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PROMOTION OF RECORDS AND INFORMATION PRODUCTS AND SERVICES AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ZIMBAWE: A CASE STUDY OF THE BULAWAYO BRANCH

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to see how the promotion of records and information products and services is done at the National Archives of Zimbabwe (Bulawayo). The researcher identifies areas of weaknesses in the marketing of records and information products and services in the organisation and recommendations were cited. The researcher analysed the promotional mixes used by the National Archives of Zimbabwe and their effectiveness in raising user awareness of the records and information products and services available at NAZ. The researcher was confined to National Archives Division in Bulawayo. Data was collected through the use of interviews and questionnaires. Data gathered from the study reflected malpractice in the promotion of records and information products and services at NAZ. Data was presented and analysed using tables, pie charts and graphs. The researcher thus concluded that, failure to the promotion of records and information products and services at NAZ was due to lack of financial support from the government and well-wishers which can be channelled to the promotion of records and information products and services. The researcher recommended that, government should prioritise archiving by supporting archiving financially in a bid to support promotional activities; the NAZ should also use modern technologies and social networks as a way of promoting records and information products and services to social network users and to keep the NAZ website up to date so that people will be kept updated with current NAZ services.

Key Words: *Marketing; Promotion; Information Products; National Archives of Zimbabwe.*

Background to the Study

It is not enough for a business to have good products sold at attractive prices. To generate sales and profits, the benefits of products have to be communicated to customers. In marketing, this is commonly known as 'promotion''. Records centres and archives need to promote their products to the society so that the society will know what the information centres has at a certain time and how those records and information products and services can be accessed. Marketing is a relatively new concept in the area of records and information science. (Kotler, P. and Keller, K.L. 2006: 50). Traditionally considered synonymous with selling, promoting was thought to belong exclusively to the profit making sector. Since most records and information centres receive their funding from sources other than the immediate user, records managers and information professionals perceive the value of their product to be self-evident, they did not consider that promotion -construed as selling - applied to them.

Kotler, P. and Keller, K.L (2006: 56), articulated that organisations such as museums, universities, libraries, charities and records centres need to market their causes and their products to gain political and social support as well as economic support. This support can be attained if records centres promote their products and services to their target market. According to Dhiman, K (2005:458), Promotion involves communication that a marketer engages in with the customers in order to acknowledge the product. The basic aim of records centre promotion is to select a technique that can encourage the recipient to respond either by buying or requesting further information, or by filling the promotional material away for the use in the future.

Kotler, P and Armstrong, G (2006:12) believed that, the pre-requisites to promotion is to know the target market aimed at and making sure that one's service really answers their needs. The promotional means and message can then be tailored to the specific audience. Promotion is perhaps the one element of marketing that has traditionally been recognized and practised by records managers, archivist and librarians. Users (potential or actual) need to know what is available and promotion is an effective method and time honoured means of doing this. Promotion is one of the major components of the marketing mix also known as the four Ps. The marketing mix is the set of controllable, tactical marketing tools that a firm blends to produce the response it want ii its target market (World Bank Institute, 1996).

Kotler, P. and Keller, K.L (2006:67) articulated that, the interest in promoting has tremendously increased over the past few decades in information centres like other service centres; education, health, transportation, insurance and banking. Cowan, R and Pember, M (2007:12) propounded that, promotion of records centres and archives is vital in the management of records centres and archives. ''Due to explosion of information at global level, there is more information available in the market; therefore, management of records centres is necessary to meet information needs of users''. (Keiser and Galvin, 1995:53). The verdict afore means that, there is rapid increase in competition amongst information providers and preservers. Therefore, in order to beat the rising competition, the National Archives of Zimbabwe need to promote its records and information products and services so that it will not lose its customers thus researchers and depositors.

Kotler (2008:106) further articulated that, promoting records centre and archives helps them to be committed to customer satisfaction, understanding customers and improving the information centre's image. Gupta e tal (2002) pinpointed that, there are six elements which are considered in the promotion mix which include advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct mail, internet marketing and personal selling which helps records and archives institutions to promote themselves better to their target markets.
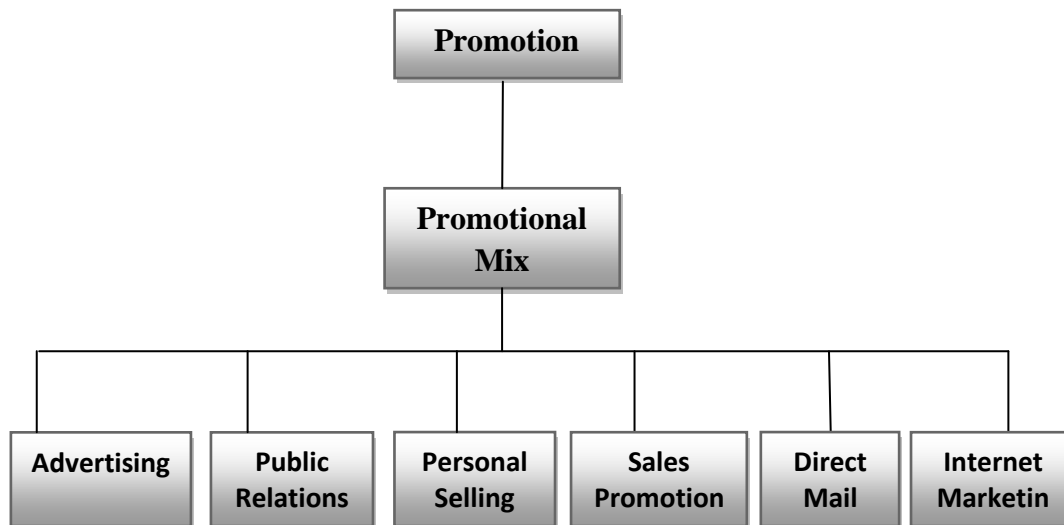
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Figure 1: Summarises the Promotional Mix (Source: www.learnmarketing.net)

Records centres promote their products and services through one of the promotional mix that is advertising. According to Kotler (2008:117) Advertising is communication with current and potential customers and consumers, done through paid mass media. The channels of communication can be television, radio, internet and billboards. The National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) use this form of promotion to market their products national wide. The NAZ has a website although the website is not always up to date where the NAZ show what they offer and ways of accessing their collections. The NAZ also promote its products and services through public relations. Kotler (2008:115) articulated that public relations involve positive relationships with the organisation media public. The art of good public relations is not only to obtain favourable publicity within the media, but it is also involves being able to handle successfully negative attention.

The NAZ also promotes its products and services through sales promotion. Sales promotion is commonly used to obtain an increase in sales short term. Sales promotion could involve using money off coupons or special offers. In other words sales promotion represents a set of different promotional activities that has a goal of animating customers for purchasing. A personal sale is another promotional way of promoting records and archives materials. Personal sale is a way of promotion activity where sales representative is directly contacting the customer. This person-to-person contact has the goal of direct promotion of the product and conclusion of sales.

In order to promote their information products and services effectively, records centres and archives need to consider the marketing concept where information centres identify their target market, identifies the customer needs and put total company effort to reach their customers at the same time making profits. The marketing concept is a philosophy that suggests firms should analyse the needs of their customers and then make decisions to satisfy those needs, better than the competitor. (Kotler: 2008:106). The marketing concept involves studying the target market needs, designing appropriate products and services and using effective pricing, communication and distribution to inform, motivate and serve the market. Records and archives institution should communicate with their target market to know what they want and provide requested services and products in a timely manner with reasonable cost involved in accessing the product thus promotion.

