

Marketing Practices of University of San Jose – Recoletos: Proposed Intervention Scheme

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of the current marketing practices of the University of San Jose – Recoletos and the degree of seriousness of the marketing problems encounter, and in order to design a strategic intervention scheme to improve and develop an appropriate marketing strategy by utilizing the descriptive survey method. Furthermore; it was able to determine the weak and strong areas of the current marketing practices. And designed a program that is suit to the problems, recommendations was also given to intensify itself against competition and maintain a good position in market place In spite of its success in school business.

The proposed program “Market Led Strategic Change” (MLSC) is designed to improve and sustain the capability of USJ-R in terms of marketing aspects, and strengthen the weak areas of the marketing style, specifically address those marketing problems the needs to be addressed, identify and design an appropriate intervention scheme to a certain marketing problem in order to stay attune in school business industry.

Keywords: Marketing strategies for business success, strategic change, market place position, marketing intervention

INTRODUCTION

In the midst’s of these difficulties such as financial crisis as well as competition, the school and colleges need to assess and revitalize themselves. They must realise the importance of marketing strategy in order to remain in business. They should adopt and improve their marketing style so that their staying power in the market place would be strengthened. Especially needed is the analysis of the four factors such as product, price, place, and promotion.

Marketing helps to identify new markets, target new customers and determine the value of the product. If the product that is currently in production does not have a substantial customer base of support, if sales are slipping and competition is securing your former market share. Marketing helps to identify the need for a product revitalization or reinvention.

The analysis of this so called 4 P’s in marketing is very important because through this the institution would be able to identify the factors that lead to customer satisfaction and make action for the improvement of the said factors, Thus marketing is not only a way to build product-customer but as a way to create sustained and satisfying relationship between organization and all stakeholders.

Branding and marketing are syllabus standard in business school, but sometimes school leaders do not apply those principles when marketing their own school. There is actually a great deal that is taught in business schools that should be taught to business school. (Mathew 2009)

Ramota (2009) said that higher education in the Philippines since time immemorial has been shaped by social realities and aspirations. Its philosophical orientation has been largely influenced by the pursuit of knowledge for the achievement of social needs and national goals. For many decades, the big challenge to higher education has been the issue the recurring problem of inefficiency, poor quality and lack of access and equity.

Breivick (2006) emphasized that private institution depends on student tuition for the large proportion of their income and seeks to establish a niche in a highly competitive and expanding market place. They exist at all levels of the academic hierarchy, although most of growth seems to be at the bottom, it is important to understand their realities and complexities.

Casas (2005) conducted a study marketing strategies of passion cebu company: basis for a proposed improvement program. His findings revealed in the area of sales and promotion, the strategies utilized by firm were generally rated to be effective except for conceiving of various sales promotion schemes and obtaining trial purchases from customers through free samples and as for pricing, the firm schemes were evaluated to be generally very effective and relevant to the objectives of the firm. And in the event sponsorship activities were likely ranked to be effective except for information dissemination, placing of advertising materials like brochure, flyers and others in a visible place during a specific affairs. With regards to product endorsement, the strategies employed by passion cebu were perceived to be very effective too.

Kibir (2002) conducted a study on the marketing strategies, Total quality management practices and customer relations techniques of Liteshipping Corporation: Basis for a human resources development program. Her findings revealed that as indicated by the result of the fisher's t- test there were no significant differences between the perception of the employees and those of the customers regarding the effectiveness of the marketing strategies used by the company in the life cycle of services, the extent to which the company practiced total quality management in serving its customers, and the extent to which the company established wholesome relationship customer of various psychographic characteristics.

Umbao (2005) conducted a study on risk management, service quality and marketing schemes of selected travel agencies in cebu: bases for an improvement program. His findings revealed that the respondents agreed that the agencies conducted market segmentation by dividing their marketing into client groups with various need, characteristics or behaviour. Likewise the respondents also agreed that market targeting was also adopted by the travel agencies whereby the latter evaluated each market segment's attractiveness and selecting one or more segments to enter. And in the area of market positioning was used whereby the agencies arranged for a particular travel to occupy a clear, distinctive and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of their targeted consumers.

