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Increasing Patron's Outreach and Engagement through Relationship Marketing: A Case Study

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Abstract

Increased diversity, demographics, and population shifts in HE campuses have led many academic libraries to re-examine their marketing efforts and adopt strategies that promote relationships and inclusivity. This requirement has become more prominent among libraries serving a highly diverse user community, particularly in a more racially and ethnically diverse campus. Adopting a marketing model that cultivates more meaningful long-term relationships with customers ensures long-term satisfaction and loyalty to the library brand. Using marketing and promotional examples from the James White Library, this article addresses the academic library's relationship marketing strategy in an increasingly multicultural higher education (HE) environment.

Keywords: library marketing, relationship marketing, relational marketing, library outreach, library engagement; diversity and inclusivity, multiculturalism, higher education, cultural competency, information user, academic library

Introduction

The increasing demographics of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, and socioeconomic differences in higher education campuses globally, particularly in the U.S. and Europe, have influenced how the academic library markets its services to diverse constituents (Overall, 2009; Tharp, 2015). Diversity is growing and expanding its scope from geographical diversity, race, and gender to socioeconomic, personal, and political ideologies and gender differentiation (Myers, 2015; Bai, 2020). And that's because today's world is a changing landscape marked by increased human mobility and interconnectedness (Rozhkova, 2020). The practice of equity and equality in social institutions, such as the library, is the anchor for a stable and progressive demographically diverse learning environment (Navarette L. et al., 2017; Higgins, M. & Stark, R. K., 2021). The library, serving in such a complex multicultural landscape, must learn to operate, communicate multicultural competence, and market its services and resources to a university community that is increasingly culturally complicated. Equity and equality are significant, considering that the library symbolizes social justice bound by moral and ethical codes to nurture an environment that promotes equity and equality (Jaeger, P. T. et al., 2015; Harrington, 2020). In such a diverse demographic landscape, marketing efforts would require a re-assessment of marketing strategies to reach and impact the evolving HE community groups. Such measures should support a learning environment that values and respects the cultures, differences, and ideologies of all groups and segments in a knowledge society marked

by disclosure and identity. In describing this global trend, Castells (2010, p. 1) asserts that "Our world, and our lives, are being shaped by the conflicting trends of globalization and identity."

James White Library Context

Within this increasing demographic diversity and identity disclosure in the HE campus, the James White Library strives to adopt an equity-focused marketing approach to making its resources and services available to a mixed demography of adult learners, international students, students of diverse backgrounds and cultures, English language learners, and many other differentiated groups. The marketing approach is inclusive with relational outreach programs that build trust and meet the social and emotional needs of the diverse library user group. Prioritizing the social and emotional needs of the students is critical to attaining their educational and academic success and institutional retention and graduation (Peet, 2019). The marketing strategies include tours, exhibitions, special celebratory events with a synchronized display of library resources, cultural events, calendar posts, flyers, posters, email, social media, electronic bulletin boards, tea time programs, and the library web page. The library also leverages the liaison librarians' faculty efforts to maximize contact with library users. The library is recognized for providing customized tours to highly positioned international guests who often return as guest scholars for research activities. The focused interactions between the librarian and guests during the tours increase awareness of library services and resources (Greenwood, 2019).

Literature Review

Academic Library Strategies for the 21st Century

Many factors necessitate a re-evaluation of the academic library marketing strategies for the 21st Century, of which globalization is central. Clauss & Parham (2014, p.62) predict that the HE campus diversity scale would change with the rapid rise in globalization and its resultant increased cultural, economic, and political interconnectedness. Thompson (2018, p.7) advances this discussion further and asserts that diversity would expand from visible diversity of geographical origin, race, and gender to include invisible diversity traits of socioeconomic status, personal and political ideologies, gender differentiation, sexual orientation, abilities, and national origin. The quest for self-identity and assertion would grow with increased demand for respect for cultural and linguistic differences, equity, and equality (Castells, 2010). The pursuit of value for linguistic recognition becomes "… *a fundamental attribute of self-recognition"* (p.55). These growing perspectives in diversity and identity would require librarians to adopt more inclusive strategies in managing the diverse patron base. Smallwood & Becnel (2013) agree with Castells and reiterate that:

 "*Building awareness of the changing demographics in communities are initial destinations on a personal road map to serve multicultural populations*" (p.5).

