

## Marketing of Library Resources, Services and Products: A Case Study of IIT Delhi

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### ABSTRACT

Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi is one of the premier institutes of India and was established in 1961. To cater the research and the teaching needs of the institute, Central Library, IIT Delhi is providing different resources, services and products to the faculty and the students. To maximise the usage and for increasing the importance, libraries in the present era around the world are adopting the different marketing strategies. Marketing besides providing sustainability, also helps in realising the goals of libraries. This paper provides a comprehensive overview on different marketing strategies adopted by libraries with special reference to Central Library, IIT Delhi for reaching to its users and to increase the outreach. The paper is intended to help professionals and the library users in knowing the various resources, services and products provided by the Central Library, IIT Delhi as a model to be explored and followed by other libraries and their administrators.

**Keywords:** Library marketing, library products and services, library outreach, information literacy. Central Library, IIT Delhi

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Information has become an essential nutrient of life. Without information, no one can survive. In the present scenario, information is growing at a fast pace and is made available in various formats. To preserve and disseminate growing information, the libraries and information centres have transposed unprecedentedly. Libraries are facing new challenges due to huge amount of information, changing media of information, budget crunch, and staff shortage, etc. To overcome all these challenges, marketing of library resources, services and products can prove to be a strategic tool<sup>1</sup>.

Marketing in libraries is not a new phenomenon. Marketing is applicable both for profit generating and non-profit organisations. Marketing calls for different activities from promotion to selling products and services to the customers that have value for them. Chartered Institute of Marketing, UK defined marketing as, "Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably". Library marketing involves identifying user information needs, matching these needs with appropriate information resources and satisfying customer requirements proactively. While profit-making is the main goal of any business marketing, providing improved services to library users is the hallmark of library and information marketing<sup>2</sup>.

#### 1.1 Reasons to Market Library Resources, Services and Products

Marketing in libraries is vital for their sustainability.

Information has already been recognised as a sellable commodity. It can be used and distributed by the users like other commodities. Marketing can help the libraries in gaining sustainability in the following ways.<sup>1</sup>

- (a) Providing solution to dwindling budgets;
- (b) Promotion of products and services;
- (c) Help in gaining self- sufficiency;
- (d) Improves library image;
- (e) Create the perception of information need in the user;
- (f) Save from devaluation and providing sustainability to library profession;
- (g) Increase readership in the library;
- (h) User education;
- (i) Implication of five laws of library science and
- (j) Solution for growing information.

#### 1.2 Central Library, IIT Delhi

IIT Delhi is one of the institutes of national importance. It was opened in 1961. The IIT Delhi Library System comprises of a Central Library and 18 departmental libraries that collectively cater the needs of teaching, research and extension programmes of the Institute. The Central Library houses a total collection of over three lakh documents comprising of books, theses, journals, e-resources video cassettes and compact discs in the field of science, engineering, humanities, literature and management. The faculty, students and staff of the

institute are the members of it apart from corporate and alumni<sup>3</sup>. Presently, IIT Delhi has become the member of e-Shodh Sindhu Consortium, formed after merging of UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium, N-LIST and INDEST-AICTE Consortium<sup>4</sup>.

## 2. MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING LIBRARY RESOURCES, SERVICES AND PRODUCTS AT IIT DELHI

Marketing involves different activities such as marketing plan, marketing research, marketing segmentation, marketing strategy, marketing mix and evaluation of products and services. Marketing strategies help in the realization of the objectives of an organization. There are various market strategies adopted by the central library IIT Delhi to promote its products and services amongst its users. Some of them are:

- (a) *Library Website*: Library website (Fig.1) is the most effective tool for marketing its products and services. All the activities carried out by the library can be described in it. It provides audio-visual and text medium to the user for proper interaction and communication. Central library IIT Delhi maintains and timely updates its website to provide information to its users.
- (b) *User Orientation*: Orientation to users is provided at the starting of their session. In orientation programme, a brief presentation is followed by library tour. Library also runs a PPT at its circulation counter and a video is available on the site for the purpose.

