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# Higher education establishment of culture and arts image as a key to its success

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*The purpose of the study is to identify the core of the main aspects and technologies of a higher education establishment of culture and arts image building. The article tries to generalize and classify these aspects and technologies according to the chosen specialty. The research methods consist of a set of the basic research principles: objectivity, systemic, multifactority, complexity, and for the purpose achievement, the following methods of the scientific cognition are used: descriptive and logical-analytical. Scientific novelty. The author of the article studies PR-technologies as a means of the higher educational institution of culture and arts positive image building. Conclusions The University image consists of many components. In its turn, public opinion about each of its components influences on the organization image building in general. To build an adequate strategy for the University image management, it is necessary to know which of them, due to the specifics of this organization, are of a priority importance. What particular components of the University image at the same time serve as criteria for choosing this organization. Modern domestic higher education establishment, both state and private, is in a constant search for a strategy to strengthen its own position in the educational services market. However, not everyone is aware of the fact the University positive image building to be one of the most effective strategies for achieving this goal.*

**Key words:** PR-technologies, image, corporate mission, corporate identity, event-management, the University authority image.

## Introduction

A modern society is characterized with a global usage of communication technologies as a means of the professional and educational activities efficiency increase. The largescaled social and economic transformations, taking place in our country in recent years, have raised an actual task to strengthen the status of the higher education itself and the higher education institutions, since education has always been a matter of prestige and not having which it is extremely difficult to claim for self-realization in a professional sphere of activity.

In particular, the target audience positive attitude to a higher education establishment of culture and arts is an important condition for its successful functioning and competitiveness. Therefore, higher education establishment positive image building is an extremely urgent task.

The scientific developments and researches of the post-Soviet period, carried out with the direct address to the “image” category, predominantly cover the issues on leadership and are mainly focused on the politicians image study (E. Egorova-Gantman, “The Image of the Leader”, 1994, E. Manjakin, “A Political Leader: the process of an image building”, 1994, etc.), public figures (R. Furs thesis on “The image of a political leader: the psychological structure and ways of its optimization”, 1996), political parties and associations (A. Garmonova, O. Podgornova). There are studies devoted to the high school teachers’ image formation (G. Busigina, L. Donskaya), education and educational services (N. Kadochnikov, “Corporate Image as a Competitiveness Factor of a Higher Professional Scientific Institution” 2005, E. Karpov, “Image in Education”, 2003). Foreign literature studies of the image predominantly covers general corporate aspects that can be applied to the educational institutions image (G. Dowling, L. Iacocca, D. Mercer, “Reputation of the company: creation, management and evaluation of efficiency”, 2003). The study on the aspects of the higher education establishments’ image is widely represented in the works of the foreign specialists (a collective work of E. Bekker, T. Burdelov, and Iu. Judanov on “Brand and Economic Resistance of the University”, 2012, etc.). However, most publications consider the image building mechanism to be imperfectly studied, in general, as a common corporate image with the involvement of public relations.

#### *Presenting the main material*

An excess of identical offers, a harsh competitive struggle, and a constantly changing demand for educational services characterizes the current educational services market. Therefore, it is extremely important to create such conditions (scientific and pedagogical, programme and methodical, material and technical) that would provide continuous communication activities, as well as its usage in the process image building and universities of culture and arts social prestige formation for the implementation of the following tasks:

- implementation of the higher education establishment of culture and arts development strategy through the means of communication usage in the aspect of differentiation of the activity areas according to the profiles of the scientific and educational, and artistic work;
- execution of the social mission, assigned to higher educational institutions of culture and arts, simultaneously been the main goal, its purpose, and the core of the higher specialized education system existence;
- implementation of the educational mission assigned to the universities in the field of education, science and culture;

- formation of a single communication space for the cooperation of professional, educational, socially-oriented institutions of culture and arts at the global, state and regional levels;
- formation of the University of culture and arts economic interest in obtaining financial profit, its professional level improvement.

The domestic system of education has entered a new phase in the development of relations with the state and society. The authorities in their legislative documents dealing with the field of education are implementing the policy of the system democratization, thus inducing the education sphere transformation into an investment and a competitive market. In these conditions, there is nothing left for the universities of culture and arts but simply to build their unique image, largely determining the competitiveness – attractiveness for the entrants, trust from employers and customers of the educational, scientific and artistic services.

The corporate brand management as a direction within the theory and practice of management appeared in the US more than half a century ago. Nowadays it is often referred to as the “management of a corporate identity”, having already formed its conceptual and categorical apparatus. The term interpretation is not always unambiguous, but the very fact of their usage is of great importance. Knowledge of terms allows orientating in solving methodological and practical tasks of the organizations image managing.

*Corporate mission* – is a socially significant status, a socially important role of the organization. The mission is reviewed, in particular, on the first pages of the annual report, booklets and directories, as well as in the organization heads speeches. The mission allows researchers and executives to look at the organization’s activities from above to ensure its a long-term competitiveness.

