



SUPPORTING THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF HIGHER EDUCATION MARKETING WITH QUALITY MANAGEMENT TOOLS

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Abstract: *Quality can hardly be interpreted on its own in case of organizational marketing. Organizational marketing might perfectly accommodate the rules of the profession and the market and, at the same time, have harmful effects considering key organizational goals. Marketing, a supportive process embedded in a network of interrelationships, can support the goals of the organization with variable success. Quality management provides a set of tools that might support the placement of marketing, the control and occasional optimization of internal processes, the measurement of activities and feedback. Authors analyse the results of an organizational assessment on the basis of their risks, interrelationships and the organizational goals. They also show how the results relate to internal and external events, in order to improve the method.*

Keywords: *higher education, marketing, goal setting, benchmarking, development*

1 INTRODUCTION

The assessments are implemented at different points of the education lifecycle to receive proper feedback. The results of the different surveys are meaningful also on their own, but their relationships also convey useful information. The measurement and the acknowledgement through feedback of constant changes in student needs can result in considerable success. The surveys, which are implemented at different points of the four-cycle evaluation model, differ primarily in the perspective of the participants.

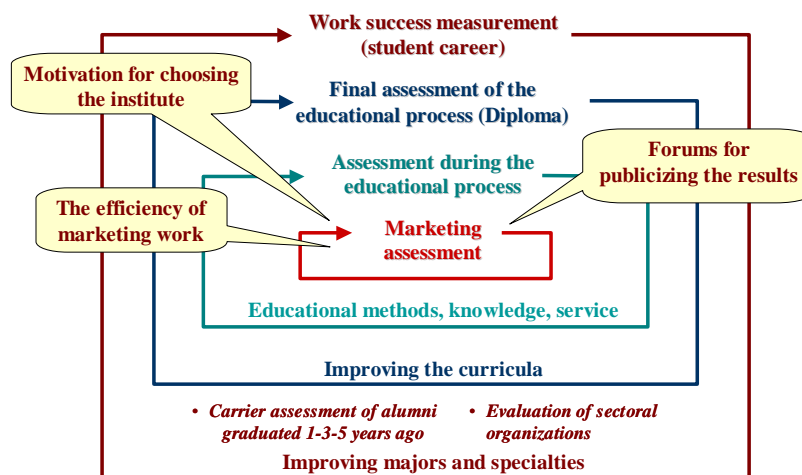


Figure 1: The place of marketing assessments in the four-cycle assessment model 1-2 months after entering the university

The first element of the hierarchical examination system, and an important output of student satisfaction and marketing efficiency, is to understand student's ideas about the PR processes. Besides their satisfaction, it is worth asking students' opinion about the importance of certain elements. Similarly to a satisfaction scale, importance can be demonstrated on an importance scale. [1]



2 QUALITY PLANNING OF THE CONTENT OF MARKETING PROCESSES

A practical methodology can be developed as part of policy deployment for a more conscious goal setting. The basis of that is to search for the goals of certain supportive processes in a hierarchical system. The organization can reach its actual strategic aims through activities defined on certain process levels. The management can raise efficiency by arranging the elements in a cause-and-effect system, even though these elements are sometimes antagonistic, and/or against the organizational interests.

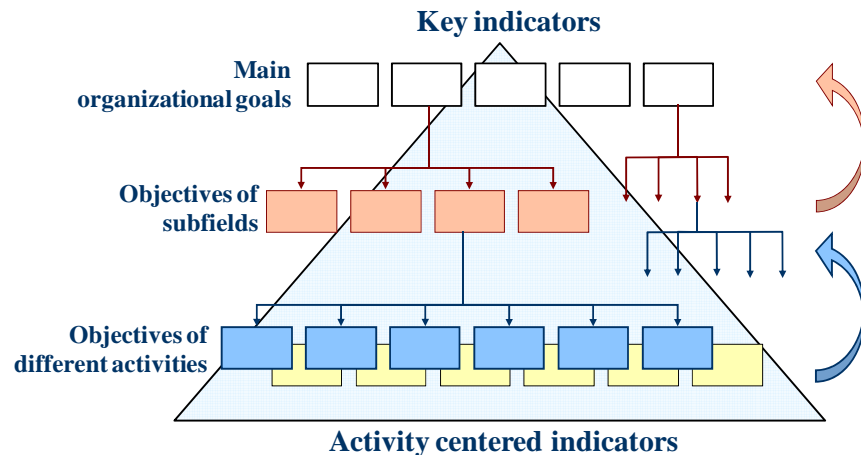


Figure 2: Policy deployment

Marketing activities can be implemented as independent processes, but other activities, seemingly irrelevant to marketing, might also have significant marketing impact. Managing the organizational marketing requires that the relevant facts should be collected and their effects and resource needs controlled.