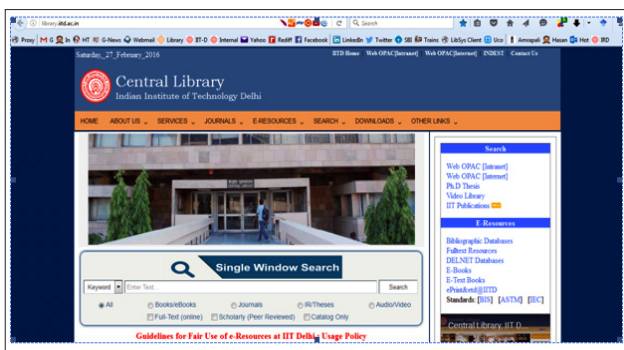


Figure 1. Website of central library, IIT Delhi (<http://library.iitd.ac.in/>).

- (c) *E-Resources*: Different e-resources are subscribed by the Central Library in the form of databases, standards and e-books (Fig. 2). The details of these have been given in the library website in the user friendly manner. Being a member of e-Shodh Sindhu, the library has access to nearly 24 databases (Fig. 3). Library also subscribes three important standards, (Fig. 4)—ASTM standards, Indian standards and IEC standards and 35 e-text books (Fig. 5) to cater the needs of specific students. For maximising their usage, library is taking usage from publishers every year, have put signage board regarding their subscription in the library, made posters and also compile annual

report regarding these. Circular mails to faculty and students are sent by the library staff pertaining to any new subscription.



Figure 2. E-resources subscribed by Central Library.

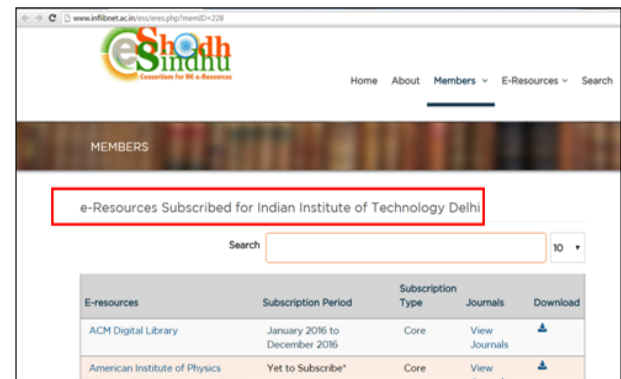


Figure 3. E-resources subscribed for IIT Delhi through e-Shodh Sindhu ([www.inflibnet.ac.in/ess/](http://www.inflibnet.ac.in/ess/)).

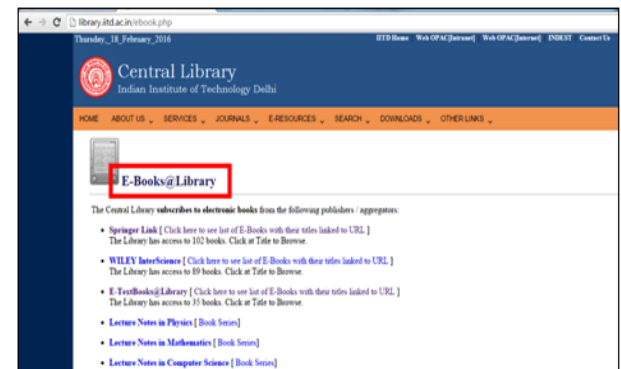


Figure 4. E-books subscribed by Central Library.

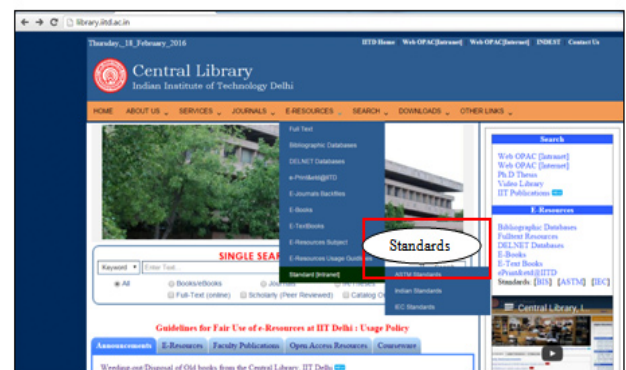


Figure 5. Standards subscribed by Central Library.