Proper promotion of records and archives ensures that the target market is aware of the information products and services offered by the NAZ. Proper promotion also ensures that the target market of the NAZ is reached by the promotional mixes of the NAZ in order to utilise the services offered by the NAZ. Proper promotion can be attained if the NAZ put total company effort in identifying the needs of the target market and raise awareness of the availability of the needs of the target market, at the same time making readily available the needs of the target market in order to satisfy the target market.

However, the NAZ is reluctant in promoting their products and services assuming the traditional view that user will just come to them if they want information and if they want to conduct researches. With an increase in competitors, emerging which provide the same products and services as those offered by the NAZ, pressure has mounted on the NAZ to promote their products and services in order to retain their supplier's market. This can be done if the NAZ identifies the best promotional management which best suits it and which easily reach its target market.
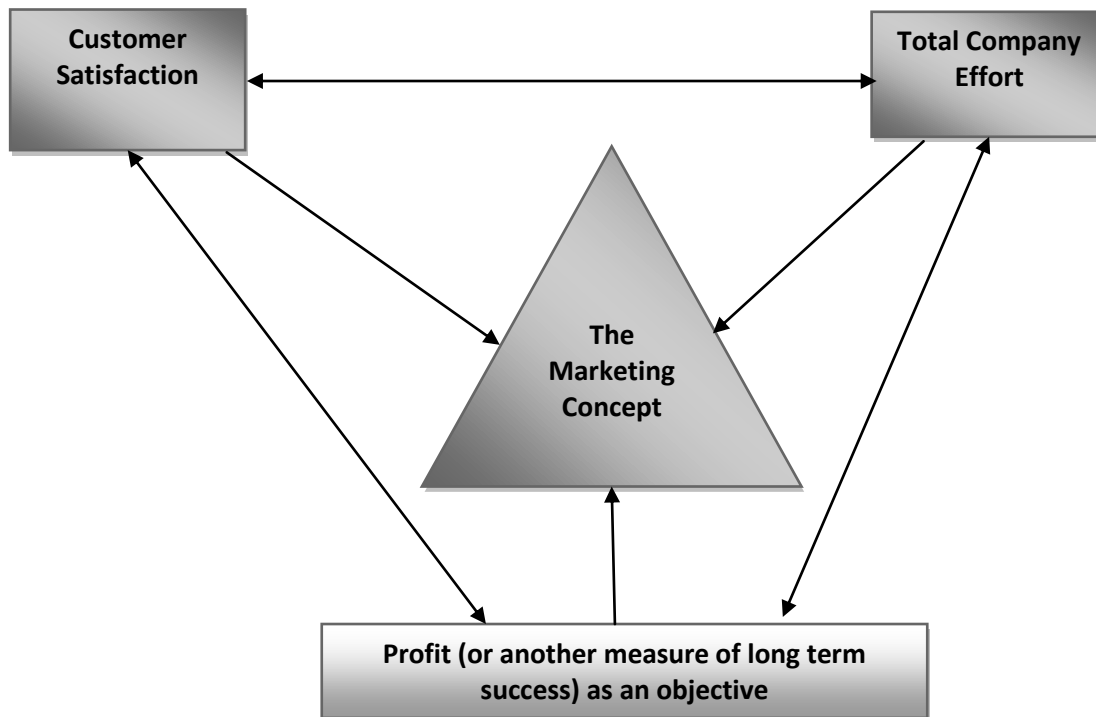
Figure 2: The Marketing Concept (Adapted from: Keiser & Galvin, 1995)

Statement of a Problem

Proper promotion ensures that the target market is aware of the information products and services offered by non-profit making organisations. (Andreasen and Kotler, 2003: 365). However, promotion of information products and services at NAZ is not well defined. The NAZ has an ''Organization-centred'' marketing mind-set and falsely believe that their products and services are needed by the target market and users will always come for their services even without being notified about the availability of those information products and services.

Purpose of the Study

The study seeks to see how promotion of information products and services is carried out by the NAZ to improve customer awareness of services offered.

Specific Objectives of the Study

i. To analyse promotion methods of records and information products and services at NAZ.
ii. To ascertain the role of promotion of information products and services at NAZ.
iii. To foresee if there are challenges being faced in promoting information products and services at NAZ.

Research Questions

i. Which methods are used by the NAZ to promote its products and services?
ii. What role does promotion have in raising awareness of information products and services in the NAZ?
iii. What challenges are faced in promoting information products and services?

Justification of the Study

The project was justified that it added literature in this relatively new field of study as it has been described by Ngulube (2003:4). A number of studies conducted about the National Archives of Zimbabwe were mainly focusing on the management of records and archives and a few were conducted mainly on the marketing of records and information products and services in broad. There was a gap which needed to be filled as far as promotion of NAZ and records and information product and services is concerned. This project will help the NAZ to regain interest of its target market by beating new competitors and help to raise awareness of the products offered by NAZ by the society.

Assumption of the Study

National Archives of Zimbabwe in Bulawayo is not prioritising the promotion of records and information products and services. If the NAZ improve its promotional mixes it will raise better awareness of records and information products and services offered by NAZ to customers.

Significance of the Study

Significance to NAZ

The study was of great importance to NAZ to improve their services and to raise awareness of the products and services they offer. Proper promotion of records and information products and services offered by NAZ helps to attracts more customers and increases the number of retaining visitors.

Significance to Researcher

The study was of great importance to the researcher because it adds to literature on the subject for future research material since this is a very uncommon area of research in the NAZ. The study is also part and partial of the researcher to attain their Bachelor of Science Honours degree in Records and Archives Management.

Scope of the Study

The researcher was confined to NAZ in Bulawayo. The study analyses promotion mix used by the NAZ as a way of promoting its information products and services. The research subjects were chosen using purposive sampling from the NAZ staff members.

Review of Scholarship

Records and information centres have begun to realise that promotion of information products and services is an integral part of administration, especially as a means for improving user satisfaction and promoting the use of services by current and potential users. Some factors which contributed to records centres and archives to promote their records and information products and services includes the information explosion, the technology revolution, rising competition with other information providers, need to capitalise profit, the desire to satisfy customers and escalating information costs. Some information service managers feel that marketing is inimical to the nature of their activities. But with increased competition in the world of information, promotion is a factor for survival. (Joseph Jestin K.J, 2002: 23).

This chapter covers in details the literature pertaining to promotion of records and information products and services by non-profit making organisations such as records centres, archives and other information centres. According to Bernard (2001:153), a literature review is a systematic, explicit and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating and interpreting the existing body of recorded work produced by researchers, scholars and practitioners. Literature review is an important section in research as it airs out different views and thoughts by different scholars which help to identify gaps in existing knowledge and how others have tried to fill the gap. In this literature review the researcher discussed the importance of promoting records and information products and services, and the promotional mixes used by non-profit making organisations to promote records and information products and services.

