

Chapter 3

Educational Marketing: Coming Down from the Cloud Using Landing Gear

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ABSTRACT

In challenging economies, many unemployed and undereducated often seek further education to increase their chances of employment. The emergence of the Internet and online learning environments offer numerous opportunities to universities and for-profit training institutions to provide that education.

The real question that the administrators of those institutions must ask is what will make students choose their institution over any other. That question becomes paramount to enlist and keep as many students as possible while maintaining the high standards of the existing institution. Many institutions are seeking cost-effective solutions, such as cloud management, to maximize recruitment while expending minimum expenses.

This chapter addresses the effectiveness of down-to-earth marketing efforts over cloud management in both recruitment and retention of students in educational institutions and presents some possible options for utilizing both to maximize recruitment and retention in higher educational settings.

INTRODUCTION

In education there is a prevalent attitude that business tactics, or the terminology associated

with business tactics, should not be applied to academia. Yet the pressures of a global economy and the pervasiveness of the Internet have had a profound influence on education whether leaders in academia choose to acknowledge those facts or not.

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This study looks at how marketing is being transferred from business applications to many academic institutions and what changes are occurring as a result of global economic pressures. While the findings of this study cannot be generalized because of the small sample, the observations noted could generate discussion that could have meaningful implications for academic institutions with respect to the application of effective marketing practices.

The study looked at how current marketing for cost-saving practices were being transferred to academic settings and whether those adoptive practices were effective in those academic settings. The study was conducted with top sales people from Fortune 100 companies who were marketing using state of the industry cloud technologies.

The study used both case study and focus group qualitative methodologies. The findings provide information that could reveal surprising insights into the outcomes in the business realm that could await academic institutions adopting cloud technology marketing practices. (Cloud technologies, for the purpose of this research, are electronic data mining, real time data management, interactive technologies, application development, and rapid prototyping).

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON ACADEMIC MARKETING

While marketing has existed as a component of business for millennia, new forms of marketing have emerged over the last hundred years as new forms of media emerged that employed marketing to influence buyers (Kabadayi & Thomas, 2005; McGovern, 2000; Shaw & Tamilia, 2001).

Marketing also emerged as a formal field of study in the early Twentieth century (2001), but remained siloed in university settings in the College of Business through the end of the Twentieth century (Wind, 2009). The problem with marketing remaining isolated as an academic discipline is

that it exists as interactivity between the parties that present ideas and products with the parties that want to purchase or emulate those ideas or products. So unless the study of marketing is in that flow, it could quickly become out of sync with real world activities.

Peter Drucker, a seminal expert in business and marketing theories, posed that there needed to be an interdisciplinary approach to marketing (2009). His research transcended boundaries and prompted a shift in marketing beyond the boundaries of academic disciplines. He also posed that “mental models” (p.29) can extend our body of knowledge on a subject, but can also restrict potential in extending opportunities beyond existing subject boundaries.

Twenty-first century customers have the knowledge, according to Drucker, not the marketers, and this shift “challenges the old view of marketing” (p.30). Life has become increasingly more connected, due at least in part to rapidly evolving technologies and dynamic interactive systems, so “an interdisciplinary approach (also) leads to a more effective focus on customers and other stakeholders, better leveraging of resources and greater positive synergy” (p.31). This type of approach can shift the very concept of customers to that of stakeholders. But that shift also necessitates a symbiosis that crosses the boundaries of supply and demand to enlist both sides to produce effective solutions.

Research on academic marketing has been somewhat thin, relegated, in the most part, to marketing student enlistment, university brand (Forrest & Murphy, 2006; Haworth & Conrad, 1997; Jones, 2003; Macchiatte, n.d.), with some more recent studies that have looked at the marketing relating to new program rollouts and student retention (Hergert, 2003; Ley & Gannon-Cook, 2009; Johnstone, Ewell, & Paulson, 2002; Salmon, 2005). The researchers in this study sought to contribute to this research from an interdisciplinary perspective by seeking to integrate the successes of exemplary corporate marketing executives

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