Innovative library web marketing practices in Singapore : a landscape of hype, expectation and reality

Tan, Catherine; Choy, Alan; Nurhazman Abdul Aziz; Akbar Hakim Harun

2008

Nurhazman, A. A., Akbar, H. H., Tan, C., & Choy, A. (2008). Innovative Library web marketing practices in Singapore : a landscape of hype, expectation and reality. Library Association of Singapore Conference, 8-9 May 2008: Singapore.

<https://hdl.handle.net/10356/90889>

NTU

Downloaded on 26 Apr 2023 16:49:46 SGT

Library Association of Singapore Conference
8-9 May 2008

Conference Paper

**Innovative Library Web Marketing Practices in Singapore:
A Landscape of Hype, Expectation and Reality**

NURHAZMAN ABDUL AZIZ, AKBAR HAKIM HARUN, CATHERINE TAN & ALAN CHOY
Library, Nanyang Technological University
Singapore

Abstract

With the current rapid development of internet technologies, marketing models have moved into the global virtual arena and are creating an impact on traditional promotional practices of libraries in Singapore. As observed, the value created today of such marketing models is perceived as being based on creative and innovative use of information, communication, social networking and web technologies. The exponential growth of virtual communities in recent years has led to social networks becoming increasingly popular. This is in part due to the ability of social networks to connect across diverse communities and dispersed locations virtually and globally regardless of time and physical space. This paper aims to provide an exploration and assessment of the adoption of commonly used web marketing tools by libraries in Singapore in their attempt to integrate these tools as part of a strategic, creative and innovative method for library advocacy and service promotion. This paper also attempts to look into explorations by libraries in Singapore to integrate the traditional (Web 1.0) and new (Web 2.0) web technologies into areas of library marketing and outreach activities to an increasingly diverse community of library users, who are adept with social networking tools and have embraced social networks and virtual communities as a part of their life. A review of currently available web marketing tools is also made. A study of the current state of web marketing practices adopted by libraries in Singapore is presented. Initiatives, based on a web marketing model, are proposed to move libraries in Singapore into a new role as an info-concierge, where individual information object or library activity is a self-sustainable, self-contained unit of content or service that can be effectively marketed in any form or format to each library's community of users.

Keywords: Libraries, Singapore, Web Marketing Tools, Web Marketing Model, Social Marketing, Social Web, Social Networking, Info-Concierge.

Contacts: Nurhazman Abdul Aziz (*email: nurhazman@ntu.edu.sg, tel: 65137605*)
Akbar Hakim Harun (*email: akbar@ntu.edu.sg, tel: 67905221*)
Catherine Tan (*email: catherinetan@ntu.edu.sg, tel: 67905213*)
Alan Choy (*email: alanchoy@ntu.edu.sg, tel: 63168751*)

Introduction

The Web has been known to be more than just a virtual space for libraries to explore and exploit opportunities to make themselves and their operations ubiquitous, especially in terms of the provision of their online information services. With the advent and tandem use of new internet technologies, libraries are evolving and emerging into the virtual space with new media to communicate and interact with their existing and potential library patrons. Libraries, librarians and players in the information industry are well known for their specialisation in identifying, selecting and organising information resources in various formats, as well as, in searching for relevant information sources and effectively delivering needed information to defined user communities through value-added services and information packages. Success or otherwise of these services are in part affected by how effective these services have been marketed or promoted and the level of outreach activities conducted. Arguably, the main thrust or objective of library marketing, promotion or outreach activities is to create a belief in the patron of a perceived benefit to them to buy-in or utilise the services or products on offer to meet their specific information needs. Marketing and promotion are now accepted as valuable practices, aligned to library strategic plans and mission statements, and have thus become part and parcel of a library's daily operation.

There are web marketing tools and channels that libraries today could adapt and deploy effectively and efficiently for their outreach services and programmes to their targeted communities. Web technologies have become robust and are aiding the marketing process down the segmentation level to either the product or target communities. Management therefore needs to understand the alignment of technology and library work processes and see this from an IT strategic viewpoint as well. In essence, the careful integration of web technologies, library processes and current marketing tools and channels could lead to the following:

1. Satisfying patron needs
2. Creating a strategic edge when delivering a piece of information or service
3. Ensuring resources are utilised shrewdly to maximise library operations and services
4. Identifying further favourable marketing opportunities
5. Engaging the community to share in the knowledge repository flow

With this in mind, a survey was conducted of libraries in Singapore to assess their level of awareness, adoption and use of web marketing tools and channels. Data collected from this survey has been used for this paper to present initial findings which can form

the basis for further exploration and also, to identify possibilities in terms of the direction or role that libraries in Singapore could take to be innovative adopters of web marketing tools and channels for library promotion and outreach activities.

