

Marketing Strategies and Use of Information Resources (IR) in University of Nigeria,

Nsukka

By

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Abstract

The study delved into marketing strategies and use of IR in University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The correlational research design serves as the study's foundation. The study population consisted of two hundred and thirty-five (235) admitted postgraduate students from the Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe Library at the University of Nigeria, selected for their eagerness in the encouragement of library patronage. The census sampling method was used to choose the complete population as the study sample. 235 postgraduate students made up the study's sample. A questionnaire was used to gather data. The questionnaire was titled Marketing Strategies and Use of IR Questionnaire (MSUIRQ). Data were analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at the 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that there is a significant and positive relationship between marketing strategies (automated emails, social media and CAS) and use of IR. This implies that automated emails, social media and CAS are important tools for encouraging the use of IR. The research concludes that marketing is a key element of library promotion. It increases the awareness of target users to the IR and services offered by libraries. Its essence to library patronage and use of IR cannot be stressed enough. It was recommended among others that library administrators should set up active social media accounts so that patrons can get virtual assistance with their inquiries about available IR.

Keywords: Marketing Strategies, Library Patronage, Information Resources, Automated Emails, Social Media, Current Awareness Service

Introduction

Libraries are vital resources for research, lifelong learning, and knowledge development. Libraries struggle to draw in and keep patrons in an era where knowledge is readily available on a variety of platforms. There is need to implement efficient marketing techniques that encourage the usage of their IR if they want to stay relevant. In libraries, marketing entails determining the requirements of patrons, crafting focused communications, and raising awareness of the services that are offered (Kaur & Singh, 2021). By incorporating marketing concepts into library administration, information resources are used efficiently, increasing patron happiness and engagement. Libraries use a variety of marketing strategies, such as digital marketing tactics, user education initiatives, and advertising campaigns. These tactics aid in establishing libraries as vibrant places that meet a wide range of information demands. According to Fyneman and Amadis (2023), contemporary strategies like social media interaction and email marketing have been added to more conventional marketing strategies like flyers, newsletters, and posters. Libraries can successfully convey their value proposition to both current and potential users by utilizing these methods.

Comprehending user behaviour and preferences is an important part of library marketing. Kasabe and Parte (2022) affirmed that libraries must perform market research to determine user demographics, information-seeking habits, and service expectations. With the help of these data-driven insights, libraries can adjust their marketing strategies and better meet the needs of their patrons. By using data analytics in library marketing, an anticipatory strategy to service provision is ensured by recognizing patterns and forecasting future information demands (Adegoke, 2015). Previously, plans of action to sell and promote a product or service were associated with marketing tactics. Achieving a sustained competitive edge is the main objective of this long-term, forward-looking planning approach. Alawadh & Al-Daihani (2019) expressed that a deliberate strategy to satisfy patrons' demands with the services and resources offered by libraries in the best possible way is known as marketing of library resources. In the context of libraries, marketing refers to the methods by which the intended audience learns about the services, programs, resources, and functions of the library that align with their interests. Osinulu, et al. (2018) avowed that it entails offering library resources and services while utilizing various methods and technologies to raise awareness, draw in, and enhance library users' utilization of the resources and services.

The use of marketing to the library gives the field a fresh perspective as it serves to highlight the

services offered by the library, marketing of library services is quite important. Kotler (2010) stated that when the field of marketing is being revamped to generate and retain more clients through innovative anticipation and reaction style marketing, the marketing strategy for library resources and services becomes much more pertinent. Exploring the nexus between marketing strategies and use of IR becomes pertinent at this stage since it will increase library usage. Libraries as client-oriented organization must build their collections taking into account the information needs of the patrons or raising awareness of the resources and services offered by the library. This can be done properly with the application of the right marketing philosophies. Fyneman and Amadis (2023) avows that good marketing techniques raise patron awareness, encourage use of the library's resources and services, and eventually improve the reputation of the institution and its staff.

Statement of Problem

The way libraries and information centres provide their services has been fundamentally altered by the quick development of information and communication technology (ICT), and librarians now face increased competition. Indeed, we live in a competitive age, with the internet, competing with libraries. In order to thrive, contribute to the information service industry, and achieve their goals, librarians must now come up with ways to promote library resources and services. This will raise awareness and increase their everyday patronage. Poor use of their IR and low user patronage are problems for many libraries. In a time where internet content vies for patrons' attention, libraries need to know how marketing tactics increase library usage and how well IR is promoted in order to meet this challenge. Libraries risk missing out on possibilities for community participation and appropriate information dissemination if they don't have a clear marketing strategy in place. This study explored the relationship between marketing strategies and use of IR in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Purpose of the Study

