

ANALYSIS OF PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

EVA TÓBLOVÁ

Comenius University in Bratislava

3 Moskovská St., 813 34, Bratislava, Slovakia

toblova@fedu.uniba.sk

Abstract. *Schools require a plan before communicating out information. They must make sure that there are enough resources invested in communication streams. Time, energy and personnel should be ensured so that they do not negatively impact communication streams. IMC can reap rewards in two ways, firstly by avoiding communication/branding issues for the school, and second by making sure that a consistent message is always sent out. Most effective strategies for promoting schools are public relations, direct marketing and advertising and partly personal marketing. Primary schools used to promote school activities such as open day, various events and performances for the public and parents. These promotional activities are part of the public relations marketing communication. An important element became even school website. However, there can be assigned to work with the public, to direct marketing to advertise and personal marketing. This paper deals with research aimed at finding effective strategies used by primary school head teachers within school promotion. The main objective is to analyze the way of promotion, i.e. communication between the legal guardians of pupils and the school headmaster. Part of the objective is to establish effective strategies for schools to acquire potential customers. Our research problems were to determine how effective promotion strategies used schools to get as many customers. Effective strategies schools are perceived as a promotional nature school activities that school performed deliberately in order to obtain the largest possible number of customers. In the last part, this paper presents the research, the progress, and results, which was implemented in selected primary schools. This is a qualitative - quantitative research focused on the detection of successful strategies that schools use to acquire clients. Success in school depends largely on the method and the quality of its communications with the surroundings. Communication school should be directed to all school partners: potential, past and present. Well directed and performed communication helps schools meet it aims to serve as a tool of marketing mix and marketing communication*

Keywords: *marketing communication; promotion; educational market; costumer's school; elementary school.*

Introduction

The aim of the paper is to present the essence of marketing, the use of marketing and marketing strategies in primary schools. Legal guardians and schoolchildren have a choice of many interesting schools providing primary education, creating a competition between schools and are forced to compete for students. Success in this

struggle can be achieved thanks to appropriately chosen marketing strategy and communications with potential customers, who are parents and their children. Our task was to determine how effective are the promotional strategies used in primary schools for customer acquisition.

One of the ways to ensure the existence of a school is the use of marketing. Seek after answers to what are the desires and needs of customers and how to satisfy them and at the same time fulfilling the objectives of the school, is the essence of marketing in the school. One of the components of marketing is a marketing communication or promotion, which is focused on communication with the public, with current and potential customers (Prevot, 2015). We were interested in what methods of communication are used by primary schools for generating potential customers, what marketing strategies related to the promotion are the most effective and why. We also decided to examine, how effective these marketing strategies are, in fact, we asked the schools existing customers and their views on marketing communication with potential customers and its effectiveness.

This is an issue we are interested in because the marketing of primary schools is now becoming topical theme and subject, with which the teaching practice meets daily and must find ways to most effectively apply knowledge of marketing and marketing communications directly into practice, at the various primary schools. It is possible to say, that the survival and success of the school depend on the marketing communication. Each primary school should develop in this area considerable initiative, be familiar with how to effectively apply different marketing strategies that could attract new customers and also retain those, who they already have.

Marketing in education

With the ability to profile the primary school and the fact that customers are increasingly demanding and schools are trying to meet their needs, they arise in schools new items, hobby groups, and classes that can be considered as part of customer-orientated marketing. Such a marketing has to address only certain selected number of customers from the school. However, it is also the way they acquire potential customers who, through marketing communications (advertising), can learn about the school's activities.

By target oriented marketing from Světlík (2009), the school may choose two approaches for its implementation: a concentrated marketing where the school specialized in one or several segments and creating for them an educational program or differentiated marketing, where a school offers several different segments and different educational programs.

