

Business Model 3: Product Differentiation

Description



A business model, broadly defined, refers to the ways in which the various inputs and resources available to the organisation are combined and exploited to create value. Value does not simply mean financial returns but also embraces value to society as a whole and value as seen by funders.

This is part of a short series of resources on the way in which lecture capture can fit into institutional business models. Business models can be combined to provide more comprehensive justifications.

Resource Summary

Topic: Product Differentiation

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Target audience: University senior managers, policy makers.

Keywords: Strategy; policy; value

Date produced: 28/09/2010

Key drivers

- Need to justify institutional investment
- Differentiating the product in a competitive market (for example in MBA provision)
- Enhancing the ability to compete on service rather than price

Lecture capture benefits

- Provision of a captured lecture service is an easily understood benefit by customers which may influence their choice of university
- Students who balance work/domestic/study commitments may value the additional margin of flexibility that lecture capture can provide

Institutional preparation/requirements

Competing on the basis of service quality requires, at a minimum, the service is reliable and consistent. This will normally require that all lectures on a course or even across the institution will need to be captured depending on what is being differentiated (the course or the university). A potential conflict exists with the idea of captured lectures being used as OERS (Open Educational Resources) unless they are used as a differentiator in marketing rather than delivery. There will be pressure to ensure that the quality of lectures is high enough to justify, in use, the claim that captured lectures are a valuable differentiating aspect of university services.

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