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LIBRARIANS' AWARENESS OF CONTENT CREATION TOOLS FOR PROFESSIONAL BRANDING IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN DELTA STATE

Dr. Esoswo Francisca Ogbomo (CLN)
Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria

Sylvester Israel Ebhonu
Admiralty University of Nigeria, Ibusa

Abstract

This study examined librarians' awareness of content creation tools for professional branding in university libraries in Delta State, Nigeria. The study population comprised 143 librarians and library officers in public and private universities in Delta State. 143 librarians were used as the sample because the population figure is relatively manageable*. Therefore, the total enumeration sampling technique was adopted for this study. To elicit data from the respondents, questionnaires were used. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings from this study showed that: the extent of librarians' awareness of content creation tools for professional branding in university libraries in Delta state is low; the types of content creation tools that librarians utilize for professional branding are Microsoft Word, Canva, LinkedIn, Twitter, Bit.ly (URL Shortener), Facebook, Blogger, WordPress, Grammarly, Mindomo, InShot, Lumen5, SlideShare & SlideSnack, Smallpdf, Plotagon, and Placeit; and that the extent to which librarians utilize content creation tools for professional branding is low. Following the findings, the authors advised that librarians should brace themselves up for the massive adoption of content creations tools and take time to learn how to utilize the tools for creating unique brand for their profession and services and that the library management should formulate policies that give importance to the marketing of the image of the library, their resources and services among others.*

Keywords: Librarians, Awareness, Content Creation Tools, Professional Branding, University Libraries.

Introduction

There is a consensus that branding is a core aspect of any business, organization, or marketing and libraries are no exception. Organizations want to

establish a solid reputation as professionals. This is because it is critical to developing a professional brand to be known for the correct reasons. Brands are frequently linked with products, services, personalities, and businesses. If a business or individual wants to thrive in the digital age, branding is a prerequisite. Brown (2020) defined the word 'brand' as "the set of physical attributes of a product or service, together with the beliefs and expectations surrounding it - a unique combination, which the name or logo of the product or service should evoke in the mind of the audience" (p. 1). The significance of professional branding in any organization cannot be over-emphasized, especially in libraries and information centers. Branding is crucial for increased patronage, good perception, and customer retention in today's society.

Ceallaigh (2017) wrote that professional branding is crafting an image of oneself, which fits the story one wants to tell, or tell using social media to share stories, experience and asking questions to create a unique trait in one's profession. Serrano (2017) added that it is the process by which individuals and entrepreneurs differentiate themselves and stand out from a crowd by identifying and articulating their unique value proposition, then leveraging across platforms with a consistent message and image to achieve a specific goal. Librarians' branding is their public face, which in most case directly influence their reputation. If librarians create their professional brand with an appropriate message, they can extend control of what people think and talk about them when they are not there. Thus, librarians have a herculean task of building their professional brand using workable branding strategies.

However, for librarians to be able to successfully build a brand for their profession, they must be familiar with content creation tools that can be utilized to create eye-catching brands in today's digital era. Content creation tools are the various digital and online tools used for processing and generating ideas for topics that appeal to their audience. They are tools used in creating written or visual content that are easily transmissible and visible to a client or customer (Chawlani, 2021). Shopify (2022) asserted that content creation tools aid in the content creation process. It helps to develop content for a brand whether it is for podcast, blog, social media, or YouTube channel. These tools help with tasks like designing quick graphics with little experience and searching for trending topics to write about.

The awareness of content creation tools can be seen as the knowledge librarians have of content creation tools in terms of their types, usage, components, advantage and disadvantages. It is important to note that, it is natural for humans to make use of what they know and are familiar with.