This paper therefore has attempted to provide a landscape of the current state of marketing practices adopted by libraries in Singapore. Based on data collected from an online survey of academic, corporate/special, public and school libraries in Singapore, it has provided an exploration and assessment of the adoption of web marketing tools and channels by libraries in their attempt to integrate these tools and channels as part of a strategic, creative and innovative method for library advocacy and service promotion. This paper has also attempted to look into explorations by various types of libraries in Singapore to integrate the traditional (Web 1.0) and new (Web 2.0) web technologies into areas of library marketing and outreach activities to an increasingly diverse community of library users, who are adept with social networking tools and have embraced social networks and virtual communities as a part of their life. Based on a web marketing model developed from this study, a new role for libraries in promotion and outreach is advocated. Libraries are recommended to consider the potential role of an info-concierge, where individual information object or library activity is a self-sustainable, self-contained unit of content or service that can be effectively marketed in any form or format to each library's community of users.

Survey Methodology

Data on current marketing practices adopted by libraries in Singapore was collected through an online survey questionnaire from 8 to 18 April 2008. Emails were sent to all libraries listed in the “Directory of Libraries and Information Centres in Singapore 2006”, published by the Library Association of Singapore, requesting for their participation in the survey. In addition, emails were also sent to one other corporate library, a special library and five other school libraries in Singapore which were not listed in the directory. In total, 145 emails were sent out.

The survey questionnaire consisted of two parts.

Part A contained questions with the stated aim of profiling responding libraries in terms of:

1. Type of library
2. Size of library membership
3. Age group of library users
4. Library staff strength
5. Availability and accessibility of library website

Part B contained questions relating to current library marketing practice. Libraries were asked to respond on the following:

1. Reasons for marketing their library services and resources
2. Frequency of marketing activities through the web
3. Level of use and awareness or familiarity based on a list of 21 web marketing tools and 12 web marketing channels
4. Providing a list of other tools and channels used to market their library services and resources

The creation of the survey questionnaire, and the subsequent management of the survey returns and analysis of the survey results, was done using Vovici EFM Community, an Enterprise Feedback Management system which uses a wizard driven online interface to help build, deploy and analyse a survey in an intuitive manner using elements of a business intelligence system.

Survey Results

Part A: Profile of Responding Libraries

The survey attracted a total of 93 responses. However, 58 of them could not be accepted due to incomplete submissions. A total of 35 valid submissions were thus accepted for this survey, providing a sample size of 24.1% for the total population of 145 libraries identified for this survey. The breakdown of valid submissions by type of library is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Type of Library				
Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School	Total
13	13	3	6	35

In terms of the size of library membership, 23 libraries, including three school libraries and five corporate/special libraries, indicated that they are serving a large group of more than 1000 users (Table 2).

Table 2: Size of Library Membership	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School
A) Less than 100	0	2	0	1
B) 100 to 500	1	4	0	0
C) 501 to 1000	0	2	0	2
D) More than 1000	12	5	3	3

Table 3 shows the age group of library users served by the different types of libraries. It is interesting to note that with the exception of five libraries who stated that they also serve the relatively young user group of below 15 year olds, all other libraries serve a mix of user groups, ranging from 15 to 24 year olds to those above 50 years old. This seems to indicate that the Baby Boomers, the Gen Xers, the Gen Ys, the Net Gen, the Millenials and the Digital Natives are served across all types of libraries.

Table 3: Age Group of Library Users	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School
A) Below 15 years old	0	1	2	2
B) 15 to 24 years old	12	7	3	2
C) 25 to 35 years old	13	13	3	2
D) 36 to 50 years old	13	13	3	1
E) Above 50 years old	13	11	3	1

What is the staff strength of each responding library to serve their respective diverse groups of users? As Table 4 shows, with the exception of four academic libraries and one public library, all other libraries has a staff strength of 50 or less. In fact, almost all of the corporate/special libraries and all school libraries stated that they have less than 10 professional and support staff.

Table 4: Library Staff Strength (includes both professional and support)	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School
A) Less than 10	3	12	0	6
B) 10 to 50	6	1	2	0
C) 51 to 100	0	0	0	0
D) More than 100	4	0	1	0

As seen in Table 5 below, 29 libraries who responded to the survey indicated that they have a library website which can be accessed either via the internet, intranet or virtual private network. Six libraries indicated that they do not have a website. Based on the verbatim responses from these libraries, one school library stated that they do not need to have one as their main institution website has a link to the facilities of the library, whereas two corporate libraries mentioned that intranet access to their library services and resources is provided through their main corporate site and they are only accessible by internal staff. One academic library indicated that their library is included in the main library website and one public library mentioned that their library is included in the website for the public library network in Singapore. Two academic libraries also indicated that they plan to have a library blog site instead.

