Customer satisfaction with presentation of the Department of Communication of Zilinska univerzita v Ziline

Juraj Fabus\textsuperscript{a}, Viktoria Fabusova\textsuperscript{a,\*}

\textsuperscript{a}Zilinska univerzita v Ziline, Univerzitna 1, 010 26 Zilina, Slovakia

Abstract

In this paper are discussed the tools of marketing communication which the Department of communication of The Faculty of Operation and Economics of Transport and Communications of Zilinska univerzita v Ziline uses in its activities. Specifically, we pay attention to various areas as advertising, public relations, personal selling, and sales promotion. The paper presents a survey of customer satisfaction with the presentation of the Department of communications. We have used a direct survey method, specifically the marketing research. The aim was to find out how students of selected classes perceive level of marketing activities in the field of communication at their department. This set out four key proposals arising from the previous stages of research and analysis. It is an informative brochure for potential students, informative board, innovation of the department’s website, and suggestion for promotional products. Planning of marketing activities can be targeted at different defined objectives. In the case of the communication policy of the Department of Communications, this planning is designed to increase the effectiveness of marketing presentations. Through a detailed marketing plan drawn up by the various instruments of communication mix their introduction into the process of using will facilitate.

© 2016 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/). Peer-review under responsibility of the Ardabil Industrial Management Institute

Keywords: advertising; public relations; sales promotion; personal selling; marketing research; segmenting; marketing strategy; marketing’s plan.

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +421-915-839905
E-mail address: juraj.fabus@fpedas.uniza.sk
1. Introduction

We can see a new trend where in the process of providing educational services is entering the market as well. It is therefore necessary to highlight the need for the implementation of marketing tools in educational institutions. One of these tools is marketing communication applied through elements of communication mix. Their aim is not only to attract new students, but also to build and maintain a positive image of all concerned and unconcerned participants.

2. Marketing Tools

Department applies some elements of communication policy, through which the general public is able to create an image about operation of the institution. Various tools of marketing communication mainly implemented by the Department of Communication are detailed in this chapter.

2.1. Advertising

Advertising is a way of communication (Kollarova, 2006) with highly public nature, which allows to school to repeat the message and to buyer (students) to receive it and compare with the competition. On the one hand it can be used to build a long-term image (Stefko, 2003), on the other hand as an impulse for a quick sale.

Information boards of the Department of Communications (see Fig. 1.) – Information boards placed on the fourth floor are designated for current as well as for prospective students who have the opportunity to look over for example during open days.

Board about profile and job opportunities of graduates of the Department of Communications - is placed in the area of the Department of Communications. It informed in detail about the possibilities offered by individual departments.

Promotional leaflets of Department of Communications - Department of Communications uses the promotional leaflets to introduce itself to the public. The current prospectus is available also in English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational unit presenting the Department of Communications</th>
<th>Advertisement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>Information boards on the premises of the Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Board of profile and employability of graduates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotion leaflet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flyer about the new study program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web page <a href="http://www.ks.uniza.sk">www.ks.uniza.sk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPEDAS</td>
<td>Information leaflet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The brochure “Information about study opportunities”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web page <a href="http://www.fpedas.uniza.sk">www.fpedas.uniza.sk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŽU</td>
<td>Set of information leaflets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information Bulletin designed exclusively for foreign students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web page <a href="http://www.uniza.sk">www.uniza.sk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Book „How to go to the university“</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 1. Advertising tools (Source: Author)
Information leaflet about the new study program at the Department of Communications - From the perspective of an educational institution may be a study program described as a product of the marketing mix of the university. Although the new study field “E-Commerce and Management” has been available for a long time, it is necessary to be constantly reminded.

The website of the Department of Communications - Every department of the Faculty of Operation and Economics of Transport and Communications has its own space to present its activities to concerned participants of the educational institutions. From the initial online bulletin boards, which provide all the necessary contact information you can go to the website maintained by the Department - ks.uniza.sk.

2.2. Public Relations

Public relations present an effective tool (Sabikova, 2007), which is not intended to offer or sell anything. It is aimed for informing and mutual communication. Good image allows to obtain comparative advantages that will be reflected in greater interest of all target groups and in better awareness of the university (Kretter, 2007). The table shows that many elements are intended for the general public that is the reason of colouring the fields of the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target audience</th>
<th>Current students</th>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>General public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>Online journal “Pošta, telekomunikácie a elektronický obchod.”</td>
<td>Department publications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Scientific monographs, textbooks, research, research papers, a book of work ...)</td>
<td>Conferences and workshops (POSTPOINT, MARVI, Diagnostika podniku, controlling a logistika a Rozvoj Euroregionu Beskydy)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooperation with enterprises and institutions at national and international levels</td>
<td>Memorable publication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Progressive Days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPEDAS</td>
<td>Faculty Annual report</td>
<td>Cooperation with enterprises and institutions at national and international levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online journal “Doprava a spoje”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŽU</td>
<td>International university cooperation in the form of a European &quot;Erasmus&quot;</td>
<td>Developing and coordinating the foreign relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Mobility of students and staff)</td>
<td>The student of the University of Žilina magazine “ŽUŽO”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University magazine, “Spravodajca”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 2. Public relations tools (Source: Author)

Publishing activities of the Department of Communications (see Fig. 2.) – transparency of the activities of the organization through active publishing activities.

