ATLANTIS PRESS

Using Information and Communication Technologies in University Marketing: Local Features

Babaitsev A.V.* Mikova E.A. Kosyanenko E.V. Podoprigora A.S.

[1] *Don State Technical University (DSTU), Department of "History and cultural studies", Rostov-on-Don, Russia*
Corresponding author. Email: we20041@yandex.ru

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the article is to highlight the current local trends in the use of information and communication technologies in University marketing against the backdrop of a rapidly changing economic, political and social situation both in the world and in the field of education. Objectively considering information and communication technologies, it is important to highlight their specifics at different stages of use and with certain competence-based approaches. Improving the educational process is impossible without the development of information and communication technologies. The level of professional competence of the teaching staff and work with new systems, programs, expanding the possibility of distance learning for inclusive students, and other audiences that are remote from universities that need higher education also depend on the process being considered. The use of information and communication technologies is not only a modern way of University development, but also an intensification of its work to attract new audiences.It is an important component of market requirements, opportunities for prospective employment, and the expansion of international and communication ties of each subject who has received higher education. An empirical study of local aspects of the use of information and communication technologies in higher education was conducted on the basis of two universities in Rostov-on-don, as well as in the reference groups of the authors of the article, while the prerogatives in expanding the use of information and communication technologies in local universities were highlighted. The results of the research were discussed and analyzed by the authors of the article among the teaching staff and students of local universities, at webinars and through online discussions. Situational confirmation of the effectiveness or inefficiency of the introduction and use of information and communication technologies in higher education was the period of remote work associated with COVID-19.

Keywords: *information and communication technologies, the local aspect, higher educational institution, marketing activities in education, intensification*

1. INTRODUCTION

The relevance of this issue is confirmed by numerous discussions both in the publications of domestic authors and in the world practice of using information and communication technologies (ICT) in the educational process of higher education institutions.

Back in the late 90's, when the Internet began to be used as a channel for interactive acquisition of a large array of information in the educational process of universities, it became possible and effective to work with available materials, process and transform them to solve current problems. Neither Central nor regional universities were ready for the technical implementation of specialized programs that help all subjects of the educational process interact interactively. However, progress has led universities to test the latest technologies in the educational process and become familiar with modern trends in the use of ICT.

Today, the introduction of information and communication technologies is so advanced that no University can fully carry out its professional activities without prolonged use of them.

The effectiveness or inefficiency of the use of information and communication technologies in the marketing activities of the University, despite the versatile coverage of the topic for all participating subjects, remains quite complex, ambiguous and not fully studied. Thus, in the scientific publications of recent years cited in this article, O.V. Saginova, O.N. Mirgorodskaya, N.A. Dadayan, A.N. Legkonogikh, AV. Bronin, M.M. Krishtal, G.A. Mavlyutova, and others, focus on the use of information and communication technologies in the educational process as an integral part of the classroom work of faculty and students, as well as on General approaches to the

formation of curricula, work programs, etc., which ensures the educational process.

Another approach is highlighted in the works of A.G. Bezpalova, I. Yashkov, G.A. Shabanov, D.V. Rastiagaev, which is more related to improving the educational process through the active introduction of ICT and the versatile use of digital communication tools in the overall activities of the University. It is also obvious that the authors emphasize the marketing aspect of the work of each University, which is put at the head of competitiveness, expanding the educational sphere of influence and raising the professional status of the University among competitors.

If the introduction of ICT in local markets became noticeable only in the late 90s, then in the Central regions, as noted in their article G.A. Shabanov, D.V. Rastiagaev (2020), "... since the mid-1980s, information and communication technologies have been actively introduced into the practice of University management and organization of the educational process … " [1, p. 2]. As a result, these authors put digitalization in the first place, and extended intra-University ICT opportunities remain in the background.

"The marketing activities of the University, based on the use of information and communication technologies, should come to the attention of those market participants who previously did not plan to get acquainted with the educational programs of the University ..." [2]. The University should become an attractive digital market entity, a participant in global digitalization and integration into the fundamental trends of modern education.

A practical view on the use of information and communication technologies is presented in the study of foreign authors Blake J., Christodoulou D., James C., Hassey N., Hendrick C.H.,Sahlgren G. (2016-2017), which is relevant to the present time, and against the background of recent world events justifies the need for expanded implementation of information and communication technologies in education in different countries [3].

