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Marketing Management and Cultural Learning Center: The Case Study of Arts and Cultural Office, Suansunandha Rajabhat University

Pirada Techaratpong

***Abstract*—**This qualitative research has 2 objectives: to study marketing management of the cultural learning center in Suansunandha Rajabhat University and to suggest guidelines to improve its marketing management. This research is based on a case study of the Arts and Culture Office in Suansunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok.

This research found the Art and Culture Office has no formal marketing management. However, the marketing management is partly covered in the overall business plan, strategic plan, and action plan. The process can be divided into 5 stages. The marketing concept has long been introduced to its policy but not apparently put into action due to inflexible system. Some gaps are found in the process.

The research suggests the Art and Culture Office implement the concept of marketing orientation, meeting the needs and wants of its target customers and adapt to the changing situation. Minor guidelines for improvement are provided.

***Keywords*—**Marketing, management, museum, cultural learning center.

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I. Introduction

LEARNING centers play a vital role in education. Learning centers are not only limited to schools, colleges and universities. They can also be learning centers outside the classroom, such as museums and other types of learning centers. They also play a role in cultural conservation and tourism promotion. The governments of many countries, such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Japan and Singapore, recognize the importance of learning centers and continuously invest in their development. As learning centers, museum and other kinds of learning centers need to build relationships with customers and audiences. Marketing is an effective driver for organizations [1] as it is a tool to understand the wants and needs to customers or audience and respond to their needs, which will result in achieving the objectives of the learning centers [2], for example, as institutions for education, cultural conservation and tourism boost.

The Arts and Cultural Office of Suansunandha Rajabhat University was established in 1980 in order to pursue the policies of the university in cultural conservation and education and cultural database development. The main learning center and office is at a former mansion of HH Princess Saisavali Biromya, Princess Suthasininart Piyamaharaj Padivaradda, a consort of King Chulalongkorn of Siam. The office has three smaller learning centers which are not included in the research due to recent development. Despite its long history and good administration, the center is not well-known. In order to develop the center, marketing should be applied to its management.



Fig. 1 The main learning center [3]

II. Objective

1. To study marketing management of Cultural Learning Centre, Suansunandha Rajabhat University
2. To suggest guidelines to improve its marketing management.

III. Methodology

The methodology of this research is qualitative. The method used was a literature review, document analysis, unanticipated observation and interviews. The primary information is useful for getting initial background of the topic and the framework and to prepare the interview guidelines. The empirical data were collected from interviews with the key informants: staff who work for the center and customers who visited or used the center service, were analyzed in accordance with the chosen framework to understand the marketing management of the center and to explore gaps.

Pirada Techaratpong is with the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Suansunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok 10900, Thailand. (e-mail: pirada.te@ssru.ac.th, pirada.at.cmssru@gmail.com).



Fig. 2 The model of marketing management

This research's main conceptual framework was adapted from the concept of marketing management, by Philip Kotler [4]. It is also useful in analyzing marketing management process and identifying gaps. The marketing management consists of 5 stages.



Fig. 3 The painting exhibition in the learning center [5]

IV. Research Result

The research found that the Art and Culture Office supervising the cultural learning center has no official marketing management. However, the marketing management is partly covered in the overall business plan, strategic plan, and action plan. According to Kotler's model, the marketing management process can be divided into 5 stages: missions and vision, situation analysis, planning, marketing strategy design and implementation, and evaluation. The marketing concept has long been introduced to its policy but not apparently put into action due to inflexible system. Some gaps are found among the process. First, at planning stage, it lacks specific marketing plan and marketing objectives and it had too many target groups of audiences. These issues resulted in ineffective marketing activities. Second, at marketing strategy planning stage, it was found that the marketing mix: product, price, place and promotion were mainly designed to comply with the overall policies rather than respond to the wants and the needs of the audiences/ customers and the environmental factors. Third, at evaluation stage, there were no specific indicators and methods to measure the effectiveness of the marketing activities.

In order to enhance the overall performance including the marketing activities and better achieve the objectives of the learning center, it is necessary that marketing is applied to the organization planning and the marketing is managed in a systemic manner as marketing helps learning centers better respond to the customer's wants and needs [6] and the situation. After the marketing management of the Art and Culture Office is analyzed and some gaps are identified, guidelines for marketing management in each stage for the centers are provided as follows

A. Vision and Missions

It is essential that the learning center put the vision and missions at the center of the overall marketing management. Every element of the plan, especially strategies need to be in accordance with the vision and mission to fulfill the objectives.

B. Situational Analysis

The managers and planners need to thoroughly analyze the situation by using SWOT analysis. Internal and external factors must be included. However, negative factors should not be the main focuses.



Fig. 4 The costume exhibition in the learning center

C. Marketing Planning

This stage consists of objective setting, segmentation and positioning. The learning center ought to set the marketing objectives in accordance with the vision, the missions and also the internal and external factors from SWOT analysis. The managers and planners should utilize the strengths and opportunities while reduce weaknesses and create remedies for threats. In segmentation, the center should focus on some certain target groups of audiences, students and working people who are interested in arts and culture. The center should position itself uniquely by focusing on the history of

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the mansion, the royal family and the lifestyles of the old days, which are the identity of the center, and audience participation.

D.Marketing Strategy Planning and Implementation

The center needs to develop a holistic plan for marketing strategies and the strategies must be related to the marketing objectives. The marketing strategies consist of 4 elements, called marketing mix: product, price, place and promotion.

The center needs to develop products to match the needs and wants of the target customer groups in order to attract more customers and fulfill the objective of the center in cultural promotion and education. For instance, the center should change the theme of the permanent exhibition to the history of the mansion, portraying the lives of the princess and court ladies. Moreover, the center should host more temporary exhibitions and the theme should be in accordance with social trends and the interests of the target groups to attract both new and old visitors. Both types of exhibitions should be interactive, encouraging visitor participation.



Fig. 5 Thai mask exhibition in the learning center

For price, the center may charge some customer group some admission fee at various prices. The merchandises should be sold at relatively affordable price, but the cost production must be covered.

For place, the center should be open on weekends to attract working-people and family groups. The venue should also be renovated to be more suitable for sustainable uses for exhibitions and other activities.

For promotion, it is necessary that the communication methods used are cost-effective as the center is a non-profit organization. For public relations, cost-effective communication methods should be prioritized. The center focuses more on social media, such as websites and facebook, as they are inexpensive and effective in building a relationship with customers. Apart from online methods, offline methods, such as pamphlets and posters, are still important. The center needs to ensure that all the media are informative, attractive and updated. To create effective sales-promotions, the center should cooperate with other organizations, such as learning centers, cultural centers and tourism organizations, in creating campaigns for visiting promotion. Above all, it is essential that all the marketing strategies are planned holistically and measurements are set during the planning.

E. Evaluation

The evaluation process consists of planning, data collection and evaluation. During planning, the managers and planners need to identify the target, the indicators and milestones, data collecting methods and evaluation period for evaluating marketing activities. However, to identify what data to collect, the planners need to consider the limits of time and resources.



Fig. 6 Thai puppet exhibition in the learning center

V. Conclusion

The research suggests that if these guidelines would attract more audiences, generate interests in arts and culture among the publics and also support the Art and Culture Office and also the cultural learning center in achieving its overall goal and mission as an effective learning center.

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