

## Görüşler / Opinion Papers

### Marketing to Get Better Mileage from Your Resource *Kaynağınızdan Daha İyi Randıman Almak için Pazarlama*

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#### Abstract

*The article gives us an insight in marketing in the library. It shows why marketing is necessary and how the competition is growing even in our surroundings. This paper argues from a marketing point of view why it should be involved in all library routines. The article shows the difference between internal and external marketing. The article discusses some marketing tools, which are especially suitable for libraries. It also emphasises that everybody at the library should be involved directly or indirectly in the marketing.*

**Keywords:** *Library marketing, Internal marketing, External marketing, Boston Matrix, SWOT analysis, Marketing tools.*

#### Öz

*Bu makalede, kütüphanelerde pazarlama anlayışı ele alınarak, pazarlamanın niçin gerekli olduğu ve çevremizi saran gelişme ve rekabetle nasıl baş edebileceğimiz anlatılmaktadır. Çalışma pazarlama düşüncesinin günlük kütüphane işlerini de kapsamı gerekliliğini tartışmakta ve pazarlamanın içerden ve dışardan olan türleri arasındaki farklılıklarını göstermektedir. Ayrıca kütüphaneler için özellikle uygun pazarlama araçlarının kullanılması çalışmada vurgulanmaktadır.*

**Anahtar sözcükler:** *Kütüphaneler-pazarlama, İçsel pazarlama, Dışsal pazarlama, Boston Matriks, SWOT analizi, Pazarlama araçları.*

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*“Not marketing your activities is like standing in a dark corner and winking at a girl. You know what you are doing but nobody else does”.*  
(anon)

I have been holding courses on Marketing for Libraries since 2001. The delegates to them have usually agreed that the need for marketing is continually increasing.

In most libraries there is somewhere a great deal of literature on marketing. But when, as a library professional, you open one of these books, you will find it full of terms like profit, margins, revenue, marketing director, marketing assistant, maximizing the profit. Marketing books, even those with a subtitle “An introduction to ...”, are often 600 pages long.

All the marketing examples in these books are difficult for us to relate to, because a library is not competing on price, but on knowledge, competence and relationships. So you maybe feel that such a book contains nothing relevant to you. These marketing books are of course aimed at a completely different audience, which has completely different assumptions. They say very little about what it is like to work in a library, and to market library services when you have got almost no budget for marketing and certainly no time for it.

This intuitive reaction is both right and wrong. It is wrong because marketing is something, which libraries should be working on, but in a rather different way from the more commercial approaches. It is at the same time right, because few simple marketing books are written by people who really know libraries and the everyday problems they face. I hope for this reason that this article about marketing will help. It is very simple in concept because its aim is not to frighten librarians. If later you want go on and get a much deeper perspective, then there are as I have said many good books on the wider subject.

This article has its starting points both traditional marketing and traditional library activities. I also want to provide some concrete tips and ideas for marketing in a library, and some thoughts about us as occupational group. I am describing the models I have used and which have worked in practical library life in many institutions.

Many people now see that we must market our libraries, and ourselves and there are many great libraries making wonderful marketing efforts. But there are still some people in this industry who think that marketing is not as important as other activities in the library. I aim this article at all levels and

shades of opinion – at the experienced marketers as confirmation that their effort is not only right but vital, and also at those who think that marketing is something difficult and beyond their experience and who want for that reason to sit about and not do anything. I also address those who say, “I have no time for marketing”. Nobody can stand aside now, and I will try to show you how to get started.

There is already a lot of marketing work done in the library world, which is very good, but I am convinced that we need to do even more. Most of all we need to change how the library is perceived as a whole by people “outside”, and here we need more strenuous efforts. But I have also come to understand after many years how little importance people give to internal marketing. Internal marketing is very often almost forgotten. Of course each library is unique, and every library employee is unique, BUT:

- all of us can do more marketing (except in the rare case of any professional marketers, employed by a library just for marketing, who have their own problems because their colleagues do not understand the importance of their work);
- all of us should start to see marketing in a different and more relaxed light;
- everyone should see to it that everything we do at the library somehow results in marketing our beloved libraries even better.

