

**DIGITAL MARKETING COMPETENCIES IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION
SCIENCE EDUCATION: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN CURRICULA AND THE
REAL DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT OF LIBRARIES**

Grebenyuk Martin Valentinovich

Uzbekistan State Institute of Arts and Culture

Lecturer, Department of Library and Information Activity

E-mail: martingrebenyuk@gmail.com

Tel: +998 90 935 93 91

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21165973>

Abstract: The article examines digital marketing competencies as a key gap in the training of library and information science (LIS) specialists in Uzbekistan. The study aims to substantiate the need to integrate digital marketing competencies into LIS curricula by comparing the content of professional training with the real digital environment of libraries. An analysis of the digital activity of fifteen regional information-library centres shows that digital channels, primarily Telegram, dominate communication practice, yet the corresponding competencies are presented fragmentarily in the training of specialists. The author concludes that the curriculum reform should treat the digital environment as an independent object of study and links this conclusion to the broader task of transforming spontaneous marketing practices into conscious professional activity.

Keywords: library and information education, digital marketing competencies, information-library centre, Telegram, curriculum reform, digital environment, professional training, marketing technologies, social media marketing.

Аннотация: В статье рассматриваются цифровые маркетинговые компетенции как ключевой разрыв в подготовке специалистов библиотечно-информационной деятельности (БИБД) Узбекистана. Цель исследования – обосновать необходимость интеграции цифровых маркетинговых компетенций в учебные программы БИБД на основе сопоставления содержания профессиональной подготовки с реальной цифровой средой библиотек. Анализ цифровой активности пятнадцати региональных информационно-библиотечных центров показывает, что цифровые каналы, прежде всего Telegram, доминируют в коммуникационной практике, однако соответствующие компетенции представлены в подготовке специалистов фрагментарно. Автор заключает, что реформирование учебных программ должно рассматривать цифровую среду как самостоятельный объект изучения, и связывает данный вывод с более широкой задачей перевода стихийных маркетинговых практик в осознанную профессиональную деятельность.

Ключевые слова: библиотечно-информационное образование, цифровые маркетинговые компетенции, информационно-библиотечный центр, Telegram, реформирование учебных программ, цифровая среда, профессиональная подготовка, маркетинговые технологии, маркетинг в социальных сетях.

Annotatsiya: Maqolada raqamli marketing kompetensiyalari O‘zbekiston kutubxona-axborot faoliyati (KAF) mutaxassislarini tayyorlashdagi asosiy bo‘shliq sifatida ko‘rib chiqiladi. Tadqiqot maqsadi – kasbiy tayyorgarlik mazmunini kutubxonalarning real raqamli muhiti bilan qiyoslash asosida raqamli marketing kompetensiyalarini KAF o‘quv dasturlariga integratsiya qilish zaruratini asoslashdan iborat. O‘n beshta hududiy axborot-kutubxona markazining raqamli faoliyati tahlili shuni ko‘rsatadiki, raqamli kanallar, avvalo Telegram, kommunikatsiya amaliyotida yetakchilik qiladi, biroq tegishli kompetensiyalar mutaxassislar tayyorlashda parchalangan holda taqdim etilgan. Muallif o‘quv dasturlarini isloh qilish raqamli muhitni mustaqil o‘rganish obyekti sifatida ko‘rib chiqishi kerak degan xulosaga keladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: kutubxona-axborot ta’limi, raqamli marketing kompetensiyalari, axborot-kutubxona markazi, Telegram, o‘quv dasturlarini isloh qilish, raqamli muhit, kasbiy tayyorgarlik, marketing texnologiyalari, ijtimoiy tarmoqlarda marketing.

Introduction

In the contemporary information environment, libraries operate under conditions of competition for users' attention, time, and trust. To justify their value, they increasingly rely on marketing tools, particularly digital communication channels. In the modern understanding, marketing is treated not as advertising alone but as an integrated activity of creating and delivering value to audiences [1]. Consequently, the professional competence of a modern library specialist can no longer be limited to traditional bibliographic and information-service skills: it must include the ability to plan and manage marketing communication in a digital environment. This makes the formation of digital marketing competencies a relevant task for the system of professional training.

The relevance of the study stems from a visible contradiction. On the one hand, libraries in Uzbekistan actively use digital channels in their daily practice. On the other hand, the corresponding competencies are weakly represented in the curricula that prepare specialists for these libraries. As a result, graduates enter the profession without systematic preparation for the very environment in which they will work. The aim of this article is to substantiate the need to integrate digital marketing competencies into the training of LIS specialists by comparing the content of professional preparation with the real digital environment of libraries.

