

## Chapter 2

# From Consumer to Prodsumer: Contemplation on Product, Producer and Consumer in Tertiary Education

**Goknil Nur Koçak**  
Mersin University, Turkey

### ABSTRACT

*This chapter aims to open a discussion on how tertiary level students of 21<sup>st</sup> century transform from passive receivers of courses to producer – consumers. The chapter brings up a new term that is “prodsumer.” The term explains that students assume two roles simultaneously. By designing the learning programs, deciding the technology, and by choosing the source of information, they become producers of their service package. On the other hand, by consuming the package that they initially created, they are consumers too. A new era is opening up, and in this new era students will assume and practice the “power” which they had never before. When the power of producer and consumer is united in one hand, this will initiate a new look to the age old marketing marketing paradigm. Thus, such conception will certainly be the milestone of new argumentations.*

### INTRODUCTION

Developing distance education programs (DE programs) are quite advantageous for universities for several reasons: (1) promoting and enhancing university or departments reputation, and reaching

far fetch students who are normally may not have access to tertiary education. (2) It may start up a competition between academics that want his or her course is being selected by the students. This will naturally ignite self-development process among academics. (3) This provides a substantial cause for justifying the self-existence of university as an entity. (4) While increasing the fiscal

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-60960-074-7.ch002

resources of universities, it may help lower the cost of course delivery, once the course is developed cost-per-delivery will be significantly reduced.

The list of benefits of DE can be even longer. However, having such a list may not be significant as these items focus only on university's (of which it assumes the "service provider" role at this stage) own needs and from its perceptual screens. Due to the fact that approaching the argument of benefit of DE only from institutional perspective evidently will make this argumentation a shallow one, and will exclude of an important party, that is students. Perhaps it may be feasible to extend this discussion; this is because if extended, it will stretch to first "competition in DE", from there to "consumer satisfaction"; then it will reach to the "loyalty" issue. However with a naive conception, if marketing perceived as "benefit transaction", one should assume that in order to further this transaction individuals should be focused on "audience of the service", not to "service provider". But, who would be the "audience of the service" is the key concern here. Actually, who is the audience of the service of any DE program, who needs to be satisfied in the end? Retreating back to the naivety of marketing conception, defining marketing as a transaction between "service provider" and "audience of the service" should evolve to "person who gets benefit from a service". If DE is an infrastructure entity, then parties who will get a benefit are DE students, relevant sectors, societies and even ideologies in general.

The presumption of this chapter is that it is the student whom should put into the focus of benefit, and for this reason the rest of the study will put the student at the epicenter of the discussions.

The presuming that the "person who gets benefit from a service" is student, will extend the discussion to the question of provide "satisfactorily service" to students. In order to accomplish this, the categorical generic nature of DE and its forms, the way service delivered to the audiences, time schedule of service, and service delivery conditions must be put forward to in the argumentation.

As Lewitt states in his legendary article "Marketing Myopia" (2004).

*"What a truly marketing-minded company offers for sale includes not only the generic product or service but also how it is made available to the customer, in what form, when, under what conditions, and at what terms of trade".*

The Levitt's definition puts traditional marketing mix elements on the table for questioning their validity in today's world. The scholar further discusses the relevance of 4P, and evokes 4C as a basis for the discussion of which seems more solution-driven alternative as compare to 4P. Observing the fact from this perspective, it is evident that traditional 4P has some limitations and as Levitt stated, 4C has more to offer, and seems more appropriate for the DE. Furthermore, putting the human factor to the centerpiece of the argument makes limitations of 4P more visible, and appropriateness of 4C becomes more evident. It is at this stage; DE comes into the play and opens up the clogging created by traditional education.

The below discussion attempts to discuss DE based upon 4P and the 4C concepts. What is contented in this study is to elaborate on the "generic product" concept in DE, "parties who are involved in producing DE courses" and "roles of parties who are involving in DE programs" under DE auspices. The final goal is to open up an argument on the traditional "satisfaction" paradigm in marketing communications.

## **Marketing Mix Praxis: How 4C Can Replace 4P**

### **Place vs. Convenience**

The traditional "face to face learning" systems in tertiary institutions does operate in alignment with 4P; namely product, price, place and promotion. In traditional systems, students need to commute to the university campuses or locations

6 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

[www.igi-global.com/chapter/consumer-prodsumer-contemplation-product-producer/53363](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/consumer-prodsumer-contemplation-product-producer/53363)

## Related Content

---

### Examining the Brand Communication Tools that Impact Brand Preferences of Women Consumer buying intentions-Empirical Investigation of Middle East

A. M. Sakthiveland B. Sriram (2015). *Trends and Innovations in Marketing Information Systems* (pp. 358-372).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/examining-the-brand-communication-tools-that-impact-brand-preferences-of-women-consumer-buying-intentions-empirical-investigation-of-middle-east/139925](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/examining-the-brand-communication-tools-that-impact-brand-preferences-of-women-consumer-buying-intentions-empirical-investigation-of-middle-east/139925)

### Mobile Service Design Thinking for Consumer Decision-Making Under Multichannel Environment

Ming-Hsiung Hsiao (2018). *International Journal of Online Marketing* (pp. 57-71).

[www.irma-international.org/article/mobile-service-design-thinking-for-consumer-decision-making-under-multichannel-environment/203676](http://www.irma-international.org/article/mobile-service-design-thinking-for-consumer-decision-making-under-multichannel-environment/203676)

### Food Purchase Using Food Delivery App and Gender Influence: Study of a Small Sample in Coimbatore City

Vanitha Natesanand Sripriya Venkatesalu (2020). *International Journal of Online Marketing* (pp. 57-73).

[www.irma-international.org/article/food-purchase-using-food-delivery-app-and-gender-influence/263046](http://www.irma-international.org/article/food-purchase-using-food-delivery-app-and-gender-influence/263046)

### Managing Brand Portfolio in a Crisis: The Case of a Pharmaceutical Company in Egypt

Rafic Nadiand Ahmed Tolba (2015). *Cases on Branding Strategies and Product Development: Successes and Pitfalls* (pp. 254-276).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/managing-brand-portfolio-in-a-crisis/123423](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/managing-brand-portfolio-in-a-crisis/123423)

### T5: Tackle the Task of a Transition through Technological Targets

Gilbert Ahamer (2015). *International Journal of Technology and Educational Marketing* (pp. 1-14).

[www.irma-international.org/article/t5/129770](http://www.irma-international.org/article/t5/129770)