# Marketing strategies for academic libraries in the 21st century

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**Abstract**

*The emerging technology in libraries, explosion of electronic resources and search engines are creating many challenges for libraries as well as librarians. A relevancy of the library is being questioned by users while commercial search engines are increasing in use by library patrons. This article focuses on how the library should market its facilities and resources to the new generation of libraries in the 21st century. It is an important for academic libraries how to formulate a marketing plan while many librarians do not understand themselves as marketers, although marketing is a crucial role of librarians. This paper explores the idea of marketing that is a vital component for libraries, and includes some suggestions of marketing strategies proposed to remind librarians, and information professionals.*

**Keywords:** *Academic Libraries; Strategic Planning; Marketing Strategies; Library Promotion; Promotional Events; Marketing Tools*

## Introduction

There are several definitions of marketing. However, Kotler and Armstrong (2004) described marketing is an important activity in organization. Marketers identify unsatisfied demand for numerous needs and provide information to administrators to come up with new products and services to satisfy those needs. In terms of library, active marketing is an essential component to promote libraries that may help to increase awareness and use of library resources and facilities among targeted users. Marketing may present a clear and constant image to library patrons in terms of resources and services which are being offered to the university community as well as validity to continued expending. Marketing team of the library is the best way to coordinate marketing activities for the library. Whether physical or digital, an academic library's collection and services would be relevant in scope if they are used by their intended audience. Usage of collections and services are not only a reflection of how well

they have been developed to meet the mission and vision of the university, the academic curriculum, and faculty research needs. It is also a responsibility of library staff that what type of channel should be used to inform the university community about specific resources that are offered by the library. Libraries have uncertainty as resources continue to move from traditional physical formats to electronic formats and as librarians' mediate access to rather than just provide resources. Libraries are facing competition from resources that are easily accessed and available online without library staff assistance through Google and other search engines or Internet (Mi and Nesta, 2006). Duke and Tucker (2007) suggested the higher quality and more appropriate services of an academic library must be conveyed to demonstrate how they meet the needs of current users, who may not be aware of ones they are not using, as well as to fascinate absolutely new users. Use of library collections and services must be justified to administration for funding that supports them. In terms of marketing, academic libraries need to think of themselves as a variety with specific products should be developed to meet the needs of library patrons. Since academic libraries are facing competition with commercial search engines, staffs need to communicate patrons about the benefits of using the library's products rather than those of the competition. The best way for academic library is to create a clear vision and strategic plan to marketing library resources and services in order to achieve its objectives and goals. Most libraries in Asia do not have marketing department in the library because many librarians do not understand themselves as marketers while marketing has become an extremely essential tool to promote libraries resources and facilities to their users that will increase usage of collections and services.

## Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review was to discover the best marketing and promotion practices for the academic libraries in order to develop a consistent marketing plan for our university library and other academic libraries in the region as well as rest of the academic libraries across the world. Few articles in the library literature were found to focus on either public relations or market planning. Public relations articles generally communicate ways to build or develop a library brand image. Hafner and Akers (2007) recognized that constant library communications, logos, slogans,

worker attitude and facilities as all are contributing to the sum of patron perceptions of the perceived mission and value of the library. Mallon (2013) stated public relations play a great role for the broadcasting of library's messages, and marketing is defined as part of strategic planning because it analyses a library's patron base and evaluates their needs in the perspective of what the library has to offer. Murphy (1991) discussed that a message about particular product and service may be highlighted in the context of what patrons' think is important to them. The literature has also investigated that marketing of an academic library is a critical issue for all higher education institutions because of rapidly emerging the innovative technology, the way of information preservation and access, and financial issues because of shrinking budget of libraries (Wolpert, 1998; Denham 1995; Harrington and Li, 2001; Adeyoyin, 2005). Strong views and experiences in the research are encouraging to develop the robust strategic plans for the academic libraries while library professionals have been published few articles on this important issue. It has been noticed that academic librarians are used the guidelines from other professionals for the academic library promotion as numerous questions found in the marketing literature. As a result, librarians are emphasizing eagerly on the marketing plan for the libraries and trying to practice on it because they understand the significance of promotional strategies and activities (Duke and Tucker, 2007; Kumar and Singh, 2015). There are few questions for libraries and librarians in terms of success and promote libraries. Are they applying strategic plan for the academic libraries, getting success and making any difference to the libraries as well as institutions. Marketing is not only tools to provide information about resources and services but also may serve many purposes such as provide training and prepare for lifelong learning and communicate users about the important functions on the research topics. Brown and Sen (2010) discussed that librarians understand the complications about library services and resources but most library patrons do not recognize the importance of the library collections and assistance, and they do not understand relationship between library resources and offered services to patrons while library plays a great role in academic achievement. Smith (2011) stated that library resources and services should provide essential needs of the library patrons and fulfill current demand of the library users, and most of the institutions understand patrons need but individual library user does not get the full advantage from the library assets. In general, librarians understand that library users do not identify their needs and library resources because they do not know their requirement, therefore they do not ask

