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APPLICATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING OF LIS PRODUCTS AND SERVICES: AN EVALUATION

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ABSTRACT:

In traditional setting marketing of Library and information services had been a challenge. Social media opened a new door for libraries and informational professional to market their product and services. This paper explore how libraries and information institutions applying social media in promotional activities of libraries and information institutions. Papers gives an over view of concept of marketing and social media and also discuss different type of social media and their application. This paper also light throws on guideline& tips for social media marketing as well as issues and challenges.

KEY WORDS: Social Media, Library, information services, product, etc.

INTRODUCTION

The revolution of information and communication technology has popularized web2.0 such as social media. This application now considered by many libraries as having potential capable of taking libraries to the next levels. Social media provides several opportunities to reach and interact with community hence use of social media has increased tremendously over past few years. The information society has found out the potentiality of information that creates a gateway for commercial profit due to which modern librarianship has the responsibility of knowledge management. Change in technical and technological aspect of library service and product have compelled library professional to market their service and product for increasing its visibility, providing quality services and also fulfilling the organizational objectives. In the context of libraries marketing does not merely means promotion and diffusion the services or develop product they hold. but it is an literary creating awareness programmed among the user about the information they offered. In the present time irrespective of kind of libraries, it is essential to market their library product and services

to enhance awareness among the user community. Marketing of LIS product and services according to the user needs.

Has been one of the current challenges of information sector. Technological innovations have been helping information professional to enhance in their promotion.

CONCEPT OF MARKETING:

Marketing, more than any other business function, deals with customer. Marketing is the managing profitable customer relationship. Merketing must be understood not in old sense telling-selling but in the new sense of satisfying customer needs.(Kotler,1976).

It has special meaning in terms of library services as the core product of library is information, a marketable good and is intangible in nature though considered to possessing the quality of any given commodities. Library marketing strategy has been changed from library home page to social media due to change in information society. Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirement profitably. Social networking technologies are new means for libraries to meet their product and services to a great extent.

CONCEPT OF SOCIAL MEDIA:

Social media has been defined in several ways. Oxford dictionary (2013) defined social media as website and application that enable user to create and share contents or to participate in social networking. According to Bradley (2012) the term social media refer to the use of web based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue. Kaplan and Haenlein(2010:61) have described social media as a group of internet based applications that build on ideological and technological foundation of web2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated contents. Brain solis, one of the most published author in new media, define social media as the democratization of information. It is user centric multipurpose and it is not time and location bound. Social media consist of various user driven marketing channels e.g. face book, twitter, blogs, you tube,flicker.It has number of benefits over traditional marketing as displayed in tables below

Traditional versus social media marketing:-

Traditional marketing	Social media marketing
Static	Creative
Monotonous	Exciting and stimulating
Expensive	Cost effective
One way	Collaborative
Passive	Interactive
Time consuming	Time saving

Why marketing of LIS products and services are necessary?

Marketing is essential in information industry. Information is the core product of library therefore, marketing of LIS product and services are must. It does not matter what library type, it does not matter how large or small your library is. You need to draw attention to your library, your services, your worth to your community, your administration your staff and your users. It is important to understand the organizational mission to produce effective marketing materials that build the libraries brand and image. Marketing is an integral part of any library and one of the best ways to enhance the use of library services and product. Sophisticated marketing enriches the use of library and there by

achieves the organizational objectives. Marketing may be instrumental in maximum utilization of information, products, for which information centre have been investing huge amount of money, manpower and time. Communication, visibility, customer orientation are the key factors in successful marketing. A satisfied customer is loyal customer and instrumental in bringing more user to the library (David et al.2012), madhusudhan (2008) signifies the essentiality of marketing for library as to

i) Conceptualized the perception of information need thereby create demand.

ii) Ensure the best use of library resource and improve the image and status of library and library professional.

iii) Tackle the problem of increasing cost of information sources and manage with the information explosion

iv) Introduced the cutting edge information technology system in library services

v) Balance shrinking fund and save library from devaluation

vi) Save library from decline reader support and uphold the motto that information is power.

Go where your user are.

Library professional have to be reached where the user are present. It is the time of ICT, and often users engage in social media or others ICT related activities.Theresore it is a big opportunity for library professional to grab the attention of the users on social media. Social media such as face book, twitter are the most visited place by the users, so library professional can create their own page on social networking sites and promotes library product and services easily. In this highly ICT environment it is difficult for library professional to attract the user only through traditional medium; they have to choose contemporary ICT strategy to grab the attention of the user's community. Application of web2.0 has brought revolutionary change in information business. Social media have been successfully exploiting these applications for the process of information exchange.

Important social networking sites:

Social networking sites are important tools for library professional to advertise and marketing their products and services. It helps to share resources and also facilitates group communication among the library professional. Following are the important social networking sites could be used for library promotional activities

Face book:

Face book is the most popular social media platform for creating library awareness and marketing (chu&Du, 2013; Du toit,2013) Face book is free social networking site that allows registered user to create their profile, upload photo and video, send message and kept in touch with friends, family&colleague (Rouse,2009).By using facebook page or account librarian can draw attention to fulfill the hidden of library treasures. Photos of Important product of library can upload on face book to grab the attention of the user. Library related videos such as library talk by eminent person can be upload on face book..