The study examined the relationship between marketing strategies and use of IR in University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the relationship between automated emails and use of IR in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

2. Inspect the relationship between social media and use of IR in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
3. Investigate the relationship between current awareness services (CAS) and use of IR in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses are shown in null form and were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between automated emails and use of IR in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between social media and use of IR in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between CAS and use of IR in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Literature Review

Information Resources (IR)

IR help the library achieve its mission of satisfying patrons' information needs. Okwu and Oporum (2021), posits that only when outstanding services are provided to the patrons through high-quality IR will stunning structures, skilled library staff, and cutting-edge information storage and retrieval technology be valued. In the consonance with the above Wiche and Oporum (2022) avows that it is only when outstanding services are provided to the patrons through high-quality IR that the stunning structures, skilled library staff, and cutting-edge information storage and retrieval technology will be valued. Interestingly, Emeka (2020), affirmed that IR are resources that people utilize to solve problems and make decisions. Jegede (2010) stated that IR refers to the materials utilized in the method of instruction and learning in libraries, which include books, audio-visual materials, software, hardware, and other items. Ndu (2022), affirmed that information-bearing resources help the library achieve its objectives of satisfying the information demands of its patrons. These materials are essential for research, teaching and learning, and the personal growth of students along with other library community members (Uwandu & Osuji, 2022).

Marketing Strategies

A key component of library patronage is marketing, which raises target users' awareness of and use of the materials and facilities offered by libraries. In the context of libraries, marketing entails advertising programs, services, and resources in order to draw in and keep patrons. By bridging the gap between prospective users and information resources, efficient marketing techniques can guarantee that library resources meet user needs (Kaur & Singh, 2021). Walker and Mullins (2011) affirmed that marketing strategy is mostly concerned with efficiently distributing and organizing marketing efforts and resources in order to achieve the company's goals within a given product-market. In this sense, marketing strategy is the detailed description of an organization's goods, services, and positions, including the target market's characteristics, its relationships with the internal and external environment, and the overall objectives that the company hopes to accomplish (Enz, 2010). Osinulu et al. (2018) mentioned that In the context of libraries, a marketing strategy is a plan of action intended to accomplish certain objectives of promoting a library's goods or services to its patrons. It can also be viewed as a tool for providing consumers with access to both raw and processed information. Marketing strategies was labeled by Uwandu and Osuji (2022) as the methods libraries employ to raise awareness in order to draw in and keep patrons who will use their information resources and services efficiently. The researchers further affirmed that marketing strategy is a defined plan or idea that a business uses to sell its goods and make the most money. In order to stay relevant in this cutthroat information age, libraries implement marketing techniques. For libraries to offer customer-focused services, strategic marketing necessitates an understanding of their patrons' evolving information demands. Implementing a marketing strategy in a library aids in creating a user-centered library that can provide customer-based services (Sharma & Pathak, 2020). It remains interestingly true that it decreases the underutilization of services and resources. Effective marketing tactics can increase the use and usefulness of the library's resources and services.

Automated Emails and Use of IR

Modern communication relies heavily on automated emails, which allow companies and organizations to send pertinent and timely messages without the need for human intervention. Khare et al. (2022) avowed that these emails serve a number of functions, including transactional notifications, appointment reminders, promotional efforts, and customer support

responses. Any message that is automatically delivered by the email service provider in direct reaction to a specific action taken (or not taken) by a user on the website or online application is known as automated email or triggered email. (Sendgrid, 2024). The purpose of this email is to deliver the appropriate message to the appropriate recipients at the appropriate time. According to Sendpulse (2023) automated emails are meticulously scheduled to be sent to subscribers at predetermined intervals or in reaction to user activity on a specific website. A trigger in email automation is a particular date, occasion, or contact's actions that instructs the system to send a relevant message. Library users can be targeted based on their behavior, preferences, and past purchases or usage of content when an email platform and website analytics are connected.

Social Media and Use of IR

Social media refers to the various internet-based technical platforms that facilitate virtual connections, communication, and resource or information exchange. By creating cybernetic networks, this computer-based technology facilitates the exchange of thoughts, emotions, and information. In straightforward but significant terms, Edam-Agbor and Ogunjimi (2018) defined social media is a platform that allows people to connect, exchange content with friends, mates, and other users, as well as publish content. Users of these sites can make personal pages with images, videos, and music-related information. Social media, according to Boyd and Ellison, as quoted in Warner-Söderholm et al. (2018), are networking sites that let people or organizations make a public or semi-public profile inside a closed system and list other users they are connected to. Idoniboye-Obu and Oporum (2021) believe that social media has turned into a vital part of the globe. Individuals cannot imagine communication without thinking of social media platforms like YouTube, MySpace, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Pinterest as well as Google +.

