Marketing your e-resources can *will* change your library!

Find out more about JCS at www.jcsonlineresources.org
“Wouldn't you think that today's 'digital native' would just automatically find and use full-text e-magazines, online encyclopedias, subject specific databases, e-books, video content, and other digital sources of information that are vetted and reliable?!”

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Some questions...

Do you still think of your library as just a physical space?

How are you reaching students who don’t visit that physical space?

Do your students/tutors think of the library as a portal to trusted e-resources?

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Make a plan!

If you answered ‘no’ to any of those questions then you need a marketing plan to help bring change...

Form a team and plan round these key questions:
Why?  What?  Who?
How?  When?

What’s the plan?

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Start with a SWOT...

STRENGTHS  S  WEAKNESSES  W

INTERNAL FACTORS

OPPORTUNITIES  O  THREATS  T

EXTERNAL FACTORS

Positive

Negative

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Internal factors to consider...

- Are e-resources well used & accepted as part of your library collection?
- Strengths and weaknesses of key staff for e-resources. Have you a champion on the team? Are there enough?
- Are staff trained to use them & trained to demo them?
- Do your e-resources have a strong online presence? Are they just looked after by one person on the team?
- How much of your budget is used for e-resources?
- Have you e-resources for all subjects? Where are they linked from?
- 'Brand awareness' - when students/staff think about the library do they think of 'e'?
- E-resources organisation - are they easy to find? Can students/staff report problems online?
External factors to consider...

- Is the library prepared for technological changes?
- Students/Staff:
  - are they keen to use your e-resources?
  - are they technologically savvy?
  - have they access to computers or their own devices?
- ‘Competitors’ – are your students getting information from other places eg the open web?
- Are your e-resource providers keeping up with the times and with your content needs?
- Is your library keeping up to date with its e-resources provision? Have you reviewed them recently?

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Marketing techniques...

(1) Staff/student interaction

- Stock reviews with staff to include electronic resources
- Recommend e-books over print books when asked for titles
- One-to-one sessions with students
- One-to-one sessions with staff - maybe on inset days
- Presence as Fresher’s Fair
- Word of mouth
- Recruit staff and student champions
- Encourage students to tell their tutors when they find e-resources they like and are useful (even those in your catalogue!)
- At staff/departmental meetings
- Organise training days

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Marketing techniques...

(2) E-Comms

- Subject specific emails to tutors
- Blogs about e-resources
- Twitter
- VLE home page and VLE subject areas linked to the library
- Add links everywhere - website, VLE etc

- 'Digital Learning Badges' - award digital badges for areas of learning including 'Library Learning'.
- Develop into a digital portfolio of badges for CV/Portfolio of achievements for job applications.
- QR codes on subject leaflets linked directly to relevant resources.

'A great marketing plan is about forging connections between content and people.'
(3) Physical Items

Posters

Leaflets & guides

Whiteboard display with ‘looped demo’ showing (for example) effective searching techniques

Provide physical representation of eBooks - eg add old VHS cases with QR codes to book shelves
(4) Training

- Run surveys to see which resources and e-skills are needed for staff training.
- Don’t forget digital literacy skills as well.

Finally, don’t make assumptions! Staff and students probably need a lot more help, skills, and constant reminders about your e-resources than you realise.
Bibliography

Feedback from a lot of librarians/LRC staff


Doug Johnson’s blog:
7 ways to promote your library’s online resources