

What They Didn't Teach in Library School: The Cycle of True Marketing Presented by Kathy Dempsey of Libraries Are Essential

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What Does "Marketing" Really Mean?

Many people think they're doing "marketing" when they're really not, because that word is used interchangeably with other words. To make sure you're doing "true marketing"—the kind that really works—I'll tell you the real deal.

+ **Marketing** is taking steps to move goods from producers to consumers. It's determining what people want, delivering it, evaluating consumer satisfaction, and then periodically updating that whole process.

+ **Public Relations** is a planned, long-term communication program (via various media) that has a goal of convincing the public to have good will toward something. It's helping people to think well of an organization, product, or concept.

+ **Publicity** is sending a message via official channels such as news releases, newsletters, press conferences, etc.

+ **Promotion** is furthering the growth or development of a product or service. It's not just aiming toward good will; it's encouraging people to use it by telling those people how it would benefit them.

+ **Advocacy** is getting people who have good opinions of your organization to speak to others on its behalf, to convince other people of its value.

+ **Advertising** is calling attention to something through paid announcements.

+ **Branding** is establishing a strong link between a company and its logo/font/colors or name/phrase. Its aim is to make people associate the company with the graphics or words it uses. Branding helps build loyalty. (A brand touchpoint is a point of interaction between a brand and a customer, which gives the customer an impression of the brand.)

More Useful Definitions

+ The Four Ps

Product (or Service): What you're offering

Price: What users pay for your service (not just \$\$)

Place: Location of service (including online)

Promotion: How you encourage others to use your service

+ SWOT Analysis

Strengths: What you do well; advantages you have

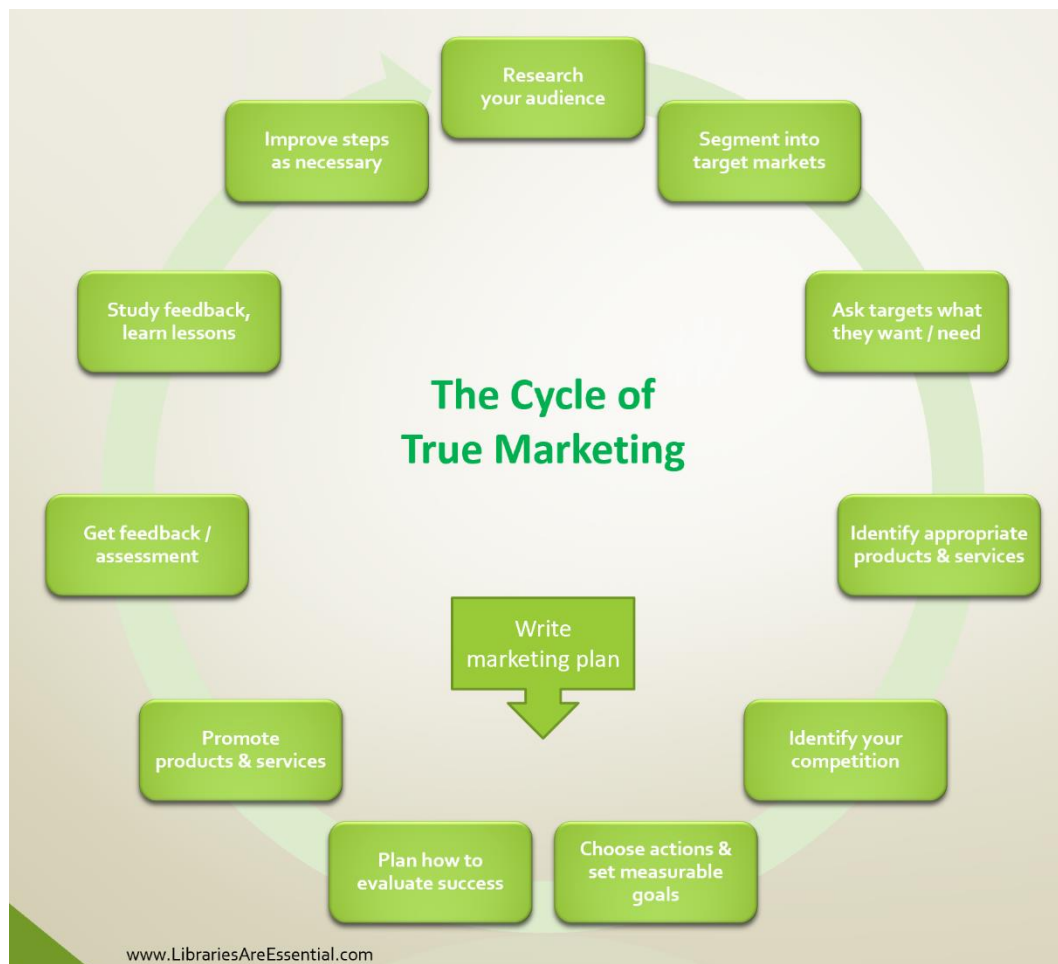
Weaknesses: What you need to improve

Opportunities: Assistance you can get from outside

Threats: Competition; what works against you

Strengths and Weaknesses are internal; Opportunities and Threats are external.

The Cycle of True Marketing



Strategies and Tools You Can Use

Strategies

Always operate on evidence-based information.

Remember: It's all about the customer!

Don't overlook the need for internal marketing: Your own staff members and administrators are among your most important target groups.

Treat members of the media as a separate target market.

Never *guess* what people want when you can *ask*.

Have events other than programs to get people into your building, meeting your staff, and seeing your resources. Offer customized training on databases that stakeholders need. Have an Open House. Invite the Mayor for a photo opp.

Don't wait until you're in trouble to start building partnerships and looking for help. Get to know people from your target audiences over a period of time so that, when you need to ask for their opinions, votes, or advocacy, you already have a positive relationship.

Always track your results and evaluate them to see what works and what doesn't. Your process needs to be fluid, so you can change and improve easily when necessary.

Use student ambassadors to reach other college students.

Tools and Info

Use your patron information to its fullest capacity. What attributes do your patrons share? Map out where they live (and notice where they don't). Make the most of usage reports from vendors. Use your server logs to check for search trails and patterns.

Study your reference question statistics. Are there any frequently asked questions or major topics that expose a certain information need?

Pay special attention to customer feedback, suggestion boxes (physical and online), survey results, and online reviews. These are primary sources of user information.

Find out what sort of data your city / university / corporation has on your area and its residents / employees. City planning info can affect your collection development and service decisions. Ditto for projections of growth in your county, info about students expected in the next 5 to 10 years, or information about company employees.