

## **Media Convergence as Universities' Attraction: Study of the Use of E-Learning as a Marketing Communications Strategy of Private Higher Education Institution in Indonesia**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The competition between higher education institutions in attracting prospective students increased today. Each educational institution improve educational facilities and infrastructure facilities, improvement of the curriculum, the quality of human resources, collaborate with outside agencies, and emphasis the cost of education. The increase in the facility includes the application of e learning on the course. E learning application provides convenience and flexibility in teaching and learning activities. This paper is a presentation on marketing communications strategies using e learning in the lecture as an attraction for students, consumers of higher education institutions.

This research using survey method of students and then depth interviews with managers of private universities whose implementing e learning programs in Indonesia. At the time of this paper was written, research was already held in Jakarta (representing the western region), Denpasar (representing the middle region), and will soon be carried out in Makassar (representing the eastern region of Indonesia).

Our preliminary study, in Jakarta and Denpasar resulted in findings that e learning can be partially marketing communications strategies for Private Higher Education Institution. That is, the application of e learning as a teaching and learning method improve the Private Higher Education Institution opportunity to be selected as a college by students. The findings of this study academically useful as a reference for similar studies in the future. As a practical manner, the findings of this study are expected to be a recommendation for the management of other private universities in shaping the marketing strategy of the institution.

**Keywords:** *E learning, Marketing Communication Strategy, Private Higher Education Institution*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In marketing a product/service, communication plays a crucial role, among others disseminate information, introduce products, forming the image in the minds of consumers, influence buying behavior, encourage purchases and build a tangle of long-term relationships with consumers and the public more broadly.

In marketing communication activities can be done starting from the presentation of information on products/services, advertising, sales promotion, special event (special event), personal selling, publicity, direct marketing. Marketing communications increasingly important role, because of the competitive environment and increased resources are needed to compete in today's environment of Commerce (Engel et al, 1999). Basically the purpose of any marketing communication is to convey a specific message to a specific target group with a clear and effective manner (Brannan, 1998).

Educational institutions need resources to serve the public. But, private university operations depends on student tuition fees, donors and other funding sources that support; for students and others, expect services that satisfy the educational institutions, the administrative system of regular, professional teachers and so on. Without the ability and the support of

students, funding/finance, faculty, staff, faculty, facilities and other supporting facilities, an educational institution unethical such thing.

Indonesia as a third world country has a great concern over deficiency of technology and believes that the digital divide should be reduced so that there will be an economic recovery. The Indonesian government is determined to utilize the information technology effectively to support efforts to increase the national competitiveness. This aspiration is reflected in the Indonesian (Yuhetty, 2004). ICT is undeniably instrumental in promoting teaching and research activities in higher education. It could solve problems pertaining to quality, equity, and access to higher education. ICT could also promote resource sharing and therefore improve efficiency and productivity while at the same time open up access to global resource of knowledge and information (Kunaefi, 2007).

The interactive computer could be used to give students an alternative to writing as a form of active participation in knowledge-building. It can model real-world systems and transactions, and can therefore create an environment in which learners can explore manipulate, and experiment (Laulillard, 2006). E-learning has been used very effectively in university teaching for enhancing the traditional forms of teaching and administration. Students on many courses in many universities now find they have web access to the lecture notes and selected digital resources in support of their study, they have personalized web environments in which they can join discussion forums with their class or group, and this new kind of access gives them much greater flexibility of study. Part time students can more easily access the course and this in turn supports the objectives of wider participation, removing the traditional barriers to Higher Education (HE) study. According to her, e learning method can be applied in any courses. In line with Laulillard, Ruiz (2006) explained that e learning method can be enhancing learners' interaction with other (collaborative learning) and transforming the role of the teacher in the medical courses.

Barton's (2010) research shows that the adoption and uptake of e learning technologies is also strongly shaped by cultural and social factors. She has suggested that the adoption and uptake of e-learning technologies is strongly shaped by cultural and social factors. In Indonesia, e learning system more focused in the undergrad course (Sukartawi et al., 2002).

Therefore, it is interesting to know how Private Higher Education (HE) institution using e learning as part of the marketing communication strategy and the effectiveness of that strategy to the students.