Librarians therefore can only utilize content creation tools to create brands for their profession and libraries if they are aware of its existence, types, and usage benefits. Consequently, by utilizing content creation tools for professional branding, librarians can enhance their recognition as experts in librarianship, establish reputation and credibility, advance their careers and build self-confidence. However, the awareness of the existence and usage of content creation tools like Canva, SlideShare, Visme, Place It, Movavi, BuzzSumo, Hemingway, Prezi, Flipsnack, Grammarly, Typeform, Anchor, etc., is a must to leverage on, if librarians must build a brand that is unique to them and their profession. It is on this premise that study seek to examine librarians' awareness of content creation tools for professional branding in university libraries in Delta State.

Statement of the Problem

Librarianship is a profession that contributes enormously to the educational development of people thereby bringing about development to Nigeria as a nation. Despite the numerous benefits of librarianship to the nations of the world, the profession is still largely unaccepted as a noble profession among prospective undergraduates in Nigeria especially Delta State when compared with other high-profile professions such as Accounting, Medicine Law, etcetera. This unfavourable view of the profession, stereotyping of librarians and portraying their image as just keepers of books, people who read and shelve books all day and don't understand or work with technology, thereby reducing their overall worth, calls for concern. Thus, the questions raised in the researcher's mind are: are librarians not aware of the existence of content creation tools that can be utilized to create brands for their profession and libraries? Or is it that they lack awareness of the usability of these tools? This study was necessary in an effort to find answers to these questions.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study examined librarians' awareness of content creation tools for professional branding in university libraries in Delta State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. determine the extent to which librarians in university libraries in Delta State, Nigeria are aware of content creation tools for professional branding;
2. find out the types of content creation tools used by librarians for professional branding;
3. find out the extent to which librarians utilize content creation tools for professional branding;

Review of Related Literature

Extent of Librarians' Awareness of Content Creation Tools for Professional Branding in Libraries

Academic librarians also known as knowledge workers are one of the key values of strengths to university libraries. As professionals, they must be aware and take the current challenge toward the transformation of their professional image. In the course of this transformation process, authentic personal branding becomes academic librarians' personal mission, followed by their personal key roles, which are translated into the criteria for effective authentic personal branding and authentic personal branding strategies in meeting the current needs of library users and adapting to technological changes (Ahmad et al., 2016). However, the activities of librarians towards creating brands and increasing the awareness of their profession has been on the decline.

There is an increasing recognition that the future for public and academic libraries looks bleak and that a major contributing factor is their failure to change the image or their "brand" as their identity (what they are and what they do) has evolved (Hariff & Rowley, 2010). This challenge is not just prevalent in UK libraries but emblematic across the sector globally. In terms of librarians' awareness of branding and how to market themselves and their profession, Igbokwe (2009) argue that library orientation, increased users' awareness, in-house displays, exhibitions and Internet services are major marketing strategies utilized by 280 librarians and para-professionals in twelve (12) universities in Nigeria.

Commenting on the awareness of content creation tools for professional branding, Charninga and Barnett-Elis (2007) in their study on librarians' knowledge of and usage of Facebook, it was discovered that a few UK medical school librarians currently use Web 2.0 for branding though, still at the experimental levels. They use it mostly to push information rather than as a two-way communication platform. Anunobi and Ogbonna (2012) also discovered that the use of Web 2.0 by Nigerian library professionals is not very popular. Anunobo and Ogbonna further suggested that low use and acceptability is likely to be found among the older generation of academic staff. Ashinedu (2017) studied the effectiveness of social media in Nigerian university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. Results showed that 101 (93.5%) of the respondents used Facebook to market their library services, 52 (48.1%) used Twitter, Instant Message 41 (37.9%), Pictures 20 (18.5%), Blogs 22 (20.4%), and YouTube 25 (23.4%) respectively. The use of Internet Forum was 27 (25.0%), Academia Edu. 24 (22.2%), LinkedIn 17 (15.7%), Message Board 8 (7.4%) and Wiki 4 (3.7%) respectively. The study

concluded that the usage of social media tools for the marketing of library services is low. The reviewed literature on librarians' awareness clearly depicted that librarians are barely aware of the current content creation tools that can be used to create a good brand for their library and the profession at large.

