



STUDYING ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE AND MARKETING MIX IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Understanding factors and circumstances that create certain market environment conditions is a primary goal of any modern - oriented higher education institution that enables harmonizing the supply with current demands as well as defining appropriate marketing strategies. The process of formulating the strategy of a higher education institution, in addition to reviewing the existing services, includes identifying new opportunities, analyzing relevant competitors and positioning against them and similar. The need for change in marketing strategy, that is market restructuring of a higher education institution, presents a natural consequence of economic oscillations which are the result of market needs and competition dynamics. Continuous monitoring and adjustment of modern developments with the needs of the target market affect the overall perception of service quality and satisfaction of users. Since the choice of marketing strategy involves defining the best ways of achieving the goals, keeping in mind that marketing as a business function, it should contribute to the improvement of educational institutions of governance process, orientation towards the market, or aligning curriculum with the needs of target groups. The Education Reform in Serbia has initiated all educational institutions (private and state) which market-oriented their activities, due to insufficient, inadequate application of current marketing and marketing tools. Using different combinations of marketing mix instruments can lead to achieving competitive advantage in education market.

Keywords: - Student, Market, Education, Product, Service

I. INTRODUCTION

Intensive development of society and commerce leads to expansion of the service sector, and in such manner it becomes a propagator and dominant force in developed countries, which indicates the necessity of getting to know the significance and specific nature of marketing within the

service sector. Considering the education that represents a service activity and its market influenced by various circumstances, educational institution management permanently finds itself facing the pending problem of how to accord its offer and marketing strategy with ever-changing market requirements. Today, education management is considered a survival condition, as well as a condition of modern society development. Competitive institutions are called only those, which, in the easiest way, adapt to changes of the environment and first adopt innovations.

Application of a marketing strategy enables quality improvement in the system of higher education through synergistic application of marketing mix in order to create a service that corresponds to the expectations of target market and deliver a superior value. Competitive advantage is more and more basing itself on intangible assets (the know-how and expertise of teaching staff, quality of lectures, team work, staff development, etc.), which the competition cannot acquire or successfully imitate in a short period of time. Communication of a higher education institution with target market requires a specific approach, since the decision on the choice of faculty is made once in a life-time. It is defined by time and the decision-making process depends on the family, friends, school and media and therefore it has to be created in a way in which a mixture of marketing communications influences stated segments of target public. Communications, environment, corporate behavior (reputation, innovation, financial power, social responsibility, management quality) shape the image of an educational institution, which, from a long-term aspect, provides competitive advantage and service user loyalty.

II. MARKETING IN EDUCATION

The main goal of marketing in higher education institutions is to define quality education system, market-oriented, whereby one cannot ignore the institution primary role and function, which is to provide a specific type of service of general social benefit, in accordance with its needs. Marketing strategies and activities of business marketing in educational system are limited, much more than in other service and production industries, due to the direct influence of state regulations defining the educational system, with established control mechanisms of accreditation bodies, prescribing the evaluation system, as well as quality control system.

Basic role of a marketing strategy is to combine competence and other strategies of an educational institution, to coordinate challenges and constraints of the environment and to find best ways to realize its missions and visions. Therefore, in order for the organization to be able to meet contemporary requirements of ever-changing business environment, it is necessary that it itself becomes subject to the change and initiate them on its own.

Formulation of a higher education institutional marketing strategy includes decisions about: 1. The institution's current programs and markets – whether to maintain, build, or drop them. 2. Future new program and market opportunities. 3. Analysis of competitors. 4. Positioning of the institution in relation to competitors. 5. Selection of target markets and designing of the marketing

mix. (Kotler and Keller, 2009). Creation of marketing mix service concept needs to be realized in a way that provides synergy between marketing, process management and human resources management. Thus, if the heart of modern strategic marketing, as indicated by Kotler, is comprised of market segmentation, evaluation and selection of target market segment and positioning, i.e. differentiation, then their use in organization pursuits should primarily be oriented towards gaining competitive advantage. This should especially be the case with the offer positioning with the aim of providing a more favorable image on a certain segment in comparison to the present and potential competition.

III. EDUCATIONS AS A SERVICE

Education marketing is a topic with a very broad scope. Given that formal education starts in school, progresses through intermediate levels, and culminates at higher and/or professional levels depending on the choice, vocation, and aspirations of the pursuer, the benefits sought from higher and professional or vocational courses should be more tangible or measurable in terms of benefits acquired. While they offer more chances for a living, higher education and professional or vocational programs appear to offer benefits that are more concrete or quantifiable than conventional schooling.

Strangely, the education industry has not really felt the need to "sell" its services since educational institutions, whether they be colleges, universities, or schools that focus on certain subjects like management, have always had more demand than they could handle. The competitive environment is shifting for specialized disciplines like management and computer education, where appealing commercial potential has led to the establishment of an expanding number of schools. Even institutions with high demand in the past have struggled to identify the ideal target market, leading to problems with product differentiation, product expansion, diversification, and service integration. For educational institutions, developing and maintaining organizational reputation is crucial to generating market "pull." This has sparked considerable interest in the hitherto underutilized field of marketing educational services.