Twitter:

It is a kind of micro blogging application where short message can be sent to the destination. Twitter has become an important feature on social media landscape and it has been an increasingly popular social networking tools for libraries to reach out their patrons (Sewell,2013).It helps to keep user and staff informed of the events& programmes of the library workshop, new arrivals and new

services through short message.

LinkedIn:

It helps to connect with subject specialist in their particular field of interest. Library professional can use this platform to serve specialized services such as strategic dissemination of services. It also help to create professional connection among the library professional. LinkedIn can be effective marketing channels with proper planning& implementation.

Flicker:

It can be used for sharing the image of library. Cover page, content page image of new arrivals of books & journal can be diffused among the user community through flicker. Image of academic seminar, workshop, and conference may be shared to the public for awareness. Library can use flicker to upload library image& picture of different services offered.

You tube:

It is and another important social media platform where videos can be uploaded, searched, accessed, downloaded all over the world. Video of library workshop, seminar, documentary give user a grid view of intact collection and environment of library. User can even comments on videos which may be considered for the feed back.

Blogs:

Blogs are one of the oldest social media channels. Blog is a website consisting of entries appearing in reverse chronological with the most recent entry appearing first. they are popularly used in library to broad cast library news and marketing play a leading role in advertising the use of blogs for scholarly communication and commenting on research finding(Ezeani&igwesi,2012).Increasingly library are using blogs for publishing library news and events; providing information about new acquisition and encourage use of library services(walia&Gupta,2012).

Slideshare:

It is a social media platform where user upload files privately or publically which can be viewed by users. It play important role in the field of education and e-learning.it is much effective in sharing idea, thought and conducting research.

Del.icio.us:

It is a social book marking service that helps in discovering, gathering and sharing book mark .it is a platform where user shares web resources in an effective manner. It helps in organizing huge amount of information user come across in daily life from different sources. A detailed document on library service offered and their usefulness can be created online& book marked which itself would be an active in library marketing (TK Gireesh kumar&muruli, 2013)

Pinterest:

Pinterest is a free graphical and an emerging social media tools. it is an online pin board that allows you to organize& share things. It provides great venue to market library resources. A library can make it own profile and create board, pinning photos, video, showcasing library.

Planning and guideline for successful social media marketing:

Planning is important for successful social media marketing. We need to do plan before executing any work and marketing on social media is not a easy task, so for successful social media marketing we need to take serious step of planning. the market plan is the actual process which will establish the library's business goal ,objective and figure out how to achieve them. Katz (1988) call marketing action must effective when the relevant activities are planned& coordinate. There is a need of clear understanding of user need and realization of organizational objectives while planning library marketing activities.Continious feedback and revision in strategy according to user need can be beneficial for successful library marketing. Major guideline and tips for social media marketing are-

Decided the purpose of social media marketing:

First of all, it is important to decide the purpose and goals of Social Media marketing based on the specific needs of a particular library(Burkhardt,2010)

Start with small things

Start with doing small things such as creating outstanding presence on face book or twitter, using this experience move on to the other social media outlet. Doing one thing is better than doing lots of neglected profile all over over the web.

Decide on what to post:

It is critical to decide what to post on social media or what to not whether to post library news& events, new addition to library collection, link to article, videos, community information or anything else?

Promote events:

A great way to market the library is to let everyone know about all the events of your library by creating descriptive hash tags(#awesome library events) that can be used onsite such as twitter& face book and encouraging people to attend live blog or twit(Kroski,2013)

Get the tone right:

Use informal but not overly familiar, friendly but not overly personal, colloquial but grammatically, syntactically and orthographically correct language for your library social media platform (potter, 2011)

Maintain Constant communication:

Constant communication is very important in social media marketing. Spend time on social media to listen the users comments, advice and assure them with suitable words for future improvement.

Create connected and consistent brand channel:

Create a consistent presence on all of the Social Media platforms of your library. Use the same logo and the same color scheme to show the users your brand and connect all your profiles on each Social Media channel and link all the Social Media accounts on the library's website (Kroski2013)

Challenges:

❖ awareness about social networking site (SNS) among LIS professionals are necessary for creating successful social media marketing.

❖ Library professional in India are not satisfactorily possess interest to learn about SNS.

❖ Adaptation of contemporary marketing strategies in promotional activities.

❖ undependable electricity supply

❖ Sluggishly speed of internet

❖ Security issue of personal identity

❖ setting up right attitude towards social media by planning modules to get rid of techno phobia

❖ creating awareness about social media among educational institution that social media is not just for entertainment but also an effective platform for academic activities by providing access to social media.

CONCLUSION:

This paper tried to explore how libraries and information institutions using social media in marketing LIS product and services. Social media is well organized and well accepted forum for marketing library and information product. Libraries ought to change according to changing nature of information communication technology to promote their services and product. Hence all type of libraries and information institutions should apply these media to enhance their marketing and promotional activities.

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