

## **Adoption and Applying of Experiential Marketing in branding the programmes of Higher Education Institution to prospective millennial students in the future conditions**

**Manoj M S<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Ritika Sinha<sup>2</sup>, Priyadarshini B A<sup>3</sup>**

*<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, <sup>2</sup>Senior Assistant Professor, <sup>3</sup>Research Scholar,*

*Canara Bank School of Management Studies, PG Department of Management Studies, Bangalore University, Central College Campus, Dr. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru (India)*

### **ABSTRACT:**

*Higher Education Institutions may still be using the traditional marketing tools in order to create a better experience for the prospective students. With the technological development taking place, millennial students are less interested in the traditional marketing, as they are avoiding the advertising using the ad blockers, and paying more for the premium subscription and ignoring the bill boards which are being displayed in the city. Prospective students are aligning themselves to the technology and love to try out the newer experiences. Traditional marketing tools are becoming obsolete as against the technologies and HEIs are in need of changes in marketing their programmes.*

*In order to give out an optimum level of experience for the prospective students, experiential marketing can be applied to address the changes that are taking place and can be focused to enhance the students experience with the HEIs and their programmes.*

*Experiential marketing can become an important tool in the futuristic conditions for the higher education institutions. It may provide prospective students make an active decision to engage with the institution's programmes. Prospective students wish to be part of the experience and they can share with other students firsthand unlike the traditional marketing.*

*This paper outlines the description of experiential marketing and its possible application in enhancing the experience of student before enrolling for the programmes being offered in the higher education institutions.*

**Keywords:** *Experiential Marketing, Higher Education Institutions, Student Experience*

# Second International Conference on Nexgen Technologies

Sengunthar Engineering College, Tiruchengode, Namakkal Dist. Tamilnadu (India)



8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> March 2019

[www.conferenceworld.in](http://www.conferenceworld.in)

ISBN : 978-93-87793-75-0

## I. INTRODUCTION

Many higher education institutions are finding very difficult to reach the millennial generation, as they are not paying much attention to the traditional marketing. Millennial students are looking for something different, and they prefer experiences over traditional marketing, this phenomenon is making difficult for the institutions to reach and understand the millennial prospective students.

Millennial students have become tech-savvy, where they block the advertisements when using the search engines to gather information about a particular course or programme. Traditional approaches in advertising are becoming obsolete and there is a need for a newer marketing campaign. Experiential marketing can be an amazing way to reach and engage the millennial students, because it can give valuable insights on the experience of the programmes that are being engaged by the prospective students.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The experience which are created by the brand experience, are usually associated with a brand. As this often leads one to brand loyalty and increased brand equity with stronger possibility for future sales (Wood, 2009). Many marketers are arguing that experiential marketing has the possibility of being more powerful and effective than any other kind of marketing (The Huffington Post, 2017)

An increase in the influential role of experience in evaluating the brand encourages brands to use different strategies from the traditional advertising in order to create a deep meaning on customer's mind (Cliffe; Motion, 2004)

Growing number of competitors have rendered organisations to increase their number of offerings to the customers, this move has made the organisations to differentiate themselves by providing products and services. In order to have a competitive edge over the competitors, organisations are being pressured by the market to come up with experiences that can stimulate the target customer's emotion and sensation (Gentile, Spiller and Noci, 2007)

Experiential marketing has the ability to enable the customers to experience and be directly involved as the main body by creating a kind of unforgettable feeling which can satisfy their needs mentally to the greatest extent in order to win customer trust and loyalty (Liu, 2006)

Several studies by various authors indicate that there is a positive correlation between experiential marketing and purchase intention. These findings show that through experiential marketing, customers are able to provide an immediate feedback on the products. The potential customer will have the full insight on the functions, safety and price of the products. Experiential marketing has the ability to establish an interactive relationship between customers and brands and they are likely to have positive evaluations of these brands. Hsieh and Li, 2008; Blackwell, Miniard and Engel, 2006; Holbrook (2000).

# Second International Conference on Nexgen Technologies

Sengunthar Engineering College, Tiruchengode, Namakkal Dist. Tamilnadu (India)



8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> March 2019

[www.conferenceworld.in](http://www.conferenceworld.in)

ISBN : 978-93-87793-75-0

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research paper is exploratory in nature, where it provides insight on the experiential marketing, which can be adopted and applied by the HEIs and limited research has been done pertaining to this topic. The data for the study were gathered from journals, articles and expert opinions.

- **Journals:** Data was collected through journals, where it gave significant insight on the experiential marketing and its possible scope which can be applied in branding the programmes to the prospective students
- **Expert Opinions:** Expert Opinions were collected from online webinars which gave an insight on how higher education institutions can apply experiential marketing in branding the programmes effectively
- **Articles:** Articles were reviewed to gain information on how experiential marketing can be implemented in the higher education institutions

After gathering all the data, content analysis technique was used in order to systematically review it up to manageable data which was correlated to the topic.

## IV. RESEARCH GAP

After reviewing the literature through the content analysis technique, studies were focused on the application of experiential marketing in higher education institutions. There is a significant gap between the student engagement and experience that are driven during the course of enrollment to the programme.

Every HEIs advertise their uniqueness of their programmes, in order to advertise, institutions use many of the marketing methods like traditional and non-traditional methods. Traditional methods of marketing are becoming obsolete where students are less interested in the advertisements and institutions are struggling to grab the attention of the prospective students. This research paper highlights the application of experiential marketing and also shares the insight on the opportunities that present itself during the course of marketing.