### Why Market?

*“Marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, services, organizations, and events to create and maintain relationships that will satisfy individual and organizational objectives.”*

*Contemporary Marketing Wired (1998) by Boone and Kurtz. Dryden Press.*

One professional marketer with whom I discussed marketing topic for librarians declared that marketing is NOT a suitable activity for librarians! I asked why not? Who else is going to work at marketing libraries? We cannot just sit there and hope that somebody else will do it for us. We must do it on our own. To succeed in marketing is not a matter of luck. Everybody can do it, but it needs a lot of work to achieve the targets. Our whole environment is more and more marketing oriented, and we as customers are more and more getting acclimatized to it. We are overwhelmed by PR and marketing efforts from our birth to our death - literally. That is why we as librarians must maintain our position among all these voices, but in our own way, and

following our own beliefs.

Does a successful operation need any marketing?

*Good work doesn't need any marketing, it is self-evident.*

*A library employee*

This attitude is not viable any more. If marketing is optional, or even unnecessary, why do we have a whole industry full of marketing people? Are they marketing only poor quality products or unnecessary services? No, of course not. But marketing and PR take up more and more space in the economy (in some areas the costs of marketing are much higher even than the costs of making the products). This is because we have so many choices all the time, and so many agents trying to influence us to choose their product or service. Every product, service or institution must now justify its existence - and so must libraries. We have been very fortunate in that for many years we didn't need to do so. Our activities have historically been considered both desirable and necessary in universities, schools, businesses and local authorities. But all this is changing now. Our work in its current form is sometimes questioned already, and if not yet there is a serious risk that it will be in the near future. No longer is there absolute or even tacit approval from politicians – government or local - nor from university faculty, school governors or head teachers, company directors and others in key positions. If we, the representatives of libraries, do not act now to demonstrate how important we are, and how significant a resource we constitute for the whole of society, we will just not be noticed in the ongoing information flow. Most other activities put enormous resources into marketing. Each piece of advertising they put out, each brochure, each campaign costs a lot of money. There are many different estimates and ways of calculating it, but it is not unusual to find a marketing budget of 10% of total turnover. There are businesses where it is 30%, and even more. How much of your library annual expenditure goes towards marketing efforts? It would be interesting to see this figure, IF you have any chance of finding it. Most probably the figure, whatever it is, does not even start to approach that of other activities. Is it so strange, though, those libraries are not noticed much any more when they get so little space in daily newspaper and on TV? Of course the library just hasn't the same resource as many other activities. Then we have to find other ways. But we also need to dare to use at least part of our budget for marketing. Maybe it is time for some redistribution of expenditure?

### **This is the Time for a Really Strong Marketing Effort**

We all must get involved in marketing, even those people at the library who have no relevant experience or who don't find it easy to relate to it. It is not

enough to have just one very dedicated person at the library, which may be very good and can probably draw nice pictures - everybody working at the library, needs to contribute to this process.

Marketing is a team exercise.

*“All employees in an organisation are involved in the process of marketing and can either contribute to it or destroy it.”*

*Philip Kotler, Kotler’s Marketing guide from A to Z*

We need all our colleagues to accept the concept, and to contribute actively to direct or indirect marketing. We all need to be part time or even full time marketers.

*“Romeo and Juliet didn’t die of broken hearts,  
they died because of lack of communication” (anon).*

We all believe sincerely that we are doing important and meaningful work, but do our customers know about it? Do we communicate it to them in the right way – one which gets through to them and which they can understand? **We need to be aware of the crucial importance of promoting our message.**

A project to make the library more visible is not often at the top of our priority list, and it gets lost among the other more traditional things we prefer doing. However, if we ignore this approach, won’t the rest of the world in the long run think that we are not needed as much as other public or university facilities? Maybe they could organize their information in a different way? Wouldn’t that be a pity, when we know that we can do it best and that we are the most knowledgeable in this area? In a nutshell, when we all are involved in the marketing efforts, the possibility for the library to stay strong increases and our occupation/profession will keep the leading role.