The educational market has an impact on the management of the primary school. If the school intends to succeed in the competition for a student, it is forced to choose marketing strategies that it moves to the forefront of the customer guarantee them sufficient information about the quality of service, additional services and exciting activities the school organizes. The school management, usually a director or manager of school (mainly the same person) must manage the school at a higher level, and

through marketing, however, can advertise their services and attract more customers bringing profit.

According to Světlík (2009, p.19) is a marketing school "management process that results in the recognition, influence and in the final phase of meeting the needs and wishes of the customers and the clients, which provides a means of school - effective manner while meeting the objectives of the school" It is a comprehensive marketing and operational definition of school that covers all key factors as constituting the essence of marketing and marketing education.

The education consists of marketing as a process demand - the needs and requirements of the customers and the role of the schools to provide them revealed through services; Service - granted on the basis of queries, serving on its fulfillment; price or value - fulfill customer wishes, but also the requirements of vendors; transaction - is the actual sale of services; educational market - the place where is a communication between the school and the customer.

The school, which is marketing-oriented, is characterized by certain features for which Obdržálek et al. (2004) are the following:

- continuous monitoring of the current and future needs of the target market, requiring the school to pay continual attention to customer care - students, parents, school partners and the market;
- systematic market research, which clarifies the issues on market size, his character, competition;
- qualified defining targets used for camping missions, tasks and mission of the school;
- consequent realization of the functions of the school;
- the innovation of all school activities and continuous improvement of every phenomenon and processes in order to provide quality and increasing;
- clarifying of the strategy for a long-term existence of the school - that can be rapidly offensive, which means being the best in the market, mildly offensive, which means be marketed well or retreat, or defensive, which means offer such a services which already other schools do not offer, but for a particular school it appear to be favorable;
- systematic monitoring and improving the image of the school, how the school is doing on the market, how the customers notice offered activities and require them, what the school has a reputation in your neighborhood;
- merging needs and interests of customers with the needs and interests of the school.

Success in the school depends largely on the method and the quality of its communications with the surroundings. Communication of the school should be directed to all school partners: potential, current and past. Well directed and performed communication helps the school meet its goals, what is it one of the tools of the marketing mix, the marketing communication (Eger et al, 2010).

Under the marketing communication in the school Světlík (2009, p.212) means "the systematic use of the principles and practices of the marketing elements in establishing, strengthening and deepening relations between the school and its customers". The school is using marketing communication with the public trying to promote their offer, which builds a positive image and strengthen its position in the education market.

On the mediation of advertising information are the communication channels in use, their choice is still a critical factor for advertising success. Choosing the right combination of media support is called the media mix and it is to keep in mind, that every medium has some advantages and disadvantages. The basic advertising media are printed advertising media, print, radio, TV, internet, outdoor advertising media and promotional materials (Pisoňová et al, 2014).

“The Internet is a common tool of the communication and is an effective mediator for advertisements and promotions. Typically, the advertisement uses e-mail, presentations or leaderboard ads (banner)” (Světlík, 2009, p.250). As we mentioned in the direct marketing, e-mail can be sent only to the partners of the school, who have requested it, otherwise, it can act as a promotional tool negative. Presentation of the school promotes on a website and mediate on it a lot of information. This is done not only on the own website but also on other, where is a link to the presentation. Leaderboard ads, added to frequently visited sites, that you reserve space for them, these ads contain substantial brief information and also a link to the website, on which the candidate learns more about the school.

Communication of the public schools today is unconditional. First, it provides a school their existence, also it helps to win new customers while getting to know their wishes, the fulfillment of which leads to improving the quality of services provided.

Communication is also a means of creating a positive public image of the school and the opportunity to acquire new, profitable partnerships. This is one of the marketing tools that primary school should implement with reference to the mission, vision and objectives of the school as their marketing communication and helps to deliver results. There are many forms of communication with the public and to be effective, it is important to carefully choose the one, that is relevant to those goals and is in this situation the most appropriate and most acceptable. At the same time, the success and characterized by originality and innovation, which, in conjunction with knowledge of customer needs, the school can provide an important place in the education market. Therefore, primary schools should be creative in a planning its marketing communication ideas to stand out among competitors (Pisoňová & Nagyová, 2014).