## V. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In order to market or brand programmes of particular institution to the millennials, institutions must understand the students' desires and should make the strategies accordingly to give out the best experience. For this very reason, institutions are depending on the utilization of market research to help them acquire the information on students' requirement.

Over the years, institutions have been using traditional methods of marketing their programmes and these methods are becoming obsolete where institutions may fail to create a better experience to the prospective millennial students while giving out the information. Millennial students are less interested in the advertising as they are aligning themselves to the technology and immerse with the newer experiences while getting the information. This paper

# Second International Conference on Nexgen Technologies

Sengunthar Engineering College, Tiruchengode, Namakkal Dist. Tamilnadu (India)



8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> March 2019

[www.conferenceworld.in](http://www.conferenceworld.in)

ISBN : 978-93-87793-75-0

highlights an alternative approach to create better experiences in the near future through the experiential marketing, a newer, innovative branch of marketing that captures the essence of students and focuses on creating an emotional connection with millennial students. It immerses them in experiences that engage the senses as possible and creates lasting impacts on their memory and enrollment decision.

## **VI. RATIONALE BEHIND APPLICATION OF EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING IN THE FUTURE CONDITIONS BY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

For the higher education institutions, experiential marketing is still a new concept, after the application of experiential marketing by corporate companies, higher education marketers are assuming that there is lot of potential in engaging all five senses of prospective millennial students which might spark emotions in the mind of prospective students that form lasting memories. It also presents an opportunity for the prospective students with the HEIs in person, and serves to be event-centric. By adding experiential elements, HEIs can enhance or complement their initiatives.

## **VII. EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING**

Experiential marketing is a form of marketing where it identifies and satisfies the customer needs and aspiration profitably, engaging them through authentic two-way communications that bring brand personalities to life and add value to the target audience.

As institutions are searching for new ways to engage prospective millennial students, experiential marketing steps into the mix with unique and fresh ways to reach mysterious millennial students. The experiential marketing provides the real experiences to the students with the programmes and the institution that drive the enrollment and increase the brand image and brand awareness among the millennial students.

## **VIII. MEETING STUDENT EXPECTATIONS WITH APPLICATION OF EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING**

With the arrival of new technologies, experiences of the students are changing constantly and the expectations of students have also changed. Due to this phenomenon, HEIs can no longer afford to sit back and has to deploy resources, attention and investments in improving the student engagement to provide the best experience. Today, prospective millennial students evaluate the institutions based on range of parameters i.e. programmes, career and course delivery options, infrastructure, placement options, students are becoming more concerned about the entire process.

# Second International Conference on Nexgen Technologies

Sengunthar Engineering College, Tiruchengode, Namakkal Dist. Tamilnadu (India)



8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> March 2019

[www.conferenceworld.in](http://www.conferenceworld.in)

ISBN : 978-93-87793-75-0

With the application of experiential marketing, institutions can directly integrate the students experience with the marketing activities of institutions. Institutions can engage prospective millennial students in various marketing activities, thus creating moments in which they are intensely engaged with the institutions brand.

Experiential marketing can become a perfect strategy to intensify the institutions connection with the millennial students.

## IX. FUTURE OF EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING

Millennial students crave for the authentic experiences with the HEIs, and experiential marketing will become a very important marketing strategy. Institution marketers must think of new and creative ways to interact with the millennial students. This may involve livestreaming or virtual reality devices. Regardless of innovative strategy that institution chooses, it must encourage students to share their experience with their network via social media.

## X. CONCLUSION

Gaining the attention of millennial students is not an easy task for the higher education institution. In order to maximize the brand awareness of the higher education institution in the minds of the students, they would have to understand the minds of the students for them to come up with the suitable student experience strategy to influence them for the enrollment of courses or programmes.

Experiential marketing has the potential to become an important tool for the higher education institutions to engage with the students in order to give out better experience. With the influence of marketing strategies, students' brain may store up the best experience of institutions and maximizes the chance of enrollment.

## XI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to Dr. Ritika Sinha, Senior Assistant Professor, Canara Bank School of Management Studies, Bangalore University for her guidance, and advice which helped to improve the present paper; Mrs. Priyadarshini B A, Guest Faculty and Research Scholar, Canara Bank School of Management Studies for helping in collating the required information for writing this research article.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Ashworth, P. And Lucas, U. (2000) Achieving Empathy and Engagement: a practical approach to the design, conduct and reporting of phenomenographic research, Studies in Higher Education, Volume 25 Number 3, pp 295-308.
- [2] CLIFFE, S., and J. MOTION (2004), Building Contemporary Brands: A Sponsorship-based strategy. Journal of Business Research, p. 1069-1077.

# Second International Conference on Nexgen Technologies

Sengunthar Engineering College, Tiruchengode, Namakkal Dist. Tamilnadu (India)



8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> March 2019

[www.conferenceworld.in](http://www.conferenceworld.in)

ISBN : 978-93-87793-75-0

- [3] Coomes M. D. (2004) Understanding the historical and cultural influences that shape generations, New Directions for Student Services, Volume 2004 Issue 106, pp 17-31.
- [4] GENTILE, C., N. SPILLER, and G. NOCI (2007), How to Sustain the Customer Experience: An Overview of Experience Components that Co-create Value With the Customer. European Management Journal, 25, no.5.
- [5] Nyachoti, V. (2013). Critical Success Factors in the Marketing of an Educational Institution : A Comparison of Institutional and Student Perspectives. Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, 10(2), 39–57.
- [6] Sewe, S.A. (2014) Perceived Factors Influencing Success of Marketing Activities of Universities in Kenya: A Case of Business Schools in Nairobi Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, 8(2), 29–35.