Brand Communication for Public Libraries

S.O.S selling our services. International Seminar on Library Marketing organized by EUROLIS.
Thursday, November 18, 2010. Goethe-Institute London

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Theses

Public libraries in Germany have the potential to play a significant role in regional economic policy – as a cultural and educational facility, as a multimedia learning location, or as a venue for social communication and exchange of opinions. Their potential, however, is often underestimated by local politics and by the general public.

Public libraries that are aware of their competitive environment, their target groups and their own strengths and are able to locate and monitor socio-political or technological trends have a distinct advantage when it comes to facing actual challenges, using available resources efficiently, and positioning themselves offensively and with an unmistakable profile as a brand name in the cultural and educational landscape.
Agenda

Opportunities and risks of Public Libraries in Germany

Essentials of Brand Development, and why it is so difficult for libraries to develop brand names!

Brand name development for Public Libraries using the example of Hoeb4U

Thesis
Public libraries in Germany could play a central role in regional and local economic policy – as cultural and/or educational facilities, as multimedia learning facilities or as a venue for social encounters and exchange of opinions. Their significance, however, is quite often being underestimated both by local politics and by the general public.
Chances of Public Libraries

- Lifelong learning
- Information as a driving force for the creation of value
- Technology and media development
- Demographic change
- Individualization
- Increasing significance of migration
- Increasing significance of local matters

Knowledge society’s gravitational centres

- Access to knowledge and information
- Information and media competence, cultivating reading
- Social engagement
- Places of contemplation and the exchange of cultures and opinions
- Most frequented cultural institutions with low-threshold offers

Weaknesses of Public Libraries

- No legal protection
- Insufficient financial endowment (staff, media, access, technology, space)
- Usually little marketing and lobbying
- Little charismatic aura

Risks of Public Libraries

- Fragmentation of society into milieus
- Fast change of technology and media development
- Swift development of fashion and trends
- Networking culture and internationalisation
- Competition by commercial providers
- Little lobbying and negative image
- Fiscal and economic crisis

Strengths of Public Libraries

- Knowledge society’s gravitational centres
- Access to knowledge and information
- Information and media competence, cultivating reading
- Social engagement
- Places of contemplation and the exchange of cultures and opinions
- Most frequented cultural institutions with low-threshold offers
The Fiscal and Economic Crisis in Germany leads to high pressure for legitimation within the cultural and educational areas of German communities.

Diagram 1: Development of tax revenue and public expenditure on culture 2000-2011 in Mio. €

Government is covering up to 90 percent of all cultural expenditure.

source: actori-study 2010

Which offers are still affordable for communities in the current fiscal situation?

Under financial competition, it is essential to communicate your cultural, socio-political and/or economic added value.

s: My own survey, based on ibas 2010
Two thirds of local libraries have been hit by budget cuts.

59 percent of all local libraries are affected by budget consolidation now or within the coming months.

20 percent of all libraries have been forced to operate under a comprehensive budget stop since the spring of 2010.

36 percent of local libraries are facing temporary or permanent cuts of their acquisition budgets.

8 percent of libraries have to shorten their opening hours.

23 percent of libraries have to reduce events and other offers.

13 percent have to call off planned projects like construction.

Public Libraries (in Germany) have not been able so far to create a positive image and to communicate it clearly.

The critical view from within

„The public’s general image of the profession and practice of librarianship is poor. The reputation of the profession is low and as a consequence the status of workers in it is also low. The situation is not exactly the same all over the world but it does exist everywhere to varying degrees, and the picture is a fairly accurate one for the most countries.“ Hans Prins, Wilco de Gier

„The perception is still wide-spread that the role of libraries is limited to storing books and pushing them across the counter.“ Claudia Lux, director, Central State Library of Berlin

„We are still considered to be institutions for children and housewives who have plenty of time for the reading of novels.“ Horst Neisser, former director of Cologne City Library
Essentials of Brand Development, and why it is so difficult for libraries to develop brand names!

