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16.	Mohini Sandip Injar, Jyoti Charudatta Kale	Mobile Library Services and Applications	69
17.	Mr. Manish Parmar, Prof. (Dr) Meenal Oak	Future Trends of Academic Libraries in India: A Study of Emerging Technologies and Professional Readiness	78
18.	Mr. Suraj Satish Kadam, Mr. Dnyaneshwar Ishwar Shingade	Chatbots, Virtual Assistants And Smart Reference Services In Library Use	86
19.	Rajendra S. Savekar	Use of ChatGPT in providing library services	89
20.	Ravikiran Subhash More	New Generations, New Libraries: Understanding Gen Z and Alpha Users in India	93
21.	Ravindra Mangale, Dr. Veena Kamble	Marketing of Library Services in the Digital Era: Strategies, Challenges, and Opportunities	98
22.	Ms. Sonali Dadasheb Beldar, Dr. Shahina Sultan Khan	Evolving Ethical Frameworks and Professional Responsibility in Library and Information Sciences Research	102
23.	Mr. Tanaji Laxman Kamble, Dr. Ravindra Pandurang Adav	Ethical Responsibility of Library and Information Science Researchers in the Digital Age	105
24.	Avinash Salunkhe, Vishwas Hase	Generative AI for Knowledge Discovery in Academic Libraries: Transforming Information Access, Research Support, and Scholarly Communication	113
25.	Mr. Anil Patil	Digital Evolution: Cloud-Based Library Resource Management	119
26.	Dr. Khandekar Ganesh Bajirao	The Evolving Role of Libraries in Implementing National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: A Strategic Roadmap for Academic Institutions	121
27.	Dr. Sandeep L. Lokhande	Global Research Output on Cyber Security, Data Privacy, and Information Security in Libraries: A Scopus-Based Bibliometric Analysis (2010–2025)	125
28.	Dr. Sanjivani Kamble	Internet of Things (IoT), Blockchain Technology and Smart Public Library Systems	134
29.	Gaikwad Purnima Vilas	Marketing of Library Services in Digital Era	137
30.	Gitanjali Ragnath Sable	Cyber Security, Data Privacy and Information Security in Libraries	141
31.	Kailas R. Pawar	Future of Legal Educational Libraries in the Age of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation: Opportunities and Challenges	144
32.	Dr. Yuvraj G. Jadhav , Ms. Rutuja B. Parit	A Comparative Analysis of Library Management Softwares with Special Reference to Koha and SOUL 2.0	147

## Marketing of Library Services in Digital Era

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This paper explores the evolution of library services in the digital era. Libraries today use digital tools like App, Email, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, and phones to market their resources and effectively to the readers who are not familiar with the electronic environment. Digital Libraries share information faster and serve more users. Librarians should pay attention to learners' characteristics, language skills, learning styles, and subjects of interest. By doing this, they can provide the information in the right way to the appropriate users. Understanding learners helps librarians serve and marketing skills make libraries more visible and useful.

**Keywords:** Digital, Library Marketing, Resources, Services.

**Introduction**

Libraries have been around for hundreds of years. They started as places to **store books** and help learn. Over time, they grew into centres for **research and knowledge**. Today, libraries are not just books. They also give access to **digital resources** like online articles, e-books, and websites. This libraries now help people both in person and online, making it easier for communities to learn and formed. In the today's rapidly growing digital environment libraries must balance challenges with opportunities to stay relevant and serve better services to the society. However beginning of digital changed the overall logical structure and way of operations in traditional libraries.

Because of **digital databases, e-books, and automated cataloguing systems**, libraries have grown and just physical spaces. Modern libraries use digital tools to give people online access, support learning anywhere, and create interactive ways to connect. The move from traditional libraries to **digital libraries** happened because of new technologies. Tools like **artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and cloud computing** have made it possible for libraries to store huge amounts of information, organize it quickly, and people access online. These technologies make libraries smarter, quicker, and more user-friendly.

Open-access platforms have changed how knowledge is shared. Instead of keeping research and early content by paying some fees, these platforms make it free and available to everyone. This means students, researchers, and even the general public can access valuable information without restrictions. Digital libraries are helpful, but challenges like skills, safety, and money make modernization difficult. Librarians and information professionals need to keep up with the changes brought by digital technology. This means they should: learn technical skills, protect information, provide fair access.

**Library Marketing :**

Marketing is about understanding what people want, creating value for them, and communicating that so they choose your product or service. According to Philip Kotler, The term Marketing is defined as "a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through buying, offering and exchanging products of value with others." Wikipedia says, marketing is about communicating the value of a product, service or brand to customer or consumers for purpose of promoting selling the product service or brand.

Library marketing today goes beyond just posters, flyers, or announcements. It also includes digital marketing, social media engagement, community outreach and partnerships. Library marketing helps libraries visible, useful, and connected to their communities in many different ways.

The first goal of library marketing is to make sure people **know what the library offers**. Many users may not realize that libraries provide more than just books. They also have: digital resources, services like research help, internet access and training programs, workshops, Reading clubs, community events etc. By spreading awareness, libraries help users understand the full range of resources available to them. The second goal of library marketing is to **encourage people to take part and interact with the library**. This means libraries don't just want users to know about their services—they want them to **join activities, share feedback, and feel connected**.

