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Master thesis:

**Marketing opportunities for digital collections in the
University libraries in Serbia: competences of the
employees and recommendations**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The biggest change that all libraries (be they academic, special, or public) underwent in the past decade is the so-called “digital shift”. It implies both the shift from classical to digital content as well as the shift from classical to online services. Digital content is here to be understood as both digitized and digital-born. Although there is a distinction between the two, for the purposes of this paper, it will only be stated, but not considered in greater detail. Digitized content is the product of the process of digitization. Most simply put, digitization is the process of converting information into digital form, so that it can be recognized by computers and other electronic devices. Information here can entail text, image, and analog audio and/or video signal. The basic aim is to preserve that information long term, as well as to make it more accessible to users worldwide. The process of digitization thus serves twofold purpose: preservation and democratization of culture, as the digitized data is made accessible more widely. On the other hand, digital-born content is the one that was primarily created in digital form, such as e-books, websites, electronic art, etc.

Serbian libraries in the 21st century have already dealt with „digital shift“ rather successfully – a majority of them have adopted electronic services such as OPAC, electronic delivery of documents, and databases, and are present online via their websites. They are also increasingly working on digitization of documents; according to the Serbian Law on Culture (2009) and its article 6, one of the key cultural interests in Serbia is the encouragement of use of the new technologies in the culture, especially information technology and digitalization. Yearly open calls for the financing of projects dedicated to the preservation and protection of cultural heritage of the Ministry of Culture are in line with that trend. In 2014 alone, the Ministry will devote almost 35 million dinars for this purpose.¹

However, a systematic approach in the standardization of digitization is still being established. There is still no integrated information system that would connect the cultural and scientific institutions, by grouping the heritage, and by feeding and distributing information through

¹ Rezultati Konkursa za finansiranje ili sufinansiranje projekata iz oblasti kulturnog nasleđa u Republici Srbiji u 2014, <http://www.kultura.gov.rs/cyr/konkursi/rezultati-konkursa-za-finansiranje-ili-sufinansiranje-projekata-iz-oblasti-kulturnog-nasledja-u-republici-srbiji-u-2014-> ((accessed on July 10th, 2014)

various clusters and databases. There is no clear state digitization policy (or any other cultural policy, for that matter). And although this affects digitization endeavors of the libraries, questioning their sustainability in the long-term, there is no question of the purposefulness of these actions: digitization of data is here to stay, and digital content will continue to be produced increasingly.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the digital content in the university libraries in Serbia (in Belgrade, Nis and Kragujevac) by performing a multiple case study, using observation, interview and survey. The focus, however, will not be on the production of digital data, but rather on its usage (or lack thereof) by library users.

The main hypothesis is that the digital collections in the university libraries in Serbia are underused partly because they are not marketed appropriately.

The secondary hypotheses are:

- Current systematizations do not match current needs of their respective communities, and the persons who do market digital collections do so not because their job description requires them to, but because of their personal enthusiasm and commitment.
- Due to the lack of official requirement to manage online content and services, the employees that do so are not professionally trained, but rather self-taught enthusiasts, which impacts their performance; knowledge transfer from marketing specialists (especially those active in the field of digital marketing) would benefit them greatly
- Systematizations of work in university libraries are outdated and not relevant in the digital environment

2. BACKGROUND

2.2. About digital content

There is a distinction in literature between a digital library and a digital repository and it is important to state it here, as this paper will deal with both.

According to 2014 IFLA manifesto on digital libraries, „A digital library is an online collection of digital objects, of assured quality, that are created or collected and managed according to internationally accepted principles for collection development and made accessible in a coherent and sustainable manner, supported by services necessary to allow users to retrieve and exploit the resources.

A digital library forms an integral part of the services of a library, applying new technology to provide access to digital collections. Within a digital library collections are created, managed and made accessible in such a way that they are readily and economically available for use by a defined community or set of communities.

A collaborative digital library allows public and research libraries to form a network of digital information in response to the needs of the Information Society. The systems of all partners in a collaborative digital library must be able to interoperate.

A digital library complements digital archives and initiatives for the preservation of information resources. “²

As for the repository, “A digital repository is a mechanism for managing and storing digital content. Repositories can be subject or institutional in their focus. Putting content into an institutional repository enables staff and institutions to manage and preserve it, and therefore derive maximum value from it. A repository can support research, learning, and administrative processes. Repositories use open standards to ensure that the content they contain is accessible in that it can be searched and retrieved for later use. The use of these agreed international standards

² IFLA/UNESCO Manifesto for Digital Libraries, <http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/digital-libraries/documents/ifla-unesco-digital-libraries-manifesto.pdf> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

allows mechanisms to be set up which import, export, identify, store and retrieve the digital content within the repository.

Digital repositories may include a wide range of content for a variety of purposes and users. What goes into a repository is currently less an issue of technological or software ability, and more a policy decision made by each institution or administrator. Typically content can include research outputs such as journal articles or research data, e-theses, e-learning objects and teaching materials, and administrative data. Some repositories only take in particular items (such as theses or journal papers), whilst others seek to gather any credible scholarly work produced by the institution; limited only by each author's retained rights from publishers. However, some more complex objects (websites, advanced learning objects, 3D topographical representations and other data sets) do present a technological challenge”³

In other words, a digital library is any collection of digital objects (usually texts, but not necessarily) that forms an integral part of a library's collections. An example of a digital library can be digitized old books or newspapers from a particular library's holdings. A digital repository is more associated with academic libraries, as it is a mechanism for storing and managing digital content that can later be used for research purposes. While it is important to make the distinction between the two, it is also worthwhile noting that, in university libraries that are the focus of this paper, both are present and both (jointly) form digital collections. In further discussion, the term „digital collections“ will be used to note both content from repositories and from elsewhere.

2.3. Justification of the topic

Why choose university libraries as topic of research? University libraries, as primarily academic, have by definition a different role in the community than public (“narodne”) libraries. Their aim is primarily to provide support to the research and teaching processes at their respective universities, and less so to animate the public and to promote love of reading and literacy.

³ The Repositories Support Project, <http://www.rsp.ac.uk/start/before-you-start/what-is-a-repository/> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

However, at the same time, they are open to general public and are subject to the same laws and regulations as other libraries, and are facing the same challenges and dilemmas.

According to the available data, it is safe to say that the majority of public libraries in Serbia have coped with the digital shift rather successfully – numerous successfully completed digitalization projects (some of them international) testify to the speed with which libraries adjusted to the content shift, while their amazing online visibility shows, if not the actual online services, then at least the readiness and willingness to implement them. But what about our academic libraries?

Before answering that question, we need to clarify which academic libraries this paper will deal with, and which will be excluded, and why.

There are seven state universities in Serbia today: University of Belgrade, University of Kragujevac, University of Niš, University in Kosovska Mitrovica (dislocated from Priština, Kosovo and Metochia), State University of Novi Pazar, University of Novi Sad, and University of Arts in Belgrade. The first four have their university libraries, while in Novi Sad Matica Srpska library performs the function of the central university library by providing literature for the academics. There is also “Central library” located in the university premises which coordinates the work of faculty libraries, but it is a relatively small one, with only two employees and mostly run by volunteers. As for the one in Kosovska Mitrovica, it has been operational since 2007, so it is too young and underdeveloped to be eligible to be the topic of this research.⁴ State University of Novi Pazar was founded in 2006, and although it does have a library, no data about it is available, apart from its online catalogue. The official website of the University states only that the library „is in the process of being formed”.⁵ As for the University of Arts, it consists of four separate faculties and an Interdisciplinary center, each with their own library, but without a central one.

⁴ Before the University of Priština was dislocated to Kosovska Mitrovica, the function of university library was performed by National and University library of Priština. However, as the tensions between Serbs and Albanians that eventually lead to the declaration of independence of Kosovo heightened, the Serbs dislocated some parts of library holdings to National library of Serbia in Belgrade and some to Kosovska Mitrovica. The remaining holdings (mostly in Albanian language) remain in Priština.

⁵ Prikaz objekata i sadržaja Državnog univerziteta u Novom Pazaru, [file:///C:/Users/PCx/Downloads/OBJEKTIUNIVERZITETA%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/PCx/Downloads/OBJEKTIUNIVERZITETA%20(1).pdf) (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

Therefore, the topic of this research will be the three university libraries in Belgrade, Niš and Kragujevac, and the research itself will be performed as a multiple-case study.

There is yet another issue that needs additional clarification: university libraries are not the only academic libraries in Serbia. Each faculty at each University has its own library, as do most research institutions (institutes, academies, various centers etc.). However, there are two major differences between university libraries on the one hand and faculty and special libraries on the other hand: the first is the fact that they are not independent units, but function as departments/organizational units within their respective institutions. This directly affects the way they are being financed, creating a huge gap among them and making the comparison much more difficult. The second (and in the author's opinion, bigger) difference lies in their users: faculty libraries are by definition closed institutions, open only to their own students and researchers. Once a person graduates and leaves faculty, for example, they can no longer use the services of the said library, or, indeed, have any need to do so. University libraries are open to general public, by contrast. This greatly affects the way their services, holdings and programs are marketed: the need for marketing is much greater, as is, indeed, the need to attract and engage more users.

Having thus narrowed our research to only three institutions (albeit large ones), we need to examine the level at which they operate when it comes to digital content.

A superficial overview shows that they seem to have embraced the "digital shift" completely: all three of them offer both digital content and services that facilitate its use.

However, it is the author's intention to investigate this from a different perspective. Namely, the focus will be less on demonstrating what those libraries did achieve and more on investigating what they did not, and that from a managerial perspective. In other words, the author will take a deeper look into the internal organization of the said libraries – investigate their job systematizations, internal organizations, job descriptions and responsibility delegations in order to find out who the responsible persons for managing online content and services are, what their job descriptions entail and how they are incorporated in the overall mission and vision of their respective institutions.

2.4. Methodology description

In order to prove the hypotheses, the author will primary use qualitative research strategy. This strategy is more flexible and can help the author interpret and better understand the complex reality of a given situation. It is also important to choose research design which will provide a framework for the collection and analysis of data. Having in mind that this research will first examine separate cases, three independent organizations, it should start by implementing a case study design. Observation, interview and survey will be used.

Indicators to be compared are the following:

- Financing and budget
- Official documents on internal organization (systematization documents, departments, delegation of responsibilities)
- Employees (core competencies)
- Number of users and circulation statistics
- Digital collections themselves
- PR and marketing activities

The indicators will be examined by data collection, using both publicly available data (university libraries' official websites) and the data obtained from in-depth interviews with employees (preferably with managers, or, should they prove unavailable for interviews, mid-range managerial staff), as well as data obtained from a survey which was distributed to the library users in all three cities in order to determine their level of satisfaction with their library's services.

The survey was conducted in July and August 2014 and consisted of 7 questions that aimed at determining who the typical user of a university library is. Age, gender, and employment status were assessed, followed by several short, multiple-choice questions with the aim of determining what the typical user uses the library for, i.e. what are the most common reasons for using the

library, as well as determining which of the library services are most underused and why. The survey was distributed both online and offline, in order to facilitate data collection.

On the basis of collected information and the theoretical background about the preferred level of performance in academic libraries, some conclusions will be drawn and overall hypothesis either confirmed or rejected.

The theoretical background will be determined from the secondary data collection, i.e. review of literature by established authors in this field, both from the country and abroad. Such authors include Denise Garofalo (who taught library science at State University of New York), Luisa Alvite, PhD (professor in the Department of library and information science at University of Leon, Spain) and Gordana Stokić Simončić, PhD (who teaches a range of subjects at the Department of Library and information science at the University of Belgrade). Books, articles from scholarly journals, as well as blog posts and other online content will be examined. Best practices in the field of digital library marketing, found in existing literature, will also be presented as means of establishing the desired level of performance with which our target case studies can be compared.

3. UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN SERBIA

3.1. University library „Svetozar Marković“, Belgrade

University library „Svetozar Markovic“ from Belgrade (UBSM) is the biggest and oldest university library in Serbia, and the central (or „parent“) library for both University of Belgrade and all other academic libraries in Serbia, as well as specialized libraries in academic institutions in Central Serbia. It was founded in 1921, and it is also the only one that can be proud of a building that was specifically designed as a library; Library building at Bulevar Kralja Alexandra 71 is the first building intentionally built as a library in Serbia in 1926 with donations from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The Department of Folk Literature is the only one located outside this building, in the House of Vojislav Jovanovic Marambo in 24 Bircaninova Street.

UBSM caters for the needs of students and researchers of the University of Belgrade, the largest and oldest university in Serbia, with about 80 000 students and 4800 researchers today.

UBSM's collection is rather impressive and includes more than 1,5 million items, mostly monographs and journals, but also manuscripts, old and rare books, and non-book material (mostly maps and atlases, but also cds and dvds, posters etc.). A significant portion of the collection is visible via the union catalogue COBISS, but not all of it. This catalogue contains data on all publications acquired after the 1988 and all older publications that have been borrowed in the meantime. For older publications, card catalogue is still used and these publications are circulated by hand-filling the reverse, while the newer publications can be both reserved and circulated automatically. They offer a full range of services to their users, from standard ones (such as circulation, reading rooms, internet access, reprographic services etc.) to more sophisticated ones, such as citation index searches, advanced user education and bibliographies-on-demand. User education includes on-site instruction, free classes held every Wednesday at the library, as well as outreach – visits to faculties and high schools in Belgrade.

The library boasts several reading rooms, including an electronic one (opened in early 2014) and an Arts center (essentially a gallery, but also used for film screenings, lectures, presentations and similar events). There are also several specialized spaces, such as Austriana (a collection of

books on Austria), professors' reading room, EU Info center, Center for students with disabilities, as well as legacies of distinguished scholars and writers.

Users' space is large, but frequently considered inadequate, as all reading rooms are occupied to their full capacity, especially during exam terms. This is why they introduced longer working hours for the largest reading room, which is open until 11 p.m. on weekdays.

Being located in Belgrade, the capital, is both an asset and a threat for UBSM. On the one hand, the number of potential users is much greater than in any other city in Serbia, but on the other, so is the competition. The National Library of Serbia, the biggest and best-stocked library in the country, and Belgrade City Library (also well-stocked and very active in the cultural field) are both located in Belgrade. The fact that each faculty belonging to Belgrade University also has a library, as well as numerous privately-owned universities, is also a threat. In such circumstances, UBSM has to work really hard to establish their place as the leading scientific library in the country. The fact that they perform the 'parent' function for other academic libraries helps a lot.

The main parent function is to connect work of academic libraries with relevant institutions in the country and abroad, to equalize and modernize their work, and to deal with issues of regulating the status of libraries and librarians, as well as to organize professional training for librarians. Other functions include the monitoring and supervision of university libraries and research institutes, collecting and entering data into a database of these libraries, librarian training for beginners, as well as organizing practical work for the students of Library and Information Science from Faculty of Philology in Belgrade.

In order to better coordinate the work of university libraries, Serbian Association of Academic Libraries was founded in 1992 and located in UBSM. Libraries of all six universities and major libraries with research institutes joined the Association. At the time of its establishment, Serbian Academic Library Association had fifty members, and now there are over a hundred and fifty. The Association is one of the founders of the Serbian Library Consortium for Coordinated Acquisition KoBSON.