Importance of Promoting Records and Information Products and Services

Promotion includes any activity that a firm uses to communicate with customers (Armstong and Kotler, 2004: 399). Promotion in non-profit making organisations consist of five elements namely mass media advertising, direct promotion, personal selling, sales promotion and public relations also known as the promotional mix. The basic aim of records and information product and service promotion is to encourage the recipient or customer to respond either by buying or requesting further information about the product or service. (Dhiman, K. 2004:34). The contact between the customer and the service provider is the heart of the service interaction. Whatever the business or organisation, it is ultimately the person-to-person contact that will make or break the relationship between the customer and service provider. The catalogues, letters, newsletters, bulletins, telephones, e-mails, and the like will help, but sometimes the people at the service and the customer will have to come into direct contact and the most 'moments of truth' occur when they interact. According to Keith and Hart, (1999:60) Face-to-face contact offers the best way to exchange information, of weighing up to other party, of negotiating, of solving problems and establishing a long-term relationship. It grows and prospers with the delivery of result, time after time. The willingness of the people at service is the heart of the customer-service provider interaction which is a constant disposition to serve the customer.

Promotion aids in the management of records centres and information centres (Cowan, R and Pember, M (2007:12). Due to explosion of information at global level, there is more information available in the market. Therefore, promotion of records and information centres is necessary to meet information needs of users. "The world in which information centres exist has changed dramatically. It moves faster, relies on technology and competes more intensely. Fearful that change may threaten our existence, we must promote our records to help us manage better". (Keiser and Galvin, 1995:2). Here Keiser and Galvin are pointing out that, due to the introduction of virtual archives, there is more competition on line about what different archives and records centres offers, therefore if NAZ will not promote its records and information products and services, it will lose its customers to other records centres and archives.

Promoting records and information products and services helps to improve the image of the National Archives of Zimbabwe or improves the public relations of NAZ. In today's business environment, "Information professionals who take marketing seriously will earn "street cred" in their organization. This would benefit them in terms of their career but will also help to accelerate the death of the old buddy-duddy image and herald the arrival of the focused, business-like, customer led librarian" (Kotler, P. and Keller, K.L, 2006; 102). A good reputation may involve cordial relations with the community, good facilities, high service standard, good discipline, a well-qualified staff and good results. As such, promoting efforts can help NAZ in improving its image through improved services. Promotion will help NAZ improve its image in the sense that, it will pin point to various services the National Archives of Zimbabwe offers which the society might not be well informed about the availability of a certain service at NAZ. Gronroos, C. (2000:55), further articulated that, for the information centre to remain competitive, or even more fundamentally, it has to promote its products and services.

Marketing Communication Process in Relation to Promotion of Information Products and Services

A successful product or service means nothing unless the benefit of such a service can be communicated or promoted clearly to the target market. The communication process plays a pivotal role in making sure the target market is aware of the records and information products and services offered by the NAZ and that the target market react to the promotional measures or the promotional mixes which the information centre uses as a way of reaching its target market. According to Goldsmith, (1999: 12) the elements of the promotions mix is integrated to form a coherent campaign as with all forms of communication. The message from the promoter follows the 'communications process' as illustrated in Fig 3 below:

Fig 3: Communication Process

For example, a radio advert is made for a records centre's information products or service. The records centre (sender) pays for a specific advert with contains a message specific to a target audience (encoding). It is transmitted during a set of commercials from a radio station (Message / media).

The message is decoded by a car radio (decoding) and the target consumer interprets the message (receiver). He or she might visit a dealership or seek further information from a web site (Response). The consumer might opt for the service or information product offered or express an interest or dislike (feedback). This information will inform future elements of an integrated promotional campaign. Perhaps a direct mail campaign would push the consumer to the point of purchase. Noise represents the thousands of marketing communications (promotional communication) that a consumer is exposed to everyday, all competing for attention. Communication process is vital to all promotional mixes used by the NAZ. In other words, for all promotional mixes to be effective and be able to reach its target market effectively, all promotional mixes should incorporate the communication process illustrated above. The promotional mixes used by NAZ should be in a position to beat the noise that other information providers cause as they will be trying to attract attention from consumers.

The Promotional Mix

The promotion (Promotional Mix) is one out of four basic instruments of marketing that has the purpose to inform about other instruments of marketing mix and to contribute to sales increase on the long term (Records Management Society, 2010:45). Goals of promotion can be public informing, demand increasing, product differentiation, and product value increasing or sales stabilizing. Usually the promotion is targeting more than one goal.

Personal Selling using a professional sales force or the salespeople of retail channel members is typical for high-ticket consumer durables such as cars and household appliances and is essential for most business-to-business capital goods such as the sale of airplanes or manufacturing machinery. However, the NAZ does not use personal selling, as most products offered by NAZ are not durable. Furthermore, even if they are durable information products people will not opt for such products as they value other things they assume are worth spending more money for. Personal selling can play a significant role if the target market is well informed about the importance of information so that they will value it and be prepared to spend it. Unfortunately, less economically developed countries are still in agrarian era. Therefore, they do not see the value of records and information products (Shapiro, 1981:234). Sales Promotion involves a temporary change in the price/quantity offer, such as: "Buy one, get one free!" is ubiquitous in consumer packaged goods purchased in grocery stores and is very effective at generating a short term increase in unit sales, often at the expense of current period profitability and sales in future time periods. Public Relations, the fifth element, has often been considered as an after-thought, but successful marketing managers no longer wait around for disaster to strike before consulting with their PR counsel. Modern Public Relations embraces a cornucopia of legitimate techniques to promote a firm, its brands and its products beyond traditional advertising.

A strategic approach to marketing begins with an understanding that strategy always involves making choices: Successful firms focus their resources as much by choosing which market opportunities to avoid and which to target. Similarly, a managerial approach to the promotional mix that is truly strategic will be one that makes choices among the

many possibilities. For example, very early in the product life cycle the firm's promotional objective may be solely to generate interest in the category ("Have you thought about getting a satellite phone?") rather than generating sales per se. Different promotional techniques achieve different promotional results: awareness, brand recognition, brand preference, product choice, customer loyalty and so on. An important part of management of this Promotional Mix is to make sure that all elements of a firm's communication strategy are coordinated. A familiar example of a failure in this approach is to go into a records centre in response to an advertisement and find that the sales staffs knows nothing about an advertised sales price offer. Strategic thinking includes adopting the philosophy of Integrated Marketing Communications: Making sure that activity in one of the five elements is harmoniously coordinated with the others (Schultz, 1993).

Figure 4 below summarises the promotional mixes used by information centres and other information centres to promote their records and information products and services.
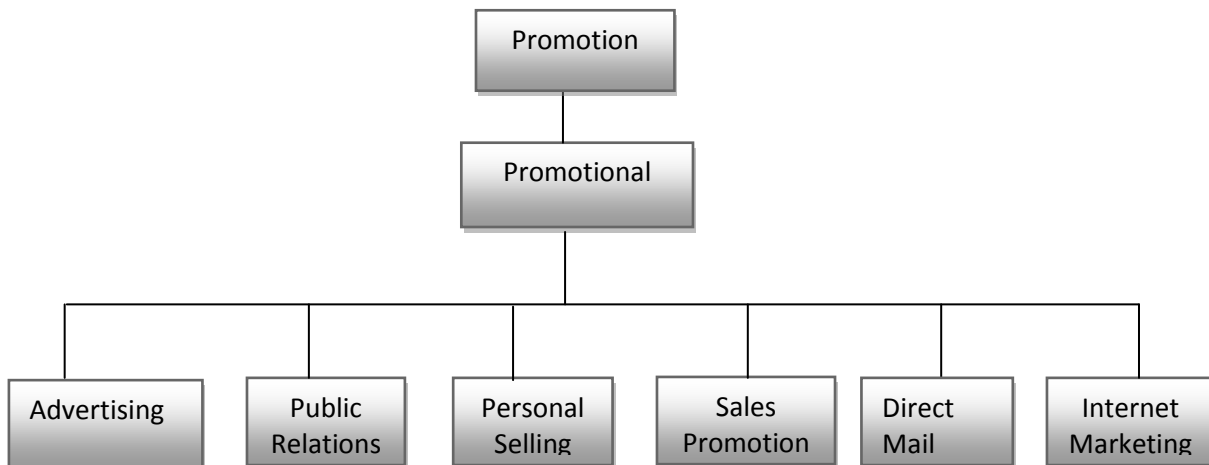

Figure 4: The Promotional Mix (Adapted from: www.learnmarketing.net)

Advertising

The advertising, as a part of promotion mix, is the basic element of promotion within marketing mix. Advertising is any form of indirect presentation of ideas products or services Kotler (2004:56). Koekemoer (2004:65) defines advertising as;

> ''a means of making known what we want to sell or want to buy, a means of informing existing and potential customers about a product, its special features and benefits and a means of persuading them to buy the product. More generally the purpose of advertising is to induce potential customers to respond favourably to the offerings of the firm''.