Library marketing is important because it helps shape how people **see and feel about libraries**. By promoting their services and showing their value, libraries can build a positive image, change attitude of people towards them, strengthen trust by showing libraries care about serving everyone fairly and effectively. Effective library marketing strategies depend on a thorough understanding of user preferences, interests, and needs. To better engage their communities, libraries must conduct comprehensive audience research that examines demographics, interests, digital habits, and related factors. Such knowledge enables libraries to customize their marketing messages and channels, ensuring they effectively reach their target audiences and align with their specific interests.

Effective marketing can assist managers of libraries and information centres in improving access to their clients while also working toward financial self-sufficiency. Marketing can assist libraries in determining their future direction and in identifying high-quality products, services, programs, and materials. Effective marketing also helps improve the public image and professional status of libraries and library professionals.

#### **Medium for Marketing**

Marketing activities can take various forms, depending on the nature of users and the objectives of the services to be promoted.

##### **Book Exhibition:**

Book exhibitions represent form of marketing to extend their services to unreached sections of the community. Leading publishers and booksellers should be invited to participate in the exhibition. This offers staff, students, and research scholars an important opportunity to browse hundreds of titles in their subject areas at one place. A book exhibition also draws the attention of end users to the library.

##### **Orientation Program:**

**Orientation programs in libraries** are special sessions where the library staff show new students or users how the library works. They explain where to find books, how to use computers, and what services the library offers. The library can use a **PowerPoint presentation** to show new user things like the library's books, working hours, rules, and services. This makes it easier for newcomers to understand how the library works and what it offers.

##### **Library Talk :**

The library can organize a "**Library Talk**" every month or on special days. Important speakers can be invited to talk about interesting topics. Library users should also be invited to attend, so they can learn more about the library and its activities. This is another way the library can **promote itself** and show people why it is useful.

##### **Institutional Repositories:**

Academic libraries can create **Institutional Repositories**, which are digital collections of books, research papers, and other resources from the school or college. These repositories help **showcase the library's services and resources** to students, teachers, and researchers.

##### **Library Best User Award:**

The library can create a "**Best User**" award for users who make the most use of library resources and services. To encourage them and inspire others, their name and achievements can be displayed on the **library notice board** or other important places. The best user can also receive a **certificate** from librarian.

**Library Blog:**

A **blog** is a website where people share information and have discussions online. Since a library is a service for students and users, it should also have a **blog** to share news, updates, and new resources. Many young people spend a lot of time online, so a library blog is a great way to **stay connected with them**. The blog should be **updated regularly** with useful and interesting information.

**Library Portal:**

A **web portal** is an essential tool for modern communication. For a higher education library, maintaining a dedicated web portal allows it to reach a wider audience effectively. The portal

should provide comprehensive information, including the library's overview, working hours, rules and regulations, membership details, library sections, digital library resources, new arrivals, services, collections, and staff information. By offering this centralized access, the library can enhance user engagement, improve accessibility, and promote its resources and services more efficiently.

**Social Media:**

**Social media** is a life sustaining tool for marketing library services in the digital age.

Platforms such as **Facebook**, **Instagram**, **LinkedIn** and **Twitter** can be used to communicate with users, promote library events, gather feedback, and build relationships. Social media also provides opportunities for collaboration with other libraries, organizations, and influencers in the library and information field, thereby expanding the library's reach and visibility. Applications like **Pratilipi**, **Google Play Book** are also widely used by the people.

**Challenges in Library Marketing:**

In the last decade, significant changes have occurred worldwide, presenting new challenges for libraries, library professionals, and the field of library science.

**Lack of awareness:**

Many people may not know about the overall library services like different categories of books, novels etc., programs, and resources. Libraries often struggle to reach potential users who are unaware of what is available.

**Lack of training and education:**

Many librarians struggle to effectively promote library services because they lack proper training and knowledge of marketing tools and techniques. This gap can limit the library's ability to reach users, showcase its resources, and increase engagement with its programs and services.

**Pricing :**

The **pricing of information products and services** has been a widely discussed issue in the library and information field. There is no single standard method for determining the cost of such products and services, making pricing a complex and often debated topic.

**Attitude :**

The attitude of the library director and the staff they interact with customers is what shapes customers' experience and, markets "the library to those customers.

**Old expectations :**

Libraries and librarians are often constrained by a **traditional image**, where they are perceived mainly as places for borrowing books and hosting programs. This limited perception can hinder efforts to promote the full range of modern library services and resources.

**Fear :**

Some librarians are reluctant to adopt practices from the private sector. They may view marketing as overly commercial, manipulative, a waste of time and resources, or even unprofessional, which can limit the promotion and visibility of library services.

**Lack of budget:**

Many academic libraries face **limited budget allocation** for marketing their services.

Insufficient funding can restrict promotional activities, outreach programs, and the use of modern marketing tools, limiting the library's ability to reach and engage users effectively.

### Conclusion:

The way libraries work has changed a lot in the digital age. Digital libraries make it easier for people to access information, use library services, and get things done faster. But there are some challenges too, like some users not being familiar with technology, risks to online security, and limited budgets. Libraries need to **use technology carefully** while still being places where everyone can access knowledge. In the future, research should focus on finding ways to make digital library services better and help users adapt to new technologies easily. With so many other sources of information available today, librarians must **highlight the unique benefits** of their services.

Effective marketing helps users access library resources more easily and ensures libraries remain **useful and sustainable**, especially in the digital age.

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