Parent functions also cover special libraries with the scientific - research character in Serbia. Since the main task of the parent functions is to create a unique network, which would connect libraries with each other and the world, UBSM in cooperation with relevant members of the Association, is working to create a modern library network and to disseminate the new knowledge in librarianship. Former Association's journal "IZBUS" which was prepared at the

University Library since 1992, changed in 2000 to Infoteka - Journal of Information and Library Science, which publishes scientific and technical papers in the field of information and library science, as well as the documents from conferences organized by the Association.

Apart from the journal "Infoteka" they publish books, catalogues, bibliographies and other items, either alone or in cooperation with other institutions.

UBSM also strives to be an active participant in the cultural life of the city of Belgrade and regularly organizes events such as exhibitions, debates, film screenings, lectures, presentations and the like. They also establish cooperation with numerous institutions and organizations both on local, national, and international level, and have participated in or coordinated numerous projects.

Not surprisingly, their internal organization is the most complex one among the three respective libraries; the work is divided into four divisions, one of them for "general affairs" and three expert ones, which are further divided into 8 departments, sometimes divides further into sections. They are the following: Book Acquisition and Cataloguing Division (consists of Cataloging Department and Book Acquisition Department), Library Materials Processing Division (consists of Collections Department – further divided into Section of Periodicals and Section of Folk Literature - and Rare Books Department) and the largest one, Scientific Information and Development Division (consists of four departments: Scientific Information and Education Department, Reference and Interlibrary Loan Department, Development and System Administration, Book Digitization and Cultural Activities Department and Supervision Department).

In 2005, they defined their mission, goals and values, but, interestingly, no vision of further development. Moreover, they do not have a strategic development plan, only yearly working plans.

"Mission

University Library "Svetozar Markovic" (UBSM) is the central library of the University of Belgrade and the main library for all university and academic libraries in Serbia, as well as specialized libraries in academic institutions in Central Serbia. It collects, preserves and takes care of further use of the unique records of human creativity.

Allowing access to written knowledge, encouraging and supporting the flow of information, UBSM participates in educational, scientific, professional and artistic work of Belgrade and the Serbian academic community. It is the guardian of the written heritage of the University of Belgrade, and because of its long history, preserves and shares part of the Serbian cultural heritage.

University Library in Belgrade is an educational center with rich collections, services, and library and information knowledge. We participate in the educational and research work of the University, the intellectual and professional development of students as well as lifelong learning of all our users.

Goals

- selection, acquisition, preservation and organization of access to original records of human thought and creativity, regardless of their ownership and form,
- organizing digitization processes and managing digital collections of educational and scientific literature with consistent respect for copyrights,
- organizing and managing repositories of doctoral dissertations in classical and digital form,
- organization of library services on the internet and active participation in distance learning programs,
- organizing and managing information system of scientific research at the University according to the European methodology CRIS
- implementation of bibliographic control for works created under the auspices of the University of Belgrade and University of Arts in Belgrade
- raising the level of information literacy, as well as professional and creative development of library users and librarians,
- providing easily accessible, safe and comfortable space for a variety of customer services, and for librarians' work,
- the use of innovative technology that provides a high level of productivity
- incentives for professional communication and cooperation with partner libraries, colleges and other educational institutions in the region and the world, as well as the library and educational institutions in the country,

- encouraging the development of creative ideas and dynamic organization that can respond to changing needs and goals of the University,
- constant increase of efficiency through evaluation of accomplishments of the Library.
- encouragement and support of scientific research and professional pedagogical and artistic work at the University,
- organizing electronic repositories and physical collections of scientific and educational publications of the University,
- Supporting free access to all information sources.

Values

Knowledge

- encouragement and support of scientific research, pedagogical, professional and artistic work at the University,
- organizing electronic repositories and physical collections of scientific and educational publications of the University,
- Supporting free access to all information sources.

Quality

- commitment to quality,
- acknowledgment of high standards of professional performance,
- hiring the best staff, the best use of collections and resources for professional work
- commitment to lifelong learning for personal development and prosperity of the institution,
- continual improvement of work processes, procedures and services to meet the goals we serve,
- fostering a high level of work ethic and being responsible for the work we do.

Ethics

- fostering equality and mutual respect for people,
- encouragement of diversity in attitudes and openness to new ideas and events
- respect for personality and individuality of each individual,
- incentive for compassion, empathy and tolerance,
- protecting the privacy and dignity of all customers and employees,
- commitment to environmental protection in our community.

Intellectual Freedom

- provision of free access to Internet services and information resources, regardless of their ownership and form,
- support the independent decision-making, research and cultural development and lifelong learning,
- maintain collections which represent different political beliefs and doctrines.”⁶

3.2. University library „Nikola Tesla“ , Niš

University library „Nikola Tesla“ from Niš (hence UBNT) was founded in 1967, two years after the University of Nis was established.

University of Nis, the second largest university in the country today, has about 28 000 students and 1560 researchers.

UBNT collection counts about 160 000 items, 92 000 monographs and 70 000 volumes of journals. It also has non-book material as well as some old and rare books, but their number is fairly insignificant. About 1/3 of the collection are books in foreign languages. They are a deposit library for the scientific output of the University of Nis, and have a large collection of doctoral and master’s theses, all scientific journals, and most textbooks published in Nis. They also have several legacies of distinguished individuals from Nis area, as well as a large collection of material on life and work of Nikola Tesla.

Their entire collection is online, inside the union catalogue COBISS, however, only about 1/3 of it is actually visible in the union catalogue, whereas the rest can only be viewed and accessed locally. The reason for this is that those 2/3 are those records that were migrated into COBISS from their previous database, ISIS, and the 1/3 are those records that were catalogued after the migration. Although they state that they wish the entire collection were visible, this is actually not perceived as major problem by library staff and management. Indeed, it does not pose problems in everyday work with users, as they are instructed to use only the local database. The circulation is fully automated, including the possibility to reserve material from home.

⁶ Univerzitetska biblioteka “Svetozar Marković”, <http://www.ubsm.bg.ac.rs/engleski/strana/69/misija-vizija-i-vrednosti> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

They offer standard library services to their users (circulation, reading rooms, bibliographic instruction, reprographic services) and their advantage locally is that they are the only library in town that offers the interlibrary loan service from the country and abroad (the public library in Nis is not a member of COBISS and does not partake in interlibrary loan, except on very rare occasions). The user education is performed both on-site and in outreach programs, in cooperation with students' associations and some faculties of University of Nis.

They are located inside the University building, and although the building itself is not well-suited for library purposes (inadequate storage space, small reading rooms etc), its unique location and historical significance are an asset for the library.⁷ They offer four reading rooms, including a computer-equipped one, and a gallery on the second floor that is also sometimes used for lectures, workshops, seminars etc. The entire users' area was thoroughly reconstructed in 2013, thanks to the EU-funded project "Adaptation and furnishing the user's area of University Library and of the Information System (JUNIS) at the University of Nis"

The library publishes its own publications and publications in cooperation with other institutions or individuals, within the three series. The first two are a part of the Digital repository: The Bibliographies Series comprises bibliographies of scholarly writings of the Nis University teaching staff, bibliographies of journal articles and catalogues. The Monographs Series includes books related to Nikola Tesla, the city of Nis, and the librarianship. The Biography Series publishes monographs about important scholars of their region.

They are also very active in the field of event organization: they host visiting exhibitions (or organize them themselves), as well as presentations, lectures, meetings etc. They cooperate with all relevant cultural and scientific institutions in the city of Nis, as well as with non-governmental organizations, students' associations etc.

Their internal organization is a simpler one: the work is divided into 5 departments, one of them for "general affairs" (legal, economic and maintenance) and 4 expert ones: Development department, Monograph Acquisition and Cataloguing Department, Periodicals Acquisition and Cataloguing Department and Information and Lending Department. It is important to note that this organizational structure is rather new, as it was established in late 2013, when Development department was introduced as a separate one, employing one senior librarian and a system administrator. Prior to that, the system administrator was working under the general affairs

⁷ The building is one of the oldest in Nis and is classified as a cultural good.

department, and the librarian for the Information and Lending one. This change occurred because the management thought it necessary to ease the workload from Information and Lending, as they were fully aware of the growing number of various jobs and obligations, including (among other tasks) PR and marketing. It is too early to estimate whether this move was effective and efficient. However, it is at least indicative of the awareness on the part of the director that the prior systematization was no longer adequate.

In early 2012, they set up a mid-term strategic plan (2013-2017), and defined their mission, vision and values for the first time. The work on the strategic plan was partly induced by their participation in the Tempus project „New library services at Western Balkan Universities“, and is a result of several months of team work of the employees from different departments and of the extensive survey undertaken by all employees and other stakeholders in the summer of 2012. This strategic plan is the basis for all their yearly operating plans.

„Mission

The mission of the University library is to provide information support to teaching, scientific and research processes at the University of Nis, as well as to satisfy all other educational and cultural needs of academic and wider community.

Vision

University library is the central library of the University of Nis and a dynamic European library-information and cultural center.

Values

- satisfied users
- providing access to various information sources with the aim of improving teaching and scientific-research work.
- permanent professional improvement of the employees
- enthusiasm of the employees
- dedication to science, knowledge and educational processes.“⁸

⁸ Univerzitetska biblioteka “Nikola Tesla”, http://www.ubnt.ni.ac.rs/pdf/Dokumentu/Misija_i_vizija_UBN.pdf (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

3.3. University library Kragujevac

University library Kragujevac (hence UBKG) is the youngest and smallest university library in Serbia. It was founded in 1978, two years after the University of Kragujevac, which today has about 20 000 students and 1500 researchers.

UBKG owns a collection of about 100 000 items, mostly books and journals. Similarly to UBNT, there are other items such as old and rare books, and non-book material, but their number is not significant. Their entire collection is catalogued and visible inside the union catalogue COBISS, and this is their biggest advantage in comparison to other two libraries – although relatively small, the collection is visible in its entirety. The circulation is fully automated, including the possibility to reserve materials from home. Their relative „youth“ is also an asset when it comes to other issues of internal organization – unburdened with previous traditions and eager to establish their place as the most important scientific library in the central part of Serbia, they were able to adapt quickly to all changes and to respond to growing user’s demands with relative ease.

When it comes to the services for users, their advantage locally is that they, like UBSM in Belgrade, offer the service of citation for academics (something that the public library in Kragujevac cannot do and that emphasizes their role as the leading scientific library in town, and also something that UBNT does not practice). User education is carried out daily, on-site.

Their premises are inside the building of the Faculty of Law and, although not purposefully built for a library, the space appears to be adequate, especially after a major renovation in year 2010. Today they offer a spacious computer-equipped reading room with 50 places for readers and 10 places for free Internet access, periodical reading room with 20 places for readers, several storage rooms (depots) for storing publications, working offices for employees and a gallery (called University Gallery) that can also serve as a concert venue, because it has a piano. Numerous events are being organized in the gallery, including concerts, exhibitions, promotions, presentations and the like.

UBKG also publishes books, though they mostly focus on bibliographies of researchers of University of Kragujevac and exhibition catalogues.

As for the internal organization, theirs mirrors the one of UBNT: there are 5 departments, 4 of them expert (the names of the departments are remarkably similar to those of UBNT, namely

there are Monograph Acquisition and Cataloguing Department, Periodicals Acquisition and Cataloguing Department, Information and Lending Department, Scientific Information and Development department, and General, Legal and Financial Affairs). This systematization was also adopted in late 2013, both as a result of incorporating provisions from the Law on Library and Information field from 2011, and the perceived need to ease the workload from the system administrator, who was performing many more duties than just IT coverage.

They do not have a strategic development plan, nor official yearly operating plans. Unlike other two libraries, they also lack formulated vision, mission and values. Instead of following their own development strategy, they follow that of the University of Kragujevac and strive to integrate their own work into the overall direction in which their university is going. Although the lack of vision and mission for an academic library may seem like a disadvantage, in reality, this close bond that UBKG maintains with the University of Kragujevac is actually an asset: the rector's office is understanding of library needs (including financial ones) and very closely cooperates with library management in mutual desire to establish Kragujevac as a university center and attract potential students. In other words, although UBKG is a separate legal entity from the University of Kragujevac, they are as integrated as they can possibly be in current circumstances.

Although at a first glance rather different, the three university libraries have surprisingly much in common; their internal organizations are similar, as is their organizational culture.⁹ Admittedly, the Belgrade one is much bigger and consists of more departments, but essentially, they all follow the same logic in the way they organize their day-to-day activities; moreover, their vision and mission statements are similar (where applicable), as are their statutes and other internal

⁹ The values and behaviors that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of an organization. Organizational culture includes an organization's expectations, experiences, philosophy, and values that hold it together, and is expressed in its self-image, inner workings, interactions with the outside world, and future expectations. It is based on shared attitudes, beliefs, customs, and written and unwritten rules that have been developed over time and are considered valid. Also called corporate culture, it's shown in

- (1) the ways the organization conducts its business, treats its employees, customers, and the wider community,
- (2) the extent to which freedom is allowed in decision making, developing new ideas, and personal expression,
- (3) how power and information flow through its hierarchy, and
- (4) how committed employees are towards collective objectives.

It affects the organization's productivity and performance, and provides guidelines on customer care and service, product quality and safety, attendance and punctuality, and concern for the environment. It also extends to production-methods, marketing and advertising practices, and to new product creation. Organizational culture is unique for every organization and one of the hardest things to change. Definition from Business Dictionary: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/organizational-culture.html> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

documents; lastly, they all cooperate amongst themselves really well and have participated in several joint projects, including two major Tempus ones, that have significantly changed the way university libraries operate.

The first Tempus project took place in 2002-2004 and was called „Building Cooperative Academic Library Network in Serbia: Library Information System Development at the Universities of Belgrade, Niš and Kragujevac“. As the name suggests, this project built upon the establishment of COBISS union catalogue and information system, enabling the three university libraries (and their respective faculty ones) to undergo training and take part in the union catalogue.

The second Tempus project took place almost a decade later, and lasted 2010-2012. It was called „New Library Services at Western Balkan Universities“¹⁰ and was completed with great success. Its outcomes included transition to new library software COBISS 3 for all partner institutions, inclusion of more academic libraries into the union catalogue, establishment of digital repositories and extensive training for library staff in various segments of library work (not only cataloguing and circulation, but also strategic planning, for example).

As an important outcome of the project, all three Serbian universities adopted new regulations on doctoral theses, requiring candidates to provide electronic versions of their theses simultaneously with printed ones, as well as to sign a document that allows the respective university library to archive their work in the digital repository under the Creative Commons license of the author's choice.¹¹

This is an important step for three Serbian universities in question, as open access policy on research work is thus being implemented, enabling them to live up to the Berlin declaration that they were all so eager to adopt on paper.¹²

More in line with our theme, this is an important step for our university libraries, as it allows them greater visibility, better position at their respective universities, a chance to contribute to the open access ideology as well as to scientific progress in general, and lastly, but not least importantly, a promotional opportunity.