(d) **WebOPAC:** Library holdings are searchable through WebOPAC. The online catalogue is available on intranet at <http://10.217.116.5:8080/jopacv11/html/> and on internet at <http://libcat.iitd.ac.in:8080/jopacv11/html/>. To enhance search facility, a good number of computers for WebOPACs have been installed in the library (Fig. 6).



Figure 6. WebOPAC area in the Central Library.

(e) **Discovery Services:** To have relevancy in search and to increase usage specially of e-resources, central library has recently subscribed to Ebsco Discovery Service (Fig. 7). This service is having unified index to webOPAC, institutional repository, i.e., e-prints@IITD, e-resources in the form of databases, e-journals,

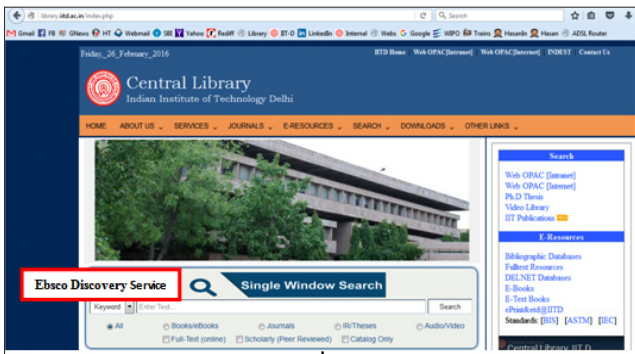


Figure 7. Ebsco discovery service at Central Library.

e-books, standards etc. This unified index provides a single search window facility to the users.

(f) **Video Library Service:** Central library provides video library service to its users. These video lectures are delivered by the eminent professors of IIT Delhi and are recorded in CDs by the professionals (Fig. 8).

(g) **Inter Library Loan service:** As a member of DELNET, the unavailable books and research papers for the



Figure 8. List of available videos in Library.

users on inter library loan request basis are made available by searching through their union catalogue (Fig. 9).



Figure 9. Snapshot of DELNET interface.

(h) **List of New Arrivals:** List of new arrivals is sent through circular web mails to all the library members (Fig. 10). They can view the list by clicking the link. List of New Arrivals (Fig. 11) can also be viewed through new additions interface available in the WebOPAC (Fig. 12) and books are physically displayed for 15 days in the library before placing them on shelves.

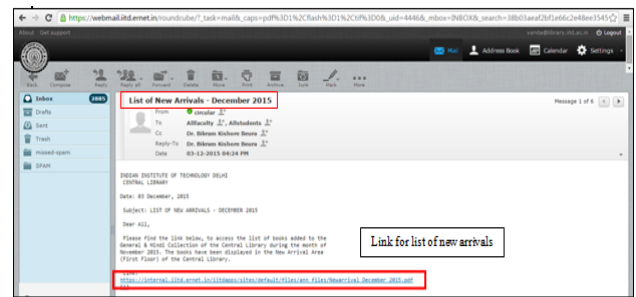


Figure 10. Circular web mail showing new arrivals.

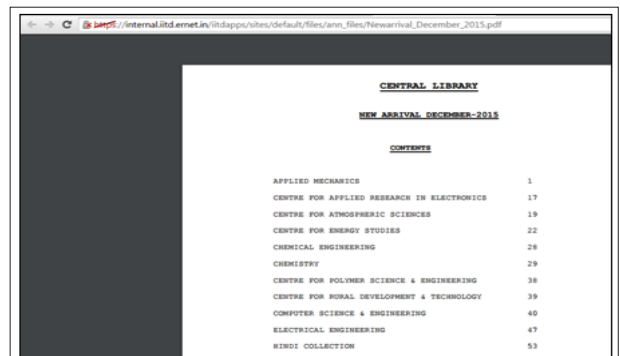


Figure 11. List of New Arrivals.



Figure 12. List of New Arrivals available through WebOPAC.