Conferences and workshops - The Department of Communications is actively involved in the organization of conferences and workshops. It emphasizes the specificity and professional level of educational institution.

Cooperation between institutions - Department of Communications cooperates with Slovak companies and institutions whose business activity is closely related to the fields of study and education at the department. Membership and active operation in the European organizations and university networks have an important role in improving the image of the department.

Memorable Publication - In 2011, the Department of Communications celebrated its 50th anniversary. On the occasion of the round anniversary was published a publication "A History and Present of the Department of Communications."
Progressive Days - This is a presentation of current PhD students about the achieved results.

2.3. Personal sale

Personal communication is due to the structure of target segments of providers of educational services significantly greater than in the classical marketing. While impersonal communication through the media is particularly suitable to draw attention of potential students to the university and its achievements, but in real decision making about university selection plays an important role personal communication (Rostasova, 2006).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target audience</th>
<th>Potential students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comm@Day (Presentation by the Department of Communications in secondary schools)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>Open Doors Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPEDAS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŽU</td>
<td>Fair of post-secondary education „AKADÉMIA“</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 3. Personal sale tools (Source: Author)

Personal selling is a marketing communication tool which when applying in an environment of university is reduced into one segment of the market. These are potential students with which after personal contact should be established a relationship determining their future journey to study at the Department of Communications (see Fig. 3.).

Comm@Day - Department of Communications within the context of personal communication is organized an action named „Comm@day“, every year during the period of applying to university. It is a visit of the secondary schools by the department representatives aimed primarily on students in the last year.

2.4. Sales support

Sales support motivates customers to act right now by providing benefits. Sales support does not create long-term customer loyalty (Matulcikova, 2007) and does not increase the status of the name of educational institution. Department of Communications does not produce any activity in this segment (see Fig. 4.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target audience</th>
<th>Current students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stipends (extra stipends, stipends for excellent fulfilment of study duties)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPEDAS</td>
<td>Tender issued by DHL company for students of 2nd year of engineering studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 4. Sales support tools

3. Survey of customer satisfaction

For the purpose of exploring customer satisfaction with the presentation of the Department of Communications is in this work applied one of the major methods of direct survey - marketing research. For the purpose of detecting customer satisfaction with the presentation of the Department of Communications has been selected questionnaire survey method, which consists in creating a semi-structured questionnaire. This is a form that uses closed questions
in addition to the semi-closed and open questions. Respondent receives a space to comment on the topic. By identifying the problem it is necessary to take into account the subject of the examined case, which determines the direction of the questionnaire survey (Butoracova, 2007).

The main objective of the survey of customer satisfaction with the presentation of the Department of Communications was to find out how real students of pre-selected years perceived level of marketing communication activities at the department which they know well. The questionnaire was submitted to the fifty students of the second year of engineering studies through electronic media. For the first year students of bachelor studies in "Postal Technologies and Services" questionnaire was conducted in writing.

In the first phase of marketing research a number of objectives was defined that should be achieved by research. After a phase of getting information, it is necessary to collect data into a form in which it will be possible to work with them more complete. The objectives are evaluated, the article deals only with the evaluation of the most essentials.

3.1. First Objective: Evaluation of the effectiveness of each marketing communication tools that have been used in the past by the Department of Communications for the purpose of attracting potential customers.

To achieve such an objective respondents have answered the following question: "On the basis of the witch suggestions you have decided to study at the Department of Communications? “

![Figure 5. Marketing communication tools affecting the decision of potential students](image)

In terms of the effectiveness of each marketing communication tool we can evaluate the publication "Which university to choose" as the most effective tool (see Fig. 5.). The student has the opportunity to compare study programs through this publication. The second most reliable tool for presentation of the Department of Communications is the recommendation of graduates. Verbal report is in the case of good university more important than marketing tools.

Respondents have answered also this question "What information did you find essential when choosing a university? “
3.2. Second Objective: Assessment of the level of marketing tool "Public relations".

Current students were asked, "What do you think about the students' awareness about news from the Department of Communications?" The aim was to determine the extent to which respondents are informed about current events at the department (see Fig. 6.). Within the search for the new opportunities in the field of marketing tools is a willingness to receive information one of the most important criteria (Stefko, 2003).

![Fig. 6. Informing students about the latest news (Source: Author)](image)

The final result of this assessment is that the vast majority of students have the feeling of the average awareness about the news by the Department of Communications. As reasons were reported belatedly distributed information. It is necessary through research to understand the attitude of students to the presentation of the Department of Communications. The aim of the question "Would you like to be informed about the activities of the department more?" is to find out if the respondent would like to be informed about current events at the Department of Communications. In this survey, it is necessary to answer the question: "To what extent is the student willing to receive and accept the information?"