## **2. MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS**

Marketing communication is the process by which marketers develop and present the appropriate stimuli unity, a clear target audience in order to obtain unitary response expected by marketers (Yessin, 1999). Subsequently (Burnett and Moriarty, 1998) explains that marketing communication is the process by which information or ideas are communicated effectively to the target audience. The target audience is a group of people who receive marketing messages and potential in capturing the messages that are communicated (Burnett and Moriarty, 1998). There are several advantages and development strategy of marketing communications (Smith, et al, 1999), namely:

1. Static activity to help each other build in creating communication power through continuity and consistency.
2. Help create messages clearer, sharp and precise aimed at consumers at various stages in the process of purchasing.
3. Tactical planning of any means of communication will be faster when the direction set out a clear strategy.
4. Streamlining integrated marketing communications that save time, money and stress, as well as providing other benefits in terms of consistency and clarity.

Defined marketing communication planning on developing a system that includes reviews, goals, strategies, tactics and resources were incorporated in a systematic path. The elements of the marketing communications plan include SOSTT + 4 M (Smith, et al, 1999) the following:

1. Situation (where now?)

2. Objectives (where to go/go?)
3. Strategy (how to get there?)
4. Tactics (detailed strategies)
5. Targets (segmentation and market target)
6. 4 M: (1) Men (human); (2) Money (budget); (3) Minutes (time scale);  
(4) Measurement (supervising effectiveness)

In the concept of marketing communication strategy, there are two basic elements that need to be understood, that the communication strategy and communication strategy is a combination of marketing planning. Communication strategy (communication planning) with the management of communication in achieving the goals of this communication. These strategies should be able to demonstrate how practical operational must be done in the sense that the approach may differ from time to time, or depending on the circumstances. For that reason, the private higher education institutions had took various efforts to expand and maximize their marketing communication strategy, including implementing e learning method for the course.

### 2.1 Marketing Communications Model

The success of a strategy depends on how the strategy should be able to adapt the resources in its power to identify any opportunities. Based on analyzes the resources owned by the company and an assessment of market opportunities, a strategy to be in position to establish operational objectives are realistic for the company, such as the model presented in Picture 2.



Figure 1 Marketing Communications Model (Bulaeng, 2000)

Figure 1 summarizes the relationship key components and systems planning legal entity (corporation) and how the marketing communication strategy fit with the overall picture. On the model of activity is known to mix promotion mix (promotional mix) or adult is growing in terms of communication mix. Marketing communications mix consists of advertising (advertising), sales promotion (sales promotion), direct marketing (direct marketing), personal selling (personal selling) and public relations (PR).

Furthermore, marketing communication model as quoted by Sutisna (2003) include the sender, the party who sent the message (marketers), the next process is how the message will be understood and responded to by the consumer, to be determined what types of communication are used. After that, the delivery of messages through the media that will be captured by the receiver. When a message is received, the receiver will respond to the message sent. A positive response will encourage consumers to make a purchase action, this is what is expected. The latter process is the feedback (feedback) on the message that was sent. Marketers evaluate whether the message delivered in line with expectations, meaning that received a positive response and action from konsumen. Hal can be seen as in Figure 2.

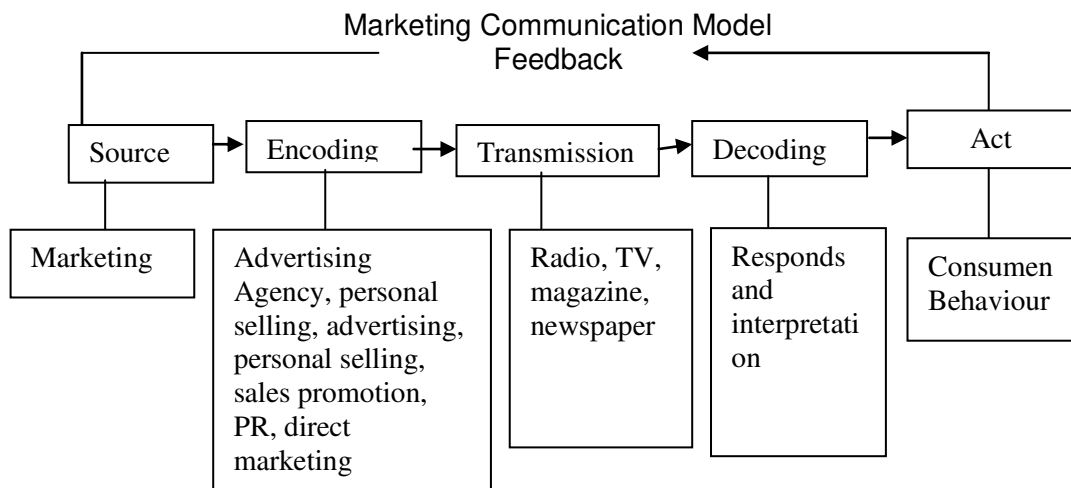


Figure 2. Marketing Communication Model (Sutisna, 2003)

Each promotion tool has characteristics and different costs, still many educational institutions that rely on one or two promotional tool to achieve the purpose of communication. They chose a promotional tool that is adapted to the abilities and circumstances. With the phenomenon of the new world and increasingly sophisticated consumer demands force educational institutions to take a more varied.

