

# Cycling Through: Paths Libraries Take to Marketing Electronic Resources

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“Librarians know that for today’s information consumer if it’s not online it does not exist.”

-- Buczynski 2007

# Literature Review

Field: information and library science

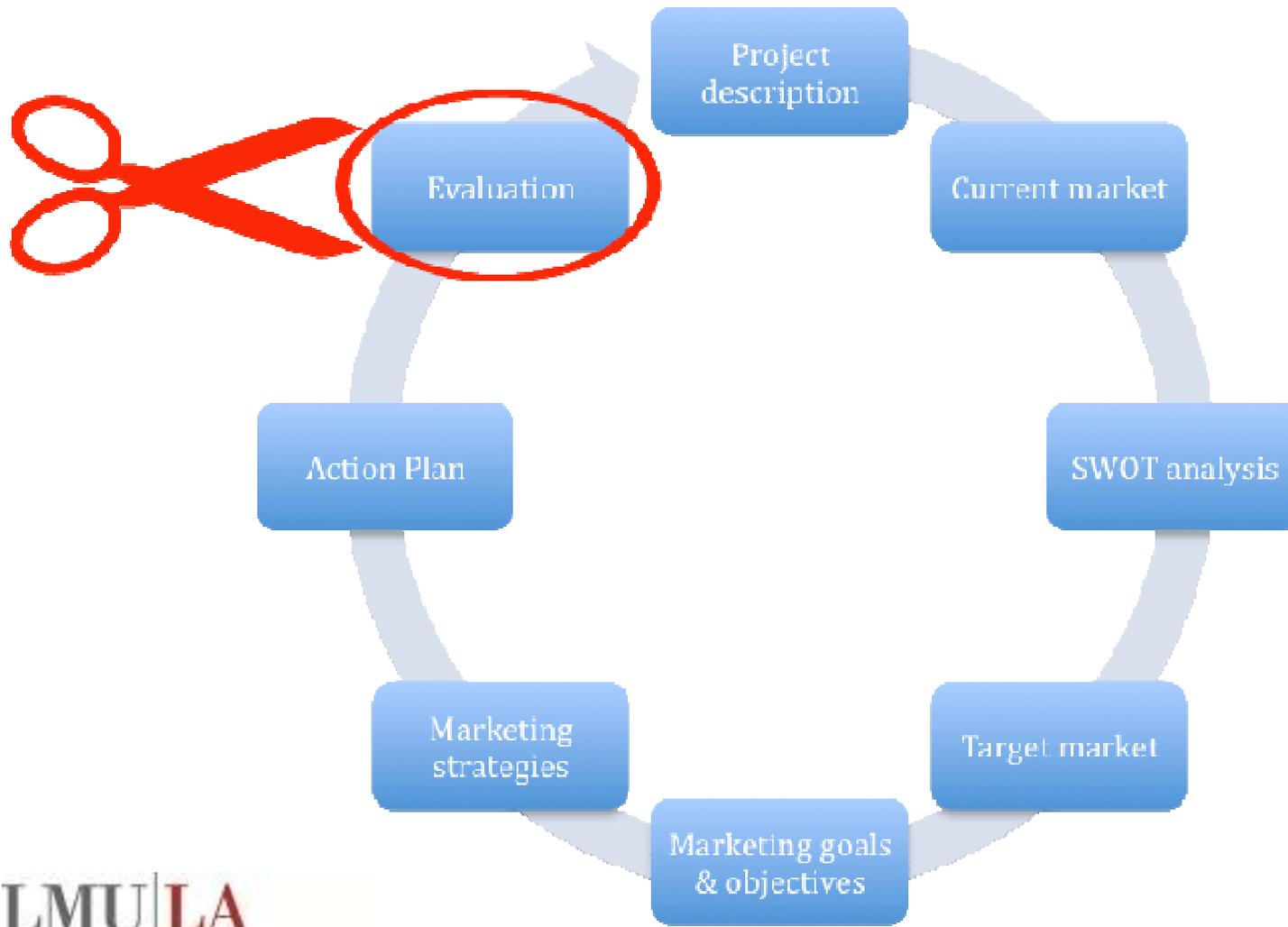
Years represented: 1994 – 2009

Resulting corpus: 23 documents

# Marketing Cycle



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After implementation, lengthy testing, and library staff training, it was evident to Information Services and Circulation staff that users were not aware of the GET IT button in library-subscribed databases or how to use it. The Web Committee and Administration felt that SFX is a technological advancement that would greatly save the user's valuable time in accessing information for education, research and patient care. Now that the service was no longer in beta testing, an SFX Publicity Committee (SFXPC) was appointed by the library director to bring in staff with expertise and interest in promotion. The SFXPC interpreted the charge as a challenge to initiate an aggressive marketing campaign in the promotion and use of SFX via the library's customized GET IT icon. The SFXPC met for three one-hour sessions before proposing "GET IT and GO Day" as the theme for a full day of publicity. The SFXPC decided to base its marketing strategy on the GET IT button. The budget for the promotional campaign was \$2000.

SFXPC believed that in order to promote the use of the GET IT button, a number of strategies should be utilized before, during, and after GET IT and GO day. Teasers and buildups were incorporated into the marketing strategy to get people talking about GET IT and to maximize the impact of the GET IT and GO day. The approaches used may seem common sense, but when used in combination and timed strategically, these promotional tactics can reach and retain the attention of a variety of audiences. The following strategies were used:

*Word-of-Mouth:* Information Services staff were encouraged, a month in advance, to inform users about GET IT, its use, and the upcoming celebration when teaching workshops and while working at the Information Service desk. In addition, the library director included information about the service and the launch in presentations to WCMC department chairs and the General Faculty Council. *Staff utilized:* All program areas *Time invested:* Ongoing during the course of regular duties *Added expense:* None

