Marketing and Assessment in Academic Libraries: A Marriage of Convenience or True Love?

by
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3rd Library Assessment Conference,
27th October 2010, Baltimore, USA
One central library
• $4.7 million budget (2010)
• High quality user services are priority
• Large English language collection
• Participant in ARL ESP service in April 2008
• Assessment program began in 2006

Research university
• 10,000 undergraduate students
• 6,500 graduate students (24 doctoral programs)
• 25% of students are native Arabic speakers
• 1,200 research & teaching faculty
• Strong in humanities & social sciences
Marketing Team formed 2006

- Six members chosen by library management e.g. web master, blog editor, graphic designer

GOALS

- To promote **awareness** of existing and new library resources and services
- To increase accessibility and **use** of library resources and services
- To increase **visibility** of the physical and digital library
Assessment Team formed 2007

- Nine members (two also members of the Marketing Team) - chosen by library management for professional, interpersonal and leadership skills

**GOALS**

- To create a “Culture of Assessment”
- To assess the extent to which the library is meeting the needs of its customers
- To assess the extent to which library customers are satisfied with library services
- To recommend the implementation of changes in the library based on the surveys that are conducted
Marketing Team reservations about working with Assessment Team

- Marketing is a time-consuming, expensive and labor-intensive process
- Need goodwill of users
- Need expensive incentives
- Belief that assessment is redundant
- Belief that marketing would not increase survey response rates for some assessment activities

- Difficulty of publicizing negative results
- Library assessment activities may show deficiency of current marketing activities
- Very few courses in library schools on marketing or assessment
- Difficulty of depending on the services of other professionals e.g. graphic designer, public relations unit
Assessment Team reservations about working with Marketing Team

- Fear of loss of autonomy
- Difficulty of working with large number of people
- Differences in styles and personalities
Assessment & Marketing Teams working together…
Benefits of team cooperation

- Findings of assessment activities assist Marketing Team in setting priorities
- Marketing activities are essential for promoting awareness of surveys
Assessment slogan

You Impact the Library!
Marketing methods

Pre-survey marketing:
- Posters
- E-mail notification
- Library blog
- Library and university web sites
- Screen savers
- Plasma television screens

During survey marketing:
- Colorful bookmarks
- Balloons
- Sweets
- Roving laptops
- Incentives

Post-survey marketing:
- Blog
- University web site
- Newsletter
- Facebook/Twitter
Joint Marketing and Assessment Projects

- **In-Library Use#1, In-Library Use #2, In-Library Use#3**
  Help us to continue to improve library services
  Please devote a few minutes of your time to fill in the questionnaire.
  “The library - My information channel”

- **Wayfinding**
  The library is looking for new students to participate in a survey to evaluate its services. Each session will last about one hour and will be filmed. The library is offering 50 nis to each participant.

- **Focus Groups**
  The library invites you to participate in a focus group on the subject of library renovations on one of the following dates… The meetings will be filmed. Registration…

- **LibQUAL+®**
  By participating in the survey, you can impact the quality of the library and be part of a worldwide community that is involved in this process. We will use the results to improve and enrich the library.
And... Non-Users

How do you obtain academic information?

Hello,

Please find attached a short questionnaire which aims to assess patterns of academic information use. Your opinion is important to us even if you don't use our services very often.

To complete the questionnaire click here

Thank you for your cooperation!
Library Assessment Team
Library Assessment Team activities

The Library Assessment Team was established in 2007 in order to systematically evaluate and assess the quality of library services for users. Since then numerous activities have been carried out (and are being carried out on an on-going basis), including: surveys, observations and focus groups which assessed the following aspects of library services: physical environment, user needs, quality of collection and services, and remote and in-house access to library resources.
You Said, We Did
or
You Requested, What we are
doing about it
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You requested ...</th>
<th>What we are doing about it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quieter library</td>
<td>We are undergoing a &quot;Quiet&quot; campaign. A member of the library staff roves the library during peak hours and asks people to turn off their mobile phones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group study areas</td>
<td>We created a group study room on the third floor of the library which has tables, computers and a drinks machine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help locating books on shelves</td>
<td>We installed an internal telephone helpline various places in the library. Library staff now wear purple shirts for easy identification if help is needed among the stacks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved signage in library</td>
<td>We added signage to the entrance/exit and to the Media and Periodicals Departments as well as among the stacks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow entrance to the library with bags</td>
<td>At the beginning of the last school year we began allowing you to enter the library with bags. We will also be installing lockers in the new library wing which is currently being constructed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One place to search for all library information</td>
<td>At the beginning of the current school year we launched a new system called &quot;OneSearch&quot; which allows you to search for books, articles, images, maps, video and databases in one go.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to use library website</td>
<td>At the beginning of the current academic year we launched a new user-friendly website.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simplified remote connection to the library systems</td>
<td>During the second semester, the Computing Division will provide you with a web link for simple remote connection to the library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continue buying books and journals</td>
<td>We will continue to acquire as many books and journals as possible with the budget available. We recently purchased the following: Archives of electronic journals from leading publishers; Repository of OECD statistics - donated by the Center for German and European Studies; Packages of e-books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Reference services</td>
<td>We offer 1:1 specialized Reference Service specializes for graduate students and faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to library resources through Google</td>
<td>We have made library resources available through Google and Google Scholar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More electrical outlets for laptops</td>
<td>We have added dozens of additional outlets throughout the library.</td>
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<tr>
<td>More public workstations</td>
<td>We have added computers throughout the library including in the new Group Study room. We offer laptops for use in the library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borrow movies from the Media</td>
<td>Students and academic staff can now borrow DVDs overnight or over the weekend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to full-text articles in Hebrew</td>
<td>We have begun scanning the full-texts of Hebrew journals as part of a national project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notification of new library resources</td>
<td>We have installed an electronic notice board to inform about existing and new services. We issue a monthly newsletter about new and existing services which we send to the whole library community. We also notify of new services on the library blog, Facebook and Twitter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinks Machine</td>
<td>We installed a drinks machine in the new Group Study room on the third floor of the library.</td>
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<td>Assistance with technical problems</td>
<td>We plan to activate a new Help Desk to provide technical assistance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comfortable and welcoming physical space</td>
<td>During the coming year the library staff will populate the new wing and the current library building will be totally renovated and refurbished.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shorter queues at Reference desk</td>
<td>We will be creating a combined Reference service desk which will enable more librarians to be available to users. We offer the following remote services: chat, e-mail and phone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduce cost of ordering items from other libraries</td>
<td>We are currently examining the possibility of reducing Interlibrary Loan charges in the next school year.</td>
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Quiet Campaign
Quiet Campaign

SHANA TOVA
From the University of Haifa library staff
Assistance among the shelves
Defusing the Marketing Team reservations about Assessment and vice-versa

- Regular meetings of team leaders
- Frequent e-mail exchanges
- Team meetings prior to each project
- Continuous explanation of aims of assessment
- Presentation of survey response-rates and results
- Involvement in post-survey decision-making
Marriage of Convenience or True Love?

Despite ongoing difficulties…
Assessment and Marketing now enjoy true love!
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