The different activities of different periods can be mapped, and by weighting them we can measure to what extent they serve the organizational values. We can provide an order of values by weighting each value to be conveyed the marketing. The individual activities will not reflect the same order. Some elements will gain more emphasis, and some will turn out to be of less importance. It would be a problem if the marketing activities of an institute, boasting the scientific approach, could only reflect the enthusiastic student community. If this happens, we should eliminate the problem with supplementary actions. [2]

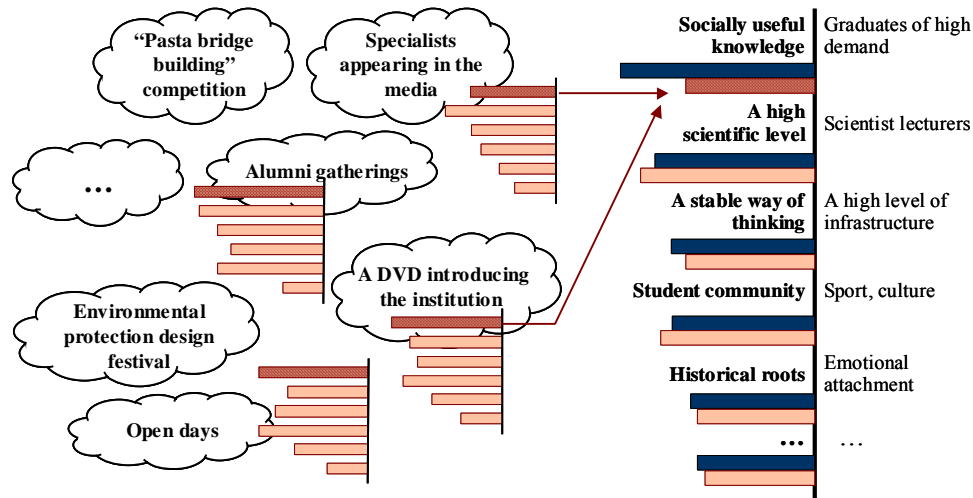


Figure 3: *Institutional goals on the map of marketing activities*

3 IMPROVING THE MARKETING PROCESSES ON THE BASIS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Important aims of quality management are to observe, document and evaluate process characteristics and to use the data for process development. Process development is based on data on the one hand, and on analyzing and using the logic and relationships of phenomena. A wide range of analyses and development methods are in use, and these well-established solutions can serve as the basis of complex methodologies.

First, we introduce some fields where data is used. The analyses can be classified on the basis of the source of data, and on the strategies of applying the data. In our case the strategies of applying the data are narrowed to the development of marketing processes. We used variable sources of data in order to ensure constant development and improvement in reaching the objectives. Different types of information serve as the basis of different quality techniques. In the following, a few typical sources of information are paired up with the most important process development methods. [3]

- Data from the institute's own similar processes – Internal benchmarking
- Data from earlier phases of the present process – Trend analysis, optimization, control charts
- Data from model processes of other institutes – Benchmarking
- Data from processes influencing the examined results – Correlation analysis, optimization

As far as marketing processes are concerned, the most important techniques are the benchmarking and the optimization based on correlation analysis.

3.1 Applying internal benchmarking for marketing development

From a practical point of view, benchmarking is a management tool comprising the knowledge acquired from our own processes, plus the conscious application of this knowledge. It provides information about existing faults and defects, and though this, helps to reach the desired institutional aims. Benchmarking is the search for the best practices in order to reach the highest level of performance. [4]

Internal benchmarking basically means the application of inner activities as benchmarks, in other



words, defining the best practice based on the comparison of the activities of different units, and to generalize this practice within the whole institution.