Koekemoer (2004:66) explains that the source of the information or message is known as the advertiser, which could be a manufacturer, retailer, service organisation or even the government. The message is transmitted through non personal mass communication such as newspapers, magazines, television, radio, outdoor advertising and direct mail. When the message is transmitted, it is adopted by the target market. According to Kitchen (1999:68), advertising ''takes a more remote approach'' to its target audience than the other elements in the marketing communication mix and its primary role has become longer-term brand-building through building awareness, conveying information, telling a story, establishing an identity and creating a predisposition.

The basic purpose of advertising is to stimulate demand and product sales. Therefore, advertising is considered to be basic instrument of sales and communication with the public. Accordingly, records and archives institution use advertising as a way of presenting their ideas and making customers well informed about the records and information products and services they offer.

According to Coote and Helen (1994:12), advertising supports two different goals of the company. If the goal of advertising is the product or service, with the purpose of sales increase it is called Product Advertising. On the other hand, if the goal is to promote the image of the company, then it is Institutional Advertising. Non-profit making organizations' make use of both product and institutional advertising as a way of improving their societal image and to raise awareness of their records and information products and services they offer. Non-profit making organisation advertise their records and information products and services to their target market through channels of communication such as TV, radio, Internet and billboards. According to Broom, G.M. (2000), Advertising can have a number of objectives, these usually are:

  i. To promote
  ii. To remind
  iii. To support
  iv. To compete
  v. To persuade

According to Nobilis (2007:6), product advertising can have different roles. The most important roles of product advertising are:

i. Pioneer advertising that points to primary demand for the product. It is relevant during the introduction phase of the product. Since the product is new, the pioneer advertising is promoting novelty and set new trends.

ii. Competitive advertising is pointing for demand increase for specific product of the company. Since the product is in the phase of growth or maturity, competition is developed and active. Therefore, the goal of competitive advertising is to differentiate product from the competition and to increase or protect sales volume.

iii. Sustainability advertising has a goal to keep the loyal segment of customers. The sustainability advertising is reminder advertising that makes sense for established and developed brands.

Institutional Advertising has advertising goal that is much wider than the product advertising. While the product advertising is basic advertising stage, the institutional advertising is advanced level. Institutional advertising cannot be conducted without developed product advertising. The institutional advertising is developing image of the company, clarifying the mission and vision to population and building the public opinion about the community contribution of the company.

Channels of communication for product and institutional advertising are TV, radio, newspapers, internet advertising, mail, e-mail, and billboards. However, mass media advertising has its limitations. Sadly, the readership of daily newspapers is shrinking (Angwin and Hallernan, 2005:23), especially among those generations whose members grew up accessing information from the Internet. Advances in digital composition have made it very easy to start new magazines (the National Directory of Magazines lists more than 10,000 non-scientific periodical titles). While this means that advertising can be narrowly targeted to niche audiences (Godin, 1999:29), such as people who crochet as a hobby, it makes it harder to reach new customers such as people who would be interested in taking up crochet as a hobby. TV networks can no longer deliver 85 percent of all viewing households as Ed Sullivan could command for his variety show in the 1950s. Cable and satellite TV have led to the fragmentation of media—with many more channels, fewer viewers are watching each one (Leonard, 2004:6). Worse, from the advertisers' point of view, the most desirable customers may not be watching TV at all, choosing to spend their leisure time online, gaming or watching commercial-free programming. Digital video recorders permit consumers to "zap" commercials by skipping ahead. Those media which do carry advertisements are increasingly cluttered (Kotler & Armstrong, 1996: 500) so the impact Mass Media Advertising expenditure is diminished.

Public Relations

Of the four promotional mixes, options available to marketers' public relations is the least understood and consequently often receives the least amount of attention (Dalgic, 1998). Many marketers see public relations as only handling rudimentary communication activities, such as issuing press releases and responding to questions from the news media. But in reality, in a time when customers are inundated with thousands of promotional messages every day, public relations offers powerful methods for cutting through the clutter. Public Relationship (PR) is communication toward public, but is turned more to reputation and image of the company, than to its products. The PR activity can be a press conference, TV interview with company representative, press article about donation of the company to charity or about latest environmental project.

Public relations are about creating understanding through knowledge, and this often involves effecting change. Public relations are therefore a form of communication. It applies to every sort of organisation, commercial or non-commercial, in the public or private sector. Public relations consist of all communications with all the people with whom the organisation has contact. Non-profit making organisations make use of public relations as a way of keeping in touch with their target market and with companies which deposit their records to them so that they remain as retaining visitors. In other words, public relations are there to improve NAZ's relationship with its clients. Public Relations is the part of the Promotional Mix that involves communication between the firm and its public constituencies other than paid mass media advertising and direct promotion (mail and e-mail).(Jestin, J 2002:34)

Public Relations activities seek to promote "Word of Mouth" and increase Media Mentions of the firm and its product. The long-term goal of any successful Public Relations activity is to encourage positive consumer perceptions of the firm, its brands and its products. From a myriad of PR activities that will be described below, the effect of a successful PR campaign can be identified in two intermediate results: Word of Mouth and Media Mentions. These two vectors are interrelated thus, positive print articles result in friends talking, friends talking suggest story ideas to reporters—the specific effect of the various tactics will vary with a greater weight on word of mouth or media mentions as the intermediate result.

Word of Mouth

"Word of Mouth" is the promotional dream of most marketers. If a firm is lucky enough to have it, consumers tell each other about the firm's products, and the most satisfied customers volunteer as ambassadors for the brand. Word of mouth is particularly effective as a promotional communication because each message comes from a trusted source such as a friend, family member or acquaintance. Not too long ago, a marketing manager whose work I respect commented: "There's not too much we can do about Word of Mouth—we figure, if it happens, that's great." However, Renee Dye's (2000:23) influential article defined Word of Mouth as a legitimate promotional goal and suggested several techniques, such as creating artificial shortages of in-demand products, to produce what she called "buzz". The recently formed Word of Mouth Marketing Association (www.womma.org) seeks to promote best practices in the field amongst its members. Andrew and Jack Kaikati (2004:23) recently reviewed a number of "stealth marketing" techniques (such as paying people to talk up the brand) which have been employed to directly promote Word of Mouth. Word of Mouth is particularly desirable as the intermediate goal if there is a narrow group of customers for a product or if the firm is trying

to seek the attention of opinion leaders and early adopters. For example, if a firm developed a new product to aid autistic children, while media mentions on morning TV news shows would be nice to have, this would be over reaching (most families watching the shows would be uninterested in purchase). A more strategic approach would be to focus on developing Word of Mouth within autism parent associations and support groups.