(i) **Book Bank Service:** Book Bank service is provided to all BTech students. Upto 6 books are issued to every student for the whole semester on free of rental and on first-cum-first serve basis on notified dates only. It has a syllabus-related dedicated collection of over 6,000 books which is regularly updated. Book Bank notice along with the updated list is sent through circular web mail to all BTech students, a week prior to notified dates. Announcement notice regarding book bank is put on the IIT Delhi internal web as well as on the library website. Notices are also put on different places in the campus, hostels and in the library for having proper publicity of book bank service (Fig. 13).

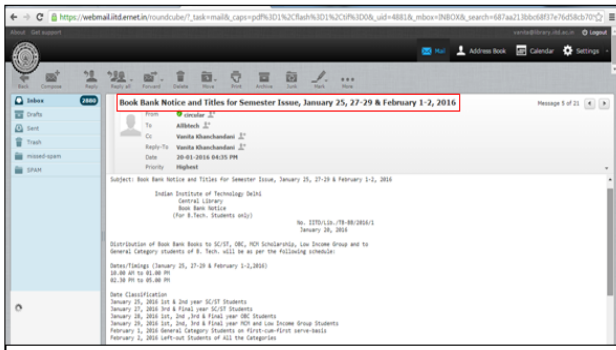


Figure 13. Circular mail showing book bank notice.

(j) **Technical Talks regarding Subscribed Databases:** For making users aware and maximising the usage of e-resources, regular technical workshops are organised as part of reaching to its users by the resource persons. Notice regarding the content of technical talk and reminder is sent to all members through circular web mail (Fig. 14). It is also put in announcement area (Fig. 15) on library website and posters are displayed in important areas.

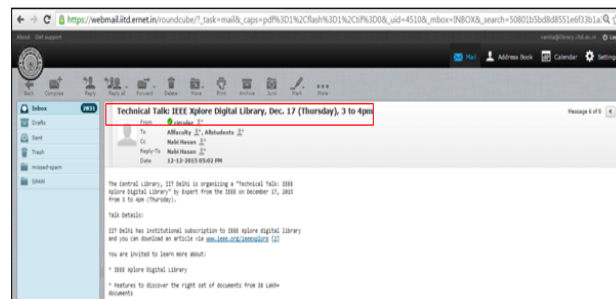


Figure 14. Circular mail showing notice of Technical Talk on IEEE Xplore (Workshop/Information Literacy).

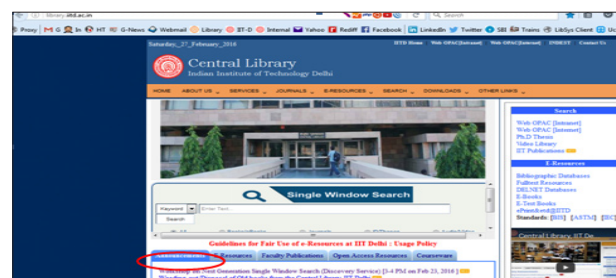


Figure 15. Notices/Announcements on the library website.

(k) **Library Brochure:** The library provides printed as well as downloadable copy of its brochure comprising of different services, rules, subscribed e-resources and collections. It is downloadable from the link <http://library.iitd.ac.in/pdf/LibraryGuide.pdf>.

(l) **Doctoral Theses:** Doctoral theses are important output of any research institution. To make this research accessible to all, all the theses have been digitized. Anyone can get the bibliographic details of these through PHP-based database (Fig. 16) and the extended abstracts of the same can be downloaded from WebOPAC or from the institutional repository, i.e., EPrints @IITD<sup>5</sup> (Fig. 17).



Figure 16. PHP-based interface for doctoral theses.



Figure 17. EPrints@IITD (DSpace-based IR).

(m) **Remote Access Facility:** This facility for accessing the e-resources has been provided through VPN.

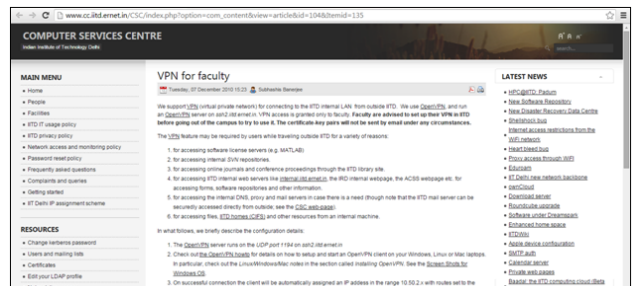


Figure 18. VPN facility at IIT Delhi for accessing the resources remotely by the faculty.

