



THE IMPORTANCE OF BRANDING AND POSITIONING IN MARKETING LIBRARY SERVICES: A PROFESSIONAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Libraries encounter the difficulty of distinguishing themselves and proving their worth to users in a highly competitive information landscape. This article examines the significance of branding and positioning in promoting library services. The text explores important ideas in branding and positioning, reviews examples of effective library marketing projects, and offers ways for libraries to establish their brand and strengthen their position in the market. Through the implementation of strong branding and positioning tactics, libraries can improve their support to communities, enhance service usage, and secure long-term sustainability in an ever-evolving information environment.

Keyword: branding and positioning, Marketing, Library Professionals, Community Relationships.

Introduction

Libraries are really having to adapt to the digital age. All of the libraries, the old wealth of knowledge is now being challenged by the internet, twitter, facebook, and other forms of technology that provide immediate access to the information. Therefore, it cannot be expected that libraries will continue to perform solely their original purpose but must instead continually adapt and grow to meet the evolving needs and demands of their patrons.

In today's fluid environment, branding and strategic positioning are not only buzzwords but have become integral tools in the marketing arsenal for libraries. Branding is more than just a logo or a tagline, it is a whole process to create a unique persona in the information services market

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place. It's about getting across the library's core ideals and mission and who it is as an organization to the population it is dedicated to serving. A good image of the library will make the users trust us more and feel more comfortable going to the library whenever they have some sort of information need.

But, according to the book, positioning is the practice of a company deliberately differentiating itself and its products in the minds of the target audience. This involves realizing the unique features and advantages the library has over other forms of information, be it digital databases, search engines, or social media. With exceptional customer service, unlimited resources, and innovative programming, libraries can establish a unique image and a following of loyal users.

This paper will extensively examine the role of branding and positioning in the marketing of library services. It will discuss the advantages of good branding including greater exposure, improved public perception, and higher user activity. Moreover, the paper will offer practical tactics and useful advice for library professionals who want to develop and execute effective branding and positioning campaigns. Knowing and applying these concepts allow libraries to flourish in the digital age, ensuring their relevance and indispensability to the communities they serve. This test will ultimately reveal the paramount necessity for conscious branding and strategic positioning in aiding the libraries' ability to maneuver through the complexities of the modern information landscape.

Review Literature

(2023). the paper "Library services marketing: An overview of strategies and outcomes" by Acharya and Vagdal discusses the evolving landscape of library marketing in the digital age. Key points include foundational works that shape understanding, methodological approaches like literature reviews and case studies, and diverse strategies such as digital platforms and partnerships. The good things about great marketing campaigns are increased involvement and donations, but the bad things are lack of money and constant assessment. The entire literature review underlines the need for libraries to market themselves in order to keep up in the digital age, and it provides some ideas as to what libraries can do to improve their services, to attract communities, and to surmount their marketing obstacles.

Shripad, V., Chandratre., Meghana, S., Chandratre. (2014). This paper is about how the people who work in the library don't understand anything about marketing, and how there should be more marketing in the library (since it is a service) setting. It even goes into the difficulties of creating a library image and proposes that maybe individualizing services would strengthen user relationships. That kind of user revisit is important, and it's really right along the lines of customer relationship management in marketing. Notably, the trend of personal branding among corporate workers can be leveraged by academic librarians to enhance user engagement. According to the paper, there needs to be more research done on libraries and their marketing strategies, specifically in the areas of branding and user relationship management. As a whole there is a lack of literature available on the subject of marketing in libraries, however this only emphasizes the need for more

research in this area, along with the development of applicable strategies which will contribute to the enhancement of service delivery and user satisfaction.

Identifying key requirements and dimensions to provide a conceptual model” This paper presents a literature survey focusing on key factors influencing brand building in libraries. The authors searched for articles both in Librarian and international databases using the NHS methodology and chose 44 articles in English and 3 in Persian to analyze. Five main aspects of library branding were found: library architecture, information resources/services, personal branding of librarians, marketing of the library, and library management. Inhibiting factors included internal challenges like branding costs and external challenges from the digital age and economic conditions. This survey stresses the need for good brand management and the ability to change in this information age, if the library is to not only survive, but to connect with its users. In conclusion, this research illuminates the intricacies, possibilities, and problems of library branding.

Theoretical Framework

1. Branding

Branding involves various aspects such as strategically developing and managing a brand's identity in order to stand out from competitors in the market. It is based around a mindful analysis of different elements, that combined create the identity of a brand, such as its name, logo, visual style, communication, and the entire user experience it provides.

The brand of a library is the characteristics that make the library what it is to the patrons that come into contact with it. This is not just limited to superficial attributes like the library's name and logo, but also the tone and subject matter of its correspondence, the decor and purpose of its rooms, and the nature of services that it affords. All of these elements contribute so much to a unified and distinctive image.

A well thought out and powerful brand can evoke positive emotions and allegiance among its following. It can build more community relationships, respect and adoration. When people have pleasant experiences and associations with a library, be it helpful staff, cool events, or aesthetically pleasing surroundings, they tend to develop a great sense of loyalty to it. This loyalty which could lead to increased use of library services, outspokenness in the community, and a good image, which in turn would make the institution look even better.