Types of Content Creation Tools Used by Librarians for Professional Branding in Libraries

Content creation is the process of generating topic ideas that appeal to your audience and then creating written or visual content around those topics. It is about making information and one's expertise to be seen by anyone consuming your content. To gain the benefits of creating content, you have to make information accessible as much as possible to your audience in a blog, video, infographic, or other formats (Stapleton, 2021). In the same vein, Wikipedia defined content creation as the contribution of information to any media and most especially to digital media for an end-user/audience in specific contexts. Typical forms of content creation tools include maintaining and updating web sites, blogging, article writing, photography, videography, online commentary, the maintenance of social media accounts, editing and distribution of digital media.

Brand-generated content is a new development. In the beginning of communication, content was disseminated in four channels: printed media, TV, radio and data carriers. Digital carriers are different. Digital content is able to reach out of the advertising category, stimulating conversation and fostering data sharing and connecting to consumers in a new way (Świeczak, 2016). Content development includes its creation and curation as opposed to other forms of advertising. Digital content helps brands compare, on everyday basis, the behaviors of consumers creating and sharing the content, whether brand-related or not. Such an environment is a great chance for marketers to present the brand personality and engage people, just like they engage themselves in each other's affairs. For librarians to create digital contents that can be used for branding and rebranding their profession some basic tools are required.

Świeczak (2016) asserted that content marketing is based on developing long-term relationships through the interaction and engagement of both parties, meaning those promoting their content and their audience. This according to the author is supported by a major range of tools and techniques that help create and distribute content so that they deliver optimal benefits for the organization. Some of these tools as outlined by Świeczak (2016) are Social media, Blogs, E-newsletter, White papers, Expert articles, E-book, Webinar, Video publishing, Online press release, Sponsored article, Printed newsletters, Digital magazines, Mobile applications, Teleseminar, Podcast, Audiobook, Virtual trade fairs, Comic,

Roadshow, Brand content application, and Infographics. Also, Okuonghae (2021) while commenting on the tools that can be used by content creators for the creation of content that is capable of advertising a brand, asserted that content creators will need to use tools such as Giphy, Venngage, Meme Generator, Survey Monkey, Wideo, Checklist, Snappa, Gamefoot, Thinglink amongst others. According to Okuonghae, regardless of their competency level, it is not difficult to create graphics interchange formats and infographics. Trepanier and Gooch (2014) also outlined LinkedIn, Quora, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Academic.edu, Slide Share, Personal websites, and Blogs.

The Extent of Librarians' Use of Content Creation Tools for Professional Branding in University Libraries

Professionals such as librarians may have to learn how to manage dual and potentially competing interests about their own social media use. It can be difficult to craft a professional digital brand while simultaneously using social media for personal pleasure or fulfillment. Moreover, in exchange for the free use of digital tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Google, etc., users voluntarily comply with their marketing strategy of sharing of information from such Websites. Content creation tools such as social media provides several opportunities for building brands that can help to reach and interact with the community and this helps librarians to showcase the image of their profession to their user community (Jain, 2013). In America, most libraries and information centers are using digital content creation tools such as social media to promote libraries and librarians' image and services to their library community. Social Media tools like Twitter, Blogs, Flickr, Podcasts, Online videos are being used, but Facebook (71.4%) is the most popular (Rogers, 2009). Again, at South Carolina State Library, Facebook, Twitter, Blogging, YouTube, Flickr, Google Docs, and Wikis are all used; the most common are Facebook (88.8%) and Twitter (46.8%) (Macmanus, 2012).