Methodology and research

Our research problems were to determine how effective promotion strategies used schools to get as many customers. Effective strategies are perceived as a promotional nature school activities conducted by schools deliberately, in order to obtain the largest possible number of customers (Pisoňová, 2016).

The research problem we have formulated in accordance with the objective of the research. This is a descriptive research problem, which we investigated and described, in how marketing communication tools are effective for customer acquisition at the primary schools. This means, we are using the method of interviews with managers of schools surveyed, what tools of communication mix primary schools used to reach customers and method of the questionnaire for the parents we surveyed that school communication strategies were most effective in determining the legal guardians of students choosing a primary school.

The result of the research is to analyze the way of promotion and communication between the legal guardians of schooler and the school principal and identify effective strategies for generating leads. Within the research we tried to determine if primary schools use some of the tools of communication mix for acquiring new customers, and if these strategies are effective. We also investigated, which of the communication strategies are the most attractive for potential clients and what are the reasons, why parents choose those primary school for a child.

Based on the research problem and research objectives, as well as on the studying literature, dedicated to the issue of marketing communication schools, we set a number of research questions. Research questions we divide in our work in terms of focus on the object, depending on whether relating to the management of the school (1-4) or legal guardian of a child (5-7). 1. What is the primary school doing to ensure that parents have chosen their school for their child? 2. Notes elementary school the pressure of the education market? 3. What are the marketing strategies used by managers of primary schools for acquisition clients? 4. What are effective strategies used by managers of schools to promote school for getting potential customers? 5. Which of the marketing strategies of school consider the parents as the most effective? 6. What forms of marketing communication for generating potential customers are considered the most effective by current customers? 7. To what level the extent promotion of a school fulfilled the expectations of potential customer's school?

Specifically, the research examined us samples comprising both schools as entities, as well as managers of the schools and education customers (legal guardians of students who attend the school). We focused while their view of marketing communication in terms of potential customers of the former school. Using research methods we acquire the data for conducting our research. Our objective was to determine how effective marketing communication tools used by primary schools are, for getting potential clients. We are looking at used marketing tools, so parents and students can say their opinion on it, which of these tools are in their choice of a school for their children, most affected. As we in the research collected data from two different objects, we decided to use two research methods.

For data acquisition from school leadership, we chose the method of the interview (interview). Based on the research questions we compiled the interview questions, and we decided to semi-structured interview. This type of interview has allowed us to obtain the necessary information while flexibly reacting to the situation during the interview.

As fundamental questions for the interview, we prepared two sets of questions as follows: A / What primary schools do to ensure that parents choose their school for the child? 1. Why do you believe should the parents choose your school? Why do you think, it is better or preferable than another school? 2. Do you feel the pressure of the education market as manager of the school? Who is your biggest competitor? 3. Why do you think you win the students or vice versa? 4. Do you have enough interested students for a first class? B /What marketing communication strategies are used by primary schools for that parent to choose the right school? 5. What is the marketing philosophy of your school? What are you trying to achieve? 6. What are the marketing strategies you use? 7. What tools (modes) marketing communications / promotion use it? 8. Which tools of marketing communication (promotion methods) do you consider as most successful and why? 9. What tools of marketing communication have had not produced

a successful outcome, and why? 10. What advice would you suggest to improve the quality of marketing and promotional activities of the school to get a higher number of customers (parents, students)?

The first set of questions we focused on issues relating to the activities that the school performs for generating customers. We find out here, what a given elementary school offers, what is unique and why the parents would choose this school for their child. We are also interested in the perception of the educational market, competitive pressure by the school and subsequently of what makes the success of schools in this field. So we come to the second set of questions. It focuses on the marketing philosophy of the school, the school's marketing strategy, especially the marketing tools that the school uses, why and how. Finally, we are interested in promoting the school and how school leaders perceive their marketing communication with the public, particularly with potential clients.

