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# Evaluation of a Private Higher Educational Institution Marketing Initiatives for School Year 2018-2019: Baseline Data for a Sustainable Marketing Plan



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**ABSTRACT:** This study aimed to evaluate one private higher educational institution marketing initiatives as baseline data for a sustainable marketing plan during the School Year 2018-2019.

Since it was founded, this private higher educational institution has not conceptualized creating a marketing office that has focus its programs and activities solely for marketing. What they had before in marketing was a part-time employee who did the marketing activities for the school in concurrent functions.

Recently, a marketing office was created and a marketing officer was appointed, and a marketing program was designed, putting emphasis on five (5) aspects of intensive marketing program.

In a highly competitive world of private education where everyone aims to be on top, every higher educational institution enunciated programs in marketing that would leave traces in the hearts and minds of the populace.

This study describes the five strategies and plans employed by one private higher educational institution, the purpose of which is for the betterment of the school in general.

The five (5) marketing plans and strategies are as follows: 1.) Do It Yourself Internal Marketing 2.) School Campus to Campus Marketing 3.) Parents, Alumni,

Community Involvement Marketing 4) Multi Media/ Social Media Marketing and 5.) Extensive International and Local Linkages on Shipping and Hotel Marketing. A systematic marketing program deemed to be of great help to the school in general.

KEYWORDS: Higher Educational Institution, Evaluation of Marketing Initiatives, Baseline Data, Sustainable Marketing Plan,

### INTRODUCTION

Many would agree that the state of our private education system in the Philippines and the rest of the world today has plenty of room for improvement. However, developing a plan to take private higher educational institutions in the right direction is easier said than done. (Seleinski, 2015) The first challenge lies in identifying underlying problems keeping students from learning today. This challenge, in part, is due to the fact that the problems may change considerably depending on who is labeling them, whether it is the students, parents, educators, lawmakers or the community in general. (Pullizzi, 2019)

The need therefore to build our own identity is a must to keep us abreast of what the industry demands and the things we need to know in order to survive the competitive world of private school business. For instance, (Miller, 2017) found out that we must clarify the message we wanted to convey to our customers in order for them to have a specific viewpoint of who we are, what we are. If we were able to clarify our message from the very beginning, our customers will listen to us, Miller added.

An ever-dynamic private higher educational institution believes in the importance of a marketing strategy to be at par with other private schools not only in the Philippines but also outside of the country as well. This belief is supported by Scott (2017) who explained that marketing strategies give businesses a direction toward effective promotion.

The ultimate goal today of why it is important to develop a marketing plan is to address the problem brought about by the full implementation of the K to 12 educational system in the Philippines which greatly affect the dwindling of the number of enrollees. There are also other factors which were identified as it move closer to a more challenging role in line with the program. (DEPED Circulars, 2013).

Moutinho and Chien (2008) mentioned that marketing strategies may differ from one business to another but it can be customized to suit the needs of a particular company. The development of a marketing strategy involves the isolation of a target market segment, a set of clear-cut goals, a fair amount of consumer research, and the implementation of initiatives aimed at getting the word out.

In a separate study conducted by Handlin (2018), it lamented that there are five strategic marketing processes that need to be followed in order to reach maximum potentials in sales.

They are (1) identifying your missions, (2) analyzing the situation, (3) creating a marketing objective, (4) developing a marketing strategy, and (5) evaluating your best point in every area.

Though private schools in the Philippines have a carrying capacity as to the number of its students to limit and control its population (CMO No. 67), it is better to have a sizeable-standby-students ready when the need arises.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- 1. To evaluate the marketing strategies that were employed by one private higher educational institution for School Year 2018-2019 in terms of its key accomplishments. 2. To identify the difficulties and challenges that were met in the process of its implementation and the factors that contributed to these difficulties and challenges.
- 3. To propose a more sustainable three-year Marketing Plan for School Year 20202023 for one private higher educational institution.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Design

The study employed the descriptive evaluative design. The data, specifically for Research Objectives 1 and 2---to evaluate the marketing strategies that were employed in one private higher educational institution for school year 2018-2019 in terms of its key accomplishments and to identify the difficulties and challenges that were met in the process of its implementation and the factors that contributed to these difficulties and challenges, were derived from a record of feedbacks and discussions which have taken place during the series of meetings conducted among the members of the marketing committee/team composed of the unit administrator as the head of the institution and the school marketing officer, two faculty representatives from the College of Business and another representative from the Basic Education Department.

The proposed Three-year Marketing Plan for 2020-2023 for research Objective 3, was made possible through a workshop with the same committee under the guidance and mentoring of the Research Office Head of the private higher educational institution.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussions presented below are based on what had been initiated in marketing last school year 2018-2019. It aimed to develop and institutionalize different marketing approaches to bolster the different marketing strategies of the school. These strategies are briefly summarized below to reiterate what has been discussed in the introduction of this paper.