Commenting on the extent of the use of digital content tools such as social media for professional branding and possible marketing and promotion of the library profession, resources and service, Khan and Bhatti (2012) investigated the librarians and LIS (Library and Information Science) school academicians' attitudes towards the usefulness of Social Media in the marketing of library in Pakistan. The study suggested that social media is integral to creating brands and marketing the library profession, services and products among online users; it captures potential users of library and offers various benefits to libraries and user communities. The study recommended that online news groups/forums, video sharing (YouTube), social networking (Facebook, MySpace), Wikis, professional

networking and blogging are good venues for marketing libraries' different services. Also, Arumugam and Balasubramani (2019) studied the impact of social media tools in promoting the library service in Engineering colleges in Tamilnadu and found that the frequency of social media communication for marketing and promotion of library services done by the LIS professionals are thus: 34% of respondents do it weekly, 26% do it daily, 24.66% do it fortnightly and 15.3% do it monthly. The study concluded that the frequency of the use of social media tools for promotion of library services by library professionals in Tamilnadu is low. In Nigeria, the findings of Nduka (2015) reported that social media are ineffectively used to promote library services and resources because the majority of the students were unaware of its wider applications for educational purposes.

Research Methodology

A descriptive survey method was adopted for this study. The population of the study is 143 librarians and library officers in the public and private universities in Delta State. As of the time of this study, there were two federal, three state, and five private universities across Delta State. The entire population was used as a sample due to the small and manageable population size. The instrument that was used for data collection was structured questionnaire. The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics (such as frequencies and statistical mean placed at 2.50).

Data Analysis

Research Question 1: To what extent are the librarians in university libraries in Delta state, Nigeria aware of content creation tools for professional branding?

Table 1: Librarians' Awareness of Content Creation Tools for Professional Branding

S/N	Awareness of the use of Content creation tools for professional branding	FA	A	NA	FNA	Mean
1.	Canva	34	90	3	15	1.99
2.	Wondershare	56	43	10	33	2.14
3.	Mindomo	29	56	16	41	2.49
4.	OBS Studio	30	47	35	30	2.46
5.	Bit.ly (URL Shortener)	33	62	6	41	2.39
6.	Blogger	57	60	7	18	1.90
7.	Microsoft Word	35	56	8	43	2.42
8.	Smallpdf	42	34	34	32	2.39
9.	Plotagon	46	50	11	35	2.25
10.	InShot	27	63	14	38	2.44
11.	Lumen5	18	62	31	31	2.53
12.	Hashtagify.me	39	45	36	22	2.29
13.	Slide Share & Slide Snack	13	55	35	39	2.70
14.	Typeform	15	53	50	24	2.58
15.	Grammarly	19	55	42	26	2.53
16.	Typorama	41	43	36	22	2.27
17.	PowToon	19	44	40	39	2.70
18.	Animoto	23	62	33	24	2.41
19.	Placeit	23	51	39	29	2.52
20.	Crello	45	33	35	29	2.34
21.	WordPress	34	58	15	35	2.36
22.	Wix	12	37	56	37	2.83
23.	LinkedIn	28	66	8	40	2.42
24.	Facebook	23	86	23	10	2.14
25.	Twitter	26	91	12	13	2.08
Aggregate Mean						**2.38**
Criterion Mean						**2.50**

Key: FA= Fully Agree; A= Agree; NA= Not Agree; FNA= Fully Not Agree.

Table 1 shows that with an aggregate mean of 2.38 which is less than the criterion mean of 2.50, it can be concluded that the librarians in university libraries in Delta state, Nigeria are not aware of content creation tools for professional branding. This means that the extent of librarians' awareness of content creation tools for professional branding is low.

Research Question 2: What are the types of content creation tools that librarians use for professional branding?

Table 2: Types of Content Creation Tools used by Librarians for Professional Branding

