

التسويق عبر الإنترنت لمصادر وخدمات المعلومات في الجامعات السعودية

Online Marketing for Information Sources and Services In the Saudi universities

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مستخلص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على واقع تسويق مصادر وخدمات المعلومات على المواقع الإلكترونية للمكتبات الجامعية في المملكة العربية السعودية بالإضافة إلى تقديم توصيات قد تفيد متخذي القرار في تلك المكتبات. واعتمدت الباحثة في تقييم المواقع الإلكترونية للمكتبات مجتمع الدراسة على المحاور التي وضعها عدد من الباحثين في التخصص وهي مكونة من ستة محاور يتفرع منها عدد من العناصر، كما أضافت الباحثة بعض العناصر. واستخدمت الباحثة موقع وزارة التربية والتعليم بالمملكة العربية السعودية في حصر الجامعات السعودية. واتضح أن هناك 28 جامعة سعودية في مختلف مناطق المملكة تم فحصها جميعا. وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن 24 من مواقع تلك المكتبات يمكن تصفح مواقعها باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية. وقدمت معظم المكتبات قناة اتصال بينها وبين

المستخدمين من خلال مواقعها الإلكترونية وفورت 23 منها بريدًا إلكترونيًا أو رقم هاتف للاتصال المباشر. بالإضافة إلى وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي والتي تعد من أهم الوسائل الحديثة للتسويق الإلكتروني بشكل عام وفي مجال المكتبات والمعلومات بشكل خاص. كما بينت الدراسة أن غالبية صفحات مكتبات الجامعات السعودية لا توفر مصادر إلكترونية ولا وسائط متعددة، إضافة إلى أن الكثير من مواقع المكتبات لا تقدم خدمات عبر الإنترنت، مثل الحجز والتجديد والتدريب، ولا توفر سياسة الاستخدام ولا تقدم جولة افتراضية، بالإضافة إلى أنها لا تشير إلى المصادر الجديدة التي وصلتها مؤخرا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مكتبات جامعية، مصادر إلكترونية، خدمات إلكترونية، تسويق المعلومات، التسويق الإلكتروني، المكتبات السعودية. مؤسسات المعلومات

1. Introduction:

Information technology (IT) has a major impact on the lives of societies in various aspects: social, economic, educational, etc. As it has contributed to facilitating workloads, providing information, services and effective communication between different societies, therefore this technology must be used optimally to achieve great benefits for different societies. Most academic institutions, like other institutions, have benefited from information technology in achieving their goals and providing their services, especially with the presence of the Internet, where the process of providing and marketing services has become better and faster than traditional means. It is important for university libraries to take advantage of this technology in the process of marketing their resources and services to their communities.

2. Background:

Marketing is engaging customers and managing profitable customer relationships. Marketing aims to attract new customers by promising superior value and keep and grow current customers by delivering satisfaction.

(Armstrong & Kotler, 2017) We can say that marketing is the provision of products and services according to the desires and needs of consumers.

The American Library Association (ALA) has defined information marketing as "a set of activities aimed at promoting exchange, rapid construction and response between library and information service providers and actual or expected users or users of these services. These activities are concerned with the production of these services, their cost, delivery methods and ways to improve them. (Alalmani, 2011)

Marketing in the world of information institutions:

Libraries and information centers in Academic Institutions play a vital role in providing information and related services to researchers, scholars, students, teachers and non-teaching staff of the parent institution. Library is not only dissemination of information; but to promote its product and services. Marketing of library and information service is an integral part of Library Management 'Marketing includes optimum use of its resources, access users' needs and service performance, examine organizational objectives, plan for using new technology, implement various information services, programme for further development, increase more user by convert non-users into regular users, create and stimulate the desire for good reading, extend the library service to those who are away from the library (Borman, Chanu, & Singh, 2012). Many individuals consider that marketing is selling while others believe that it is distribution and advertising, and in the world of information institutions, marketing has been defined as an administrative function that includes a set of integrated activities through which the needs of the beneficiary are identified and provided efficiently and effectively. (Sbeiti & Mahmoud, 2017) Marketing is a process of compatibility or convergence between two main parties, the library as a service product, anticipating potential demand from the market, and submitting a marketing proposal consisting of an integrated marketing mix, and the beneficiary as a consumer accepts this marketing offer in order to satisfy his desires and needs. (Yassin, 2012)

