SWOT ANALYSIS OF PETRA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

SWOT analysis of PCU involves the evaluation of Petra Christian University's (PCU's) strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and for example will evaluate Department of Visual Communication Design (VCD) specifically. Recent shift from agriculture to industrial, then to an information-based society has impacted the demand on university's department/program offerings.

Keywords: SWOT, evaluation, Petra Christian University (PCU), Visual Communication Design Department (VCD).

INTRODUCTION

Petra Christian University (PCU) had been founded in 1961 and is supported by 6 local major Protestant churches. It is located in Surabaya, the second largest city in Indonesia with population of around 4 millions. The country, Indonesia is in fact the largest archipelago in the world, spread in an area between the Asian continent and Australia. It has 17,508 islands, stretching as far as the distance between San Francisco and New York. At present it has approx. 220 millions populations. The islands are...
inhabited by many tribes with diverse culture and languages, although there is a national language spoken throughout the country, namely Bahasa Indonesia. It is thus appropriate, that the country’s motto is Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, which means: Unity in Diversity.

As a student body, PCU currently has 12,000 students, coming from Surabaya, East Java and Eastern Part of Indonesia. Like other universities in Indonesia, the scope of PCU’s activities are Education, Research and Community Outreach. These are manifestation of PCU’s dedication, not only to Christian faith but also to national human resources development.

Definition of Petra Christian University’s vision and mission versus their strategic plan: Since established in 1961, PCU has a long-standing vision “to become a well-recognized learning institute which actualizes love, truth, peace and freedom”. The university’s long-standing mission, therefore, is “to produce creative graduates who have excellent capabilities in their fields of expertise as well as caring attitudes based on Christian values and able to contribute themselves for the nourishment of meaningful and harmonious living of the pluralistic Indonesian society”. This long-standing vision and mission is then implemented in the University’s five-year (1999/2000-2004/2005) strategic plan and motto: “A Caring and Global University”. The motto enhances the spirit of the university to be more inclusive and strengthen its efforts in carrying out continuous improvement to match the international standard of quality and to be part of the global community. This present strategic plan focuses on five foci, which are Caring Attitude, Global Perspective, Excellence, Information Technology Based campus and Effectiveness and Efficiency.

This paper will evaluate Petra Christian University’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, which is based on marketing point of view (perspective). Also as an example, will evaluate Department of Visual Communication Design specifically. The external environment has a profound impact on educational institutions. During this early decade of the twenty-first century, institutions, economy, society, political structure, and even individual lifestyles are poised for new changes. Recent shift from an agriculture to industrial, then from industrial to an information-based society and from a manufacturing to a service-oriented economy has significantly impacted the demand made on university’s department/program offerings. Existing programs, and those
planned for the future irrespective of the type of study program should be based on a careful consideration of future trends in society. University administrators should become initiators in shaping the future of their institutions. Strategies must be developed to ensure that institutions will be responsible to the needs of the people in the year 2002 and beyond. SWOT analysis provides a framework for educational administrators to focus better on serving the needs of their communities.

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS (Opportunity and Threat Analysis)

In general, a university has to monitor macro environment forces (economic, social-cultural etc) and significant microenvironment actors (students & staff members, local community/government/other educational institutions) that affect its ability to earn “profit”.

The university should set up a marketing intelligence system to track trends and important developments. For each trend and development, management of PCU needs to identify the associated opportunities and threats. A marketing opportunity is an area of stakeholder need in, which a university can perform profitably. Opportunities can be classified according to their attractiveness and their success probability. The university’s success probability depends on whether its strengths not only match the key success requirements for operating in target market but also exceed those of its competitors. The best-performing university will be the one that can generate the greatest stakeholder value and sustain it over time.

Since Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) was appointed as President of Republic of Indonesia and continued by his successor President Megawati, this country enjoys a better political reconciliation with China. One of the implication is, studying Chinese language and culture has become a trend in this era. PCU should take this opportunity to strengthen its Chinese Department to cater for such market.

Also as a developing country, which need foreign investment / fund / skill from developed countries, Indonesia has no other choice to enter an open market era. Consequently, communication and information technology are mostly required. PCU, which has both “Chinese language/culture” and “Information Technology” Departments has an opportunity to develop and enhance both infrastructure and programs.
The university has an opportunity to go for the “second mile” and position itself to be “one step ahead” in academic excellence, performance-based management and science/technology development through collaboration with industry and other educational institutions.