In this view an examination of these four factors needs to be undertaken by the University of San Jose – Recoletos. In spite of its success in school business. The researcher found out that the competition in the academe and related business is increasing and the researcher found that the current marketing management practice of University of San Jose - Recoletos is not so aggressive in terms of product, price, place, and promotion. As experience some of their programs namely college of nursing, college of information computer and communication technology and teachers college of education are decreasing their enrolment etc. so there is still a need to cushion, improve, enhance, and intensify itself against competition and maintain a good position and image in the market place for a better opportunity. For this, this study will be conducted.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to examine directly the marketing practices, the researcher adopted the 4 P’s in marketing mix such as product, price, place, and promotion. For a proper evaluation using the questionnaire there were two groups of respondents namely; administrators and full-time faculty, with the total of 134 and were equally divided in to different departments and offices. Using the two sets of questionnaire, the respondents were assigned to assess the degree of effectiveness of the current marketing practices, and the degree seriousness of the problem encounter of the University of San Jose – Recoletos. The respondents of the study was the school administrators and comprises of the priest or the religious administrators such as (school President, VP - Finance, VP – Academic, VP – Students Welfare, VP – Religious Affair, VP – Property Administrator). Another one was the Lay administrators such as Deans and chairpersons of different colleges and directors of different departments of the University of San Jose – Recoletos.

The second group comprised of full-time permanent faculty members of different colleges of the university. They were chosen by the researcher as respondents because they spend most of their time in the university and the researcher believed that since they been staying for so many years in USJ-R and they know already the problems existed furthermore they know some areas that need to improve, in which the researcher believe they can give exact insights about the study. The outside part-time teachers are not included since they spend their time in the university after 5:00 o’clock in the afternoon and even on Saturdays. The new faculty are also not included because they are just new in the organization and their knowledge about the school operation is insufficient.

Table 1 shows the total number of school administrators and full-time permanent faculty members of the University who are the respondents of the study.

Table 1. Respondents of the Study

<i>Departments / Offices</i>	<i>ADMINISTRATOR</i>		<i>Full-Time Faculty</i>	
	<i>Religious</i>	<i>Lay</i>	<i>Faculty</i>	<i>Total</i>
President office	1			1
VP-Academic	1			1
VP- Business & Finance	1			1
VP- Student Welfare	1			1
VP- Religious Affair	1			1
Property custodian Head	1			1
Arts and Sciences		4	40	44
Engineering		5	23	28
Nursing		2	5	7
Commerce		4	24	28
CICCT		2	10	12
Teacher's College		3	6	9
Total		26	108	134

Research Instrument

The researcher made questionnaires that were used in this study as the main instrument of data collection. The questionnaire were divided into two parts. Part I contains question to elicit responses regarding the respondents perception on the effectiveness of adaptation of the marketing practices with regards the four parameter such as Products, Price, Place, and Promotion. Each statement is followed by a number of indicators corresponding to each scale indicator is the numerical scales with the following qualitative interpretation.

Scale	Effectiveness	Interpretation
4.	Very Effectiveness	When the practice contribute the attainment of the marketing objectives in all cases.
3.	Effective	When the practice contribute the attainment of the marketing objectives in majority of the cases.
2.	Less Effective	When the practice contribute the attainment of the marketing objectives in some cases.
1.	Not Effective	When the practice does not contribute to attainment of the marketing objectives.

Part II dealt with the degree of seriousness of the problems encounter with regards the four parameter such as Products, Price, Place, and Promotion. Each statement is followed by a number of indicators corresponding to each scale indicator is the numerical scales with the following qualitative interpretation.

Scale	Seriousness	Interpretation
4.	Very Serious	Means that the problem hinders the attainment of the marketing objective in all cases.
3.	Serious	Means that the problem hinders the attainment of the Marketing objectives in majority of the cases.
2.	Less Serious	Means that the problem hinders the attainment of the marketing objective in few cases.
1.	Not Serious	Means that the problem has no effect on the attainment of the marketing objective in all cases.

