

## APEC Conference Abstract

### **Critical Success Factors in the Marketing of an Educational Institution - A comparison of institutional and student perspective's**

by

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The paper draws upon the findings of two large scale surveys. The first comprised 315 educational institutions from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and United States at all levels (higher education, VET, ELICOS and schools). The second, a sample of 800 students, both international and domestic, drawn from institutions at all levels throughout Australia.

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance they placed on a series of seventeen items that an examination of the literature and previous in-depth interviews identified as being critical to the success of educational institutions seeking to market themselves internationally. A factor analysis of these items in the organisational study identified four underlying dimensions:

1. **Promotion & Recruitment** - Use of private recruitment agents; Size of overseas advertising and promotion budget; Possession of offshore recruitment offices; Use of government information offices overseas; Size of international student enrolments.
2. **Image & Products**- Level of market profile or recognition; Strength of financial resources; Reputation for Quality; Size and influence of Alumni; Range of courses and programs.
3. **People & Culture** - Level of innovation within the institutions' culture; Level of customer orientation within culture; Effective use of information technology; Quality and expertise of staff; Level of technical superiority.
4. **Coalition & Forward Integration** - Possession of international strategic alliances; Possession of offshore teaching programs

The present paper examines the stability of these factors across the two samples and the relative importance placed upon these factors by both the institutions and the students. It provides a valuable insight into the perceptions of the two groups and identifies gaps between the perceptions of students and institutional marketing officials as to what is important in the selection of an educational institution. The implications of these findings for institutional international education marketing strategies are outlined.