



THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF MARKETING IN THE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH SECTOR



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Summary

A growing number of entities operating in the Polish sector of higher education and science and research aspire to have an active presence in foreign markets and even in the global market. This presence must be accompanied by thoughtful marketing strategies using effective marketing tools. The aim of the article is to indicate the possibility of using the knowledge of international marketing to increase the efficiency of the entities of the Polish sector of education and research. Particular attention was paid to the intercultural nature of the international marketing, especially in relation to the system to communicate with foreign customers in the Internet space. The article uses the following sources of information: official statistics, research reports, professional periodicals, case studies.

Keywords: marketing, internationalisation, universities, research institutes, communication, Internet

Introduction

The potential of the Polish higher-level education sector is currently set by public or private tertiary-level institutions providing bachelor, master and doctoral degree programmes on a full and part-time basis. According to the data of the Polish Central Statistical Office (CSE) "Universities and their finances in 2014"¹ there are 434 higher education institutions in Poland, 132 of which are public with 76% of students studying there (i.e. 1,110 thousand persons) and 302 private schools teaching 24% of the students (i.e. 359 thousand people). Over 63% of students are on full-time programmes. In the 2014/2015 academic year, the largest amount of students was studying at faculties related to business and administration, technical and engineering, and social sciences. It can be said that universities in Poland are operating on a very "over-crowded" market and the phenomenon of a deepening population decline and falling student numbers forces a more pro-active approach not only on the domestic but also the international market. International marketing, understood as the intrinsic internationalisation programme in the image strategy should bolster international ambitions expressed in the development strategies of many leading Polish universities. The internationalisation of the image strategy of a university particularly addresses such actions as:²

- 1) Image internationalisation, that is communicating to the environment the values that are associated with international ambitions and aspirations;
- 2) Shaping the identity of a university based on distinguishing features indicating activity and achievements of international importance;
- 3) Selection of suitable marketing actions and tools that will enable the formation of an international identity and international image of the university.

Higher education institutions not only belong to the sector of education but also constitute organisations that comprise the research and development (R&D) sector which in the age of globalisation and development based on knowledge and its exchange is characterised by a increase in internationalisation of actions. The Polish R&D sector is comprised of a total 3122 organisations (CSO, 2015), conducting basic and applied research

(including industrial) and development research. Some of those entities are exclusively performing R&D functions (e.g. research institutes), while others are conducting parallel educational activity (aforementioned higher education institutions), cultural (libraries), or even medical (hospitals) or tourist (national parks) activity. In a statistical context, the following entities can be identified in the overall structure of the R&D sector³:

- 1) Scientific establishments and research and development entities is the amount of 554, that is entities whose basic activity is the conduct of scientific research and development work, which include 70 scientific institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences, 118 research institutes, and 30 support units like libraries and archives;
- 2) Higher education establishments — 215 units conducting R&D activity;
- 3) Economic operators, comprising of 2,096 enterprises mainly in the industry sector; which apart from their core activities also do R&D;
- 4) The remaining units — 227 institutions conducting research and development activities alongside their core operations which were not taken into account above, for example, hospitals, national parks and botanical gardens, as well as government institutions and agencies.

The potential of the R&D sector in Poland mainly results from a highly qualified workforce with completed higher education in science and technology. According to the 2015 data of the Central Statistical Office of Poland, the largest number of scientists in the Polish R&D sector, that is 37,113 workers (i.e. 52% of the total headcount in the R&D sector) operate in higher education institutions. Research institutes employ 8,420 persons (12%), and scientific institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences — 4,873 individuals, which totals to 7% of the total employees. It should be noted that a clear rise in employment in the R&D departments of economic operators has been witnessed over the last ten years, reaching a level of 17,968 persons (which gives 25% of the total number of employees in the whole R&D sector). In light of the above overview, definitely the greatest human potential in the R&D field in Poland rests in universities. As for the value of works in the public R&D sector, it totalled PLN 14.5 m (2013), 38% of which (PLN 5.5 m) was generated in the enterprise sector, 21% (PLN 4.5 m) in the research institute and research and development sector, and 29% (PLN 4.2 m) in higher education⁴.

Researcher findings to date clearly indicate that the directions and ambit of the internationalisation of the organisation is set out by the international orientation of its executives, in the sense of "a set of attitudes towards internationalisation issues, a distinctive philosophy relating to the activity of organisations on international markets — in other words — the strategic dispositions of executives"⁵. An international orientation gives rise to certain consequences for the formulation of development strategies because it means it is necessary to include internationalisation ambitions in the mission and strategic objectives. Similarly, as pointed out earlier in relation to universities, the internationalisation of the images of research institutes is associated with the internationalisation of the tools shaping the identity of these organisations in a foreign environment and means giving international activity a significant role. The stronger involvement of institutes on the international arena requires their greater involvement in marketing efforts and activities and synchronising them with the institute's general strategy for development.

