
Embedding Marketing in Every Health Librarian's Job

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Why is marketing important?

Marketing provides a framework for creating a future in which health librarians are:

1. Positioned to provide services which are relevant to their clients
2. Perceived as valuable and essential in their organisations

BUT – the marketing dilemma: we are marketing invisible products, goods and services delivered by invisible librarians!

The problem for marketing

Libraries have a communication problem – promotional messages must communicate value (in the users' eyes)

It is critical to have a pervasive marketing culture:

- Instantly recognisable through branding (how do users know the service is provided by the library?)
- Promoted by a 'unique selling point' which encapsulates value
- Visible in the organisation's strategic plan objectives/actions
- Demonstrate value through key performance indicators

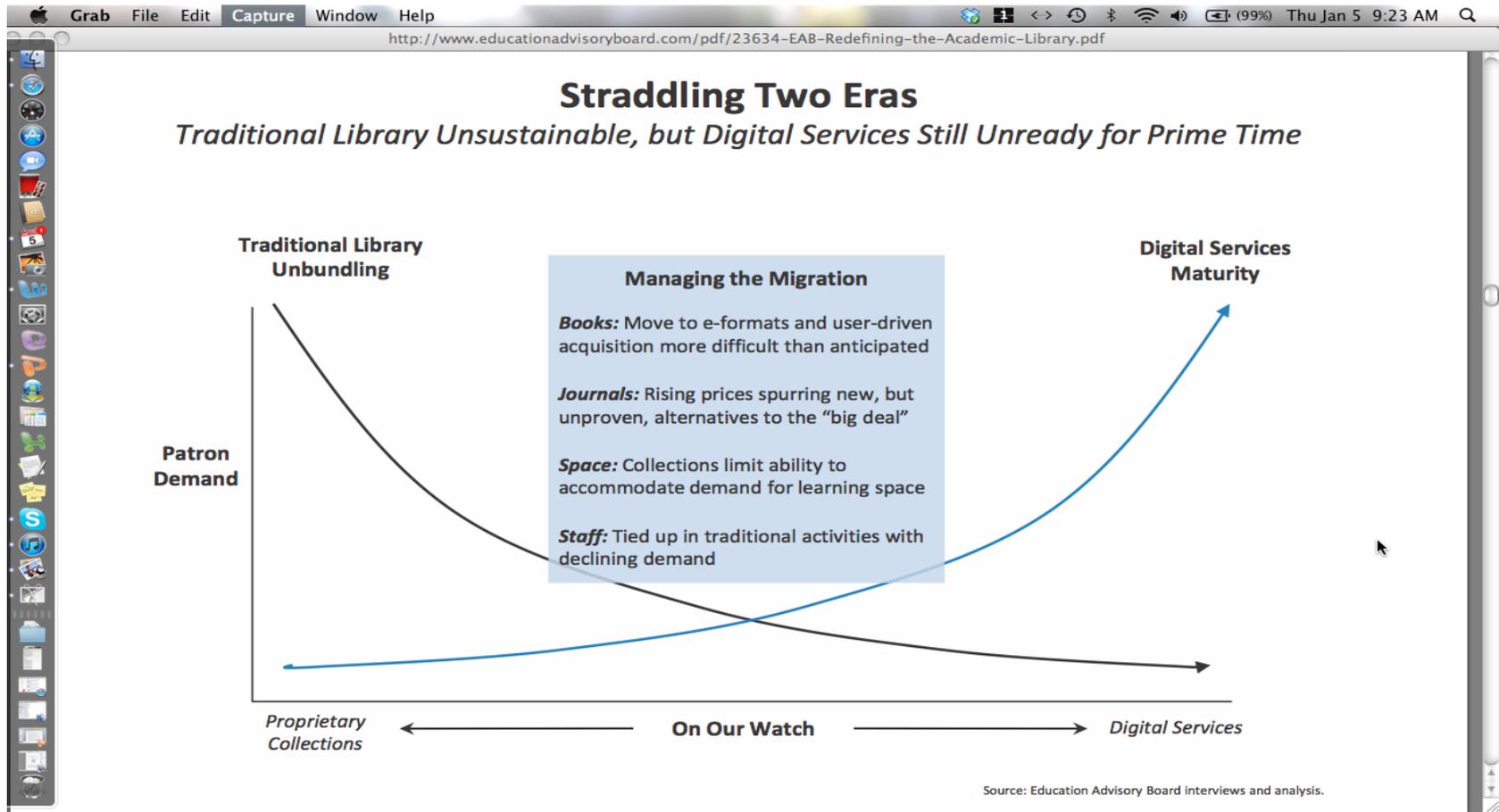
Creative marketing solutions to the problem are needed
– 99% perspiration, 1% inspiration



Q: Whose job is it to market the library?