Librarians have emphasized the need for libraries to remain competitive in the evolving knowledge environment. As library services progress in a saturated information market, Holcomb (2009) warns that the library must compete for customer loyalty to survive; and run its services like a business for competitive advantage (Antell et al., 2013). Just as any company strives for a competitive edge over its competitors, the library must adopt appropriate marketing measures that are inclusive and attract patrons to its services (Carter & Seaman, 2011). Such measures must be robust with far-reaching strategies that meet the target audience's needs (Bizzle & Floral, 2015). As a business organization within a university system, library users benefit from that business, and students deserve good customer service. Smart (2018) proposes adopting the Student As Customer (SAC) model to promote more outstanding customer service, which identifies students as stakeholders whose needs should be individually identified and fulfilled through bonding. The author argues that effective business management practices identify and fill students' distinct needs and expectations. A robust customer-service orientation that consists of strategic engagement and relationship management will personalize services to patrons and endear them to the library brand. This customer-centric strategy must focus on improving user experience (Pretlow & Sobel, 2015, p. 16), the common factor for measuring the quality of library services and the library's contribution to student success. The academic library has to be user-centered and user-sensitive to the needs of the campus user community, just as a business enterprise would be customer-sensitive and respond to customers' changing needs. The library should cultivate an inclusive environment that values patrons' uniqueness.

Mathews (2009) argues that librarians should customize library spaces to meet the needs for friendship and relationship-building while meeting patrons' academic and research needs. Such repurposing motivates patrons to visit the library. Library staff, therefore, have to learn to build relationships with their patrons to foster an environment for collaboration and knowledge-sharing. With the prevailing knowledge economy and changes in HE pedagogy, Pierce (2021) asserts that the value of library space has appreciated with a high premium. The library's status as a highly-valued living space for social and cognitive engagements has heightened the library's role as a social institution. In Pierce's opinion, library spaces should be designed to connect, cultivate and transform communities. He argues for library spaces that are flexible, multi-purpose spaces for people to gather, interact, and create knowledge. As the dynamics of the library evolve from a transactional model to a relational one, it becomes the campus interactive hub that connects educational and social events for interactions and knowledge sharing (Mysliwiec et al., 2005, p.38).

These reasons advocate for a patron-centric and inclusive marketing model that focuses more on building mutually beneficial relationships between the librarian and the information user to deeper understand patrons' differences and needs. The model helps the library design services and approaches that meet the patrons' growing expectations in their environment and respect their diversity. In support of inclusive marketing, Gustafson et al. (2017), in their study of the College of Wooster campus community's marketing plans and communication preferences, conclude that inclusive marketing strategies are more impactful in engaging users and achieving library marketing objectives. This conclusion supports Carter & Seaman's (2011) argument that

inclusive marketing is the present and future marketing strategy for the library to effectively meet the needs of its diverse patron base.

For the reasons above, this article argues for adopting a relationship marketing model for achieving success in marketing to a diverse demographic HE enrolment for equity, equality, and inclusivity. Relationship marketing model focuses on cultivating more profound, more meaningful long-term relationships with customers to ensure long-term satisfaction and endearment to the library. Relationship marketing is a paradigm shift from a transactional model that focuses on marketing products and services to building and strengthening relationships between the librarian and the information user to boost the librarian's understanding of patrons' needs.

Relationship Marketing

Literature available reveals that relationship-building is key to successful relationship marketing. For instance, Stoica et al. (2017), in their study of the relationship between consumer and marketing, describe relationship marketing as a marketing model directed toward establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchanges between marketers and consumers. The model promotes customer loyalty and encourages customer positive attitude (Narteh et al., 2013; Putra et al., 2019). The model develops strong customer satisfaction, sustains relationships (Caliskan & Esmer, 2020), improves customer engagement and experience (Rather, 2020). Several authors propose strategies for fostering customer and marketer relationships. For example, Calva et al. (2020) argue that service providers can foster relationships through one-on-one interaction with consumers. Damkuvien & Virvilait (2007); Hume et al. (2007) contend that marketers can achieve long-term relationships through repeated visits, exchanges, and collaborations with consumers. Chang (2014) underscores the importance of interactions and repeated actions as impactful ways to create mutually beneficial relationships and build trust with customers. Adamson et al. (2003) maintain that a "customer-focused" approach can build solid and trusting relationships and guarantee loyalty, retention, and success in a modern-day corporate environment.

