

ABSTRACT

Thesis Title : Fee-based Information Service Agencies: Customer Needs
and Attitudes

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Degree sought : Master of Arts

Major : Library and Information Science

Advisory Committee :

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The study surveys customer needs and attitudes toward the information service industry by examining customer needs and attitudes in terms of patterns, time, prices, content, objectives, problems and customer attitudes toward the criteria for selecting information service agencies.

The objectives of this research are as follows: (1) to identify formats that customers need; (2) to study the length of time that customers can wait for the information; (3) to find the price levels that customers are willing to pay for information; (4) to study the content of information that customers need; (5) to study customer objectives in using information; (6) to study the problems customers face when receiving information; and (7) to study customer attitudes towards the selection criteria for information service agencies. The survey was conducted through self-administered questionnaires. The population was comprised of 150 customers that use information service agencies or libraries. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

The research findings can be summarized as follows: (1) customers needed and subscribed to three types of current information services: clippings or express news services by telecommunication media ($\bar{X}=3.85$), online information services ($\bar{X}=3.84$), and compiled and analyzed information services ($\bar{X}=3.69$); (2) most customers (37.33%) need information 24 hours a day, a few (18.67%) need information between 8.00-12.00 a.m.; (3) customers wanted to pay a lower rate than that was actually charged by the information service agencies; (4) the content of information that customers needed were: economics ($\bar{X}=4.45$), technology ($\bar{X}=4.04$), and industry ($\bar{X}=3.79$); (5) customers use information to increase their current knowledge and experience in order to cope with an information society era; (6) the problems customers faced when they receive information from information service agencies were: unreliable ($\bar{X}=3.23$), incomplete ($\bar{X}=3.21$), or mixed-up information ($\bar{X}=2.86$), and late transmission of telecommunication systems ($\bar{X}=2.82$); and (7) customer criteria for choosing information service agencies were: accuracy, timeliness, fair pricing system, reliable data, credible presentation of data, fast transmission of data, justified price, well-known information service agencies and modern technology used to transmit information.