Table 5: Does your library have a website?		Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School
Yes		11	11	2	5
Accessible via:	Internet	11	4	2	5
	Intranet	10	9	1	2
	Virtual Private Network	6	3	1	2
No		2	2	1	1

Part B: Current Library Marketing Practice

Libraries surveyed were asked to indicate the reasons for marketing their services and resources. The diagram below is a tabulation of their responses. It is clear that in most cases, libraries do marketing and promotion in order to increase usage of library services as well as their electronic and print resources. In addition, libraries would also like to build rapport and strengthen the relationship with their existing library members.

(Respondents were allowed to choose multiple responses)

Response	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%	Frequency	Count
A) To increase usage of electronic resources						80.0%	28
B) To increase usage of print collection						80.0%	28
C) To increase usage of library services						91.4%	32
D) To promote awareness of authoritative information sources						68.6%	24
E) To increase the participation level of your library activities and events held						68.6%	24
F) To build rapport and strengthen relationship with existing library members						77.1%	27
G) To increase visits to the library						62.9%	22
H) To attract new library users						60.0%	21
I) To increase library membership						45.7%	16
J) To create awareness of your organization / institution to the wider community						65.7%	23

Table 6 below shows a breakdown of the responses by type of library.

Table 6: What are the reasons for marketing your library services and resources?	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School
A) To increase usage of electronic resources	12	10	2	4
B) To increase usage of print collection	12	7	3	6
C) To increase usage of library services	13	10	3	6
D) To promote awareness of authoritative information sources	11	9	1	3
E) To increase the participation level of your library activities and events held	11	5	3	5
F) To build rapport and strengthen relationship with existing library members	11	9	3	4
G) To increase visits to the library	11	5	2	4
H) To attract new library users	9	6	3	3
I) To increase library membership	7	4	2	3
J) To create awareness of your organization / institution to the wider community	11	6	3	3

It is almost a given that libraries who have a website would market their services and resources via this channel. However, based on the responses received, three of the 29 libraries who indicated that they have a library website also indicated that they do not market via this channel. All three are corporate libraries.

How often do libraries market their services and resources through the web? 17 out of the 35 libraries who responded do their marketing and promotion on a daily or weekly basis, and out of these 17 libraries, 12 of them are either academic or public libraries. Table 7 below shows a breakdown of marketing frequency via the web by type of library.

Table 7: How often does your library market its services and resources through the web?	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School	Total
A) Daily	3	2	2	0	7
B) Weekly	6	2	1	1	10
C) Monthly	2	2	0	1	5
D) Quarterly	1	5	0	0	6
E) Yearly	1	2	0	4	7

The following two tables provide a summary of responses for the questions on the level of use and awareness or familiarity of a list of 21 web marketing tools and 12 web marketing channels. Libraries surveyed were asked to respond to each tool or channel based on the following: (1) whether they are currently using the tool or channel; (2) whether they are thinking of using it; (3) whether they are aware but have no plans to use it; or (4) whether they have ever heard of the tool or channel.

Table 8, which covers responses to marketing tools, shows clearly that many libraries are aware of the existence of these tools but have no plans to use it in their library marketing and promotion. Of the tools currently in use, email marketing seems to be the most used tool with 54.3% of libraries currently using it. A surprising result showed that more libraries are using voting features (28.6%) than blogging (25.7%). Could it be that adding a quick poll or survey on a library website to assess the usefulness of certain resources or services is easier to do than blogging about the resource or service to seek comments from library users?

Table 8: Does your library use the following tools to market its services and resources?	Currently using it	Thinking of using it	Aware but no plans to use it	Never heard of it
Social networking, forms, wikis, collaboration (eg, Sharepoint, Facebook)	5	11	15	4
Online video	3	10	21	1
Podcasting	1	12	20	2
Blogging	9	10	13	3
Widgets (eg, BookJetty, Shelfari)	2	6	18	9
RSS feeds	7	7	16	5
Instant messaging (eg, MSN Messenger)	0	7	27	1
Tagging (eg, BookJetty, Shelfari, LibraryThing)	1	9	18	7
Voting features (eg, through polls and surveys)	10	7	14	4
Microblogging (eg, Twitter, Jaiku, Pownce, Hellotxt)	0	4	13	18
Search engine optimization (web content is indexed accordingly to ensure high relevancy in search engine results)	9	7	11	8
Search Engine Marketing (a form of Internet marketing that seeks to promote websites by increasing their visibility in search engine result pages)	2	6	19	8
Email marketing	19	4	10	2
Invasive marketing (eg. using "pop-ups" or "pop-unders")	1	5	24	5