Sales Promotion

Sales promotions are tactical activities used as part of the overall promotional mix. Koekemoer (2004:267) defines sales promotion as

''a blend of marketing communication activities and materials designed to intensify the efforts of the marketer's sales force, induce intermediaries to stock and sell the marketer's product offering, and / or persuade consumers to buy the product offering within a specified, limited time period''.

Some of the objectives of sales promotion include encouraging salespeople to increase their efforts to sell more of a specific product, to locate more prospective buyers of a product and to build consumer goodwill. Kitchen (1999: 292) identifies types of sales promotion as price cuts, coupons, displays and feature advertising and/or a combination of these. They are intended to produce quick and short-term changes in consumer or business to business buying behaviours

When to use Sales Promotions?

Sales promotion techniques are used to introduce new products into the market through educating people who may not have necessarily tried the product if no promotion existed. For current products, a sense of goodwill is created whilst new clients and accounts are attracted with the offer of discounting or gifts. National Archives of Zimbabwe can use sales promotion when they put in place a new service for example after digitising their collection and put it online they can reduce the cost of viewing the archival material online or per download at first and when the service became well established a fixed cost for viewing and download is then implemented.

Whilst there are criticisms surrounding some sales promotions, most of them yield positive results such as customer satisfaction and jump starting low sales volumes through a stimulated demand, however as with all promotional activities these must be measured and planned out thoroughly as part of your overall marketing strategy. Sales promotion is used by NAZ when they introduce new product or service into the market as they will be educating people who may not have necessary tried the product or service if no promotion existed. According to Kotler, Philip (1997:78), sales promotion is usually done in introduction phase in the Product Life Cycle as the records centre will be trying to raise awareness of the product or service to the target market. Price discounts will be given in order to give the target market an opportunity to try the product without much risk. Communication with the organisation's target audience is more direct and personal.

Personal Selling

Koekemoer (2004: 13) defines personal selling as ''a person-to-person process by which the seller learns about the prospective buyer's wants and seeks to satisfy them by offering suitable goods or services and making a sale''. Communication is extremely personal through direct contact with the purchaser. This is a process by which a person persuades the buyer to accept a product or a point of view or convince the buyer to take specific course of action through face to face contact. It is an act of helping and persuading through the use of oral presentation of products or services. Target audience may vary from product to product and situation to situation. In other words personal selling is a person to person process by which the seller learns about the prospective buyer's wants and seeks to satisfy them by making a sale. (Kitchen: 1999). Some of the examples of personal selling include: Sales Meetings, sales presentations, sales training and incentive programs for intermediary sales people, samples and telemarketing. It can be of face-to-face or through telephone contact.

Direct Marketing

Koekemoer (2004:326) refers to the generally accepted definition of direct marketing used by the American Direct Marketing Association, namely that direct marketing ''is an interactive system of marketing that uses one or more advertising media to effect a measurable response and/or transaction at any location''. Koekemoer (2004:326) also refers to a more elaborate definition by Stone and Jacobs (2001:5) that ''direct marketing is the interactive use of advertising media to stimulate an immediate behaviour modification in such a way that this behaviour can be tracked, recorded, analysed and stored on a database for future retrieval and use''. This type of marketing reaches the targeted consumers with techniques such as promotional letters, street advertising, catalogue distribution, fliers etc. These promotional efforts are of two general types involving:
  i. Direct face to face communication
  ii. Indirect communication through mass medium, such as television, newspapers and radio.

Sometimes a mixture of personal/direct and non-personal/indirect promotion is used as we use in the sales promotion. Industrial buyer will not decide to purchase equipment on the basis of advertisements or direct mail. Personal selling is preferred in this case. On the other hand a customer buying toothpaste or hair oil will have less contact with the company sales person and will be influenced more by advertisements.
Table: 1 below summarises the advantages and disadvantages of using different promotional mixes

Table 1: Advantages and Disadvantages of Each Element of the Promotional Mix

Mix Element	Advantages	Disadvantages
Advertising	Good for building awareness Effective at reaching a wide audience Repetition of main brand and product positioning helps build customer trust	Impersonal - cannot answer all a customer's questions Not good at getting customers to make a final purchasing decision
Personal Selling	Highly interactive - lots of communication between the buyer and seller Excellent for communicating complex / detailed product information and features Relationships can be built up - important if closing the sale make take a long time	Costly - employing a sales force has many hidden costs in addition to wages Not suitable if there are thousands of important buyers
Sales Promotion	Can stimulate quick increases in sales by targeting promotional incentives on particular products Good short term tactical tool	If used over the long-term, customers may get used to the effect Too much promotion may damage the brand image
Public Relations	Often seen as more "credible" - since the message seems to be coming from a third party (e.g. magazine, newspaper) Cheap way of reaching many customers - if the publicity is achieved through the right media	Risk of losing control - cannot always control what other people write or say about your product

According to Golchels, L (2010), promotion of information products is conducted through the whole product life cycle which progresses through a sequence of stages from introduction to growth, maturity, and decline. The product life cycle and is associated with changes in the marketing situation, thus impacting the marketing strategy and the marketing mix.

The product revenue and profits can be plotted as a function of the life-cycle stages as shown in the graph below:

Figure 5: Product Life Cycle Diagram (Source, MBA.com)

Introduction Stage

In the introduction stage, the firm seeks to build product awareness and develop a market for the product. The impact on the marketing mix is as follows: Product branding and quality level is established and intellectual property protection such as patents and trademarks are obtained. Pricing may be low penetration pricing to build market share rapidly, or high skim pricing to recover development costs. Distribution is selective until consumers show acceptance of the product. Promotion is aimed at innovators and early adopters. Marketing communications seeks to build product awareness and to educate potential consumers about the product. Promotion at this stage can be best done through sales promotion because of the reasons articulated above at sales promotion. Use of personal selling is used at this stage as the NAZ will be trying to reach its specific target market as a way of trying its product or services with a lot of discounts such as deposit 20 boxes of records and 5 will be deposited and archived for free.

Growth Stage

In the growth stage, the firm seeks to build brand preference and increase market share. Product quality is maintained and additional features and support services may be added. Pricing is maintained as the firm enjoys increasing demand with little competition. Distribution channels are added as demand increases and customers accept the product. Promotion is aimed at a broader audience. NAZ use internet marketing and advertising as a way of promoting information product or service. Internet marketing and advertising is used at this stage because of its ability to reach a large market and low cost. Internet marketing and advertising is used at growth stage in order to boost profits with limited expense.

Maturity Stage

At maturity, the strong growth in sales diminishes. Competition may appear with similar products. The primary objective at this point is to defend market share while maximizing profit. Product features may be enhanced to differentiate the product from that of competitors. Pricing may be lower because of the new competition. Distribution becomes more intensive and incentives may be offered to encourage preference over competing products. Promotion emphasizes product differentiation. NAZ improves in its branding or emphasizes on branding of its product in order to differentiate its products from other products and services offered by other information centres. This helps to avoid market sharing of information products and services and stabilise the profits.

Decline Stage

As sales decline, the firm has several options: Maintain the product, possibly rejuvenating it by adding new features and finding new uses. Non-profit organisation continues to promote the product or service even the sales of the records and information product tents to decline. Sales promotion can also chip in here where by the NAZ introduce sales discounts as a way of discontinue the product, liquidating remaining inventory or selling it to another firm that is willing to continue with the product. The NAZ can also reduce costs and continue to offer it, possibly to a loyal niche segment.

