

Book Reviews/Comptes Rendus

Hayes, T. L. (editor). *New Strategies in Higher Education Marketing*. Binghamton, New York: The Haworth Press, 1991, pp. ix, 181. Reviewed by Michael Hatton, Assistant Principal, Lakeshore Campus, Humber College.

This series of twelve papers, bound in a slim volume, was edited by Thomas Hayes of Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. Selecting them from more than forty refereed papers delivered at a symposium on marketing in higher education, Hayes describes them as "the best" (p. ix). The articles are grouped in four categories: strategy, research and promotion, enrollment services, and development. The contrast in the papers is substantial: significant enough to conclude that Hayes worked hard to achieve this degree of heterogeneity.

Several papers introduce and examine basic research techniques, while other papers are largely descriptive in nature, focusing on practices or programs at specific institutions. Contrasted with these are papers that present findings from research studies.

Although much of the information contained in several of the papers in this book is quite basic, it may serve as an interesting introduction to those who lack familiarity with marketing in the higher education context (though they may come away less than impressed with the demonstrated rigour and depth). Beyond the very basic papers, the articles by Goldgehn, Sekely and Yates, and Kraus are interesting and valuable both for theoretical researchers and for those who have a more applied interest in the marketing of higher education. Following is a brief examination of two papers selected from each section.

Strategy Papers

The first paper, titled "Opportunistic Marketing," describes the process whereby a group of Admissions and Financial Aid personnel promoted the development of a marketing ethos, the use of marketing techniques in student recruitment, and the adoption of strategic planning at a regional campus of the University of Pittsburgh. Key activities included: using the American College Testing Program's surveys to gather data from prospective students, incoming freshmen, non-matriculating students, enrolled students, withdrawing students, and

alumni; and developing an Admissions Marketing Plan, detailing strengths and weaknesses along with goals and action plans. The authors of this paper, Thomas Wonders and James Gyure, freely admit that the “opportunistic marketing model”, as represented in the paper, suffers from simplicity. They also argue, however, that simplicity is the strength of the model, encouraging broad adoption and wide application. Beyond the model, the paper is a case study, and to some degree a blueprint, detailing the method whereby a few people with a strong sense of purpose and a strategic plan had a significant influence on a large organization.

“Are U.S. Colleges and Universities Applying Marketing Techniques Properly and Within the Context of an Overall Marketing Plan?” by Leslie Goldgehn, reports on a survey of College Registrars and Admissions Officers that gathered data on the impressions that this group had with regard to the use and effectiveness of a variety of marketing techniques. The findings are more interesting for the fact that Goldgehn compared the data gathered in this 1988 study with the results of an earlier study (J.C. Blackburn’s, *Marketing Techniques Used by Admissions Officers*, an Ed.D. dissertation completed at Indiana University). Thus we see that, although the relative degree to which various marketing techniques are used has not seen great change, the absolute degree to which the techniques are used has increased substantially. Anomalies are also noted. For example, Goldgehn highlights the fact that target marketing is reportedly used at more than 90% of the institutions, yet market segmentation, a precursor to target marketing, is used at fewer than 78% of the schools. Although greater clarification regarding Goldgehn’s use of statistics, particularly in the area of comparing “effectiveness ratings” (see pp. 47–48), would be useful, this paper provides an interesting comparative snapshot of one group’s impressions regarding the use of marketing techniques in higher education. A similar study, examining the Canadian context, would be an interesting and valuable addition to the literature.

Research and Promotion Papers

The first paper in this section, by Robert Cope and George Delaney, is titled “Academic Program Review: A Market Strategy Perspective”. The paper contends that most academic review programs are self-assessments aimed at ensuring minimum standards of quality, something quite different from strategically oriented reviews that scrutinize the qualities which give rise to competitive advantage in the marketplace. Although the authors do not choose to make much of them, it is worth noting that strategic reviews, almost by definition, include robust quality assessments. This paper first identifies and discusses four

criteria to be used for rating academic programs and support services, then, by means of a case, describes how the ratings can be used to assist with the establishment of priorities and with decision making. The matrices are interesting and include a nice blend of theory and practical application.

“Multiple Positions for an Academic Institution: A Factor Analysis Approach”, by William Sekely and Rebecca Yates, relies on a case study to describe how factor analysis can be used to segment a market for the purpose of designing marketing programs aimed at targeted segments. In contrast to many reports of quantitative studies, these authors present their findings in a straightforward and highly readable fashion. The factor analysis applied to public versus private high school students is particularly interesting, indirectly describing how institutions that have proceeded directly to target marketing, without the benefit of effectively examining and segmenting the market (see Goldgehn’s paper, described earlier), could implement a more systematic and effective approach to marketing.

Enrollment Services Papers

Sandra Schmidt’s paper, titled “The Enrollment Challenge for Business Schools: An Alumni View”, describes the results of a survey of alumni from an undergraduate Business School. The survey was designed to collect data on the alumni’s perceptions of skills developed by the business program, the strengths and weaknesses of the business program, and the alumni’s expectations of the program and level of satisfaction. The data showed strong support among the alumni for the school and the program, and highlighted several curricular issues. As it stands, the paper is a brief overview of one element of a standard approach to program review, sampling alumni perceptions. Somewhat surprising, particularly for a marketing symposium, the paper does not inform the reader as to how the data were used, which, had it been included, would have been the most interesting element of the paper.

“Enrollment Management: The Model, the Manager and the Message” by Jan Jantzen is a brief paper that argues for two developments in recruitment and retention strategies: first, thinking of recruitment and retention as one continuous process rather than two separate functions; and second, shifting more college resources to support the “front end” of students’ careers. Jantzen’s plea is based on a theme readily recognized by student services personnel: “Freshmen park in the next county, carry gym bags back and forth because lockers are taken, get their bills processed last, eat at undesirable times and are last on every list of who-gets-what. Is it any wonder that some go home for the

weekend and never return?" (p. 138). Further discussion related to why this state of affairs continues, and will in all likelihood continue to exist, would be valuable.

Development Papers

"Factors and Strategies Which Influence the Marketing of Successful Fund Raising Programs in Small Private Colleges", by Ronald Kraus, describes a research study that examined the demographics, opinions and financial giving history of alumni from three, small, Catholic liberal arts colleges in the north-eastern United States. The goal of the study was to identify and assess the strength of selected independent variables that could be used to predict the giving behaviour of alumni. Kraus concluded that the predictors used in this study were "weak to moderate for the most part" (p. 159). Notwithstanding the fact that the findings did not identify strong relationships between any of the independent variables and giving behaviour, the study is interesting for its approach, including the use of multivariate analysis and the fact that the sample was composed entirely of women. The major weakness of the paper is the lack of detailed information on the statistical analysis and questionnaire. Though space is an obvious limitation in a publication of this nature, this paper needed greater detail.

The final paper in the book, by Hayes, the editor, is titled "Up the Organization". In three pages, Hayes argues that in most universities and colleges there is "no relationship between the office of institutional advancement and enrollment management or planning" (p. 179), and then proposes an organizational model that addresses this issue.

A recurring theme in the book, and restated by Hayes in his paper, is the fact that "marketing has such negative connotations within educational circles that it is avoided like the plague" (p. 178). It would be interesting to see this point further developed, preferably with an analytical flavour. Perhaps, as implied in the first paper, it is time for higher education marketers to do a better job of marketing marketing. As it stands, marketing in most not-for-profit organizations is a relatively new activity, not well understood or studied; and, although graduate business schools typically offer a marketing course aimed at not-for-profits, graduate departments of education continue to steer well away from what many involved with teaching and learning still describe as a philistine activity.