for assistance. Conley and Tucker (2005) discussed that marketing is a customer-oriented process: selling a particular product to a particular group by considering their needs and how a specific product may fulfill their needs, therefore customer satisfaction should be a central concept of the marketing strategy, customers of libraries are consumers of library resources and services provided by librarians, and customer satisfaction is a major output of the marketing (Singh, 2008; Jones, 1998). On the other hand, Kotler and Armstrong (2004, 5) reported that "Today, marketing must be understood not in the old sense of marketing a sale "telling and selling" but in the new sense of satisfying customer needs". Conley and Tucker (2005) highlight the need to understand who the internal and external patrons are and how to find the ways to reach them. They focused on the development of marketing plans and activities those fulfill the library's mission and objectives. Keiser (2014) stated that a plan should define the target patron groups and the appropriate library services, identify the competition, establish measurable objectives, and describe how outcomes will be monitored and evaluated. Duke and Tucker (2007) focus on the importance of constructing a marketing plan that is an outcome of a strategic planning process and addresses a library's vision and mission statement, their definition of marketing library services is to convey what the library has to offer to its community of consumers. Bridges (2005) reported that libraries have a continual turnover in patrons and a constant stream of new users; marketing is an ongoing process so librarians should be marketing their libraries on regular basis. A marketing plan may provide a structure for the development of activities that can be constructed on and modified over time as user needs change and library services evolve to meet them. Marketing features should address the target audience, what can be marketed, the nature of the marketing activities, what should be included in the activities, evaluation of each activity's effectiveness, and budget considerations. It should be easy to change over time to incorporate feedback and assessment of how well each element of the plan is functioning (Umeozor and Afolobi, 2013). Campbell and Gibson (2005) deliver a case study of a yearlong marketing action plan that was executed for their library. They campaign to growth on campus visibility included increasing their relatively new liaison program, creating a series of posters based on the American Library Association's (ALA) "READ" posters, creating a reference assistance program, conducting user satisfaction surveys, and publishing a library newsletter. They point out that assessment of results is significant for representing a library's worth and importance, as well as for assessing a program's efficiency. Richardson and

Kennedy (2014) stated that a marketing plan that includes a project explanation, a research of the current market, the target market, aims, objectives, strategies, action plans, and assessment methods. Dubicki (2007) highlights that promotional messages and materials must tie together and constantly communicate the benefits of a specific library product to its specific user groups, this technique will create a demand for the product's use. Smith (2011) recommends the communication tools should include direct marketing/word of mouth, print brochures, posters, open houses, workshops and training sessions, the library catalog and Web site, newsletters, emails, RSS feed and course management systems. Hallmark et al. (2007) reported that every marketing action should include an evaluation method constructed into the action before it takes place; it is only by assessing the success of each marketing component that unsuccessful one can be discarded and actions that work well can be extended. Brodsky (2003) observes the Sonoma State University "Your University Library" campaign that used campus newsletters, the student paper, and the library Web site to develop awareness of new products and current services. Chan (2012) suggests that the library's Web site is a vital marketing tool, especially for off campus users. Most important news and contact information should be on the first page of the library home page where it can be easily found. Other free marketing options should include welcome letters to new faculty, working with resident counselors in dorms. Faculty members should make library links into their classroom management website and navigate web pages with specific library resources and services (Swanson, 2001). Overall, research suggests that marketing is an important component for academic libraries and strong marketing initiatives can greatly enhance user awareness (Cole et al., 2010; Mallon, 2013; Brodsky, 2003).