*Corporate individuality* – is values, thoughts and norms of behaviour shared in the company and determining the essence of an individual corporate culture. Corporate individuality –is what the company is in fact, an analogue of a person, and individuality of a person.

*Corporate identity* – is that the organization reports about itself, about its individuality. Everything the organization creates forms its identity. These are products and services, formal and informal communications, company policies, and its staff actions.

All this helps to build the educational institution image.

Under the notion of the higher education establishment image one should understand a stable, emotionally coloured vision of the higher educational institutions. This vision is formed by a group of people relying on the organization current image, having arose either as a result of the direct contact with the higher education institution, or on the basis of the information about the University received from other sources. In order to identify the mechanisms and capabilities of University image managing, it is

necessary to analyse what characteristics are the basic ones in building the University image, to visualize the structure of this image. The traditional components of the University image are as follows:

- the University’s educational services (the demand on the offered specialties, quality of teaching, the prestige of diplomas, the cost of the services provided, employment opportunities);
- the University’s scientific and pedagogical staff (appearance, social and demographic characteristics, general cultural level, competence);
- the University’s founder / head (appearance, social and demographic, and psychological characteristics);
- the University’s students (appearance, lifestyle, general cultural level);
- the University’s internal social and psychological characteristics (organization culture, the collective social and psychological climate);
- the University’s social characteristics (social aspects of the University);
- the University’s visual characteristics (architecture, interior design, corporate style elements, staff appearance);

For any educational establishment to master the science and art of its own image building it is necessary the “Public Relations” discipline to be included to the students’ Academic Curriculum; an organization’s PR-department to be created for a purposeful and a long-term work in this direction.

Practice has shown that PR-departments can make a significant contribution to the management and marketing practices of an educational institution. The key to success is not only awareness, but also a consistent, continuous operation of the department. An integral part of the educational establishment management is its educational and creative services positioning. This is a positive public opinion formation about the University of culture and arts, information space creation for media relations establishment and support, corporate image building, advertising and PR-actions preparation and conduction, accessible Internet information, information implementation of significant educational, scientific and creative projects.

Depending on the external conditions and the goal, higher education establishment makes its own strategy for image building and organizes the process of communication with various groups of the public.

In particular, L. V. Danilenko offers to consider a purposefully created image as a set of the following components:

- popularity and reputation of the educational institution;
- consumer inquiry changes response rate;
- innovative potential and its realization;
- educational programs prestige;
- educational institution advertising policy;
- international collaboration development and availability level;
- financial capacity [3];

Thus, for an external image building we distinguish the following categories of the external forms:

*Corporate identity (corporate style)* — is a set of elements, an object can be recognized and memorized. The corporate identity elements are visual (colour, form, font); tactile (material, fabric texture or paper); audio (rhythm, timbre). Additional meanings include the elements of the image symbol — the name, anthem, and flag. Not only our University has its own flag and anthem, but also some of its faculties do. These are precisely the symbols to be used during different events — conferences, ceremonies, days of faculties, etc.

Style and theme are the basis of the corporate identity. The subject of the corporate topics can be mission, values, purpose, strategy, etc.

Together with the employees' appearance, the form of behaviour, the language of communication, actions, and typical organization of customs (rites and ceremonies, etc.) are of particular importance. Such factors as qualification, teaching staff professional qualities; age composition directly influence on the higher education establishment collective image building.

No less important role in the University's positive image building plays a University's authority appropriate image, being a peculiar face of the University, its brand. To create the authority image it is necessary to use products of his/her activity (scientific achievements, creative victories); to strengthen the basic attributes: to make the physical image more effective; character — steady; style — able to surprise. That is the way the "star strategy" arises — a certain PR method. Culture and arts are the areas with the personality and individuality to be of primarily importance. The technology of the image promotion into the broad masses makes the following statements be important:

- creation of advertising products with the person photos, his/her creative or scientific collective: calendars, booklets, posters, notebooks, banners, etc.; video material about creative activity: concerts, tours, conferences, exhibitions, etc. (depending on the human activity sphere); plots broadcasting on television; information in the media about new projects and their implementation;
- creative meetings with the communication participants: schoolchildren, colleagues from the relevant spheres of activity, administration representatives, etc.

Due to the PR media campaign, any of these arrangements become events. Together with the University's authority image promotion, there takes place the advertising idea "commercialization" for a broad public opinion.

The University's positioning can be implemented through event-management with the involvement of the target audience. For example, the "You" competitions jury participation, or festive events, with his/her opinion about the institution or organization's activities to become a priority.

Currently, one of the positive image building tools is the organization of the events. A well-organized event attracts the media and the public attention.

Exhibitions (photo or decorative arts), flash mobs, festivals, contests, concerts, etc. can be organized within the framework of the University's culture and arts artistic events.

The event-management makes it possible to discover new names, promote new performances, paintings, creative or scientific projects, films, brands, creative ideas.

The University's image made by the public may base on facts and rumours; it may be clear or fuzzy, positive or negative.

