Conference Proceedings

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ECONOMIC TOURISM SCIENCES TECHNOLOGY HUMANITIES SOCIAL SCIENCES AND EDUCATION RESEARCH CONFERENCE

London, United Kingdom
5 – 7 April, 2017

THE 2017 ICBTS

Conference Three Themes
The International Business Tourism and Applied Sciences Research Conference
The International Education Social Sciences and Humanities Research Conference

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INTRODUCTION

We would like to welcome our colleagues to the International Business Tourism Transport Technology Social Sciences Humanities Education Research Conference. It is the seven series in 2016 of Conference on Business Tourism and Apply Sciences was held in Amsterdam. As always many members of the ICBTS 2016 community look forward to meeting, sharing and exchanging their research ideas and results in both a formal and informal setting which the conference provides. Likewise, the concept of alternating the international conference every one month on April to November between Europe and the rest of the world is now well established. This year’s event in London (UK) Paris (France) Munich (Germany) Amsterdam (Netherlands) Boston (USA) Toronto (Canada) London (United Kingdom) Zurich (Switzerland) Berlin (Germany) Tokyo (Japan) and another continues with the cultural following the very successful and productive event held in London-Zurich in August 2016 in the field of various types for international academic research conference on Business Economics Social Sciences Humanities Education and Apply Sciences. As usual The ICBTS 2016 brings together leading academics, researchers and practitioners to exchange ideas, views and the latest research in the field of Business Tourism and Apply Sciences.

The theme of this event The 2016 ICBTS International Business Tourism Social Sciences Humanities and Education Research Conference is “Opportunities and Development of Global Business Economics Social Sciences Humanities and Education” It is also represents an emerging and highly challenging area of research and practice for both academics and practitioners a like, The current industrial context is characterized by increasing global competition, decreasing product life cycles, Global Business, Tourism Development, Social Sciences Humanities Education Apply Sciences and Technology collaborative networked organizations, higher levels of uncertainties and, above all, and customers. In our view holding this event in Tokyo represents a timely opportunity for academics and researchers to explore pertinent issues surrounding Business Economics Tourism Social Sciences Humanities Education Sciences and Technology.

Potential authors were invited to submit an abstract to the International Conference Session Chairs. All abstracts were reviewed by two experts from the International review committee and final papers were further reviewed by this volume with 30 contributing authors coming from 18 countries. This book of proceedings has been organized according to following categories:

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ONLINE MARKETING IMPLEMENTED ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN THAILAND: A CASE OF INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE, SUAN SUNANDHA RAJABHAT UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Online marketing is becoming important tool for today’s marketing technology. This mechanism helps marketers reach more target market while enhancing profit. For higher education, online marketing has been recently applied with office marketing tools in order to attract young students who like to search on online platform. The objective of this paper are to analyze online marketing environment of higher education in Thailand as well as to exploit strategy that best appropriated with improving online marketing in International College, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University context. The sample in this study consists of 10 academic and supporting staffs currently working in International College and 5 students. The samples were obtained by using probability sampling method – samples were selected using population list then using simple random sampling. The instrument is interview questions. Data was analyzed using content analysis method.

The results illustrated that administrative environment could help the college to operate online marketing more efficient. Meanwhile external environment could facilitate the institute to effectively reach target market. To improve strategic environment, TOWS matrix model had been introduced. The college could maximize strengths in terms of creating reliable and attractive online marketing channels. They could also offset weaknesses by using opportunities to provide faster information with high level of accuracy. Moreover, threats could be avoid by providing up-to-date content in order to accomplish customer preferences. Finally, the interviews showed that students were likely to use social media to obtain information. Nevertheless, the usage of other online marketing channels, such as the college’s website was quite low. Therefore, International College should promote the website through social media and provide clearer and deeper information in all channels.