Additionally, a powerful brand can impact how the public perceives the library compared to other establishments, such as other libraries or various organizations, influencing individuals' viewpoints. It can state the mission and vision of the library, how it is such a necessity, an instrument of education and accessibility of knowledge and outreach to the community. If libraries use effective branding techniques then they can ensure that they are not simply thought of as book warehouses, but as vital sources of information, imagination, and advancement in the community. The ultimate goal is to have a brand that appeals to the users and makes the library stand out from the rest and develops a relationship with its audience over time.

2. Positioning

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Positioning is the methods and tactics that a company utilizes to present its image, its brand, and its products to its target market. This process involves a complete understanding of the market place, being able to identify the unique qualities and attributes that make the organization different from its competitors. By recognizing these differentiators, a company can then communicate the value of its products to potential customers in such a way that ensures its message matches their needs and preferences.

Good placement counts for a lot in the library. Libraries need to clearly state their reason for existence in the community, highlighting their role not just as stores of knowledge but also as important hubs for education, cultural development, and individual advancement. Clear communication can only help the library's mission become more understandable, and its commitment to access, learning, and community outreach is evident.

Libraries can also establish an image of credibility and expertise among its user by serving as a dependable provider of information. This consists of tailored programming, workshops, and materials all geared toward the unique interests and needs of the population they serve. By strategically placing themselves, libraries can increase their presence, draw in a variety of patrons, and strengthen their role as essential collaborators in promoting ongoing education and culture understanding.

The placement strategies used by both businesses and libraries are vital because they create meaningful relationships with their targeted audiences, they emphasize their unique contributions to social well being, and they ensure the continuous support and participation of the communities which they intend to serve.

The Importance of Branding and Positioning in Library Marketing

1. Differentiation in a Competitive Landscape

Libraries must define with great clarity what unique benefit they can provide now with so many other avenues of information readily available. With all the other competition like online databases, e-books and social networking sites, good branding helps libraries to stand out. By implementing strategic branding, libraries can showcase their distinctive services like community programs, individualized support, and a friendly atmosphere.

2. Building Community Relationships

After all, libraries serve many different types of communities with many different needs. A well known name can create strong ties with consumers if they trust in it and it keeps itself up to date. For instance, libraries could reach out to more people by marketing themselves as community places or learning centers and engaging them with programs and services that appeal to the community.

3. Enhancing User Experience

The branding is the impression of the library services to the users. When a brand has a consistent image across design, messaging, and user interaction, the user experience becomes seamless and the user is more satisfied. The libraries with the best image or brand are the ones that are most likely to leave an impression on the patrons, and thus will be the ones that the patrons return to and tell their friends about.

4. Increasing Awareness and Usage

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A strong brand and position can make the library's services very recognizable. Good marketing techniques that reach certain audiences like twitter and Facebook, local events, or even fliers, will increase the recognition of a brand and bring in customers. A library that effectively markets its name can better inform its users of its resources, and therefore gain more use and support.

5. Supporting Sustainable Funding

It is hard to get money for libraries especially when there are budget cuts. A strong brand will also help with advocacy if the library's impact on the community is stressed. By continually publicizing their accomplishments and influence through a strong brand story, libraries will be able to garner support from local government, patrons, and grant organizations.

Case Studies

Case Study 1: The Chicago Public Library

The Chicago Public Library (CPL) effectively changed its image with a thorough marketing effort highlighting its importance as a community resource. The CPL utilized strategic communication that emphasized accessibility, innovation, and engagement. By featuring various programs and connecting its brand with the city's values, CPL grew its audience and confirmed its role as an important community resource.

Case Study 2: The New York Public Library

The NYPL used its famous reputation to improve its presence and importance in a digital age. NYPL established itself as more than just a typical library by maintaining a uniform visual brand and forming strategic collaborations, becoming known as an innovative educational environment. The branding strategy involved updating communication on social media and hosting events to appeal to different groups and increase customer interaction.

Strategies for Effective Branding and Positioning

1. Carry out Market Research: Libraries need to discover their target demographics and perform studies to grasp their requirements and interests. This data can guide branding and positioning tactics.
2. Create a distinct value proposition: Libraries must clearly define their unique qualities. Crafting messages that resonate with users is made easier with a strong value proposition.
3. Establish a unified brand image: Build a uniform visual and verbal identity throughout all marketing materials, such as logos, color schemes, and messaging, to establish a distinct brand.
4. Interact with the Community: It is important for libraries to engage in community events and work together with local organizations to boost their visibility and improve their positioning.
5. Utilize Digital Marketing: Libraries should take advantage of social media, websites, and email newsletters to expand their reach and advertise their services in an engaging manner.

Conclusion

The significance of branding and positioning in marketing library services should not be underestimated. In the face of a quickly evolving information environment, libraries can stay important, draw users, and gain needed backing through strong branding and positioning tactics. By allocating resources to branding efforts, assessing their market position, and actively interacting with their communities, libraries can greatly boost their.

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