Interactive web marketing	1	5	25	4
Web advertising (eg, use of web banners)	5	4	23	3
Contextual advertising	1	6	17	11
Social advertising (eg, in Facebook)	1	8	24	2
Affiliate advertising (eg, with Amazon.com)	1	7	21	6
Widget advertising (eg, through BookJetty, NuffNang)	0	6	13	16
Sponsorship / cross branding	4	5	18	8

Table 9 shows that libraries are mainly using established library or corporate/institution sites as the main channels for their library promotion and marketing. Only a handful have ventured beyond into the realm of virtual worlds, mobile devices, rating or review sites, and online video and live streaming sites.

Table 9: Does your library use the following channels to market its services and resources?	Currently using it	Thinking of using it	Aware but no plans to use it	Never heard of it
Micro sites (eg, sub-sites for library catalogue, databases, e-forms, services)	18	3	10	4
Portal (eg, MyYahoo, My "name of site")	6	8	18	3
Customised sites (eg, subject libraries, blogs, rooms, guides)	15	2	14	4
Intranets	26	2	6	1
Extranets	3	5	23	4
Main corporate or institution site	22	4	6	3
Rating or review sites (eg, CNET reviews)	1	5	24	5
Online video and live streaming sites (eg, YouTube)	3	7	23	2

Virtual worlds (eg, 2nd Life)	1	8	19	7
Online gaming sites (eg, Habbo, Warcraft)	2	4	27	2
Internet TV	0	6	27	2
Mobile devices (eg, PDA, SMS, mobile phones)	2	13	18	2

What other tools and channels have been used to market library services and resources besides those listed in the previous two tables? Based on the verbatim responses received, these include:

1. On-site (in the library) advertising
2. In-building advertising or publicity using plasma screens, collaterals, banners, notice boards
3. Viral marketing
4. Word-of-mouth
5. Print based collaterals like brochures, flyers, posters, bookmarks, handouts
6. Cross promotion of collaterals
7. Newsletters, articles, library guides
8. External banner advertisements
9. Outreach activities
10. Event invites and presentations at seminars, conferences, meetings
11. Exhibition booths at open houses or career fair roadshows

Discussion

Hype and expectation

The survey results have shown that a fair number of libraries in Singapore have been thinking of using the various web marketing tools and channels. Tools such as podcasting, social networking tools, blogging, online video and tagging appear to be high on the list. Mobile devices, portals, virtual worlds and online video sites appear to be favoured channels for library marketing and promotion. Most of these channels are tied to social networks and have gone from experimental to a haven for some immersive communities, for example, librarians using Second Life to outreach to the community.

Tools like search engine optimization and blogging could be a powerful combination when used strategically together. Many librarians today are aware that most of their patrons actually begin their initial “hunt” phase for a desired piece of information with Google. In anticipation, libraries could ensure that their web contents are properly managed and indexed to achieve high relevance and recall upon the retrieval of a search result. The anatomy of a typical weblog has provided a good structure for alignment with the web search optimisation process. This is one of the reasons why a weblog could be easily retrieved. A blogging piece coupled with proper indexing of that blog could raise the relevance and thus recall of that blog in a Google search.

But what could be the reasons for these libraries not to use these tools and channels yet? Is it a question of time before such tools and channels are adopted and integrated into their marketing processes? Or is it just all talk and hype? Could there be other underlying reasons for the non-adoption yet, like the need to acquire technological expertise, or the need to further understand their user’s information seeking and use behaviour as well as the acceptance of these tools in their daily work and study? What are the expectation levels of both the library and its users in terms of the adoption of these tools and channels and their possible returns to investment? These are possible questions that could be researched further.

Limited Resources and Expertise

The survey results have also shown that many libraries in Singapore, who are aware of the various web marketing tools and channels, are not planning on using them. Possible reasons could be offered but need to be substantiated with evidence from further research. These possible reasons could be:

- A lack of knowledge to implement such tools and use such channels
- A lack of manpower
- The complexity of IT infrastructure and governance within the library and organisation
- Playing the waiting game to see how the first movers and shakers are performing in terms of success or otherwise
- Perceiving that the tools or channels will not meet expectations

Are libraries in Singapore then not adventurous enough to venture into such tools and channels? The large number of libraries not planning to use web marketing tools and channels even though they are aware of them appears to back this claim. Perhaps libraries need to be encouraged to explore more, as innovative use of these tools and channels will likely benefit the organisation, provide good returns on investment and at the same time, lead to the long term retention of existing users and attract potential new users to their libraries.