Keywords—Higher education, Marketing strategy, Online marketing, TOWS analysis

INTRODUCTION

Recently, marketing has proved to be important factor for a successful education institute. The high rate of competition has forced higher education to create strategic marketing plan for promote their institutes. One of the strategy includes Memorandum of Understanding or MOU with foreign universities to attract students who like to study abroad. This strategic plan is, indeed, a result from The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). For Thai institutes, GATS put more pressure to them since it provides opportunity for foreign universities to open their education gate in Thailand. For instance, Thailand-Australia Free Trade Agreement (TAFTA), which is an agreement on high education between Thailand and Australia, provides a good chance for Thai students to get Australian degree while study in Thailand. Thus, Thai education institute should enhance their education standard to compete with these foreign education institutes [1].
To improve education quality, an institution should combine various inputs together, such as administration, management, human resource, skills of lecturer, capital as well as student [2]. Method of improvement must be flexible with the focus on process by adopting business model to manage budget and risk [3]. This is the concept of students are customers which concentrates on customer-driven marketing strategy to maximize customers' satisfaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Online Marketing Concept

Traditionally, marketing means the way that a company uses to satisfy customers' wants or needs. However, the new trend of marketing has been focused on maximizing value of product or service to customers according to their preferences [4]. There is a gradually increase in the usage of marketing via online platforms. Online marketing is, therefore, combining technology with marketing strategy in order to distribute product or service to the hand of customers efficiently [5]. Normally, there are two types of online marketing used within a company: click-only and click-and-mortar. Click-only refers to companies that has established only on online platforms, no physical location. Click-and-mortar, on the other hands, means companies that a physical location for their operations. This type of online marketing allows firms to pursue a various marketing channels - applying online marketing with off-line marketing.

Lately, online marketing principles has put more focus on content and the process of creating online marketing. The process of identifying online strategy can be done through SOSTAC Model as the figure shown below [6].

Figure 1
SOSTAC Model

![Figure 1](image_url)

This model, firstly, requires a firm to evaluate their market situation, market positioning, and level of competition in order to specify marketing strategy. Secondly, objectives of doing a business need to be identified. Thirdly, analyze the target customers and marketing strategy according to the objectives. Then, the company need to find the tactics of pursuing marketing strategy and written it as a plan. Lastly, take action of the plan while controlling all functions of management as well as evaluate outcome and get the feedback from customers.

At the same time of setting a marketing plan, data collection and analysis method should also be set. There are many methods to collect data statistically, such as questionnaire, poll, log files, cookies, or web stat. As a result, this data would be analyzed to further generate appropriated online marketing channels for a firm.
1.2 SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is one of the method of collecting information from internal and external environment related with a company performance. Strength and weakness explain situation within the company while opportunity and threat refer to external changes outside the company that might affect the firm in the future. These information is required when a company identify its marketing strategy [7]. To develop online marketing strategy, TOWS matrix should be used to enhance weakness using strength, and resolve threat using opportunity. The TOWS matrix is illustrated in the table below [8].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Environment</th>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Weakness</th>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>SO - Matching Approach Using strength to obtain the new competitive opportunity</td>
<td>WO - Off-Set Approach Using existing opportunity to improve weakness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat</td>
<td>ST - Covering Approach Using strength to cover organizational objectives from threat</td>
<td>WT - Mitigation Approach Minimizing or mitigating threat that may affect organizational objectives</td>
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This TOWS matrix explains solution approach after doing SWOT analysis. It can tell how a company should maximize its strength through new opportunity as well as when a company should leave the market. Thus, a company can use this matrix to select the appropriate approach for their marketing strategy.

1.3 Marketing in Education Sector

The turning point of educational buyer behavior may, perhaps, come from the concept of ‘student is customer’. This concept has increased a tension of competition in education sector. Reduction of budget supported by the government as well as education quality management are the main factors that forcing many institutes to promote their colleges or universities through modern marketing channels [9]. Nevertheless, understanding customers’ preferences is important to identify their behaviors. Often, the customer who satisfy with product or service will recommend it to others [10]. Buyer behaviors also affect marketing activities, such as product features, and marketing strategy for a specific target group. Marketer will research these target market and identify marketing activity that satisfy customers’ needs and wants.

