

City University of Seattle, Slovakia

Marketing Plan

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MK 300 Principles of Marketing

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1. Overview

City University of Seattle, Slovakia (City University) is a private not-for-profit institution of higher education offering the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) and Master of Business Administration (MBA) programs, and its diplomas are accredited in the USA by Northwest Commission on Schools and Universities NWCCU. Located in Bratislava (the university's European headquarters), City University offers the opportunity to study at globally recognized school, while enjoying the advantages of small city of Bratislava, capital of Slovakia. In addition to daily courses, City University is the only university in Slovakia offering online courses. This distance learning method is very flexible, and therefore it is very attractive to those students who don't have time to attend school regularly, or those who are currently out of state. This is the main reason why this type of learning slowly gains on its popularity. City University's goal for upcoming years is to expand its online learning by adding more majors and more students from both Slovakia and Europe. This will have several advantages. First of all, the company will gain more profit from larger number of students attending. Secondly, teachers will be able to enjoy teaching from their homes. And lastly, there will be no need for big facilities since the fixed costs for facilities will be significantly lower. By concentrating on its online learning, City University of Seattle, Slovakia will lower its cost and increase its profits.

2. Company description

City University of Seattle, Slovakia was established on December 1, 1999 as the first private college in Slovakia. Its founding partner is City University of Seattle, located in Washington, USA, provides its business curriculum to Slovak branch. Since its establishment, City University has successfully gained accreditation and local recognition both, in Slovakia and

Central Europe. University offers undergraduate and graduate program in business administration. City University has two campuses, one in Bratislava and one in Trencin. They both provide modern facilities with 15 classrooms with wireless abilities, 2 computer labs, and library. Trencin location also provides a dormitory. City University has professors with rich practical experience who challenge their students to broaden their interest, creativity, communication, deepen their talents, and help them to be prepared for graduate school and life.

3. Strategic Analysis

Mission.

Our mission is to provide high-quality education and learning. We are dedicated to satisfy our students by providing opportunities to enrich their development, leadership growth, and social responsibility. Our goal is to win student's hearts by providing an excellent assistance, and outstanding service.

Objectives.

For the coming years, City University seeks to achieve the following goals:

Financial.

City University's plan for upcoming year/s is to increase the number of students for online program. This increase will eventually lead to increase in school's revenue, because the marginal cost for every additional student is very low. Distance learning program does not require classes; therefore, the overall expenses for facilities will be minimal. Our goal is to increase gross sales by 30 percent in the first year and incrementally in subsequent years.

Non-financial.

City University wants to gain a good reputation and image on a national and international basis through Internet marketing. Its goal is to become a leader in providing higher education on Slovak market. In order to achieve this goal, University intends to increase the number of offered majors in following years and work on constantly improving quality and customer's satisfaction. Internet marketing and informative advertising will be used to expand university's sales. Additionally, university wants to improve its web page and make it more attractive for prospective students and more efficient for current students. Lastly, City University aims to gain market share internationally, promoting its flexibility and lower prices compared to universities abroad.

4. Situational Analysis

SWOT Analysis.

University of Seattle, Slovakia has several strengths; however, our major weaknesses are the web page and poor selection of majors. The major opportunity is increased demand for private institutions of higher education. Our major threat is competition.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility • Value pricing • International instructors • No competition on Slovak market (BSBA) 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web page • Small selection of majors • Lack of awareness about online program
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased demand for private universities • Lower costs of programs than abroad 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition

Table 1: City University's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Strengths.

City University can base upon four strengths:

Flexibility.

One of the major strengths of City University is its flexibility. It offers programs in both, in English and Slovak. Students can study on daily basis or online; they can even combine these two forms how it fits them the best. The length of study is usually 4 years, but after all it is up to student when he/she finishes. Students just need to gain 180 credits to get a bachelor title. The trimester system is also very flexible; it allows students to study 3 trimesters plus one additional trimester in summer. They can always skip one trimester and then continue to the next one.

Pricing.

City University's price is about the same as price of its Slovak competitors; however, much lower compared to universities outside the state. This gives us an advantage over the international customers who cannot afford university inside their state.

International faculty.

The base City University of Seattle, WA shares international staff of instructors with its Slovak branch. This makes the programs more qualitative.

Low competition.

City University has no competition on the Slovak market with its BSBA program. Also, it is only school which enables students to study online.

Weaknesses.

City University has 3 major weaknesses:

Web page.

Even though the university just introduced new web page design, it left its content unchanged and disorganized. From the first sight it does look attractive and professional, but once one starts looking for particular information it is very hard to find it. For example, there is no shortcut for prospective students with all information they might need. Also, current students find it very difficult to use the web page because of its complexity. It is very hard for them to find information they are looking for. Therefore, we will put a great emphasis on improving our web page in the following year, so it is more attractive for prospective students, and compendious for current students.

Low selection of majors.

City University offers only one major at the undergraduate and graduate level - business administration. In upcoming years, our plan is to open more majors to attract more people.

Lack of awareness about the online program.

