

## Marketing My Programme Through Lecturing

Paper delivered at the 2019 Godfrey Okoye University Workshop on Staff Capacity Building and ICT in Education. Postgraduate School Hall, 23 - 25 September 2019

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I am most privileged to be sharing this interactive hour with you and to be addressing you alongside a prestigious professor of Education, Prof Aaron Eze. He will give the bulk of what we intend to discuss with you this morning, but I will take a few minutes to share with you some ideas I consider as very vital and fundamental in achieving the goals of teaching in the university.

I do not intend to talk about curriculum because it is a given; NUC gives the same *Minimum Academic Standard* to all Nigerian universities. What is different is the way each university represents its uniqueness through its culture of giving lectures. So I will not discuss curriculum. I would address myself rather to how teaching takes place or should take place at Godfrey Okoye university. I have captioned my discussion "**Marketing my programme through lecturing**, because I am convinced the success of every business depends on its marketing strategies and how it packages its product.

Why would students choose Godfrey Okoye? Students will not choose Godfrey Okoye university because they love the name. In fact many of our students do not know who he is. Some parents bring their children here because this is a Catholic or Mission university and they believe that this university aligns itself with a Catholic tradition of education that is both efficient and productive. Parents simply hope this tradition of education is still what it used to be. But we know times have changed, human beings change with time and pedagogy as a science continues to evolve new methods. So what should lead candidates to choose our university is neither the name nor the university's noble affiliation with a tradition but the ability of the university and its system to impact the quality and wholistic education it envisions to achieve.

Our university understands education as a dialogical process of acquisition and dissemination of knowledge. Therefore, in order to align our teaching/lecturing tasks with this philosophy which considers the individual as a social and dialogue seeking being, lecturing should also be a dialogue between lecturer and student. Dialogue is the ability to raise questions around a concept; to be open to other people's ideas about problems; the questions and ideas help to unravel the concept's hidden aspects and lead to its comprehensive knowledge. Development in

technology and globalization has made it possible for teaching to be dialogue. Now, everyone has access to information about one and everything. What everyone thinks and publishes about something is available to many.

Why did I caption my topic in this way? Why do I use the language of marketing to discussion quality assurance in lecturing? In Nigeria today, there are many universities competing for the same customers - students. And there is so much competition. Go Uni and similar mission establishments would not have any need to establish a university in this higher-institution-saturated environment if it did not have a specific mission. If we are serious with our claims that education at Godfrey Okoye and nowhere else meets the pedagogical needs of students as human beings, then we must run this university as a business, and I must add, not a money-oriented but mission-oriented business. In today's world, everything is marketing. Even churches operate as businesses. The vision and mission of the university must be conceived as a product which must meet market needs.

In this business, **Quality assurance** is required in every stage of the relationship between the organization and the customer, that is, at every stage in which the product comes into contact with the customer.<sup>1</sup> What are the stages:

- when the customer is inquiring about the product: this relates to admission inquiry either through phone, online or personal contact with front line service staff.
- when taking a customer order or payment: this concerns the admission process, payment of fees, faculty/Departmental registrations, course registrations, booking of hostels ecc.
- when the product is delivered: administering lectures, examination and computing results.
- After sales care: when making repairs, doing maintenance or handling a complaint: this concerns complaints from different sectors of university life - VC, key officers, lecturers, admin staff, classroom, laboratory equipments, bursary payments, remarking of answer scripts, complaints about exam scores ecc.

In all these stages, the attitude of employees who make contact with the customer must be positive and professional. The major concern of this paper is on the product delivery through lectures.

## **The Market**

Every successful business starts with a market survey. We have described the market as a higher-institution-saturated environment. So there is need to sell the product and to remain in the

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<sup>1</sup> Ideas about Marketing are taken from a compilation of marketing concepts by The Institute of Customer Relationship Management (ICRM), *Strategic Customer Management & International Marketing Management*, vol 17-18, Lagos 2015.

business. Two things might happen to us if we do not do good business. Firstly, we might lose our relevance and this would happen if we compromise our values; if we are careless with our vision and mission, if we are just one of many universities. Secondly, we might be pushed out of business. A successful business is more likely to grow and to attract customer loyalty (some parents have more than two of their children studying at Go Uni), which is repeat business and referral (recommendation of the university) to friends and family members. Because of the competitive nature of the market, we must always consider the great advantage in retaining customers and the high cost of losing them.

### **The Customer**

The customer is the one who pays to obtain or receives the product (good or service) from an organization. Parents/sponsors and their children/wards who become students are considered as the external customers.

#### Customer Focus

A good marketing strategy puts the customer at the center of the purpose and activity of the business. Customer focus is the essence of the business seen from the customer's viewpoint. Some organizations manifest this in their adverts with expressions such as "the customer is boss" or "the customer is king" or "we are here to serve you" or "have it your way". In the 1980s, the British Airways used the slogan "putting people first"

#### Need to Understand Customer Attributes

There is need to study customer attributes in order the better to understand who the customer is. Customer attributes are characteristics that enable the organization to categorize the customer according to certain kinds of information - demographic (age, ethnic background, religion, marital status ecc) or psychographic (lifestyle, family influences, hobbies, social class, needs, attitudes ecc). This would determine market strategies that would lead to customer satisfaction.

In view of the above, professional lecturers would be passionate about bringing students to love their products, the courses they teach. First step to doing so is interest in understanding the interests, strengths, shortcomings and behavior of today's student. Each new generation of students comes with peculiar behaviors and other novel habits and attitudes.

