Library Branding: Requirement, Implication and Importance

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ABSTRACT

Libraries play a crucial role in society, serving as a beacon of knowledge and learning. We do have hundreds of literature which glorify libraries and their role in evolving society. However in today's fast paced digital world, libraries are facing tough competition from new age technological learning assistance. The purpose of this paper is to explain what is library branding? Why it is require? What is the significance of library branding? What are the earlier efforts made to library branding? And also discussing the importance of library branding and best way of library branding.

KEYWORDS: Library Branding, Marketing, Academic Libraries.

INTRODUCTION

Albert Einstein signifies libraries in a very appealing way. He once said "the only thing you absolutely have to know is the location of a library. Libraries play a crucial role in society, serving as a beacon of knowledge and learning. We do have hundreds of literature which glorify libraries and their role in evolving society. However in today's fast paced digital world, libraries are facing tough competition from new age technological learning assistance. Most of the academic libraries are currently in transition phase, struggling to shift their collection from print to digital and their services from manual to automate. In the process of maintaining a hybrid library services, libraries are realizing a gap between themselves and their users. Libraries are losing their true essence.

Library Branding

In the era technological advancement and evolving information society where users required all the information on their finger tip. Today users do-not want a short bay walk to reach their information need, they do-not have patience to be in hoping ques. They want everything ASAP. To meet their preferences and cop up with all the challenges, establishing a strong and cohesive library brand is crucial for attracting and engaging library's users, fostering a sense of community and ensuring the libraries long term success. Library branding is not just a logo or visual creativity it is bound to change the perception, expectation and experiences of patrons.

According to Thomson Spencer "a library that has established its brand idea has a higher likelihood of successfully executing a marketing tactic. A definite brand idea can keep marketing efforts from drifting backward, away from the brand and into a laundry list of the library's services and information offerings."

Libraries are always considered as an important place of large institutions, organizations or towns. A library that is embedded in the place with a strong identity may have a readymade brand idea, but it should decide if the idea will actually beneficial. Library branding goes way beyond to positively impact the whole learning process. Certainly following are some reasons why libraries require their branding..

Remembrance & Recognition

A comprehensive library brand helps establish an new & unique identity in the mind of users and community at grand. It enhances library's images, creating recognition and its identification. A well built brand identity motivates users to associate with the library and its missions, values, products and services.

Motivating and Appealing Library's Users

A well define library brand has capacity to engage and motivate patrons to avail library and its services. It spreads library's value proposition, services and resources making them way more appealing that attracts users towards library. It enables libraries to provide exceptional services and experiences.

Rebuilding the Trust and Loyalty

An effective library brand has power to rebuild the trust and loyalty with its patrons. When a library consistently delivers on its promises and maintains a compatible brand experiences across various touch points. It further develops and improves the confidence of the users to their library.

Fostering Community Connection

A strong library brand can serve as a bridge that connects community and libraries together. It can represent libraries as center of learning & knowledge. It can also represent as a center for exchanging the ideas and cultural heritage point. It emphasizes on strengthening communities ties and encourage engagement as well as cultivates interest on over all community well being.

Adaptability & Relevance

Library branding is dynamic; It continuously assessing and refining different strategy and keeps changing according to the patron's requirement, preferences and recent trends to be relevant and meaningful in rapidly evolving landscape. This kind of adaptability allows library to cater to emerging needs and interest while maintaining the true value and essence.

Organizational Efforts for Library Branding

There are various organization that are concerns about libraries believe that library branding is crucial because it can create a positive perception of the library, communicating its values and services and building a sustainable relationships with the user and the community.

International Federation of Library Association and Institution (IFLA)

It is one of the resound association that promotes the development, advocacy and cooperation of libraries. They provide various resources, products, guidelines and best practices for library branding and marketing. It also helps libraries to establish their unique identities and effectively communicate their value to the community.

Library Marketing and Communications Conference (LMCC)

LMCC is specially designed for library employees to promote, marketing, communication, public relations and social media involvement for academic, public and special libraries. It gives a global platform for all the library professionals in the field to share new and innovative ideas, plans, strategies and success stories of libraries. LMCC organizes different seminars, conferences presentation, and workshops to support libraries and branding efforts.

American Library Association (ALA)

American library Association was founded in 1876 in Philadelphia. It is the oldest and largest library association of the world. It provides resources and guidance for marketing and branding through its multiple divisions. There are two mainly division, one is Public Librarian Association (PLA) and another is Association for Library collection and Technical Services (ALCTS). They facilitates various workshop, webinar, seminar, and information publications for helping libraries to develop branding strategy and better marketing techniques.

State and Regional Library System

There are many state level associations & regional library systems takes initiatives focused on marketing and branding of libraries at state or regional level. The main objectives of these initiatives are to provide training, infrastructural supports, guidance and resources to local libraries for improving libraries condition.