The respondents are requested to encircle the number that best corresponds to their answer.

For accuracy and precise interpretation and analysis of the findings, the following statistical tools were used:

Mean. This were used to determine the extent of marketing management practices if the University of San Jose – Recoletos as assessed by the administrators and full-time faculty. The formula is presented below:

Where:
$$\mu = \frac{\sum fX}{n}$$

 μ = weighted mean

Σ = Summation

f = the number of responses under each scale

X = the weight assigned to each scale

N = Number of respondents

t-test for Independent groups. The null hypothesis was tested by means of the Fisher's T-test of differences between two groups of respondents was use. The following formula was applied:

$$t = \frac{M_1 - M_2}{\sqrt{\frac{\Sigma X_1^2 + \Sigma X_2^2}{N_1 + (N_i - 1)}}$$

$df = N_i - 1$

where:

t = t- Test for two independent samples

M_1 = mean of the fist group

M_1 = Mean of the second group

Σ = Summation

X_1 = standard deviation of the first group

X_2 = standard deviation of the second group

N_i = number of pairs of indicators compared

SUMMARIZED INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Summarized Data on the Effectiveness of the Marketing Practicess

Table 2 contains the summarized data on the effectiveness of the marketing practices adopted by the University of San Jose – Recoletos based on the 4 P's of marketing mix – place, promotion, product and price. The general mean of 3.16 taken from the group mean of 3.24 for the administrators and 3.14 from the faculty of the various colleges revealed that the practices were rated to be generally effective.

Specially in the area of place, the location of the school was considered effective ($\mu=2.93$) considering its nearness to business establishments and dormitories as well as its accessibility to various mode of transportation.

The factor mean of 3.00 likewise indicated that the promotion strategies used by the school were deemed to be effective in communicating and increasing awareness of the program offerings, achievements and activities of the university and stimulating a positive response from the targeted market.

In term of the product, the programs offered by the university were viewed to be very effective ($\mu=3.42$) in meeting industry, trade and government requirements. Furthermore, all the courses were given due recognition by commission on higher education (CHED) and are recognized by various accrediting organizations.

Lastly the price, the marketing practices related to this factor were likewise assessed to be very effective ($\mu=3.30$). it can be gathered from this findings that the price levels of the services and products offered by the school were at par with its competitors.

Table 2. Summarized data on the effectiveness of the Marketing Practices of USJ-R n=134

Indicators	Aministrators		Faculty		Total	
	μ	Int.	μ	Int.	μ	Int.
1. Place	3.09	E	2.89	E	2.93	E
2. Promotion	2.99	E	3	E	3	E
3. Product	3.99	VE	3.4	VE	3.42	VE
4. Price	3.4	VE	3.27	VE	3.3	VE
Grand Mean	3.24	E	3.14	E	3.16	E

Legend:	<u>Range</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>
	3.26 - 4.00	Very Effective (VE)
	2.51 - 3.25	Effective (E)
	1.76 - 2.50	Less Effective (LE)
	1.00 - 1.75	Not Effective (NE)

Summarized Data on the Seriousness of the Marketing Problems

Table 3 contains the summarized data on the seriousness of the marketing problems confronting the University of San Jose – recoletos as assesses by the administrators and its faculty. As revealed by the general mean of 2.72 taken from the group mean of 2.63 from the administrators and 2.77 from the faculty, the problems encounter by the school were generally observed to be serious.

Specifically, the marketing problems related to place were noted to be serious as can be gleaned from the factor mean of 2.74 this indicates that although the school was viewed to be generally accessible, yet there were certain place components within the campus that need to be addressed to improve the place factor of the university.

Regarding promotion, the marketing problems related to this metric were likewise deemed to be serious as shown by the factor mean of 2.86 the findings showed that there was a need for the school to enhance it operating activities to sustain its competitive advantage on the unique features of the school’s strengths and capabilities.