Keeping Pace with Reality

It is not a surprise that a number of libraries might not have heard of some of the web marketing tools and channels listed in the survey. Tools like microblogging, widget advertising and contextual advertising are fairly new. Microblogging, for example, involves posting small pieces of information content on the web for the purposes of broadcasting, keeping current, creating a buzz and promotion. Microblogging could also be a substitute to invasive instant messaging. There is perhaps a need for these libraries to be aware of the existence of such web technologies and to keep abreast of developments in order to understand their potential and possible use in library marketing and promotion. Question is, will these libraries use or even plan to use these tools and channels once they have raised their awareness of the latter's existence?

Innovative Library Web Marketing Practices

A number of libraries have actually moved into the sphere of Web 2.0 platform and are using emerging tools such as search engine optimization, voting features, blogging, RSS feeds and social networking. There is also a small number which have explored using tools such as interactive web marketing, affiliate advertising, social advertising, contextual advertising, podcasting, tagging and invasive marketing in their library web marketing practices (see Table 10). These libraries are what we would call as "first movers

and shakers”. Further research could be done to profile these libraries, understand their decision to use these fairly new web marketing tools and also to view the implementation process involved in integrating these tools in their marketing and promotion.

Table 10: Web Marketing Tools Currently Used by Libraries in Singapore	Type of library				
	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School	Total
Social networking, forms, wikis, collaboration	2	1	1	1	5
Online video	2	0	1	0	3
Podcasting	1	0	0	0	1
Blogging	4	0	3	2	9
Widgets	1	0	1	0	2
RSS feeds	4	0	2	1	7
Instant messaging	0	0	0	0	0
Tagging	1	0	0	0	1
Voting features	4	3	1	2	10
Microblogging	0	0	0	0	0
Search engine optimization	4	2	2	1	9
Search engine marketing	0	0	2	0	2
Email marketing	7	9	1	2	19
Invasive marketing	1	0	0	0	1
Interactive web marketing	0	1	0	0	1
Web advertising	3	1	1	0	5
Contextual advertising	1	0	0	0	1
Social advertising	0	0	1	0	1
Affiliate advertising	1	0	0	0	1
Widget advertising	0	0	0	0	0
Sponsorship/cross branding	2	0	2	0	4

One of the highest ranked emerging tools is voting features, such as through polls and surveys. This voting feature could be extended into a social approach. Libraries could actually exploit this feature in the area of recommendation of books, where the user community is able to either promote or demote a book. Libraries could also exploit the functionality provided on BookJetty.com to integrate this feature in their promotional activities. In addition, BookJetty.com has the potential to establish a connection with most of the cataloguing system via Z39.50 gateway.

Table 11: Web Marketing Channels Currently Used by Libraries in Singapore	Type of library				
	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School	Total
Micro sites	9	4	2	3	18
Portal	4	2	0	0	6
Customised sites	11	1	2	1	15
Intranets	10	12	2	2	26
Extranets	3	0	0	0	3
Main corporate or institution site	9	8	2	3	22
Rating or review sites	0	0	1	0	1
Online video and live streaming sites	2	0	1	0	3
Virtual worlds	0	0	1	0	1
Online gaming sites	0	0	1	1	2
Internet TV	0	0	0	0	0
Mobile devices	1	0	1	0	2

With regards to web marketing channels, most libraries are currently spreading their marketing efforts through established channels like intranets, main corporate sites, microsites and customised sites (see Table 11). Many libraries have established websites surrounding their services and resources, and marketing efforts generally revolve around these channels. Will libraries now explore other channels which are outside the boundaries of established library and corporate sites and move into the realm of the social sphere? Only a handful of libraries are currently using channels like rating or review sites, virtual worlds, online gaming sites, the

world of mobile devices and online video and live streaming sites. Again, it will be interesting to see the library marketing approach that these “first movers and shakers” have taken to move themselves into these yet unexplored channels.

Info-concierge

One of the ways that libraries could enhance their current role in supporting their respective user communities and life-long learning is to perform as an info-concierge, or as a network of inter-connected info-concierges and true collaborators (Foo, Ng, & Soh, 2008). In a well built environment of a service concierge model, the service provider will lay out its strategic planning to build up a holistic customer relationship management. This model can be seen and currently well-practiced in the hospitality industry. For example, the Hilton Hotels and Resorts website has introduced an “electronic hotel concierge” that suggests to their guest to try other services of Hilton by displaying short messages (Gilbert, Powell-Perry, & Widijoso, 1999). Likewise for libraries, they too can use new web marketing tools, like microblogging or widgets advertising, to be deployed into their main corporate site to promote or create a small promotional “buzz” on their highlighted book of the month or other promotional events. This could also extend to other parts of their library cyberstructure via microsites, portals or customised sites (such as library blogs).