In general, these forms of marketing communication have the same function, but the forms can be differentiated functions in particular. In this case, each institution conducting constant communication about the programs implemented, students, alumni, campus and so on. Formal communications program is one of the key foundations in the activities of marketing communication mix. Main variety ones are public relations, marketing publications and advertising.

Planning effective communication include, among others:

- a. Identifying the target market / target
- b. Classify the market needs
- c. build market
- d. Choosing the right media
- e. Selecting sources
- f. Inventory feedback

When all units in educational institutions to work together to serve the interests of the customer, the result is an integrated marketing. To encourage teamwork among departments, the educational institutions need to implement internal and external marketing. Internal marketing is marketing that is directed to the public outside the external education. Marketing of the institution is to serve customers and other parties associated with the best strategic. Internally, marketing must precede external marketing; because it is not rational communicate the excellence services to students and stakeholders before staff educational institutions are ready to give it.

Based on the awareness of the foregoing, the leaders of educational institutions should start to change the old paradigm into a new paradigm, where customer satisfaction and external public currently occupies a central position. Therefore, many educational institutions assume that education is clear. Prospective students choose a college because of interest in the programs offered and the curriculum developed. The notion that marketing is not a necessity in a college is wrong. Hal is contrary to the paradigm of customer-oriented institution.

The increasingly fierce competition in the field of education to force private universities to not just focus on the use of the media alone, but the combination of various communication techniques marketing. However in reality, that is often encountered today is the difficulty of integrating the various elements and marketing communication techniques used. Many factors affect marketing communications. In the first stage, the source (the marketer) specifies the purpose of communication, and then advertisers encrypt the message in order to communicate

the benefits of the product. The third stage, the message in the target segment which required an effective media plan. Effective media plan is expected to balance the goals may conflict. Problems can occur between attempt to reach as many people versus efforts to reach out to them as often as possible, for example, due to budget constraints. The next stage involves consumer-exposure toward message, which at this stages the audience trying to interpret (perception and interpretation) and choose the action that must be performed. The last stage, feedback, check for understanding by the consumer if the same message as desired communicator and if consumers follow the perception of the message. In the process of communication, there could be many distractions that may occur to the source, the encoding process, delivery process, or to the recipient when deciphering the message.

## **2.2 Forms of Marketing Communications**

Kotler (2002) argues that understanding the marketing communications mix (marketing communication mix) consists of five models of communication, namely:

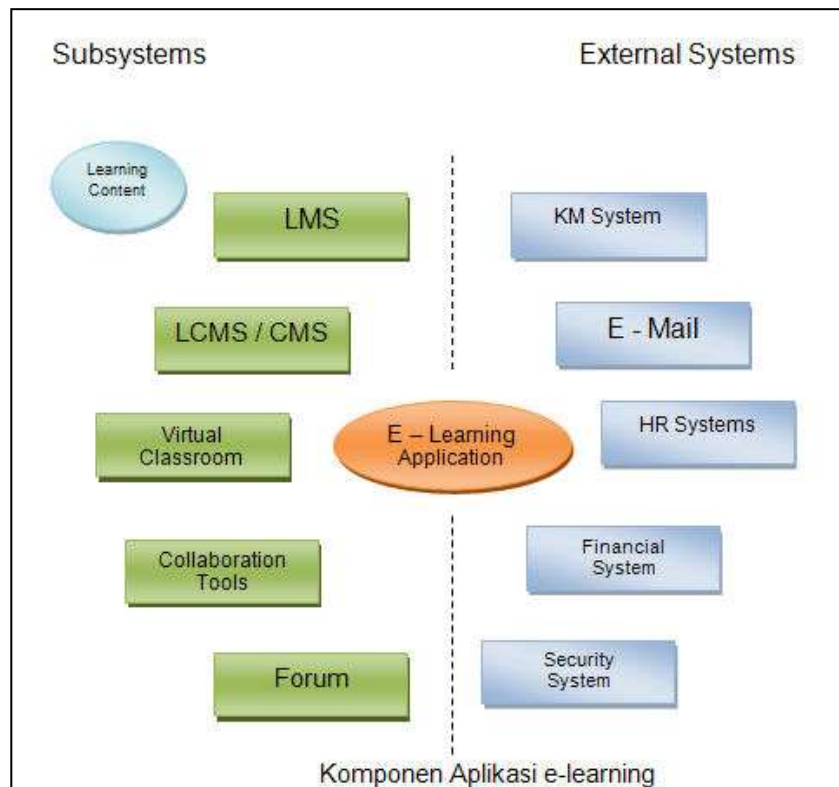
- a. Advertising is any form of presentation and promotion of ideas of goods or services paid for and carried out by the sponsor identified.
- b. Sales promotion are all sorts of short-term incentives to improve the experiment or the sale of a product or service.
- c. Public relations and publicity are all kinds of programs designed to promote or protect the image of a company or its products.
- d. Private sale is the face to face interaction with one or more prospective buyers to make presentations frequently asked questions and obtain orders.
- e. Direct marketing is the use of mail, telephone, fax and e-mail to communicate. In answer directly to obtain personal direct from specific customers or prospects.