International marketing strategies in the education and research and development sector

The education sector and the research and development sector (R&D) is considered — in line with the sectorial division of the economy — to the so-called services sector, which today plays a leading role in the socio-economic development of highly developed countries in the world. The prevalence of the service industries in the economies of those countries is especially expressed in the increased share of services in the employment structure and the generation of GDP — namely, over 70% of the share in GDP (Poland — 62%) and close to 80% in the employment structure (Poland — 57%)⁶. The higher education sector — referred to here as the higher education sector — and the research and development sector (R&D) are of particular importance for the development of a knowledge-based economy. This is demonstrated by the contemporary changes taking place in the worldwide services sector of the 21st century, which are like megatrends, that is:

- The development of new information and communication technologies (ICT) and IT solutions transforming traditional service processes;

- The development of various forms of innovation: process, product, organisational or marketing (resulting in the shortening of the life cycle of many services);
- Rising importance of knowledge and information in the economy and the development of their supporting services (educational, R&D);
- High pace of development of services associated with business management;
- Internationalisation and globalisation of services;
- New business models using outsourcing and offshoring in their services;
- Continuously increasing competition in the services sector;
- Appearance of forms of networking between entities.

The mentioned megatrends reveal the clear need for development of the education sector and the R&D sector towards their internationalisation, to consolidate their image and strengthen their market position, but also to build possible forms of international cooperation and solidarity in the field of education, science, research and international business.

However, literature indicates that the assessment of the potential for internationalisation and globalisation and the identification of desirable strategies for marketing activities on foreign markets is more complex in relation to service activity. Following P.R. Cateora and J.L. Graham, feasible marketing strategies for services on the international market that relate to the general marketing orientations can be formulated:

- 1) Domestic (national) marketing strategy,
- 2) Multinational marketing strategy,
- 3) Intra-regional marketing strategy,
- 4) Inter-regional marketing strategy,
- 5) Global marketing strategy,
- 6) Transnational marketing strategy⁷.

The choice of a specific marketing strategy may be limited by the features of a facility with service impact, according to which the following occur:

- 1) Services requiring direct contact, where people are the object — the physical presence of the service provider on the foreign market is required, in view of the possible forms of this presence;

- 2) Services the subject of which are tangible objects in the possession of purchasers — some of these services are connected with the physical location of the service provider on the foreign market but others can be delivered remotely;
- 3) Services based on knowledge and information, affecting the human intellect or the intangible assets of buyers — with the greatest globalisation potential, since they can be provided at a distance thanks to the development of ICT technologies.

The latter of the mentioned groups of services refers to the education and R&D sector, thus this sector can be attributed to have a relatively high globalisation potential. Therefore, the question arises as to the extent to which Polish operators in this sector have (are planning) global strategies, and the extent to which their presence on foreign markets signifies a different approach to strategy.

Table 1 shows the mentioned international marketing strategies and their more important features in relation to a specific international orientation, namely: ethnocentric, polycentric, regiocentric, geocentric (global) or its transnational (semi-global) variant.

Analysing the above variants of the international marketing strategy falling within particular international orientations, it can be stated that they are largely formed depending on the international ambitions of executives, which are expressed in the development strategy of these organisations. This also concerns universities and research institutes, which is confirmed by earlier research of selected tertiary education establishments and research institutes in Poland conducted by the Author in 2012. As a result of this analysis and evaluation of international orientations followed by these entities, two different international orientations were identified in the education and R&D sector⁸:

- 1) In relation to universities — a strong link was established between Polish higher education establishments and countries in Europe, which meant adopting a *regiocentric orientation* and the use of marketing appropriate to this orientation, which had an appreciable effect on the indicators of their internationalisation;
- 2) Relative to research institutes — it was indicated that we are dealing with a relatively low scope of internationalisation of research institutes

observed on the basis of an analysis of the content posted on the websites of these institutes (mission, strategy), which signified a dominance of the *ethnocentric orientation* and the use of marketing adequate to this orientation.