## Developing a Marketing Plan

Is it important to create a marketing plane for academic libraries? Librarians should think about it, why marketing is essential for the academic libraries. Presently, library patrons do not want to visit the library building because they are interested to access the library resources from outside the library building, and users think that they will get everything from Internet, therefore they are using search engines more than ever in the history of academic world. Users are increasing unawareness with the value of the library assets, and unconscious about the library resources and

facilities, and how the library can fulfill their information needs. It is essential that librarians should understand the value of marketing and what is meant by marketing exactly. Cole et al. (2010) reported a quotation from the American Marketing Association, describing marketing as "an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders." Author realizes this explanation actually highlights marketing components for the library environment. Librarians are required to be active and fulfill the requirements of the library patrons and this is one of the parts of their responsibilities.

Librarians must understand that who are their consumers and what are their requirements. Focus groups and surveys are the best tools to know that who are their users and what they need. Cole et al. (2010) described marketing plane as SMART goals. Every letter of the abbreviation represents a core element: S (specific), M (measurable), A (achievable), R (realistic), and T (timed). Librarians must focus on their goals specific and targeted. These must be assessable and have a look at the usage statistics and how will librarians determine if usages are satisfactory or not. Goals must be reachable, truthful and well timed. Established SMART goals within a realistic time frame and should be flexible in order to make sure that librarians are motivated. It is also essential for the Librarians to have a look at the best, successful marketing plan at similar institutions and adjust them according to local user needs and presences. Hallmark et al. (2007) described that assessment method must be included in the marketing plan, a long rang marketing plane can be included in the marketing strategies and regularly monitor based on the usage statistics and user satisfaction reports, they also stressed on the marketing outreach strategic planning for the academic libraries.

Cole et al. (2010) suggested that strategic plan should include SWOT (Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) all these elements help library during the marketing activities and provide feedback to improve marketing plan (Richardson and Kennedy, 2014). Feedback is an important to develop a healthy collection and robust infrastructure of the library, and provide information about library patrons what they feel about library resources and services and which area is weak and should be improve. Feedback does not provide information only about users need but also articulates a real position of the library for the further marketing plan and action. It means,

library patrons are great source to develop a marketing plan to improve library image within the library boundaries and beyond. Assessment is another important element; therefore, assessment strategic plan should be including in the marketing plan that can be used to measure a specific user group within the institution.

There are some suggestions for the library if librarians are going to create a marketing plan, the following guidelines may help library staff:

- Define the purpose of marketing and area that library needs to promote, and why is it need as well as when is needed
- Define the main causes which are affecting the library and develop a strong marketing plan based on affecting factors
- Identify who are the library competitors, if library patrons are using other sources rather than library resources (For example: open access through Google scholar, Wikipedia, and other free internet resources)
- Define solid steps to overwhelm with competitors as well as competes and dominate on library challengers
- Identify particular services to marketing and focus on selective resource that library needs to promote because library team may not focus on everything at the same time as well as the same message for all services
- Design short and clear message to marketing purpose for all library users
- Use simple words and structure of the language that may communicate clearly a message to the library patrons
- Define step by step plan to marketing resources and services, and set the priority based on the user's needs
- Define the methods to marketing based on library budget for promoting library resources, facilities and institution as well
- Identify marketing objectives for the forthcoming months and throughout the academic year including all semesters.

After these guidelines, share with team including library staffs and get the opinions and suggestions from all the staff members than finalize the final plan, and practice throughout the year. It is important to get feedback and discuss with the library patrons before going to continue and implement it because this strategy could provide strong power. If a team decides that it is a positive and robust promotional plan that has been developed now then put this theory into practice. It is also important to measure the actions and activities at the end of semester either is achieving the objectives or not, if not then go through measuring and change the steps wherever are necessary.