The importance of marketing information services in information institutions is clear in that they achieve the goals of the library and satisfy the largest possible number of actual and potential beneficiaries by meeting their different needs. In addition, it works to achieve a balance between the services provided by the library and the services needed by the beneficiaries (Sbeiti & Mahmoud, 2017) It focuses

on the market and the recipient more than product and production. The beneficiaries are also aware of the products available and on the market. (Alalmani, 2011)

Among the methods used in marketing information services in information institutions are the following:1- Issuing various bulletins and magazines to identify libraries and information, their sources and services. 2-Preparing a site or page for libraries within the university site that the university libraries follow to market information and its sources. 3-Announcing the various databases that libraries share and provide, and the information that university libraries provide clearly on its website, on the Internet. 4- Activating the Current Awareness Services (CAS) and Selective Dissemination of Information Service (SDI) by various means, including announcing the new sources on the website. 5- Investing various events to serve the information marketing in university libraries among the various classes of beneficiaries. (Alalmani, 2011) 6- Marketing of information services through the library site or via social media.7- Providing workshops and training courses for the beneficiaries. 8- Attention to the general form of the library, which includes building design, furniture, fixtures, manuals, and mutual contact with the library community and the beneficiaries. (Sbeiti & Mahmoud, 2017) 9- Provide the chat, voice or video chat service on the library website to assist users.10- Provide small videos of the library's conferences and Achievements on the library's website (Yassin, 2012).

The applications of ICT have strong impact on the libraries. Library applications change their form of services from physical to virtual objects (Buriro, et al., 2018). Investing web applications 2 in the field of marketing information services for information institutions (libraries) can achieve a qualitative shift in the degree of interaction of beneficiaries with the library and open libraries to new work

horizons and innovative mechanisms to deliver information to beneficiaries. (Al-Zuhairi & Abdel-Zahra , 2012) Libraries should activate the use of social media to promote their services. The reference service should be available through various social media to facilitate access to the information. Use the library's website to publish the library's social media accounts to increase the number of users and followers. (Al-Rendi, 2017) Library sites must have more than one language in addition to providing services for persons with disabilities, and the effectiveness of library services should be measured. (Gharib, 2016) This is not only restricted to national libraries, but extends to university libraries.

The role of employees in providing services is of the utmost importance - it is the most important. The employees are the face of the institution. Their activities and reputation may lose their importance if the employees are not trained, motivated and create an uncomfortable and even hostile atmosphere. All this may happen if the manager does not select enthusiastic and qualified employees who must be trained regularly to improve the performance and commercialization of service marketing technology. (Yankova, 2013).

A committee should be formed to market library services. This committee aims to enlighten and create the necessary awareness for staff and students about library resources and services. The Marketing Committee will also help management, employees, and students realize that the library is capable Stimulate, nurture and support research in the university community (Aremu & Saka, 2014)

3. Related Work:

Several studies have been conducted on the evaluation of library sites. But very few studies have been carried out to evaluate information services on library sites or to market information services to library sites.

There are only two studies concerned with marketing information services on the websites of libraries or information institutions. The first study for Abdoulaye Kaba his paper seeks to analyze and describe the current status of academic library websites. It specifically targets public and private universities and colleges accredited by the Commission for Academic Accreditation, Ministry of High Education, United Arab Emirates. A total of 29 academic library websites were examined using a checklist of criteria developed from the previous studies and current websites. The study confirmed that websites are not fully utilized for marketing library resources and services. A large majority of libraries did not make any effort to provide online literacy courses, live supports, copyright documents, and online user surveys. Likewise, more than 80 percent of the websites could not be read in Arabic.