It must be remembered that different groups of the public (entrants, employers, journalists, competitors) do not equally perceive a higher education establishment; they have different requirements for it, different evaluation criteria. Students are interested in prestige, an opportunity for an interesting student life, a guarantee of employment; parents look for a high quality education, moderate cost of education, scholarship, a hostel availability; employers demand high level of professional training of graduates. These peculiarities of the target groups' expectations must be taken into account.

The graduate image is a no less important element of the higher educational institution's perfect image building. In the eyes of the public, a graduate is the face of the institution, a criterion and indicator of its effectiveness. It is necessary to popularize the educational institution activities, to highlight its successes, career and professional growth of graduates, to invite them to master classes, artistic and educational events as guests, jury members, experts, etc.

The image of the educational institutions is also the image of the University's authority/founder. This is a figure with own charisma and leadership ambitions. T. Yu. Lebedeva states that on the basis of contradictions, coincidences and contradictions, the experts try to derive the patron communication logics, which ... is capable to "humanize the enterprise", identifying it with the person who personifies it... The patrons were the first to pay attention to colossal resources, consisting of properly organized communications and public relations [8, p. 156].

A well-known French PR-specialist, a founder of the highest private school of communication in Paris, F. Bouari [1] distinguishes the following elements of the basis for the leader's success:

- a unique temperament;
- an incredible character;
- charisma and eccentricity.

One should remember that it is not possible to consider everything while building the authority's image. The first person forms a top management

team, he selects to feel comfortable in different aspects: the culture of management, the vision of the world picture, the areas of interests, and the sense of what a quality management should be. In Ukraine, the corporation's brand is associated with the first person: the person enter the most important deals, banks provide loans. The organization corporate culture is its leader reflection, thus building the chief's image requires a long time, consistency and harmony of the image with all the elements constituting the organization identity.

In our opinion, the image effective management should be carried out at the University's first contact of with the target audience — entrants. In our University, such events as: Open Doors, exhibitions, conferences have become traditional.

Comprehensive and artistic schools, gymnasiums, and lyceums graduates are invited to the accounting concerts of the Departments creative groups. They can not only get acquainted with the education process results (musical, choreographic performances, the work of actors, directors, designers, photographers, etc.), but also communicate with students, teachers, get a detailed information about the admission rules to higher education, as well as social protection, assistance and privileges for the students from low-income families, orphans, etc.

A set of such activities creates a stable, emotionally coloured University's image, which can be decisive when choosing an educational institution and the future profession.

### *Conclusions*

Thus, we may see that the University's image consists of many components. Each of its components, in turn, influences on the organization image building as a whole. However, in order to build an adequate strategy for managing the University's image, it is necessary to know which of them, due to the specifics of this organization, to be of the priority. What components of the University's image are at the same time serve as criteria for choosing this organization?

Modern domestic higher education establishment, both public and private, is in constant search for a strategy to own position strengthening in the educational services market. However, not everyone is aware of the fact that one of the most effective strategies for achieving this goal is the University's positive image building. In the West organization's image management has long been an integral part of the strategic management. It should be noted that any organization image, based on external and internal characteristics perception, is rather stable. In spite of the fact many educational institutions to be usually deprived of the opportunity to use traditional PR tools (for example, participation in exhibitions), at the same time, there is a possibility to hold Open Days, master classes, forums, meetings of graduates, olympiads, etc.

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## ІМІДЖ ВИЩОГО НАВЧАЛЬНОГО ЗАКЛАДУ КУЛЬТУРИ І МИСТЕЦТВ ЯК ЗАПОРУКА ЙОГО УСПІХУ

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*Мета дослідження – виявити сутність основних аспектів і технологій створення іміджу вищого навчального закладу культури і мистецтв. Здійснити спробу їх узагальнення та класифікації у відповідності до обраного фаху. Методи дослідження становлять сукупність базових принципів дослідження: об'єктивності, системності, багатофакторності, комплексності, а для досягнення мети використані наступні методи наукового пізнання: описовий та логіко-аналітичний. Наукова новизна. Досліджується створення позитивного іміджу вищого навчального закладу культури і мистецтв засобами PR-технологій. Висновки. Образ вузу складається з безлічі компонентів. Громадська думка про кожну його складову, в свою чергу, впливає на формування іміджу організації загалом. Для побудови адекватної стратегії управління іміджем вузу необхідно знати, які з них, через специфіку даної організації, мають пріоритетне значення. Які компоненти образу вузу виступають одночасно і як критерії вибору даної організації. Сучасний вітчизняний виш, як державний так і приватний, знаходиться в постійному пошуку стратегії посилення власного становища на ринку освітніх послуг. Проте далеко не всі усвідомлюють той факт, що однією з найефективніших стратегій досягнення даної мети є формування позитивного іміджу вузу.*

**Ключові слова:** PR-технології, імідж, корпоративна місія, корпоративна індивідуальність, event-менеджмент, образ керівника.