- SWOT analysis
- Staff
- Budget
- Marketing strategies
- Staff
- Budget
- Timeline

# Findings

Libraries do not consistently use the components of a marketing plan when embarking on a marketing campaign for electronic resources

3 of 23 report all components

# Findings

- Project description

22 libraries reported their reasoning behind wanting to pursue a marketing campaign for their electronic resources

# Findings

- Current market

0 libraries reported competing products

21 libraries summarized the state of the library or described their typical user groups

# Findings

- SWOT analysis

0 libraries reported a full analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, or threats for the library based on the electronic resources being marketed

# Findings

- Target

23 libraries reported a target for their marketing of electronic resources



# Findings

- Goals

22 libraries reported a goal or objective for their marketing campaigns

7 noted that the goal was to increase “awareness” or “use” of electronic resources

# Findings

- Strategies

23 libraries reported a strategy for their marketing of electronic resources

38 specific techniques are noted



# Marketing techniques in use

Academic staff as collection developers	Banners/posters	Blackboard
Bookmarks	Branding	Calendar
Collaboration	Collection policy	Email (external)
Email (internal)	Faculty/professionals as marketing tool	FAQ
Feedback form	Flyers/brochures	Giveaways
Home/off-campus access	Incentives	Mascot
Native language education	Newsletter	Newspaper alert
Online social networks	Patron training (group)	Patron training (individual)
Phone call/personal visit	Pins	Postcards/letters/direct mail
Screen savers	Slide show/demonstrations	Staff training (group)
Staff training (individual)	Students as marketing tool	Survey
Usage statistics	Use guide	Web page alert
Web page, customized	Word of mouth	

# Findings

- Staff

18 libraries mention the people involved with working on the marketing campaign

# Findings

- Budget

11 libraries report having a budget for their marketing campaigns

# Findings

- Time

17 libraries report a timeline for their marketing campaigns

“Although the program is started with a timeline in mind, and a general goal of promoting the resources, the promotion never ends.” -- Brannon 2007