A: Marketing should be embedded in everyone's job

The ICT environment – opportunity or threat?



Redefining the Academic Library (2011:16)

<http://www.educationadvisoryboard.com/pdf/23634-EAB-Redefining-the-Academic-Library.pdf>



The problem for libraries 'straddling two eras'

Managing the Migration – Traditional Library Unbundling (proprietary collections, f2f reference /decreasing demand) moving to Digital Services Maturity (digital services / increasing demand)

Books – Move to e-formats and user-driven acquisition more difficult than anticipated

Journals – Rising prices spurring new, but unproven alternatives to the Big Deal

Space – Collections limit ability to accommodate demand for learning space

Staff – Tied up in traditional activities with declining demand

Key questions for marketing managers

Collections entertain, inform, educate, transmit research-based knowledge – which digital products/services will operate in the emerging networked knowledge environment, and how do we manage the migration?

- *How do we market (position) these repackaged services?*

Where are our clients and what spaces do they need?

- *How to repurpose library spaces?*
- *Where to promote and deliver our services?*

What is the staff mix we need, what skills should we recruit and provide training for?

- *What marketing and 'personal selling' skills do staff need?*

Embedded marketing

Modern marketing philosophy (Markku Vierula)

- Marketing is everyone's responsibility.
- It's not a separate department which should take care of it.
- Library and information science (LIS) education: marketing should be implemented and integrated to all subjects.

- Continuing education – important!

Library

- Service organization
 - Library does not compete on price, but on
 - Knowledge, competence, relationships
- Everybody can contribute
 - See marketing in a different and more relaxed light
 - Everyone run the same direction and the target will be reached
- All kinds of libraries must learn from each other, must borrow each other's good ideas and try to cooperate as much as possible.

Marketing everywhere

- In all kind of communication
 - Face to face, social media, training courses
- Make library and its services more visible:
 - Library will stay strong, and our profession will keep its leading role in information provision.

”Moments of truth”

- Jan Carlzon, Christian Grönroos
- Concept literally means that this is the time and place when and where the service provider has the opportunity to demonstrate to the customer the quality of its services. It’s the **true moment of opportunity**.
- In the next moment the situation is over, the customer is gone, and there are no easy ways of adding value to the perceived service quality. The moment of opportunity is gone.

Moments of Truth. Jan Carlzon, 1989

'Owner' marketing

- Getting our message over properly to our decision-makers
 - To those who control our budget (and our destiny!)
 - University chancellor, the local councillors, the board directors
- They need to know what we do and can contribute
- Elevator talk – key messages

Library staff - together

- Belong to the group
 - Encouragement, help, collegial support
- Same target
- Professionalism
 - Continuing education!
- Self confidence
- Feedback, reflection

Case1: Health Libraries Australia Workforce & Education Research – an example of market research

Aims

1. To determine the future requirements for health librarians in the health professional workforce in Australia
2. To develop a structured, modular, competency-based education framework to meet these requirements:
 - a specialist post-graduate qualification
 - a continuing professional development structure

Research design

Methodology

- Phase 1 & 2: environmental scan & literature review
- Phase 3: data collection

2 online surveys

- Individual health librarians [162 valid responses]
- Health library managers [51 valid responses]

Semi-structured interviews with employers (owners)

Surveys asked questions about competency areas (adapted from MLA competencies)