Table 1. Strategies for the international marketing of services

Strategies for the international marketing of services	Features of international marketing of service strategy
Ethnocentric orientation	
Domestic (national) marketing strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign market treated as a secondary in relation to home market, • marketing mix programs, procedures similar to those on the home market, • Purchaser needs are considered as similar to those on the home market (although socio-cultural differences may occur), • Adaptation of services by the service provider only to the extent necessary to meet buyer needs, minimisation of service adjustment.
Polycentric orientation	
Multinational marketing strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every foreign market independently treated as specific, • Needs and requirements of service providers are recognised as being different on national markets, • The individualisation of marketing mix programmes, alignment of procedures, • Adaptation of the offer of services, brands, communication, and forms of customer services to the needs of the foreign market.
Regiocentric orientation	
Strategy of intra-regional marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region treated as relatively homogenous (e.g. EU countries), • Similar consumer attitudes and behaviour in the region, • Standardisation of marketing mix programmes dominates, alignment of procedures, • Adjustment of services imposed by legal provisions in force, barriers on the foreign market,
Strategy of inter-regional marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific regions (e.g. Europe) are treated as heterogeneous areas, • Individualisation of marketing mix and procedures, • Involvement of local staff (managers, service providers).
Geocentric orientation	
Global marketing strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World market treated as a potential market for operations, • Highly integrated marketing strategy (decisions made in company headquarters — in country of origin), • Standardisation of marketing mix programme and procedures prevails.

Cont. table 1.

Strategies for the international marketing of services	Features of international marketing of service strategy
Transnational orientation	
Transnational marketing strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifying submarkets and segments of customers that are transnational in nature,• Marketing mix programmes and procedures that take into account (in controlled scope) the specificities of submarkets,• Selective standardisation of marketing mix — individualisation possible to an extent.

Source: Developed on the basis of: Duliniec E., *Marketing międzynarodowy*, PWE, Warsaw 2009, pp. 27–29; Cateora P.R. and Graham J.L., *International Marketing*, McGraw Hill-Irwin, New York 2007, pp. 355–360.

Continuing the aspect of research on the marketing strategies of universities and research institutes, the Author took on the next research thread connected with the internationalisation of their marketing actions. It consisted of an evaluation of international communication of those entities in light of an analysis of their websites in terms of their availability in a foreign language. These studies were performed at the end of 2015 and their results have been presented in the following part of the article.

Communication as a tool of the international marketing of services

In a functional approach, marketing communication is defined as the "the whole of operations with the aid of which an enterprise delivers information in different forms and with different content to various target groups about itself and its market offer as well as its activities and action, which are aimed at obtaining feedback and conveying feedback, being an expression of the reaction of recipients to the undertaken actions"⁹. In a research approach, however, marketing communication is seen as a collection of tools that form a complex composition with defined characteristics enabling the coordination and achievement of goals and of company function¹⁰. An important aspect of examining the communication

system with the surroundings is its integration. The definition coined by L. Porcu, S. del Barrio-Garcia, and Ph. Kitchen deems that integrated marketing communication is a "coherent, transparent, communication exploiting the synergies to various stakeholders to empower the organisation to build beneficial relationships with the environment in the short, medium and long-term"¹¹. Therefore, it is important to stress that the marketing communication of universities and research institutes in an international environment should also be coherent and transparent, both on the level of the marketing mix elements, as well as on the level of the collection of communication mix tools applied. The aim of integrated marketing communication of these entities should be building beneficial relationships with the international environment based on a consistently built international image. Of course, both traditional measures and communication channels such as advertising, personal sales, public relations, sponsoring, remain at the disposal of the entity, but in the age of the Internet and the dynamic development of social media, the palette of communication means with the surroundings is continuing to expand.

The effect of the impact of new technologies and the Internet on marketing is marketing communication harnessing permanent communication between the enterprise and the market. The use of new channels of communication may be viewed in different ways, namely:

- 1) The use of the Internet solely as an additional communication channel in services, with the aim of their streamlining;
- 2) The use of the Internet in active, bilateral communication in order to increase the effectiveness of promotion and communication in services, building databases on the market;
- 3) The use of the possibilities of the Internet both for communication and sales purposes.

In light of the foregoing, operations in an international environment requires professionally prepared communication programmes with the market, internally integrated and cohesive with other market actions. Particular attention is paid in communication to the cultural demands that constitute an important context for the communication process with entities of the international environment. Furthermore, the service

provider should also be aware of the differences resulting from differences in the cultural setting of potential foreign markets. This phenomenon is referred to as cultural distance in the sense of managers perceiving the differences between the culture of their own country and the culture of the target country.

It is also worth noting that despite the development of interactive communication tools based on Web 2.0 technology, in particular the growth of social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, discussion forums and the blogosphere), the lead role in terms of information on the Internet is taken by websites presenting companies and their offers in hypertext: text, images, graphics, sound, animation and video sequences.

