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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-295-1-122>

**MARKETING OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS:  
CHALLENGES IN THE CONTEXT OF INTEGRATION  
IN THE EUROPEAN EDUCATION AREA**

It is required to review scientific and educational approaches to the management of education due to the development of the educational services market in the context of the integration of domestic education into the European education area and the transition of humanity to the knowledge economy. On the one hand, the management will take into account both social and commercial aspects; on the other hand, it will be focused on consumers of educational services and the maximum satisfaction of their needs in high-quality and competitive higher education. The emphasis of the development policy of higher education institutions (HEIs) shifted towards the revision and activation of its marketing component due to the intensification of the competition between HEIs for applicants, as well as the trend to reduce the amount of state funding and, as a result, the limitation of the possibilities of accumulating financial resources for strategic growth.

At present, the domestic educational area is transforming in line with the growth of competition both in the domestic and foreign markets. Due to hostilities in Ukraine, Ukrainians consider the opportunity to obtain higher education in foreign universities both full-time and remotely. It is important to emphasize the fact that martial law aggravates the problem of involving foreign students in the educational process at Ukrainian higher education institutions. These and other concerns about the potential for growth of the domestic market for educational services are on the agenda. This sector ensures the formation of workforce capacity and intellectual capital for all spheres of the national economy, fulfills an educational and cultural mission, and provides an innovative component [4, p. 33]. This is stated in the “Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in Ukraine for 2022-2032” [2], which sets a course for intensifying cooperation in the field of higher education between Ukraine and the EU, especially with regard to the reformation and modernization of the higher education system, the encouragement of alignment in the field of higher education within the framework of the Bologna process, the improvement of the quality and importance of higher education, a deeper cooperation between HEIs, the expansion of the HEIs’ possibilities, and the activation of the mobility of students, scientific, academic, and pedagogical staff [2].

The concept of HEI marketing is not new. The market for educational services has been using this concept for quite some time, defining the qualitative and quantitative elements of its perception by society. This is related to the coherence between the target orientation of HEI marketing and the interests (expectations) of society, which should be ensured through the active interaction of universities with all stakeholder groups (internal and external). The researchers of Polissia University propose to understand this concept as “customer-oriented activity of a HEI in the target market aimed at offering a competitive educational product and training a competitive specialist in the labor market, which is underpinned by formal state institutions and oriented to public and political trends” [4, p. 36-37]. Such an approach is essential under the implementation of a modern model of partnership interaction between education, science, and business.

In contrast to traditional product markets, the market for educational services offers a unique kind of product with specific properties. External marketing involves the creation of educational services, setting tuition fees, distribution and offering of services to consumers, while internal marketing is focused on training and motivating employees of HEIs with the goal of improving the quality of providing educational services [1; 5, p. 107]. The university's marketing orientation means the involvement of every employee in its marketing activities. The HEI marketing micro-environment is formed by applicants, parents, competitors, partners, authorities, recruitment agencies, investment companies, banks, the employment service, mass media, etc., those target groups with which it is necessary to regularly collaborate. That is to say, it is crucial to develop not only external marketing but also internal marketing and interaction marketing in the field of higher education.

Promotion measures and student involvement in the educational process are often thought to be almost the only criteria determining the efficiency of marketing in higher education, with targeting consumers of educational services being its key principle and imperative [3, p. 84]. HEI marketing is, however, a somewhat broader concept. Its functional features also include additional measures, such as segmenting the market for educational services, conducting marketing research, identifying the target segment, diagnosing the consumer profile, involving stakeholders, creating a business portfolio of educational services, benchmarking against competitors, positioning the institution in a competitive environment, developing an effective marketing complex, identifying opportunities for diversification of educational and scientific activities, searching for grant activities, etc. The admissions campaign and career counseling are the key areas of concentration for HEI admission marketing, which uses a variety of tools to encourage applicants to enroll. First and foremost, they cover promotion activities (such as direct mailing, website, and advertising), the formation of pricing policy (offering different types of financial assistance, discounts, and bonuses), as well as providing modern educational and professional programs and opportunities for acquiring hard and soft skills during training.

HEI marketing involves the creation of its development concept, whose key elements include the basic principles of work, mission, vision, goal, tasks, imperatives, strategic expectations, etc. The concept is the basis for forming a development strategy, long-term planning, monitoring and diagnosing activities, adjusting the quality management system of the educational process, etc. The creation of the HEI marketing concept entails several crucial steps related to conducting marketing research intended to diagnose contemporary trends and vectors of higher education development in Ukraine and around the world, studying the conjuncture of the national and international markets for educational services, and determining the place and role of a specific higher education in this process. The findings of marketing research serve as the basis for forecasting demand, identifying potential consumers, and understanding their preferences. It also helps to objectively assess the factors that influence the applicant's choice of HEI and a major, as well as the criteria that consumers use to pre-evaluate the quality of the offered educational services and how they interpret these criteria [1].

Therefore, effective HEI marketing is based on a thorough understanding of the specifics of its work, history, unique advantages, and values, as well as the mission entrusted to it. Essential attributes should include the diagnostics of the target market, the creation of a consumer profile, state regulation and global trends in education, and institutional factors of regional development of the education sphere. It is advisable to implement continuing marketing tools at the local level, such as advertising, branding, public relations, sponsorship, direct marketing, cross-marketing, HEI participation at the community level, etc. In other words, the marketing policy of a modern HEI should be

based on the principle of goal setting, which will provide for clear motivational mechanisms for meeting the needs of consumers of educational services as well as employee participation in the development of unique educational services. This will allow the institution to take the lead in the market for educational services and will maximize consumer satisfaction in their pursuit of a quality education.

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