The literature suggests many strategies for fostering customers loyally. For instance, Payne & Frow (2006) stress that long-term engagement is key to improving customer experience and securing customer loyalty and retention. The authors attest that the traditional marketing approach that focuses mainly on selling the product is no longer effective in building loyalty to the brand. Peppers & Rogers (2011) reiterate this shift in strategy and advance the discussion on long-term engagement by identifying a four-step process to building long-term engagement as: "*Identifying customers, differentiating them, interacting with them, and customizing for them*" (p.73.) The authors argue that the steps represent the mechanisms for building any genuine long-term relationship that focuses on building trust with the customer. Other authors argue in support of trust. For instance, Rooney et al. (2021) affirm that building trust is critical to gaining consumer loyalty, and the effective strategy is engaging in a productive long-term relationship with customers. Handley (2013) describes trust as a "*subtle yet critical shift*" from the

traditional product-centric system that prioritizes the organization's interests above the interests and needs of the consumer. Such personal interactions enable the marketer to assess and understand the needs of groups and individuals in diverse communities and promote inclusivity.

Literature available reveals the importance of attracting customers to the brand. Drucker (2009), a world-renowned marketing expert, asserts that the fundamental purpose of marketing is to attract consumers. The author stresses the importance of understanding the customer's needs and ensuring that services and products correlate with their needs. De Souza Miake et al. (2018) & Alexander (2019) concur and emphasize that the way to position a product for success is to analyze the market segments carefully, assess the customers' needs, and determine how to meet their needs. Nealon (2018) uses the metaphor of a wheel and a spoke to describe the relationship between marketing and consumer. He compares marketing to a wheel and advertisement to the spoke of that wheel. Using the wheel and spoke analogy, he argues that by customizing advertising and marketing strategies toward the audience's needs, the marketer can build equity, reach potential and current consumers, and achieve marketing goals. For any form of marketing to succeed, the marketer needs to conduct market research, identify the needs of the consumers, and build a brand that meets their needs (de Mooji & Beniflah, 2017).

Wagner and Boatright (2019) address the issue of segmentation and claim that segmentation is the anchor for a relationship-driven marketing and outreach structure that meaningfully addresses differentiated group needs. The authors explain that segmentation is an intentional marketing strategy that aims to align with local realities, understand behavioral differences, and customize services to meet the needs of various groups (de Mooji & Beniflah, 2017). Dubicki (2007) argues that segmentation is the key to winning customers, not mass marketing. He affirms that segmenting patrons by groups and tailoring marketing strategies to meet their needs effectively appeal to patrons and secure their loyalty. After all, patrons constitute the market in the library setting, and segmentation techniques can help focus on them individually or in defined groups of expressed needs. Academic librarians marketing, particularly in a complex and diverse learning landscape, need to adopt segmentation techniques to respond in context to attract multicultural students' different interest groups and support their retention (Boff et al. 2006).

Wagner and Boatright (2019) concur that a student-centric strategy customized as content marketing and targeted to a particular audience is a more effective way of motivating patrons to use library resources. After all, libraries need to mirror the population served (Hastings, 2015) and reach them as entities. In support of the people dimension, Stodolska et al. (2020), in their study of marketing recreational services to a diverse community in central Illinois, assert that the "people" dimension is a critical focus if marketers learn the market's needs of their diverse constituents. Market segmentation is proof that the library recognizes the diverse constituent groups that benefit from information services (Camarillo et al., 2019). Segmentation places people before processes or products and focuses on understanding the patron, showing empathy, and gaining trust (Wallace & Wallace, 2016). The multicultural landscape is unique; marketers need to understand their university's demographic profile and use that insight to align marketing efforts with the user community's needs. (Morse, 2018) & Brubaker (2019)

The Constructs of Empathy, Trust, Goodwill, and Commitment

As a people-focused marketing model that appeals to human sensibilities, naturally, relationship marketing would employ the constructs of empathy, trust, goodwill, and commitment as tools that drive reciprocal human encounters (Egan, 2011; Scheer, 2013; Kiyat et al., 2015). Roberts et al. (2003) and Lamont (2020) argue that these constructs are higher-order concepts pertinent for connecting and building human relationships and connecting products with consumers. However, the strategies used in applying the constructs determine the quality and success of relationship-building as a marketing strategy (Hess & Story, 2005).

