

## **ID-E Berlin**

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### **Exploring Difference: Positioning your Institution – Marketing and Branding**

#### Canadian Workshop

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#### Summary

- THE CHANGING FACE OF CANADIAN EDUCATION
  - o 2016-2026 – a decline in the overall number of university-age students is projected
  - o an increase in the numbers of immigrant students is projected: + 25% is expected in Toronto and Vancouver
- INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION IS A STRATEGY IN CANADA
- BRANDING
  - o Creating a unique brand and marketing that brand effectively is essential, since the brand has an impact on everything the institution does (eg ability to recruit students and staff, the quality of studies, the institution's reputation in its community) – and the customer's actual experience has a huge impact on the brand!
  - o Examples:
    - University of Ottawa: "Canada's University" (bilingual university in Canada's capital city)
    - McMaster University: "Learning Without Borders" (emphasis on innovation and research)
    - Dalhousie University: "Inspiring Minds" (emphasis on personal and intellectual growth)
    - TRU: much consultation undertaken to find the right brand:
      - "Now This is University!" – domestic brand
      - "Where the University Meets the World" – international brand

- **BUILDING THE BRAND**
  - TRU's brand embodies flexibility, small classes, personal attention, "gold-plated service" for students
  
- **MARKETING STRATEGIES**
  - Some examples:
    - Familiarisation tours for students, parents, agents, investors
    - Pre-university ESL courses ON CAMPUS, leading straight into university study
    - Honorary doctorates for individuals who can appropriately represent the institutions unique qualities and values
    - Marketing materials (including website and documentation) in 15 languages
    - Student advisors who speak various languages to better assist students
  
- **THE IMPORTANCE OF FINDING A NICHE**
  - All Canadian universities are trying to differentiate themselves from others, regionally, nationally and internationally
  
- **QUESTION**
  - How does an institution find the right niche?
  
- **ANSWER**
  - By using professional market research, setting up advisory committees in each professional sector, working closely with government ministries (eg tourism), finding out what the demand is, then creating appropriate innovative educational programs
  
- **UNIQUENESS**
  - each institution must be UNIQUE
  - Thompson Rivers University (TRU) pays faculty members to develop new programs and find new specialised niches for the institution

- **QUESTION**
  - How do TRU professors react to this approach? Could this really work at a German University?
  
- **ANSWER**
  - The international office at TRU (“TRU World”) pays the salary of a liaison person who ensures a good flow of information between TRU World and the various faculties of the university. This person meets deans, professors and provost OFTEN to ensure that they are well-informed and able to participate in brainstorming, decision making and shaping ideas of the future of the institution. This way, they “buy in” – and this is essential for success.
  - TRU World also gives faculties special funding for every international student they accept.
  
- **QUESTION**
  - How long has the process of internationalisation taken, from research to branding, and has it been successful?
  
- **ANSWER**
  - Twenty years of internationalisation
  - Ten years with a new team
  - Balance between a business approach and an academic approach
  - Proof of success: as much funding is generated by international students as by domestic students – this reduces reliance on government funding
  - Results:
    - Increased number of source countries
    - Increased diversity of programs taught at TRU
    - Increased number of international students studying off-shore
    - Higher number of international students studying on-campus
    - International activity now an integral part of the University’s plan and strategy for the future
  
- **OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS**
  - Selection of professors
  - Credit transfers to and from TRU
  - Evaluation and selection of students
  - Constant monitoring of all aspects of internationalisation