Through the next question: "What manner of presentation of the department is closest to you?" was to determine which channel is most acceptable for students.

3.3. Third Objective: Evaluation of the image of the Department of Communications from the current student’s perspective.

For the purposes of this assessment, the questionnaire used three questions:

- To what extent do you think is the Department of Communications known to the general public? (Justify on the basis of the responses of your surroundings.)
- How are you satisfied with the study at the Department of Communications?
- Would you recommend the study at the Department of Communications to your friends and people you know?

3.4. Fourth Objective: Evaluation of the specific tools of marketing communication from the current student’s perspective.

Students through the questions "Do you like website of the Department of Communications?" rated the electronic presentation of the Department of Communications. For the purpose of assessing the next marketing tool of the Department of Communications respondents were asked "Do you like the Department of Communications environment?" (see Fig. 7.).
From the students of first year of bachelor study are satisfied with the environment of the Department of Communications 47% of respondents. The remaining 53% of respondents defined the environment as cold, often monotonous and without significant environmental changes. Students of the second year of engineering studies expressed 60% dissatisfaction with the environment of the Department of Communications. In the open question they reported the same reasons as the previous group of respondents. The last point of the questionnaire survey was devoted to the question - which promotional item by the Department of Communications would be welcomed by student.

4. Proposal of tools

The final result of the SWOT analysis is a precise definition of the priority factors by which it is possible to maximize the strengths, minimize weaknesses, and also as far as possible to use the opportunities and eliminate threats. SWOT analysis of communication policy is not part of this paper.

Based on the knowledge of all necessary information that has been obtained by market research and by situation analysis is possible a proposal of instruments to increase customer satisfaction with the presentation of the Department of Communications. This is the penultimate stage in the process of implementing the survey questionnaire. Based on the processing and analysis of information gathered it comes to the implementation of individual ideas.

The main objective is primarily to provide an integrated communication system of the Department of Communications. It can be achieved by systematic planning of communication subtasks. The integrated system is not created by a one-time planning, it is a long-time process of realizing individual goals. After the precise definition of the objectives of the communication policy, including a brief summary of achieving them it can be proceed to specifying individual proposals.

4.1. The information brochure for prospective students

Among directly oriented marketing activities of the Department of Communications to potential students can be included an action called "Comm@Day". Among weaknesses of the communication policy of the Department of Communications has been included the missing promotional material exclusively presenting the department. For the purpose of highlighting the study programs for potential students was suggested the information brochure. As a communication channel distributing information brochures can be electronic as well as printed form. The aim of
releasing information brochure into an integrated communication system of the department is to increase the demand for its services.

4.2. Informative board

In the environment of the Department of Communications is situated an informative board that contains profile information and job opportunities for graduates in individual study programs of the department. The disadvantage is the lack of relevant data about the department. Marketing research found that an absolute majority of the respondents do not like the Department of Communications environment. They defined it as cold and monotonous. On the behalf of enrichment the facilities of department is in this work introduced the proposal of creatively processed informative board. The aim of proposal is to replace the original information board by more modern version that would emphasize the positive nature of the Department of Communications.

4.3. Innovation of the website of the Department of Communications

Through questionnaire survey it was found that asked students are not satisfied with the internet presentation of the Department of Communications. Most of them measured it as ordinary. Introduction of a discussion forum on the website of the Department of Communications will focus on various current issues of the department. It would allow students to comment on the issue through an open virtual debate. Through various reactions can university better understand student’s attitudes and opinions.

4.4. Proposal of promotional items of Department of Communications

One of the approach to underline the Department of Communications to each market segment is communication support by promotional items. Through the questionnaire survey respondents were given several choices. Most of them would welcome a pen, mug and calendar with advertising content of department.

One of the most important stages of marketing planning is compiling marketing strategy. It is a complete understanding of each proposal communications policy of the Department of Communications. It focuses on a systematic approach for defining the means and methods to achieve well-defined tasks. Marketing plan of communication policy of the Department of Communications is established for a period of one year. Its description is not the matter of this work.

5. Conclusion

Department of Communications makes an effort in marketing communication field for all participants of educational services market. In case of communication needs of department customers, it is not a unification of the market but the differentiation of the individual segments. This means that every marketing communication tool is specifically designed to a precise audience of department.

Information from market research helps to understand the perception of communication policy by concerned participants in the environment of the Department of Communications. From the conclusions of the survey should be obvious, what are the problems, threats or opportunities for the presentation of the department. In addition to assessing the current situation is this work suitable to measure the effectiveness of the tools of communication mix. The analyzed results serve consequently as a basis for drawing up a specific marketing strategy.

Based on previous analyses, it can be stated that the Department of Communications is a marketing-oriented and has a relatively stable communication system. The big advantage is the willingness to constantly develop communication policy of the department by concerned persons.

Grant support

This contribution was undertaken as parts of the research projects:
References