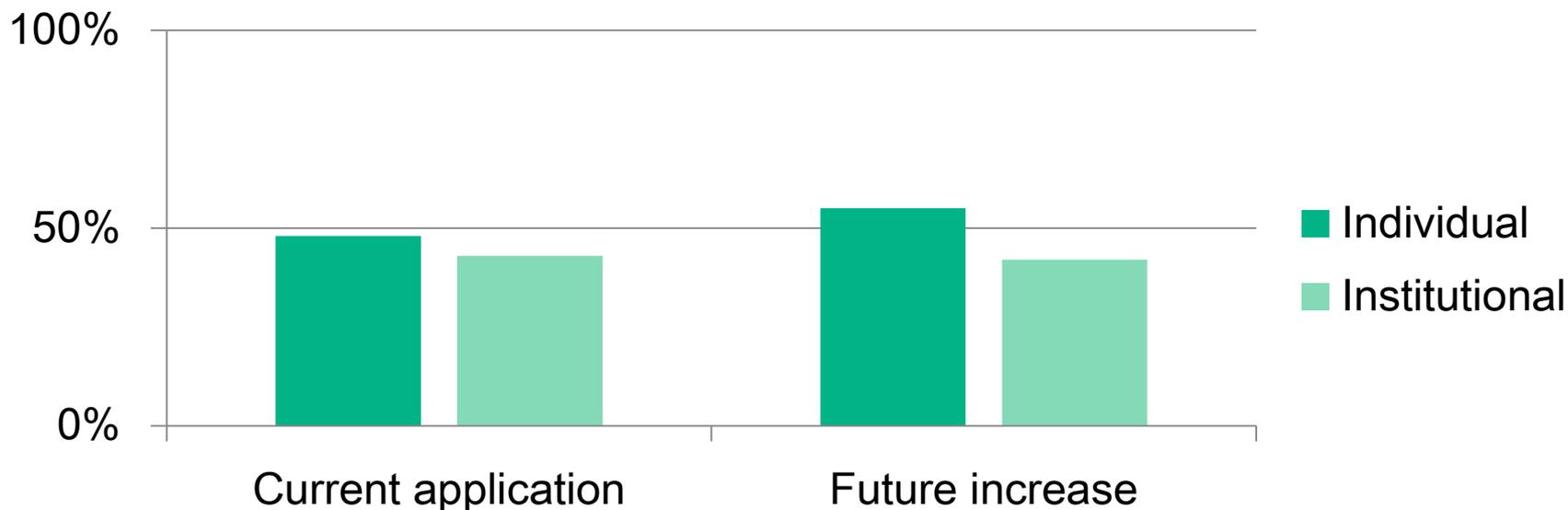
1. Understand the health sciences and health care environment and the policies, issues and trends that impact on that environment
2. Understand the principles and practices related to providing information services to meet user needs.
3. Understand the management of health information resources in a broad range of formats.
4. Know and understand the application of leadership, finance, communication, and management theory and techniques
5. Understand and use technology and systems to manage all forms of information.
6. Understand curricular design and instruction, and have the ability to teach ways to access, organise and use information.
7. Understand scientific research methods and have the ability to critically examine and filter research literature from many related disciplines
8. Maintain currency of professional knowledge and practice.

Survey question management/leadership competency area 4

Current and future requirements for knowledge and professional responsibility to:

“Know and understand the application of leadership, finance, communication, and management theory and techniques (eg strategic planning; organisational policy, planning and decision making; financial management; **marketing and public relations**; review and evaluation of library services; human resources planning and management...)”