In order to manage higher education system, administrative in terms of supporting function and academic function are needed [11]. Supporting function includes regulate code of conduct, manage internal administrative, writing a strategic plan, establish community relationship, deal with paper work, and manage budgeting and funding. Academic function refers to teaching standard, curriculum management, student enrolment, teaching and learning environment, lecturer management, student and academic affair, and organizational relation management. Marketing is used to support the main functions of education system, particularly finding fund and student enrolment. Due to the reduction of birth rate trend in Thailand, an institution needs to develop marketing strategy to attract more customers [12]. To develop marketing strategy, an institution can apply 4Ps of traditional marketing mix with 3Ps: producer, purchasers and probing [13]. To increase revenue, therefore, an institution should carefully design appropriated courses, budget, and marketing communication, in order to compete in high competitive market. In this case, applying online marketing would be an appropriated choice for an institute that has less investment. However, they still need to consider basic
infrastructure, such as Internet access, hardware and software for pursuing online marketing communication (14).

**METHODOLOGY**

This paper is based on a social science research using qualitative method. Data has been collected by interviewing from stakeholders; supporting staff, academic staff, and students. A sample group consists of 15 people and has been selected using simple random sampling from name lists of three stakeholders. The interview has been conducted using semi-structure interview questions. The questions had been divided into four main themes: internal environment, external environment, factors associated with online marketing communication channels, and factors associated with online marketing content. The data had been analyzed using content analysis.

**RESULTS**

2.1 Internal and External Environmental Analysis

The result of analysis in internal and external environment of online marketing is shown on the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal Environment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Online Marketing Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Online Marketing Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>External Environment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Social factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Economic factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Competition factor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the internal environmental assessment, managing online marketing system in International College is flexible because there is only one division control the system. However, in-depth information about programs or courses still needs to be enhanced. The program should take an information provider role while Public Relation Division should take only a publication role. On the other hands, external environment shown that middle income families can take benefit of online marketing to find information faster and lower cost than other methods.
2.2 SWOT Analysis

The environmental assessment can be summarized in SWOT analysis. The flexibility of system management and up-to-date information are the main strengths of online marketing strategy applied by International College. Using pictures and other graphics can attract young target market. Moreover, cost of online marketing is lower than other types of marketing communication. With the improvement of standard infrastructure in suburb areas, opportunity to introduce the college to wide range of customers is growing. Since the cost of internet is lower, customers can obtain information whenever and wherever they want. Although the college provides information on online channels, it could not cover all detail of each program. Furthermore, the variety of online marketing channels should be improved to reach the large number of customers. For threats, the competition has put more pressure on higher education institutes in terms of their marketing fund. To target more customers, they need to invest lots of money for marketing activities. This, in turn, increases cost of maintaining trust on the online marketing system to those institutes.

From the SWOT analysis, the author has developed TOWS Matrix to apply with marketing strategy of International College [15]. The TOWS Matrix can be concluded in the table below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Environment</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Accuracy and flexibility of online marketing system</td>
<td>1. Too general detail of each program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Control by Public Relation Division</td>
<td>2. Less variety of channels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Up-to-date information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Attractive graphics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Low cost when comparing with other marketing communication channels.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External Environment</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Increase accessibility of infrastructure (i.e. internet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Growth rate of online marketing users</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External Environment</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. High competition within higher education market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Perception of trust on the online marketing system through the eyes of customers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SO - Matching Approach</th>
<th>Use progressive marketing approach by put more pictures and graphics to attract potential customers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ST - Covering Approach</td>
<td>Due to high accuracy of the system controlled by Public Relation Division, information provided in all online marketing channels can gain high trust from customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WT - Mitigation Approach</td>
<td>Minimize the effect of competition by promote each program progressively through wide range of marketing channels, including offline marketing channel.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOWS Matrix, therefore, provides alternative approach that International College can use to compete with other institutes. Increasing strengths while off-setting weaknesses could increase the chance that customers will know the college. High accuracy of system would increase trust from customers, which will lead to a high reputation in the future. Moreover, keeping information up-to-date is the most important task in promoting the college.
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the SWOT analysis, the system has high accuracy rate because it is controlled by Public Relation Division. However, there should be more information provided in all marketing channels. Furthermore, high competition means customers have low switching cost of accessing information via online marketing channels. The results from TOWS Matrix shown that International College has an effective online marketing strategy. The college has adopted progressive approach to increase number of customers. Although there are threats from external environment, International College can minimize it with the strengths. Therefore, the college should promote the programs in a variety of channels, such as social media, website, as well as other offline channels in order to obtain more customers from this high competitive market.

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