#### How do we describe today's students?

- Students of today think and approach life in a completely different way.
- Many of them are very young, very simple minded, open to new experiences, sensitive to injustice, hypocrisy, insincerity and easily discouraged by unkind attitudes.

- Apart from a few who are forced either by difficulties or by austere parents to acquire a level of autonomy, many of today's young people are dependent on parents or others for many things, even to fill the application form into a university.
- Entering the university is for many of them the first time they are leaving the warmth and protection of their parents. So they arrive here a bit disoriented.
- One of the biggest challenges of today's teaching is the ability to capture the attention of students and to effectively convey ideas to them.
- Besides all these, moreover, students are very interested in technological innovations. They would rather spend their time watching movies than reading novels or spending the time in the library.
- They have short attention span, and many do not understand what is said during lectures.

Since their interests lie so much in technology, teaching is one of the professions that must keep pace with technological progress. Students will be more responsive to the lecturer who applies new technologies during lectures and in the giving of assignments. Today's pedagogical method must reflect an understanding of the psychology of young people, their dreams and passion, and the teacher's love for technological instruments (cf. <https://medium.com/@braydenfox/modern-teaching-methods-and-skills-2977c7cd245e>).

### **Delivering The Product Through Lectures**

The product is that which the university was established to achieve, expressed in its vision and mission statements. It is important to recall that lecturers and other university employees do not own the organization; they belong to a class of customers to the organization. They are called internal customers while the consumers of the product (good or service) are called external customers. Internal customers - the employees - contribute to the overall success of the organization by serving the needs of external customers. This is why the organization must empower its employees for ultimate customer service. The university markets its product through lecturing. One of the most efficient ways of selling this product is through lecture delivery.

As we make effort to maintain quality assurance in lecturing and management, we are required to look beyond traditional approaches. A greater part of the success of students lies in the hand of the lecturer. This is why the teacher must use skills that enhance student learning experience. The chart below represents a self-evaluation table that help us to evaluate our methods:

	<b>Traditional Method</b>	<b>Modern Method</b>	<b>Using Modern Method as Marketing strategy</b>
	<b>Not in question:</b> the education, skill, commitment and	The lecturer has education and skill, committed and organized, tolerant , sociable and open to questions	Applies promotional activities and initiate after-lecture activities that help the student to understand the

<p>personal qualities of the lecturer: organized, tolerant, sociable and open to questions.</p>		<p>lectures better and benefit from them</p>
<p>Lecturer stands and delivers lectures and students listen and take notes</p>	<p>Lecturer uses innovative pedagogical practices as main mode of lecture delivery. They include but are not limited to: visual aids, peer instruction, problem-based learning, design-based learning, use of simulations or games for learning purposes, service learning, self-learning, integration of industry/enterprise based practical training into the formal curriculum</p>	<p>Lecturer adopts pedagogical practices that are more interactive and focus on competencies.</p>
<p>Lecturer seems to fulfill the demands of a job</p>	<p>Lecturer seems to fulfill the demands of a job</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecturer appears to love the teaching profession and loves to communicate ideas, to solve problems</li> <li>• Has student focus; takes time to address and understand students' needs and seeks to enhance students' learning experience.</li> <li>• Is more innovative because the goal of teaching is not to give a good performance but to bring out the best in the student and to make them independent.</li> </ul>
<p>Begins lectures by welcoming students and exposing the topic of the day's lesson</p>	<p>Begins lectures by welcoming students but also shows them how they can benefit from the content of the lesson. This increases students' desire to listen to the teacher.</p>	<p>From the beginning of contact with students, the lecturer paints a picture of what is hoped to accomplish. The picture might be a symbol or story which is an inspiring representation of the university's vision and how it would benefit the student.</p>
<p>Lecturer gives lectures and goes</p>	<p>Lecturer is committed. He/she is responsible for self and for the student.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tests students ability for research by giving them assignments for class</li> </ul>

			<p>discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives them feedback on the work done through appraisal and correction.</li> </ul>
	Relies on textbooks and handbooks	Relies on hands-on materials approach	Relies on hands-on materials approach
	Compels students to learn through memorization and recitation by repeating learned information	Students learn through participation. Makes students to analyze, find pros and cons, make conclusions and find evidence but not only memorize.	Enhances students' abilities for independent thinking and problem solving. Gets them to love the teacher and the course.
	Emphasis on transfer of knowledge: Cares little about communication skills and relationship issues. He/she is interested in his own world, in getting the salary and not in other people.	Emphasis on communication: Has communication skills and makes effort to acquire attitudes that encourage good relationship with students: patient and tolerant, open to questions, does not impose own viewpoint on students	Introduces promotional activities Lecturing might also include storytelling, slide presentation, interactive whiteboard, visualizer, projector, educational software, CD player and other things that enhance the learning system and make it more appealing to students.
			lecturer gets students to be independent learners by engaging them in peer discussion and group discussion, makes study more interactive, gives online tasks and encourage collaborative solution to a problem. This is called active learning.
	Assessment is seen as a separate activity and occurs through testing	Assessment is seen as an activity integrated with teaching and learning, and occurs through portfolios and observation	Finds ways of encouraging and rewarding excellence and improved efforts.

I conclude with a saying attributed to Alexander Trenfor which has it that "The best teachers are those who show you where to look but do not tell you what to see."