The second study of Muhammad Islam and Muhammad Hussein the purpose of this study was to address and analyze the current status of university library websites in Bangladesh. Particularly, it is focused on all universities accredited by the university Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh. university library websites were examined using a checklist of criteria developed from earlier studies and present websites. A total of 57 university. The most important The study identified that the websites are not fully utilized for marketing library resources and services, and that university libraries are not maximizing their promotional activities.

This study may differ from previous studies in that it was applied to a different country which is the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and will add to the previous standards some elements that are appropriate for the current time.

4. Objectives:

- This study aims to identify the reality of the services of university information institutions (university libraries) sites in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Providing recommendations that may benefit decision makers in Saudi university libraries in improving and developing electronic marketing for their library resources and services.

5. Terminology of study:

Information institutions: In this research, information institutions mean the libraries of Saudi universities that provide resources and services to all members of the university community.

6. Methodology:

The researcher based the examination of the services of library sites on the axes that were set by researchers Abdullah Kaba, Muhammad Islam and Muhammad Hussein. The number of axes reached six axes. The first axis Visibility of websites, second axis General website information, third axis Communication features, fourth axis Online Service, fifth axis Online resources, The sixth axis Useful Links. The researcher added some elements to some axes, and made some changes, some axes and items, such as adding social media and adding the Saudi Digital Library (SDL) to keep pace with the changes of the current era and in line with the reality of education in Saudi

7. Data collection:

The researcher relied on the Ministry of Education website for counting Saudi universities. It turned out that there are 28 Saudi universities in various regions of the Kingdom. 28 sites were examined twice (from April 25, 2020 to (May 29, 2020). and the Saudi electronic library was excluded because it does not contain

some evaluation items due to its electronic nature that differs from the rest of the university libraries.

The Excel program was used to perform some statistical operations for the data to extract the distributions of frequency and percentages.

Table 1: Saudi university libraries

| NO | Saudi university libraries | NO | Saudi university libraries |
|----|--|----|--|
| 1 | Umm Al-Qura University Library | 15 | Al-Baha University Library |
| 2 | Islamic University Library | 16 | Tabuk University Library |
| 3 | Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University Library | 17 | Najran University Library |
| 4 | King Saud University Library | 18 | Northern Borders University Library |
| 5 | King Abdulaziz University Library | 19 | Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University Library |
| 6 | King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals Library | 20 | King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences Library |
| 7 | King Faisal University Library | 21 | Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal University Library |
| 8 | King Khalid University Library | 22 | Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University Library |
| 9 | Qassim University Library | 23 | Shaqra University Library |
| 10 | Taibah University Library | 24 | Majmaah University Library |
| 11 | Taif University Library | 25 | Jeddah University Library |
| 12 | Hail University Library | 26 | Bisha University Library |
| 13 | Jazan University Library | 27 | King Abdullah University of Science and Technology Library |
| 14 | Al-Jouf University Library | 28 | Hafr Al-Batin University Library |

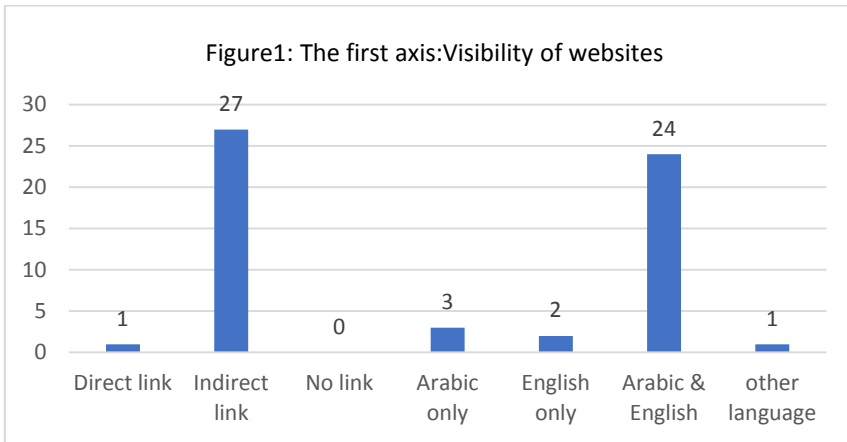
8. Findings and discussion:

8.1- The first axis: Visibility of websites

This axis consists of seven items related to the availability of a link to the library from the main page of the university and the languages used for the site. Table No. (2) shows that only one university (4%) provides a direct link to the library on its main page and 27 (96%) university provides indirect links to the library. most universities made it available under the heading "Deanship of Library Affairs" and one university made it available under the heading "Library" and another university made it available under the heading "Knowledge Sources" and another made it available under the heading "Education Affairs" and another university made it available under the heading "Information Sources". all Saudi universities It has links to the library, whether direct or indirect. As for the item related to the languages of the library pages available on the websites of Saudi universities, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an Arab country, and it is certain that the Arabic language is the official language used in education and information. And formal and governmental transactions (Saudi languages, 2020), the English language is used in some disciplines in some Saudi universities, and a number of foreign students who do not speak Arabic are taught in some Saudi universities. And the two languages are important for disseminating information and scientific progress, so it is best for the Saudi universities websites with all their pages to be in Arabic and English and we look forward to using more languages. It was found through the exam that 24 universities (86%) could browse the pages of their libraries in Arabic and English, while three libraries (11%) had their pages in Arabic only, and two libraries (7%) had their pages in English only. One library (4%) can browse its pages in three languages: Arabic, English and Spanish.

Table 2: The first axis:Visibility of websites

| items | Number | percentage |
|------------------|--------|------------|
| Direct link | 1 | 4% |
| Indirect link | 27 | 96% |
| No link | 0 | 0% |
| Arabic only | 3 | 11% |
| English only | 2 | 7% |
| Arabic & English | 24 | 86% |
| other language | 1 | 4% |



8.2- The second axis: General website information

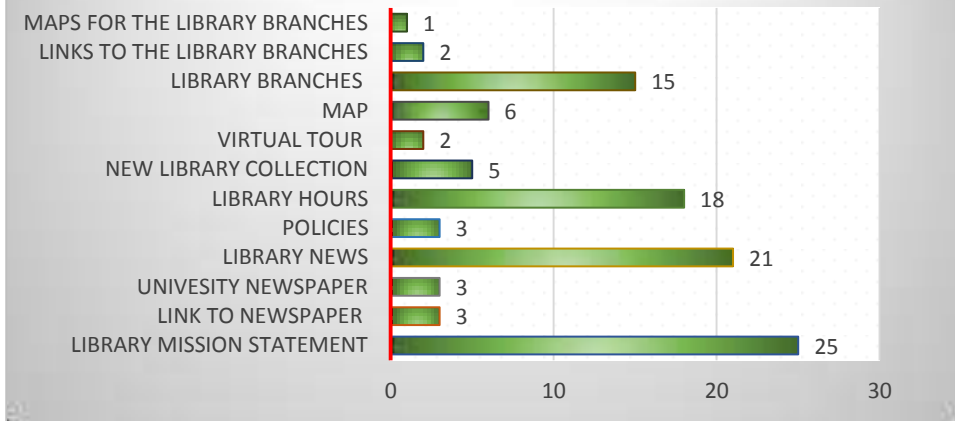
Table 3 shows how university libraries in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia provide general information to their users through the websites of Saudi universities. "It is important for the library to provide general information about the site because this information helps libraries to enhance their marketing strategies and provide a valuable guide for users." (Islam & Hossain, 2013) This axis contains several items: Library mission statement, links to local newspapers, university newspaper, library

news, library policies, library hours, virtual tour, map locations map of the library, library branches, links to library branches, locations map of the library branches. The library mission statement item ranks first in general information, 25 libraries (89%) provided this item. Then the Library News item, as 21 university libraries provided this item at a rate of (75%). Then the library hours item, 18 libraries provided this item at a rate of (64%). The map of the library's branch sites came at the end. Only one library provided this item (4%).