**We have to tell people that we exist and what we can do.** This we can achieve in many different ways, according to our local practices. That’s why we should involve marketing routines in our daily work. We librarians are also marketers. In successful marketing is very important that all are aware and pro-active with their own ideas, but it is even more important to pursue these ideas and realize them after proper coordination. Like in a play in the theatre, where all the actors have different roles but with a common script, there must be a marketing script. This is also called **MARKETING PLAN**. With this plan

there is also assumption that all will run in the same direction and that way reach the target. To integrate marketing this way in the overall library routines is often the most difficult part. To minimize the problems and difficulties it could help to start on a smaller scale, and after that involve more and more routines. We cannot either expect any fundamental changes as we start our marketing efforts, changes will not happen overnight, marketing takes time and needs purposefulness.

### **Marketing Means Developing/Development**

*Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in eis.*

Marketing can work as a very efficient way of developing and fine tuning the library work. It means a continuous check that we are on the right road. We often hurry development, because we are afraid. We know what we have now, but not what might happen if we change things. That times are changing is nothing new, but everything goes much faster now, especially in our own branch, the information business. All kinds of marketing are ongoing processes, which will never be fully complete and must take new shapes all the time. We have to repeat our mantra in order to reach results. Sometimes we need to find new solutions for the same problems as those around us have - our customers are changing their way of work too.

All people working with development and marketing will meet difficulties and problems. We will maybe in spite of our good intentions not be received with open arms (meaning that people will love our ideas) the first time and maybe not even the second or third time. The senior management or politicians are often moved on, and we have to start all over again. But this is the reality for all other businesses, and so it is even for us.

Most of marketing departments in different business have difficulties to run in the same direction and to achieve understanding from colleagues and senior management, but it doesn't mean that we can drop it. We should just be aware that there would probably be some problems.

All economics handbooks all around the world are saying that competition is good and helps drive development forward. That must include even the library. Let us use competition and learn from the world around.

There was a time when it was impossible to find books without knowledge of classification systems and cataloguing rules. Today we can find most of the information through Internet - both what you want to find, and also things which are disturbing and which you want to be spared. You can seek through free text searching, or via search engines like yahoo's categories, and under categories which start from points where non-librarians are

looking for information.

Many library people are rather sceptical about services, which were not developed by librarians for libraries, when they are using these at libraries. They see them as searching just for the sake of searching. We often think that our portals are the ones that should be used in the first instance. They are for sure much better and more reliable where we know there is relevant information. In spite of this Google is the first hand choice for most people. In principle it means we need to listen and understand how our customers think and react accordingly, and not stick to what we find most important. If our customers want Google, we must start from that point. Also it is not just Google, which comes closer and closer to libraries (Google Scholar). John Regazzi, managing director of market development at Elsevier, described studies that show 70 percent of professionals use the Internet in their work (even 91 percent of those over age 55 use it six or seven times each week). When Elsevier researchers asked librarians and scientists to name the top three most reliable online services, librarians named Science Direct, ISI's Web of Science, and Medline. Scientists, on the other hand, named Google, Yahoo! and PubMed.

### **Don't We Need Libraries Any More?**

Henry Ford was known as an opponent of all designers' tricks and changes, and his slogan was "You can have your car in any colour so long as it is black". This was because the black colour was fast drying and for that reason it suited the conveyor belt best. But even the great Henry Ford had to change his mind and start to produce cars in other colours because competitors' cars came in different colours.

Let us learn from history and be better than Henry Ford, and as soon as possible start to try new colours and new services in our library world. "If you can't beat them join them" is suitable even for library world. All these new developments open up a lot of possibilities, so we must keep our eyes open to discover them.

Both scientists of today and school children often find the first lead for information on their own. What we librarians can contribute is help with the next step, to question right routes, evaluate sources and filter the enormous amount of information. There will in the future be an enormous need for human "filters" and "selectors". The consensus we hope for is of course that libraries will be needed more than ever, but we must help each other to profile ourselves as the necessary partners which we are, and market

ourselves and what we are good at.