Inherent in these constructs are elements of human responsiveness that are critical in developing constructive and purposeful human relationships, particularly in services marketing. Ingwer (2012) stresses fostering bonding with customers using empathy. The author argues that empathy is a strategy that can penetrate through the customer to understand and satisfy their emotional needs and align marketing strategies to meet those needs for a more significant marketing impact. The author identifies control, self-expression, growth, recognition, belonging, and care as the core emotional needs of customers. He stresses that the librarian's ability to identify and understand patrons' needs based on their emotional expressions and use those expressions to link patrons with helpful resources is a highly impactful way to deliver customer value. Empathy helps to secure and foster a long-term patron engagement with the library. In support of empathy as a relationship-focusing construct, Tripp (2013) stresses that if "*business needs to go deeper…the key is empathy*" (p.59). Girton et al. (2019) reiterate that an empathic approach to library marketing effectively connects with potential users and strengthens the bond with current patrons. The authors emphasize that understanding the emotional needs of patrons and designing strategies to meet the needs are fundamental to successful marketing, engagement, and retention.

The empathetic librarian with a robust relationship-building power has a high tendency to provide excellent customer service, argues Pearson (2014). When applied to the library situation, Girton et al. (2019) stress that empathic marketing offers a high-impact design for library outreach. Through empathy, the authors affirm that the library can address and meet the differentiated needs of particular groups, such as international students, distance education students, and adult learners who are juggling work, study, and family. These groups are part of the campus diversity and have special needs and commitments. Magi & Mardeusz (2013) advance the empathy argument and maintain that empathy promotes warm, relational exchanges that prepare the fertile ground for information and research consultation between the librarian and the information user. The library can build a long-term care relationship using empathic techniques by demonstrating a genuine sense of goodwill and kindness. For example, staff can repackage library resources and services tailored to the needs of particular groups. In addition, the library can show patrons how library resources reduce personal expenses on books and promote experiential and collaborative learning for academic and professional success

Prioritizing goodwill and kindness can sustain relationships and build trust. Atilano (2019) suggests that acts of charity demonstrate to library patrons show that librarians care. In a study of outreach services at the Thomas G. Carpenter Library, the University of North Florida, the author reinforces the importance of goodwill. The study concludes that librarians should

prioritize kindness, friendship, and sustainable partnerships to successfully promote library services and resources. A positive emotional response builds trust between the librarian and the patron. For example, Kiyat et al. (2015), in a study of relationship marketing activities of Klaipeda health care institutions, discover that trust, commitments, goodwill, confidence, and other constructs of relationship marketing are critical to achieving customer loyalty in the health care industry. The authors argue that trust is essential in relationship building, particularly in a complex marketing environment.

Underscoring the role of trust in relationship building, Molm et al. (2007) attest that trust is a marketing construct that promotes marketer-customer bonding for successful relational exchanges mutually benefiting the parties involved. Following the argument of the previously cited authors, Scheer (2013) stresses the uniqueness of trust and declares that the construct "trust" in relationship marketing is very distinct. The author argues that trust builds confidence and loyalty and plays a decisive role in relational outcomes in a marketing environment. One of the ways to foster trust is planning and implementing student-centered events that meet the needs of students at crucial times in their academic careers and connecting more fully with the campus community. According to Connaway (2015), this strategy builds trust, improves engagement, and endears patrons to the library. Krataithong & Rakrachakarn (2020), in their study of the effects of relationship marketing on millennial customers in the hotel industry in Bangkok, expand the constructs of relationship marketing. The authors conclude that most elements of relationship marketing—trust, commitment, empathy, service quality, products— have significant effects on millennial customer loyalty. Millennials constitute a high percentage of the library clientele; thus, a relationship marketing strategy that focuses on building trust might be one way to reach and gain the trust and loyalty of this vulnerable user group.