# Findings

- Measurement

20 libraries report a measurement

Kinds of measurement: counts,  
comparisons, trends

Stated difficulties in knowing what to  
measure

# Findings

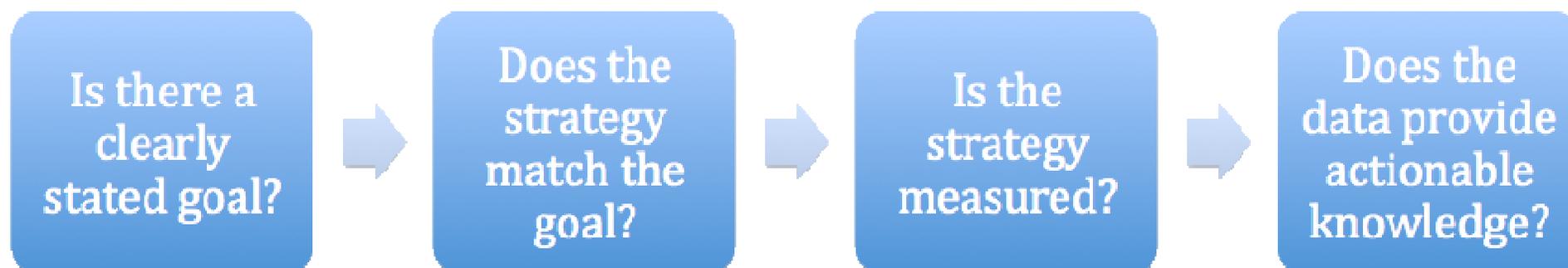
- Assessment

19 libraries provide some kind of consideration of the effect of their marketing strategies

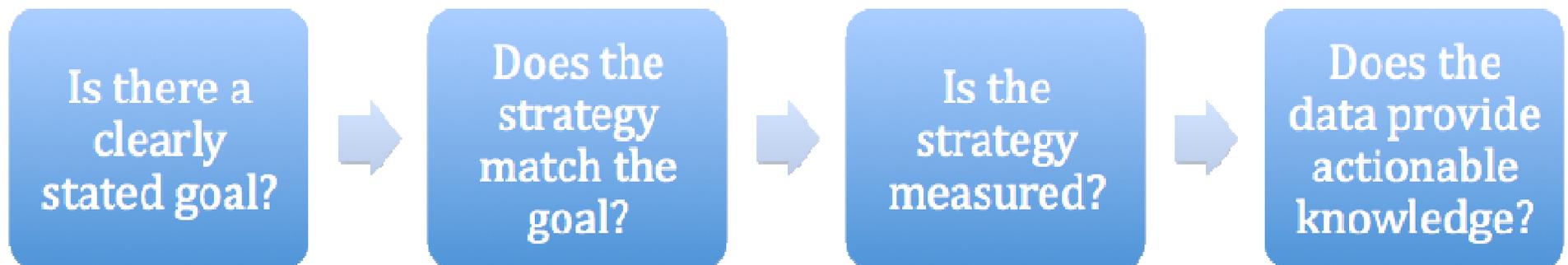
# Does the assessment match the goal?

Having a clearly stated goal for a marketing plan should lead to choosing a strategy to achieve that goal, and identifying how to measure the strategy will ultimately tell a library if the campaign has helped to reach the goal.

## A model to assess a library's efficacy in marketing plan development



## A model to assess a library's efficacy in marketing plan development



3 of 18 succeeded with the model

Goal	Strategy	Measurement	Assessment
<p>“The objectives of this research were to ... (2) assess the obstacles to use of electronic information ...”</p>	<p>“A random sample of 400 faculty (including teaching assistants) was generated by computer from a population of over 2,300.”</p>	<p>“Thirty-nine percent of the recipients of the survey responded.”</p>	<p>“... The most common cited obstacle to using information technology is lack of information; to increase use of electronic resources the Libraries need to provide more information and instruction on available resources. Obviously, current promotional efforts have not been sufficient.”</p>

# Discussion and future research

“Librarians do not understand the fundamental nature of marketing and public relations or its benefits.” – Lindsay 2004

Marketing is not a priority

# Limitations of this research

Scope limited to publications about marketing campaigns

Pro: reflects the actual behaviors of libraries, related to marketing e-resources

Con: does not reflect the numerous ways in which marketing electronic resources may be being done in libraries

# Summary

These findings parallel the conclusions of Ford, Lindsay, and Marshall, who found that libraries do not plan well for marketing in libraries; libraries do not do better in developing marketing plans specifically for electronic resources.

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