Lack of awareness about the online program is another City University's weakness. Our university is the only one on the market providing online studying. We need to take advantage of this fact and launch the marketing campaign to inform people about this form of study.

Opportunities.

There are two opportunities for City University:

Increased demand for private universities.

Nowadays, more and more students are switching from states universities to privately owned ones which increases demand for private schools. Therefore,

it is very important that City University establishes a strong position on the market and becomes a leader in providing higher education.

Lower costs of program.

Even though the price for programs at other universities in Slovakia is about the same, the prices for education on the global market are much higher. City University needs to take advantage of this fact and promote itself on the global market to gain more international student doing online program.

Threats.

Our university faces one threat which is increased competition on Slovak market. There are many universities which take advantage of growing demand for private schools and enter this market. Even though there is not competition with BSBA program, there are some private schools of management offering Bc. title. Slovak programs at City University face the biggest threat. To win over the market, university has to offer students the best services and fair selection of courses.

Industrial Analysis

The private university industry is in the growth stage of market development. There are 10 private schools in Slovakia, out of which City University is the only one as a subsidiary of the foreign university. This gives us a great advantage on the market with our BSBA program. There is also no limit of students doing distance program for schools. That means that schools can admit as many students for distance learning as they want to. Each year, the number of students attending private institutions grows; however due to the lack of information provided on the web page I could not provide specific numbers.

Competitive Analysis.

There is no competitor providing BSBA program, however there are four private universities with business programs:

School of Economics and Management in Public Administration in Bratislava (SEMPA).

SAMPA was established on December 2003. Students can choose either full-time or part-time program. The length of study is three years. It offers three bachelors programs: Public Administration, Management of small and medium-sized enterprises in regions, and Public administration. It also offers one master degree program in Public Administration.

Pan European University- Faculty of Economy and Business.

The Bachelor program Economics and Business Management is held as a full-time as well as part-time study. It consists of three academic years. The Engineer study program Economics and International Business Management is held in full-time and part-time study. Studies take two years and are divided in two academic years. The postgraduate program International Business consists of theoretical and academic part. The full-time form of studies lasts 3 years, the part-time form 5 years.

The University of Security Management in Košice.

The University of Security Management in Košice organizes a full-time and part-time in the study program Security Management for the 1st level of the university education (Bc.) and since the academic year 2008/2009 also for the study in the 2nd level of the university education (Ing.) in same study program.

International school of management Slovakia.

International school of management Slovakia offers two types of study: full

time, and part-time. It offers bachelor program International Business.

Competitor	Bachelor Program	Master Program	Postgraduate Program	Price
School of Economics and Management in Public Administration in Bratislava (SEMPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Administration • Management of small and medium-sized enterprises in regions • Public administration 	Public Administration	n/a	1400Eur
Pan European University - FACULTY OF ECONOMY AND BUSINESS	Economics and Business Management	Economics and International Business Management	International Business	2 000 Eur
The University of Security Management in Košice	Security Management	Security Management		Full time-790 Eur Part time-1055Eur
International school of management	International business			1360 Eur

Table 2: Selected Private Universities with Business major

Consumers Analysis.

There are many potential customers of City University.

Seniors in high schools.

Seniors at high schools should be the primary focus for our university. There are hundreds of students finishing their high schools ready to attend the universities. It is very important that we focus on this group and develop a marketing strategy to attract them.

Adults.

There are also many adults who have already started working but haven't

completed their university education. Because they cannot attend the school on daily basis, our online program would be the perfect match for them. We need to attract this group by marketing strategy showing them that it is never late to start study.

Foreigners.

The third potential group for City University is people living in different states. They can be either Slovak citizens living abroad, or citizens of foreign states. Since our online program is cheaper than programs offered by other universities we are going to use a marketing strategy to attract people living outside of state, who seek to obtain the degree either in English, Slovak, or combined form.

5. STP Marketing

Segmentation.

City University decided to target various market segments by creating different forms of study. The full time study program fits mostly students who go to university straight from the high schools, compared to online program which suits better those who decides to go to school later, or who work or live abroad. City University also offers Intensive English Program designed for those students who need to learn or improve their English.

Targeting.

City University is going to use differentiation as a targeting strategy. So far it offers online and full-time programs with one major - business administration. In next 3 years, university plans to open more degree programs to gain more customers.

University is going to be targeting three types of consumers: high school students, adults of age 20-50, and foreign people living either in Slovakia or abroad.

Competitive Advantage and Differentiation.

City University is going to use service differentiation to provide a superior value for its customers. To gain this service differentiation, we are going to offer maximum flexibility. The flexibility means that students can design their study program; they can choose the form of study (full-time, online, or combined), major, length of study, and the beginning of the study (from the beginning of transfer from other institution). Each student will be considered individually and university will let him know that all what matters is him/her. This individual approach will be our competitive advantage.

Positioning.

There are two positioning strategies City University is going to use. On the Slovak market, City University will use “more for the same” positioning strategy because for the same price of service it will deliver the superior quality. Many schools offer business programs but neither is as flexible as program at City University. City University is also the only one offering online courses and BSBA program accredited in the USA by Northwest Commission on Schools and Universities NWCCU.