¹⁰ www.westbulnet.com

¹¹ More on Creative Commons licenses <http://creativecommons.org.rs/>

¹² Full text of Berlin Declaration, in English: http://www.zim.mpg.de/openaccess-berlin/berlin_declaration.pdf (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

Apart from these two projects, each university library has participated (or is currently participating) in other projects, some of them international and/or large-scale. Examples include “Europeana”, an international project, or “Serendipity in science, philosophy and the arts”, a national project, both currently in progress in UBSM.

3.4. Comparison of indicators

3.4.1. Financing and budget

Unlike public libraries, that are financed by the Ministry of Culture, university libraries fall under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Science, which completely terminated financing the acquisition of library material in 2007. Moreover, the deposit copy of textbooks and other material written by Belgrade university professors that used to be obligatory for UBSM is no longer the case under the new Law on library and Information field – it is only the National Library of Serbia that holds the deposit copies. The salaries for the employees are being paid regularly, as are the most basic maintenance fees, but virtually no money is being invested into collections enlargement or even in licensing fees for the participation in the union catalog COBISS. Needless to say, this has greatly affected the way university libraries operate. On the one hand, it reduced their acquisition policies to exchange and receiving gifts and donations, thus disabling planned procurement and lowering the quality of collections; on the other hand, this unfortunate situation forced them to adapt quickly to new circumstances and to seek alternative ways of financing – through projects, cooperation with corporations and entrepreneurs, donations and sponsorships. They were also forced to become more market-oriented and try to generate more revenues from user’s inscription fees, and charging for services that used to be either free of charge or much cheaper before this situation (interlibrary loan, renting of space, or specialized services). It is hard to determine which of the three libraries was most successful, as they not only participated in two major international projects together, but also, their local circumstances differ greatly. A quick glance into their official price lists clearly demonstrates that. UBSM charges most for their services, and the inscription fees, for example, go as high as 2 500 dinars (around 20 euro) per year for university professors, 2 000 dinars (17 euro) for employees and 1

500 (about 13 euro), for students, retired, and unemployed people. UBKG charges 1 200 dinars (10 euro) to professors and post-graduates, 800 (about 7 euro) for employees and 700 (6 euro) for students, while the unemployed pay 500 dinars (around 4 euro). A very special discount is given to freshmen students, who pay only 350 dinars (little less than 3 euro). UBNT charges only 600 dinars (about 5 euro) for employed people (whether university employees or regular citizens) and 500 dinars (circa 4 euro) for students, while the unemployed people can obtain their library card for as little as 300 dinars (2,5 euro) per year. The same trend is noticeable in charging other services, such as printing, photocopying etc., and the only area in which their prices are uniform is the interlibrary loan, because the prices for interlibrary loan in the country are determined by postage fees (the actual service is not charged), and the prices for international interlibrary loan are decided on consortium meetings and must be equal for all institutions providing that service throughout the country.

This discrepancy in pricelists is indicative of the differences in local circumstances, but also of their organizational culture. For example, UBNT maintain that they purposefully keep low prices in order to accommodate to the citizens' standard of living, which is lowest in the south of the country. This is, of course, a valid argument, as official statistical data on salaries and wages in Serbia, published each month by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia indeed corroborate that fact¹³. However, in determining prices for any service or activity, one must take into consideration much more than just the economic factor, because the buyer (customer, user) pays not only for the actual service, but also for the invisible attached costs, such as time and expertise needed to provide that service. The fact that UBNT takes into consideration only one aspect of price-determining (i.e. perceived purchasing ability of their users) goes to show that no effort whatsoever was placed into the process, and that they only took the easy way out. The same can be said for UBSM, albeit they are on the opposite scale of economic spectrum – Belgrade is indeed the municipality with highest purchasing power, but at the same time, the municipality with highest costs of living, which puts a heavy strain on the (already somewhat vulnerable) student population. The fact that the students receive no bigger discount than, say, retired people, may push the students' population away and make UBSM seem a student-unfriendly place, which would be in direct discrepancy with their formulated mission and goals.

¹³Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, report on employment and wages, May 2014
<http://webrzs.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/repository/documents/00/01/42/23/zp14062014.pdf> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

As far as UBKG is concerned, it is unclear whether their pricelist is a result of serious deliberation on all aspects of price calculation or a simple matter of finding a middle ground between their Belgrade and Nis counterparts; whichever the case, it is also indicative of their adaptive organizational culture. The fact that they charge least for freshmen students is an indicator of good strategic deliberation: enabling students to enroll for very little money for the first time and then increasing the price once they have already familiarized themselves with library offerings is a good marketing strategy.

On the other hand, despite very low income from inscription fees and other services, UBNT has had a lot of smaller but very successful local projects that enabled them to end each fiscal year with a positive balance. UBSM obviously generates much more money from users and services, including the money they receive to support their “parent” function as the central research library; they also participate in many more projects, both local, national and international; however, due to the fact that they also own the building they work in, a lot of money is being spent on maintenance, electricity and heating bills, etc. UBKG seems to be in most favorable position at the moment, because they both generate income and participate in projects. In fact, two of the faculties belonging to Kragujevac University regularly pay inscription fees for all their freshmen students, and they are also able to rent their space.

According to the Law on public procurement¹⁴, all three libraries are obliged to make plans for their annual budget as well as public procurements, but never realize them. It is not surprising, in such conditions, that neither of them plans for marketing funds; instead, money is being invested into marketing *ad hoc*. It is hard to determine how much money is actually being spent on marketing, but it is safe to assume that the amounts are indeed minimal.

¹⁴ Law on Public procurement, http://paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_javnim_nabavkama-new.html (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

3.4.2. Official documents

According to the freely available information, UBSM uses the statute from year 2003, and UBNT last changed theirs in February 2014, most probably to reflect on the last changes in Law on library and information field from 2011. In UBSM, the change was reflected in the internal policy manuals, but not in the statute.

When it comes to actual job descriptions, the Systematization manual of UBKG states that it is the Scientific Information and Development Department that performs the following functions:

“Information activities of the Library aim to provide all kinds of scientific and technical information on the library holdings and other information sources. The main purpose of information activities is to assist users in finding the necessary literature and relevant information in the holdings of the Library, as well as relevant databases, and electronic information sources available. Systematic education of users and librarians of academic libraries in the use of electronic information resources is one of the important segments of the information industry.

Department of Scientific Information and Development shall:

- Monitor the development of the scientific information and communications,
- Search databases in all fields of science,
- Provide oral and written bibliographic information on the basis of classical and electronic catalogs and secondary sources of information,
- Direct users to work with electronic information resources, online tools, databases, manuals etc,
- Work on information literacy, especially of students and prepare materials for courses tailored to different user groups,
- Prepare bibliography citations on the request of researchers,
- Develop and perform interlibrary loan of library and information materials and resources with libraries abroad
- Organize and prepare thematic exhibitions, cultural and scientific programs, promotions and professional meetings,

- Develop leaflets, guides and other informational materials about the library,
- Maintain Library website,
- Plan and implement digitization of publications from the Library holdings,
- Collect, create and maintain a digital repository of doctoral dissertations, publications and other educational materials and scientific production of the University,
- Develop and maintain a database of scientists at the University of Kragujevac,
- Plan and implement the automation of library operations,
- Maintain and enhance computer network,
- Establish contacts with the media.”¹⁵

Since this department provides most of information services to the users, it is unclear why the circulation department still contains the word “information” in its formal title; most probably the reason is that this is a remnant of previous systematization titles.

In UBNT, most of these activities are performed by Information and Lending Department:

“Information and Lending Department has the following responsibilities and duties:

- Organizes storage, protection and circulation of library materials,
- Organizes tasks in accordance with the Regulations on the use of holdings and the provision of services of the University Library, as passed by the Board, and in accordance with the Guidelines on the use of holdings and the provision of services of the University Library, as passed by the library manager,
- Monitors the development of library activities and special library information systems and science and technology,
- Provides information about library collections, how to use the resources and services provided by libraries, and organizes training for users of library resources,
- Circulates library materials for use in the library and outside, and keeps adequate records thereof,

¹⁵ Univerzitetska biblioteka Kragujevac <http://www.ub.kg.ac.rs/index.php/odeljenja/2011-10-19-22-59-33> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

- Provides oral and written bibliographic information on scientific and technical literature on the classical and automated, their own and other people's sources of information,
- Develops their own sources of information,
- Prepares and organizes thematic exhibitions and other library materials,
- Organizes interlibrary loan, domestic and foreign,
- Organizes publication promotions, and scientific and technical seminars,
- For analysis and statistical reports on the needs of users and the use of library funds, and the state library system of the University of Nis - organize education of library users,
- Develop informants, guides and user guides, the contributions of the media and professional journals, and other information and promotional material libraries, i.e. engages in the marketing of the library,
- Organizes maintenance of the website of the Library (updates content), as well as pages on other social networks, organizes cultural activities of the Library,
- keeps records of scientists of the University (E-CRIS system) - is working with other departments on issues of interest to the library.
- Works on the development of an integrated library system at the University of Nis.”¹⁶

At the same time, “work on library marketing” appears in the job description for the Development department, but not for the other two departments; moreover, the details of what “library marketing” here actually entails are not given.

For UBSM, the list of these duties is included in the job descriptions for System Administration, Book Digitization and Cultural Activities Department, operating within Scientific Information and Development Division. This department employs eight people, one of them with the title “Public relations and marketing associate”. As the name suggests, this department is in charge of the following activities:

- Plan and implement the automation of library operations
- maintain and enhance a computer network is planned in cooperation with other departments of the University of Belgrade and other scientific and cultural institutions

¹⁶ Document accessed in the library

- digitization of publications from the Library
- collect, place in digital repository and maintain a repository of digitized theses, publications, courses results and other scientific and educational activities of the University and take care of their maintenance and use
- prepare in cooperation with other departments and maintain the website of the library
- organize cultural and scientific programs, exhibitions, promotions, professional conferences, academic evenings, conferences, forums
- collect and process documentation related to programs and prepress and sets the appropriate materials to the web site of the library
- establish contacts with the media in connection with the implementation of the program of the Library.

Within this department, a specific person in charge of public relations called Associate Librarian for Public Relations and Marketing has the following job description:

“Coordinate public relations and organizing activities related to the promotion of the Library (press conferences, ceremonies and events); participate in the development of promotional materials to libraries and other marketing activities, preparing and collecting materials from other departments for publication on the website of the University Library and the presentation of the library and its results online, conferences and in the media, translates and proofreads materials, performs all other duties within programs and projects in the fields of culture and information; performs other duties as requested by the Head of Department”.¹⁷

As can be seen from these documents, official systematizations in all three libraries do entail work on marketing and public relations; however, these duties are not only distributed across different departments (Scientific Information and Development for UBSM and UBKG, and Information and Lending for UBNT), but, more importantly, are performed by varying number of people. In UBSM, the department employs eight people, but not all are engaged in marketing activities, as there are those who work exclusively on digitization or computer network administration (as the name of the department suggests). Therefore, apart from the Associate

¹⁷ Univerzitetska biblioteka “Svetozar Markovic”, pravilnik o organizaciji, http://www.unilib.bg.ac.rs/o_nama/sistemizacija.php (accessed on June 20th 2014)

Librarian for Public Relations and Marketing, there are also other colleagues who perform these duties, and, due to the fact that their number is changing, the team can count up to eight people, but not all of them come from this particular department. This “fluid” nature of organizing the work will be discussed further in the chapter on core competencies of the employees. In UBKG, the department employs three people, and all of them are in charge of these activities, with no interaction from other departments, while in UBNT, the department employs eight people, five engaged in circulation of library material, and other three in providing reference information, interlibrary loan, and other duties, marketing included. In practice, though, only one person is in charge of web marketing, while other two take care of more traditional aspects of external communication. Again, details will be given in the chapter on core competences of the employees.

3.4.3. Employees

UBSM permanently employs 100 people, UBNT 24, and UBKG 20. Having in mind the sheer size of their collections and number of services they provide, the number of employees is actually proportionally the same for all three libraries. At the time when this research was conducted, all relevant employees in all three libraries have completed the state license exam on librarianship.

When it comes to regular employment strategies, they all (expectedly) follow the same pattern: when a position opens up (due to someone’s retirement or career change), the vacancy is advertised with the local Employment Bureau, interested parties are interviewed and the most appropriate candidate is chosen. More often than not, the only competencies sought are the most basic ones – a university degree, knowledge of a foreign language, usually English, and some computer skills. Even the official job systematizations described in section 3.4.2. do not require candidates to have obtained a degree in LIS, although such degrees have been offered at the Faculty of Philology at the University of Belgrade since early ‘90s. In practice, the candidates with this degree will have some advantage over others, but this rule is more informal, as it is not stated in any official document. This may be viewed as a potential problem, as the people hired do not have any official education in librarianship and must undergo extensive training in order to be able to perform their daily tasks. Moreover, the fact that someone successfully passed the

state exam does not necessarily mean that they are experts in any field of librarianship, but neither does a degree in LIS – expertise entails not only theoretical knowledge, but also practice, dedication and life-long learning.

When it comes to professional education of employees, the three libraries employ somewhat different strategies – the two smaller libraries, UBNT and UBKG, strive to give opportunities for further professional education for as many people as possible, regardless of their current status and position. In practice, this may mean that someone employed, for example, in the Cataloguing department may attend a course in information retrieval or classification or vice versa. This is justified with the fact that the total number of employees is very small and people need to be educated in order to be empowered to step in and replace a colleague, if needed. On the one hand, this is a logical argument: if there is only one person that is an expert in their field of work, the inability to immediately replace that person (if needed) would be costly, both in time and effort. On the other hand, there is a potential danger of creating employees that are good enough at many things, but not really expert in anything. However, apart from courses that are required by law in order to pass the state license exam, and the courses that the employees attended during some project, very little money is actually being invested into further formal education of staff. Informal education is, if not exactly encouraged, at least approved upon, provided that it does not cost anything. This kind of organizational culture is potentially very dangerous in the long run, as it implies that the institution would rather spend money on purchasing books and/or equipment than invest in their employees.¹⁸

UBSM takes a different approach to professional education of employees – once a person is assigned a position within a specific department, they are expected and encouraged to continue their education within their line of work; attendance of the courses organized by Virtual library of Serbia's Education Centre is obligatory, and the attendance on various professional seminars, conferences, workshops, etc. is highly encouraged. Moreover, a lot of employees regularly publish in professional journals and some of them even obtained their Master's or PhD theses in LIS or related fields.

¹⁸ It is not the author's intention to diminish the importance of the fact that these institutions indeed operate on extremely tight budgets. However, the fact that the professional improvement of the employees was the first thing sacrificed when those budgets became cut is in direct discrepancy with their formulated mission and vision, and should thus be reviewed.