## Creating Website for Marketing

Is a library website one of the marketing toot? The library website is a highly useful and multipurpose tool for the marketing purpose that is direct link between users and library, and it communicates users about library resources, services and activities (Kaur, 2009). Library webpages communicate users to library programs, and inform about library staff qualification, their position, responsibility and location of office in the library building, extension and email in order to contact them if library patrons need any assistance and that they can reach the library staff for a particular need or for assistance. The home page of the library communicates users about online databases, ebooks, public access catalog and other resources available for the university community. The home page and other Web pages that contain information about research as a general and specific information subject based for the university community, even online services are available twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week including online instruction, electronic delivery and email reference service. Library website is a most successful tool for marketing resources, facilities and library itself. Other online marketing tools can be used through library website such as Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, Wikis, email, instant messaging, and chat by mobile technology (Vaaler and Brantley, 2016; Chan, 2012). The university's social media pages (Facebook) provide navigation to the library's webpages, and information posted during the finals exams to show that how students may get assistance to their projects from the library. Academic libraries use Twitter to post the general information regarding the library such as library hours, new arrivals, library staff and events. Twitter allows the library to inform the library patrons and

university community about the upcoming events, programs and library services on the particular occasion including exam and summer timings.

Designing a Web site needs more focus on the user group and understanding the purpose of website than technical skills, it is needed to redesign and keep up to date for the marketing purpose (Brewerton, 2003). Once the need is recognized, the Web site designers must have a talent and skills to organize a number of pages in hierarchical system with the coverage, website construction with flexibility, and usable tags with needed terminology (Swanson, 2001). Furthermost importantly, creating of library web site is the work of two specialists, system librarians and marketing team, both can make it successful. Library patrons would find important information through the library website; however, it is the outline about the information, and the construction of the website allows users to proficiently find information what they want. Website developer will need to define relationships between sections of information in order to arrange sections within the website. There are not only sections needed to be organized together as a group in a sequence but they also can make a sense to user who had never used a library online. It has become clear that creation of web site must have intention to promote library through virtual environment, and purpose of the promotional pages execute different functions, and allow visitors to get comprehensive information about facilities, resources and activities. Finally, librarians should design library website professionally with technical skills for the marketing purpose in a digital age.

## Social Media

Social Media is reshaping both our professional and personal lives as well as libraries around the world in the 21 century that has brought many challenges and advantage for academic libraries including the opportunity to marketing the library resources and services. Still, the full prospective of social media has not been entirely recognized and amended to fit the needs of educational institutions and marketing academic libraries. Chatten and Roughley (2016) reported that Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are being heavily used by academic libraries and their users,

although it has been cleared that academic libraries are using social media in different ways and for different purposes while some libraries use Facebook to display images of the library and publicize services. On the other hand, librarians use Twitter to share their responsibilities and add content. Social media also provide customer service, building a community of users, and the promotion of the library and its resources. Academic libraries are using social media to connect students and updating their resources and services, and their top priority is promotion of the library while several libraries use Pinterest platform as a channel to promotion of the library assets. Pinterest is a social media tool which allows users to preserve and retrieve multimedia contents and many libraries use Pinterest platform to promote their collections and exhibitions while some libraries in the United States use Pinterest to promote special collection (Chatten and Roughley, 2016). Social media is not only channel for promoting libraries but also a communication channel between students and libraries. Librarians can develop a relationship with the university community members through social media. Library may develop a close relationship with the students by using Twitter and Facebook to promote each other's activities. Students can communicate with the library even before they come on campus; library and users can post their comments; therefore, social media is an excellent source of feedback and improve library resources and services.

