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LIBR 204 – Discussion Post - Marketing

Week 4 Discussion Board
Discuss three effective marketing techniques it could use to promote services to its primary audience. Why would these be most effective?

My local library recently launched a wonderful new website with a superb single search. The new site is cleanly designed with a simple interface and understandable navigation. While they did a great job of building anticipation through Facebook and Twitter and announcing on both of those social sites, I feel like they could have taken some other steps to promote the launch. (Granted, they may have purposefully decided to strictly announce through their social sites per their communication strategy!)

- Email – Emails to an organization's own mailing list tend to have the highest open and response rates. An email announcement to all library card holders (with email addresses, of course) would have made sense as a way to ensure that the entire patron base was aware of the launch. Including a link directly to the new site would have helped to ensure that people were not only aware but able to immediately try out the site. Emails of this type would be infrequent, so a mass email now and then to announce a significant improvement shouldn't be a CAN-SPAM issue. Users could optin to receive such emails when they apply for a library card. And, of course, the email itself would contain an unsubscribe link.
- Press Release – Announcing the launch through a press release seems a logical and simple step. Distributing that release on the local wire would be relatively inexpensive. A press release would help create publicity through local media thereby potentially introducing/reminding a broader patron base of/about the library's services in general and the new site in particular.
- Scavenger hunt/contest – Engaging their patrons with an online scavenger hunt/contest would have been a great way to launch the site. The scavenger hunt could have been announced through email, Facebook, Twitter, and the press release, as well as promoted within the library itself (e.g., signs, word of mouth). The scavenger hunt would have engaged patrons with a game (a very popular learning theory these days) while requiring them to interact with the new website. The hunt's objectives could have been created such that patrons had to use the new features of the site in order to win. This interaction would have aided in understanding the functionality of the site as well as understanding its value for the patrons. In addition, it would be a fun relationship-building activity. Winners of the hunt could have been recognized by having their names posted to the homepage (Facebook and Twitter as well, of course) or even with an actual prize (e.g., an iPad assuming budget availability).