NWU®

Library and Information Service

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

1   Purpose

The NWU Corporate Relations and Marketing Office implements the NWU Media Strategy and promotes the visual presence of the campuses while positioning them in the broader context of the NWU. A Communication Strategy for the Library and Information Service (LIS) is necessary to make the libraries, its services, resources, and facilities visible to internal and external stakeholders, but also to ensure that LIS staff on all three campuses are well informed about LIS activities and staff matters.

2   Objectives

To provide mechanisms for the LIS to portray a clear and consistent image of library services and news to

fulfil the library's vision, mission, and strategic goals,
to meet the information needs of users and LIS staff,
to attract new users,
to highlight LIS events, staff activities and projects,

to increase the use of library services, facilities, and resources to position the library on and off campus.

All online content to be published, bearing in mind user technologies such as desktop computers, tablets, and other mobile devices.

3   Scope of Application

This document is applicable to library marketing, communication, and outreach activities. The following documents are integral components of this strategy and must be read in conjunction with one another and with the paragraphs below:

* NWU Communication Policy
* Social Media Guidelines for NWU and Staff
* NWU Social media Framework
* NWU Online Publications Framework
* NWU Brand Policy
* Language Policy of the NWU

4   Marketing tools

Different tools are used to position and promote the library on and off campus. The LIS marketing material reflects the aligned services and facilities of the libraries on all three campuses.

4.1   Library Website

The LIS website is an essential communication tool that provides pathways which link users with library content, regardless of where they are. The LIS showcases its online presence with the maintenance of a user- friendly and intuitive web page. The Librarian Web Development plays an important role to ensure that the library, its resources, facilities and services are visible, and that marketing material or news messages are portrayed in a creative and clear way. A website committee as compiled by the Manager: Information Systems assists the Librarian Web Development in this regard.

4.2 Social media

The LIS recognizes the importance and benefits of communicating through social media as a powerful vehicle for the communication of relevant news to the university community, to listen to the voices of students and employees, to connect with its audience online, as an important tool for branding and promoting the public image of the university, and to build goodwill. Only the mandated spokesperson of the LIS is authorized to communicate in the social media on behalf of the NWU LIS. All publications on social media platforms, whether informal or formal, must support NWU strategic and operational objectives and comply with the NWU Social Media Framework.

4.3 Library blog

LIS news reports regarding library events, involvement in campus and outreach activities, conference attendance, staff matters and achievements as well as library projects need to be published on the library blog. The blog is a powerful tool to ensure that LIS staff and other blog followers are informed about the latest news, as they are all subscribed to the blog and receive notifications of new posts via email.

- The Senior Manager: Outreach, Projects and Quality (OPQ) serves as the central clearing point for library news reports to ensure a consistent library identity, to avoid duplication of reporting and also for quality assurance purposes.
- Blog content must be provided in Word format, plus 2-3 clear pictures if available.
- The Senior Manager OPQ acknowledges receipt within two working days and ensures that reporting takes place within one week after information was received.
- Feedback as received from the different NWU libraries on the same events, is consolidated.
- Credit is given to the LIS staff who assisted with the information feedback.
- Language edited reports and pictures are then provided to the Librarian Web Development for posting on the blog.

4.4 Other social media

The webmaster publishes the blog reports also on applicable social media like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

4.5 Library brochures for different user groups

The library has information brochures, designed by the NWU Branding and Communication Office, which portray the services for the main user groups.

- Undergraduate survival guide
- Postgraduate support guide - indicating library support throughout the research process
- Academic staff guide

The brochures are available online and in print format. The brochures are developed by the Senior Manager OPQ in consultation with the Director and Managers for Information and Learning Services, and are updated annually.

4.6 You Tube videos

YouTube videos are available to make the undergraduates and postgraduates aware of library support, spaces and services.

- NWU Libraries: Welcome first years! – virtual tour of the three campus library spaces, focusing on the services and support for first years and undergraduates.
- NWU Libraries: virtual tour of spaces, focusing on research support to postgraduates.

4.7 LIS Annual calendar

Annual LIS calendars that display the academic calendar as well as library events, are distributed over all three campuses. The content of this calendar is compiled by the Senior Manager OPQ, based on the academic calendar of the NWU. Library events are also included. The calendar is very popular amongst staff and students and is available in electronic and printed format.

4.8   LibGuides

LibGuides (Library Guides), prominently visible on the library web page, are developed by Faculty Librarians and provide interactive access to library and research services, resources, training activities and material in subject context. There needs to be a LibGuide for each subject group as it has proven to be very useful in communication with users, - also an effective tool during training sessions to different user groups.

4.9   LIS Annual Report

The LIS Annual Report is consolidated by the Senior Manager OPQ. This is an important marketing and communication tool. The Annual Reports are submitted annually at the May SLiSC Meeting and communicated to LIS staff to take note of accomplishments, challenges and trends of the past year.   The Annual Reports are available on the LIS web page electronically, but a few copies are also printed annually.

5   Marketing Activities

Marketing activities are planned according to the annual calendar (as mentioned above) and are communicated at the beginning of each year. Staff from all campuses are involved in marketing activities. After each event, news reports and pictures are supplied to the Senior Manager OPQ for alignment of content and quality assurance. The webmaster publishes the reports on the library web page news column, blog, Facebook and Twitter.

Involvement and visibility in the following campus activities are required:

- First year induction program – to make first year students aware of how the libraries can support them.
- Campus Open Days – to create library awareness amongst prospective first years.
- General Career Days – make campus students aware of Information Sciences and career possibilities.
- Postgraduate Webinars – attended by Faculty Librarians to portray library information and research services and facilities to postgraduates.

Participation in and presentation of activities during Library Week, Information Literacy Week and Open Access Week are excellent opportunities to showcase the library's professional positioning in the university community.

6   Stakeholders

6.1   Recruitment and Brand Communications Office

Marketing and promotional material are designed by the Recruitment and Brand Communications Office. The designers ensure that all designs are branded in line with the NWU CID guidelines.

6.2   Corporate Communications Office

The journalists in the Corporate Communications Office are important partners in the provision of a wider presence of selective library matters or activities. They have the authority to post messages or news reports on different platforms, reaching staff and students, and to assist with news coverage in local and national newspapers.

7   Other news platforms

7.1   @NWU

@NWU is an institutional communication tool, available as an effective medium to convey important matters to the university community. Messages are delivered to the email of all NWU staff twice per week. The Senior Manager OPQ is the liaison for @NWU matters.

7.2   Eish!

Eish! is the official staff newsletter of the NWU and is distributed in Afrikaans, English and Setswana to all staff members of the NWU. This is an excellent platform to share library success stories or newsworthy articles.

7.3   LIASA-in-Touch

This is the official magazine of the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA). Newsworthy reports as well as reports regarding staff matters (new appointments and resignations), are provided to the Editor of this journal for publishing. Engaging on this platform ensures that the professional LIS community in South Africa takes note of NWU LIS matters, activities and achievements.