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STUDIES IN THE ONLINE MARKETING OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS - SELECTED ASPECTS

Dynamic changes on the educational services market, especially in the domain of higher education, are multidimensional and require a separate study. From the perspective of marketing activities, three main factors for changes are: demographics (a diminishing number of students caused by the demographic decline), generational changes concerning the need for education as well as ways of receiving it (changes between generations X, Y, Z) and technological changes (the spread of marketing digitisation). These elements affect marketing paradigms.

One of the consequences of the Polish and Ukrainian economic transformation ever since the 90's of the 20th century was the formation of a free market of educational services, including the higher education level. The need to gain competitive advantage and compete for students - clients called for the implementation of the concept of marketing management of a higher education institution. Marketing programs based on standard marketing tools, among which the Internet deserves special attention in the era of digitization, have become elements of schools' new strategies.

In recent years, the marketing activity of higher education institutions has been the subject matter of an extensive exchange of opinions on both domestic and international arena. The topic has been discussed by M. J. Armstrong, B. R. Clark and A. Pabian, among others. Nowadays, it is not the question of whether such institutions should adapt to the concept of marketing management, but rather what strategies, methods and instruments they should use for that purpose.

The aim of the article is to present the opinions regarding the use of the Internet in the marketing activity of higher education institutions in Poland and the Ukraine. The study was carried out in the period from 6 Feb. 2017 to 28 June 2017 as part of the international research project entitled "The Internet in the marketing activity of higher education institutions". The data was collected by means of computer assisted web interviews (CAWI). 123 Polish and 62 Ukrainian schools took part in the study. Out of the Polish higher education institutions, 32% were public schools and the remaining ones were private. As for the Ukraine, the ratio was 93.5% (public) to 6.5% (private).

82% and 95% of the respondents from, respectively, the Polish and the Ukrainian higher education institutions agreed with the claim that the Internet is a medium that significantly supports the creation of the image of a higher education school. In similar vein, the vast majority of the respondents subscribed to the view that online marketing activity is cheaper in comparison with the traditional media (66.7% and 79% of the respondents in Poland and in the Ukraine, respectively).

75% of the Polish respondents and 65% of the Ukrainian ones also agreed that the Internet allows to reach the target groups of potential students in the market sectors currently served by the school with great precision. 61% (Poland) and 50% (the Ukraine) of them stated that the Internet allows to reach new market segments precisely. In both the countries, almost all respondents ascertained that the Internet renders quick access to information on the educational services market possible. Similarly, the vast majority of them agreed that the Internet serves to tighten positive, interactive relations with the students (Poland - 93.5%, the Ukraine - 89%).

They also supported the claim that the Internet is conducive to the improvement of the quality of student service (Poland - 95%, the Ukraine - 86%). While the statement that the Internet allows a better understanding of students' needs was not obvious to 47.2% of the respondents in Poland, 60% of the Ukrainian respondents found it true. The results were basically the same for the claim that the Internet strengthens the feeling of ties between the school and its students. While the Polish respondents (43%) chose the 'difficult to say' option, the Ukrainian ones (47%) supported it.

As for the question whether the Internet allows to acquire detailed information on the current and potential students, the majority of the respondents in both the countries (48% and 53%, respectively) found it true. 84% and 77% of the Polish and the Ukrainian students of higher education institutions, respectively, ticked 'agree' next to the claim that the Internet supports the introduction of new elements of the educational offer to the market. The last point subject to evaluation was the claim that the Internet is a medium that stimulates the sales of educational services. Both the Polish and the Ukrainian students found this statement correct, yet a significant disproportion was observed (95% of the former and 66% of the latter).

Marketing activities should be considered systemically: first, through a marketing analysis of individual elements, then through a marketing synthesis, where the components are combined. This process constitutes the basis for integrated marketing management, including higher education institute management. The results of the study reveal that the Internet is an important element of the marketing activity of higher education institutions in both Poland and the Ukraine. There is general awareness of the potential of this tool, used not only as a channel of marketing communication. Still, not all the virtues of this medium, in particular in the field of gaining information on present and potential students, are fully recognized.

The results presented are yet to be analyzed in more detail and call for a broader discussion. Part of the research was conducted under the international research project entitled "the Internet in the marketing activity of higher education institutions" and the results obtained will constitute the subject matter of separate publications.

1. *Armstrong M. J. (2003). Students as a clients: A professional Service Model for Business Education. Academy of Management Learning and Education. Vol. 2 № 4.* 2. *Clark B. R. (1998). Creating Entrepreneurial Universities: Organizational Pathways of Transformation. New York: Pergamon Press.* 3. *Hall H. (2007). Marketing w szkolnictwie. Warsaw: ABC a Wolters Kluwer Business.* 4. *Pabian A. (2005). Marketing szkoły wyższej. Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza ASPRA-JR.*

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COMMERCIALIZATION OF R&D ACTIVITIES AS WAY FOR SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITIES

The development of higher education in Ukraine, in accordance with meeting the Bologna process requirements and knowledge society's new challenges, needs more financial resources. However, we observe decreasing level of state financing for higher education. A modern university is in its way of searching additional resources for raising the money.

In modern economic conditions commercialization of educational services is a reasonable way for increasing financial potential of higher education institutions. R&D activities provided within universities can also be an efficient source of funding. According to the Law on Science and Scientific and Technology Activities "scientific and R&D activities in higher educational institutions are an integral part of educational activity and are carried