Accordingly, for all the activities which are conducted by the NAZ in promoting its records and information products and services, the NAZ take into consideration the marketing concept where the NAZ has to put total company effort to raise awareness of the availability of the records and information products and services at NAZ.

The Marketing Concept

Dalgic (1998:45) described the marketing concept as, "basically a straight forward and a logical idea, which put the customer at the centre of overall activities of the firm''. The concept gained much recognition among academia in the 1960s. Kotler (2008:14) further states that in order to adhere to the principles of this management philosophy, an organisation should strive to satisfy customer needs through a coordinated set of activities that also allows it to achieve its objectives. Strydom (1999) argues that the marketing concept requires awareness of the consumer's wants and needs but at the expense of the organisation's goals. He also points out that members of the organisation must accept and believe that the marketing concept if it is to be successfully implemented.

Strydom (1999:13) defines the marketing concept as:

> the marketing concept holds that achieving organisational goals depends on determining the needs and wants of the target market and delivering the desired products or services more effectively than competitors.

Strydom (1999:13) also described this concept as an ethical code or management philosophy according to which the enterprise's tasks are performed to satisfy customer need and wants a profit. Friedman, Giladi and Lewis (1999) affirm that the marketing concept is one of the principal philosophies businesses today. It has enabled many marketers of consumer goods to survive in today's extremely competitive and difficult economic environment. They argue that an organisation should do everything in its power to satisfy its customers' needs, thereby achieving its own goals. Focusing attention on customers' needs will not only keep an organisation viable, but also assist management to create new opportunities for few products much more readily than if the focus were on current products.

The essence of the marketing concept lies in four principles (which may vary according to the views of various authors and theorists). The four principles of the marketing concept are the target market, customer needs, coordinated marketing and profitability. It starts with a well-defined market, focuses on customer needs, coordinates all activities that affect customers and produces profits by creating customer satisfaction (Cant e tal, 2004:16). Cant et al (2004:13-14) include profit orientation, consumer orientation, organisational integration and corporate social responsibility as the four principles of the marketing concept. Accordingly, for the National Archives of Zimbabwe to effectively promote its records and information products and services it should consider the marketing concept where it has to put total NAZ effort in order to meet customer satisfaction at the same time making profit as articulated above.

Research Methodology

This section presents and discusses the research methodology of the study. It discussed the research design, target population, sampling techniques, research instruments, questionnaires, interviews, data presentation plan and analysis procedures.

Research Design

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:647), a research design is a plan or structured framework of how you intend conducting the research process in order to solve the research problem. Good research design will anticipate competing explanations before collecting data so that relevant information for evaluating the relative merits of these

competing explanations is obtained. (Experiment-Resources.com 2008:4). The researcher used a descriptive research design to analyze the existing situation at NAZ as they promote their records and information products and services and provide data to try to solve the problem. According to Neuman (2006:34) a descriptive research presents a picture of the specific details of a situation, social setting, or relationship. In other words, the research can only report on what has or is happening. Hart (2003:47) articulated that, the advantage of using descriptive research design is that it enables one to understand a common or uncommon social phenomenon by observing the detail of the elements that makes it a phenomenon in order to provide an empirical basis for valid argument. Trochim (2006:1) further articulated that, a research design provides the glue that holds the research project together. In other words, Trochim's words articulate that the research design act as a juncture for the researcher in conducting the research as it can help the researcher to find out what is on the ground pertaining to the promotion of records and information products and services. The researcher used a case study method research design since he was aware of the area he wanted to focus on which is the promotion of records and information products and services at NAZ. The researcher used case study method because it provides more realistic responses than a purely statistical survey. Also the case study provides a great amount of description and detail thus, researchers can learn a lot from one case. (Shuttleworth, M (2008: 2).

A sample was chosen from the NAZ staff using purposive sampling technique. Lewis (2003: 79), articulated that the principal aim of purposive sampling is to ensure that within each of the key criteria constitutes of relevance to the subject matter are covered and to ensure that within each key criteria some delivery is included so that the impact of the characteristic concerned can be explored. Data was collected from the selected sample using questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires were used to gather data so that the researcher will not put pressure on respondents, rather the respondents will have to take their time to exhaust all information needed by the researcher at their own pace. Questionnaires were tested before they were given to the respondents. Interview was also conducted as a way of triangulating the information to be gathered so that the researcher can be able to obtain information which might have been left out on questionnaires.

Research Method
Since the researcher had a clue about what he wanted to find out and the organization the study was based on, the researcher decided to use the case study method in the research so that the findings of the study will be objective to only the organization under study that is the NAZ. A case study is a form of qualitative descriptive research that explores individuals, a small group of individuals participating in a project, or a group as a whole. (Kumar, 2005: 83). The objective of a case study is to determine unique characteristics in the promotion of records and archives and information products and services. The case study strategy involves a systematic investigation into a single individual, event or situation, that is, the researcher studies a single example or case of some phenomena and its context are not clearly evident(Kumar 2005:84). Walsh (2004:27) sees the case study as research and evaluation study that focus on specifics and give an account of the instance in action.

In Spratt's opinion (2004:21) the case study can describe a project, a course, an institution or a particular innovation. Deriving these characteristics of the case study from Spratt et al (2004:21), the researcher saw the characteristic to describe an institution as the suitable one in choosing the case study design since the study is focused on an institution which is the NAZ. A case study is an in depth study of a particular situation rather than a sweeping statistical survey. It is a method used to narrow down a very broad field of research into one easily researchable topic. (Shuttleworth, M. 2008:2)

Advantages of Case Study
According to Shuttleworth, M (2008: 2), one of the advantages of using a case study is that, it provides more realistic responses than a purely statistical survey. Also the case study provides a great amount of description and detail thus, researchers can learn a lot from one case. This volume of details suggests many future research questions to follow up in other studies. Another advantage of case study is that case studies are flexible. (Shuttleworth, M. 2008:2). Whilst a pure scientist is trying to prove or disprove a hypothesis, a case study might introduce new and unexpected results during its course, and lead to research taking new directions.

The detailed qualitative accounts often produced in case studies not only help to explore or describe the data in real-life environment, but also help to explain the complexities of real life situations which may not be captured through experimental or survey research. A case study of reading strategies used by an individual subject, for instance, can give access to not only the numerical information concerning the strategies used, but also the reasons for strategy use, and how the strategies are used in relation to other strategies. As reading behaviours involve complex cognitive processes, each reading strategy cannot be examined in isolation but rather in relation to other strategies (Zaidah, 2003:2).

Drawbacks of Case Studies
Despite these advantages, case studies have received criticisms. The chief drawback of the case study is that the results obtained using a case study might not generalize to others. In other words, the experiences of NAZ in Bulawayo in promoting its records and information products and services can not apply to other non-profit making organization. (Shuttleworth, M. 2008: 2). Another drawback of using case study is that, case studies provide very little basis for scientific generalization since they use a small number of subjects, some conducted with only one subject. The question commonly raised is "How can you generalize from a single case?" (Spratt et al, 2004:22)

Target Population

Target population refers to the entire group of individuals or objects to which researchers are interested in generalizing the conclusions. The target population usually has varying characteristics and it is also known as the theoretical population. (Castillo, J (2009: 2). The researcher was confined to NAZ in Bulawayo. The chief archivist, records manager, librarian and the archivist at the NAZ were the target population for the researcher and three of them were given questionnaires to complete and the remaining one was interviewed.

