement of the users in the designing process of any new service/product but in practice, they do not involve them actively in this process.
- Of the respondents, 84.6 per cent accept that libraries conduct marketing programmes at random rather than develop a coherent programme.
- Of the respondents, 90.3 per cent accept that major problems in developing a marketing programme in university libraries relate to obtaining manpower and financial support. Mohan (1998) and Kanaujia (2004) reached similar results in the surveys carried out by them.
- Mixed and split responses for all the statements relating to price component highlight the confusion prevailing among the librarians/professional staff whether to charge or not to charge for the services/products provided by the university library. However, 84.6 per cent of the respondents are of the view that only nominal charges should be taken from the users for the advanced services.
- A majority of the respondents (90.3 per cent) admit that access to the materials and services should be made more convenient to the users in order to increase the use of products and services, but in reality all the libraries are slow in adopting latest techniques in the areas relating to service delivery and channel of distribution.
- A majority of the respondents accept that promotional efforts are essential to increase the utilization of services and product.
- Promotion is the only element of marketing mix employed to a significant extent in the libraries. Similar results were obtained in the studies carried out by Nkanga (2002), Kavulya (2004) and Kanaujia (2004).

### Suggestions

Based on the above findings the following suggestions are put forth for improving the marketing practices in the university libraries:

- Each university library should have a marketing plan for its products and services with a mission to serve its parent organization.
- Users should be involved in the designing process of new services and products targeted at them.
- Regular user surveys should be conducted to determine whether a service/product should be continued/modified or withdrawn. Immediate feedback on the quality of services/products is essential for making the necessary adjustments to meet the requirements.
- Libraries should appoint full time personnel to look after marketing activities in the library. If possible a separate marketing unit or marketing division/department should be set up as part of the library.
- Provision should be made for separate and sufficient finances for efficient marketing.

- Libraries should constantly maintain and improve the quality and range of its services/products and match these to the changing requirements of the users.
- Libraries should harness technology fully to achieve full automation of their library activities.
- Access to library products/services should be made more convenient.
- There is a need to consider the pricing issue. Charges for services and products should be introduced on no profit, no loss basis. Efforts should be made to convince the users that they are to pay for such services as online, CD-ROM, CAS, SDI, abstracting, indexing, e-mail, internet browsing as they already pay for photocopying facilities.
- Promotional efforts such as user orientation programmes, publicity and personal contact programmes should be regularly carried out to make the users aware of the services/products of the library. With the availability of internet, each library should design its homepage/web page and use it as a strategic tool to improve awareness, advertise products/services, distribute and disseminate digital products and services.
- Library science curricula should be suitably changed to widen the subject of management in great detail giving importance to topics on marketing, PR and quality management to equip future library professionals with the management skills. Short term training programmes for all levels of staff should be organized for imparting marketing skills/capabilities to the library staff.

### Conclusion

University libraries must grasp that marketing and business plans are essential for survival in the face of rising competition and a fast changing environment. All the users do not use information uniformly. A “one-size-fits-all” model has to be transformed in favour of the “customized-services” model (Corral, 1997). While designing the new products and services or redesigning the old ones, the libraries must keep in mind the users and their information requirements and existing infrastructural facilities available for the creation of products and services, technology to be used, library strengths and weaknesses in terms of resources, personnel and areas of specialist expertise. This will help university libraries in providing services/products which are more responsive to the needs of the users. Thus it is on the introduction of the successful marketing mechanism in the libraries that the survival of libraries depends as non-profit organizations for the supply of services and products at subsidized rates in an era of advancing technology.

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