The James White Library Implementation

The qualities and gains inherent in relationship marketing in a culturally diverse campus are sufficiently convincing for the library to redefine its approach and adopt marketing strategies that build a solid and meaningful relationship between the librarian and the information user. The library should target demographics using marketing strategies and tools that are responsive to the changing diversity of people, tastes, customs, and beliefs. There is a need to appreciate the culture of the people, respect their diversity, and meet their growing expectations. Explained below are distinct strategies that the James White Library employs in marketing to its various user groups.

The Library designs its marketing activities to meet students' needs at crucial periods in the semester. For example, at the beginning of the semester, the library advertises course reserves and interlibrary loan services to reduce students' expenses on expensive textbooks. Shortly before mid-term, the library promotes free research resources available online and the resources in the Digital Commons—the Andrews University open repository. Through these interventions, students access necessary course materials at a reduced cost, thus saving them unnecessary educational expenses. Without a relational knowledge of the needs of the students, such interventions would not have been possible.

Multicultural Competence for Public Service Desk

The public service desks at the James White Library are frontline marketing posts that need to respond to changing demographics, racial, ethnic, and psychosocial diversity, and population shifts at the Andrews University campus. Staff should be flexible, demonstrate cultural awareness, and exhibit practical communication skills as library employees who experience the most direct contact with patrons. Staff is the link between the patron and the library. And a patron's first visit could be their last if the staff does not handle dialog and interactions competently. Bennett and Salonen (2007) maintain that staff must be interculturally competent to bridge domestic and global diversity. As frontline service providers, staff need to embrace openness and acquire the competencies necessary to create a library environment that welcomes, respects, and values individuals and groups (Hastings, 2015).

Based on these considerations, the library developed a multicultural competency training program to equip staff with cultural competency skills to prepare the team for effective multicultural encounters. The training, adapted from Deardoff's (2006) Process Model of Intercultural Competence, consists of a three-level model that addresses multicultural training competencies at the organizational, cognitive, and behavior levels is offered to new staff and newly-hired student assistants. The model is cognitive and skills-based to improve frontline staff's knowledge, attitude, and skills. Topics covered include:
- Mission and vision of multicultural diversity in the library;
- Critical awareness and knowledge of patron diversity;
- The crucial role of public services in advancing diversity;
- Behavioral skill-based training; and
- Service design to promote inclusivity.

The internal outcome of this training is a flexible, adaptable, compassionate, and ethnic-relative staff prepared to accept and adapt to the prevailing changes and trends in diversity and identity. External outcomes are observable evidence of staff communicating and engaging appropriately to library patrons' preferences irrespective of diversity. After the last training, participants provided some feedback. The following excerpts are direct quotes received from the feedback.

Communication Skills
- "The workshop stressed that words are expressed differently in various languages, which has a big effect on their meaning."
- "…dissolve stereotyping."
- "…to be more sensitive..less egocentrism."
- Have the willingness to learn and build communication skills…understand the patron's view."
- "Pay attention to the patron as workers communicate with them."
- "Be practical and practice third culture; when dialoguing understand the differences…avoid jumping to conclusions…."

Diversity Awareness

- "Look for ways to interact with other cultures … celebrate and complement each other rather than offend."
- "The workshop provided greater insight in understanding the cultural and social diversity shift that has happened in society."
- "Less judgment, more acceptance…there's need to be understanding and tailor services to diverse patrons depending on their culture, age, gender or disability."
- "Do not judge others by their appearance; people reason differently, individuals solve/fix/do things differently…."
- "Workers help people give their best through awareness of cultural differences." "Understanding and learning more about other cultures enables workers to respond efficiently to patrons' requests."
- "Remember, student workers, represent the University's pride!"

