

## Marketing Library and Information Services on the Green Road of Web 2.0: The Library Perspective

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*Technological advancement has ushered a great change in the knowledge economic sector. The way people communicate, and in the process of information collection, organization and dissemination considered are to be crucial for providing the right information to the right customer (users) at the right time in a customizable, personalized, and collaborative way to the users which is imperative for the information professional. The role of the library is crucial in developing the novel thought to support the intellectual growth and success of the individuals and institutions that they serve in responding to these changes. The web 2.0 movement emerged as a response to the modern means for upgrading the libraries into more user-centered in the present library marketing scenario. In this paper, the author has vividly described marketing library services from user perspectives by applying social networking tools on the green road of marketing library and information services. The author has also rightly demarcated marketing strategy 2.0 plan for implementing social networking tools in the library and information services successfully.*

**Keywords:** Library Services, Social Network, Library 2.0, Marketing 2.0

### 1. Introduction

In last few years, libraries have been subject to significant pressure due to the information revolution. Information has to be properly collected, organized and disseminated (marketing) for the customer (user) at right time in a right way. What, why, when and how to market information on user perspectives is continued to be a crucial debate for the library and information centre. Libraries around the world are facing vital challenges due to budget cuts, increased user base, the rapid growth of resources, rising costs, networking demands, competition of database vendors, and complexity in information requirements compelling the professionals to look up the open source technology available on the web. The traditional strategy of library marketing seems to be a debate among the library where user satisfaction is the prime concern. Also the five laws of library enumerated by Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, rightly urged to market the library and information services by any means. But where to look and what techniques need to be acquired by the professionals are major questions? Do librarians have any means? Does library matter? The answer is "Yes". Libraries should think of applying the new leading concepts like social networking in the marketing of library and information services for the users. Library 2.0 proposes to bring revolutionary changes in libraries that are bound to bring about conceptual, cultural and physical changes in the libraries to cope up with the changes for information seekers. Library 2.0 can be seen as

a reaction from librarians to the increasing relevant developments in web 2.0. Social networking tools Wiki, RSS, Facebook, Ning, Meebo, ELF, Library Thing, Delic.io.us, Technorati, Tagging, flokonomies, MySpace, Flickr, Podcast, Mashup, Ajax etc can be successfully practiced for providing and promoting library and information services in the library .

## 2. Trends in Library Marketing

M. Cox identified that the trends in marketing are increasing integration of the marketing and planning processes, emphasis of the need for marketing surveys, increasing usage of the pro-active management methods in librarianship the continuous thorough analysis of the main concepts of marketing: the basis of marketing, the analysis of marketing and public relations, advertising; common and different in sale communication; increasing adjustment and implementation of the business world marketing methods in library marketing processes; and analysis of usage of new marketing methods and means in the development of library marketing strategies (Cox;2000).

## 3. Marketing Defined

Marketing has been defined as one of the areas of competency that is important for Library and Information Professionals in the challenging scenario. Broadly, the concept of marketing can be defined as "a set of techniques involving a number of process; as a philosophy by providing the right information to the right user at the right time; an approach to serve the customers information need and as customer driven marketing where customers are the hub of service sector". 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 the customer.

The most well-known and most often used definition of marketing by Philip Kotler (Kotler,2007), states "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 the target market's needs and desires and as using effective pricing, communication, and distribution to inform, motivate and serve the markets."

There are 7 major points to be emphasized in the above definition:

- Marketing is a managerial process involving analysis, planning, implementation and control.
- Marketing is concerned with carefully formulated programmes – not random actions – designed to achieve desired responses.

- Marketing seeks to bring about voluntary exchange.
- Marketing selects target markets and does not seek to be all people.
- Marketing is directly correlated to the achievement of organizational objectives.
- Marketing place emphasis on the target market's (consumer's) needs and desire rather than on the producer's preferences.

Marketing can also be considered, as Harmon has rightly pointed out that " Marketing is the finding, diagnosing and filling the needs of relevant clientele through mutual beneficial exchange relationships, and doing so better than one's competitors" (Harmon,2002).The above mentioned definitions stressed that marketing is an exchange relationship or called as "relationship marketing"

Hence, we define marketing as the process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships in order to capture value customers in return.