(n) **Newspaper and Magazine Clipping Service:** Newspaper (Fig. 19) and Magazine Clipping Service (Fig. 20) is a personalised current awareness service (CAS) provided to very senior functionaries of the institute in digital form through daily e-mail. The purpose of this service is to make them aware about the daily happenings and coverage in media on the basis of pre-decided keywords.



Figure 19. eNewspaper clips at IIT Delhi.

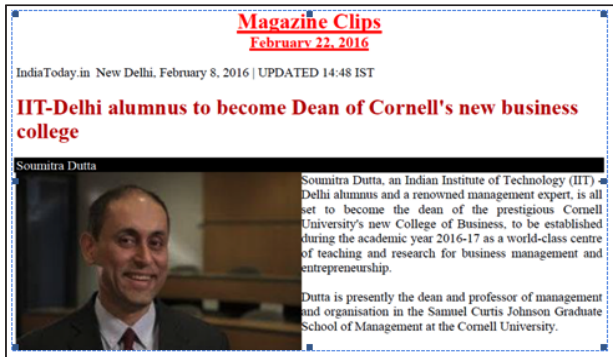


Figure 20. eMagazine clips at IIT Delhi.

- (o) *Institute eNewsletter*: The Central Library compiles and publishes the bimonthly institute eNewsletter, named 'Between the Lines' (Fig. 21) which cover a large number of institute matters.

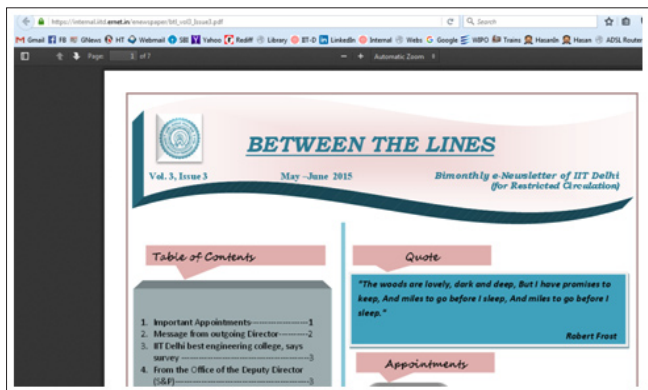


Figure 21. Institute eNewsletter hosted at internal website.

- (p) *Atmospherics*: To provide best reading facilities to the users, library has installed RFID facility for an easy lending of books. The users can self-check-out through kiosk or can self-check-in using book drop (Fig. 22) box on 24x7 basis alongwith the reading facilities. Good furniture, lighting along with proper signage has been provided to increase readership in the library (Fig. 23).

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

Libraries are going through a period of paradigm shift. To save libraries from devaluation and for sustainability,



Figure 22. Self-check kiosk and book drop box.



Figure 23. View of reading hall with printed journals display area.

marketing of library resources, services and products is the only solution. Central library IIT Delhi is offering different products and services to its users and adopting different marketing strategies to reach them. Librarians/information professionals have to analyse the mission, vision and objectives of the library and the institution for effectively implementing the marketing strategies and also need to fix/avoid bottlenecks and gaps. Commitment towards careful planning and proper execution of marketing plan will certainly make library reachable to more users and would further strengthen its products and services.

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**Dr Nabi Hasan** is working as Deputy Librarian at IIT Delhi. He has a professional experience of over 21 years and has published 11 Books and 110 papers. He did his Borlaug Fellowship in 'Electronic Library Resources Management' from Cornell University, New York, USA. He is on the Editorial Board of many journals of Library and Information Science and has organised 36 national & international events, delivered 100 invited talks and has been associated with 9 projects. Currently, he is Director, SLA-Asian Chapter (2016-17) and Member of Online Content Advisory Council (2016) of SLA (USA); Joint Secretary—Asian Library Association; Secretary—Delhi Library Association; and Governing Board Member of IASLIC. He has implemented several library-related projects on Library automation systems, institutional repositories, RFID, ISO certification, digitisation, etc., including those funded through World Bank.