Thus, the research tasks include in-depth study of the use of ICT in the educational process, from the implementation of curricula and work programs to the development of such areas of higher education as inclusive education, social, public, research and, ultimately, marketing activities.

2. OBJECT OF RESEARCH

Timely preparation, development and implementation of information and communication technologies allowed local universities to gradually and consciously come to understand the importance and necessity of integrating all marketing tools to intensify not only the technological, but also the intellectual, professional and, ultimately, economic base of the University.

In this sense, marketing is a fairly developed area of economic activity of the University and is reflected not only in working with internal audiences, but also with external entities of the educational market. A special

feature of this is the use of information and communication technologies for the formation of the corporate image of the University, as well as attracting an increasing number of applicants, patrons, sponsors, media, etc.

Information and communication technologies activate the marketing of higher education institutions and contribute to the differentiation of individual areas into component parts, more precisely, they do not reduce the educational process to a single reproduction, broadcasting and standardization, but divide it according to the needs and requests of all subjects of higher education. First of all, the educational process itself receives a vector of development, condensing and filtering out those negative elements of University marketing that are not currently a priority.

The article considers the negative elements of University marketing in the following context: commercialization of education, oversaturation of irrelevant competencies that are not regulated in the format of a separate work program, lack of financial and material base for equipping the University with information and communication technologies.

Referring to the concept of "information and communication technologies of the University", we emphasize that this is information support, supported by communications that are provided technically and technologically. In the original version, this is the use of information available on all University resources in marketing work in order to optimize the communication process and transfer information through all its channels, technically and technologically verified and configured for target audiences. As mentioned, the University audience is divided into internal and external, differently configured to contact this market entity.

"In the context of globalization and integration of all world processes, education also acquires an international character, which directly affects the digitalization of universities, the accumulation of many years of experience and skills in implementing digital communications and technologies to improve the quality of the educational product ..." [4, p.122].An identical approach was defined at the forum "Vuzpromexpo" (Moscow, 2019), in which "… all digital solutions that are being implemented in the field of higher education should be built on the basis of solving specific issues and situations that teachers and students face. Only in this case, digitalization of universities will be useful for all participants in the educational process ..." [5].

Some authors insist on the following wording: "... University marketing is an activity (of its personnel and specialized departments) aimed at identifying, creating and satisfying educational and other needs of society, the state, organizations and individuals in various types of products and services of the University through commodity and monetary exchange in the relevant markets ... " [6, p.89].However, this concept of University marketing literally duplicates the concept of marketing from the point of view of, for example, Philip Kotler. As a result, it is

difficult to assume that in the modern educational world such a view is applied to actual University practice.

The modern practice of using ICT in marketing activities of the University has been described several times. However, University marketing, from the authors ' point of view, is a rather flexible and ambiguous concept due to the specifics of educational services themselves as a rapidly changing product of promotion. Because of this, even the use of information and communication technologies can't lead to a balance of market trends, demand for education, the requirements of a new formation of students and the University's capabilities as a conglomerate of the General economic market.

3. METHODS

Research method-testing (test sheet in two copies for teaching staff and students). The period is March 2020. Participants – teaching staff and students. The representative sample was 16/172 people.

The testing format is open-ended questions with correlated answer options for both groups. Testing was equal in the number and quality of questions, and was conducted by the authors of the article in a local University, remotely, via the chat of the educational resource Model.

Let's consider the range of characteristics of the use of ICT in University marketing for five specified points.

1. University marketing is (University lecturer): work with applicants, work with parents, work with graduates, schools, colleges, and community groups.

University marketing is (student youth): work with students; software; social potential; creative life; research activities; modern curricula; international education; mass media.

2. University marketing should (University lecturer): increase the number of students; form a positive corporate image; form a favorable external image of the University.

University marketing should (students): develop international education; develop international programs; conduct research; create a favorable image of the University; implement SMM and SEO.

3. University marketing is the responsibility of (University teachers): faculty; University management; public relations and communications specialist; students; business environment; society.

University marketing is the responsibility (student youth) of: faculty; student communities; University marketing Department; public figures; business environment.

4. University marketing includes (University teachers): innovative education; information and communication technologies; new educational standards; the latest work programs; technical equipment.

Marketing of the University includes (students): innovative and popular education; employment; social activities; introduction of new technologies, computerization and digitalization of the University; development of new specialties.

5. University marketing integrates (University teachers): technical innovations; software; material base; educational potential; commercial activities; public work; research activities; global libraries; databases.