When obtaining data from parents of students, we have chosen the method of the questionnaire. Questionnaire for parents contains seven questions (open and closed). The research was therefore decided to focus qualitative- quantitatively method interview. It represents a qualitative research component, which is to determine what promotional activities relevant Elementary School is developing for customer acquisition and as it is in this direction successful. Within quantitative methods, we collected survey data to answer questions the effective communication strategy in terms of school parents.

Research results and interpretation

As the extent of the article does not allow us to list all the observed research results, we present only the most significant findings of our research. With the interview research method, we investigated the facts about marketing management school, particularly its promotional page to the management of the school. We also got a view, what kind of the idea the school management have for school communication with potential customers and the school's position in the education market. Three primary schools attended to the research.

We focused on the educational market, feeling of pressure as a manager of an elementary school and we have also asked during interviews if there are any significant competitors in their neighborhood. An executive has consistently said, that the competition between primary schools perceived and is created by a way of school funding, she the director of the first school sad is mainly due to the funding of the schools, because schools depend on the number of students they have "a representative of the other schools" schools struggle by surrounding the scholars is also due to funding - that is for the school to survive, and that's the competitive fight." Based on other answers on this questions, it showed, that the priority is a good educational program, which attracts scholar's parents, because, as the deputy of third school sad "training program which is more acceptable and more advanced and more accommodating - it meets many parents."

Next, we asked school principals about the marketing strategies, schools use. Director of the first school admitted that "this is it, what we fail". The second school is at least in

marketing and promotion of school involved in the schools surveyed. It mainly focuses on current clients and promoting them through school and uses a relatively limited repertoire of promotional activities about which we will speak in the analysis the following questions. Priority for schools is a satisfied customer, based primarily on the feeling safety at school and one which it enjoyed visiting it. The headmistress B is the most important quality of service: "We focus on the quality of teaching, quality of teachers and there is also a quality of the educational program". The third school also preferred as marketing strategy targeting the quality of the services they provide and at the same time their variety (extracurricular activities, performances) of which are promoted via the website of the school. Overall, a marketing concept or philosophy Schools executives determined to provide quality services: tempting educational program, teaching the quality, innovative teaching methods and quality of teachers.

Using the questionnaire, we investigated the views of parents on the school's communication with based to the acquiring new customers. We are interested in using an approach existing customer's school to the marketing communications. The questionnaire was completed by 68 respondents. First, we analyzed and interpreted the results and subsequently drawn conclusions from them. The acquired data we will describe and then we will interpret them into a graph.

The second question concerned to assign importance to constituents school marketing mix when choosing a school. The respondents were asked, on a scale of 1 to 5, to express their identification or disagree with those statements, and expresses if its full unit approval and tail complete disagreement. In completing this questioner, not all of respondents answered to each question. This applies to all points, except school atmosphere, to which all of it were answering (Figure 1. The importance of the components of the marketing mix).

We found out, that when choosing a school, for parents was most important, what kind is the quality of the services, the school provides. Up to this point belongs to curricula and the quality and professionalism teaching staff. As the promotion of school employees, whether consciously or unconsciously, is one of the tools of marketing communication can be considered partly this has to be one of the factors that affect marketing communication for the potential customers. In terms of marketing communication is interesting, that on the higher place were ancillary services and costs of the education. It follows that customers in the selection of schools interested in events, that the school organizes for students and parents, community, school trips, and hobbies. Also, they are interested in a more favorable education prices than offered by other schools, which means lower fees.

The surprise for us was, that the choice of schools for parents is greatly impressed by the atmosphere of a school. Full or partial agreement on this point expressed 52 parents, which is 76%. The most important component of our research - school's communication - was in the selection of a school the weakest point for the motivating the customers and at the same time one of the least important, since compared to the other components of the respondents identified as the least important. With substantiality communication of the school in the selection of a school agreed completely or partly 46%, while the total or partial disagreement was expressed by 31% respondents.