The Do-It-Yourself Internal Marketing initiative is one way of strengthening the marketing strategy in the area where our school operates. According to Rayudu (2008), marketing should start first within the organization rather than off the campus.

Every member of the organization should police their ranks and see to it that they have already mastered the product they are selling before their item reaches their customers. Product knowledge in marketing is one of the major tools in selling. (Blanchard, 2017)

The School Campus to Campus Marketing initiative is already a traditional practice of marketing by the school long before different theories were discovered. In fact, our school has adopted that kind of strategy, too. Wiley and Sons (2001) made a thorough research and claimed that in order to maximize captured market in sales and save time, effort and resources, an establishment may try to concentrate and tap the local market near the vicinity and focus the marketing to the existing needs of the people nearby.

The Parents, Alumni and Community Involvement Marketing initiative is an effective strategy in marketing. Ansoff (2005), in his book "Strategies for Diversification," had enunciated that community involvement and participation is one best marketing strategy to boost your product in the area where you wanted to be known for. It was bolstered by Ansoff when a company conducted its study and gets involved in the program on social responsibility. It was viewed by many as a humanitarian act and a gesture of concern not only for doing business with them. As a result, influx of customers had patronized its product.

The Multimedia/Social Media Marketing initiative was perceived as the need of the time. Kelley and Lazer (2007) in their study on the "Marketing in the Information Technology World," had set bigger opportunities for those products that are linked to the net and on the different multimedia platforms. Different Multimedia approaches are avenues to achieve a wider reach or coverage as far as product knowledge is concerned (Lazer, 2007).

Extensive International and Local Linkages on Shipping and Hotel Marketing is another approach our school has initiated. Mazur (2013) in his study showed that the more linkages you have, the more viable and credible is your product. This international and domestic tie-up is one great tool in marketing and has been proven many times. Stanton (2001), in his study, had found out that companies who had numerous partners other than their sister companies are likely to be supported by the customers.

This means that a product can stand with as far as quality with other companies local or international. Drucker (2000), in his study on management, has even bolstered the claim that the more linkages you have, the higher you create prestige among would-be clients in the area where you do the operation.

Table 1 shows the key accomplishments of the five marketing strategies that were employed for SY 2018-2019.

Table 1. Private Higher Educational Institution Marketing Strategies (SY 2018-2019) and their Status of Accomplishment

Marketing Initiatives		Key Accomplishments
1. The Do-It-Yoursel Internal Marketing		Teaching and non-teaching personnel sport a happy disposition in dealing with students
(DIY-IM)		Teaching and non-teaching personnel act as a good neighbor to the students
		Students wear proper uniform in the campus
		Employees and students observe the No Garbage Receptacle Policy thereby observing CLAYGO
	о□	School were identified as to the number of students it feeds every school year
Campus Marketing		Out of town schools were given ahead schedule for schools' visitation
(SCC-M)		City Schools' were prioritized as to the marketing campaign
3. Parents, Alumni and		Forged partnership with the Barangay Alijis Council
Community		Forged partnership with CDRRMO of San Carlos city
Involvement Marketing		Establish linkages with NOPSSCEA
(PACI-M) 4. The Multi Media/Socia		Establish tie-up with the Provincial Government
		Forged partnership with ABS CBN
Media Marketing		Forged Partnership with Island Living Channel
(MMS-M)		Forged Partnership with Negros Daily Bulletin
		Forged Partnership with Visayan Daily Star
		Forged Partnership with RMN
		Launched a unified FB Account and Page
		Launched a unified marketing hotline
5. Extensive International and Local		Establish a monthly TV ad along airports and seaports via Island Living Channel Forged a MOA with ARCHIPELAGO Philippine Ferries Inc., A domestic shipping company • On-going negotiations with Montenegro Shipping for another
Linkages on Shipping		MOA before the year ends.
and Hotel &		On-going negotiations with Aboy's Restaurant, Seda Hotel, L'Fisher Hotel, Business Inn, Sugarland among others
Restaurant Marketing		
(EILLSH-M)		

Table 2 provides the difficulties and challenges met in the implementation of the 2018-2019 marketing initiatives and a root-cause analysis of these problems.