University marketing integrates (students): interactive communications; distance learning; research; education; business environment; media communications; external and internal image of the University; management; advertising and PR.

The respondents either had to select the set parameters or enter their own characteristics for each item. Then a matrix of intersecting characteristics was created.

The use of information and communication technologies in University marketing has an ambiguous approach on the part of the analyzed subjects of the University, but there is an intersection between them, although not obvious.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

From the set of responses from teachers and students, we will highlight the intersection of characteristics of University marketing based on the use of ICT (table 1).

Table 1 Intersecting characteristics of University marketing in the use of ICT, Rostov-on-don, March 2020

Testquestion	Total number of characteristics (teachers)	Total number of characteristics (students)	Intersection of characteristics, for both groups
1. Marketing of the University is…	5	8	0
2. The marketing of the University should…	3	5	2
3. The marketing of the University is the responsibility of …	6	5	2
4. The marketing of the University includes...	5	6	3
5. The marketing of the University integrates…	9	10	0

It should be noted that each question in the test had its own variants for a separate group, in addition to those developed by the authors of the article. The table summarizes the options presented only from the point of

view of teaching staff and students, without integrating the author's options. This is done in order to reflect the importance of using information and communication technologies in University marketing and to indicate how respondents assess the penetration of ICT in the educational process of the University, in its General professional and / or social activities.

As a result, it was found that only 7 variants of responses can indicate a direct or indirect intersection. Therefore, for all other issues, it is necessary to develop a new marketing strategy of the University and find a consensus on the use of ICT that would suit all subjects of the educational process of the local University.

5. DISCUSSION

The author's vision of University marketing is based on the fact that it is an activity aimed at interacting with important market players who are interested not only in educational services, but also in the social significance of the University, its professional competence, culture, socialization and status, which together makes a certain, including economic, contribution to the life of the region. However, the localization of marketing activities of the University limits the functions and tasks, which, as a rule, consist only in "... focusing on informing potential consumers of educational services, the main segments of the consumer market, the target audience of the University ... " [7, p.2].

We have highlighted another narrow approach, and it was also discussed during the webinar. Thus, in the presentation of A. Bronin (2018), the use of ICT in the University's activities is: "... project, simulation, algorithmic, case – based technologies, distance and Internet-oriented, adaptive learning system technologies and others in the same aspect ..." [8]. There is no direct analogy between marketing, management, and University development – but only the way to use information and communication technologies as a tool for implementing educational programs. But this is unambiguous and not promising, as well as utopian for local universities, which are still on the verge of "information and communication hunger".

M.M. Krishtal's explanation (2019) is close enough to the author's belief that "... the level of digitalization in Russian universities is very different. Universities strive to build up these competencies and pool resources to improve their competitiveness. However, there are still no common standards for connecting data and services, and this seriously hinders the development of ... "[9].

We believe that the market of educational services should be built not in the direction of what is dictated "from above", without taking into account the specifics of demand for educational services, but in the context of what can make up the future of student youth, who in a clearly defined period of their life is an active consumer of «University products». This implies the entire range of University services, from educational and scientific activities to social life.

The same is emphasized by O.V. Saginova, "... an important customer (buyer and consumer) of educational services is the society itself, most often represented by the state, which sets its own requirements and standards aimed not only at training professionals of the necessary qualifications, but also to meet the needs of an individual in intellectual, cultural and moral development ..." [10].

In this regard, the role of marketing activities of the University becomes so significant that it is important to activate all its areas – from marketing research to planning and implementing communications with all audiences.

It is obvious that local universities do not have a fundamental basis for implementing full-scale marketing activities in the aspect of educational services, which is identical to the experience that has been accumulated for decades in relation to material products. Educational services are still intangible in many cases products that do not have a constant quality, despite the standards and curricula, do not have the quality of full ownership of the educational service on the part of all subjects involved in the educational process.

It is possible that marketing research of the educational market today is of priority importance and universities use different methods and tools for their implementation, when through specialized programs it is possible not only to interview a mass audience geographically dispersed, but also to sum up the results of such research as quickly as possible.

Today, this function of University marketing has become even more important, when all subjects of the educational process, due to the special situation due to the coronavirus, are forced to interact in isolation, remotely, and find effective solutions to problems formed by time.

According to G. A. Mavlyutova, "... we should also pay attention to the most important expected result of using ICT in University marketing, such as increasing the efficiency of interaction between all departments. High-quality modernization of internal content is an integral element of the large-scale innovative transformations that are planned to be obtained from the outside ..." [11, p. 6].