Main part

The empirical basis for the comparison is an analysis of the digital activity of fifteen leading regional information-library centres (ILCs) of Uzbekistan [5]. The analysis shows that the digital environment of these institutions has a clearly expressed national specificity. Telegram is the dominant communication channel: it is the leading messenger in the country and, for libraries, the principal channel of communication with users. Practically all of the studied ILCs maintain a Telegram channel, and many also use Instagram. Thus, the digital channel is not a peripheral element of library communication but its centre of gravity.

However, the activity in these channels is not supported by a systematic approach. The problem lies not in the absence of channels but in the absence of a system: what to publish, when, for whom, in what format, and for what purpose. Publication is often reduced to monotonous event announcements, while content strategy, audience analysis, and engagement metrics remain outside professional practice. This predominance of tactical tools over strategic planning is noted as a characteristic problem of library marketing in the digital age [2]. In other words, libraries possess the digital tools of marketing but apply them spontaneously, without a strategic and analytical foundation.

When this real environment is compared with the content of professional training, a systemic gap becomes evident. The technologies of digital marketing communication – maintaining Telegram channels, content strategy on Instagram, web analytics, engagement metrics, feedback tools in the digital environment – are presented fragmentarily or are absent altogether in the previous training programmes. Yet digital marketing constitutes a distinct field of competencies with its own framework and research agenda [3]. Educational literature of the traditional genre is oriented towards forming theoretical knowledge, while the applied digital competencies that are most in demand in practice are not systematically developed. The gap is therefore not between theory and practice in general, but specifically between the declared content of training and the concrete digital reality of libraries.

This gap defines a clear pedagogical task. The reform of LIS curricula should treat the digital environment not as an auxiliary topic within a general marketing course, but as an

independent object of study, with its own national specificity. For Uzbekistan this means, in particular, a dedicated focus on Telegram as the central communication platform, on the multilingual communication environment, and on the tools of measuring digital engagement. Such an approach allows the training to correspond simultaneously to international standards of professional preparation and to the real conditions of the national professional environment.

It is important to emphasise that the formation of digital marketing competencies is not only a technical task. The very recognition of marketing competency as a necessary element of professional preparation for information specialists has been substantiated in the international literature [4]. The analysis of the practice of ILCs shows that marketing activity in libraries often exists without being recognised as marketing at the conceptual level. Therefore, the development of digital marketing competencies in future specialists simultaneously solves a deeper problem: it provides graduates with the conceptual language and analytical tools to transform spontaneously implemented practices into conscious, goal-oriented professional activity.

Conclusion

The conducted analysis allows the following conclusions to be drawn. First, the digital environment of libraries in Uzbekistan has a pronounced national specificity, in which digital channels, primarily Telegram, occupy the central place in communication practice. Second, the corresponding digital marketing competencies are presented in the professional training of LIS specialists fragmentarily, which creates a systemic gap between the content of education and the real environment of professional activity. Third, the reform of curricula should treat the digital environment as an independent object of study and take into account the national specificity of the digital ecosystem.

On this basis, the integration of digital marketing competencies into LIS curricula is proposed as a necessary direction for reforming professional training. Such integration not only equips graduates with the skills demanded by the modern digital environment, but also enables them to transform spontaneous marketing practices into conscious professional activity. This direction appears relevant for library and information education in other countries of Central Asia, which face similar challenges of aligning training programmes with the rapidly changing digital reality of libraries.

References:

1. American Marketing Association. Definitions of Marketing. 2017. URL: <https://www.ama.org/the-definition-of-marketing-what-is-marketing/>
2. Wang J., Wang S., Liu Y. A Study on the Current Status and Driving Force of Library Marketing in the Digital Age // Publications (MDPI). 2025. Vol. 13, No. 2. Art. 21. DOI: 10.3390/publications13020021.
3. Kannan P.K., Li A. Digital marketing: A framework, review and research agenda // International Journal of Research in Marketing. 2017. Vol. 34, No. 1. P. 22–45.
4. Singh R. Marketing competency for information professionals // Education for Information. 2017. Vol. 33, No. 1.
5. Grebenyuk M.V. Axborot-kutubxona markazlari faoliyatida marketing texnologiyalarining rivojlanishi: nazariy modeldan amaliyot tahliliga // Muhandislik va iqtisodiyot. 2026. No. 6-1. B. 331–334.