The general website design principles should always be followed which include:

- 1) logical and transparent text structure,
- 2) Precise text format on the screen,
- 3) Proper identification of the owner of the portal,
- 4) Interactive elements,
- 5) Different language versions¹².

The last distinguished rule, namely, the availability of corporate websites in different language versions may still seem to be too high or even unnecessary in times of dominance of the English language. However, according to the World Stats website, the languages most commonly used by Internet users include: English (28.6%), Chinese (23.2%), Spanish (7.9%), Arabic (4.8%), Portuguese (4.3%), Russian (3.9%), French (2.8%) and Malay (2.7%). Therefore, the English language only covers a mere 30% of Internet users and the growth dynamics of the number of remaining users has been very high over the last ten years, particularly in the area of the Arabic, Malay and Portuguese languages¹³.

Summing up, the experiences of international business entities show that the international customer expects information posted on the Internet also in their national language. Thus, the following questions arise:

- 1) Could the lack of availability of educational and research and development institution websites in many language versions prevent

from reaching a diverse audience of their offer and potentially hinder communication with the international environment?

- 2) What requirements should a professionally prepared foreign language version of a website meet?

These issues will be discussed in the next part of the paper in which the websites of ten of the best Polish universities and eight of the research institutes with a presence on the international arena have been analysed.

Professionally prepared foreign language version of higher education and research institute websites

Professional adaptation of a foreign website to meet the expectations of international recipients means — in light of knowledge on effective intercultural communication — the need to take the local cultural context and local customs of the target audience into account. Studies carried out in this area have enabled a set of guidelines to be developed facilitating professional creation of foreign language versions of corporate websites. They include:

- The possibility of easily and quickly selecting the language by persons visiting the website without having to scroll down to look for the desired language version;
- Availability of the website in the appropriate number of languages;
- Professional website translation that takes into account, for instance, the length of the text intended for translation, and
- the cultural differences as regard the reception of images and colours;
- Making the websites portable device friendly (*Smartphones, tablets*)¹⁴.

Another challenge after the creation of a foreign language version of the website is content management. Here, there are two possibilities — the first consists of independently managing one's own website and the second of outsourcing the management of the foreign language version. Experience shows that the more foreign languages a website has, the more difficult it is to manage its content individually by company employees. Although

companies do use translation engines of the content on their Polish websites, the quality of those translations is very poor (at least at present).

Analysing the role of foreign language websites in the system of communication at Polish higher education and research institutes with an international presence, the visible phenomenon of the growth of the internationalisation of these entities over the last few years should be stressed from the outset. Thus, the issue of websites in foreign languages is gaining in importance and in relation to universities it is peculiar since on the one hand it pertains to an extensive educational offer for students and a R&D offer on the other. research institutes, however, operate only in the latter environment, namely business entities and various institutions.

Analysis of foreign language university websites

Observation of the practices of Polish universities indicates that two approaches are being carried out in the process of education of foreign students:

- An approach based on English language unification of the education for students — both foreign and Polish, an example of this is the educational offer within the Erasmus programme that was posted on the website only in the English language;
- An approach taking the linguistic diversity of foreign students into account, and consequently posting information on university websites in different languages but with two learning options, one in the English and one in the Polish language (the offer for students from the Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Turkey and China can serve as one example).

Table 2 summarises information on ten higher education establishments that had the leading places in the "internationalisation" category in Perspektywy 2015 (according to the positions specified in Table 2). It is worth recalling that this category according to the applied methodology includes: Study programmes conducted in foreign languages in the academic year, studying in foreign languages, student exchange (departures/arrivals), number of foreign students, number of academic

teachers from abroad, number of lectures conducted in foreign languages, and so-called "international recognition" resulting from the position of the establishment obtained in international league tables.

Table 2. Internationalisation of communication at Polish universities (according to the Perspektywy 2015 ranking)

University	Internationalisation of university	Main website	Availability in foreign language	Comments
1. Koźmiński University in Warsaw	100	www.kozminski.edu.pl	English	Entire website translated
2. Academy of Finance and Business Vistula	98,9	www.vistula.edu.pl	English Russian	Entire website translated
3. Collegium Civitas in Warsaw	85,8	www.civitas.edu.pl	English Russian Ukrainian	Entire website translated
4. Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan	70,8	www.amu.edu.pl	English	Translator for every view
5. Łazarski University in Warsaw	68,0	www.lazarski.pl	English	Entire website translated
6. Warsaw University of Technology	57,2	www.pw.edu.pl	English	Entire website translated
7. Medical University of Lublin	56,3	www.www.umlub.pl	English	Entire website translated
8. University of Warsaw	54,8	www.uw.edu.pl	English	Translator for every view
9. Poznan University of Medical Sciences	54,0	www.ump.edu.pl	English	Entire website translated
10. Wrocław University of Technology	53,5	ww.pwr.edu.pl	English	Translator for every view

Source: University websites (10/11/2015).

