



Marketing of educational services



Lecture 3

The reputation management

A good organizational reputation has a positive impact on business-to-business relations.



In the context of higher education institutions, the importance of institutional relations at local, regional, national and international levels cannot be overstated.

Key perspectives on reputation include:

- The public relations perspective
- The marketing communications perspective



- The crisis/risk management perspective
- The corporate branding perspective

The public relations perspective

PR has multiple roles including defending an organization from attack by competitors, publicizing its successes, building a long-term image and nurturing relationships with potential and current customers.



The marketing communications perspective

A higher education institution which is viewed unfavourably by prospective students will need not only a radical re-examination of its product offering, but also an equally radical communication strategy to transform the existing negative identity into a favourable new image.



The crisis/risk management perspective

The key elements of good crisis management include:

- establishing good media relations
- having external agencies in place
- rehearsing hypothetical scenarios
- dealing in truth and not evasion
- the need for an established crisis management team



The corporate branding perspective

Institutions with strong brand identity carry a halo of positive assumptions that build trust and confidence in the institution and lead to positive outcomes ... such as:

- students choosing to attend the institution;
- a reporter seeking a professor to quote in a new story;
- a legislator meeting with a campus representative or an alumnus deciding to make a major donation.



What is reputation management?

Institutional reputation is one of the strongest influencers of people's decisions when it comes to study destinations and subject or course choices.

Reputation is a deeper set of enduring images which are more difficult to erase from the public consciousness and, unlike images, are not solely based on immediate representations.

Reputation

In order to build this strong message about the institutional distinctiveness, Lawlor (2007) has recommended what he calls the FACTS method:

- Focus
- Ask
- Clarify
- Tell
- Show



An analytic and process model for reputation management

- the institutional context;
- the institutional reputation framework;
- the strategy and operational framework.



Institutional context

- the socio-political and educational context;
- the policy framework at regional, national and international levels;
- key competitor strengths and weaknesses;
- institutional strengths and weaknesses;
- institutional mission, vision, goals, aims and objectives;
- the intended institutional distinctiveness and institutional brand
- proposition.



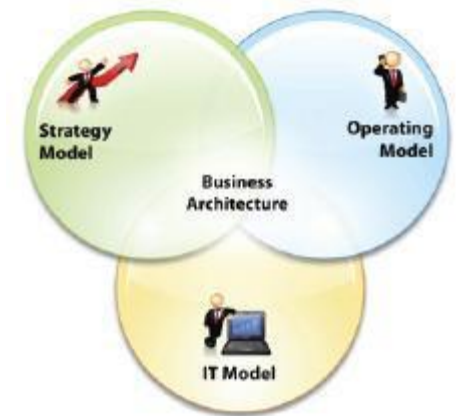
Institutional reputation framework

- brand and branding element;
- public relations element;
- crisis management element;
- marketing communications element.



Strategy and operational framework

- teams drawn inclusively and with task orientation;
- focus on quality;
- focus on customers;
- developing institutional identity and distinctiveness;
- communicating frequently and consistently;
- demonstrating added value;
- ongoing evaluation.



Key obstacles to brand development and reputation management: External barriers

- Temptation to compete on price
- Lack of distinctiveness
- Fragmented markets



Key obstacles to brand development and reputation management: Internal barriers

- Underdeveloped branding strategies
- Organizational resistance to innovation
- Pressure to become profitable

