

# PROMOTIONAL MEANS OF NEUTRALIZING THE IMPACT OF THE ACADEMIC CRISIS

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**Abstract:**

*This paper aims to develop means to promote academic institutions, to present an interconnection system of the faculties within Tibiscus University, to achieve common objectives.*

**Key words:** *academic promotion, students, education, faculties.*

**JEL classification:** *I23*

Most countries, through their macroeconomic policies, encourage higher education as a solution for the development of individual, social and economic prosperity.

Wider access to higher education requires sustained public support, but public funds are gradually diminishing.

Higher education institutions should focus on the most urgent needs of the business environment for development, on what the labor market validates as the need and opportunity, while ensuring wider access, diversified preparation and increased performance and competitiveness.

The university – as an academic institution – is meant to prepare highly qualified specialists and to create close links with the business environment and the entire society in which it is included, and on a larger scale, with the society as a whole.

The Romanian higher education, both public and private, has experienced in the last few years a drastic decrease in the number of students, making each faculty, in each university, to fight even harder for every potential student. Private universities feel more pressure, because they don't have places free of charge, every place in these institutions are financed by the student or by their family and relatives.

Tibiscus University is such a private university that competes on the educational market, in Timisoara and Timis County; it consists of six faculties/departments as follows: Economics, Psychology, Design, Computer Science and Applied Information Technology, Law and Public Administration, Journalism and Communication and Modern Languages.

Promotional activities within Tibiscus University in Timisoara, consist of actions undertaken at the university (advertising spots on local radio and television stations, attending university fairs, flyers), and the promotion of each faculty within the university.

Every faculty should see promotion as an essential activity, and that for the simple fact that this action should provide students, the ones who, by paying the tuition fee, supply the only source of income, which this private university relies on, when it comes to its budget.

The goal of each faculty is to promote itself, taking after Adam Smith's theory, namely, the welfare of a community is achieved when every individual in that community does what is best for him/her, when rather they should apply the theory of

John Nash - the welfare of a community is best achieved when every member of the community does what is best for him/her and other members of the group.

Let's take the example of a high school class - 12th grade - X, visited by a team within the Faculty of Economics - Tibiscus University; they have various promotional materials and they are able to answer possible questions from students, but only in what regards this particular faculty, and if this class has an art major, those students will not receive those materials that really interest them, and their questions related to this area will not find an answer. The best thing that could happen would be if the class was visited by a team within the Faculty of Design, because, otherwise, those students will not receive the same information and will not be really informed about the possibility of attending courses with the Faculty of Design. The Economics team might say that they do not care whether those students attend the Faculty of Design or not, could this be right, considering the financial interdependence of these faculties.

This interconnection or, in other words, collaborative effort should exist in other areas as well, but for the most part in the promotion process of institutions, in general, and each faculty, in particular.

This was just an example, perhaps a trivial one, related to a specific aspect or action, to the promotion itself, but we believe that this is necessary, i.e., very close collaboration among faculties, in order to achieve better results, moving from quantity-oriented actions, to joint actions, based on quality.

Each one of us, I mean the teaching staff, has the "handicap" of their field, for example, an accountant has a certain vision of something, but a whole new thing can be said about a teacher whose specialty is, let's say, journalism. I wanted to get to the fact that we, in the marketing department, given this "handicap", believe that the first place in this activity has to be held by the client, and in our field of activity, this place would have to be filled by the student.

The student, the only source of income, should be the focus of the entire teaching staff and not only, of the whole university as well. I often say to my students, put yourselves in the client's place, so I ask myself, how many times have we done it this year?

They say that marketing is so important that it cannot be left only in the care of the marketing department within an organization and that each person there must be involved in this phenomenon, but in our organization, we do not even have a marketing department.

Why should the students be our main concern? Not only because they contribute essentially to the formation of the institution's budget, but also because they are the key part in the promotion process (positive or negative) of the university; a market research conducted two years ago, on a sample of 657 students in 12th grade, in Timisoara and Timis County, revealed that 75% of them were informed about the university and its faculties, from friends, acquaintances, relatives, or current or former graduate students at Tibiscus University.

**Table. 1.**

**The main source of information on Tibiscus University in Timisoara**

		Number of answers	Percentage
Valid answers	Do not know	85	12,9
	Friends	466	70,9
	Mass-media	48	7,3
	Internet	28	4,3
	Family	30	4,6
	Total	657	100,0

The results were as follows: 70.9% indicated friends as their main source of information about the existence, within the educational landscape, of Tibiscus University in Timisoara, the leading source posted in this classification, in second place, at a great distance, lies the media with an average of 7.3%, followed by family and Internet with 4.6 % and 4.3%.

Students should be asked for their opinions, they should have the courage to express them without suffering the consequences and, finally, those opinions should be taken into account.