Non-profit Organization and Foundations:

There are some non-profit organization and foundations that too focus on library advocacy and support libraries through offering different grants and programs specifically aimed at library branding. These initiatives provide funding, mentor-ship, and expertise to libraries to help them develop and implement effective branding strategies.

Importance of Library Branding

Library branding is one of the major initiatives that help libraries to increase visibility and awareness. It motivates and attracts patrons towards the library, foster community, attracts funding, ensures relevance and adaptability and also markets the product and services of libraries. Library branding is so valuable, it is surprising how often this work is misunderstood or undervalued, the expertise and experiences needed not always respected by administration and colleagues or simply grossed over through an assumed librarian's sense of responsibility.   Library Branding is important for several reasons:

Uniqueness

In the era of technological advances, users are overloaded with information, Library branding helps user to use library to find exact information. It creates a differentiation that distinguishes a library from others. It facilitates a

unique identity that highlights library's product and services and adds value to them. This differentiation attracts patrons who resonate with your library's brand and its distinctiveness.

Visibility and Awareness

Library has unlimited treasure that A strong library brand increases visibility and awareness within the community. By effectively branding your library, you can generate interest and attract the attention of potential patrons who may not have been aware of your services or resources. Branding creates a recognizable presence that helps your library stand out and be easily remembered.

Patron Engagement

Library branding encourages users to use library. A well defined brand identity helps build faith, familiarity and ease among users. When patrons have a positive attitude towards his/her library they are more likely to actively engage with library services, they participate more in programs and events and also promote the library products and services to other.

Community Bonding

Library always serves its community with information and its services based on information. Library branding can foster a sense of community connection. With a good branding a library can inspires its community to create and share intellectual output that strengthens the bond between library and its users. This bond further increase community support, involvement and advocacy for the library.

Adaptability

Library branding encourages the library professionals to use new technology and to start new services for its users to promote uses of library. Change should be based on the need and preference of users. A good brand strategy ensures that library remains aligned with the evolving requirement of the users.

Funding and Support

Library branding and marketing helps to improve the library reputation, that not only attracts the users but it is also beneficial when library reach its stakeholders, parent institution, funding agency, or community for financial aid. A well planned branding execution demonstrates the library's impact and value that justify the financial requirements of library.

Long Term Sustainability

Long term sustainability is very important for any institute. A strong library brand contributes to long term sustainability of the institution. It helps build a loyal patron base that continues to support the library over time. With a brand value a library is more likely to withstand challenges, changes in leadership and fluctuations in funding because it has established a strong reputation and connection with its community.

Execution of Library Branding

Following are some effective strategies and approaches that must be considered before executing library branding..

Individualization of Library

All though every library provides information products and services through information but each library has its own specific mission, vision and value. So library branding should start by clearly defining library mission, vision, value, products and services of the library. Uniqueness of the product and services offered by the library will set the library different from others and what value it brings to the library users. It will create a base for the library brand.

Visual Representation and Design

It is one of the most important steps while creating a library brand. There should be library logo, that must be appealing and cohesive brand identity that reflects library vision and its services to the targeted audience. While selecting a logo colour palette, design and typography should choose carefully. It will ensure the consistency across all the products and services offered by the library.

Tagline & Slogan

A memorable and meaningful tagline and slogan can reinforce specific message and create a lasting impression to its audience. It should be particular, concise and specifically aligned with the library vision. The tagline should have some unique proposition that communicate or evoke a sense of connection to its users.

Enhance the Physical Environment

In everyone's imagination library is a clean, quiet, peaceful place where books are available for reading and studying purposes. Physical space of a library plays a significant role in branding. Consider creating an inviting and aesthetically pleasing environment that reflects brand values. It will motivate users to use library and its services.

Leverage Online Presence

A well designed and interactive website establishes a strong online presences. To ensure easy navigation for user library branding element must include with library website. To showcase and promote the library's products and services among its user library also utilizes social media platform.

Provide Exceptional User experience

To motivate a user a library must deliver an exceptional user experience. It is crucial for building a strong library brand. Ensure that library staffs are knowledgeable, and willing to adopt new techniques and technology to provide a wide range of service to its users. They are committed to create a personalized experiences and continuously seeking feedback to improve its services.

Engage the community

Building a strong relationship is required to engage the users with library products and services. Develop partnership with local organization, schools, and business strengthen the library brand. Organize events, workshop and programs that align with the library's mission and cater to the interest and needs of the users.

Utilize Content Marketing

Content Marketing can help position the library as a valuable resource and thought leader. Create informative and engaging content such as blog posts, newsletters and podcasts that addresses topic relevant to your community share this content through various channels to establish the library's expertise and foster community engagement.

CONCLUSION

A successful library branding is an ongoing process that requires consistent efforts, adaptability and a deep understating of library audience from regular feedback from the users to understand their needs, requirements, preferences and perception. By effectively branding the library one can create a positive and lasting impression foster community engagement and ensure the library's continued relevance and success.

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