UBSM is the only one that takes on volunteers on regular basis; in late 2013 they have formed a „volunteers’ club“, in the effort to motivate young people to do volunteer work for them. The usual scenario is that a volunteer stays for 2-3 months, and he/she is engaged in those activities that regular staff has little time to do. More often than not, these activities include updating the website, social media profiles, digitization of documents, help in event organizing and running errands, but also learning about library work and engaging in more professional activities. They do not have to stay full time and receive no compensation for their work, only a certificate at the end of the arranged period. UBNT also sometimes takes on volunteers, but always in cooperation with their local Employment Agency. The volunteers usually stay a whole year and undergo a complete training in all relevant library work and are thus enabled to pass the state license exam, if they wish to do so. During that year, the Employment agency usually covers their transport fees and a symbolic payment. In that sense, they are actually interns, rather than “real” volunteers.

UBKG has never worked with volunteers, but they are considering the possibility of starting.

3.4.4. Number of users and circulation statistics

Although all libraries are reluctant to provide information on the number of registered users, official data can actually be obtained through Virtual Library of Serbia website¹⁹, but not for the year 2014, as the statistics are being extracted once a year only. Therefore, the data shown below is for the year 2013. Expectedly, UBSM has the biggest number of registered users - 38, 123 or 44% of students/researchers at the University of Belgrade. UBKG has 6,414, or 29% of students/researchers at the University of Kragujevac. UBNT has only 2,923, or about 10% of students/researchers at the University of Nis. However, we must here distinguish between registered and active users; registered are those who are library card holders, while active are those who have, within a specific period of time, e.g. one year, performed at least one activity associated with the library (e.g. borrowed an item, used the reading room etc.). It is here that the figures show a striking difference: UBSM had 5,506 active users in 2013 (meaning that only 14% of registered users were active, or 6% of all potential users from Belgrade University).

¹⁹ Virtuelna biblioteka Srbije, statistike za biblioteke, http://vbshome.vbs.rs/sr/o_cobissu/dokumenti/STAT_POZAJMICA_2013_SR.pdf (accessed on June 25th 2014)

UBKG 1,311 (also 6% of potential users, and 20% of registered users) and UBNT 1,171 (41% of registered users, but only 4% of potential users). Cross-referencing this with the number of library card holders clearly shows that UBNT has the most active user base, but in comparison with the number of potential users, it is at the same time disappointingly small. UBSM has the least active one, especially taking into consideration the sheer number of students – potential users – at Belgrade University. For UBKG the discrepancy between registered and active is not so great.

According to official data on circulation, in the first six months of 2014, UBSM has circulated about 14,200 items, UBNT 3,300 and UBKG 3,800. When we compare these figures with the number of items in their holdings, we arrive at approximately the same number – UBSM circulate about 5% of their holdings, UBKG 4% and UBNT 3,5%. These numbers include both items circulated outside the library and for the reading rooms, but no interlibrary loans. However, it is safe to assume that the number of items circulated via interlibrary loan would not alter this percentage greatly, as the vast majority of items is indeed used on site. The percentage of circulated items in comparison to the total library holdings is indeed small.

When it comes to usage of OPAC, the statistics for the past six months indicate that UBNT has had 34,069 queries in 10,064 accesses. UBKG has had 26,769 queries in 16,689 accesses, while UBSM 141,490 queries in 58,805 accesses. Such large figures indicate that their catalogues are all being used extensively, but low number of actually circulated items may seem to indicate otherwise. This discrepancy may be explained by two possible scenarios: either the users perform a lot of searches but do not find what they are looking for, or the searches are being performed without the actual desire to borrow the items, but only to gain information about certain items (for example, out of curiosity for a certain topic, or with the aim of making a bibliography). In order to find out which of the two is the case, a separate research is called for.

3.4.5. Digital collections

No discussion of Serbian university libraries' digital collection can begin without discussing the recently completed project „New Library Services at Western Balkan Universities“, as it has had as one of its outcomes the establishment of institutional digital repositories in all three respective institutions.

Two out of three of them have had experience with digital content before the beginning of the project – UBSM had already participated in projects such as Europeana and digitized parts of its collection, most notably old and rare books and UBNT had begun work on digitizing a part of the collection, focusing mostly on those publications where they were publishers and documents without copyright (most notably the ones on life and work of Nikola Tesla); UBKG has not had any previous experience. Thus it was with this project that their digitization efforts were synchronized and standardized.

The PHAIDRA (Permanent Hosting, Archiving and Indexing of Digital Resources and Assets) system, that was procured from the University of Vienna in the course of the project, for the first time enabled standardized description of digital objects, and, more importantly, provided metadata for each archived object.

PHAIDRA is innovative university system for archiving and managing of digital objects. It enables to professors and associates of the University to upload, by themselves, their scientific papers, publications and other documents in the system for permanent hosting. The system allows to deposit PhD theses, master theses, final exams and other published and unpublished papers, and to protect them by copyright legislation. It is possible to archive documents relevant for educational, scientific, administrative and organizational work of the University, and different forms of digital objects: pictures, audio and video files, links etc. Objects are described with standardized metadata and all fields are searchable. It is possible to change or add metadata, but it is not possible to change the object. Every object receives the permanent link or permanent identifier, which enables citation. Objects can be connected in collections, with their own links which can easily be forwarded.

All employees of the University can use PHAIDRA system actively, but also students and others with necessary authorization. Authorized users have privileges to archive objects and to manage

them, also to define if the object will be accessible worldwide or only for particular group of users. However, metadata are always visible to all internet users.

Law regulations on copyright are incorporated in the system. Authorized users can access and choose different license models which can be easily applied.

Following the principles of integrity, authenticity, interoperability, confidentiality and availability, the data in PHAIDRA are:

- Long-term archived
- Permanently secured
- Classified
- Described by metadata
- Available worldwide

PHAIDRA preserves data about research, educational work and organization of the University. It enables data managing, flexible use of resources and facilitate location or retrieval of archived digital objects.

Five reasons why PHAIDRA was chosen over other open-access repository options:

- 1) Free and open access. Access to system is available to all members of the University (teachers and students). Active use of PHAIDRA (archiving objects) is possible for authorized users with account. Content search is free for all internet users without login.
- 2) Possibility of citation. All objects have permanent link, which is available worldwide and can be cited or forwarded. Through the link main data about an object can be received, and the object can be overviewed or downloaded.
- 3) Flexibility. PHAIDRA is a stable database for management, research and teaching, and it offers possibility for further flexible use of resources. Authorized users can, by themselves, at any moment, lock their objects so that they can be visible only for particular groups of users.
- 4) Clear legislative rules. PHAIDRA ensures the archived objects and offers them law guaranties. Models of licenses are incorporated and can be chosen very simply.
- 5) Reliable long-term archiving. PHAIDRA is organized as a system which enables long term archiving in a simple manner. The system supports formats convenient for permanent storage. It is also a way to establish interoperability with other systems.

In the last year of the project, PHAIDRA was modified to better suit the needs of the partners, and a new module was introduced, called E-Theses. E-Theses is a part of PHAIDRA that enables hosting and archiving of doctoral and master's theses from all partner universities. System "E-theses" is assigned for search and download of doctoral dissertations. According to copyright policy, the repository contains only dissertations with signed statements in which candidate authorizes the University to upload his/her dissertation in Digital repository, and indicates license conditions. Dissertations are searchable either within "E-theses" module or within the PHAIDRA.

As was stated earlier, digital collections in university libraries entail both digital objects stored inside respective digital repositories and those stored elsewhere, but available through libraries' websites. The numbers stated in this section were assessed in July 2014.

Not surprisingly, UBSM has the largest digital collection. It consists of digitized newspapers, (old) books and manuscripts. A part of its collection is available through Europeana and Europeana Newspapers portals, and the rest through their website.²⁰ They are also the only one among the three university libraries that maintain so-called "LibGuides" on their website.²¹ The LibGuides are collections of relevant data classified according to different scientific fields, aimed at facilitating research. Those data include (but are not limited to), documents, weblinks, video content and other digital data. The total collection amounts to several hundred thousand objects. Their first digitization efforts go back to 2009, when they firstly scanned and uploaded several dozen Oriental manuscripts from their holdings. The objects were stored in .jpeg format, they were neither provided with OCR (Optical Character Recognition) nor metadata, and remain unsearchable to this very day. However, in the meantime, thanks to two major international projects, they have raised their digitization efforts to a much higher level, today providing their users with content that is searchable, equipped with adequate metadata and reliable. Their institutional digital repository (<http://phaidrabg.bg.ac.rs>) holds about 3500 objects and the E-theses module 912 objects. It is important to note here that they use PHAIDRA in its full capacity, meaning that they allow non-staff (as long as they are affiliated with the university) to

²⁰ Univerzitetska biblioteka "Svetozar Markovic", digitalna biblioteka <http://www.ubsm.bg.ac.rs/latinica/digitalna/> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

²¹ Univerzitetska biblioteka "Svetozar Markovic", vodiči kroz naučne oblasti <http://unilib.libguides.com/> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

place objects into the digital repository by themselves. This has greatly increased the number of objects archived, but at the same time, leaves the consistency of their quality questionable.

UBNT owns several hundred of digitized objects, mostly old and rare books on Nis and non-copyrighted newspaper and journal articles on Nikola Tesla. Until late 2013, these were available on their website, but now the site is undergoing a major makeover and those documents can only be accessed in the library itself, which makes them basically invisible for the average Internet user. The staff is currently considering whether to put the materials back on the website or to store them inside the digital repository. As for the repository itself (<http://phaidrani.ni.ac.rs>) it has 460 objects, and the E-theses module 50. It is important to note here that UBNT decided in early 2013 that their digital repository is to be considered an integral part of the library holdings and that the general rules and procedures that apply for procurement of library material, apply for digital content, as well. In other words, they made a conscious choice to prefer quality over quantity; there are only two employees in the library that are allowed to access and work on the digital repository and the whole process of handling digital content is very carefully monitored and regulated by written internal manuals.

UBKG has a very small collection of 16 books that have been digitized in the course of a project on heritage and memory, called „Tragom srpske prošlosti“. The books are not available on the library official website yet, but on its blog.²² They are also digitizing PhD theses on demand, which is why their E-theses module counts as many as 163 items. Once again, the relative youth of Kragujevac University proved an asset: eager to promote their scientific output through open access and thus make their institution more visible internationally, the researchers rushed to UBKG demanding that their theses be put in the repository – something that neither Nis nor Belgrade experienced. As for the digital repository as such (<http://phaidrakg.kg.ac.rs>) it has 191 items at the moment, and they are basically the same items stored in E-theses module.

Since their first encounter with digitization was as late as 2011, in the course of the project “New library services at Western Balkan Universities”, and since they were able to purchase the adequate equipment only in 2012, their digital collection, although very small, can be considered successful.

²² More about their blog in the next chapter

Apart from these collections, all three libraries have permanent access to international scientific journals and e-books through KoBSON service, but since their use has been well documented on numerous occasions, it will not be the focus of this research²³. At this point, suffice it to say that KoBSON has been measuring a steady increase in use since its establishment in 2002, and despite numerous problems with budget, remains the most recognized and most frequently used service for researchers and scientists throughout Serbia, whether they are affiliated with universities or any other state-funded research institution (institutes, academies etc.).

3.4.6. PR and marketing activities

All three libraries partake in PR and marketing, both on- and off-line. This chapter will only examine the more classical PR and marketing activities, while the marketing of digital content will be examined separately, as the author wants to describe it in greater detail.

In its most simplified definition, “public relations” is a term that denotes a set of activities undertaken by an organization (here: university library) in order to maintain or improve the public perception. Those activities include, but are not limited to, media relations, communication with all relevant stakeholders, paid advertisements, printed promotional material (brochures, leaflets), event management, and internal (employee) communication.

Information brochures and pamphlets are one of the important sources for creating awareness about the facilities, services, and the collections of all three libraries; the users are usually provided the information brochures at the time of their enrollments as registered members. The information brochures are usually on facilities, latest publications, and latest additions to the library, library rules and regulations, electronic resources, and online information services list.

”One-size-fits-all” approach is used; there is no segmentation of the target audiences, except in some web-based releases. Instead, leaflets, flyers and announcements are uniform.

All three libraries maintain extensive mailing lists and contacts with media, especially local. Press-clippings are carefully kept, but not used to analyze marketing efforts.

²³ See, for example, the article by Biljana Kosanovic <http://scindeks-clanci.ceon.rs/data/pdf/1450-9687/2008/1450-96870802077K.pdf>

They all strive to maintain a distinct visual identity; their logos are recognizable as well as their printed material (envelopes, memos, promotional leaflets...). However, internal signage is surprisingly poor, though UBNT made an effort to improve theirs after the renovation of users' area in 2013.

When it comes to the question of internal communication, it is always a sensitive issue, as there are no established rules on who communicates with whom and how. Instead, the employees are left to their own devices to determine which information should be passed on to other colleagues and in what manner (email, phone, personal contact). More often than not, personal relationships among various employees affect those decisions and can hinder communication, so that certain employees (rightfully) complain that they had not been informed in time or at all about details that are relevant for their daily work. Moreover, no employee (including even those employed in the departments responsible for PR) considers it his/her job to keep other colleagues informed; instead, most of them believe it is the duty of a library manager. To be fair, the list of the duties given in the specifications of job systematization as described in section 3.4.2 does not entail communication with colleagues, but both the definition of "public relations" and the common sense require it. In practice, this is usually overcome by sending circular emails to all employees on important issues; however, should university libraries wish an improvement in this field, a more strict set of regulations on internal communication is needed. As an added value, such a set could contribute to the overall sense of loyalty for all employees and thus foster better interpersonal communication.

As for the external communication, the situation is somewhat better; communication details (emails, phones, and in some cases regular mail addresses) of all relevant stakeholders²⁴ are kept and regularly updated. Library news and updates are sent regularly and the communication is frequently properly segmented.

Due to unfavorable economic situation, nobody uses paid advertising, which is not necessarily a bad thing, as it forces them to be more creative and find alternative ways of getting the message across.

²⁴ Researchers, colleagues, media representatives, distinguished individuals, etc.

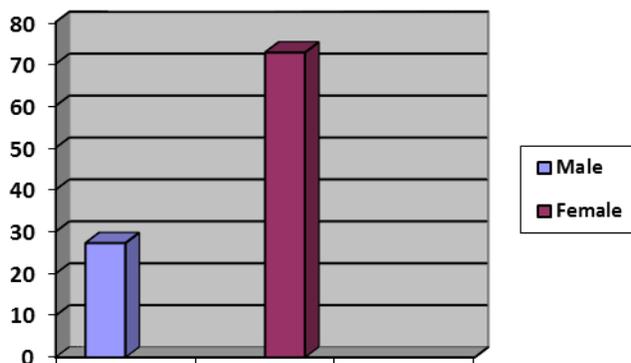
3.5. User survey results interpreted

Surveys have been distributed to users in all three cities. The aim was to determine typical user's profile and the reason why they come to the library in the first place. The next set of questions was designed to determine whether people use digital collections at all and to what extent. It seemed important to determine whether the non-use was the result of the unawareness on the part of the user that such a collection is available or the result of general disinterest.

