CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Dr. Keshava
Associate professor
Department of Studies and Research in Library and Information Science,
Tumkur University, Tumkur.

Thimmaiah B. N
Junior Research Fellow
Department of Studies and Research in Library and Information Science,
Tumkur University, Tumkur.
E-mail: thimmegowda55@gmail.com

Shiva KumaraS.U
Research Assistant
Department of Studies and Research in Library and Information Science,
Tumkur University, Tumkur

Abstract

Technological advancements and information explosion have compelled the LIS professionals to work for user centric approach. Users are able to access the information from the Internet through various channels, such as websites, blogs, and digital libraries. Customer Relationship Management, popularly known as CRM is a process or methodology or strategy used to learn more about customer's requirements and behaviors to develop stronger relationship with them. The paper attempts to assess the impact of customer relationship management in their work and their perceived level of satisfaction towards academic library services. The primeaim of the present study is to understand the user needs and method of satisfaction.

Keywords: CRM; Academic libraries; CRM factors.

1. INTRODUCTION

Customer Relationship Management offers an integrated approach to archiving this through anticipating and satisfying user need. This broader view of customer relationships and requirements enables libraries and information services to better benchmark and evaluate progress customer centric approach of marketing management gave rise to various practices through which customers can be served best. Library and information services have adapted management techniques and systems for its development. In a way technological

advancements and information explosion have compelled the LIS professionals to work for user centric approach users are able to access the information from the Internet through various channels, such as websites, blogs, and digital libraries etc.

Libraries are service organizations that store data and function as main information resource centers for various users (Hernon and Altman, 1998; Hernon and Calvert, 2005; Huang, 2007; Raza and Nath, 2007). Traditionally, users go to the library for services, such as borrowing/returning books, accessing the reference directory, availing of interlibrary loans and document delivery, and browsing through relevant collections of resources.

Library professionals confirm the difficulties involved in providing training for their students because of the large number of students, lack of suitable training rooms and equipment, and the shortage of qualified trainers (Bex and Miller, 1999). At present, many library service features have changed due to the recent developments in digital and networked environment technologies.

2. THE CONCEPT OF CRM

Customer Relationship Management, Generally known as CRM is a process or methodology or strategy used to learn more about customer's requirements and behaviors to develop stronger relationship with them. CRM is a strategy for studying, analyzing and learning about the customer's needs and expectations. "CRM is an information industry term for methodologies, software, and usually internet capabilities that help an enterprise manage customer relationships in an organized way" – Digital Dictionary.

CRM has been defined from different perspectives (Zablah et al., 2004; Matamoros, 2012)

- as a process,
- as a strategy,
- as a philosophy,
- as a capability
- and/or as a technological tool

3. CRM AND LIBRARIES

CRM can be defined without any reference to IT or particular information systems implemented, but it is the collective developments of IT and the internet that help to facilitate the realization for more effective customer personalization management. According to the IT employed and the sophistication/integration of the information system used, the CRM development stages can be divided into four stages (Stefanou et al., 2003).

(1) The first stage: the preliminary, manual, and non-IT-assisted stage.

(2) The second stage: IT is adopted to assist the predominately manual process (Wells et al., 1999). Spreadsheets, database systems and statistical packages can be used to analyze collected customer-related data.

(3) The third stage: the IT-automated CRM stage by using a number of technologies, such as the internet and telephone/computer integration.

(4) The fourth stage: the integrated CRM (i-CRM) stage by employing sophisticated CRM information systems providing highly integrated back-office, front-office and internet functions in order to pursue customer personalization, high level of services and customer satisfaction. (Bradshaw and Brash, 2000)

Libraries have gone through the first stage. Since it is not for libraries to be web and IT enabled, many libraries are in the second or the third stage. For example, some libraries have designed and promoted their web sites to attract and retain attention and deliver service quality fulfilling user expectations, and used "e-mail, newsgroups, chat rooms, expert forums, message board, FAQs and other user information, and feedback forms" to support "all of library-to-user, user-to-library and user-to-user interaction" (Rowley, 2002).

CRM can be helpful for libraries in following ways:

- It increases the usage of library and improves capacity utilization.
- It helps to understand the requirements of users with the library collection.
- Improve loyalty and contribution of libraries customer community.
- Increase compliance and cooperation between the users and the library staff.
- Encourage suggestions and feedback from the users for the up gradation and extension of library services.
- It provides superior quality services to users.
- It helps to get more financial benefits from management.
- It helps libraries to gain trust and loyalty from the valued customers and helps in brand image building.