Sampling Technique

Sampling is the act, process, or technique of selecting a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population. (Webster, M 2011). Booth, C and Williams (2008:197), articulated that, there are eight types of sampling techniques which includes simple random, stratified random, cluster, stage, purposive, quota, snowball and volunteer or accidental or convenience. In this study the researcher used purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is when the researcher deliberately decides to include people who meet a specific criterion for example in this study the researcher used purposive sampling when he selected the personnel which works in the archives such as archivist, librarian, director at NAZ and the librarian because they have a wider knowledge about how the NAZ is promoting its records and information products and services. According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003:79), purposive sampling is precise what the name suggests; members of a sample are chosen with a purpose to represent a location or types in relation to a key criterion. The principal aim of purposive sampling is to ensure that within each of the key criteria constitutes of relevance to the subject matter are covered and to ensure that within each of the key criteria some delivery is included so that the impact of the characteristic concerned can be explored.

Data Collection Tools and Techniques

Booth, C and Williams (2008:212) states that data for research can be collected using interviews, or documents. In order to carry out the study effectively, relevant data was collected through the use of interviews and questionnaires.

Interviews

These are discussions of question and answering between the researcher and respondents selected for the interview. Both structured and unstructured questions were used for the interviews. Person to person interviews were conducted to get the general views and knowledge of the respondents who play part in the promotion of records and information products and services. The interviews facilitated the clarification of questions and answers between the researcher and the respondents which in the end brought about thoroughly discussed conclusions on the issues which needed clarification since there was direct contact face to face interaction with the respondents. Face -to -face interviews have a distinct advantage of enabling the researcher to establish rapport with potential participants and therefore gain their cooperation. These interviews yield highest response rates in survey research. They also allow the researcher to clarify ambiguous answers and when appropriate, seek follow-up information. The fact that interviews can be structured or semi-structured makes them flexible in gathering data.

Disadvantages include impractical when large samples are involved, time consuming and expensive. (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001: 23). Despite the above noted disadvantage, the researcher used the structured interviews to collect some information. According to Schlinder and Cooper (2006:43) structured interviews are advantageous in that they allow ease of data comparison and analysis, reduce interpersonal bias factor and encourage respondents to feel more ready to participate. A total number of four respondents were interviewed from the NAZ.

Questionnaires

The researcher used questionnaires in the collection of data. Lewis et al (2003: 306) defined a questionnaire as a written list of questions either given or posted to the respondents who fill it in themselves. Johnson (2003) says that the questionnaire comprises of open ended and closed questions where the closed questions are those which need a single word answer usually 'YES' or 'NO' and the open ended ones will require the respondents' opinion to the question or idea in discussion. This type of questionnaire with both open ended and closed questions is the one that was used in the study since there was the use of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches to research. Paper-pencil-questionnaires can be sent to a large number of people and saves the researcher time and money. People are more truthful while responding to the questionnaires regarding controversial issues in particular due to the fact that their responses are anonymous. But they also have drawbacks. Majority of the people who receive questionnaires don't return them and those who do might not be representative of the originally selected sample. (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001:45). The questionnaire was used to gather data from the personnel at NAZ (Bulawayo) since some of them were citing problem of lack of time to be interviewed.

Advantages of Questionnaires

   i. They are relatively inexpensive
  ii. Questionnaires does not require a lot of time to complete
 iii. Respondents can fill in the questionnaires at their time
 iv. Results of the study can be checked by researchers or interested parties

Disadvantages of Questionnaires

   i. Respondents in some cases are framed by the researcher.

  ii. Respondents may not understand certain questions and so the researcher may need to explain them and this may negatively affect the results.

 iii. Some respondents will not complete the questionnaires

Data Collection Procedures

The letter requesting for permission from the Department of Records and Archives Management at the NUST to carry out the research was sent first to the Director of the NAZ and upon approval the questionnaires were distributed by the researcher to all the respondents. Brief explanations were made to the target respondents so that they will know the rationale behind carrying out such a study. This was done to ensure that all respondents had enough information with no doubt on what exactly the study was all about and this helped a lot judging from the results which were got as shall be presented in the next chapter. The researcher went personally to the NAZ to collect the completed questionnaires and conducted the interviews as scheduled in the data collection plan. The researcher also approached other people which he gave the questionnaires and collects the questionnaires personally.

Data Presentation and Analysis Procedures

Castillo, J. J (2009:3) asserts that collected data in research has little meaning until it is analyzed and given assessment and so this was done to the data that was collected through the questionnaire and the interviews. Data was presented through words and descriptions. The researcher also used simple frequency tables, graphs and pie charts to multivariate statistical data.

Results and Discussion

This section presented and discussed data from findings obtained by the researcher through the use of questionnaires and interviews. Data was presented in a corresponding manner to the objectives of the study. The data was presented under the following topics, response rate from the questionnaires and interviews, response about the qualification of the respondents who answered questionnaires, promotional mix of records and information and products and services at NAZ, the number of researchers and depositors which the NAZ receives per day, reasons for lower number of researchers and depositors at NAZ, challenges faced by NAZ in promoting records and information products and services and the suggestions which were given by respondents which can boost the number of researchers and depositors at NAZ.

Response Rate from the Questionnaires and Interviews

The total population comprised of four people in which three were targeted for responding to questionnaires and one from the four members was interviewed. Of the total three targeted for questionnaires, all of them representing (100%) managed to complete the questionnaire and returned it to the researcher (Table 2). The one respondent contacted through the interview was the chief archivist at the NAZ in Bulawayo. The questionnaires were answered by the other three staff members at the NAZ that were selected using purposive sampling that includes the archivist, records management assistant and the librarian. A marked number of interesting and different responses were given and these enabled the researcher to have a clear picture in the area of study, while at the same time answering the research questions of the study. However, the interviewed respondent was not that good at grasping what the researcher was asking for, so the researcher helped the respondent to brighten up what he was asking for. The table below shows the response rate statistics on the way the study was carried out.

Table 2: Response from Questionnaires and Interviews

Instrument	Sample Composition	Response Rate		
Questionnaire		Population	Total No. of respondents	Percentage
	Archivist, librarian and records management assistant	3	3	100%
Sub total		3	3	100%
Interview	Chief archivist	1	1	100%
Sub total		1	1	100%
Totals		**4**	**4**	**100%**

From the table above, it shows that all targeted population in the study managed to be co-operative and managed to do the tasks which the researcher asked for assistance in.