Chitumbo (2015) noted that social media platforms facilitate communication and cooperation amongst users of the platforms. In contrast to traditional media, where one can only read or watch stories on television, this two-way approach enables people to connect and engage with the system. Social media is an interactive computer-mediated technology that makes it easier to create, share, and exchange information in online groups and networks (Horsfall et al., 2019). It is a platform that allows people to connect, communicate, and share material with one another. Social media, according to Bashorun et al. (2018), is a platform for

communication that enables people to exchange knowledge and electronically distribute information. In librarianship, social media refers to web-based applications that libraries have implemented to improve information sharing with current and potential users via a network (Tsenongu, 2020). Users can create personal profiles on these social networking sites that are loaded with photographs, videos, music, and instructional materials.

CAS and Use of IR

The purpose of CAS is to update professionals, researchers, and individuals on the most recent advancements, trends, and news in their fields of interest as well as related topics. (Ashikuzzaman, 2024). Without requiring users to manually search for updates, CAS makes sure that users are aware of changing trends, advances, and scholarly work. Uzohue and Yaya (2016) explained that CAS is one of the library services that facilitates quicker and simpler access to library materials. It is a method for going over recently added materials to the library. Email, newsletters, smartphone apps, and social media are just a few of the channels that can be used to distribute CAS. Ashikuzzaman (2024) affirmed that materials for CAS can comprise summaries, abstracts, and links to recent papers, articles, reports, podcasts, videos, and other kinds of content that are pertinent to a certain subject. As a result, CAS is a crucial instrument for promoting library services and resources. Patrons are more likely to use library resources when they are regularly updated about new and pertinent materials. Higher IR usage follows from this.

Through its ability to comprehend user preferences and adjust recommendations accordingly, CAS plays a critical role in enhancing library services (Obotu et al., 2021). By guaranteeing that customers receive the most pertinent materials according to their study interests, it boosts patronage. When the right person needs it, CAS provides them with the most recent information (Ashikuzzaman, 2024). The user receives up-to-date information from it. CAS lets users keep ahead in their respective fields without having to look for new developments on their own by tailoring alerts and updates to meet individual or group needs. Ashikuzzaman (2024) affirmed that this proactive information service is especially helpful in rapidly changing disciplines where remaining up to date can have a big impact on scientific, professional, and academic results. More than merely a source of information, CAS are a strategic instrument that promotes professional growth, improves learning, and creates an informed public. Effective CAS implementation by libraries and information centers is

essential to creating an informed community equipped to lead and navigate a world that is changing all the time. Ashikuzzaman (2024) avows that in contemporary information environments, CAS are essential for bridging the gap between users' individual informational needs and quickly changing knowledge areas.

Methodology

The correlational research design serves as the study's foundation. The study population consisted of two hundred and thirty-five (235) admitted postgraduate students from the Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe Library at the University of Nigeria Nsukka during the 2024-2025 academic. The census enumeration sampling method was used to choose the complete population as the study sample. Accordingly, 235 postgraduate students made up the study's sample. A systematic questionnaire was used to elicit data. The questionnaire was titled “Marketing Strategies and Use of IR Questionnaire (MSUIRQ)”. To ascertain the validity of the instrument, it was submitted to three validates in the department of Library and Information Science, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt. The instrument was deemed valid and appropriate for the study based on their corrections, critiques, recommendations, and adjustments. The questionnaire was distributed by the researchers with assistance from research assistants at the university under study. Postgraduate students were given 235 questionnaire, two hundred and thirty-one (231) of which were returned, yielding a 98% response rate. The data acquired for this study was examined using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

Table 1. Bio-data of Respondents

Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex		

Male	129	56
Female	102	44
Age		
20-30	67	29
31-50	121	52
51 and Above	43	29

In terms of Table I, 102 (44%) of these respondents were women and 129 (56%) were men. This suggests that the responses were more male than female. Additionally, the results showed that 43 (19%) were 51 years old, 67 (29%) were between 20 and 30, and 121 (52%) were between 31 and 50. This implies that most responders were between the ages of 31 and 50.

Table 2. There is no significant relationship between automated emails and use of IR in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Variables		Automated Emails	Information Resources
Automated Emails	Pearson Correlation	1	.831**

Information Resources	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	231	231
	Pearson Correlation	.831**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	231	231

Table 2 shows the Pearson's Correlation between automated emails and use of IR as .831 and the significant value as .000. This indicates a significant and positive relationship between both variables. Hence, the stated null hypothesis one is rejected and the opposite indorsed. Accordingly, there is a significant and positive relationship between automated emails and use of IR.