3.1 Requirements for good Customer Relationship Management in Libraries:

3.1.1. Informative and Interesting Reception

Library reception must be informative and interesting. A person sitting in reception should be sound in communication, detailed knowledge about library resources& services.

A librarian could be well versed in every item in a library, but it wouldn't matter a single bit if they lack the social skills to communicate this information with the users. Our jobs exist because of the people who come there, not the materials; otherwise, they could just hire a

watchman to mind the building. So our librarians to make improve their communication skill. Reception should have sign broad with all floors details and provide users kiosk.

3.1.2.   Clean and Pleasant Environment:

Our library should maintain clean and pleasant environment to the users.

- Library floors should be cleaning regularly.
- Book shelves should be dust free.
- Provide better ventilation and lighting facility.
- Provide comfortable sitting facility.

3.1.3.   Easy Access of Library:

Library staffs should helpful to the users to access easily library premises. Printed library maps to be provide to the users and every floor should have holding details in digital board or sign board. Detailed bay guides and books are arranged properly according to the subject, topic and author etc. Staffs are voluntary go and help the users and answer properly.

3.1.4.   Complete Members Profile:

Collect all the information about the users including need, desire, designation, qualification etc, it will help us to provide better service to the users as per their need. It will create high satisfaction level and mouth publicity to the Library.

3.1.5.   Proper book collection and weed out policy:

Library should have proper book collection and weed out policy with preparing organizing expert committee. Polices are modified as per need and demand of users.

3.1.6.   Dynamic and updated Library Website:

Library website should be attractive and provide exhaustive and comprehensive about products, services library rules and regulation, timings, various sections of library, and etc. It includes virtual tour, online chatting facility with users. Web OPAC with the facility of Online renewal, online reservation, online membership and etc., It should be dynamic and using multimedia software.

Factor A	Factor B	Factor C	Factor D	Factor E
Knowledge and understanding of CRM of library staff and leadership of library administrators	**Organizational culture and communication**	**Customer management Processes**	**Technology for supporting customer management**	**Channels for library services and communications**
Perception and awareness of service quality focusing on customer relationship is a key to library success.	Creation of the CRM teamwork	Recording and registration of customer profiles	Communication technology (telephone, web page, call center, hot line, etc.)	Direct channels (service counter, self circulation service)
Acceptance and support of use of CRM in the library	Clear cooperative working agreements	Customer analysis	Information technology (database, data mining, knowledge management system)	Indirect channels (telephone, call center, email, personal web, library web, social networking tech., etc.)
Clear vision and mission about using CRM in the library strategic plan	Clear roles and responsibilities	Customer classification	Technology for operating support (SFA-service force automation system, marketing automation, financial operation system)	
Knowledge and understanding of library staff on CRM processes	Good communication between library staff	Services to individual customers		
Knowledge and understanding of customer characteristics and behaviors	Cross library functional integration	Services to expected customers		
	Performance evaluation and development	Continual customer interactions		
		Customer-oriented activities		

4.   CONCLUSION

Library service features have changed due to the recent developments in digital and networked environment technologies. Libraries and information services to better benchmark and evaluate progress customer centric approach of marketing management gave rise to various practices through which user can be served best. Academic libraries should understand the importance of Customer Relationship Management while providing library services. Without appropriate CRM in library, may misunderstand the users service request

and unable to meet their expectations. CRM applications in library services could be helpful to optimum use of library resources.

REFERENCE

- Bex, Jane and Miller, Anna, (1999). Users' views on UK academic networked information services, Education for Information, 17, pp.145-154.
- Hernon, Peter and Altman, Ellen, (1998). Assessing service quality: satisfying the expectations of library customers, Chicago: American Library Association.
- Stefanou, C.J., Sarmaniotis, C. and Stafyla, A. (2003). "CRM and customer-centric knowledge management: an empirical research", Business Process Management Journal, Vol. 9 No. 5,pp. 617-34.
- Rowley, J.E. (2002), "ECRM through their website", Library & Information Update, Vol. 1, April, pp. 44-5.
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voice_over_IP (Retrieved on 02/02/2015)
- Zablah, A.R., Bellenger, D.N., & Johnston, W.J. (2004). An evaluation of divergent perspectives on customer relationship management: Towards a common understanding of an emerging phenomenon. Industrial Marketing Management, 33, pp. 475– 489.