Major threat is dependency, especially for academic affairs to government. It has to be self-understood that all educational institution have to face bureaucratic Government regulations and policies. Other threat is community/neighborhood development in surrounding area, which compete PCU. Other universities and other foreign competitors of similar backgrounds are booming and can threat the existence of PCU. Probably big budget and more business minded universities will win the marketing competitions.

Similar to products and services in industries and business, the required programs in universities are also changing. PCU has excellent resources in Civil Engineering and Architecture Engineering but as the demand is changing to Information Technology, Visual Communication Design etc., which PCU has not enough resources, PCU has to prepare the young generation to be excellent lecturers in the future as current qualified lecturers, especially in Civil and Architecture Departments are almost retired.

INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS (Strengths and Weaknesses Analysis)

It is one thing to discern attractive opportunities and another to have the competencies to succeed in these opportunities. Each university needs to evaluate its internal strengths and weaknesses periodically through Marketing Memo “Checklist for Performing Strengths/Weaknesses Analysis”. Management reviews marketing, financial, academic and organizational competencies and rates each factor as a major strength, minor strength, neutral factor, or major weakness. Clearly, the university does not have to correct all its weaknesses, nor should it gloat about all its strengths. More important question actually is whether the university should limit itself to those opportunities where it possesses the required strengths or should consider better opportunities where it might have to acquire or develop certain strengths. Sometimes a university does poorly, not because its department lack the required strengths but because they do not work together as a team.
PCU has position herself as Christian University, where majority of students are Chinese. This enables us to have a stable market segment every academic year. However, they are also perceived as our weaknesses, because we are living in Moslem community, where seldom does this program respond to the needs of this society. Since there are many graduates from Christian High Schools in Surabaya and East Java perceive that PCU has a good reputation, most PCU departments are always in demand (except Civil and Mechanical Departments, which are not popular at the moment). Due to increased demand, PCU is not prepared to accept them, because we have limited seats and limited faculty members.

Other strengths of PCU, as a global-spirit university, we are not only registered as a member of Association of Christian Universities and Colleges in Asia (ACUCA), but also co-operate with following institutions:
1. Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand
2. Dongseo University, Pusan, Korea
3. Christelijike Hogeschool Noord (CHN), Lauwarden, Holland
4. Hanzehogeschool, Groningen, Holland
5. Hogeschool Holland, Diemen, Holland
6. Curtin University, Perth, Australia
7. Edukatieve Faculteit van Amsterdam (EFA), Holland

Moreover talking about strength, PCU has an aggressive Community Outreach Center (COC). Every year since 1993, PCU arrange Community Outreach Program, which bring together various kinds of activities, such as research, teaching and social service. Note that although COP is not compulsory for PCU’s students, many students voluntarily participate. For example, during last July-August 2002, foreign participants e.g. Dong-Seo University, South Korea, Holland Hogeschool, the Netherlands and Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong also joined and participated in this program. Like other groups every mid of the year these groups, who come from multi-disciplines and cultures stayed among villagers for around one month to plan, execute and evaluate some projects together with them. As COP is done only in one month, there is insufficient time to reach the main goal of solving development problems faced by the villagers. Nevertheless, the COP projects that have been started by the students have to be
continued. COC will take over some of the projects to ensure their sustainability until the next COP in the following year. During this time, COC works in co-operation with the local government in the community. Regular visit to the service area must be done by the staff of COC.

The university library, which is also a part of PCU’s strengths has become a high priority in the development plan. It provides convenient access not only to information and knowledge from books, which are the only of information in many other libraries in Indonesia, but also to material in other forms, such as microfiche, microfilm, CD ROMs, film strip etc. The university library is equipped with a computerized catalogue of its own design, SPEKTRA and has gained access into the internet. While developing its own resources, the library also strives to equip students with information gathering and processing skills. The university regards these skills as essential in an information-centered world. Through the internet, Petra’s library has the privilege of providing enhanced access to information beyond the Petra campus. The library extends its services to students from other universities and visitors from governmental and non-governmental offices.