The factor mean of 2.70 indicated that for marketing problems associated with product these were also assessed to be serious. The program offerings, facilities, as well as the teacher’s competencies in handling certain subject were viewed to be inadequate to meet the ever growing demands of the studentry and industry.

Lastly, for price related marketing problems, the factor mean of 2.67evidence the fact that there were serious problems related to this factor. The administrators needs to revisit the various cost components and fees charged by the school by comparing it with the other

academic institute are charging to ensure that the fees are affordable and at par with other institution of higher learning.

Table 3. Summarized Data on the Seriousness of the Marketing Problems in USJ-R n = 134

Indicators	Administrators		Faculty		Total	
	μ	Int.	μ	Int.	μ	Int.
1. Place	2.63	S	2.76	S	2.74	S
2. Promotion	2.75	S	2.89	S	2.86	S
3. Products	2.63	S	2.71	S	2.7	S
4. Price	2.5	VS	2.71	S	2.67	S
Grand Mean	2.63	S	2.77	S	2.72	S

Legend:	Range	Interpretation
	3.26 - 4.00	Very Serious (VS)
	2.51 - 3.25	Serious (S)
	1.76 - 2.50	Less Serious (LS)
	1.00 - 1.75	Not a Problem (NP)

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The accomplished questionnaires retrieved were subjected to interpretations with the following findings:

1. The effectiveness of the marketing practices adopted by the University of San Jose – Recoletos based on the four P’s of marketing mix was assessed as follows:
 - 1.1 In terms of places, the marketing practices were rated to be generally effective.
 - 1.2 In the area of promotion, the marketing practices were viewed to be generally effective.
 - 1.3 In the fact pertaining to product, the marketing practices were likewise assessed to be effective
 - 1.4 With regards to price, the marketing practices were evaluated to be effective.
2. The seriousness of the problems pertaining to the marketing practices anchored on the four P’s was viewed as follows:
 - 2.1 The problems pertaining to place were regarded to be generally serious.
 - 2.2 The problems relating to promotion were rated to be serious.
 - 2.3 The problems regarding product were also assessed to be serious.
 - 2.4 The problems concerning price were also evaluated to serious.
3. The results of the Fisher’s t- test of mean differences between the responses of two groups revealed that:
 - 3.1 There were no significant differences between the assessment of the administrators and those of the faculty regarding the effectiveness of the marketing practices adopted by the University of San Jose – Recoletos base on the four P’s of marketing.

- 3.2 There were no significant differences between the evaluation needed by the administrators and those of the faculty concerning the seriousness of the problems related to the four P's of marketing practices utilized by USJ-R.
4. Base on the findings of the study, the researcher design a program entitled “Market Lead Strategic Change (MLSC)” which comprise a series of strategic schemes design to improve the marketing practices of the University of San Jose – Recoletos.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that although the marketing practices utilized by the University of San Jose – Recoletos were generally assessed to be effective based on the four P's marketing, yet there are serious problem associated with such practices that needs to be corrected or addressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the context of the findings of the study, the proponent advances the following recommendations.

Primary Recommendation

That the administrator of the USJ-R consider for implementation of the strategic schemes of the program Market Led Strategic Change' (MLSC).

Secondary Recommendation

That the administrator together with the other stakeholders will draw up individual department marketing plans to be consolidated into an institutionalized market plan on an annual basis anchored on the findings of the market research done, further that the annual market research must done per college to determine the market trends, threats and opportunities, this scheme shall be conducted by a core group of people in each department, the data which will be consolidated and submitted to the school board for perusal and deliberation.

Further Recommendations

Studies which future researchers may wish to conduct are recommend. They are the following:

1. Marketing Management in USJ-R a Strategic Decision Making Approach: Basis for Administration
2. Market Driven Program Development in Selected Universities and Colleges in Cebu: Proposed Alternative
3. Service Marketing in a School Setting: Basis for an Intervention Scheme

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