## **3. E LEARNING METHOD**

Many experts outlining the definition of e-learning from a variety of viewpoints. Definitions are often used by many parties is as follows. E-learning is a type of learning that allows conveyed teaching materials to students with using the internet, intranet or other computer network media (Hartley, 2001). E-learning is an education system that uses an electronic application to support teaching and learning with the Internet media, computer networks, as well as a standalone computer (LearnFrame.com, 2001). Rosenberg (2001) emphasizes that the E-learning refers to the use of Internet technology to deliver a range of solutions that can improve their knowledge and skills. Hal is similar to Campbell (2002), Kamarga (2002) which essentially emphasizes the use of the Internet in education as the essence of E-learning, Purbo (2002) explains that the term "e" or an abbreviation of electronics in the E-learning is used as a term for any technology that is used to support the efforts of teaching via Internet electronic technology. Or E-learning is defined as follows: E-learning is a generic term for all technologically supported learning using an array of teaching and learning tools as phone bridging, audio and videotapes, teleconferencing, satellite transmissions, and the more Recognized web-based training or computer aided instruction commonly Also Referred to as online courses.

C. Koran (2002) defines e-learning as any teaching and learning using electronic circuits (LAN, WAN, or the Internet) to deliver learning content, interaction, or guidance. Ong (in Kamarga, 2002) defines e-learning as learning activities asynchronously via electronic devices computer obtain learning materials that fit their needs From the definition, it can be concluded that the system or the concept of education that use information technology in teaching and learning can be referred to as an e -learning. Advantages of using E-learning include: saving time learning process, reduce travel costs, saving the cost of education as a whole (infrastructure, equipment, books), to reach a wider geographical area, to train students more independent in getting science.

Full e-learning application consists of subsystems and integrated internal and external an institution. These will implicated to a system depends on the character and scale of e-learning are to be built by the company. An e-learning system can be complex and consist of elements that are interconnected, although not designed to do so (Morrison, 2003).



Picture 3. E-learning Application and Components (Morrison, 2003)

Learning Management System (LMS) is an E-learning engine is an application that makes all the processes related to e-learning automatically, usually serves as a learner registration, progress tracking, and storing the results of the assessment. CMS (Content Management System) is an application that is integrated with the LMS to support the development and delivery of course content. LCMS (Learning Content Management System) is an application that combines multiple functions with CMS LMS.

Effectiveness of E-learning can be viewed from a variety of things depending on the objectivity of the company in implementing it. Based on research by Tom Barron (2003) LOD: Quality and Effectiveness Survey, companies measure the effectiveness of e-learning of: training participants, cost savings, learner assessment / testing, ROI analysis, learner self-reporting, customer satisfaction, manager / mentor reporting, bottom-line gains, and others. Furthermore Barron (2003) examined how the company determines the quality of e-learning, namely from: learning effectiveness, learner experience, cost-efficiency, technical implementation, and others.

- Many studies comparing face-to-face learning in the classroom with distance (distance learning) to examine the effectiveness of teaching and learning experience (learner experience), such as:
- Barbara B. Locke, Assistant Professor of Instructional Technology, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, said delivery style does not affect learning (Morrison, 2003, p. 46).
- Thomas L. Russell, Director Emeritus of Instructional Telecommunications at North Carolina State University, has compiled a bibliography of 355 surveys, there were no significant differences between the technology-base and classroom learning. Russell calls this collection with The No Significant Difference Phenomenon (Morrison, 2003, p. 46).
- Bill Orr, a researcher-Vocational Adult Education Department at Auburn University in Alabama, investigate further. Orr compile a bibliography consists of 60 qualitative survey made in 1988 and 1999; each explaining technology-base learning does give a significant difference in improving performance rather than learning with face-to-face (Morrison, 2003, p. 46).