“A Brand is the customer’s idea of a product” (Ogilvy)

- Brand awareness
- Associations
- Sympathy
- Confidence
- Loyalty

- Market
- Statements
- Acceptance

- Corporation
- Brand identity

Who are we?
What do we offer?
For whom are we useful?
What is our effect?
How is our appearance?
The core of brands is a brand model.

Mental Convenience - (Cognitive) Relief in Decisive Situations – is a Core Element of Strong Brands.

Strong brands...
... have a differentiating potential and are unique,
... are communicating emotionally and rationally at the same time,
... generate identification,
... show consistency and continuity in their brand communication,
... in case of expansion of the brand portfolio, they preserve a clear brand image.

Brand Success
Brand name
Brand associations
Brand sympathy
Brand confidence
Brand loyalty

Esch 2005, p. 27, 63
Why it is so Difficult for Libraries to Develop Brand Names:

A clear and specific brand communication is often impossible because supporting bodies favour the brand architecture model of “Branded House”.

It is almost impossible to visualize brand name and brand advantage of library products and services.

Customers are rarely able to evaluate quality and usefulness of library products and services.

As non-profit institutions, public libraries have a wider target and target group portfolio than private sector corporations.

Brand name development for Public Libraries using the example of Hoeb4U

Thesis

Public libraries that know their competitive environment, their target groups and their own strengths, that recognize and monitor societal or technological trends have a distinct advantage when it comes to facing current challenges, using their resources efficiently and position themselves as a distinctive brand in the cultural and educational landscape.
Hoeb4U: Trend Library in Hamburg

Hoeb4U is a central institution and experimental laboratory for Hamburg public libraries. The library opened 2005 and is located in the midst of cultural centres in Hamburg Altona, next to media companies and cafes. It is a library with a very special profile, designed to appeal to teenagers and young adults aged 14 to 24. The media stocks at Hoeb4U are focused on leisure activities – they are multimedia, and right up-to-date. Young people can develop their creative potential in direct use of all kinds of media. Interactive and virtual events are provided to promote reading and media skills or participants, who take part in these campaigns with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Website Hoeb4U (http://www.buecherhallen.de/aw/~fbw/hoebu/ accessed 13th September 2010)

Brand model of Trend Library Hoeb4U in Hamburg

Trend library for teenagers and young adults
multi-media centre
Experimental Lab

Benefit & Reason
Why? What do I offer?

Brand competence
Who am I?

Brand tonality
How am I?

Brand image
How is my appearance?

emotional

rational

young, innovative
multi media
interactive
right up-to-date

right up-to-date

Leisure
focussed:
media-based event concept
Interactive and virtual events
reading and media skills
individual Internet portal

...
The Brand has to be implemented systematically through marketing management.

How is the market put together?

Who are we and how do we position ourselves in the market?

How do we enter into an exchange with the market, how do we distinguish ourselves, what are we offering?

How do we check marketing success?

Marketing management refers to analysis, strategic planning and operative implementation of marketing goals in an operative marketing mix and subsequent efficiency control.

Analysis of Demand

Which are the library’s target groups?

- Customers
- Stakeholder
- Local politics
- Sponsors
Analysis of the surrounding environment

Market analysis

Strategic marketing

Marketing mix

Marketing controlling

How is the library’s micro environment?

How does the library position itself in the cultural and educational landscape ...

How is the library’s macro environment?

What answers does the library offer to ...

Communal location factor?
Leisure competition?
Fiscal competition?
Cooperations/Network?
Communal discourse?

... demographic change?
... multi-optionality of society?
... integration of socially deprived milieus?
... information and media development?

Analysis of potential

Market analysis

Strategic marketing

Marketing mix

Marketing controlling

What are strengths / weaknesses; chances and risks for the library?