Table 3. There is no significant relationship between social media and use of IR in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Variables		Social Media	Information Resources
Social Media	Pearson Correlation	1	.662**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	231	231
	Pearson Correlation	.662**	1
Information Resources	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	231	231

Table 3 shows the Pearson's Correlation between social media and use of IR as .662 and the significant value as .001. This designates a significant and positive relationship between both variables. Hence, the stated null hypothesis two is rejected and the reverse indorsed. Consequently, there is a significant and positive relationship between social media and use of IR.

Table 4. There is no significant relationship between CAS and use of IR in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

		Current	
Variables		Awareness	Information Resources
		Services	
Current Awareness Services	Pearson		
	Correlation	1	.581**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	231	231
Information Resources	Pearson		
	Correlation	.581**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	231	231

Table 4 shows the Pearson's Correlation between CAS and use of IR as .581 and the significant value as .000. This specifies a significant and positive relationship between both variables. Hence, the stated null hypothesis three is rejected and the reverse indorsed. Therefore, there is a significant and positive relationship between CAS and use of IR.

Discussion

The hypotheses developed to guide the investigation served as the foundation for the discussion of the study's findings:

Automated Email and Use of IR

The result of hypothesis one indicates that there is a significant and positive relationship between automated emails and use of IR. This implies that automated email is designed to deliver the correct message to the right people at the right time, which makes it a good marketing tool in the library. It can used to reach great number of patrons without the library personnel performing extra actions. The results of this study are in covenant with Sharma and Pathak (2020). The scholars affirmed that libraries can meet their patrons' ever-changing

information needs via automated email. Sendpulse (2023) mentioned that automatic emails are accurately programmed to be delivered to users at predetermined intervals or in response to their deeds regarding a precise library activity. Users can be targeted according to their preferences or requests when the analytics on the library website are connected to their email addresses. According to Sharma and Pathak (2020), automated messages are excellent means for libraries to communicate with their online patrons.

Social Media and Use of IR

The result of hypothesis two specifies that there is a significant and positive relationship between social media and use of IR. This suggests that the creation, sharing, and exchange of knowledge on IR in libraries is facilitated by social media, an interactive computer-mediated technology. The result of this examination aligns with Tsenongu (2020), who confirmed that social media, as a web-based tool, allows libraries to share information more effectively with both present and potential users through a fast network. In light of the aforementioned, Bashorun et al. (2018) asserted that social media as an avenue for interaction enables libraries and users to share expertise and disseminate accurate information electronically. One important strategy for librarians and libraries to keep current and optimize their job and services is to use social media. Consequently, social media has emerged as a crucial tool for promoting library resources and services in the twenty-first century. Libraries are quickly changing from being physical places where people can go to get information to being social online communities where people can access, engage with, and contribute to existing knowledge. (Akporhonor & Olise, 2015). Social media gives libraries the ability to inform their users about their offerings.

CAS and Use of IR

The result of hypothesis three states that there is a significant and positive relationship between CAS and use of IR. The result of this research is in covenant with that Ashikuzzaman (2024) who affirmed that the actual mission of CAS is to inform professionals and scholars on the latest developments, news, and trends in their areas of interest and related subjects without requiring them to manually search for updates. Uzohue and Yaya (2016) explained that CAS is one of the library services that facilitates quicker and simpler access to IR. Obotu et al.

(2021) mentioned that by guaranteeing that customers receive the most pertinent materials according to their study interests, it boosts patronage. CAS lets users keep ahead in their respective fields without having to look for new developments on their own by tailoring alerts and updates to meet individual or group needs. CAS are a strategic tool that fosters development, enhances education, and produces an informed public. They are more than just a source of information. Libraries must adopt CAS effectively in order to build an informed community capable of leading and navigating a constantly changing world.

Conclusion

Marketing is a key element of library promotion. It increases the awareness of target users to the IR and services offered by libraries. Marketing IR and services entails knowing the objectives of the library, exploring the needs of the target users, packaging the library and its services to satisfy these needs, and then promoting the library, its resources and services to draw in the target users. Marketing must be viewed as vital if librarians and libraries are to remain relevant. The study delved into the nexus between marketing strategies and use of IR. It revealed that there is a significant and positive relationship between marketing strategies (automated emails, social media and CAS) and use of IR. Marketing of IR is key following the role it plays in library patronage.

Recommendations

The following recommendations resulted from the study's findings;

1. Automated email systems should be used by libraries to increase patronage. By sending users customized and targeted automated emails with pertinent news and reminders of recent IR in the library, this can be accomplished.
2. Library administrators should set up active social media accounts so that patrons can get virtual assistance with their inquiries about available IR.
3. Training in resource marketing should be mandatory for librarians in the CAS unit of the library since it will enhance the quality of services provided there.

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