- Dexter Fletcher researchers from IDA (Institute for Defense Analyses), explained that the E-learning reduces the time about one-third or one-third increase the effectiveness of traditional classroom and justify a third of the cost savings in the same way (Morrison, 2003, p. 47).
- Morrison (2003, p.49) took the conclusions of several studies that: "According to research, the worst case scenario is that E-learning is as effective as traditional face-to-face classroom learning; the best case scenario, that E-learning delivers significant advantages to the learner-both in the quality of learning and the level of performance that results. "

Larry G. Moyer found if learning occurs, then there is a change. Changes can occur in attitudes, ways of thinking, beliefs and customs. Thus, to understand the effectiveness of our need to understand the extent of the changes that may have occurred or which can be measured (Moyer, 2005). The same is expressed by Stuart Emmet (2003) effective learning will produce change. However, effective learning requires encouragement and support from colleagues, supervisor or mentor, and a supportive environment. Involve learning the knowledge, skills, motivation, and application. Motivation is necessary for us to do something.

Gagne (1965) mentions some of the conditions necessary for learning to be effective, namely: lack of attention and motivation; gives the desired result (benefit); develop knowledge; provide an opportunity to develop skills, tutoring (training), and feedback; provide an assessment of performance, and support the implementation or practice. (Pimmarda, 2009).

Education as a college major process generally involves three activities:

1. Content: the material prepared by lecturer
2. Packaging: courses offered
3. Distribution: presentations to students

With the support of information technology, then these three activities done by:

1. Content: the best material quality
2. Packaging: flexible but remain on signs
3. Distribution: locally or globally with the help of technology

The soul of the integration of education with information technology is not to learn about the technology, but learning with technology. The use of technology is expected to increase in the education process and the results of such education. With the soul of the quality of education will be maintained and sustained. Schacter has made a report on "The Impact of Technology on Student Achievement Education". Schacter mentions a of positive results of a student / students, teachers and professors in the science with the help of technology than the conventional way. The survey also mentions a negative outcomes, and concluded that the negative result stems from the fact: "A lot of people think about the technology first and the education later". In other words, stuttering technology is a major problem. The faster familiar with the technology will be faster avoiding stuttering technology. (Universitas Mercu Buana , 2009)

#### 4. RESULTS

Based on the results of questionnaires that have been distributed to University A students as a sample of private universities in Jakarta and ST B as a sample of HE Eastern Indonesia showed the following results:

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.205 <sup>a</sup>	.042	.029	1.82588

a. Predictors: (Constant), VAR00001

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.089	1	11.089	3.326	.072 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	253.373	76	3.334		
	Total	264.462	77			

a. Dependent Variable: VAR00002

b. Predictors: (Constant), VAR00001

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.620	1.113		6.845	.000
	VAR00001	.044	.024	.205	1.824	.072

a. Dependent Variable: VAR00002

Based on the above data, the results of a questionnaire distributed to 78 students University A class of employees showed a significant influence amounted to 0.72 this means that marketing communications are carried out by the lighthouse globe associated with e-learning teaching model shows the influence is strong. This happens because at University A who follow the model of learning E-learning is employees who want to continue studying. Where the employee is on having the time to follow courses thus indirectly require e learning.

Marketing communications conducted by University A has a strong influence which good advertising that uses traditional media to the web media shows their contribution to the attitude of selecting students. It also means that because the respondent is a class of employees that they no longer desire to move or leave HE already in voting. It is different from the sample subsequent study conducted on students ST B, where the results of a questionnaire distributed to 105 students showed the following results:

**Variables Entered/Removed<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	VAR00001 <sup>b</sup>		Enter

a. Dependent Variable: VAR00002

b. All requested variables entered.

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.262 <sup>a</sup>	.068	.059	2.00572

a. Predictors: (Constant), VAR00001

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.553	1	29.553	7.346	.008 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	402.290	100	4.023		
	Total	431.843	101			

a. Dependent Variable: VAR00002

b. Predictors: (Constant), VAR00001



**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.588	1.139		5.785	.000
	VAR00001	.059	.022	.262	2.710	.008

a. Dependent Variable: VAR00002

Based on the results of the questionnaire showed that, the influence of marketing communications HE has little effect at 0:08.