Chan (2012) identifies that academic libraries have top priority to use of social media as a marketing tool because social networking technologies might have more advantage over traditional library marketing strategies. Social media is cost effective and requires minimal effort to promote libraries; therefore, many academic libraries use and maintain social media on regular basis. The library may create a page which can be a stable and customizable profile then students can select to become library's fans by indicating that they like its page and after linking the page, fans can receive updates posted by the library to their News Feed which is a core feature of the Facebook. In addition to Facebook, Twitter and YouTube social media has introduced in many other different forms such as blogs, wikis, microblogs, social networking sites, social bookmarking sites, photo and video sharing sites while 65 percent of young internet users use social networking site such as MySpace, Facebook or LinkedIn, and 71 percent internet users use video-sharing sites such as YouTube and Vimeo (Lili et al., 2013). In a rapidly growing digital environment, marketing has

become more important to promote library services and its resources. Library profession in the 21 century requires librarians to develop social media skills and implement marketing strategies, recognize user and stakeholder needs. Librarians need to create awareness, develop curiosity, build reliability and demonstrate value. Social media is a current demand to use as a marketing tool in digital environment, to increase visibility, to enhance levels of information literacy and deliver personalized services that fulfill the present and future needs of patrons.

Lili et al. (2013) describe that there are several types of social media and libraries are using a variety of technologies for different purposes but the library professionals primarily focus on social networking sites for marketing purpose such as Blogs, Facebook and Twitter. In addition, academic libraries use YouTube as a channel to advertise services, resources and locations, which can be particularly useful for newcomer students and faculty who may watch a video before they visit on campus. LeBlance and Kim (2014) stated that a wide range of social media tools have been applying in academic libraries around the world. They also reported that libraries are commonly used social media such as blogs, multimedia media sharing sites, podcasts, really simple syndication (RSS), social bookmarking and tagging, social networking sites, video conferencing, instant messaging (IM), wikis and more. They stated that libraries in U.S. and U. K. have early adopted social media and Web 2.0 technologies for marketing purpose than other counties in the world. They also identified that academic libraries are using multimedia tools such as Flickr for sharing pictures of events and slide sharing for instructional services, and Mashup technologies to integrate Google Maps into their video, images and text-based library tours and drawing images of book covers from Google into online public access catalogs. Students use their computer and mobile technologies to connect with library, wherever they are on campus or off campus. Academic libraries of the twenty-first century need to adopt social media platform to meet user's current requirement as well as marketing library resources and services. As a result, social media is a key tool to promote, customize, personalize and collaborative library that students can visit and meet to librarians in digital environment of the twenty first century ( LeBlance and Kim, 2014). Library staff and users have different ways and levels of interactions with social media, although it depends on individual institution to decide how much and what type of involvements

may take place on each social media platform (Xie and Stevenson; Chan, 2012; Chatten and Roughley, 2016).

## Promotional Strategies

Is it necessary to create promotional materials for library? Library promotional materials represent the image of library and inform users about services and resources. Promotional items reveal the magnificence of university standard and an institution serves the regions of the state. Librarians may determine about the library's promotional materials should be in an alike manner and quality wherever is possible, match the themes and match the colors of the university's promotional materials. If library follows institutional strategies then the library would be recognized as an integral part of the institution, at the same time emphasizing the facilities and specific resources of the library.

Librarians must have innovative concepts to create posters and a display board centered on the themes of research, user friendliness, library resources and facilities. Smith (2011) stated that an academic library should emphasize on innovative technology and user-friendly system that library patrons expect to their research with the library. Librarians should refine the principle, policy and procedure, and approaches of promotional strategies, the guidelines and values should include the followings:

(1) Use positive images to communicate the library messages
(2) Create specific objectives for promotion
(3) Use a diversity of media sources to convey the messages
(4) Promote within the library building and beyond the library
(5) Invite vendors and publishers on campus for presentation their products
(6) Convey the messages to others about professional librarians and scholarly activities
(7) Provide selective dissemination of information by sending resources to appropriate individuals
(8) Understand that promoting the library is continuing process
(9) Assess and review to keep the messages from becoming old
(10) Include supplementary information on the library's communication tools

Librarians should keep in mind these objectives and adopt wide range strategies to increase awareness among university community about library and implement new initiatives, and communicate the library's messages regarding innovative technology, facilities and wealth of resources.