### **Same Marketing – Different Kind of Libraries**

Different libraries don't imply different universes. When it comes to marketing methods and marketing needs, there are really great similarities between scientific, school, public and corporate libraries. Especially now, when there is a will to minimize distance between these library worlds. There are the same demands from all kind of library customers, also depending on the trend towards lifetime learning and distance studying. Learn from each other, steal good ideas and try to cooperate as much as possible.

### **Marketing with Impediments**

Marketing costs both money and time. And usually we don't have either of them. What can we do then? The answer is as simple as it is unpleasant and difficult to digest. Liquidate some services and products and you will get time and money for marketing.

The sad reality is that we will not get any more money or more people before we have done something positive and interesting. Before we can show that we have more customers or new customer groups we will never get more money. We also are so busy with our ordinary work that the saying "We want to do something but we have no time" is very often heard in library world. But what about if we are spending time on the wrong things? There is probably some truth in this so we must all the time check ourselves with almost brutal honesty in order to know what is really important and what we must get rid of.

Suppose you were to come upon someone in the woods working feverishly to saw down a tree.

- "What are you doing?" you ask.
- "Can't you see?" comes the impatient reply. "I'm sawing down this tree."
- "You look exhausted!" you exclaim. "How long have you been at it?"
- "Over five hours," he returns, "and I'm beat! This is hard work."
- "Well why don't you take a break for a few minutes and sharpen that saw?" you inquire. "I'm sure it would go a lot faster."
- "I don't have time to sharpen the saw," the man says emphatically. "I'm too busy sawing!"



*Stephen R Covey, 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

Sharpening the saw is about renewing ourselves-physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally. Even those of us working in a library need to stop for a while and spend more time on marketing of libraries. To get time for that we maybe have to get rid of something. I do not minimize all the work and all the things we need to do on daily basis, but we must actively produce more time for marketing if we want reach out with our message.

**The Courage to Eliminate**

Is everything we do on the daily basis really necessary? What happens if we eliminate some smaller work items? I think if we start this thought, it is not that frightening and strange. All of us can rationalize something. But of course everything must be discussed and planned and coordinated. One move, which liberates half an hour a day gives 2 hours a week and that, is a good beginning. These hours can be used for thinking through and developing marketing ideas.

We can ask if there are happy eliminations? Of course there are. If we only get new and more interesting work after removing something else we will get an opportunity to influence the library work in a positive way. Better to forestall than be forestalled. When we have been successful with some elimination we achieve and analyse of our activities and find a strategy for marketing, then we are on the right way.

So start with something small and go back and evaluate, if the decision to liquidate just this activity was right or wrong. If there will not be many customers suffering from this decision is it really such a catastrophe? Probably not, it was just a small change and we can change back. Think again through it and find something else. Eventually you will find the "right" ones. "Kill your darlings" was the best advice ever I got when I started my own consultancy. This is a good motto, but so hard to live with. I am convinced that many of us find it very difficult to kill off our own brilliant ideas, ideas we have had for a long time and which we have a personal relationship with – almost a responsibility for. But ideas are getting old like we are and the world around is changing too, so maybe these ideas don't belong any more?

Something which I used to think was a fantastic idea, shows up as not good enough. On the other hand someone else's idea -my boss, my colleague, my children, my wife/husband or even a customer or competitor

shows up as the right one.

### Marketing Tools

We agree now that marketing is important, not to say essential, and that we all should work at it and also that we must find time for it.

#### *How shall we start?*

Let us have a look at the marketing literature and theories. I would like to start with a quotation from Philip Kotler, the most well known marketing guru. His books are in the marketing courses' literature lists all around the world. He said: "*Marketing is a philosophy*".

That's why I want to make it simple, and so I will just mention some theories and strategies, which are relevant to our library world. We can use some marketing tools from the famous marketers. I have tried them in my marketing courses, and it works for many libraries. Actually, in my experience it really doesn't matter which model of analysis or strategy you choose. Stay with the first you select for some time and see if it works. If not, use another one. I would anyway recommend you to try using some of the standard marketing tools. Please also note that our internal and external surroundings are changing all the time. Threats become Opportunities; Weaknesses became Strengths or the other way around. (Google could be a Threat or Opportunity). For that reason we need to have routines for marketing and to assess the process on a regular basis.