Table3: The second axis: General website information

| items | Number | percentage |
|-------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Library mission statement | 25 | 89% |
| Link to newspaper | 3 | 11% |
| univesity newspaper | 3 | 11% |
| Library News | 21 | 75% |
| Policies | 3 | 11% |
| Library hours | 18 | 64% |
| New library collection | 5 | 18% |
| virtual tour | 2 | 7% |
| Map | 6 | 21% |
| Library branches | 15 | 54% |
| Links to the library branches | 2 | 7% |
| Maps for the library branches | 1 | 4% |

Figure2: The second axis:General website information



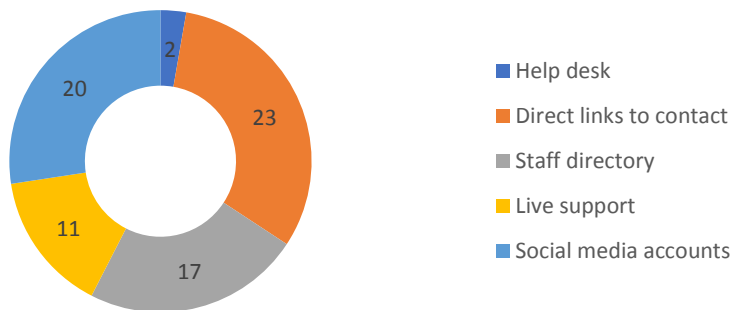
8.3- The third axis: Communication features:

Table 4 illustrates the third axis related to the availability of means of communication with the library on its website, and the means of communication are very important in facilitating access to information by users and reducing their effort. This axis consists of five items: Help desk, Direct contacts such as e-mail, telephone, ask the librarian, and a guide for library staff, live support, and social media and occupies the first rank of communication available on university libraries sites is direct contact with e-mail, phone and ask the librarian 23 libraries (%82) provided this item. The second rank was taken by social media, 20 libraries (71%) provided this item, and libraries differ in the number of social media available on its site. The third rank was taken by the Library Staff Directory item, 17 libraries (61%) provided this item, and libraries differ in the number of social media available on its site. Fourth ranked taken by the live support item, 11 libraries (39%) provided this item.

Table 4: The third axis: Communication features

| items | Number | percentage |
|-------------------------|--------|------------|
| Help desk | 2 | 7% |
| Direct links to contact | 23 | 82% |
| Staff directory | 17 | 61% |
| Live support | 11 | 39% |
| Social media accounts | 20 | 71% |

Figure 3: The third axis: Communication features



8.4- The fourth axis: Online Service:

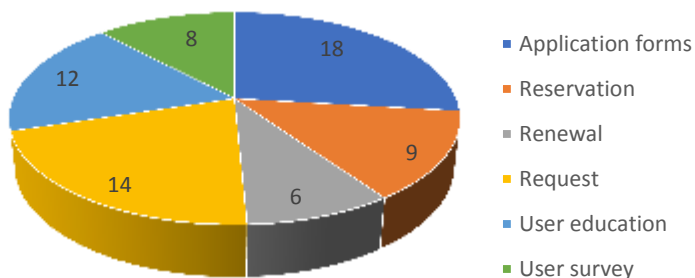
Table 5 shows the fourth axis, which consists of six items: application forms, reservation, renewal, request, user education, user survey, it is clear from the table below that 18 libraries out of a total of 28 libraries (64%) provided application forms. 14 libraries with a rate of (50%) provided the request and request item, which is a request for a visit to the library, a request for a scientific or periodic message, a book, a training course, or an application to subscribe to a database or activate an account or borrow. Also, 12 libraries (43%) provided the item for

educating users. And 9 libraries (32%) provided the reservation item, and it would be a hall, a book, or a research retreat. 8 libraries (29%) provided a survey item for users, which is important for assessing library services and knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in order to develop library services. 6 libraries (21%) provided renewal.