#### 4. Relationship Marketing and Library: The New Venture

Relationship Marketing has emerged as a paradigm shift in marketing with consequences for marketing and management of a relationship type marketing strategy. It refers to all activities directed to establishing, developing, and maintaining successful long-term relationships (Berry; 1995). Relationship Marketing can be defined as "Identify and establish, maintain and enhance and when necessary also to terminate relationships with customers and others stakeholders, at a profit, so that objectives of all parties are met, and that this done by mutual exchange and fulfillment of promises (Gronroos; 1994). In the context of Library and Information Service, the relationship marketing approach suggests that libraries are required to go beyond the needs, wants, and demands of their customers and should try to fulfill them by anticipating them as far as possible (Singh 2003); Relationship marketing offers specific benefits to libraries, and can be applied to particular effect in marketing digital library services (Henderson 2005). Libraries should consider at least six relationships and partnerships: customer markets, internal markets, supplier and alliance markets, referral markets, recruitment markets and influence markets (Besant, Sharp 2000). Customers or users are the most basic ingredient in a working library or information center. Therefore, marketing must be customer-driven; without the customer there is no reason for a library to exist. Relationship marketing is about getting and keeping customers by developing real and long-term relationships. Visualizing relationship marketing in libraries is most important. The six relationship marketing model as:

**4.1 Customer markets** include not only new customers but also the loyal, long-term customers who are at the heart of every service encounter. A loyal and strong relationship with customers will assist with fighting budget cuts and with expanding services.

**4.2 Internal markets** are the employees and departments within the library or the organization who are both internal customers and internal suppliers. Good internal working relationships enhance external relationships.

**4.3 Supplier and alliance markets** include publishers, system vendors, and booksellers who provide raw materials and basic equipment. Collaboration and alliances resulting in new approaches and new ways of rewarding these relationships are critical.

**4.4 Referral markets** are groups that do marketing for the library such as satisfied customers, personal and social networks, and mass media. Referral markets can be fast-acting via the Internet and either supportive of or damaging to marketing efforts.

**4.5 Recruitment markets** are the new people we attract to the profession. Getting and retaining the best people to work in the profession by creating an appealing image is necessary for sustainability.

**4.6 Influence markets** include any person or group who can benefit from the library such as trustees, corporate executives, government officials, and friends groups. Proactive instead of passive relationship-building is key for these markets.

**5. Traditional Marketing Vs Viral Marketing**

With the development of the world wide web, the marketing concept has mixed up with information technology. Viral marketing is a form of targeted marketing, to assist websites increase their web presence and to promote their product or services through internet such as Search Engine Marketing; Search Engine Optimization; Banner Advertising; Directory Submission; Email Marketing and many more. Internet Marketing is more economical and faster way to reach out the customer (users) directly but where as traditional marketing is non targeted marketing deals with customer (users) more precisely, and is sometimes called personalized marketing or one-to-one marketing. Social Networking tools like MySpace, YouTube, Digg, Ning, Facebook, Wiki, RSS Feed, Meebo etc have made it relatively easier to reach out to a wide audience in comparison to traditional marketing. A brief comparative view of both is represented as below:

**Table 1: Comparative view of VM vs. VM**

Targeted Marketing	Non- Targeted Marketing
Economical and fast way to promote product.	Expensive and takes more time to promote product.
Cost-Effective for promoting product globally	Expensive and time consuming process for traditional marketing.
Your product or service is 24 X 7 advertising	That is not possible in traditional marketing.
Effective mode of tracking investment	Not Possible

**6. Library 2.0: A New Perspective for Library**

The concept of Library 2.0 has been borrowed from web 2.0, and follows similar philosophies of web 2.0. Library 2.0 is a mixing concept that focuses on a number of ongoing conversations around the changing ways that libraries should make themselves and their services visible to end users and to one another. Maness (2006) defined Library 2.0 as “the application of interactive collaborative and multi-media web-based technologies to web-based library services and collections.” It is the application and implication of web 2.0 principles and technologies in the field of library and information services. Libraries and information centers can underscore the importance of Library 2.0 because it breaks the cycle of “plan, implement, and forget” that many services and plans suffer (Miller, 2005). Library can be a part of web 2.0 by harnessing the concept, principles and technologies for rendering exemplary services to user in electronic world. It is a framework for incorporating all changes made at all levels in the management of library. Now librarians must begin to use this Web 2.0 application if they want to prove themselves just as relevant as other information providers, and start delivering experiences that meet the expectation of the modern user in the information-rich world. It should be a relentless drive to seek new ways to allow communities to seek, find and utilize information in a productive way.

**7. Web 2.0: Some Possible Application for Marketing Library and Information Service**

Social Networks or social software can be used for marketing library information service in the e-marketing environment to save the time of the users and also fourth law of library science rightly stated by Dr. S.R. Ranganathan “Save the time of the reader”. Marketing library and information services on user perspectives is crucial issue, where web 2.0 tools can be successfully practiced by strategic planning and right exercise by the information professionals. The possible social network tools that can be look forward for marketing library and information services are Wiki, RSS Feed, YouTube, Blogger, Podcast, Facebook, MySpace, ELF, LinkedIn, Slideshare, aNobii, Delic.io.us, Netvibes, Library Thing, lib.rario.us etc and many more. Wiki can be used as a knowledge management tool for the library to organizing and managing digital information for the users; RSS feeds are used by libraries for users to subscribe to, including updates on new items in a collection, new services, and new content in subscription databases and also library content for republishing on library sites; Podcast is a process of capturing audio digital-media files that can be distributed over the Internet using RSS feeds for playing-back on portable media players as well as computers that can be used to support library orientation programmes; Vodcasting is used for delivering video content of the library; MySpace and Facebook enables users to share informative resources with one another; Del.icio.us enables users to share web resources; Flickr enables sharing of pictures; Frappr is a blended network that facilitates use of maps, chat rooms, and pictures to connect individuals. Tags are usually chosen informally and personally by author / creator or by its consumer/