## Promotional events

University library must show interest and participate at promotional events whenever university organized special events on and off campus while other departments use portable display booth at promotional events then library should also use portable display booth (Empey and Black, 2005). Library will not be invited at the promotional events of the university, if librarians do not show their interest to participants in promotional events on or off campus. For example, our university organizes culture week every year, all departments, institutions and colleges have their display booth during the whole week in this special event of the university but library never had invited because librarians did not show their interest to participate in the special event of the institution. Library Director contacted organizers team and asked them about library display booth, university organizers reported that library never exposed an interest to participate in the culture week therefore library was not invited to participate in this event. University community or event's organizers did not think that library will participate in such events while promotional events are very important to promote the library. Librarians must be aware and show their interest whenever institution organizes a promotional event. This lesson should be included to the document of guiding principles and marketing strategies of the library. Librarians must show their curiosity to be engaged in marketing, explore opportunities, and make sure that organizers of events must have contact information of library promotional team (Smith, 2011; Empey and Black, 2005).

It is important to develop and demonstrate that would be used for a wide range of marketing purposes, and select bold phrases, exciting photographs that may be eye catching from faraway as well as emphasis on the facilities and resources library wants to promote. Public Relation department of the university may help in selection of appropriate photographs for the library because public relation department holds a rich stock of photographs. The display must have

welcoming environment and should be innovated, cutting age technology, a wealth of resources and services, and an easy to understand by audience. The top of the middle panels may highlight the name of library visibly; a concise message should be combined with nice looking text and appropriate photographs on the panels. Librarians should deliberately create a display with expertise of language including marketing skills, and arrangement of photographs in a professional way that appeals the natural expression of pictures. At the time of display, other materials are usually organized on the table in front of it and also depend on the event requirement and display accordingly; items may display journals, promotional pens, pencils, key rings, note books, calendars, a selection of monographs from the library collections and a computer demonstrating the online library including library resources and facilities. Finally, the library is now ready to participate with pride and professionalism in the university funded events and special occasions. The university community appreciates the library presence and librarians will get positive feedback from the patrons. Author has suggested that this is cost effective, flexible, easy to develop, and definitely will contribute to building a distinctive image of the library.

## Eye catching Posters

Empey and Black (2005) reported that Creation of poster is an impression of distributing the message more widely and it is better than a portable tabletop display. An expert team of advertisement should sketch the posters and professional skills are necessary to use the drawing posters. The following messages can be communicated:

  (1) The facility to access the library off campus
  (2) The wealth of assets available in the library
  (3)  The library uses innovative technologies
  (4)  Librarians are professional and friendly
  (5) New arrival items

Designing five distinct posters may help to convey the messages that will increase awareness more efficiently and raise library visibility. Visual images and eye-catching phrases should be printed on the top of all posters. For example, a phrase on the poster is used to promoting off campus access (access the library from home) or access the library off campus. Text and language on each poster is used a brief so that easily understandable and readable at a gaze but the phrases at the

bottom of all posters should be an identical with the institutional logo the name of the library in order to building distinctive identity (Empey and Black, 2005).

It is important to design a neat and clean display with a natural expression of picture, text, and color and make sure balanced between all elements. For example, librarians should explain their ideas and purpose to the communication team who is going to take photos for this purpose, the concepts and features should be appealing  students and patrons in the appropriate positions with natural expressions. Photos explain clearly a comfortable environment for the library users, facilities and resources are available to use and access without obstructions.  It may be an interesting with photos that the individual features are not similar at the viewer, but it seems to be completely involved in the activities and showing their engagement with the library. This can make the photos appear more natural expression and less unnatural modeled, in that way providing a realistic quality to the posters and the messages. The posters may be presented deliberately all over the places in the library including entrance, around campus, and the dormitories. A model of the poster provides an opportunity to make a change and adjustment of the message easily including photographs and colors, therefore keeping up to date  this promotional tool is always new and provides a different option all the time. As a result, it has been identified that this promotional tool is not very expensive, easy to design, easy to modify, and undoubtedly will contribute to promote the library resources, facilities and technology as well as institutional image.