The Qualification of the Respondents

A general overview of the professional qualifications of the target population shows that, two of the respondents have diplomas and the other two have degrees of which most of them are library and information science degrees. Out of the four respondents which the researcher consulted, 50% have library related qualification and 50% of them have

records and archives related qualifications (Figure 6). A pie chart below summarizes the composition and distribution of the characteristics of the population's professional qualifications which obviously had an impact on the findings of the study.
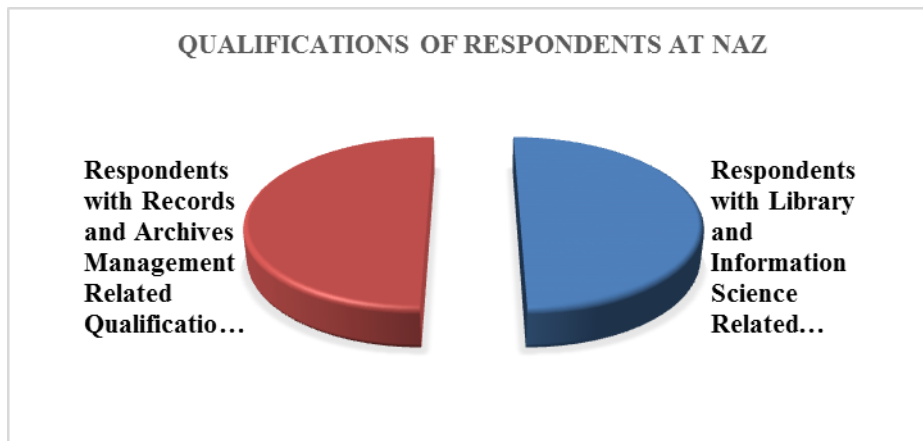

Figure 6: Qualifications of Respondents at NAZ

Number of Researchers and Depositors at NAZ

The respondents were given three options where they were supposed to tick the number of depositors and researcher the institution receives per day. Three options were less than five, between five and ten and more than ten. According to the response from the questionnaires, the respondents indicated that the NAZ receives less than five depositors and researchers per day. The response from the interview also articulated that, the NAZ sometimes does not even receive any researchers and depositors of records per day. The lower number of depositors according to respondents was that, the NAZ is funded by the government, therefore, only government institution are the ones which deposits records and archives at NAZ.

Number of Researchers and Depositors per day at NAZ

From the above bar graph, one can depict that there is need for promotion of the National Archives of Zimbabwe's records and information products and services in order to improve the number of researchers and depositors.
The interviewee cited factors which lead to underutilization of the NAZ which includes;

i. People don't know that the archive exist and its purpose this has tent to reduce the number of researchers at NAZ.
ii. The NAZ is not visible thus; it is located way outside the town which makes it invisible to potential depositors and researchers.
iii. There is an issue of bureaucracy at the NAZ; this means that, even if the NAZ wants to promote its records and information products and services, there are procedures which are supposed to be followed in order to be approved. This makes the archives staff to be reluctant as most of their request are turned down by the Home Affairs citing factors such as financial constraints.

Response about the Promotional Mix of Records and Information and Products and Services at NAZ

Since the issue of promotion of records and information products and services is relatively new in nonprofit making organization (Kotler, P. & Keller, K.L, 2006: 56), the researcher used closed ended questions so that he can give the respondents some ideas of the area under study. The researcher gave the respondents option about the promotional mixes available in the promotion of records and information products and services so that the respondents will choose from the given promotional mixes, the promotional mix the NAZ uses. The promotional mixes options which were given to the respondents include advertising, public relations, personal selling, internet marketing, sales promotion and direct mail. Since this area of promotion is relatively new in Records and Archives Management, the researcher as he gave the respondents the questionnaires, browsed the questionnaire in front of the respondents and elaborated on some areas which seems to be complicated to the respondents. Of the six options given on the questionnaire and asked on the interview about the promotional mixes, three of the respondents affirmed that, the NAZ promotes its records and information products and services through public relations (Figure 7). Two respondents said personal selling, while one said through internet marketing and another one said advertising. The above information can be represented on a bar graph as follows;
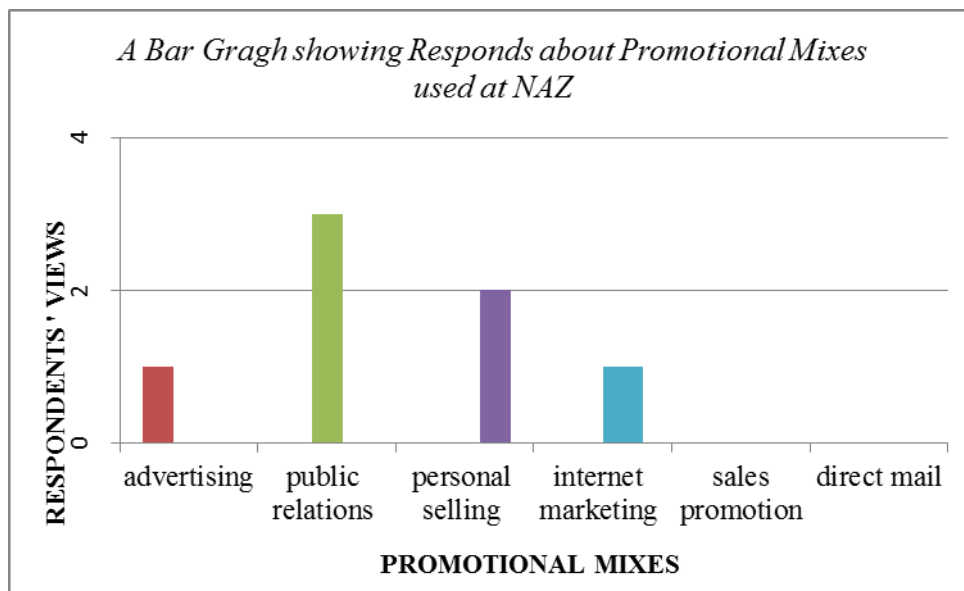
Figure 7: Response about Promotional Mixes

Challenges faced by NAZ in Promoting Records and Information Products and Services
Respondents cited the following challenges;
i. Lack of funding from the treasury and donors which can be used on promotional activities.
ii. There is also an issue of bureaucracy. If the National archives of Zimbabwe want to initiate any promotional activity of records and information products and services, it has to follow certain procedures which are time consuming.
iii. Surveys at the National Archives of Zimbabwe are conducted once after two years of which a lot will have happened mainly due to high turnover of employees. Projects in progress are affected by this high turnover and all things remain static.

Suggestion given by Respondents to improve the Promotion of Records and Information Products and Services at NAZ
i. Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF) exhibit only pictures as a result people think that the NAZ preserve photographs only. Therefore, the NAZ should exhibit other archives found in the NAZ which may attract users such as historical artifacts such as Rudd concession.
ii. A marketing department should also be established at NAZ which specializes at the promotion of records and information products and services.
iii. Staff members at the NAZ should go to seminars which encourage the use of information and communication technology services (ICTS) so that they will provide a platform for the promotion of records and information products and services.

Conclusions and Recommendations
This present the findings of the study, make some conclusions and recommend possible solutions to the problems.

Conclusions
✓ The National Archives of Zimbabwe is neglecting the promotion of records and information products and services.
✓ The malfunction of the promotion of records and information products and services could be due to lack of support from the government through the provision of funds to be channeled to the promotion of the holdings of the National Archives of Zimbabwe.
✓

Recommendations
✓ The NAZ should exhibit other archives besides pictures at the Zimbabwe
International Trade Fair because people now believe that the NAZ preserves photographs.
✓ The NAZ should also use modern technologies and social networks as a way of promoting records and information products and services such as face book, blogs and twitter so as to attract the social network users.
✓ The National Archives of Zimbabwe should also keep updating its website page because the current webpage is out of date this will keep users of the NAZ updated with the current activities at NAZ through the use of web 2.0 software which encouraged feeds on the website. Web 2.0 is software used in website platform which allows feedback to users and provide constant feed.
✓ The National Archives of Zimbabwe should be removed from Home Affairs Ministry and placed in ministry of Education, Sports and Culture because the ministry of Home Affairs is not marketable mainly because of politics.
✓ The NAZ should use user centered approach in providing records and information products and services.

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