Table 2. Difficulties and Challenges Met in the Implementation of the 2018-2019 Marketing Initiatives

Mar	keting Initiatives	<b>Difficulties and Challenges Met</b>	Root Causes
1.	The Do-It-Yourself  Internal  Marketing (DIY-	Employees not open yet to new suggestions in handling students' academic performance in classroom	Attached to the old belief that teacher should be disciplinarian inside the classroom The thinking that the job of the employees is just to make good of their
IM)	•	Employees are not yet open to suggestion to be partners in school marketing	work and not as partners in marketing
2.	School Campus  ■□ to Campus	No regular personnel were assigned $\ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \$	Marketing as an office and as a separate department is not a priority to the administration but only as an additional
Mark	eting (SCC •□	Students tapped in the campaign cannot	portfolio who can handle the same
	M)	be assured of an extra point in his/her academic activities	There were no clear academic guidelines ye from the school when it comes to additional points
3.	Parents, Alumni  •□ and Community Involvement	Parents were not educated as to their ${ullet}$ responsibilities in helping market the	They are just partners contented to the PEA of giving funds for infra projects at school and no more
•		school outside  Alumni were not responsive and are adamant to participate in any school activities  Lack of external involvements'	They were victims of financial solicitations by some teachers and some are being asked to donate things which are irrelevant to the school
		•	The culture of priority of every unit administrator is considered as one cause
4.	■□ Media/Social	No existing relationship yet with the $\ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \$	who has the access to the media Advertisement is not a priority for the
Medi	a Marketing	Occidental •□	administration
(MM	S-M) •□	No existing budget for advertisement No unified FB account for Students $\blacksquare$	Everyone can just post his concern of the FB TV Commercial was not a priority and not
		No Existing TV Commercial was being aired ${}^{ullet}\Box$	in the list to do by the previous administrators
5.	Extensive  -	School has no establish program on looking $ullet$ for linkages	Not a priority in every unit to look for a tie up- dependent with the head office
Interi	Local Linkages in • Shipping, Hotel and Restaurant Marketing (EILLSH-M)	Linkages is with the international •  shipping only which does not also cater and responsive to the problems confronting the deployment of students on board	Long time practice that domestic companies were not given importance

The difficulties and challenges met as shown in Table 2 are the results of the initial implementation of the marketing initiatives which started in 2018-2019.

Futrell (2005) in his study can be seen enunciating that any new ideas introduced are being confronted with numerous problems. There are critics coming from the inside and external factors as well that need to be refined and one could not adjust immediately.

Hansen (2011) has bolstered the study conducted by Futrell in a way giving idea in the light of the problems presented, that only willingness to adapt change is needed in order to achieve what was being sought for as perennial disease in an organization. The fact that new ideas had been introduced in the organization would mean adaptability among its members is necessary (Gregg, 2003).

Table 3. Proposed Three-Year Strategic Plan for Marketing (2020-2023)

Reference (Ten Point Agenda)	Strategic Objective	KPI/Measure	2019-2020 Target	20202021 Target	20212022 Target
A Sustained Technological Environment	Promote the school and its activities through social media/multimedia and other platforms	Number of social media/multimedia exposures	4	6	8
Pursuit of International Recognition	Increase number of tie-up companies to strengthen external linkages in shipping, hotel and restaurants	Number of shipping, hotel and restaurant companies added to the current	2	4	6
A Dynamic and Productive Alumni Involvement	Establish numerous school activities that will highlight the alumni's involvement, in partnership with the parents and the community in general	Number of activities lined up and intended in partnership with the alumni, parents and the community	2	4	6
Inculcation of Values	Create different programs that will foster students' and employees' involvement in developing values enrichment inside the school	Number of programs intended for students' and employees' participation inside the school	2	4	6
Excellence in Education and Training	Establish activities that will foster harmonious relationships among elementary and high schools in the community thereby creating a link for easy campus marketing by way of sharing best practices	Number of identified top feeder schools for sharing of best practices	2	4	6

Table 3 presents the proposed Three-Year Strategic Plan for Marketing (20202023), putting into consideration the difficulties and challenges as well as the root causes of these problems from the implementation of the marketing strategies in SY 2018-2019.

From this strategic plan, the proposed Marketing Plan for SY 2019-2020 was culled out as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Marketing Plan for SY 2020-2021

Strategic Objectives)	KPI/Measure	Target	Plans & Programs In-Charge	(Weeks)	s Resources Needed Budge
Promote the school and its activities through social media/multimedia and other platforms.	Number of social media/multimedia exposures	2	Marketing Officer	October 2019 & 52 March 2020	Manpower & Logistics
Increase number of tie-up companies to strengthen external linkages in shipping, hotel and	Number of shipping, hotel & restaurant companies added to the current	2	Marketing Officer Shipboard Training Office	October 2019 & March 52 2020	Financial & Logistics
restaurants. Establish numerous school activities that will highlight the alumni's involvement, in partnership with the parents and the community in	Number of activities lined up intended in partnership for alumni, parents and the community added to the current	2	Marketing Officer CES Officer Placement Officer	October 2019 & March 52 2020	Manpower & Logistics
general.  Establish an outdoor sign, like that of a billboard in a conspicuous place that will highlight the school's corporate social responsibility and the school program	Number of sites located in preparation for the installation of an outdoor billboard signs	2	Marketing Officer Safety and Security Plants & Services	October 2019 & March 52 2020	Manpower & Logistics
offerings. Establish activities that will foster harmonious relationships among elementary and high schools in the community thereby creating a link for easy	Number of identified top feeder schools for sharing of best practices and Career Information	2	Marketing Officer Placement Officer HR Office Research		Manpower & Logistics

campus
marketing by
way of sharing
best practices.