Portfolio of product and services?
Employees?
Infrastructure?
Available funds?
Technical equipment?
Premises?
...
Strategic Marketing

Profile development
Who are we, and how do we position ourselves in the market?

Mission Statement
Multimedia trend library and playground for young persons between 14 and 24 years with a leisure oriented offer: Development of reading and media competence through active handling of all kinds of media.

Brand
(brand model according to icon brand navigation)

Profile development
Who are we, and how do we position ourselves in the market?

Goals/strategies
How do we position ourselves in the market?

General goals
Goals for strategic activity areas
Marketing goals
**Marketing mix**

In a Marketing mix, socially relevant offers for customers are being implemented through profile-oriented arrangement of all exchange relations between customer and library.

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**Trend Library Hoeb4U, Hamburg**

- **Distribution policy**
  - Its own location as a youth library. Modern and innovative store atmosphere.
  - Proximity to the creative scene of Ottensen/Altona district: some 27,000 young people live in Altona (Hamburg total: some 205,000), of whom just under 20 percent have foreign roots.
  - In the Zeisehallen, coupled with a cafeteria, a movie theatre and media industry offers.

- **Relevance of marketing**
- **Brand Environment**
  - Opening hours: Tue – Fri 2-8 p.m.

Trend Library Hoeb4U, Hamburg

Program policy

Total stock: 15,000 ME
50 percent print media + 50 percent AV media

Media species: board games, books, CDs, DVDs, audio books, magazines, games for: Nintendo DS, PC, PS2, PS3, PSP, Wii, Xbox 360

Main topical focus: Adventure, action, comics, English language media, books for young people, games, love & sex, lifestyle, mystery, politics & history, spotlight, stress, addiction, scene

No school relevant media.

Trend Library Hoeb4U, Hamburg

Program policy

Classic author readings featuring young authors from Hamburg
Workshops with multimedia content (Computer games, Mangas, etc.)
Wii events
Bookcrossing
Geocaching
Cosplay events

Relevance of marketing
Participatory Culture
Edutainment
Experience Marketing

**Trend Library Hoeb4U, Hamburg**

**Communication policy**

- Image brochure for a professional audience

Relevance of marketing

Branding: Brand name + Corporate Design

Conventional mix of communication

Search engine optimization

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**S:** Website Hoeb4U (http://www.buecherhallen.de/aw/~fbw/hoebu/ accessed: 13th September 2010)

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**Blog**

08.09.2013 [Filmkritik] *Nutzungsverbot 24* - Akke, Marti, Gloria und Merin werden ihre Reise fortsetzen. *mütter*

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01.09.2013 [Mediennews] *Bist* bereits nach Deutschland! Die beliebte Musikal Serie wird ab Januar 2013 im deutschen Fernsehen ausgestrahlt. *mütter*

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Anregungen & Kritik

**S:** Website Hoeb4U (http://www.buecherhallen.de/aw/~fbw/hoebu/ accessed: 13th September 2010)
Communication policy

Relevance of marketing

Community of Interest
Web 2.0-Marketing
Storytelling

Communication policy

Relevance of marketing

Community of Interest
Web 2.0-Marketing
Storytelling
Trend Library Hoeb4U, Hamburg

Employee policy

- Modell der Juniorfirma
- Bibliothekare + Auszubildende
- Auszubildende bringen (in Veranstaltungen ... mit ein)
- Corporate Behavior: Einheitliche Kleidung, Essen/Trinken/Handy erlaubt.

Relevance of marketing
Diversity Management


Conclusion

Literature


BID - Bibliothek & Information Deutschland (Hrsg.): 21 gute Gründe für gute Bibliotheken. Berlin, 2008


DBV - Bibliotheksverband Deutschland e.V.: Ergebnis der dbv-Befragung zur Finanzlage der Öffentlichen Bibliotheken in Deutschland. Berlin, 2010

Literature II


Hoeb4U: Website


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