A recommendation for libraries to consider is to build an info-concierge model through web marketing practices. There are a number of tools and technologies on the web today which could be used for this purpose. Libraries, for instance, could create their own model using the available tools provided from the open-source industry. For example, to market library services, resources and events through blogging, libraries could use Wordpress software and customise according to their needs. In fact, through the Wordpress platform, libraries could promote their books into social networking sites, such as Facebook, either via RSS feeds or a widget plug-in that is specially created to parse information into the Facebook’s environment. Web tools and channels, such as these, actually have the potential to model libraries into a network of true collaborators.

Further Research

The following could be areas for further research:

1. Measuring the effectiveness of currently used web marketing tools and channels
2. Studying the potential of emerging web marketing tools and channels
3. Studying the sustainability of web marketing tools and channels
4. Identifying the underlying factors affecting libraries' non-adoption, slow or late adoption of web marketing tools and channels
5. Profiling the "first movers and shakers"
6. Studying how libraries are merging non-web and web marketing tools and channels
7. Profiling level of competency of librarians to handle new web technologies
8. Identifying the process to develop librarians' talent and expertise for emerging technologies
9. Studying libraries IT infrastructure and governance
10. Identifying core components of an info-concierge model

References

- Foo, S., Ng, J., & Soh, A. (2008). *Going virtual for enhanced library experience: a case study of the National Library of Singapore*. Paper presented at the VALA 2008 14th Biennial Conference & Exhibition.
- Gilbert, D. C., Powell-Perry, J., & Widijoso, S. (1999). Approaches by hotels to the use of the Internet as a relationship marketing tool. *Journal of Marketing Practice: Applied Marketing Science*, 5(1), 21 - 38.

Library Association of Singapore
Conference 2008

Innovative Library Web Marketing Practices in Singapore: A Landscape of Hype, Expectation and Reality

Nurhazman Abdul Aziz, Akbar Hakim, Catherine Tan & Alan Choy
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Friday, 9 May, 2008

NTU Business Library

Business Librarians

Baharudin Bin Nordin
Business Law

Balbindar Kaur Dhaliwal
Accounting, Banking & Finance

Catherine Tan
Strategy, Management & Organisation

Nurhazman Abdul Aziz
Business IT & Operations Management

Akbar Hakim Bin Haji Harun
*Head, Business Library
Tourism & Hospitality Management*

Alan Choy
Marketing & International Business

Objectives

- To provide an exploration and assessment of the current adoption of web marketing tools and channels by libraries in Singapore
- To look into explorations by libraries in Singapore to integrate the traditional (Web 1.0) and new (Web 2.0) web technologies into areas of library marketing and outreach activities to an increasingly diverse community of library users
- To propose moving libraries in Singapore into a new role as an info-concierge

Survey Methodology

- Survey Conducted: April 8th to April 18st , 2008 to 145 libraries
- A total of 93 libraries responded to the survey – only 35 were accepted as valid submissions

Survey Methodology (Part A)

Survey Questionnaire

- Part A contained questions with the stated aim of profiling responding libraries in terms of:
 - Type of library
 - Size of library membership
 - Age group of library users
 - Library staff strength
 - Availability and accessibility of library website

Survey Methodology (Part B)

Survey Questionnaire

- Part B contained questions relating to current library marketing practice. Libraries were asked to respond on the following:
 - Reasons for marketing their library services and resources
 - Frequency of marketing activities through the web
 - Level of use and awareness or familiarity based on a list of 21 web marketing tools and 12 web marketing channels
 - Providing a list of other tools and channels used to market their library services and resources

Survey Results:

Part A: Profile of Responding Libraries

Table 1: Type of Library

Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School	Total
13	13	3	6	35

Table 2: Size of Library Membership

	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School
A) Less than 100	0	2	0	1
B) 100 to 500	1	4	0	0
C) 501 to 1000	0	2	0	2
D) More than 1000	12	5	3	3

Survey Findings:

Part A: Profile of Responding Libraries

Table 3: Age Group of Library Users	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School
A) Below 15 years old	0	1	2	2
B) 15 to 24 years old	12	7	3	2
C) 25 to 35 years old	13	13	3	2
D) 36 to 50 years old	13	13	3	1
E) Above 50 years old	13	11	3	1

Table 4: Library Staff Strength (includes both professional and support)	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School
A) Less than 10	3	12	0	6
B) 10 to 50	6	1	2	0
C) 51 to 100	0	0	0	0
D) More than 100	4	0	1	0

Survey Results:

Part A: Profile of Responding Libraries

Table 5: Does your library have a website?		Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School
Yes		11	11	2	5
Accessible via:	Internet	11	4	2	5
	Intranet	10	9	1	2
	Virtual Private Network	6	3	1	2
No		2	2	1	1