### **CONCLUSION**

Marketing is a way of life for everyone, whether you are into putting up your own business or engaging for an employment. We cannot do away with marketing. In landing a job, one should excel among applicants especially when only a single item is vacant and a lot of you are aspiring for that position.

According to Cialdini (2016), in order to be noticed, one should have an aura of business in transforming a simple style of marketing into sales. Cialdini (2016), in his article titled "Pre-Suasion---A Revolutionary Way to Influence and Persuade People in Business" shared that its presentation builds on the works or performance and argues that the best persuaders in marketing are not merely eloquent charmers with wellcrafted, finely tuned arguments but are also creative preparers who focus on finding the best ways to launch their offers and ideas.

The five marketing initiatives made by the marketing officer and his committee was on its infancy stage of implementation and was a jump start for the school to have at least a general guide in marketing. It has not only steered the institution to have a functional marketing whose only concern before was the school campus career talk.

This time, it has covered almost everything. From the Do-it-Yourself marketing which was strengthened by Lindstrom (2015) injecting neuroscience into the art of marketing.

It is necessary in marketing that everybody in the organization should be well-equipped with the product and the brand that we are selling. It is important to realize that the attitude of all the members of the organization is already marketing in itself.

If marketers could uncover what is going on in our brains that makes us choose one brand over another---what information passes our brain's filter and what information doesn't---that would be the key to truly building brands of the future (Lindstrom, 2015).

The School Campus to Campus marketing has been proven to be very effective in getting sales out of it. Seth Godin (2017) claimed that for decades, marketing pundits thought about marketing in terms of cramming your brand messages down to people's throat.

Godin (2017) turned this concept upside down by pointing people that they have so many choices today, and that they are going to pick and choose what messages they want to hear. It is in every career talk that one could be given the chance to be considered a choice.

The parents, alumni and community involvement as a marketing strategy has also been found to be working well for a private higher educational institution. As Trout (2015) had it published, it lays out the basics of finding where their product should be placed and what other people want and what other companies are doing.

Well-entrenched program in marketing needs to know what others are doing in promoting their products. Trout (2015) added that the community must get involved, that the alumni should do their share, and that parents are partners of the institution to progress.

The multimedia/social media marketing is a way of catching up with the latest trends nowadays. Gone are the days when businesses used to rely only on yellow pages, newspapers, and radio ads to drive new leads and customers through their doors.

From simple multimedia, we added social media as one tool in private higher educational institution marketing and we found it very useful. Digitalized marketing through social media, according to Deiss and Henneberry (2017), are already proven strategies being used to engage our audiences, build our brands, to get more customers and make more sales.

The extensive international and local linkages on shipping, hotel and restaurant marketing are one initiative that sealed the five marketing strategies of one private higher educational institution. One cannot stand alone in business without somebody patronizing its product (Cespedes, 2018).

The interaction of external market factors and internal organizational linkages are required to develop and maintain profitable customer relationships. It considers what well-known companies in different market environments are doing to manage these marketing linkages, and reveals the wider organizational implications in areas ranging from strategy development, on the one hand, to tactical sales management issues, on the other.

To provide avenue for sustainability, graduates need employment, and local and international linkages are the answers to these challenges.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

People have been in our shoes before, and at least one of them has come up with a better solution than you can study. Luckily, many of the world's best marketers have written about their experiences. With a private higher educational institution, it used their lessons to avoid their mistakes and get a leg up on our competitors. The initiatives they have developed for marketing are products of the different studies made by some experts in the field of marketing and sales. Establishing a unique feel of taste using your brand is something in competition (Eyal, 2014). People using your product are cool, but people habitually using your product are cooler. There is a pattern to which products and services catch attention and become essential for consumers.

In school, we do not only offer different courses. At a private higher educational institution, they are presenting the totality of a package which their customers wants, so called, stakeholders, to buy or patronize.

The need to fully implement the five marketing strategies in a required time is a must to attain maximum result. The creation of a Marketing Office or Office of External Affairs managed by a Marketing Officer or an External Affairs Officer, specifically for a private higher educational institution, will likely be the key to successfully implement the initiatives developed and continue to develop.

Perhaps it can work even better if this office can be institutionalized, with its own budgetary allocations and staff to regularly oversee and maintain its own thrusts and operations plan and to implement whole year round what was stipulated in the marketing initiatives.

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