The most important thing is to go through all four stages: Analysis, strategy, realization, and feedback.

#### *Analysis*

All analyses are for auditing an organization and its environment before starting the marketing process. They help us to focus on key issues.

<b>SWOT Analysis</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Strengths	* our specialist expertise. * reliability
Weaknesses	* lack of marketing experience * budget cuts
Opportunities	* new product or service (e-resources) * new customer groups (internal marketing)

Threats

\* competitor (Internet, Google)

<b>PEST Analysis</b>	<b>Five Forces Analysis</b>	
Political factors	The threat of entry.	* technical problems Another models for analysis:
Economic factors	The power of buyers	
Sociocultural factors	The power of suppliers	
Technological factors	The threat of substitutes	
	Competitive rivalry	

sis:

**Strategy**

In order to choose the right strategy; you may use some of the matrices below. Matrices are for studying how market looks, both for now and in the future. Personally I prefer this Boston Matrix, because we NEED to find “dogs” so that we can eliminate some routines and stop doing everything. We suffer from doing everything, and from keeping up all the old routines together with all the new ones. Example for strategies:

Boston Matrix

Dogs: Products/Services with a low share of a low growth market. Consider how to get rid of these products in order to find time for new services.

Milk Cows: Products/Services with a high share of a slow growth market. They are good for the time being.

Problem Children: Products/Services, which consume resources and generate little in return.

Stars: Products/Services with high market growth and easy to maintain. Keep and build your stars.

Another matrix, which also works for us, is

Ansoff's matrix, which offers strategic choices to achieve the objectives. There are four main categories for selection.

**Market Penetration:** Here we market our existing products to our existing customers. This means increasing our revenue by, for example, promoting the product, repositioning the brand, and so on. However, the product is not altered and we do not seek any new customers.

**Market Development:** Here we market our existing product range in a new market. This means that the product remains the same, but it is marketed to a new audience. Exporting the product, or marketing it in a new region, is examples of market development.

**Product Development:** This is a new product to be marketed to our existing customers. Here we develop and innovate new product offerings to replace existing ones. Such products are then marketed to our existing customers. This often happens with the auto markets where existing models are updated or replaced and then marketed to existing customers.

**Diversification:** This is where we market completely new products to new customers. There are two types of diversification, namely related and unrelated diversification. Related diversification means that we remain in a market or industry with which we are familiar. For example, a soup manufacturer diversifies into cake manufacture (i.e. the food industry). Unrelated diversification is where we have no previous industry or market experience. For example a soup manufacturer invests in the rail business ([www.marketingteacher.com](http://www.marketingteacher.com)).

### *Realization*

Now you know about your own organisation, about your environment, about your key products and about some marketing strategy. How to take the next steps? YOU ARE THE EXPERTS you know. Also you have done it before very well, and now you know even more about your environment, both for the present, and, with some qualified guesses, for the future. The crucial thing is really to do it. Try to divide different activities in the library between yourself and your staff and write them down and get people to accept their role. It is easier when they have been through the whole process of analysis and strategies.

### *Feedback*

We need time for feedback. That's why it is so important to establish routines for marketing activity. When we continue using the same tools it becomes more and more easy to overlook the need to get feedback, to see what went

right and what was wrong. It is actually here, at this stage, that we should learn most for our future activities, although most of the time we forget or do not give ourselves time for it, because there are new activities, new fires to be put out, new challenges to meet. I know all this so well, but feedback really PAYS. All stages are very important to make sure that we target the right group, with the right products and using the right tools.

“Recycling of knowledge”

If we help new scientists from the beginning they will be happy to help us in return. I call it “recycling of knowledge”. There are ways to do marketing; we just need to sew it together.

So obviously we have some problems here. We librarians mean well, but somehow we don't reach out. We also rely a lot on the traditional usage statistics, which are very good as far as they go, but we seem not to use them very much in our marketing. They can be a fantastic tool, but we must probably change the way we view statistics, and not look at them solely as librarians. The most important thing is, how would our university bosses look at them? Try always to see it from their perspective. They are probably interested in different usage statistics from the ones we see as essential. Also all the yearly reports we are producing could be used a lot in both our internal and external marketing.