Table 5: fourth axis: Online Service

| items | Number | percentage |
|-------------------|--------|------------|
| Application forms | 18 | 64% |
| Reservation | 9 | 32% |
| Renewal | 6 | 21% |
| Request | 14 | 50% |
| User education | 12 | 43% |
| User survey | 8 | 29% |

Figure 4: fourth axis: Online Service

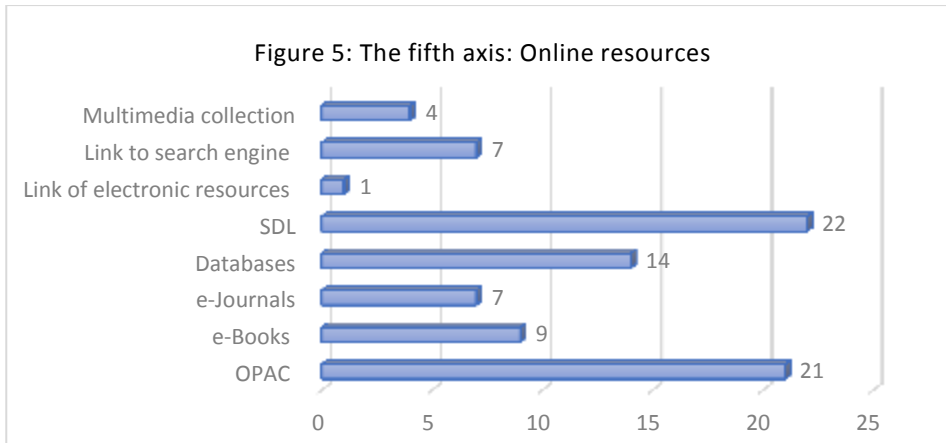


8.5- The fifth axis: Online resources:

Table 6 shows the fifth axis related to online resources, which consists of eight items: OPAC, e-books, e-journal, databases, Saudi digital library, electronic sources, multimedia, search engines. One of the advantages of using the Internet in libraries is that Ensures quick and immediate access to information, regardless of its location, so quick access to information and information sources for users is very important (Qandilji, 2010). through the table below that 22 of the total of 28 libraries by (79%) provided the Saudi digital library item with the assumption that all Saudi libraries are supposed to provide the library Saudi Digital on its page. There are 21 libraries (75%) that made OPAC available on its website at the university's website. Also, there are 14 universities (50%) that provide databases, and one library (4%) provided electronic resources such as CDs. It is noted that a small number of libraries provided the e-books item e-journals, multimedia, search engines, and the reason for this is that LSD includes a huge number of sources of information of various kinds in addition to databases.

Table 6: The fifth axis: Online resources

| items | Number | percentage |
|------------------------------|--------|------------|
| OPAC | 21 | 75% |
| e-Books | 9 | 32% |
| e-Journals | 7 | 25% |
| Databases | 14 | 50% |
| SDL | 22 | 79% |
| Link of electronic resources | 1 | 4% |
| Link to search engine | 7 | 25% |
| Multimedia collection | 4 | 14% |