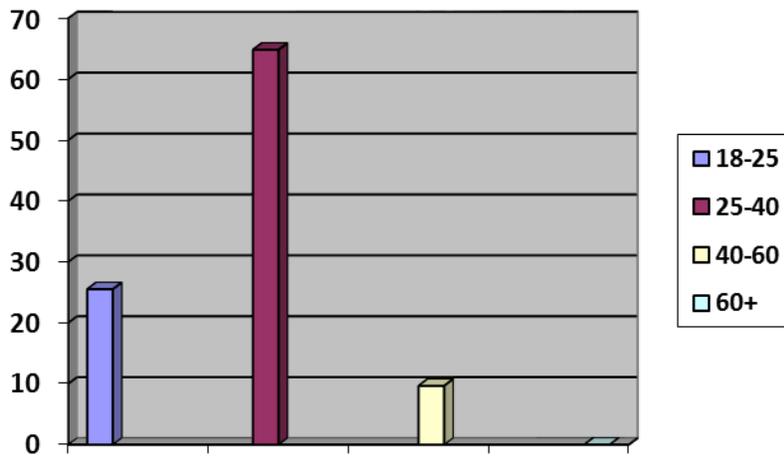
The survey was designed using SurveyMonkey software, and distributed in July and August 2014, mainly online, using social media, most notably Facebook. All three university libraries shared it on their Facebook pages, as well as a lot of employees and their friends on their personal profiles. 145 responses were collected, 131 online and 14 offline. Low offline response rate can be attributed to the fact that offline questionnaire was given only to users in Nis, and that during the summer months of July and August, when there are generally less users in the libraries.

These were the findings:

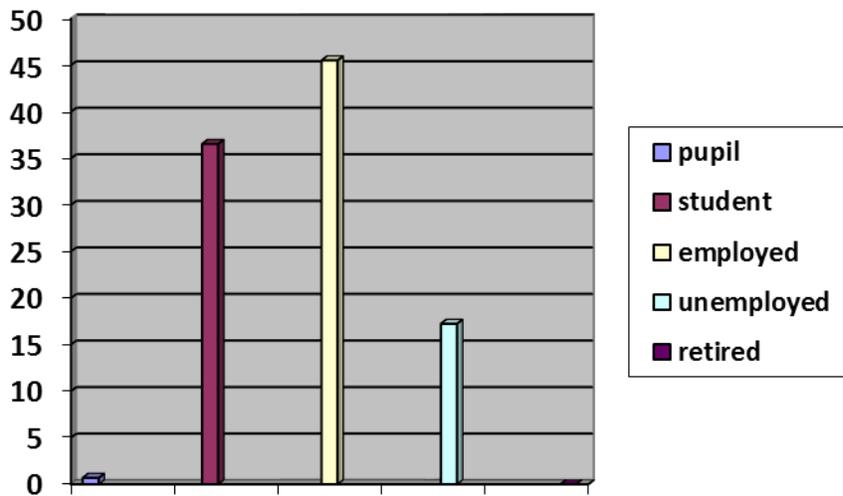
27.27% of respondents were male, and 72.73% female.



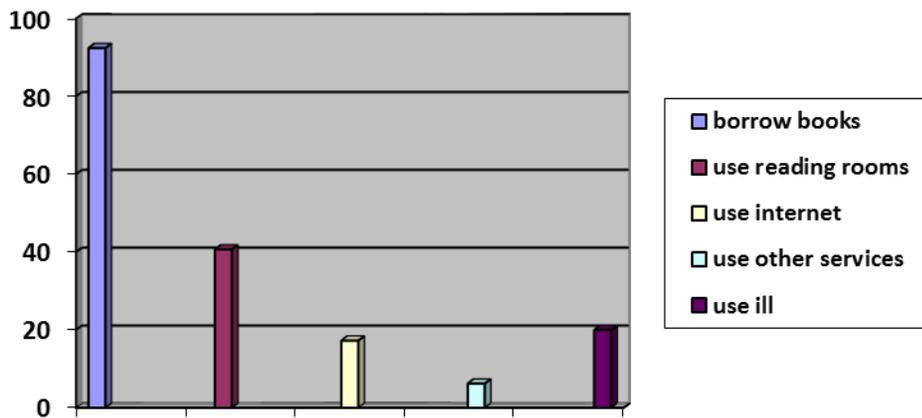
25.52% were in the 18-25 age group, 64.83% in the 25-40, and 9.66% between 40 and 60. There were no respondents older than 60.



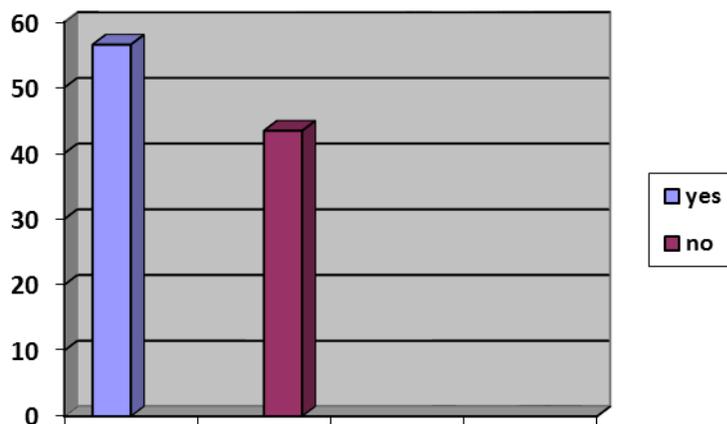
There were no retired people, 0.69% of users are pupils, 17.24% unemployed, followed by 36.55% of students and the majority of 45.52% of employed.



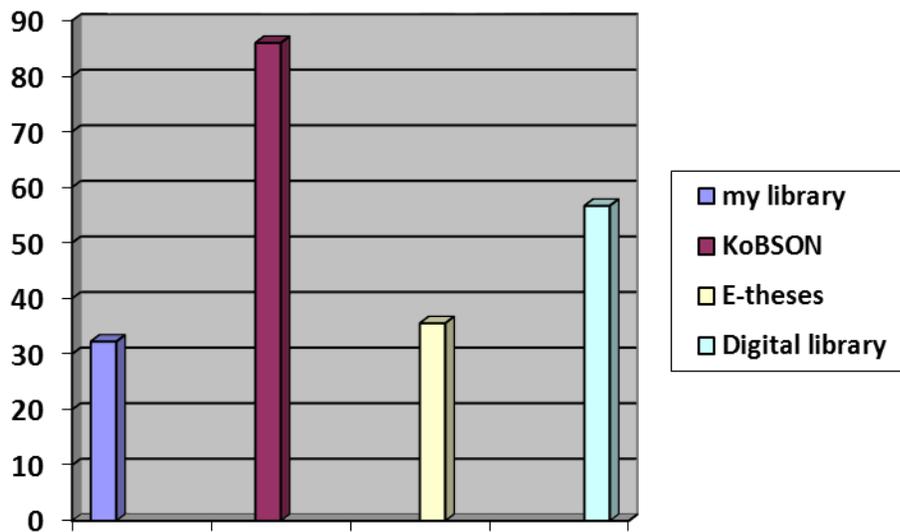
When it comes to the reasons of frequenting the library, the results show that the greatest number of users (92.41%) go to the library to borrow books. A very significant number of 40.69% go in order to use the reading rooms, followed by 20% of those people who go in order to use interlibrary loan service. A smaller percentage of 17.24% go to use the internet, while the smallest percentage of 6.21% go in order to use the services of photocopying, scanning, printing etc.



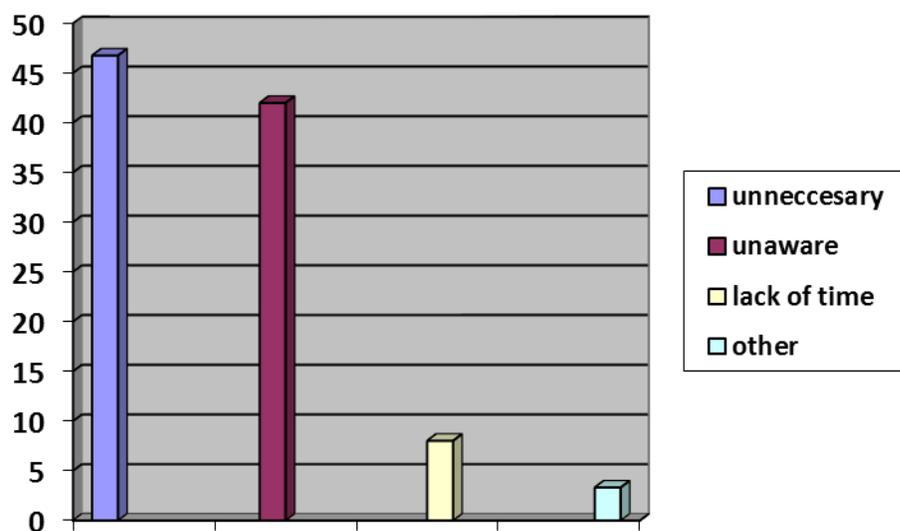
When asked whether they use distant services of the library, 56,55% of respondents replied positively, while 43,45% said that they do not.



The responses to the question „which online library services do you use“ were the following: 32,26% said that they use „My library“ OPAC service for distant reservation of library items, 86,02% indicated that they use KoBSON service, 35,56% said that they use E-theses and 56,69% that they use digital library.



As for those who do not use any of the said services (and we must here bear in mind that they constitute more than 1/3 all of surveyed users!), 46,77% said that they „do not need“ to use them, while 41.94% indicated that they were not aware of the fact that they can take advantage of those services, 8,06% said that they have no time to use them, while 3.23% indicated „other“ as their response. In fact, only two users used the open-ended response; one of them stated that they „have no need to use distant services at the moment“, and the other one said that they were „not sure how this all works“.



The collected data yields the following conclusions:

The age, gender and employment status of survey respondents were somewhat inconsistent with the internal statistics of university libraries, whose average user is indeed female, but aged 18-25 and a student. The vast majority of employed females in the 25-40 age group is, in fact, consistent with the statistics of a typical Facebook user, and since most surveys were completed online, this is not a surprising result. The fact that no retired people (or people over the age of 60) took part in this survey is also consistent with the fact that it was mostly distributed online.

The vast majority of respondents (in fact, nearly all of them) come to the library to borrow books, and although other library services also rank high among the respondents, books (and presumably, other printed material) are still the number one reason for using a (university) library in Serbia. The fact that these libraries, as a rule, do not acquire newly published material, due to the reasons described in chapter 3.4.1. may mean that the users are content with available books and have no need for more contemporary information resources. However, it may also be the very reason why there are so (comparatively) few users in the first place.

The percentage of people who do not use any distance services is worryingly high. However, it must be stressed here that there were some respondents who initially replied negatively to this question, but later circled some distance services that they do use. This may be explained by the misconception on the part of the users as to what „distant services“ actually entail – for a significant number of them, some library services are taken for granted and are not perceived as „distant“ or „divorced“ from regular, on-site library services, such as borrowing a book. If this is indeed the case, this is only yet another argument for improved marketing effort on the part of the libraries: if users were to be better informed about the reality of services provided, they would appreciate the said services more.

However, even if we do disregard those users who were somewhat confused about the distinction between on-site and distant services/resources, the number of people who do not use digital content and services at all is very high, especially the number of those people who state that they “have no need” to use them – almost 47%.

This goes to show that there is a significant number of users who are either very nostalgic about the way they perceive libraries (i.e. as places for borrowing books and/or quiet study) or whose information needs are indeed easy to satisfy.

On the other hand, a 42% of respondents who were “unaware of the existence of distant services/resources” is a clear and unambiguous cry for more and better user education, which is only another name for more and better marketing.

4. MARKETING OF DIGITAL CONTENT

We have already established that all three university libraries have virtually no money available for marketing purposes; in such circumstances, it is only logical that they would turn all their efforts into web marketing, as it is both freely available and perceived as easy to use. At the same time, it makes a lot of sense to market digital content digitally, in its “natural habitat“, as it were. According to Lidia Verbanova, web (also known as „digital“, or „Internet“) marketing entails „products and services offered via the Internet, as well as via email, wireless media and online devices“²⁵. In practice, it means that all content that the libraries post online with the aim of promoting their services and collections is a part of web marketing. Websites, social media channels and email communication are the most frequently used forms of web marketing, and all three university libraries partake in it, with different levels of success. In order to determine those levels, let us look at the definitions of online users given by Verbanova: “*Passive users* are the one who read the online content (websites, blogs and forums), watch videos and listen to podcasts, but they do not participate in it. *Online connectors* maintain a profile on a social networking site with the main goal of staying in contact with others and observing. They might or might not post content online, but they maintain a profile. *Online collectors* usually add tags to their photos or web pages, use bookmarking tools to easily collect or refer to content, and subscribe to RSS feeds for regular updates on preferred content. *Online contributors* give critical opinions, post ratings and reviews, comment on other blogs and contribute to online forums by posting opinions. The most engaged group of online users are the *creators of online content*, who publish their own blogs, open forums based on specific topic, or upload content (text, video, or audio)”²⁶

It is important to keep this definition in mind when examining the online presence of the three university libraries, as it will be indicative not only of their present exhibited online behavior, but also of the preferred course of action in the future.

At the time being, UBSM has no less than two active websites, which they plan to merge into one, in late 2014. UBNT’s website is also currently under reconstruction, meaning that it

²⁵ Lidia Verbanova, *Strategic Management in the Arts* (New York: Routledge, 2013), p161

²⁶ *ibid*

provides the basic information, but lacks a lot of content at the moment. Their previous website was, on the other hand, so overburdened with information, that it became user-unfriendly and needed urgent reconstruction. UBKG maintains an active website (rather basic, but informative and modern enough) and two different blogs. Apart from that, all three maintain regular e-mail communication with their users and partake in social networking sites, with varying success.

4.1. Social networks and their current use by university libraries

The social media channels that all three of them use are Facebook, Twitter and Foursquare. UBSM and UBNT also use Pinterest, while UBKG uses blogs and Google+, while UBSM is the only one that uses YouTube.

	Facebook	Twitter	Pinterest	Google+	Foursquare	YouTube	Blog
UBSM	√	√	√	X	√	√	X
UBNT	√	√	√	X	√	X	X
UBKG	√	√	X	√	√	X	√

Before taking a closer look at their channels and trying to measure their success, the author will give a brief description of each social network and how it functions: also, as numbers and figures on social media tend to change rapidly, the data exhibited here will be the data accessed in early June 2014.

By far, the most popular and best-known social network (indeed, sometimes used as a synonym for social networks in general) is Facebook. www.facebook.com. Individuals use it to connect with friends and family, share news updates, photos etc., while organizations and institutions, including libraries, use it for promotional purposes.

“Facebook Pages look similar to personal Timelines, but they offer unique tools for connecting people to a topic they care about, like a business, brand, organization or celebrity. Pages are managed by people who have personal Timelines. Pages are not separate Facebook accounts and

do not have separate login information from your Timeline. You can [like](#) a Page to see updates in News Feed.”²⁷ Seems fairly easy and intuitive, but administering a Facebook page actually requires a lot of work, as the Facebook algorithm does not settle for a mere number of “likes”. Instead, it uses several factors to determine top stories posted by people and Pages, including the number of comments, who posted the story, and what type of post it is (ex: photo, video, status update). In other words, even if a page itself is liked by a lot of people, if it does not get enough interactions on individual posts (likes, comments, and shares, uniformly called “talking about this”), it will not be shown in peoples news feed and will slowly, but steadily, decrease in visibility and popularity.