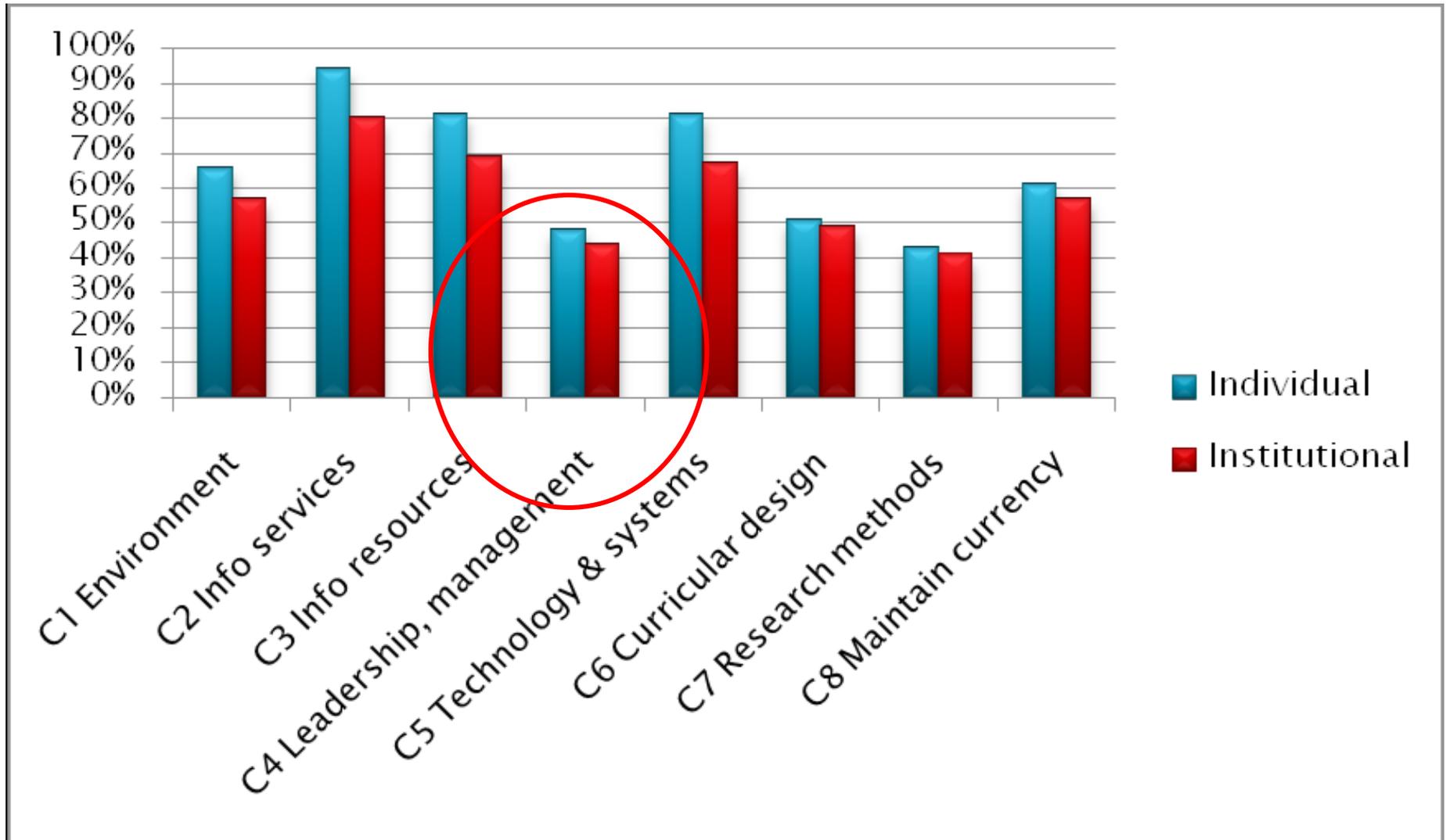
Individual & institutional surveys: competency area 4



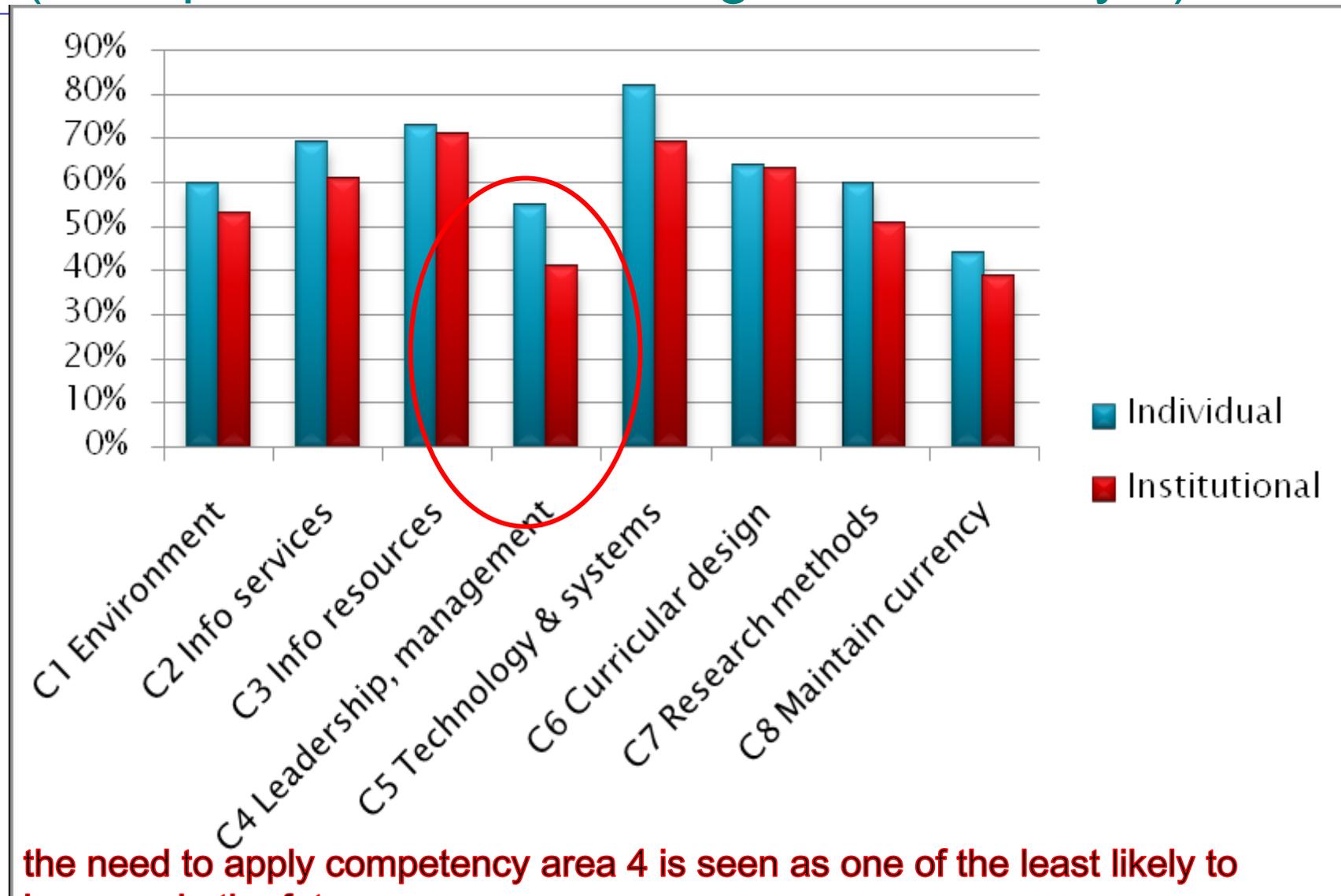
Comment: *'The library has to continually prove itself to be relevant; have to ensure fit with organisational priorities, and strive for better **marketing opportunities.**'*