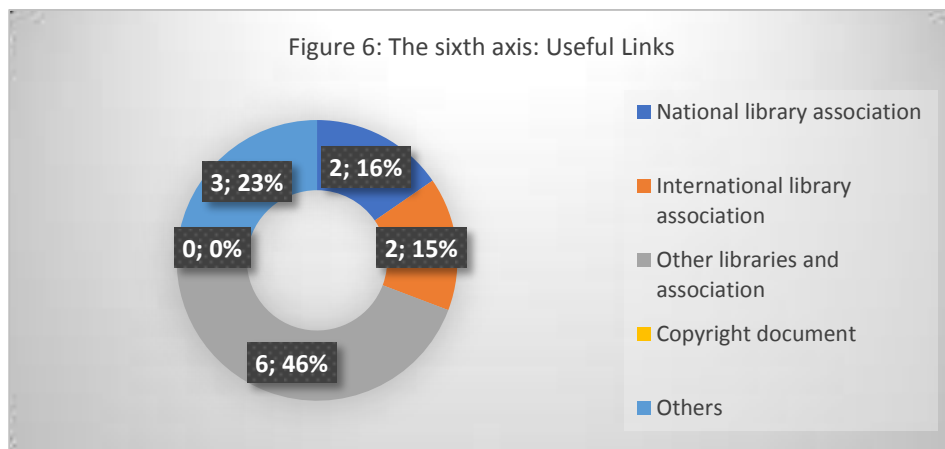
8.6- The sixth axis: Useful Links:

Table 7 shows the sixth axis that relates to the extent to which libraries provide useful links for researchers and specialists. These links may enhance the process of marketing university library services. This axis contains (5) items, namely: The first item is a link to national libraries associations and there are two libraries at a rate of (%7) provided a link to the Association of Libraries Saudi Arabia, and the second item is a link to all international libraries and provided two libraries at a rate of (%7) and the third item is a link to libraries and other associations, whether they are in Saudi Arabia or in any country in the world and has provided 6 libraries with a percentage of (%21), and the fourth item is a link to the copyright and copyright document and unfortunately there is no library This document provided on its page, and this document may help students and researchers to abide by copyright and non-violation of copyright. The sixth item is other links, and it means any links other than the previous items, such as a link for the university agency for postgraduate studies and scientific research, and the search engine Google Schooler, 3 libraries have provided (11%) this item.

Table 7: The sixth axis: Useful Links

| items | Number | percentage |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------------|
| National library association | 2 | 7% |
| International library association | 2 | 7% |
| Other libraries and association | 6 | 21% |
| Copyright document | 0 | 0% |
| Others | 3 | 11% |

Figure 6: The sixth axis: Useful Links



9. Conclusion:

By examining the sites of Saudi universities libraries, we found that there are strengths and weaknesses in some of the items that measure the marketing of library resources and services in Saudi universities, and we will explain them as follows:

strength point:

-Among the strengths of Saudi university libraries are the following:

The majority of the pages of libraries in Saudi universities, that is approximately 24 libraries, the pages of which are available in Arabic and English.

-25 libraries indicated their mission on their home page, 21 libraries provided news about their activities, 18 libraries pointed to the library working hours, and this is important for the user so that he knows when he can take advantage of library resources and services and his book saves time and effort and is an important element in the marketing process in libraries, and provided 15 library of its branches on the pages of its website, so that the beneficiary goes to the branch near to him, which is suitable for him and who can seriously find his need.

-Most libraries provide a means of communication between them and the user through the pages of their website, 23 libraries provide an email or phone for direct communication, many have more than one account from social media on their site, There is no doubt that social media is a modern means of electronic marketing in general and in the field of libraries and information in particular. 17 libraries have provided a guide for library staff that also contains On their email and phone.

-The majority of libraries provide the Saudi Digital Library (SDL), which contains a huge number of different sources, as well as OPAC and databases. The Internet sources are the most important needs of students and researchers from all libraries.

Weak points:

That one library is the library that provides a direct link and 27 does not provide a direct link, and this negatively affects the process of marketing of information sources and services he libraries of Saudi universities. Accessing and benefiting from its services encourages research and scientific publishing.

Unfortunately, a large number of Saudi university libraries do not provide a link to local newspapers or to the university newspaper, as their provision encourages the use of the library website. "Most of them do not refer to the library policy, nor do they provide a virtual tour until the user knows the library and its contents before visiting it, in addition to that they do not refer in their sites to new sources that have reached them recently, and many of them do not provide a map of the library's location and its branches.

Most libraries do not provide a help desk, and this element is necessary to provide it, as some users may encounter a problem when using the library site and cannot access the library resources and services and benefit from them, the help desk helps beneficiaries in solving those problems. Just 11 libraries provide live support, and this negatively affects the marketing of library services, especially as we are in an era of speed and technology.