A good example in the field of marketing is, if we implement the majority of our activities in all of our organizational units, for example in all of the faculties. If the aims and the framework characteristics are similar, then the resources and results of the processes can easily be compared. The results can have a positive effect because of the natural competitive attitude between the faculties. At the same time, the reasons behind the most outstanding performances (the so called best practices), can be successfully generalized within the whole institution. [5]

	Faculty 1	Faculty 2	Faculty 3	Faculty 4	...
Website	>80%				
Open days organized by the institution	>60%				
Good relations with high schools	<60%				
Participation in conferences and scientific events	>70%				
Communicating alumni success					
Self-representation in the media					
Printed materials					
Information in person or via the telephone					
Participation in national education fairs					
Open days organized by job centers					
Information spread by advertisements and billboards					

Figure 4: The results of an internal benchmarking: the acquaintance of future students with communication tools used by different units of the institution

Detailed analysis, examining besides the statistical data the system of causes, allows finding the best practices. In the following, we introduce an example of comparing the data, providing a great help in spreading the best practices.

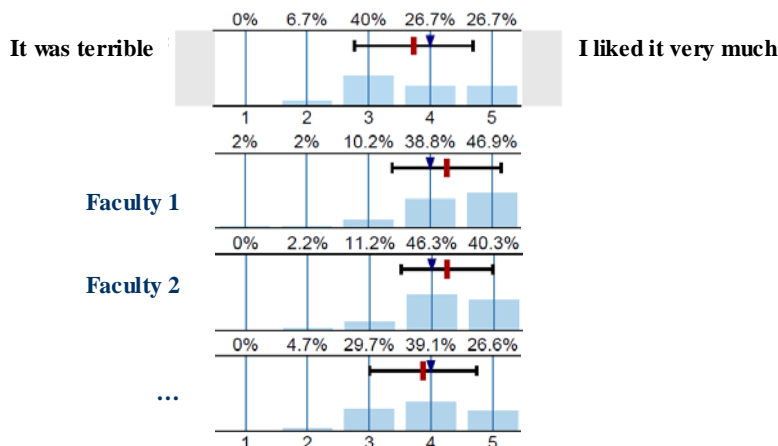


Figure 5: Comparing the data of different faculties concerning respondent satisfaction with the open day



3.2 Applying external benchmarking for marketing development

External benchmarking means that the best practices are defined by comparing the data coming from different institutions. This can be implemented either bilaterally, by two institutions comparing their data and process mechanisms, or multilaterally, by a group of higher education institutions cooperating on a national level. In the latter case, the process parameters and the organizational performances can only be compared if relevant data are produced by the same methods. This type of analysis allows us to compare performance on a wide range. Since we can guarantee that each higher education institute can only see their own data, the possible anxiety and tension resulting from the competitive situation can successfully be eliminated.

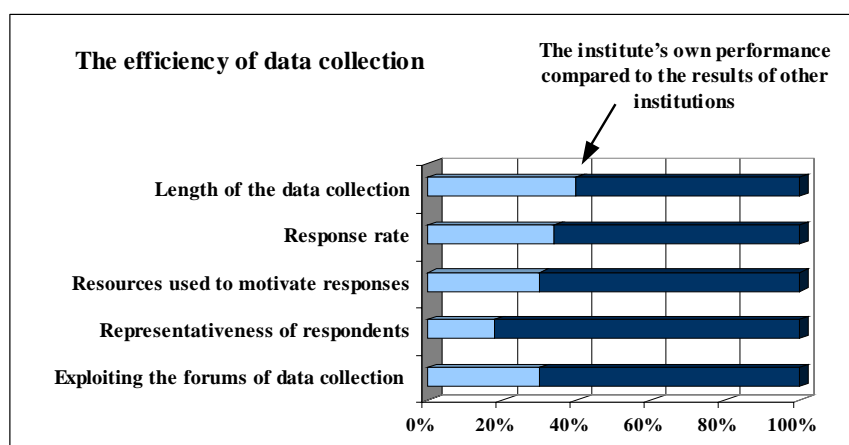


Figure 6: The results of a multilateral benchmarking from the viewpoint of a higher education institute

Benchmarking results make it possible to compare the efficiency of different marketing processes as well. The emerging costs and the results (for example the number of points required for university/college acceptance, or the number of applicants applying for the institution at first place) can serve as a fruitful directive to improve the efficiency of activities.

4 CONCLUSION

The development of higher education marketing can be implemented through several other forms than those introduced in the present paper. These can be organized into a system following our methods, and can constitute an integral part of the operation of the institute.

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