This means marketing communications conducted by ST B does not contribute to the attitude of selecting students. Based on the results of interviews with the Marketing ST B in conducting marketing communications via radio, newspapers, brochures, direct visit to the school does not promote learning about E-learning program is because the program does not make a seed of Stikom. Lecturer just using e learning to replace the face-to-face tuition if unable to attend. And there is no specific policy on certain subjects that require to use elearning learning model. Another reason is because the high school student who becomes the target of a campaign that ST B did was students who were deemed not understand the learning E learning model. The basic policy E-learning at University A is based on the premise that the development and advancement of the use of information technology it is possible to reach learners outside the classroom, including the use of internet, it is very significant to realize the system of distance learning or e-learning. Therefore, the University A developing, implementing, and operationalizing concept of distance learning system supported internet information technology (Prawirosumarto and Farida, 2011).

E learning application policy objectives reflected in the emphasis on improving the quality of learning and culture change passive to active learning by expanding access to learning resources; which also involves not only teachers and students but also the community. Marketing opportunities can occur at this point, because the access is open so as to enable the public to know and assess the quality of the methods and sources of learning at this University A. Making people recognize and remember institutions can also create a brand image, as written on the benefits of learning e learning. Therefore, applying learning system e learning at University A is part of a marketing strategy.

Benefits of learning e learning with the availability of learning materials in electronic media through the website e learning University A that is easily accessible and developed by the students and the community, the enrichment of learning materials in accordance with the progress and development of science and technological progress, improving the quality of learning and the satisfaction of learners and the quality of service, reduce operating costs and increase revenue, increased student interactivity (no time limit), and students become more responsible for the success (learner oriented) may be advantages 'sold' by the institution.

Aspects of marketing strategies through University A's e learning reflected in the benefits of e learning is learning to competitive positioning. That is, put the position of the institution at a competitive rate, can compete with similar institutions because it has advantages. According officer Employee Class Program, which specializes in e learning, e learning advantages are (1) creating and increase the chances of student interactivity, and (2) there is no restriction of time and place so that students become more responsible for his success. In the basic policy on the application of e learning University A, can be analyzed that the advantages of learning with e learning method is putting the freedom to students, as well as to make students more responsible with the freedom he earned it. Freedom and at the same time putting the onus on the students reflect the treatment of the student as an adult human being who has been familiar with what they want and how to manage it wishes, including the learning activity. Therefore, it is very relevant when applied to Employee Class Program.

According to marketing officer, at University A, e learning program is actually intended more to Employee Class Program targets. So, in the management of marketing strategies would be handled by a special section Employee Program. In University A, there are two

courses, namely regular and first-class employees. Target marketing is different, despite using marketing techniques are the same. Regular students can encompass the way down directly to schools or educational exhibits, when students from Class Program Employees cannot be taken that way.

University A in general 'sell' program as Information Technology (IT) as an institution of excellence. Mentioned in '10 Reasons to University A' among others, is "Use of Information Technology (IT) for the process of learning or Electronic Learning (E-learning) is applied through the Multi Access Learning (MAL) for several courses so that students can learn to be more flexible and not to be inside the room / anywhere'.

Excellence is more emphasized flexibility in the application of e learning. According to the Marketing Department Employee Class, this is an opportunity for the employees who are busy and time-bound work to be able to learn freely without having to physically attend classes. Flexibility is also addressed in order to enrich the study materials, namely based on modules are uploaded by lecturers and developed by students.

The module is used to guide the material in the lecture, limiting the study of specific scientific concepts, and provide a self-evaluation to include practice questions. Chat facility is provided between faculty and students and among the students themselves to a discussion, in addition to facilitate the faculty and institutions to monitor the level of activity of students in the lecture.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Private universities attracting students to use several marketing communications ranging from advertising, public relations activities, direct marketing, sales promotion and personal selling. Promotional activities were carried out to provide information ranging from the advantages of each private college respectively till the learning model that is in use.

The results showed for the Jakarta area which is represented by University A that there is a significant influence between the marketing communications is done by selecting HE with an attitude, but for the region of Eastern Indonesia represented by ST B research shows little effect.

Private universities should use a learning model E-learning in the learning process, because research shows one of the interests of prospective students is the learning model E-learning is primarily for HE in urban areas and classes of employees. Private universities should more actively communicate and market the E-learning model of learning through promotional tools used in promoting its HE.

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