Services are "those individually identifiable, fundamentally intangible activities, which give want fulfilment and are not necessarily related to the sale of a product or another service," according to the American Marketing Association (AMA). The usage of tangible items may or may not be necessary while rendering a service. Yet, no ownership transfer of these tangible commodities occurs in the service buying transaction when such use is necessary. Therefore, it can be said that education as a service satisfies the need for learning, knowledge acquisition, and the provision of an intangible benefit (increase in knowledge, professional expertise, and skills) produced with the aid of a set of tangible (infrastructure) and intangible (faculty expertise and learning) components, where the purchaser of the service does not receive any ownership. Although the service provider may be able to demonstrate concrete physical proof of the service exchange transaction, the actual advantage realized is entirely intangible.

Building relationships and delivering high-quality service are crucial for higher education institutions since they operate in a very customer-centered service industry (Gronroos, 1994). Students, parents, and potential employers are listed as significant clients in Trustrum and Wee's (2007) study. Parents frequently interact with the institution during the course of their children's education, whether it is for fee payments or for comments on their children. As future employers engage in the "buying process for placement services," they collaborate with universities. In order to achieve a close corporate fit between the student and the firm, it is usual for client organizations to contribute to course material and engage closely with placement personnel throughout the candidate selection stage.

IV. MARKETING MIX ELEMENTS OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

In the context of providing educational services, "the Seven Ps" is a common shorthand for the components of the marketing mix. The Seven Ps of Marketing are Product / Service, Pricing, Location, Process, Promotion, People, and Physical Proof, and they are frequently utilized as a marketing technique by educational institutions.

1. Product / Service

Products in the context of educational institutions are the students who attend them. The educational institutions also count the students among their clientele. Services are primarily intangible offerings, such as the teaching and learning process, student grooming, mentoring, and overall development. The institutes hope to establish their reputations in the marketplace through the quality of their offerings.

2. Price / Fees

The cost is the sum that a student must pay in exchange for the services received. Competition, service quality, placement, reputation of the school, ownership (private vs. public), infrastructure, amenities given, location of the institute, form of education, brand name of the educational institution, etc. are all elements that play a role. Here, the cost is commensurate with the value received by the pupils. So, it might serve as a promotional tool for the respective institutions.

3. Place

A school's "Place" is the geographic region in which it is based. The service center is a common name for this location. The institute will have a significant competitive advantage if it is located in a major metropolis as opposed to a smaller town. So, location is also an important asset for schools to use in their marketing campaigns.

4. Promotion

Marketing encompasses all methods of interaction between a service provider and potential customers. Advertising, PR, word of mouth, POS, publicity, direct & web marketing, etc. are all part of promotion. Advertising and online marketing are two forms of promotion that educational institutions place a greater emphasis on than others. When it comes to advertising, it has been determined that positive word-of-mouth is the most effective strategy.

5. People

When we talk about "the people," we're referring to the school staff and the broader community who have a direct or indirect connection to the services provided to the pupils. How well teachers are able to serve their pupils is the single most important factor in whether or not those students choose to stay in their classes. Instead of "guru," teachers are referred to as "facilitators" or "service providers." The success and longevity of any educational institution—but especially any professional educational organization—rests squarely on the shoulders of its teaching fraternity. The most vital part of the marketing mix for educational services has been shown to be people.

6. Process

The process refers to the set of actions leading up to the transfer of value. Gaining an edge over the competition depends critically on the manner in which service providers supply their services to students. An institution may truly stand out from the crowd if its service procedures are straightforward, easy to grasp, tailored to the needs of individual students, and supported by cutting-edge IT infrastructure. Such examples include how a student is handled by a staff member or instructor, or how long they have to wait to receive services.

7. Physical Evidence

Students can evaluate the school's provision of necessary resources based on their own subjective reports of their sensory experiences with those resources. The setting in which a service is offered, the facilities made available, and the supporting infrastructure are all examples.

You could list things like the number of books and journals in the library, the number of computers, the number of textbooks, the number of audiovisual aids, the number of AC classrooms, the number of textbooks, the number of textbooks, the number of textbooks, the number of textbooks, the number of textbooks, the number of textbooks, the number of textbooks, etc. All of these are important aspects of promoting a school or university.

V. CONCLUSION

This research proposes a novel integrated model of the many elements affecting college-bound students' decisions, including the features of universities that contribute to constructing a positive

reputation. From the standpoint of potential students, this model is crucial. The antecedents of students' behavior intentions are provided in a different model in this research, including university identification, university brand trust, students' loyalty, and word of mouth. This model was developed with the help of the theories of relationship marketing and the idea of planned behavior, and it is based on the experiences of current students.

Modern universities gain competitive advantage primarily through attractive curricula, renowned teaching staff, which applies modern technologies in performing teaching process and through quick adaptation and reaction to changes or new needs of a background.

In addition to consideration of students' needs, higher education institutions must also take into consideration wishes of other groups such as staff, alumni, parents and the state. A great challenge for an educational institution is to synchronize interests of different groups, and to maintain balance in order to satisfy interests of the society and service users at the same time.

Higher education institutions in Serbia have understood the importance of marketing application, as well as its contribution to improvement of many aspects of university activities, such as internal and external communication, improvement in the process of educational service delivery, financing issue and determining height of tuition fee, teaching process quality, but in the first place user satisfaction.

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