## Exhibits

Exhibit is a valuable part of the university strategy plan and library must have participation in the exhibits organized by the university, and participation of the library is an important marketing tool for the library promotion. Library may organize its own exhibit within the library building that should be included in the library promotional strategic plan. An entrance of the library is an ideal place for exhibits, for example, our Main University Library building possesses a wide area just after main entrance where is located circulation desk and information service desk that area has also open visibility with good sight appearances and itself attractive place to exhibits. There is a glass display cupboard but this display unit does not pamper the beauty of the library and permitted

patrons on either side of the two separate entrances to visible the exhibits. Librarians receive many visitors and comments during the exhibit in the library and often monitored gathering around the display units and discussing about displayed items. Based on the positive feedback from the library patrons, the exhibits have added incredible value, the impact has significantly noticed in terms of increasing awareness about library resources. Library exhibit informs, educates, and promotes the libraries' resources and facilities and at the same time entertainment. Exhibit provides an excellent opportunity for the librarians to engage in collaborative activities with the university community, especially with faculty members, students and researchers of the university (Smith, 2011; Empey and Black, 2005).

The ministry of health invites our university library to exhibits every year within the hospital campus. City Hospital organizes the exhibits and all libraries of the region participate in this event. Library director selects two professional librarians to participate who are expert in health science resources and services as well as talented library staff. The library displays of current imprint book and selected items on the particular subject area from the library collections, brochures, bibliographies, instructional materials, books, journals, magazines and other promotional material. It is also an excellent opportunity to marketing the library resources and services beyond the university campus. Library receives appreciation from the ministry of health and the impact of library is significant in terms of increasing library awareness among professionals, practitioners and public. Author suggests that exhibits are low cost and minimal efforts strategy plan while benefit is priceless.

## Publications

By the objective of getting extensive spectators, university publication is a best source to reach a wide range of audience but frequency of publication varies institution to institution and depends on the institutional policies and procedures. Many universities have bi weekly, monthly or

quarterly publication; anyway, librarians may take benefit of local publications such as the Bulletin, a newsletter, student newspaper published by the university publication department to notify university community about events and activities. University publication department can include library information without charge and circulated directly to the broad audience of the university. Information in the Bulletin may include announcements about library events and activities but that message should be written in a professional way with scholarly endeavors of librarians as well as substantial developments of the library resources that may create an interest in the library patrons. The information published in the newsletter should be easily readable and quickly fascinated. As an outcome, it has confirmed to be excellent disseminated information out to the target audience. The editor of the local media should be willing to accommodate the information about library as a regular massage from the librarians. A standard size of pattern may be design with a logo of the library; the center portion may be used to general information such as library timings during summer and exams, rest of the space may use to the current events, new arrived items and emphasize facilities of interest to the patrons. The messages must be written with expertise of language and submit in advance before publication deadline in order to make necessary changes if there is need to delete or add something. This tool of marketing will definitely increase awareness and interest among the university community as well as make a connection between users and library.

## Upcoming directions

After implemented a series of promotional strategies for the current year, librarians will receive a feedback and recommendations to the further directions to develop more successful promotional plans and approaches. Feedback is the best tool to develop more effective promotional strategies. The desk top display, the posters, library exhibits, pen and pencils are inexpensive and provide an excellent promotional value. Publishing in the bulletin is also a great promotional strategy if students, faculty and administrators read the information submitted to the local media. However, there is no cost and it is easy to use these media sources for library publicity, academic libraries may use them to keep continue promotion for the library and institution. Empey and Black (2005)

stated that manipulating the familiar symbols has given an incredible flexibility to develop the catch phrases and familiar symbols impact greatly on the library promotion. Librarians may keep continue with these types of approaches while enhancing the strategies, and brainstorm for innovative way of marketing. As research suggested that identified weak areas should be given priority to marketing plan and implement in forthcoming marketing activities (Campbell and Gibson, 2005; Duke and Tucker 2007). In addition, the following areas are recognized: a financial management to move on promotional strategies, methods to assessment results, and an official marketing document and systematic steps to move on the promotional strategies.