In sum, the participants express sympathy for patrons and agree that information services providers must understand patrons' needs from the patrons' perspectives. Another quotation from a participant attests that: *the more employees understand the patrons' particularities in terms of the way patrons see things, the better the services provided.*

Figure 1
The James White Library Cultural Competence Training Model

Culture Competence Training Model

Level 1
(Library-wide level - Input)
ORGANIZATIONAL
-Mission & vision of multicultural diversity
-Promote awareness
-Action plans
-Skills development
--Cognitive
--Behavioral (skill-based cultural competences
-Reinforce the importance of patron diversity

Culturally Competent Library Climate

Culturally Competent Patron Services Staff

Cognitive training

Skills-based training

Culturally Adapted Communication & Behavioral Skills

Level 2
COGNITIVE
(Staff Training)
-critical --awareness, knowledge
-Training
-Behavioral – skill--based
Service design to promote inclusivity

-Level 3
BEHAVIORAL
(Staff Output)
-Policies & Procedure
-Service Designs for delivery of culturally appropriate services. Stereotypes, biases, misconception
-Show genuine sense of fairness
-Have a diverse staff
-Share experiences professionally

Note. Adapted from Deardoff (2006)

The James White Library Tea Time

The James White Library provides Tea Time service during the winter months— a "look-forward to" service. Students and library staff sit and rapport around the tea table, sipping tea, chatting, and getting to know each other. The library's Tea-Time service creates a relational and endearing intervention setting, akin to Fourie's (2013, p.173) "zones of intervention" that allow library staff to listen attentively and internalize patrons' discussions about their classes, information needs, and other interests. Over time, librarians and students build relationships and bonds through these affectionate rapports and boost library marketing in ways similar to the marketing Rule of Seven's impact on sales (Hamada et al., 2014).

Figure 2
Tea time at the James White Library

Note. This image depicts the rapport between librarians and students during tea time at the James White Library.

Architecture Resource Center

The Architecture Resource Center (ARC Library) is a campus branch of the James White Library that provides information and research services to the School of Architecture & Interior Design (SAID). Library staff drapes the library with national flags representing the nationalities of every student and faculty of the School, thus celebrating and valuing the diversity of the ARC Library user groups. The recognition of diversity creates a feel-at-home and a welcoming atmosphere for students. When an international student is homesick, the presence of their country flag at the library provides solace. Also, the atmosphere generates a relational and endearing setting for close-up interactions between the librarian and students.

The ARC Library librarian regularly supplies hot chocolate and tea, apples, fruits, and snacks to library patrons at a larger scale than the Tea Time service at the main library. Students go into the library to warm up with hot chocolate during the cold winter months and eat sandwiches at a small lounge at the library. As a result, the ARC Library is the place to be on a cold winter day to warm up with hot chocolate and snacks. When students are too busy to go to the cafétaria or their apartments for meals and short relaxation, the ARC Library serves the students' needs as a living space during finals. Students enjoy random and light conversations about library services, spaces, and resources. The ARC Library students frequent the library, quickly identify new resources, emerging services, and often make suggestions for library improvement during these light moments. Owing to this rapport, the librarian has developed a strong connection and a deep understanding of the needs of the students and provides resources and services to meet the needs at the right time. The bridge-building relational initiatives have helped win the students, gain their trust, and create endearing and bonding relationships with the librarian. The library espouses random acts of kindness and human sensibilities that endear students to the library.

Figure 3
The Architecture Resource Center

Note. These images show the librarian having some light moments with students. Also, note the flags that drape the library depicting the different nationalities that the library serves.

Campus Diversity Exhibitions

As a university with high demographic diversity, the library, in conjunction with students and faculty, celebrates cultural events to share special times and moments with patrons, particularly international students. Such celebrations include Philipino History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, African-American History Month, Native American Heritage Month. Attractive electronic bulletin board posts feature the achievement, prospects, food, culture, arts, ethnic history, community contributions, and artifacts of specific groups complement the exhibitions. Library staff solicits exhibits from students, faculty, and staff for a rich and inclusive exhibition. Library staff and students work side-by-side to put up displays. These exhibitions foster a sense of ownership and belonging among the students. Students feel celebrated and often pose for photographs alongside the exhibited items. With a corresponding display of related information materials, the exhibitions expose students to unique collections that celebrate cultural distinctiveness and identity. The information displays are the library's tangible way of demonstrating value, appreciation, and acceptance of the distinctiveness of its patron base. The occasions also serve as opportunities for rapport and engagement between staff and patrons and marketing the library's valuable resources (Chen et al., 2018). The exhibitions enhance the library's goal to foster a learning environment that leverages equity and equality.