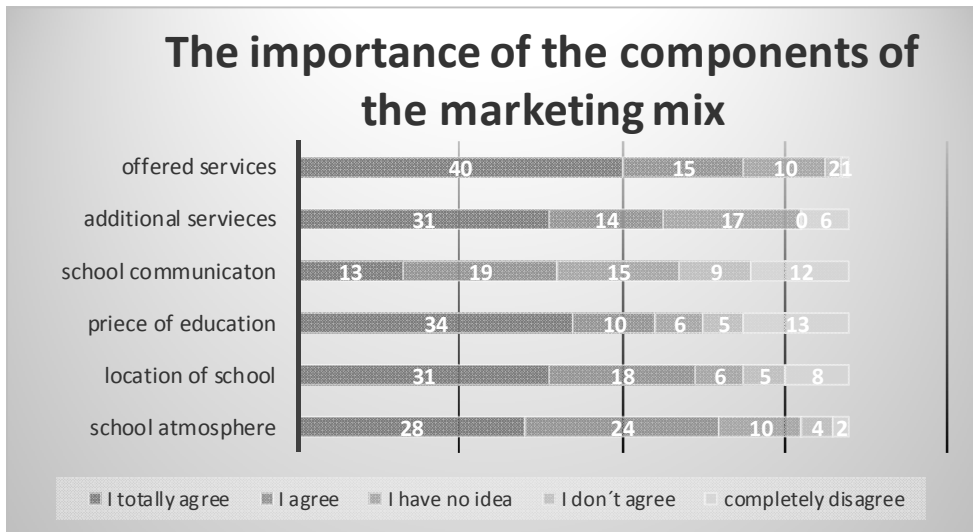


Figure 1. The importance of the components of the marketing mix

None of the schools that participated in our research currently implement advertising and cooperation with the founder described previously at a lower level. And therefore in these cases, it was not possible to expect other results, as shown in Figure 2 – low effects of parents in the selection of a school in these items. We are also impressed, that the performances to the public or incentive choice of a primary school for potential customers as they parents express their views on public appearances as frequently organized.

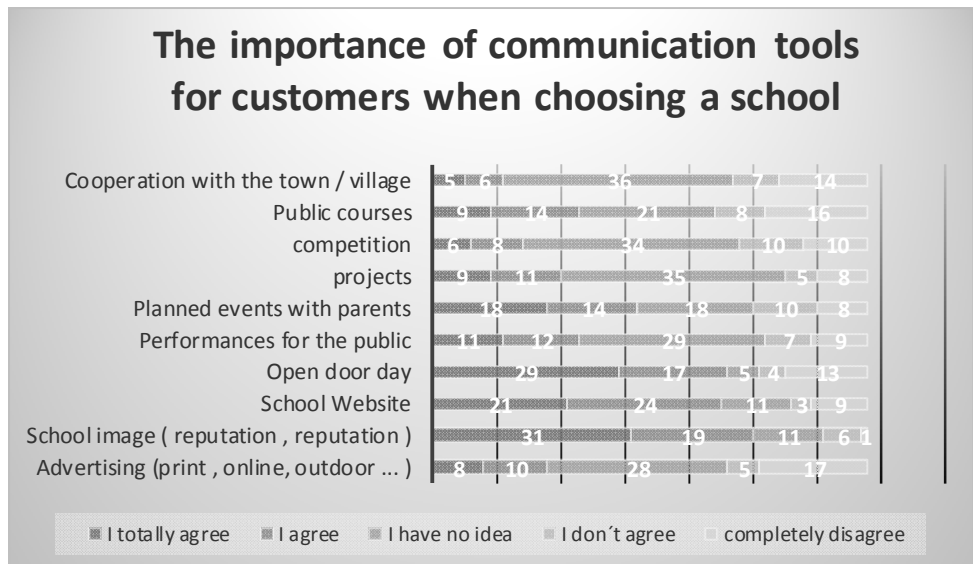


Figure 2. The importance of communication tools for customers when choosing a school