The analysis of websites of ten of the best Polish universities according to a ranking of Perspektywy magazine reveals — apart from two exceptions — the dominance of the English language version on their websites. Only two private universities, Collegium Civitas and the Academy of Finance and Business Vistula, have identified the segment of Russian and Ukrainian speaking students from Eastern Europe in their international environment (referred to as the regiocentric orientation). As for the English language version, it has been made available by all higher education establishments. However, seven universities

adopted a "twin" English language version to a large extent corresponding to the Polish language version, thus, the whole content of the Polish website was made available in the English language. A new solution consisting of language translators was implemented by three large universities, however, their functionality is doubtful due to the time-consuming nature of the "clicks" for users, inaccuracies in translation and even missing fragments of website content. This approach was taken by large, multi-faculty public universities, namely the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, University of Warsaw and the Wrocław University of Technology and this corresponds to the geocentric orientation.

As was pointed out earlier, as many as 23.2 % of Internet users use the Chinese language, and this region gives rise to the considerable interest of universities. Interestingly enough, two website versions have been prepared in the Chinese language by two public universities of economics: The Wrocław University of Economics, which has made very fundamental information about the university available in the Chinese language (university showpiece), and the Cracow University of Economics, which presents much more extensive content in the Chinese language (e.g. relating to the fields of study offered). Several private schools of economics have also decided to make Chinese versions of their websites available (e.g. University of Business in Wrocław).

Analysis of foreign language research institute websites

An overview of the research institute websites enables similar observations to be made as in the case of universities. Among the eight entities distinguished in Table 3, as many as seven present geocentric data, making websites available in the English language. Four of these, however, have made the full versions of their native websites translated into the English language (Institute of Innovative Technologies EMAG, Institute of Aviation in Warsaw, Institute of Non Ferrous Metals, and Institute of Biopolymers and Chemical Fibres), and three institutes use translators which have to be launched at every viewing, which is an inconvenience to users. Only the Foundry Research Institute presents a polycentric approach, making its website available in as many as seven language versions: English, German, French, Spanish, Russian, Bulgarian and Chinese.

Table 3. Internationalisation of communication of research institutes — selected examples

Research institutions	Main website	Availability in foreign language	Comments
1. Central Mining Institute (CMI)	www.gig.eu	English	Translator for every view
2. Institute of Innovative Technologies EMAG	www.ibemag.pl	English	Entire website translated
3. Institute of Aviation in Warsaw	www.ilot.edu.pl	English	Entire website translated
4. Institute of Non-Ferrous Metals	www.imn.gliwice.pl	English	Entire website translated
5. Institute of Biopolymers and Chemical Fibres	www.ibwch.lodz.pl	English	Entire website translated
6. Foundry Research Institute	www.iod.krakow.pl	English German French Spanish Russian Bulgarian Chinese	Entire website translated
7. Institute of Power Engineering	www.iem.com.pl	English	Translator for every view
8. National Centre for Nuclear Research	ncbj.gov.pl	English	Translator for every view

Source: Websites of research institute (access 10/11/2015).

Summing up, the communication strategies on the Internet of research institutes using corporate websites is characterised by a dominance of the English language version. It is not difficult to guess that this environment has a preference for the English language in the field of research, innovation and development. However, it would be worth considering whether or not the adaptation of a website to the expectations of business customers (both present and future) located in various countries would be beneficial for the development of relationships and the building of an international image. This would involve taking the orientation into account like, for instance, a semi-global approach and adjusting Internet communication strategies sensitive to the cultural determinants of the international environment to it.

Summary

An analysis of the websites of higher education and research institute has revealed that different solutions in the scope of communication of content in a foreign language have been adopted on corporate websites. On the basis of the discussed examples, it can be stated that:

- 1) The most popular foreign language in communication with the foreign environment is the English language — this corresponds to a geocentric (global) orientation, without taking cultural, local differences in marketing communication into account;
- 2) Some of the entities have also made their main websites available in other foreign languages (mainly Central and Eastern European), basing on a professional translation of the comprehensive (sometimes partial, for instance, educational) content of their corporate websites, guided by a regiocentric or polycentric orientation;
- 3) "Built-in" language translators are a new solution but their functionality is limited since numerous individual clicks are required to view the page (and its sub-pages).

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