Figure 4
Hispanic Heritage Month

Note. Students, faculty, and staff contribute to this exhibition.

The Library Week celebration provides an opportunity for staff to exhibit library resources and showcase staff talents that include: knitting and crocheting, stamp collecting, ornament collecting, gardening and flower tending skills, publishing, etc. These exhibitions show the human side of staff and encourage students to approach staff for dialog about shared pastimes, interests, and skills. Often, students and library staff demonstrate similar interests and talents. In addition, the bonding that ensues these events promotes interactions that provide insight into students' social, academic, and research needs. Feedback from emails, personal expressions, and guestbooks usually express students' positive impressions and personal satisfaction. For example, after the Hispanic month display, a student expresses pride as a Hispanic. During the next exhibition, the Hispanic professors in the Department of Music display Hispanic music instruments to celebrate the occasion. Others liaise with staff to learn some crafts after the Library Week showcase.

Figure 5
Library Week Staff Display

Note. A showcase of staff creativity draws together students and staff who exhibit similar talents.

Customized Postcards

The James White Library produces customized postcards that celebrate special occasions, including Father's Day and Mother's Day. Students can pick up postcards for themselves, family members, and loved ones. The students may choose to mail the cards themselves or take advantage of the library's offer to provide free mailing by dropping them in the library's outgoing mailbox. The gifts are tokens of love and goodwill to library patrons and friends of the library worldwide. The postcards also serve as outreach tools for promoting the James White Library across borders.

Figure 6
Customized Postcards

Note. These postcards are free for students. If the student completes the address portion, the library will mail the postcards free of charge to the recipients.

Figure 7
Images of Customized Postcards
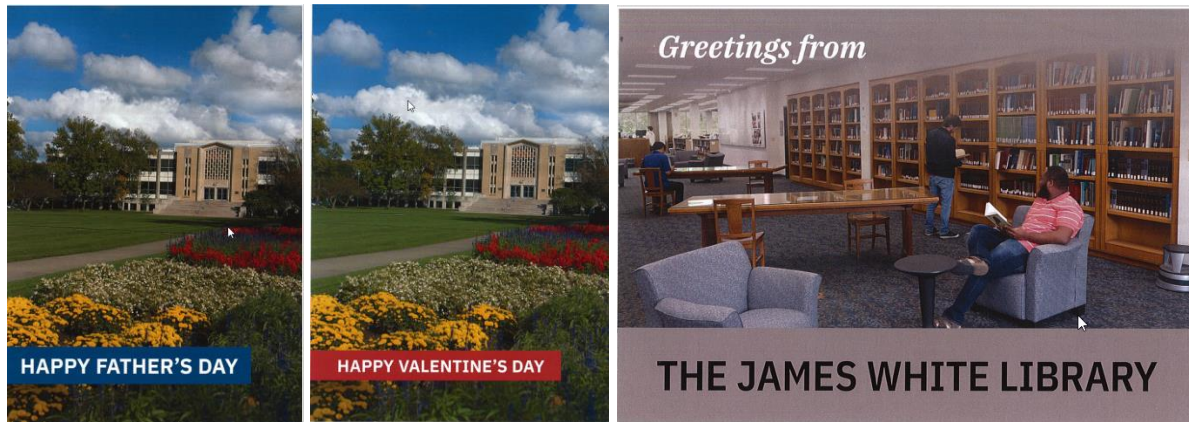
Conclusion

The population that the library serves has become more diverse. Academic library marketing strategies need to respond to these changes in the socio-cultural evolving environment of the HE campus. The days of mass marketing strategies are long gone. Instead, the birth of customized and differentiated marketing has dawned. As librarians reckon with diversity, there is a need to look at all the factors that make the patron-base unique and employ customer-centric and inclusive marketing techniques that help understand the information user. Relationship marketing strategies are designed for personalized marketing while evoking human sensibilities to create trust and loyalty. After all, the library is about people, for the people, and managed by the people. This democratic construct thrives when the library succeeds in connecting and engaging in positive relationships that impact the wellbeing and success of students.

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