

Greetings everyone, I'm Madeline Ford and I'm the Head of Reference Services at Lehman College. Monica's discussion on the democratization of information and Clay's discussion on the embedded librarian is an appropriate tie in to marketing the library. OCLCs forecast on the perceptions of libraries and information resources is certainly an eye opener, but not surprising. Those who work at a public service desk or teach classes know that most students and even faculty will search Google before even thinking of using library resources. So how do we change these perceptions? Let's take a look at the marketing principle of the 4' Ps, Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. These are considered the four keys to success in the marketing world. The 4' Ps have morphed into the 4'Cs created by Philip Kotler, a distinguished Professor at Northwestern University and author of several renowned marketing books. The 4'Cs are Customer Value, Cost to the Customer, Convenience, and Communication. The 4'Cs can work interchangeably with the 4'Ps, but fit better into the academic framework of the library. The first three C's are useful in identifying the products and services that libraries provide. In the following examples, patrons will represent the customer or more specifically students, faculty and staff.

First, Customer Value or Product – this is determined by the patron and the value in which the patron places on the products that the library provides. So what does the library provide or offer? Here are a few, the library building/place, knowledgeable librarians and support staff, books, periodicals, multimedia, databases, the Internet, ILL/Document Delivery, instruction classes, archives and special collections, copy machines and much more. Each has a value to the patron. Consider the value of each and how the “product” can be utilized to benefit the patron.

Second, Cost to the Customer or Price. When we hear “cost” we immediately think monetary, but what about time, ease of access, or distance. Each one is a cost to the patron and to the library. So what do libraries provide, remote access, online forms, online renewal, e-books, streaming media, or virtual reference.

Third, Convenience or Place. How does a library make products and services convenient? Digitization, E-reserves, 24/7 reference, searchable webpage, e-resources. We understand the changing needs of our patrons and use technology to deliver the needs.

So we get to the last of the 4'Cs the one that leads to the implementation of the first three. Communication or Promotion. This is where the library decides who to target and what methods to use. I can't cover everything, but I hope these examples will give you ideas at your library.

The advances in technology offer wonderful and creative opportunities for libraries. Before implementing any of these know your patrons. How comfortable are they with various types of technology or do they have access. Here are a few that I'm aware of:

Email – quick way to communicate to the masses. Keep in mind if your campus has email and if students, faculty and staff are using it. Hint, keep messages brief or try adding a link that takes them to a webpage with information. Consider creating a Mailing List or listserv that users can subscribe. Make sure at least one message is sent a week, to keep your constituents interested.

Blackboard – Supported by CUNY, you can have a link on the initial page directly to the library or work with faculty to develop a research link. Send out messages or news to keep users abreast of the library products and services.

RSS Feeds – Headlines, article summaries, and links to full articles. This is information that streams over your desktop, just like ticker tape.

Blog/Weblog – It's a journal (or newsletter) that is frequently updated and intended for general public use. Who knows maybe someone is interested in the day in the life of a librarian or better yet maybe create a contest for students on their adventures in research.

Podcasting – audio broadcasts via the Internet. Great for the MP3 and Ipodder's. Could be a weekly update on library happenings.

PDA – users can download how to guides or tutorials from the library website.

Not enough technical support at your campus consider the traditional forms of communication. Here are some ideas with new twists. Flyers - consider using colored paper, play with the fonts, or consider creating different shapes with the paper, for example September, silhouette of a schoolhouse that reminds students about reserve or accessing library resources remotely. Bookmarks, share these everywhere, at meetings, in classes, when someone checks out a book. Bookmarks can have useful information or just list the library website and phone number. The school newspaper, if possible take an ad out at the beginning of each semester

and have a contest, maybe local merchants are willing to offer monetary/services as prizes. Here are a couple of contest ideas, 5001 patron to enter the library or how many marbles in the jar. It gets the patron in the library, that a start. Posters have them in the library and where you want students, faculty and staff to see them, the cafeteria, faculty lounge, or near the restroom. Library instruction classes are one of the best ways to communicate services and products. Besides formal classes try doing outreach during "club hours" or that space of time when no classes are scheduled. Get a laptop and start providing reference/instruction at the student cafeteria or popular hangout spot. Have a table at college events or meetings, with information about library services and products. Lehman library recently participated at the new student orientation. In addition, to providing a variety of handouts, we raffled of prizes, gave out pens, bookmarks and had a PowerPoint tour of the library in a continuous loop. The library ended up being the hit of the day because of the creative ideas we used. If the college has a television or radio station, get the thespians in the library to put something together. Create a library handbook specifically geared to the student, faculty or staff member. How about an online tour of the library, PowerPoint is great for

this and maybe someone on staff is willing to take pictures with their digital camera. As you can see the ideas are boundless. I'm sure many of you are saying to yourself, that sounds like more work, but don't forget this is a group effort. From the library director to the student aide all need to be involved in the process of marketing the library. Student workers are a great source for word-of-mouth advertising. Keep them up on recent additions to the collection; make sure they know some basics like the hours or looking for a book in the catalog or on the shelf. The support staff is also a commodity to tap into; these are the individuals who spend a lot of time at service desks. Support staff can help get the word out and provide constructive ideas on how the library promotes its services and products.

As you develop your plans for marketing the library consider how you are marketed to. What positive or negative marketing has been used and what might work at your library. I recently saw a marketing technique in an office supplies store, the sales associates wore t-shirts that prompted the customer to ask a question, for example "Want to save more, ask me how?" Not every example I've shared with you today is the answer for your library, but I hope that it has you thinking and planning.