Therefore, students attending our school will gain more for the same price than their friends attending other private institutions.

On the international market, City University will use the “same for less” positioning strategy, because the price of the education will be much lower and service about the same.

6. Marketing Program

In order to be able to compete on market, it is very important that we puts a great emphasis

on product differentiation and powerful marketing strategy. To achieve profitability, competitiveness, positive growth, and position on the market, City University uses the advantage of fast growing internet industry by incorporating internet form of study as the alternative to daily program. Our main goal is to increase the number of students studying at our institution and make their experience the best. To achieve this, we are going to use product, pricing, distribution, and communication strategies.

Product strategy.

City University offers Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) and Master of Business Administration (MBA). Both programs can be taken in the daily or online form. The academic year is divided into three trimesters, each lasting 3 months. There is also one summer trimester. City University also sells Intensive English Course. We will introduce more majors for both, bachelor and master forms in next years. Building the City University Brand will be part of our marketing strategy. Our logo will be displayed on our web page, social networks, internet,



advertisements, flyers, and printed documents.

Pricing strategy.

We are going to use discount pricing strategy. One trimester at City University costs 950 Eur. If student pays for each semester separately before they start he ends up paying almost 2850 Eur a year. However, if student decides to pay in advance for entire year, he pay discounted rate 2300 Eur a year. Both prices are for City University attractive. If student pays each semester separately, our school gains more money. If the student pays in advance, it is guaranteed that student will not be leaving

after one semester. This method is attractive for student as well. He does not need to have all money ready right away. He can be saving them gradually.

Distribution strategy.

Our strategy is to sell our product directly to our customers without any intermediaries. Programs offered by City University are described at our web page which also includes information how to pay for them. Using our individual approach, each student can set up a meeting with an advisor and visit our school in person (this will be recommended). This advisor has to be also skilled sales person because he/she will try to sell our program to visitor. City University will also provide demonstration products, detailed handouts, and full-color displays of offered services to attract potential students.

Communication strategy.

For our communication strategy we are going to use promotion mix of advertising, and direct marketing.

Advertising.

We will use nonperson communication channel for our communication with the customer. To attract high school students we will use print media, such as handouts and posters to attract students and display them in the school facilities. To reinforce our differentiation, we will use service message on Internet, social networks, magazines, newspapers, and TV. To attract even more people we will use advertising in public, using billboards, busses, and other advertising spaces.

Public Relations.

We are going to build a good corporate image and publicity by maintaining

good relationships with ministry of education, our students and partners. We are also going to create a positive image in media.

Direct marketing.

To target individual customers, such are students, adults, and foreigners we are going to use internet. We will invest to advertising on social networks and special sites targeted individual customers.

7. Financial Data and Goals

The main goal of University is to gain students attending online form of study. That means that if fifty additional students decide to attend our online program (and pay a year price of 2,300 Eur), our annual net sales will grow by 115,000 Eur. Since each student is expected to attend school for 4 years, our net sales would grow by 460,000 Eur in 4 years. (taking into consideration only those 50 students, not other students gained following years). This shows that investing in a good marketing campaign will be very profitable for our institution.

8. Organization

The overall responsibility for City University marketing activities will lie in hands of marketing manager. Our branch in Bratislava does not have many people dedicated to the marketing campaign but our goal for the near future is also employ more people to expand our program and run marketing campaign. For now, this marketing manager will work hand in hand with sales manager to handle national and international marketing and sales campaigns, advertising, and public relations efforts.

9. Implementation

There are going to be three main marketing campaigns throughout the year.

January + February.

The first campaign will be launched in early January and will last until the end of March. This campaign is designed for seniors in high schools who have to apply to public schools by the end of February. We are going to be marketing our full-time courses mixed with online courses. We are going to initiate money for flyers and posters which are going to be distributed to high schools. Other money will be used for radio ads. Our main focus will be Internet marketing, targeting these young adults mainly through social networks.

June.

In June we will launch our new advertising campaign. We will be using public advertising for delivering the message of flexibility and how easy is to study at City University. We will invest into advertising in public transportation, billboards, and other public spaces. We will also spend money on Internet marketing, advertising on web pages, as well as newspapers and magazines.

Fall.

Our next marketing campaign will be launched in fall. It will be very similar to the summer, still promoting flexibility, but also delivering a message “It’s never late to gain a degree”. There is going to be used radio campaign, public advertising, and internet advertising.

10. Evaluation and Control

Evaluation is very important for our future growth and improvement. Therefore, all students are encouraged to take a survey at the end of semester to rate their professors. There is also a space for providing their suggestions or claims. We also encourage our

student to provide complains as soon as possible so we can take care of it. They can either to write an email with their complain or see a faculty member.

City University is planning to closely monitor quality and customer satisfaction. This will help us to correct any problem which may occur. We will do everything to satisfy our customers and make them feel that we are always here for them ready to listen.

References

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