Marketing is seen to be the role of the manager, but there was an awareness that all staff needed stronger skills in this area.

C1-8: Current knowledge and professional responsibilities (how frequently required to apply)



Future knowledge & professional responsibilities (anticipated extent of change in next 3-5 yrs)



the need to apply competency area 4 is seen as one of the least likely to increase in the future.



Phase 3: Interviews with employers

- Triangulation to improve validity of research
- Important stakeholder group – need to plan their workforce – **market research helped to promote the role of health librarians in their organisations**
- ‘Mission-critical goals’ – we asked them what was important
- Emphasis on roles of librarians (not function of the library)
- Librarians’ contribution now and future
- What knowledge/skills will librarians require in the future

Findings summary

- Opportunities, expectations and CHALLENGES for health librarians to be more proactive, strategic
- New, emerging, expanding roles in
 - education and training,
 - academic research,
 - clinical support,
 - informatics,
 - mobile technologies,
 - unique skill set – able to interpret two worlds, librarians as business analysts, being the ‘warmware’ – employers have lots of ideas and see the potential

Owners' opinion: Marketing skills for health librarians

Interviews with employers highlighted:

- personal relationships and visibility
- measuring user satisfaction and 'getting to people'
- being more proactive, revolutionary
- getting closer to our users to sell our skills more effectively
- creative solutions in developing new roles, new models of access to information, new products especially electronic and point-of-care resources
- being involved with strategic planning for our organisations
- able to demonstrate value to core business, and contribute to the growth of the organisation

Case 2: Terkko's web services

- Terkko Navigator
 - Brand new, also mobile
 - Combines medical specialties with different resource types
 - Including social networking
 - <http://www.terkko.helsinki.fi/>
- Digital Course Library
 - Medical teachers' course material available for medical students
 - » Lecture material etc.
 - Since: 1998 (started as a web page) – faculty initiative!
 - <http://www.terkko.helsinki.fi/kurssikirjasto>
- Otto- the student's library
 - Links to Digital course library, thesis of medical students, electronic course books
 - <http://otto.terkko.helsinki.fi/>
- User friendly (easy-to-use)!



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Digital Course Library



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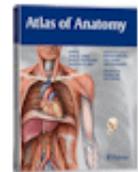
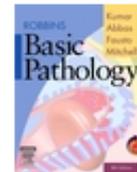
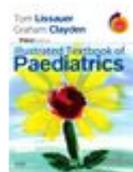
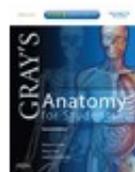
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Conclusions

- Marketing provides a useful framework for developing services which are seen to be valuable in the eyes of our clients and our organisations.
- Marketing is everyone's responsibility – all health library managers, librarians and other staff need to have a marketing attitude.
- Employers recognise the need for health librarians to market their services more effectively.
- Owner marketing – getting our message properly to our decision makers.

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