

**Practical Marketing for the Academic Library by Stephanie Espinoza Villamor and Kimberly Shotick. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2022, 137pp., \$58.50, ISBN- 978-1-4408-7222-8 (paper)**

**Reviewed by Barbie Keiser**

This slim volume written by two academic librarians during the COVID-19 pandemic—Stephanie Espinoza Villamor, eLearning Librarian at the College of Southern Nevada, and Kimberly Shotick, Student Success Librarian and assistant professor at Northern Illinois University—provides valuable tips for libraries striving to adapt and continuously improve outreach to their communities. As Stephanie states in the preface, the content is “general enough to apply to almost any type of higher education institution, any type of staff, and any type of population” (p. xii). Throughout the book, readers “will find approaches to library marketing that...can be adapted as our libraries evolve and adapt to the changing landscape of higher education” (p. xiv).

The book takes readers through the arc of implementing a marketing program, from choosing the members of your academic library marketing team (Chapter 1, Building Your Team) and determining the right way(s) to reach various market segments within your community (Chapter 2, Defining Your Areas), through different assessment practices to demonstrate the value of the library to stakeholders (Chapter 6, Assessing the Program) and understanding what might turn potential user segments beyond students into active supporters of the library (Chapter 7, Marketing to Faculty, Staff, and Administration).

Arguably, the best chapter is Marketing for the Mind (Chapter 3), in which the authors suggest how explicit library staff must be in marketing library

products and services as users' time-savers. This "value-added" by the library is a stand-in for a consumer's notion of cost in a retail setting. Espinoza Villamor and Shotick point to tools that help libraries calculate return on investment (ROI) and report relevant indicators to each stakeholder group.

Chapter 3 explains how to determine which marketing approach outlined in Chapter 2 would be most effective with distinct segments of the student population. (Chapter 7 addresses other stakeholders of the academic community: faculty, staff, and administration.) The authors identify resources libraries should market—physical resources, electronic resources, and library spaces—and stress the varied techniques libraries can use. The chapter closes by emphasizing the importance of choosing messaging that resonates with each audience and aligns with the mission, vision, and values of the library and the institution. The messages might highlight how the library product/service enables student success, facilitates information access, or transforms scholarly publishing.

Chapters 4 (Marketing from the Heart) and 5 (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) complement Chapter 3 by emphasizing the benefits of using the library that may be beyond the tangible: Psychological needs, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Chapter 4 champions the benefits of offering students opportunities to share stories and provide feedback. Chapter 5 reminds library staff to "consider the diversity of the patrons they serve when approaching marketing" (p. 75), including the composition of library marketing teams, the language employed, and accessibility. The chapter briefly discusses the Universal Design (UD) framework and how minor adjustments to current practices can promote equity and inclusion. Readers will want to review their institution's updated policies regarding DEI as they review current marketing artifacts and curate exhibitions, for example.

Each chapter introduces the major concepts related to the subject matter and closes with bulleted *Quick Tips*, summarizing the key points made in the

chapter, a set of brief stories *From the Field* that illustrate the successful implementation of the ideas conveyed in the chapter, and a robust *Reference List* for those who want a deep dive on the subject covered. The multiple approaches to implementing the core elements of each chapter found in *From the Field* remind readers that there is no single “right way” to market. The “lessons learned” described in these callout boxes may be more valuable to readers than the chapters themselves.

The volume offers little that's revolutionary, but is an easy read. Providing greater detail in some places might help the work stand independently. As it stands, readers must consult relevant references if they want to learn more about ROI or toolkits briefly mentioned by the authors. *Practical Marketing for the Academic Library* can be helpful for staff considering how it wants to market its library's products and services more actively. Readers may question some word choices in the text, such as "patron" and "audience," but that should deter no one from its purchase.

#### About the reviewer

Barbie Keiser is an information resources management (IRM) consultant. Ms. Keiser has created and reengineered libraries and information centers, managed academic and corporate libraries, and worked as a reference and instruction librarian. Barbie teaches Knowledge Management to librarians via Library Juice Academy. Barbie is a co-author of *Marketing Library Services: A Nuts-and-Bolts Approach* (1994, IFID) and has turned the print work into a series of workshops for librarians, information specialists, and information providers around the world. Barbie received her MSLS from Case Western Reserve University.

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