Now let us talk about weaknesses. Due to limited income/budget, PCU is not able to provide competitive salary to its staffs. Although in general, their salaries are above the average among local universities, but there are two other universities in Surabaya, which have students from similar market segment, could provide better salary and other facilities. Other weakness is unefficient building/space management. PCU has only 80 class-rooms of 13,850 sqm, and various laboratories of 10,950 sqm, compared to 63,900 sqm total building floor and 100,876 sqm total area of land. Consequently, during the intake year, we could not accept more students. To improve this weakness, PCU has to arrange a higher percentage of their space in classroom uses and to keep an eye on classroom available versus utilization.

Weaknesses in Information Technology (IT) includes non-integrated computer systems. This is because in the past, each unit/department felt that data IT system and development belongs to their own authority and autonomy. Important data was not shared for “confidentially reason”. This has built “small kingdoms” within PCU.
DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN (VCD)

Since the establishment in the year of 1998, VCD department has successfully graduated 90 students for the first time in 2002, in which five of them are excellent graduates. In 2000, VCD department was accredited by National Accreditation Board. From 3 new departments in PCU who applied to be accredited, only VCD department successfully met the qualifications required. Similar with that of big companies CEOs having coffee morning in 5 stars hotel, VCD department has ‘ngopi morning’ program for their lecturers, a kind of forum to enable them to improve their knowlegde through academic discussion. Various topics have put into discussion, such as "How to value the work of arts", "Tiga Bicara Estetika", "Tata cara Penulisan Jurnal Ilmiah", "Bagaimana Bentuk Tugas Akhir Jurusan Desain Komunikasi Visual UK Petra?". Another program set up by the Head of VCD department in order to improve and develop its lecturers is by sending its lecturers to foreign university, for instance to Korea. While for students, VCD department formerly arranged a co-operation program with students and lecturers of Kunsthochschule Berlin-Weissensee during an exhibition held in Dongseo University, Korea. VCD department also has organized many "state of the art" exhibitions, both domestic and international. At present, the number of student body in VCD department are more than 900 students with 90 lecturers. The availability of various physical infrastructure, such as studio, library, computer laboratory including internet facility is one of their strengths. Other strengths are excellent image of PCU, energetic and loyal lecturers, and co-operation programs with many foreign & domestic institutions, such as a co-operation with Wanganui Polytechnic a couple of years ago where the Wanganui Polytechnic staff in New Zealand with her counterpart in PCU had participated in preparing Visual Communication Design human resources through Computer Graphic Workshop, which then develop a co-operation project of Maluku Tourism between PCU and the Government of New Zealand. Furthermore, VCD department has co-operation with British Council, French Cultural Center (CCCL) etc. These are in line with PCU’s motto : A caring and Global University. Besides the strength, VCD department also has weaknesses, such as the lack of experiences in academic and administration staff and a limited number of its literature collections. Moreover, VCD department still has no permanent gallery, compared to other universities such as Tarumanegara, Trisakti and ISI.
As the demands are changing along with this information era, VCD’s department has good opportunity in increasing the number of its new students, compared to other “old” departments in PCU. Fortunately, until this moment VCD department of PCU still has no competitors in Eastern part of Indonesia. Yet, it would be sensible for the VCD department of PCU to consider other universities outside East Java which also offer similar programs in order to maintain its excellence quality.

CONCLUSION / SUGGESTION

From the above evaluation to PCU as an institutional and VCD as a department, we could draw a conclusion that PCU in general and VCD specifically is one of market leaders in Surabaya which have specific and loyal market segment. Therefore, once the university has performed a SWOT analysis, it can proceed to develop specific goals for the planning period. This stage of the process is called goal formulation. Deans/Head of department (for academic) and Head of Bureau (for non academic) use the term goals to describe objectives that are specific with respect to magnitude and time. Turning objectives into measurable goals facilitates management planning, implementation and control. The university is also need strategic partners, if they hope to be effective. Therefore, PCU has to improve and maintain the existing partners, both domestic and international institutions that complement or leverage their capabilities and resources. The university is require to have creative thought in order to find partners who might complement their strengths and offset their weaknesses. To keep their strategic alliances thriving, university has begun to develop organizational structures to support them and has come to view the ability to form and manage partnerships as core skills in and of themselves.

REFERENCES