S/N	TYPES OF CONTENT CREATION TOOLS	A		D		TOTAL	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Canva	114	80.3	28	19.7	142	100.0
2.	Wondershare	68	47.9	74	52.1	142	100.0
3.	Mindomo	85	59.9	57	40.1	142	100.0
4.	OBS Studio	69	48.6	73	51.4	142	100.0
5.	Bit.ly (URL Shortener)	103	72.5	39	27.5	142	100.0
6.	Blogger	96	67.6	46	32.4	142	100.0
7.	Microsoft Word	118	83.1	24	16.9	142	100.0
8.	Smallpdf	78	54.9	64	45.1	142	100.0
9.	Plotagon	77	54.2	65	45.8	142	100.0
10.	InShot	81	57.0	61	43.0	142	100.0
11.	Lumen5	80	56.3	62	43.7	142	100.0
12.	Hashtagify.me	46	32.4	96	67.6	142	100.0
13.	SlideShare&SlideSnack	79	55.6	63	44.4	142	100.0
14.	Typeform	53	37.3	89	62.7	142	100.0
15.	Grammarly	89	62.7	53	37.3	142	100.0
16.	Typorama	52	36.6	90	63.4	142	100.0
17.	PowToon	70	49.3	72	50.7	142	100.0
18.	Animoto	53	37.3	89	62.7	142	100.0
19.	Placeit	76	53.5	66	46.5	142	100.0
20.	Crello	63	44.4	79	55.6	142	100.0
21.	Wordpress	90	63.4	52	36.6	142	100.0
22.	Wix	62	43.7	80	56.3	142	100.0
23.	LinkedIn	113	79.6	29	20.4	142	100.0
24.	Facebook	102	71.8	40	28.2	142	100.0
25.	Twitter	112	78.9	30	21.1	142	100.0

Key: A= Agree; D= Disagree.

Table 2 shows the types of content creation tools that librarians use for professional branding. One hundred and eighteen-118(83.1%) of them agreed that they use Microsoft Word, 114(80.3%) use Canva, 113(79.6%) use LinkedIn, 112(78.9%) use Twitter, 103(72.5%) use Bit.ly (URL Shortener), 102(71.8%) use Facebook, 96(67.6%) use Blogger, 90(63.4%) use Wordpress, 89(62.7%) use

Grammarly, 85(55.9%) use Mindomo, 81(57%) use InShot, 80(56.3%) use Lumen5, 79(55.6%) use SlideShare & SlideSnack, 78(54.9%) use Smallpdf, 77(54.2%) use Plotagon, and 76(53.6%) use Placeit. It can be concluded that the types of content creation tools that librarians use for professional branding are Microsoft Word, Canva, LinkedIn, Twitter, Bit.ly (URL Shortener), Facebook, Blogger, WordPress, Grammarly, Mindomo, InShot, Lumen5, SlideShare & SlideSnack, Smallpdf, Plotagon, and Placeit.

Research Question 3: To what extent do librarians utilize content creation tools for professional branding?

Table 3: Extent of Librarians' Utilization of Content Creation Tools for Professional Branding

S/N	Extent of Librarians ′ Use of Content Creation Tools for Professional Branding.	VH	H	L	VL	Mean
1.	I use Canva for creating graphic designs/fliers and short videos about my library services	9	19	33	81	1.69
2.	I record tutorials and educational videos using OBS studio and market the wide range of services and resources of my library offers.	28	10	70	34	2.23
3.	I use photos and videos posted via Flickr and Pinterest to sensitize users to the services of the library and the librarians as well as create awareness of recently acquired materials.	22	34	45	41	2.26
4.	I create a unique brand for myself and the services of my library by uploading library and education-related post on blogs and social media platforms.	16	18	61	47	2.02
5.	I make and post videos of the services and products of my library on Twitter to keep library patrons abreast of the services available in the library.	7	32	51	52	1.96
6.	I utilize Facebook to brand the image of the library and inform the users of the services that users can benefit from the librarians.	6	27	47	62	1.94
7.	I use Typeform, Anchor and Capcut for creating brands for library services and products.	24	27	30	61	2.32
8.	I use Canva for creating graphic designs/fliers and short videos about my library services	18	26	64	34	2.20
9.	I use Facebook to create user accounts to aid in easier communication with library users	7	15	71	49	1.86
10.	I use Podcasts to broadcast library services	23	10	53	56	2.00
11.	I market programs through tweets to users and through the network outside the library users	37	22	42	41	2.39
12.	I often engage in personal self-image branding	15	23	60	44	2.06
13.	I use LinkedIn for Professional branding by updating my profile/CV with recent achievements/happenings and posting professional articles.	15	29	57	41	2.13
Aggregate Mean						**2.08**
Criterion Mean						**2.50**

Key: VH= Very High; H= High; L= Low; VL= Very Low.