Information and communication technologies allow you to track not only the progress of the educational process, but also to control the work of students, teaching staff, the quality of the resource, and this is a large array of information necessary for further improvement of the technical and intellectual resources of the University. The same is noted in the context of the use of marketing communications, which are currently moving to digital tools that are available to all participants in the educational process.

Since the research results were obtained remotely, the discussion process was held in the format of a webinar, which, on the one hand, emphasized the relevance of using information and communication technologies in the University, on the other, determined the prospects for working on the shortcomings that the teaching staff and students identified.

Information and communication technologies in the marketing of a local University can be transformed "... both in depth and in width. The determinants that cause

significant changes in education form important and consistent transformations of the behavior of all subjects ..." [12, p. 6709], interacting in the educational process and other areas, including the commercial activities of a particular University.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Let's summarize the problematic features of using information and communication technologies by a local University:

- regressive introduction of new information and communication technology programs, that is, the development of programs occurs when they are technically and morally outdated;

- low level of teaching and learning of the teaching staff and students mastering current software products. The average indicator of a local University does not exceed 4 out of 10 expert points;

- the ambiguous approach of subjects of the educational process to the use of information and communication technologies in marketing at the University, in particular, the difference in views on the characteristics of marketing-from its definition to responsibility for its implementation.

Thus, in the course of the discussion the urgency of improving the use of information and communication technologies in marketing the local University, and proves to be most effective for all subjects of the educational process with the integration of the objective reasonable characteristics of marketing from the point of view of the faculty and students of the individual University.

REFERENCES

[1] G.A. Shabanov, D.V. Rastyagaev "Digitalization of higher education: reality and expectations" [Electronic text] // "Higher education today".2020. №1. pp. 2-7. Pdf.

[2] YaIshkov "11 strategies for marketing in higher education" (2019). Available at: https://business-planner.ru/articles/marketing/11-strategij-dlya-marketinga-v-sfere-vysshego-obrazovaniya-na-5.html?yclid=1445621835230648430

[3] J. Blake, D. Christodoulou, C. James, N. Hassey, C. Hendrick, H. Sahlgren G. Annual research digest 2016-2017: Evidence on uses of technology in education. Available at: https://learningportal.iiep.unesco.org/en/library/annual-research-digest-2016-2017-evidence-on-uses-of-technology-ineducation

[4] A.G. Bezpalova, O.N. Mirgorodskaya, N.A. Dadayan, A.N. Legkonogikh "Digital communications-the dominant educational process in regional universities" // "Modern knowledge-intensive technologies". 2019. N 9. pp. 122-125.

[5] A. Schwindt "The Ministry of education and science: the digitalization of universities should be based on real problems of students" (2019) [The electronic text]. Available at: https://tass.ru/obschestvo/7326803

[6] S.I. Nedelko, A.V. Ostashkov "Marketing of the University as a tool for its sustainable development" // "Power". 2012. №12. Available at: https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/marketing-vuza-kak-instrument-ego-ustoychivogo-razvitiya

[7] D.A. Shevchenko "Marketing activities of the University: structure, management and content" // "Practical marketing". 2013. № 9 (199). pp. 2-14.

[8] A.V. Bronin"Digital University – University of the future". [The electronic text]. Available at: https://softline.ru/uploads/f/ba/d4/25/c1/79/36/6b/ad/98/tsifrovoy-vuz. pdf

[9] M.M. Krishtal (2019) "The new reality of education: what is a digital University today" [Electronic text]. Available at: https://na.ria.ru/20190722/1556704299.html

[10] O.V. Saginova "Marketing of higher education: basic concepts, new trends and prospects". Available at: https://www.marketologi.ru/publikatsii/stati/marketing-vysshego-obrazovanija-osnovnye-ponjatija-novye-tendentsii-i-perspektivy/

[11] G.A. Mavlyutova "Digitalization in modern higher education institutions" [Electronic text] // IBR. 2018. №3 (32). Available at: https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/tsifrovizatsiya-v-sovremennom-vysshem-uchebnom-zavedenii

[12] A.G.Bezpalova, E.A. Mikova, O.V. Ivanchenko, A.S. Podoprigora, I.V. Popova (2019). Proceedings of the 33rd International Business Information Management Association Conference – Vision 2020: Sustainable Economic Development and Application of Innovation Management from Regional expansion to Global Growth, 10-11 April 2019, Granada, Spain. pp. 6706-6413.