A large number of Saudi university libraries do not provide electronic resources such as audiovisual materials, nor do the multimedia collection, as well as search engines.

Internet services in university libraries need to be developed. We found few libraries offering online services, such as reservation, renewal, and training, and rarely university libraries offering loan services. Resources and services are the most important needs of students and researchers. Library marketing depends on resources and services. If it is not available, the marketing will not succeed. Some university libraries also provided a link to user survey, which is useful to know the users' needs and weaknesses in the library in order to address them, and it is important to understand the needs of users because the concept of marketing is to know the needs of users and meet their needs. Useful in developing the library and its services.

Many university libraries do not provide useful links for users to facilitate their access to information as links to other local or international libraries. "This is an important aspect as it shows commitment to collaboration between academic libraries and a willingness to share resources and services. It makes it easier for users to access shared resources and increases the use of the library website as a gateway to information" (Islam & Hossain, 2013). There is no Saudi university library that provides copyright, and this is very important as it helps to educate users so that those rights are not violated.

Recommendations:

Those responsible for the Saudi university library sites should have the following:

- Developing university library site services such as providing services for the handicapped, and an RSS service to facilitate follow-up to news of the institution or library, and adding links to branch libraries and their locations, and other services.
- Ensure the effectiveness of the facilities and services available on those sites.

- The home page of university library sites should be designed in a way that highlights services and links that interest the user and benefit them so that they are clear to the user, some university library sites are full of pictures and events and links of interest to the user are not clear or at the bottom of the page or in the pages that follow the main page.

Future studies:

- Carrying out a study measuring the effectiveness of the services of the Saudi university library sites.
- Implementation of the National Digital Repository project.

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Appendix A:

| NO | | sites |
|----|--|--|
| 1 | Umm Al-Qura University Library | https://uqu.edu.sa/lib |
| 2 | Islamic University Library | https://www.iu.edu.sa/site/12 |
| 3 | Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University Library | bit.ly/3e9Mnlu |
| 4 | King Saud University Library | http://library.ksu.edu.sa/ar https://library.kau.edu.sa/Default-212-AR |
| 5 | King Abdulaziz University Library | bit.ly/38zfvrA |
| 6 | King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals Library | bit.ly/2Cdw0Mw |
| 7 | King Faisal University Library | https://lib.kku.edu.sa/index.html |
| 8 | King Khalid University Library | https://library.qu.edu.sa/ |
| 9 | Qassim University Library | bit.ly/2O5aVbm |
| 10 | Taibah University Library | bit.ly/2Z8kmNt |
| 11 | Taif University Library | bit.ly/2Z54LOx |
| 12 | Hail University Library | bit.ly/321cFKy |
| 13 | Jazan University Library | bit.ly/3gtzpHk |
| 14 | Al-Jouf University Library | bit.ly/2DdHP7e |
| 15 | Al-Baha University Library | bit.ly/2Db5GEz |
| 16 | Tabuk University Library | https://dlaf.nu.edu.sa/ |
| 17 | Najran University Library | bit.ly/3gAvyrT |
| 18 | Northern Borders University Library | bit.ly/31Plkjo |
| 19 | Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University Library | bit.ly/31Vx7wl |
| 20 | King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for | |

- Health Sciences Library
- Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal
- 21 University Library bit.ly/31TXPpl
- Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University
- 22 Library <https://dla.psau.edu.sa/ar>
- 23 Shaqra University Library bit.ly/3gEM76f
- 24 Majmaah University Library bit.ly/2ZL0IWR
- 25 Jeddah University Library bit.ly/31VPgKS
- 26 Bisha University Library <https://www.ub.edu.sa/web/dla>
- King Abdullah University of Science and
- 27 Technology Library <https://library.kaust.edu.sa/>
- 28 Hafr Al-Batin University Library bit.ly/2Z8MEal