Table 3 shows that with an aggregate mean of 2.08, which is less than the criterion mean of 2.50, it can be concluded that the extent to which librarians utilize content creation tools for professional branding is low.

Discussion of Findings

This study uncovers that the extent of librarians' awareness of content creation tools for professional branding in university libraries in Delta state is low. This finding is in agreement with that of Ashinedu (2017) that the usage of social media tools for the marketing of library services by librarians in university libraries South-South, Nigeria is low. In the same vein, Anunobi and Ogbonna (2012) found that the use of Web 2.0 tools for marketing and promotion by Nigerian library professionals is not very popular.

This study found that the types of content creation tools that librarians use for professional branding are Microsoft Word, Canva, LinkedIn, Twitter, Bit.ly (URL Shortener), Facebook, Blogger, Wordpress, Grammarly, Mindomo, InShot, Lumen5, SlideShare&SlideSnack, Smallpdf, Plotagon, and Placeit. This finding concurs with that of Świeczak (2016) who outlined Social media, Blog, E-newsletter, White paper, Expert article, E-book, Webinar, Video publishing, Online press release, Sponsored article, Printed newsletter, Digital magazine, Mobile applications, Teleseminar, Podcast, Audiobook, Virtual trade fairs, Comic, Road show, Brand content application and Infographics as social media tools. To further corroborate the finding, Okuonghae (2021) while commenting on the tools that can be used by content creators for the creation of a content that is capable of advertising a brand asserted that content creators will need to use tools such as Giphy, Venngage, Meme Generator, Survey Monkey, Wideo, Checklist, Snappa, Gamefoot, Thinglink amongst others.

Furthermore, this study found that the extent to which librarians utilize content creation tools for professional branding is low. This finding is consistent with that of Arumugam and Balasubramani (2019) who found that the frequency with which social media tools is used for promotion of library services by library professionals in Tamilnadu is low. To further corroborate the study finding, Nduka (2015) reported that social media tools are ineffectively used to promote library services and resources because the majority of the students were unaware of its wider applications for educational purposes.

This mean that even though librarians are aware of and use content creation tools for professional branding, their extent of usage is still low which mean that they may not be using it all the time or as frequently as possible.

Conclusion

The study was carried out to investigate librarians' awareness of content creation tools for professional branding in university libraries in Delta State, Nigeria. Creating a brand for the library profession in the 21st century is a task that must be taken seriously because the influx of information in circulation and the power of the Internet has made it possible for individuals to have access to a wide range of information and information resources without having to visit the four walls of the library. If Librarians properly and consistently engage in creating content for professional branding and library service marketing, the perceived stereotypes in the minds of the public about librarians as merely bookkeepers, and so on, may be countered, thereby improving the image of the profession and morale of librarians. Librarians, therefore, have to ensure that they do everything in their power to continuously inform the public that they are the custodian of current, timely quality and reliable information and other resources that can satisfy the information needs of the populace.

Recommendations

In view of the foregoing, the following recommendations were made:

1. Librarians should brace themselves up for the massive adoption of content creation tools and take time to learn how to utilize the tools for creating unique brands for their profession and services. This can be achieved by participating in quality training and conferences on content creation and branding and related topics.
2. Librarians across Delta State should be encouraged to utilize the numerous emerging content creation tools that can be used for creating distinctive brands for their library's services and resources, notably tools like Canva, which may be utilized to create compelling graphics, motion graphics, etc. about library services and events, bringing about significant advantages for eradicating unfavorable opinions, attracting new patrons, and enhancing the reputation of the profession and libraries generally.
3. The library management should formulate policies that give importance to the marketing of the image of the library, its resources and services.

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