Survey Results:

Part B: Current Library Marketing Practices

(Respondents were allowed to choose **multiple** responses)

Response	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%	Frequency	Count
A) To increase usage of electronic resources						80.0%	28
B) To increase usage of print collection						80.0%	28
C) To increase usage of library services						91.4%	32
D) To promote awareness of authoritative information sources						68.6%	24
E) To increase the participation level of your library activities and events held						68.6%	24
F) To build rapport and strengthen relationship with existing library members						77.1%	27
G) To increase visits to the library						62.9%	22
H) To attract new library users						60.0%	21
I) To increase library membership						45.7%	16
J) To create awareness of your organization / institution to the wider community						65.7%	23

Survey Results:

Part B: Current Library Marketing Practice

Table 6: What are the reasons for marketing your library services and resources?	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School
A) To increase usage of electronic resources	12	10	2	4
B) To increase usage of print collection	12	7	3	6
C) To increase usage of library services	13	10	3	6
D) To promote awareness of authoritative information sources	11	9	1	3
E) To increase the participation level of your library activities and events held	11	5	3	5
F) To build rapport and strengthen relationship with existing library members	11	9	3	4
G) To increase visits to the library	11	5	2	4
H) To attract new library users	9	6	3	3
I) To increase library membership	7	4	2	3
J) To create awareness of your organization / institution to the wider community	11	6	3	3

Survey Results:

Part B: Current Library Marketing Practice

Table 7: How often does your library market its services and resources through the web?	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School	Total
A) Daily	3	2	2	0	7
B) Weekly	6	2	1	1	10
C) Monthly	2	2	0	1	5
D) Quarterly	1	5	0	0	6
E) Yearly	1	2	0	4	7

Survey Results:

Part B: Current Library Marketing Practice

Table 8: Does your library use the following tools to market its services and resources?	Currently using it	Thinking of using it	Aware but no plans to use it	Never heard of it
Social networking, forms, wikis, collaboration (eg, Sharepoint, Facebook)	5	11	15	4
Online video	3	10	21	1
Podcasting	1	12	20	2
Blogging	9	10	13	3
Widgets (eg, BookJetty, Shelfari)	2	6	18	9
RSS feeds	7	7	16	5
Instant messaging (eg, MSN Messenger)	0	7	27	1
Tagging (eg, BookJetty, Shelfari, LibraryThing)	1	9	18	7
Voting features (eg, through polls and surveys)	10	7	14	4
Microblogging (eg, Twitter, Jaiku, Pownce, Hellotxt)	0	4	13	18
Search engine optimization (web content is indexed accordingly to ensure high relevancy in search engine results)	9	7	11	8
Search Engine Marketing (a form of Internet marketing that seeks to promote websites by increasing their visibility in search engine result pages)	2	6	19	8
Email marketing	19	4	10	2
Invasive marketing (eg. using "pop-ups" or "popunders")	1	5	24	5
Interactive web marketing	1	5	25	4
Web advertising (eg, use of web banners)	5	4	23	3
Contextual advertising	1	6	17	11
Social advertising (eg, in Facebook)	1	8	24	2
Affiliate advertising (eg, with Amazon.com)	1	7	21	6
Widget advertising (eg, through BookJetty, NuffNang)	0	6	13	16
Sponsorship / cross branding	4	5	18	8

Initial Findings:

Part B: Current Library Marketing Practice

Table 9: Does your library use the following channels to market its services and resources?	Currently using it	Thinking of using it	Aware but no plans to use it	Never heard of it
Micro sites (eg, sub-sites for library catalogue, databases, e-forms, services)	18	3	10	4
Portal (eg, MyYahoo, My "name of site")	6	8	18	3
Customised sites (eg, subject libraries, blogs, rooms, guides)	15	2	14	4
Intranets	26	2	6	1
Extranets	3	5	23	4
Main corporate or institution site	22	4	6	3
Rating or review sites (eg, CNET reviews)	1	5	24	5
Online video and live streaming sites (eg, YouTube)	3	7	23	2
Virtual worlds (eg, 2nd Life)	1	8	19	7
Online gaming sites (eg, Habbo, Warcraft)	2	4	27	2
Internet TV	0	6	27	2
Mobile devices (eg, PDA, SMS, mobile phones)	2	13	18	2

Initial Findings:

Part B: Other tools and channels Current Library Marketing Practice

Based on the verbatim responses received, these include:

- On-site (in the library) advertising
- In-building advertising or publicity using plasma screens, collaterals, banners, notice boards
- Viral marketing
- Word-of-mouth
- Print based collaterals like brochures, flyers, posters, bookmarks, handouts
- Cross promotion of collaterals
- Newsletters, articles, library guides
- External banner advertisements
- Outreach activities
- Event invites and presentations at seminars, conferences, meetings
- Exhibition booths at open houses or career fair road shows

Initial Findings: Hype and Expectation

Figure 1: Thinking of Using Web Marketing Tools & Channels

Initial Findings: Hype and Expectation

Figure 1: Thinking of Using Web Marketing Tools & Channels

Initial Findings: Limited Resources and Expertise

Figure 2: Aware But No Plans To Use Web Marketing Tools & Channels

Initial Findings: Limited Resources and Expertise

Figure 2: Aware But No Plans To Use Web Marketing Tools & Channels

Initial Findings: Keeping Pace with Reality

Figure 3: Never Heard of Web Marketing Tools & Channels

Initial Findings: Keeping Pace with Reality

Figure 3: Never Heard of Web Marketing Tools & Channels

Initial Findings: Innovative Library Web Marketing Practices

Figure 4: Currently Using Web Marketing Tools & Channels

Initial Findings: Innovative Library Web Marketing Practices

Figure 4: Currently Using Web Marketing Tools & Channels

Identifying the “first movers and shakers” to use Web Marketing Tools

Tools	Type of library				
	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School	Total
Social networking, forms, wikis, collaboration (eg, Sharepoint, Facebook)	2	1	1	1	5
Online video	2	0	1	0	3
Podcasting	1	0	0	0	1
Blogging	4	0	3	2	9
Widgets (eg, BookJetty, Shelfari)	1	0	1	0	2
RSS feeds	4	0	2	1	7
Instant messaging (eg, MSN Messenger)	0	0	0	0	0
Tagging (eg, BookJetty, Shelfari, LibraryThing)	1	0	0	0	1
Voting features (eg, through polls and surveys)	4	3	1	2	10
Microblogging (eg, Twitter, Jaiku, Pownce, Hellotxt)	0	0	0	0	0
Search engine optimization (web content is indexed accordingly to ensure high relevancy in search engine results)	4	2	2	1	9
Search Engine Marketing (a form of Internet marketing that seeks to promote websites by increasing their visibility in search engine result pages)	0	0	2	0	2
Email marketing	7	9	1	2	19
Invasive marketing (eg. using “pop-ups” or “popunders”)	1	0	0	0	1
Interactive web marketing	0	1	0	0	1
Web advertising (eg, use of web banners)	3	1	1	0	5
Contextual advertising	1	0	0	0	1
Social advertising (eg, in Facebook)	0	0	1	0	1
Affiliate advertising (eg, with Amazon.com)	1	0	0	0	1
Widget advertising (eg, through BookJetty, NuffNang)	0	0	0	0	0
Sponsorship / cross branding	2	0	2	0	4

Identifying the “first movers and shakers” to use Web Marketing Channels

Channels	Type of library				
	Academic	Corporate / Special	Public	School	Total
Micro sites (eg, sub-sites for library catalogue, databases, e-forms, services)	9	4	2	3	18
Portal (eg, MyYahoo, My "name of site")	4	2	0	0	6
Customised sites (eg, subject libraries, blogs, rooms, guides)	11	1	2	1	15
Intranets	10	12	2	2	26
Extranets	3	0	0	0	3
Main corporate or institution site	9	8	2	3	22
Rating or review sites (eg, CNET reviews)	0	0	1	0	1
Online video and live streaming sites (eg, YouTube)	2	0	1	0	3
Virtual worlds (eg, 2nd Life)	0	0	1	0	1
Online gaming sites (eg, Habbo, Warcraft)	0	0	1	1	2
Internet TV	0	0	0	0	0
Mobile devices (eg, PDA, SMS, mobile phones)	1	0	1	0	2

Library Web Marketing Perceived Cycle: A Landscape of Hype, Expectation and Reality

Plotting Web Marketing Perceived Cycle With The Survey Results

A First Look into an Info-Concierge Model

A First Look into an Info-Concierge Model

A First Look into an Info-Concierge Model

Further Research

The following could be areas for further research:

- Measuring the effectiveness of currently used web marketing tools and channels
- Studying the potential of emerging web marketing tools and channels
- Studying the sustainability of web marketing tools and channels
- Identifying the underlying factors affecting libraries' non-adoption, slow or late adoption of web marketing tools and channels
- Profiling the “first movers and shakers”
- Studying how libraries are merging non-web and web marketing tools and channels
- Profiling level of competency of librarians to handle new web technologies
- Identifying the process to develop librarians' talent and expertise for emerging technologies
- Studying libraries IT infrastructure and governance
- Identifying core components of an info-concierge model