In order to move on the promotional plan, it has become clear about financial support is a most important element to be success. Wolpert (1998) discussed that libraries are needed to be more sophisticated about their promotional strategies and activities. Within an institution, there are several types of promotional materials and activities those are attracting and grabbing attention of the audience, therefore it is not easy to competes and achieve target with numerous fascinated materials and activities in the highly competitive age of marketing and promotion. It is a challenging time to develop materials for the marketing purpose that should not be discarded in this massive array of colorful and fascination. Therefore, it is important in this challenging time that library promotional materials should be professionally creating, appealing and eye catching. Empey and Black (2005) suggested that outcomes of promotional practices are often intangible, evaluating outcomes may be challenging and tough. Librarians can assess outcomes based on informal response from customers, and more formal remarks from individuals. They also reported that librarians are more interested to know about awareness of library patrons as well as resources and facilities are used by library patrons or not, if they have made dramatically changes in their marketing and promotional plans. In fact, promotional plans will not impact on the library unless library patrons change their perceptions about library and importance of the library services and resources, therefore librarians need regularly assessment on marketing strategies and activities if they want to achieve target. A formal assessment helps to measure the effectiveness of the initiatives with concentration user groups.

The next vital step is writing a comprehensive marketing plan. However, librarians should develop a set of guidelines as research has suggested, a formal promotional plan could be comprehensive than marketing strategies (Hallmark et al, 2007: Denham, 1995; Adeyoyin, 2005). A formal document works as a framework marketing objectives, principles and practices, in addition to leading directions. A formal promotional plan includes techniques through that effects can be evaluated in order to findings the achievement and failure of the marketing strategies. In addition, a formal document can be used as developing strategies, frequently revised and restructured to enhance new directions for the library promotion. A formal document of the library's promotional strategic plan should be including in the university promotional strategic plan, and could be used as a tool in goal setting, financial management planning, and comprehensive outline to strategic planning for the library. Marketing plan is a part of the library strategic plan of the library and this document must reflect to institutional goals and vision because marketing plan provides strengthen to the library reliability within the institution. Overall, a formal comprehensive document supports to create innovative steps, guidelines, activities and implement the new promotional directions for the future.

## Conclusions

Richardson and Kennedy (2014) identify that developing a strong marketing plan is an essential part of the strategic planning. As Jobber (2007, 39) reported "marketing planning is a part of a broader concept known as strategic planning". Developing a marketing plan for library is an outcome of strategic planning that allowed the library as an object to assess the specific needs of its most important user groups such as students, faculty members, and staffs. Marketing plans should have clear objectives and strategies to inform the university community about the wealth of library resources and services, so that the community members can use an extensive range of resources. A team of library staffs must have assignment to the strategic planning process; there is a shared recognition that marketing is a part of everyone's daily work responsibility. Literature has reported that continuing assessment, and modifications of marketing activities are needed as

resources, services, marketing initiatives, and communication channels growth and users need constantly change. The continuous turnover in students and faculty makes marketing a constant process that needs the oversight of a permanent team of conscientious professional librarians. An effective marketing plan is based on solid guidelines, values and reflects promotional objectives and vision of the institution. At the same time of developing marketing strategic plan, it is essential for the librarians to add some fundamental practical components such as outgoing messages, continue announcement, look forward for openings to marketing the library, and show a concern in participating with institutional events. In a challenging situation as, academic librarians are being questioned to explain their expenses, resources and services, marketing plan has a greater importance by the institution than ever have in the history of academic institutions. Therefore, it is an essential duty of librarians to develop a solid marketing plan and implement strong promotional practices. Developing a concrete marketing strategy may help in clarifying which core resources and facilities should be promoted, and communicating their advantages. Everyone in academic libraries should recognize their significant role of active promotional plan within the institution and beyond. Successful marketing strategies increase the library's visibility across the campus and develop an interest in academic community with the library; as a result, library would be able to get the financial support from the institution if library resources are being greatly used by the library patrons. Overall, academic libraries are currently facing many challenges, although marketing academic library is one of the important issues. It has become clear that academic libraries would be successful in the challenging environment and emerging trends if they have robust marketing strategies and needed to be continuous efforts to promote the library in the 21st century.

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