viewers/community. Tags are typically used for resources such as computer files, web pages, digital images, and Internet bookmarks; Social bookmarking is a method of storing, organizing, searching and managing bookmarks of web sites using descriptive metadata where users can save links to web pages which need to remember and /or share with other users; Mashup is a web application that combines data from more than one source into a single integrated tool that helps in a user when they log in. It allows the user to edit OPAC data and metadata, saves the user's tags, IM conversations with librarians, wiki entries with other users (and catalogues all of these for others to use), and the user is able to make all or part of their profile public. There are a number of mashup platforms that can be used to create mashups, e.g. Intel Mash Maker, Google Mashup Editor, LiquidApps, Microsoft Popfly, Serena Mashup Editor, Yahoo pipes, etc; Instant messaging or IM can be useful for providing "real-time reference" services, where patrons can synchronously communicate with librarians much as they would in a face-to-face reference context; Library version can be possible by secondlife; Library assignment and teaching scheduled through social software tools like Joomla; Professionals can put their collections on flicker; Footnote.com may be used to learn about history of library and also it will be helpful to provide the means to learn more about students, who can help libraries better to meet their needs.

#### **8. Building a Successful Marketing Plan: The Strategy 2.0**

Marketing library and information services in web 2.0 required suitably pre-planned strategy or we can call strategy 2.0 for successfully adopting the rationale behind the concept web 2.0. Librarian should framed the plan logically and implement judiciously in the services of the customer. The question is where should the librarian look? While applying the modus operandi of web 2.0 in the library, the green factors such as Identify the need of the customer; extensive research and experiment; identify the target audience (users); identify objectives of the market plan; expertise the message; encourage the audience (users); ask feedback; evaluate the feedback and find right platform; develop a plan for the platform and evaluate, implement and feedback.

#### **9. Does Library Matter? Embracing the Radical Change**

The application and implication of library 2.0 seems to be a crucial challenge and issue on the part of library that embraced several leadership challenges for successful implementation of web 2.0 in the marketing library and information services. Does library really matter? If it matters, then which are the major areas? What are the professional challenges ahead? How it can be sort out? These are some of the critical issues needed to be analyzed while considering the buzz word "Library 2.0 ". The challenges like customer (user) need, working culture, technophobia, user awareness, privacy, IPR etc are core issues which need to be addressed. The professionals should be well set up to adopt the radical change. Library 2.0 competency is crucial to develop where librarian should act as a change leader to provide resource

and service on users perspective, self practiced , education and learn information culture better before applying, master yourself by continuous experiment and feedback, encourage user to embrace and use social networking tools like wiki, RSS feed, Facebook, MySpace in their teaching learning process, role of faculty in marketing web 2.0 tools cannot be ruled out, evaluate user feedback and convert into success, create open web sites that allow users to join with librarians. Last but not least practice yourself before practiced other are some of the important challenges should be build up by the librarian for successfully driving on the green road of library 2.0.

## **10. Conclusion**

Marketing of library and information services should be mixed up with web 2.0 for providing right information to the right user at the right time. The library's services will change, focusing more on the facilitation of information transfer and information literacy rather than providing controlled access to it. Hence library should focus on interactive, collaborative, and multi-media web-based technologies to web-based library services and collections to satisfy the customer. Librarians and information professionals must learn to effectively market and advertise their services for competition for customers, competition for resources, maintain relevance, promote an updated image, visibility, valuable community resource, rising expectations, survival in web 2.0 world. The implications of web 2.0 in library will surely drive the on the green road of open source revolution. Hence library and information professionals should be well equipped and expertise to drive smoothly and apply logically the buzz word library 2.0 in marketing library and information services by addressing the issues and challenges in implementing web 2.0 in the information literacy scenario. These new services and ongoing changes are likely to make libraries more interesting, more relevant, and better acceptable place. Library 2.0 proposes to bring revolutionary changes in libraries that are bound to bring about conceptual, cultural and physical changes in libraries to keep pace with the changes in communities and their information seeking behavior. Applications of Web 2.0 technologies in libraries will result in a meaningful and substantive change in libraries in the process of information collection, organization and dissemination on user perspective.

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