In terms of the effectiveness of promotional tools of the schools, are the events they organize for parents when choosing a school, interesting planned actions for parents

totally or partially affected 20 respondents, which is 29 % of respondents. School's website and open day achieve at the parents' similar results, the success in the fight for the customers. 66 % of respondents were affected by the Internet school's communication in a positive direction entirely or largely, and the same percentage of them are interested in attending the open house presentation. Both communication tools, therefore, consider it sought potential customers at attractive and particularly effective in attracting school's customers.

Clearly, the most important for parents when choosing a school within our research, became the school's image. That creates a lot of features and is a communication tool that basically covers all the instruments of communication mix, as the school's image considerably formation, but it may also change it or damage. For 74% of respondents when choosing a school, fully or largely affect the image of the educational institution. The lowest number of respondents, almost 10%, the school's image doesn't have any meaning for the respondents when choosing a school for their child. Based on these facts, we say that the image of the school is an extremely effective communication tool for schools, helping it acquire new customers.

Conclusions

The aim of the research was to determine, how effective promotional strategies used by primary schools for acquiring new customers are. In this subchapter, we present the results of our research, based on the research questions set out at the beginning of the research. School managers agree, that the reason, why parents should choose the right school for your child, is the quality of services provided in connection with the establishing a good relationship between the public and parents. Receptive and open communication is, according to Deputy of a school, the key to reaching the customers. Maintaining good relationship with the public, build up a positive image of a school and raises awareness about the school, which can reach more potential customers.

The pressure of the educational market feels each of the elementary school that participated in our research. This is because in their neighborhood are also other primary schools, that have the same founder. They, therefore, have to fight for the favor of the founder, while they are fighting for the number of scholars. The pressure of educational market consisting in the fight for the student exists under the current setting funding for education. Schools have commented, that they suffered from a lack of the students, on the contrary, in the competition are quite successful (some less, other more), on which, however, must make due to the account initiative. This pressure forces the school improve its services and to invent a new and attractive strategy for customer acquisition.

Most effective strategies for promoting the schools are public relations, direct marketing and advertising and partly personal marketing. The most used tool of primary schools to promote the school's activities, is open house presentation, various events, and performances for the public or for parents, who are part of the public relations marketing communication. An important element became even school's website. However, there can be assigned as a work with the public, to direct marketing to advertise and personal marketing. It depends on how and for what purpose the information is given on the Internet. Ultimately, the public relationship appears to be

the most effective way to reach potential customers of the primary schools in which we have made our research.

The school's services affected the most customers in the selection of a school. Based on this finding, we can say, that the school's their marketing strategy oriented to quality, is being implemented in the right direction. Effective for customer acquisition is an offer of attractive additional services such as courses and hobbies, filling out the spare time and also provide customers with a more affordable price of education in terms of reducing financial expenditure. In additional, parents in choosing schools also taking account in the atmosphere of the school. We think that the elements of the school's marketing mix can work effectively within the marketing communications and primary schools have many opportunities to stimulate them and satisfy many customers.

Forms of marketing communication what a potential customer is considering as attractive, is important in a selecting of the school and encourage them to choose a school, so that it becomes their ultimate choice, can be called effective. Opinions of the current customers to communicate with the public schools and its presentation to the public are mainly positive and parents think that school's communication is good. Public relationships are according to the legal representatives the most important and most significant components of the communication mix affecting them when choosing a school. Therefore, activity with a public relations, that schools perform and appear to them as most effective in attracting customers, seems to be a right choice. Parents also at the choice of a school affects the school's website and most essential is, in their opinion, school's image. To a large extent the expectations of potential customers were met. Promotional activities such as Open house presentation, scheduled events for the public and parents projects meets their expectations.

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