As noted earlier, all three libraries use Facebook for promoting their services and communicating with their users. UBSM has been on Facebook longest, since July 2009, but it has a somewhat ambiguous presence, as it acts both as a profile and a page. The profile <https://www.facebook.com/UNILIB> with 4810 friends and the page <https://www.facebook.com/Univerzitetska.biblioteka.Beograd> with 3425 likes both share the same news on their newsfeed. Why they decided to choose two different ways to communicate with their audience is unclear. To make things even more confusing, their Arts Centre, operating within the library, has its own profile (<https://www.facebook.com/umetnickicentar.ubsm>) and shares its own information (news on upcoming exhibitions and updates about arts and culture in general). The number of friends/likes is impressive, but only 8 “talking about this” indicates no true interaction.

UBNT has a Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Univerzitetska.biblioteka.Nikola.Tesla> with 2250 likes and 94 “talking about this”. They have been active since November 2010.

UBKG has a page at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Univerzitetska-biblioteka-Kragujevac/218148731565039> with only 317 likes and 0 “talking about this”. They started this page in August 2011.

At the first glance, UBSM has most success, because it has the biggest number of people liking it. However, the point of social networks is in the “social”. There is little interaction with users, and most posts are liked by library employees and their personal friends. The situation is further

²⁷ Facebook Help page <https://www.facebook.com/help/281592001947683/> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

complicated by the fact that they do not maintain a unique Facebook presence, but their voice is scattered around two pages and one profile.

UBNT is actually much more successful in this domain – they generate a much larger number of likes and comments (in percentage), although similarly, the greatest number comes from the employees.

UBKG is least successful, with smallest number of likes and virtually no interaction.

Twitter (www.twitter.com) is a micro-blogging service that enables users to post short messages (up to 140 characters) called “tweets” and to interact with others. The default settings for Twitter are public. Unlike Facebook, where members need to approve social connections, anyone can follow anyone on public Twitter. To weave tweets into a conversation thread or connect them to a general topic, members can add hashtags to a keyword in their post. The hashtag, which acts like a meta-tag, is expressed as #keyword. In theory, a user can follow and be followed by an indefinite number of people. As all tweets are shown in real time and the interaction is instantaneous, it is an invaluable tool for quick exchange of information and is becoming increasingly popular, counting 225 million monthly active users and 500 million Tweets being sent per day²⁸

When it comes to Twitter, all three have profiles, available at <https://twitter.com/UBTesla> (online since August 2010, but actually active since late 2012) <https://twitter.com/UBSM> (online since July 2009, maintaining a steady level of activity) <https://twitter.com/ubkragujevac> (online since May 2011, but actually active only in the past year) even though the level of general activity is varied - UBNT is by far the most active one, posting tweets almost every day, while UBSM tweets approximately once a week and UBKG approximately once a month. However, in determining the level of success on this particular social network, much more parameters must be taken into consideration than the mere number of followers or the frequency of activity. The “influence”²⁹ of the accounts must also be considered, as well as their location and the fact whether they belong to any lists. According to authors Feodorov and Yurik, who wrote a study on the use of Twitter to promote libraries, a [library] Twitter profile can be considered successful

²⁸ Twitter official page, <https://about.twitter.com/company> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

²⁹ Posting a thousand times and getting zero responses is not as influential as posting once and getting a thousand responses. It isn't about how much someone talks, but about how many people listen and respond. – More on <http://klout.com/corp/score>

if: „...they have around 2000 (plus-minus 200-400) followers; approximately equal number of followers and following – the more followers, the better; it is highly desirable for a Twitter account to be on other users' „lists“: a good indicator is 100-200 lists; the account must be active and must post at least 2-3 appropriate and interesting tweets a day for the period of several months.³⁰

UBNT has posted about 1300 tweets, follows around 2000 people and is followed by 1300 and found on 15 lists. UBSM has posted around 300 times, follows around 100 and is followed by a little less than 200 and is found on 8 lists. UBKG has posted 21 times, follows 66 and is followed by around 100, and found on 3 lists.³¹ Although UBNT has least favorable following/followers ratio, they compensate with the highest level of activity; however, strictly speaking, none of the three university libraries can be considered successful in Feodorov and Yurik's terms, as their “influence” is rather low; The Klout score for UBNT is 42, for UBSM 36 and for UBKG 0.³²

Foursquare (www.foursquare.com) is a location-based application for mobile devices, such as smartphones, and although, strictly speaking, it is not a social network, it does exhibit traits of one, as it allows users to connect, comment and compete. Foursquare users “check in” at various places via their mobile devices and leave tips and photos for other users to see. All activity is public. The person with most check-ins at a certain place becomes a “mayor” and is eligible for rewards, that may include free drinks from a restaurant they checked into, or, as in our case, a free yearly library card!³³

All three libraries are featured on Foursquare, but interestingly, none of them bothered to connect this application to their website(s). The reason may be that it is primarily mobile-based (as opposed to more *traditional* web-based applications) and that the websites themselves have not been optimized for mobile browsing. However, there is also the possibility that they simply estimated that investing time and effort in this particular network may not yield enough benefit,

³⁰ Андрей Федоров и Инна. Журик, *Как продвигать библиотеку в Твиттер : секреты "кухни" библиотечного микроблога* (Москва: Пашков дом, 2013), стр 29

³¹ Approximate numbers instead of exact ones are given, as Twitter changes virtually hourly

³² Klout score is a numerical representation of someone's online influence – the higher the number, the more influential the person is. It can be calculated for all social media profiles one maintains, but is calculated freely only for Twitter. More on <https://klout.com/corp/score>

³³ In January 2014, UBSM offered free yearly library card to the first person to check in after the New Year's holiday break.

as the tendency is for Foursquare in Serbia to be used for more commercial venues (such as restaurants and cafes). When it comes to their Foursquare activity, UBSM <http://4sq.com/foiAyU> has had 324 visitors and 1859 check-ins, who left 9 tips (interestingly, most of them unfavorable!) and 30 photos. UBNT <http://4sq.com/TIICFj> has had 19 visitors and 39 check-ins, with no tips and 2 photos. UBKG <http://4sq.com/nWJVwN> has had 4 visitors and 4 check-ins, with no tips and only one photo.

Pinterest (www.pinterest.com) is a free website in which users can upload, save, sort and manage images, known as pins, and other media content (e.g. videos and gifs) through collections known as pinboards. Pinterest acts as a personalized media platform, whereby users' content and the content of others can be browsed on the main page. Users can then save individual pins to one of their own boards using the "Pin It" button, with Pinboards typically organized by a central topic or theme. Users can personalize their experience with Pinterest by pinning items, creating boards, and interacting with other members. It is a relatively new social networking site, but the one that records the highest growth and increased popularity, especially with women. (Statistical data for 2013 show that there are 70 million of Pinterest users, 80% of them female³⁴) This may explain why many libraries, especially in the US, rushed to adopt it as one of their marketing tools – its visual nature and the speed with which pins are being exchanged among users make it fun and easy to use.

UBSM Pinterest profile <http://www.pinterest.com/unilib/> has an excellent following/followers ratio of 16:168, but a small number of pins - only 148 pins on 15 boards. However, a closer look reveals that their activity was time-restricted: the majority of their pins came in late 2012, exhibiting a steady decline in 2013. In 2014 they have only pinned couple of times. This may indicate that their experimenting with Pinterest may have been the effort of a volunteer or an employee who had subsequently changed position or lost interest. Whatever the reason, the fact is that for UBSM, this is just yet another social network that they pay lip service to, but do not utilize its full potential. UBNT <http://uk.pinterest.com/ubtesla/> has the ratio of 425: 269, which is much more unfavorable, but also indicates more activity, as finding profiles to follow and keeping up with them also requires time and effort. Their activity on this particular network is

³⁴ DMR (Latest Digital marketing stats, tips, trends and technology), Pinterest stats, <http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/pinterest-stats/> (accessed on June 25th 2014)

also sporadic – so far, they have put 380 pins on 17 boards and the person in charge of web marketing shared that they even considered deleting the account because it was very time-consuming and yielded almost no benefit at all; the reason that they still use it is a distant possibility of utilizing this particular network to connect with similar institutions from abroad in order to share experiences. This is, of course, highly far-fetched. Still, the visual nature of this particular network eases the strain of having to post content in non-native language and makes it inherently much more “international” than other popular networks. UBKG does not use Pinterest.

Google+ (<http://plus.google.com>) is the youngest and most controversial social network. The controversy lies in the fact that it was started by a billion-dollar company Google and is sometimes perceived by users of other social networks as a pathetic attempt by Google to jump on the “social bandwagon” and try to sell to the market what is already there. Its functionalities combine those of Facebook and Twitter, and it is currently most used on mobile devices. The idea is to be able to both connect with people one knows personally (as in Facebook) and is interested in professionally or otherwise, but wishes no personal contact with (as in Twitter). The users are thus able to form social “circles”, each circle allowing various levels of openness and information sharing. It must here be noted that it has a staggering number of users worldwide, especially among the middle-aged population ³⁵ UBKG is the only one that utilizes Google+ (<https://plus.google.com/106415408568898326985/about>), and that only to post updates and photos. They are being followed by two people only, meaning that there is practically no interaction. However, they did receive tens of thousands of views, which may indicate that their efforts have not been entirely futile. UBSM is also a registered user, but with an incomplete profile, no posts and no interactions, so it can be said that they do not use this social network at all, as setting up of a profile is far from actually using a social network, as had been stated earlier. UBNT do not use Google+ at all.

YouTube (www.youtube.com) is the best known platform for sharing video content (indeed, it has become synonymous for video upload and viewing). But it also allows users to connect,

³⁵ Social media Today, <http://www.socialmediatoday.com/content/new-social-media-statistics-you-need-know> (accessed on June 20th, 2014)

follow each other and comment, thus making it social. As a company, YouTube is owned by Google, Inc. thus making it easier for registered Google users to use it.

YouTube is again used by one library alone – UBSM (<https://www.youtube.com/user/UBSMBeograd>). They have relatively little subscribers – 68, but a lot of views – almost 20.000. Considering the fact that they actually uploaded very few videos, this can be considered a success. They do not embed videos on their website and rarely advertise them on other social media profiles, which makes the success even greater. The content they share is from the project “Knowledge for everyone” that is ongoing. The purpose of the project is to provide users with free online lectures on various topics, given by distinguished scholars and experts. For their pilot, they chose a series of lectures on ancient Greece by Donald Kagan from Yale University, and then subtitled the lectures in Serbian and uploaded them to YouTube. This is a rather innovative effort in Serbia, as the author of this paper is unaware of any similar project undertaken by a library, be it public or academic.

On the other hand, neither UBNT nor UBKG use YouTube, though they both agree that it may prove useful for marketing and networking purposes.

A blog, or in this instance, a library blog, is not a social network in itself; however, if managed appropriately, it does exhibit a lot of social traits and can be used for connecting with people in a way no other website or platform can. The word “blog” itself derives from the English word „weblog“, which means „online magazine“. Blog is a kind of an online diary, where most recent entries are displayed first, and the visitors can comment on them and thus interact with blog owner(s). A blog is considered successful not only if it has many readers (although this is highly important), but also if the content it produces is shared and commented on by other users. There are numerous examples of successful blogs, both in country and abroad, and bloggers are increasingly becoming creators of public opinion. When it comes to libraries, in Serbia, interestingly, blogs are most frequently used by school libraries, followed by public libraries, while academic and special ones lurk behind. According to Feodorov ³⁶, a “successful library blog must be organized according to the following four principles: 1. Openness. You came into

³⁶ Андреи Федоров, *Библиотечная блогосфера : в чем феномен библиотечного блога?* (Москва, Пашков дом, 2013), стр 32

blogosphere in order to talk about your library, not to be silent about it. 2. Honesty. Try to write the truth – honesty and publicly admitting mistakes will provide positive reputation. 3. Regular publishing. Do not let the public eye lose sight of you, post new content, respecting the stated regularity. 4. Always reply to comments. It can be complicated, but try to react to all incoming comments – open dialogue with readers will convince your public of your loyalty to them.”

As noted earlier, UBKG is the only one that uses blogs, and no less than two different ones: one to share news updates and promote library and librarianship in general (<http://univerzitetska.blogspot.com/>), and the other one designed specifically to promote their digital library (<http://dbubkg.blogspot.com/>). At the moment, only the former is linked on their official website; the latter is linked to the blog and not to the website. This somewhat confusing situation is expected to be rectified by the end of the year, according to the statement from the employees.

The reason that they decided to start blogging in the first place was not the desire to market their services or holdings or to connect with their users; in fact, the original blog was firstly designed by an employee as a part of their state license exam in librarianship, and the ‘digital library’ one is one of the results of a digitization project supported by the Ministry of Culture in 2013.³⁷ However, the reactions to both have been positive and now they are planning to keep it up. With what success, remains yet to be seen.

Having examined all social networks our university libraries are currently using, these are the conclusions that can be drawn:

All three are aware of the need to be a part of the big social network hype and of the imperative to stay connected with their users and broader community and are willing to experiment with different kinds of networks. The librarians are generally aware of trends in the online community; Facebook and Twitter are by far the most frequently used ones, though the success UBSM has had with YouTube is also significant. They all joined social networks rather early in the game, setting up profiles as soon as certain networks gained popularity. However, both

³⁷ Rešenje o dodeli sredstava za finansiranje ili sufinansiranje projekata u oblasti bibliotečko-informacione delatnosti, <http://www.kultura.gov.rs/docs/konkursi/92243809603936013856/Resenje%20%20bibliotecko%20informaciona%20Odelatnost.doc> (accessed on June 25th, 2014)

UBSM and UBNT have been truly active only in the past 12-24 months, while UBKG became active less than a year ago (December 2013).

It is significant that, both for UBSM and UBKG, this boost of online activity coincides with the change in official systematization of work and the establishment /enlargement of the Development Department; for UBNT, the new systematization does not seem to have impacted online activity.

4.2. Competences of the employees

Having examined university libraries' web marketing efforts, we must once again turn to the core employees who perform it.

In UBSM, as noted earlier, the department responsible for marketing and PR is the Development and System Administration, Book Digitization and Cultural Activities Department, operating under the Scientific Information and Development Division. It employs, among other people, a public relation specialist. This is very important, as this is the only example, not only among academic libraries, but among public ones as well (in Serbia), that the job description explicitly includes the term „public relations“. However, this person does not have formal training in PR and / or marketing, but in librarianship; moreover, this person is neither the only one in the library performing the PR function, nor does their job description entail exclusively PR activities.³⁸ Instead, both marketing and PR are handled by a rather fluid team of people, meaning that there is no particular “face of the library” reserved for contact with the media – instead, media requests are handled by whoever is available and willing at the moment. At the same time, since there is no marketing plan as such and events and programs are being advertised *ad hoc*, it makes sense to involve more people in the process, sometimes even volunteers. There are some internal guidelines as to what is appropriate to post online, but they are not formalized by any document; instead, they are rather a part of the overall organizational culture.

