Chapter 2
Marketing Educational Programs through Technology and the Right Philosophies

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ABSTRACT

This article uses a real case to illustrate that marketing educational programs through technology is affected by one's philosophies positively or negatively, depending on the philosophies adopted. Seven philosophies are discussed in relationship to marketing educational programs via technology. Connections between the seven philosophies and different types of universities/colleges are drawn. Future research directions also revolve around marketing educational programs, Web 2.0 technologies and one's philosophies. It is recommended that universities/colleges seriously consider hiring those administrators who have adopted the right philosophies as the wrong philosophies will work against the mission of certain academic departments, hence the whole university or college.

INTRODUCTION

Marketing educational programs relies on technology and the right philosophies. Universities world wide never stop marketing their programs to the right student populations, either the traditional age groups or the non-traditional age groups. Marketing educational programs takes many forms (Caffarella, 2002) such as sending out flyers, pamphlets, broadcasting educational programs over the radio or on TV in order to reach potential learners. Educational entities and learners have distinctively different needs. While learners desire a knowledge package from universities and colleges, educational enterprises want profitability among all other things such as accreditation, reputation and partnership with other educational establishments in order to keep their programs running.

With the advent of Web 2.0 technologies, most universities began to market their educational programs via Internet technologies. In terms of marketing educational programs, the Internet technologies are the most used and the most abused

methods among other methods such as sending out flyers via regional/national/international conferences, radio or TV. First and foremost, the advantage of marketing educational programs via technology lies in the fact that that potential learners can access information about a particular educational program anywhere, any time because of the asynchronous nature of Web 2.0 technologies. If learners miss out a radio or TV program or a conference, they miss all information related to an educational program by a certain university or college. Secondly, marketing educational programs via Web 2.0 technologies is much cheaper than doing the same thing via radio or TV where more personnel are involved in terms of delivering the marketing information to learners. Because of the low price of developing and delivering marketing information via Web technologies, educators tend to abuse this method. As a result, poor quality marketing information is readily available on the Internet. This reflects poorly on the work of universities' web developers. What has caused this amount of poor quality? In this global economy where universities have to compete for more learners, educators, administrators must go all out to market their programs to as many potential learners as possible. More learners mean more profitability, hence more credit brought to a certain university. What has caused universities to abuse Web technologies so as to have developed poor quality marketing information?

Visiting some university websites can land much needed answers to this question. While some universities accommodate the learning needs of non traditional age students, some universities accommodate the learning needs of traditional age students. Those online universities certainly enjoy serving the learning needs of adult learners. Liberal arts colleges like serving the learning needs of traditional age students. On their websites, they all have a guiding philosophy which drives the mission of these universities. Therefore, it is natural to say that marketing of educational programs is driven not only by technology, but also by a guiding philosophy or philosophies. Reading journal articles, one may find that less research has been conducted in the area of marketing educational programs through technology and the right philosophies. People just take for granted the marketing information from whether liberal arts colleges or online universities. Little consideration has been given to how technology and philosophies drive marketing educational programs for different universities.

The purpose of this article is to shed some light on how technology and the right philosophies can positively or negatively drive marketing educational programs for universities. Indeed, if positively used, technology and philosophies will help universities make huge profits. Thus accomplishing their mission would be easy because of the positive use of technology and philosophies. Like wise, if negatively used, technology and philosophies will impede marketing of educational programs. Low profitability will lead to poor reputation, hence loss of possible accreditation from various accreditation bodies.

What are those philosophies that drive the mission of universities, hence marketing of educational programs? How are those philosophies related to marketing educational programs via technology? Historically, six philosophies were identified (Elias & Merriam, 2005) and they have been used to guide marketing strategies for different universities. These philosophies are as follows:

1. Liberal philosophy
2. Behaviorist philosophy
3. Progressive philosophy
4. Humanist philosophy
5. Analytic philosophy
6. Radical philosophy

Later a seventh philosophy was added to the already existing six philosophies and the seventh one is postmodern philosophy. Without exploring the implications of these philosophies, some readers probably can guess that liberal arts colleges may

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