I interviewed some librarians who spent an enormous amount of time on such a report every year. I then asked - what are you doing with it? Their answer was - *well, we leave it with the University President's secretary*. We do need change the belief that other people will automatically be interested in the library world. But we can make them interested. Our product and services are extremely good and are used very widely, actually they are indispensable.

I have done an investigation at UKSG - partly during my workshops on “Marketing for the Library” and partly by asking around some delegates during these 3 days; also at other workshops like OCLC's Updating seminar at Prague's (Czech republic) National Library and at a Joint Workshop on Electronic Publishing in Lund (Sweden). I had some trouble getting some people to fill in the feedback forms. (They didn't have time there, and I have not received anything by mail or post after the conference either. It just illustrates the lack of time - see above).

Anyway here are the results from the large number who did respond. There is no doubt that personal contact is extremely important and effective but it's not possible to use just that channel — which is why

We must utilise other methods such as:

- (a) In the library's e-newsletter (almost all libraries have some kind of

e-newsletter).

- (b) In targeted email alerts sent to academics from our information specialists. This is ideal in theory, but unfortunately it usually tends to become just the general e-newsletter above, as we often put together all our news, because of lack of time. The problem is that our customers are overwhelmed by information and would like to have very tailored data -which we cannot provide because of LACK OF TIME (Catch 22)
- (c) Through e-mail to new arrivals giving useful links and introducing our services as the first in the institution.
- (d) Through events associated with specific areas (Many libraries are very good at using all kind of events at the university to market themselves and their services. The trick is to have a good overview of what's happening around us).
- (e) Through special programs like TDNet, Serial Solutions? (Not many libraries are using these methods in the long run).
- (f) Through the institution's Website (Websites are of course very useful, but routines for regular checking and updating are very important, otherwise they could have a negative impact. A section with for instance New Resources is very appreciated at many libraries).
- (g) Through Intranet (Usually tried in other types of libraries like governmental or cooperative. This used to be a very efficient way of marketing, but the wonder of intranet tends at many organisations/companies to become less important then everybody hoped in the beginning).
- (h) Through an A-Z list with all serials extracted from library management system.
- (i) Through "old fashioned" bookmarks in paper; which works very well and customers are coming and "asking" for these.
- (j) Through the library's own OPAC.
- (k) Indirectly, through conversation on a related topic.
- (l) Many libraries are now reviewing all the library services and realize that they need to re-evaluate what should be provided, through internal & external marketing.
- (m) Some libraries are very active and try to be involved in all university/organizational presentations to all the official visits.
- (n) Through specific user sessions, organized from the library.
- (o) Open house.

- (p) Through different competitions.
- (q) Through frequent contributions to the University bulletin.
- (r) Through library workshops.
- (s) Electronic monitor in the library.
- (t) Publicity displays.
- (u) Through leaflets (paper).
- (v) There was one library, who saw the opportunity for internal marketing at a library ball! It went very well and the library got many new users.

*"Word of mouth & personal recommendations are invaluable"*

### **Who Can Help Us with Marketing?**

Anyone who wants to and who can be used for this!

There is also a possibility of involving vendors and letting them help us in our marketing. Some libraries are encouraging Vendor's workshops and see this as marketing the library. Of course this must include us as well. Sometimes we mention Google and Yahoo as competitors. I would rather like to call them complementary. We libraries are the ones who can teach people about reliability, and why it is so important especially now. At UKSG (United Kingdom Serials Group) I have heard from one speaker that 90% of information from Google is rubbish. Other speakers said that it is not so. I think it is dangerous to misjudge all other sources of information especially if the whole world around us is using them. Also, while I am writing this, I see many reports coming in about cooperation (or sometimes the lack of it!) between Google and publishers, and many development plans are ongoing right now. Could something brilliant result from this? Of course it will, it just means that we need to be more proactive, not that we have lost the battle.