³⁸ Although official systematization document states differently, the interview with the employees revealed a somewhat different practice:

Moreover, no employee in that particular department has had any formal training in either marketing, journalism, or public relations; they do, however, exhibit a substantial understanding of the way web marketing operates, and have received a lot of informal training (attended webinars, participated in web discussions etc.)

In UBNT, the department responsible for marketing and PR is the Information and Lending Department. Although this particular department is the biggest one in the library, employing 8 people, only three people perform marketing and PR activities (email communication, contact with media, press releases etc.), while web marketing is actually performed by one person only. No one had any formal training in either marketing or public relations, though that one particular person has had a lot of informal training due to personal enthusiasm for the matter. There are no internal guidelines as to appropriateness of the content, as the whole liability lies on one individual. During the interview, the person stated that they “always think of the library as a whole and are reluctant to post anything that would not reflect the opinion of the majority of colleagues or jeopardize the reputation of the library”.

In UBKG, the department responsible for marketing and PR is the Scientific Information and Development Department. It consists of three people, who divide the work evenly. None of them has had any formal education in this area, though the interview revealed that there is interest to obtain some informal training. Expectedly, there are no internal regulations to what content should be advertised and how; instead, similarly to UBNT, the team follow their common sense of what is appropriate.

Although all of them are uniformly far from ideal, all these variations have their advantages and disadvantages. For example, for UBSM, the fact that the marketing team is fluid, including volunteers, may be a good thing, as it provides an opportunity for quicker adaptation and faster reactions to the ever-changing online world; however, it may also pose a threat, as too many people may mean unclear focus and sending of mixed messages. The fact that there is no defined marketing plan enhances that threat. UBNT, on the other hand, has a recognizable online persona and a clear idea of where they want to go. But the fact that there is only one person responsible is a threat in itself: should that person be away for a longer period of time or transferred to a different job position, there would be no one to continue the work. An urgent knowledge transfer is needed. As for UBKG, much work awaits them should they decide to embark on the journey of web marketing, as most of their efforts so far have been rather experimental; the good thing

about that is that they do need to start from scratch as some good practices have already been established and all they have to do is to take time and effort to implement them.

4.3. Possible answers to low usage of digital content

A recent study by Stokić-Simončić and Vučković³⁹ on low usage of digital content in public libraries stated that „evaluation studies are very rare due to a number of reasons. Usage is just one of the criteria to evaluate digital libraries, and it includes usage patterns, usage statistics, and user studies. The ultimate goal of the evaluation of digital libraries is to determine to what extent and in what manner they affect the processes of learning, education, cultural development, research, preservation of national heritage, collective and personal identity. As the world is still expecting reliable criteria for evaluating the digital library, the positions from which we are waiting make all the difference. In Serbia, an environment that didn't manage to introduce all the possibilities provided by the Internet, either in terms of e-government, e-commerce, or of e-education, libraries have launched major digitization projects and stepped in front of the needs of our society which is not ready/ educated/ trained/used to digital resources. The way out of this situation must be sought in strengthening of the information society, of its technical and technological, legal and regulatory assumptions, and also those assumptions related to information literacy of citizens, their awareness of how human knowledge is organized, how to find the right information and how to use it effectively to improve the quality of one's own life“ Their conclusion is by all means valid – our society indeed needs a long way to go before it becomes “fully ready/educated/trained/used to digital resources”. This is also somewhat corroborated by the findings presented in chapter 3.5, as there is a significant number of users (even in university settings) who see “no need” to use digital resources.

However, at the same time, this trend is bound to change, as Internet usage and information literacy have a tendency of growth. Moreover, according to a study conducted by Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and published in September 2013, the use of computers is

³⁹ Gordana Stokić-Simončić i Željko Vučković „Koliko koristimo digitalne biblioteke“, *Kultura*, 2012, br 135: str. 114-120

experiencing a steady growth, with an increase of 2,3% of computer users and 6,9% of Internet users in 2013 in comparison to 2012. Furthermore, 100% of surveyed students use Internet, and 93,4% of Internet population between ages 16-24 use social networks⁴⁰

It is these young people that are frequently referred to as “net generation”. According to the 2010 article by Vasiljevic, Kostov and Jeremic⁴¹, the most prominent qualities of so-called “net generation” are confidence, speed, communicativeness, diversity of interests, openness for cooperation and easy acceptance of new media and tools, as well as more intelligent and more relaxed approach to net resources due to early developed intuitive search. On the other hand, most prominent disadvantages are the lack of methodology in research, non-critical attitude towards discovered information and superficiality of interest, as well as high levels of stress they experience when facing failure in research, which leads to discouragement and quick withdrawal. In other words, a typical university library user is technology savvy, impatient, superficial, but open to novelty and cooperation.

It is in between the two described extremes of users (namely, the „not-ready-for-technology“ one and the „digital native‘ one) that the reality of today’s university libraries exists, and it is that duality that makes the work of library marketer or advocate all the more difficult. However, they must not be easily discouraged, as there are techniques and ways of overcoming this challenge, the first one being the understanding that the focus of marketing is always the client (user). If the users are diverse, the marketing messages will have to be diverse, but as long as they are directed to satisfying the needs of the users, this should not pose a problem. This identification of client or customer needs as the focus of marketing is reiterated by Jeannette Woodward in *Creating the Customer-driven Academic Library*: “There is really no way for a library to separate marketing from customer service. We can’t attract more customers unless we meet their needs. We can’t meet their needs unless they tell us what they are. It is only when we are actually publicizing needed resources and services that we will attract customers.”⁴²

⁴⁰ Upotreba informaciono-komunikacionih tehnologija u Republici Srbiji, 2013
<http://webrzs.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/repository/documents/00/01/14/03/PressICT2013.pdf> (accessed on August 5th 2014)

⁴¹ Vasiljević N. i dr “Šta očekuju net generacije od akademskih biblioteka: promena korisničke percepcije i bibliotečkih usluga” (rad predstavljen na 4. Međunarodnoj konferenciji BAM, Sarajevo, BiH, 12.11. 2010)

⁴² 4 Jeannette Woodward, *Creating the Customer-driven Academic Library* (Chicago: American Library

4.5. Best practice examples from the country and abroad

A recent study „Public relations practice in public libraries in Serbia“ by Stokić Simončić and Vuksan⁴³, performed on the sample of 50 interviewees, indicates that no public library in Serbia has a department (or any other organizational unit) that is called or contains the terms „public relations“. However, there are departments for cultural programs, as well as individuals who perform those activities. The study showed that the tasks of public relations are usually performed by senior, highly educated staff, sometimes even including the director/manager. This goes to show that the situation is not much different than the one in our academic libraries; in both cases, the tasks of marketing and public relations are performed by the people whose job descriptions entail those duties among other things, but not exclusively.

This does not mean that good practice cannot be found in public libraries in Serbia; for example, the National Library of Serbia has particularly well-organized marketing and PR department that works constantly on sending a clear and unified message to the community. This goes well beyond using web marketing, as they use classical PR tools with great success (logo, memo, colors, consistent press releases etc.).

However, it seems unfair to compare the biggest library in the country with stable sources of funding and enough staff and other resources with university libraries who experience both financial and staffing constraints; this is why the author decided to go abroad in order to try to find examples of good practice that may prove helpful in Serbian circumstances.

Literature is ample with examples of fantastic promotional and/or marketing campaigns conducted by American or Western European libraries; An outstanding example is the 'Sshh...!' bags from Leeds University library, a biodegradable bag in various colors that proved so popular with students that they set up a Facebook group and website that displays the library bags next to famous sites all over the world, including the Taj Mahal and White House.⁴⁴ Another example is the highly successful ALA 2006 “@Your Library” campaign that went well beyond America and

Association, 2009), page 134.

⁴³ Gordana Stokić Simončić .i Vesna Vuksan „Praksa odnosa sa javnošću u javnim bibliotekama Srbije“, *Čitalište* 2013 br 23: str 2-11

⁴⁴ Library merchandize https://library.leeds.ac.uk/news/article/44/take_us_with_you_wherever_you_go (accessed on August 15th 2014)

earned worldwide recognition and implementation. In fact, even the National Library of Serbia launched it in 2007, and there was an attempt on the part of UBSM to use some recommendations from the said campaign. However, there are two issues with similar campaigns: the first is that the most successful ones are, as a rule, aimed at public libraries, not academic ones, and the second is that they require funds that are, in current situation, simply unavailable to Serbian university libraries. To put it bluntly, for libraries that are struggling even with the costs of printing a simple instructional leaflet, the idea of spending money on giveaway mugs, bags and mousepads seems distant, if not downright offensive. Therefore, instead on focusing on the campaigns that require monetary resources, we must shift our attention to those best practices that either build upon the concepts of “guerilla marketing” or investing time and effort (but not necessarily funds) into library promotion.

An example of such practice are the instructional services at central library of University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.⁴⁵ Namely, this library invests a lot of time and effort into instructing new users (mostly freshmen students) not only on how to use library resources, but also how to do research in general. In order to do so, they have partnered with faculties, but also with local community, including schools, public library and the Digital library and Archive of Carolina. Instructional sessions are being held either in the library or elsewhere on campus, and can be formal (one-hour long classes) or informal (“scavenger hunts” in the library).

The idea of educating users is not unknown to Serbian university libraries, as all three of them perform user education, as noted in the section 3. However, the comparison with UNC reveals a major difference: the instruction sessions in UNC are always followed by evaluation, which is used to gain feedback from users and then adapt the future sessions to expressed users’ needs. In Serbia, the sessions (where applicable) seem to be an end in themselves – feedback is not solicited, and even when it is provided, it does not affect the action. The practice of adapting services to expressed users’ needs (as opposed to perceived ones) is indeed something that Serbian university libraries must embrace in the future, should they wish to remain relevant in current academic surroundings.

The practice of rewarding the “best user” is not uncommon in public libraries in Serbia, but has not been used in university libraries; donors, volunteers and other significant individuals are

⁴⁵ Gordana Stokić Simončić *Best Practice u 22 priče: komunikacija, kultura organizacije, odnosi biblioteka s javnošću* (Pančevo: Gradska biblioteka, 2009)

frequently rewarded with free yearly user's cards, but such rewards are not given for frequent library use, and should be considered as an incentive for improving "word-of-mouth" marketing. Another good practice is that of the "open house" - an open house welcomes first-year students to the library and, hosting libraries hope, makes them more likely to use it as they adopt new study habits and undertake research projects. The library at Penn State University's University Park Campus hosts an open house over the course of two days near the start of each semester.⁴⁶ First-year students meet librarians and library staff, become acquainted with the library's physical layout, and leave with small gifts and raffled prizes, which are provided by sponsors and donors.

Some more examples can be found in the book "Student Engagement and the Academic Library" edited by Loanne Snavely⁴⁷ It gives interesting insight into what American academic libraries have done in the past decade in order to increase student engagement, promote collections and services, create tighter bonds with the community and foster learning and research in academic environment. The examples vary from gamification and hosting radio shows, to more traditional storytelling and taking on interns for developing marketing plans. What all these case studies have in common (and, incidentally, what Serbian academic libraries may most effectively build upon) is the fact that all efforts were conducted either exclusively by students or in close cooperation between students and library staff. In other words, the libraries in question outsourced (or crowdsourced, in some instances), but not to some vaguely assembled groups of volunteers, but to the precisely defined user group that is the core of academics libraries' outreach. This approach is mutually beneficial for both libraries and students, as libraries can obtain useful insight into what their users actually need from them and the preferred channels of communication; the students, on the other hand, obtain skills and knowledge that will be useful for them in the actual business environment.

Another interesting example is the case of Southwest Baptist University Libraries⁴⁸ who partnered with the Art Department of their university and took on art students as interns and worked closely with them to develop a new library logo and then created logo-consistent advertising for student-preferred communication mediums, such as Facebook, posters, website

⁴⁶ Library Learning Services, http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/lls/about_lls.html (accessed on August 15th 2014)

⁴⁷ Loanne Snavely, *Student Engagement and the Academic Library* (Santa Barbara [etc.]: Libraries Unlimited, 2012)

⁴⁸ The Journal of Creative Library Practice, Marketing your library's brand on a shoestring budget, <http://creativelibrarypractice.org/2014/06/13/marketing-your-librarys-brand-on-a-shoestring-budget/> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

stories, campus monitors, etc. In the second phase of their brand-building project, they cooperated with Students' Activities⁴⁹ in order to promote library as a place, hosting various events organized by Student's Activities.

What differs this approach from the one already applied by Serbian university libraries is the fact that their American counterparts do not use student volunteers for *ad hoc* help with daily mundane tasks that the staff finds unpleasant or time-consuming; instead, they make sure that the time students spend working with and for the library is put to use in accomplishing the libraries' strategic goals.

A little closer to home, a similar research was conducted by Luisa Alvite and Leticia Barrionuevo and published in the book called "Libraries for users: services in academic libraries"⁵⁰ which, although mentions good practice from across the ocean as well, is mostly concerned with European university libraries. Some of the best-practice examples they recommend are indeed low-cost, and include inventing slogans and promoting them consistently on- and off-line, complete makeover of library signage, regular updates on newly-purchased books on the library website, writing columns for students' journals and targeted e-mail messaging.

Both major university libraries in Berlin, Germany, offer guided tours both for first-time users and for tourists, and that is something Serbian university libraries may consider, especially UBSM and UBNT, which are both located in historical buildings, but UBKG as well, as the layout of the building is not always intuitive for the first-time visitors and the signage is poor. In fact, UBSM does offer open days and guided visits to the library, but only on special occasions and for special groups, but not as a part of their regular services/offer. Although this is not directly linked to promoting digital content, it can be a valuable tool in raising awareness about libraries in general and creating and promoting library brand; moreover, a virtual visit on respective libraries' websites can be a useful and cost-effective way of acquainting new users to all library services and resources, including digital content.

⁴⁹ American equivalent to an organization such as Student's Cultural Center

⁵⁰ Luisa Alvite and Leticia Barrionuevo *Libraries for users: services in academic libraries* (Oxford [etc.]: Chandos Publishing, 2011)

4.6. Possible recommendations

A 2011 Master's thesis on the strategic marketing in academic libraries in the UK by Joanne Alcock,⁵¹ instead of giving concrete suggestion and examples of marketing campaigns, strongly suggests that any academic library wishing to improve their marketing strategy must undertake the following steps:

1. Adopt a services marketing approach rather than a product marketing approach
2. Focus on measuring impact and value of your library service
3. Consider working towards Customer Service Excellence standard
4. Understand the desired strategic orientation of your institution and your library
5. Include strategic marketing planning as part of ongoing planning process
6. Use appropriate methods to understand the needs of your users and use this information to inform service planning”⁵²

These recommendations, although they may seem abstract, are actually very simple to implement and highly cost-effective. Admittedly, a lot of time and effort on the part of the employees is needed, but no money as such (which can be beneficial in explaining the task to library managers and other stakeholders), and the results can prove invaluable both in determining the libraries' strategic plan and firmly implementing it.

In 2009, IFLA published recommendations to supplement their 1994 Public Library Manifesto so that public libraries can place their services in the 21st century. These are the following:

- “1. Develop public library buildings with the emphasis as community/cultural spaces not just physical stores of knowledge.
2. Liberate our services using the World Wide Web 2.0 and look towards Web 3.0 and 4.0.

