Chapter 4
Higher Education and IT

Lluís Jovell Turró
Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain

Montserrat Peñarroya Farell
Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain

ABSTRACT
The introduction of IT in the learning process has completely transformed the way in which training is taught today, and the process of attracting new students has changed. This chapter discusses the changes in communication to new students and describes the main techniques to attract them to the Website of a business school or educational institution.

NEW MARKETING AND ATTRACTING NEW STUDENTS

One of the most relevant aspects related to Information Technology, is the analysis of the changes suffered in the process of attracting new students. Not surprisingly, IT companies have revolutionized marketing and have opened new horizons, while at the same time forcing a great number of professionals to get training in order to understand new tools and new communication codes. However, this has also brought new competitors from all over the world and without the need of high investments.

In this chapter, we will be talking about these four aspects: new markets, new marketing tools, new communication codes and new competition.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-4233-1.ch004

NEW MARKETS

The World is Flat (Friedman & Friedman, 2006) and this is so true that within any place of the planet (with Internet access) you can download notes, moderate a forum, watch a video, tutor a project, and in general terms even teach a class.

For the first time in the history of mankind, the market is global in various aspects: first, physically, this means, anywhere in the planet we can find a potential student; second, the Internet has allowed access of information and knowledge to every kind of people, regardless of their social class (and hierarchies) and regardless of their profession; anyone who wishes to learn can find training offers that better suit their needs. Markets such as Asia, Central Europe or Latin America are able to reach out to any business school or university that wish to contact them; for the first time, it is not a matter of means, it is a matter of desire.
Higher Education and IT

Other aspects in terms of globalization is the fact that because of information technologies, we are now able to follow any course in an asynchronous manner from the rest of the class and professors; thousands of people that because of their professional activities and lack of time were unable to access a training program, can now use their free time to distribute the learning material throughout a whole week, rather than being limited to five-days a week classes.

We observe that because of IT, it is possible to access an infinite number of people. For reasons of access, democratization of training and students´ time optimization.

Though it is not only the capacity to access more people what makes IT open a whole world of training possibilities, it is also the segmentation which is made possible by the tools that we can use. It allows us to create specific programs for certain segments and get this information to the relevant segments. The concept of “The Long Tail” (Anderson & Anderson, 2006) applies perfectly to the World of E-Learning. The new market is created by small segments that would be unthinkable without IT (due to difficulties as well as cost) but because of new technologies, we are now able to have a greater number of people in our hands that fit those micro-segments and who create a market that is profitable. Thus, it is possible to prepare a Master in Business Management specialized in business between China and Europe and enroll students from all over the world who want this type of training.

Let’s see how the six techniques of traditional marketing communication are applied to digital marketing.

**Technique 1: Direct Selling**

Frequently, sales are considered as an area of study within the second level marketing techniques, but in reality our strength for sales and its optimal function is one of the primordial aspects to develop our Marketing strategies.

Online, direct selling should be done by the Website of our school, incorporating in the site functionalities of electronic commerce and allowing potential students to enroll directly through the page. But despite the development of electronic commerce in Spain and in the rest of the world, the truth is it depends on the academic program we are trying to “sell”; it will be difficult for a sale to be closed online (because of the price and because of questions that future students would like to ask before making the deposit). For these reasons, most times business schools and universities focus on attracting business contacts instead of students directly. Therefore, direct selling of training programs via the Internet are limited to less expensive courses. As a general norm, the objective of the Website is to be able to get leads that will eventually turn into students (through the exchange of two or three emails with the head of the enrollment process).

**Technique 2: Publicity**

Publicity is one of the variables that assist marketing to act in markets; this way, the Internet also has a great role to play. It is very versatile and provides information to students, persuasively, to influence their purchasing behavior, helping schools and institutions achieve their goals.

As a communication tool, the possibilities of publicity are many, though the main objective is to inform the markets about our courses. Integrated
Related Content

Climate Change, Human Health and Some Economic Issues
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/climate-change-human-health-and-some-economic-issues/140560?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/climate-change-human-health-and-some-economic-issues/140560?camid=4v1a)

Some Things Are Just Made to Be Littered
[www.igi-global.com/article/some-things-are-just-made-to-be-littered/120103?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/some-things-are-just-made-to-be-littered/120103?camid=4v1a)

Review of Energy Efficiency Adoption Literature from a Demand Side Management Perspective: Taxonomy of Research Approaches
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/review-energy-efficiency-adoption-literature/66213?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/review-energy-efficiency-adoption-literature/66213?camid=4v1a)

Effects of Corporate Social Responsibility and Creating Shared Value on Sustainability
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/effects-of-corporate-social-responsibility-and-creating-shared-value-on-sustainability/221103?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/effects-of-corporate-social-responsibility-and-creating-shared-value-on-sustainability/221103?camid=4v1a)