

CONCEPTUALISING MARKETING OF LIBRARY SERVICES TO MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES

Dinesh K. Gupta

Concepts like customer services, service quality, relationship management played a vital role in development of marketing from boardroom concept to whole organization concept. In present time marketing is not a function, but it is an organization wide philosophy which requires years of continual work. It is a way of working and a way of serving the customers in which every activity is committed to customer satisfaction. Marketing of library services is the effective execution of all the activities involved in increasing satisfaction of users by providing maximum value to them. It is a total solution for library and information centers.

A large number of libraries- public, academic and other libraries are involved in serving the information needs of multicultural population. They are concerned with the equity, equality and access of the resources and services to their users and adopt various strategies to this end. Many marketing initiatives they involve in reaching out to their users and meeting their needs satisfactorily, e.g. collecting information about users and defining their needs, segmenting them into groups on different characteristics after consultations with individuals and groups, analyzing it and forecasting trends, understand the market, formulating objectives, making plans and devise to implement them communicating with them, promoting and helping them to use the services and resources, and evaluating everything. Of course, these are marketing efforts to meet the needs of the multicultural population, but there are many more important issues that need to be considered while taking marketing into consideration.

Marketing for libraries serving multi-cultural populations is not a function of a particular section or a particular library, but concerted efforts of all concerned to put up marketing to think about user need and meeting them satisfactorily. There must focus on each group of users and design services that each library can access in their areas of work. There is a need to develop a deliberate strategy for success.. Serving each group of users in their own language, in their own time frames, must prove that we are serious about supporting their needs. The only way for a library to be seen relevant to each group within a diverse organization is to create the illusion that each department is our only customer- in essence, to focus on the "customer of one". Effective training is one of the most valuable promotional tools of an electronic collection, because training helps to limit anxiety associated with electronic searching.