⁵¹ Cadair the Aberystwyth University Open Access Repository, J. Alcock, Strategic marketing in academic libraries: an examination of current practice, <http://cadair.aber.ac.uk/dspace/handle/2160/7732> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

⁵² *ibid*

3. Connect with our communities and educate and train people. Librarians and Information Scientists can act as educators and personal knowledge advisors and not just keepers of keys or Internet gatekeepers.
4. Develop a “worldwide wisdom” – a global knowledge and understanding by creating international cultural pathways on the web.
5. Work internationally to erode barriers and censorship whilst respecting all cultures.
6. Support our staff with continued training and encouragement to be proactive.
7. Develop our digitized collections services and knowledge – the hybrid library – knowledge, education and information in diverse forms.
8. Improve accessibility to our catalogues and databases especially for users with visual impairments.
9. Establish national and international standards on the Internet environment.
10. Public libraries as cultural storehouses – the “live” environment alongside the “recorded” one – archives, museums, libraries and culture combined: a “comby library”.⁵³

Although these refer explicitly to public libraries, there is no reason not to try to implement them in our university libraries in Serbia, especially as they are, indeed, open to general public and strive to present themselves as „social hubs“ in their respective communities.

A closer look reveals that most of these recommendations have already been or are currently being tackled by university libraries in Serbia. For example, all three have undertaken renovations/restorations of user space in the past 5-10 years in order to accommodate community/cultural activities; all three have their gallery spaces that are very active in the cultural field and recognized in their local communities. All of them work internationally and establish close cooperation with similar institutions from abroad, although UBSM is a leader in the field, as they have participated in most international projects and consortia. All of them are trying to reach out to their local communities, UBNT being most successful at the moment.

However, there are those recommendations that must be taken more seriously, such as number 6 „Support our staff with continued training and encouragement to be proactive“. This is not to say that university libraries do not invest into their staff; quite contrary, they are amongst the best

⁵³ 10 ways to make a public library work/ Update your libraries, <http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/public-libraries/publications/10-ways-to-make-a-public-library-work.pdf> (accessed on July 10th, 2014)

trained library professionals in Serbia, and it is frequent that colleagues from smaller (or faculty) libraries turn to them for professional help and guidance. However, the areas in which they receive constant training and education are typical library ones: cataloguing, classification, reference work, information literacy. What is needed is a more interdisciplinary approach that would include areas such as marketing, public relations, lobbying, fundraising, advocacy, and strategic planning.

The already mentioned Stokic-Simoncic and Vuksan study suggested looking up to good practice from American public libraries that employ so-called „communication managers“ whose task is to „develop and implement communication strategies that promote mission, goals and priorities of the library and improve the visibility of the library in the eyes of internal and external public. Communication manager plans and supervises the organization of different events in the library, contacts with media, edits publications, brochures, yearly reports, press releases as well as website and intranet...In American libraries, communication manager is usually a person who has obtained a degree in public relations, journalism or marketing, and then gained a master’s degree in one of the related areas. Apart from these qualifications, the person is additionally required to be: eloquent, dynamic, persuasive, communicative, team player and inventive. “⁵⁴

The implication of this finding, from a managerial perspective, is to hire the staff who fit in this particular description; however, although theoretically justifiable, this is not likely to occur in practice, due to specific circumstances university libraries in Serbia face today.⁵⁵ Instead, existing staff will need to obtain additional training or education in order to be able to perform these functions. Having closely examined the existing employees in the three university libraries, the author can ascertain that they already exhibit many of these characteristics. The potential is there, but in order to develop it fully, they should receive additional education and knowledge transfer.

⁵⁴Gordana Stokić Simončić *Best Practice u 22 priče: komunikacija, kultura organizacije, odnosi biblioteka s javnošću* (Pančevo: Gradska biblioteka, 2009) p. 248

⁵⁵ Economic situation and current ban on hiring in the governmental sector make it very difficult, if not impossible, to employ new people.

It is of utmost importance to stress that knowledge transfer does not need to be formal at all; internal staff meetings, online chats between colleagues, webinars, and internet forums may serve well for the purposes of obtaining knowledge through sharing expertise. A 2009 study⁵⁶ by Rajesh Sing on connection between the marketing attitudes and behavior of librarians in thirty-three different libraries of Finland clearly indicated that there exists a strong correlation between marketing attitudes and marketing orientation. Put most simply, the more positive attitudes of librarians towards marketing are, the better they perform. However, those attitudes need not be the result of formal education, the study shows: “Marketing education seems to be important in creating awareness amongst library personnel as to the usefulness and importance of marketing for libraries. At the same time, the knowledge need not always be based on a formal marketing education. It can also be concluded that there can be exceptions. A person with only informal insights in marketing can be a very effective marketer. Many of respondents have been endeavored to understand, through self-motivated study, the changing dimensions of their careers, needs and requirements of their profession and their own role during the organization”.⁵⁷ The author goes on to suggest “seminars, workshops, and training programs in marketing and other areas” as the most effective tool for knowledge transfer.

However, every manager knows that empowering employees (or even hiring the best living experts) will not suffice in itself, if the overall organizational structure and culture do not support them in their efforts. Therefore, the knowledge transfer is actually the last step; it must be preceded by a series of actions, both legislative (changing the existing systematizations, for example, in order to recognize the need to invest time and effort in community-building activities) and political (advocating towards changing the organizational culture in such a way that it reflects the needs of the library users in the ever-changing digital environment).

However, even those efforts may be futile if the libraries do not devote some time to researching the needs of their users. Instead of assuming what the students and researchers need/ want from a library, a thorough research must be conducted and the results must be carefully interpreted.

⁵⁶ Rajesh Sing, “Does your library have an attitude problem towards ‘marketing’? Revealing inter-relationship between marketing attitudes and behavior”, *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 2009, Volume 35, Number 1: pages 25–32

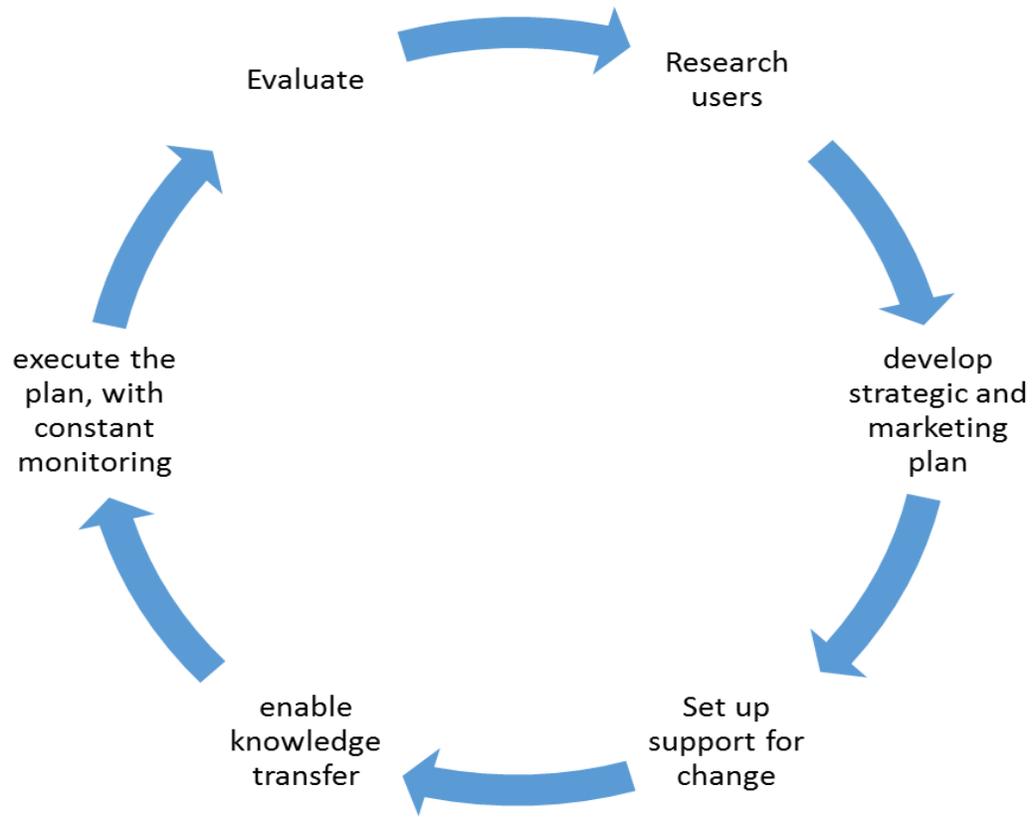
⁵⁷ *ibid*

Should the results indicate a greater demand for online services, for example, then time and funds should be allocated to educating staff to provide those services; likewise, if the users indicate that they need more digital content, it makes sense to start by marketing the already existing one more aggressively. Beyond that simple approach, user research would also enable libraries to successfully employ STP strategies for marketing activities, making them thus much more cost-effective and efficient.

Lastly, but not least importantly, a clear and focused marketing plan is a must for all three libraries, provided that it is synchronized with the larger strategic plan of their respective institutions. Strategic planning takes a lot of time and effort, but if done correctly, it can save both in the long run: it provides the institution with focus and vision that enable it to reach its goals in the desired time period.

To put it shortly, the list of recommended course of activities for the university libraries goes as follows:

1. research users → 2. develop strategic and marketing plan → 3. set up legislative and political support for necessary change → 4. enable knowledge transfer → 5. execute the plan, with constant monitoring and necessary adaptations → 6. evaluate → 7. repeat process.



5. CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to examine the marketing opportunities for digital collections in university libraries from Belgrade, Nis and Kragujevac, by examining competences of the employees who perform the marketing functions. In order for those employees' competencies to be examined objectively, they were put in larger context of their respective institutions; the research was a multiple case study and several indicators were compared, namely: financing and budget, official documents on internal organization (systematization documents, departments, delegation of responsibilities), employees (core competencies), number of users and circulation statistics, digital collections themselves, and PR and marketing activities, with special emphasis on web marketing. All those indicators were obtained by data collection; interview with core employees as well as observation were also used.

The main hypothesis was that the digital collections in the university libraries in Serbia are underused partly because they are not marketed appropriately.

According to the observation, and the data obtained from the survey, this hypothesis was confirmed. The number of people who do not use digital content and services at all is very high, especially the number of those people who state that they "have no need" to use them – almost 47%. Almost 42% of surveyed library users state that they had not been informed of the possibility to use digital collections, which is a percentage that can be clearly reduced with enhanced marketing efforts.

The secondary hypotheses were the following:

1. Current systematizations do not match current needs of their respective communities, and the persons who do market digital collections do so not because their job description requires them to, but because of their personal enthusiasm and commitment.

This was not proven in its entirety; namely, the research showed that the job descriptions do entail marketing and PR activities, and although personal commitment and enthusiasm have indeed been found in employees, they are not entirely divorced from the reality of those people's

quodidians tasks. In other words, those people are indeed required to market/promote library services and resources, and that includes digital content; however, they are left to their own devices to figure out exactly how to do this job – not only are they granted no funds whatsoever, but also there are no explicit rules or regulations, written or unwritten, that regulate which marketing activities would be appropriate for marketing which kind of services/resources.

2. Due to the lack of official requirement to manage online content and services, the employees that do so are not professionally trained, but rather self-taught enthusiasts, which impacts their performance; knowledge transfer from marketing specialists (especially those active in the field of digital marketing) would benefit them greatly

This point was also somewhat proven, as no university library employs marketing professionals; those that perform marketing and PR functions are indeed self-taught enthusiasts, but this fact alone does not seem to hinder their performance, as they seem to be aware of the latest trends and best practices in the digital environment. However, some sort of knowledge transfer would be beneficial, both for them and for other library staff.

3. Systematizations of work in university libraries are outdated and not relevant in the digital environment

This has also not been proven entirely, as there are job descriptions that do require marketing (including that of digital content). However, in order to keep up with the ever-changing digital world, those systematizations must be kept relevant and up-to-date. For example, terms such as “web development”, “social media management”, “internal communication strategy”, “user research”, “content management”, “marketing strategy” or even “strategic planning” must find their way into the official documentation.

To sum up, when it comes to marketing of digital content, university libraries in Serbia are on a good path; the employees generally have favorable marketing attitudes and are aware of general trends in the online world. However, a lot more needs to be done if they wish to increase the usage of their digital content. Knowledge transfer and application of best practices found

elsewhere in the country and abroad seem to be effective and efficient means to this end. Moreover, a more thorough analysis of the users' needs is called for, in order for them to be met appropriately. Since it is obvious that different groups of users have different information needs, a more segmented marketing approach is necessary and "one-size-fits-all" campaigns must be abandoned promptly. Examples of segmented marketing include (but are not limited to): various promotional campaigns aimed at various user groups and thorough research of user behavior in order to determine their information needs (instead of presupposing them) and act accordingly.

In the long term, developing strategic marketing plans and incorporating them into overall strategic plans of their respective institutions could be the solution to the low usage of digital resources that they have been developing so diligently.

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7. SUMMARY

This paper deals with digital content at the three university libraries in Serbia – Belgrade, Nis and Kragujevac. The focus was on investigating how the said libraries market the digital content, both from practical and from a managerial perspective. The author examined the internal organization of the said libraries – investigated their job systematizations, internal organizations, job descriptions and responsibility delegations in order to find out who the responsible persons for managing online content and services are, what their job descriptions entail and how they are incorporated in the overall mission and vision of their respective institutions. Current web marketing efforts were examined. Observation, interview and survey were used. On the basis of collected data, as well as and the theoretical background about the preferred level of performance in academic libraries, some conclusions were drawn. The theoretical background was determined from the secondary data collection, i.e. review of literature by established authors in this field, both from the country and abroad. Best practices in the field of digital library marketing, found in existing literature, were also presented as means of establishing the desired level of performance with which our target case studies can be compared.

Key words: university libraries; digital content; marketing; web marketing; social networks

8. APPENDIX 1 – SURVEY FOR LIBRARY USERS

1. Pol
 - Muški
 - Ženski

2. Godine
 - 18-25
 - 25-40
 - 40-60
 - 60+

3. Stautus
 - Učenik
 - Student
 - Zaposlen
 - Nezaposlen
 - Penzioner

4. U biblioteku dolazim da bih (moguće je izabrati više odgovora)
 - Pozajmljivao/la knjige
 - Koristio/la čitaonice
 - Koristio/la internet
 - Koristio/la usluge fotokopiranja, skreniranja, štampanja i sl
 - Koristio/la usluge međubibliotečke pozajmice

5. Da li koristite usluge biblioteke „na daljinu“?
 - Da
 - Ne

6. Ako ne, zašto?
 - Nisu mi potrebne
 - Nisam upoznat/a sa tim da mogu
 - Nemam vremena
 - Drugo (šta?)

7. Ako da, koje? (moguće je izabrati više od jednog odgovora)
 - Servis „Moja biblioteka“
 - Udaljeni pristup bazama podataka (KoBSON)
 - E-teze
 - Digitalnu biblioteku

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