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Deputy Dean (Career Guidance) at the Faculty of Economics, the National University of Ostroh Academy***Anna Novak,***Postgraduate student, specialty «Management», the National University of Ostroh Academy***THE BUILDING OF THE BRAND OF UKRAINIAN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS  
BY POSITIONING AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POSITIVE IMAGE**

*The article describes the essence of the higher education institutions positioning, defines the concepts of the image and brand of educational institutions, determines their features. The influence of the image of higher education on educational services consumers and those institutions rating among other higher educational institutions is considered in detail. Attention is paid to the educational services branding peculiarities in Ukraine. The main components of higher educational institutions brand building are highlighted.*

**Key words:** higher educational institutions, educational services, image, positioning, branding, brand of higher educational institution.

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ТА СТВОРЕННЯ ПОЗИТИВНОГО ІМІДЖУ**

*У статті розкрито сутність позиціонування ВНЗ, поняття «імідж» і «бренд» навчальних закладів, визначено їх особливості. Детально розглянуто вплив іміджу вищих на споживачів освітніх послуг і на їхній рейтинг серед інших вищих навчальних закладів. Прیدілено увагу особливостям брендингу освітніх послуг в Україні. Висвітлено основні складові побудови бренду ВНЗ.*

**Ключові слова:** вищі навчальні заклади, освітні послуги, імідж, позиціонування, брендинг, бренд вищого навчального закладу.

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по профориентационной работе***Новак Анна Федоровна,***аспирант специальности «Менеджмент» Национального университета «Острожская академия»***ПОСТРОЕНИЕ БРЕНДА ВУЗОВ УКРАИНЫ ПУТЕМ ПОЗИЦИОНИРОВАНИЯ  
И СОЗДАНИЯ ПОЛОЖИТЕЛЬНОГО ИМИДЖА**

*В статье раскрыта сущность позиционирования вузов, понятие «имидж» и «бренд» учебных заведений, определены их особенности. Подробно рассмотрено влияние имиджа вузов на потребителей образовательных услуг на их рейтинг среди других высших учебных заведений. Уделено внимание особенностям брендинга образовательных услуг в Украине. Освещены основные составляющие построения бренда вуза.*

**Ключевые слова:** высшие учебные заведения, образовательные услуги, имидж, позиционирование, брендинг, бренд вуза.

**Formulation of the problem.** Socio-economic development of Ukraine is possible only if there are significant changes in the theoretical and practical training of highly skilled specialists, whose knowledge and skills depend on the quality of providing educational services by higher educational institutions (hereinafter referred to as HEIs). However, the current conditions of the functioning of educational institutions (reducing the number and reducing the level of solvency of university entrants, the suboptimal network of universities, the lack of ef-

fective links with employers, loss of financial stability due to inadequate funding, imperfection of the existing mechanisms of organization and implementation of financial and managerial accounting, entry into the market educational services of Ukraine for foreign educational institutions) necessitate a revision of existing approaches to their positioning at the national and international level of the education market.

It is necessary to clearly distinguish such concepts as «positioning» and «branding», to take into account the status of educational institutions, their economic security, social infrastructure and the degree of demand for services rendered by educational and non-educational character.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The general corporate aspects of forming the image of business entities, its elements were researched in their scientific works by foreign scholars such as E. Becker, L. Berd, G. Dowling, D. Mercer, S. Tangyan, B. Ushakov, M. Fimin, L. Yakok and others.

The peculiarities of managing the image of universities are considered in the publications of national scholars: V. Vitkalov, S. Grabovsky, V. Grishunin, L. Karamushki, V. Korolko, F. Kuzin, A. Postovyuk, V. Shepel, V. Shul and others.

At the same time, the issue of building the brand of higher educational institutions in Ukraine by positioning and creating a positive image is not sufficiently studied at the present stage and requires additional research.

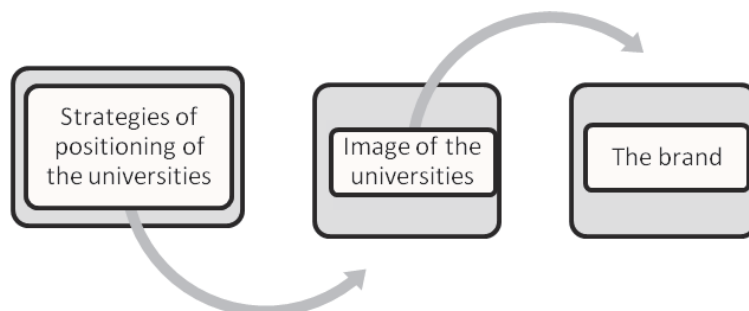
**The purpose and tasks of the study.** The purpose of the study is to develop and substantiate the activities and to identify the stages of building the brand of universities, which will ensure their competitiveness in the domestic and international markets of educational services.

**Presenting of the main material.** In order to form the university brand and consolidate it in the market of educational services of Ukraine and the world, it is necessary to carry out a series of measures that will include a choice of positioning strategies, help create a positive image, and determine the place in the eyes of consumers of educational services.

According to the professor of the Higher School of Logistics in the city of Poznan, R. Svedatovsky [6], referring to E.M. Korotkova [3], effective positioning of higher educational institutions requires an understanding of the general laws of development of the education, which include: 1) diversification of education; 2) individualization of education; 3) development of advanced education; 4) sustainability of education; 5) intensification of education; 6) computerization of education; 7) Creation of education; 8) increasing the role of education quality; 9) cyclicity and multi-level education; 10) change of target directions of education; 11) internationalization of education. At the same time, the researcher, one of the main tasks of positioning the university in the market of educational services, is to justify the method of achieving their competitive advantages.

We share the opinion of V. Kotelenets, according to which positioning for an educational institution in the general system is a complex of measures of a long-term marketing strategy aimed at creating an image and maintaining a reputation, the realization of which enables the institution of education to be in the consciousness of the target audience in fact, different from the others and advantageous for to bring to the consumer educational services the benefits and benefits that he will receive from the choice of the proposed educational programs, show partners the ways of cooperation with the educational curriculum hell, that is, the creation of its own special brand [4].

That is why, for the construction of an excellent brand of higher educational institutions, it is necessary to conduct a marketing research, that is, to determine the main stages of the positioning of the educational institution in the market of educational services, as a result of which the entrants will be formed the image of the institution. The basic stages of building the brand of universities are shown in Fig. 1



**Fig. 1. Stages of the brand building of the universities \***

\* *Developed by the authors.*

In his writings, known marketers, authors of the concept of «positioning» E. Race and J. Traut note that «the positioning begins with a product, product, service, company, institution, and even person» [7]. Their understanding of the positioning term is close to the concept of branding, since it is largely based on the emotional effect of making consumer decisions. Such an interpretation is correct from the point of view that we consider this concept as a study of the microenvironment, that is, in our case, the study of the material, technical and staffing of the university to develop measures that will help to create the image of the institution.

F. Kotler, professor of international marketing at the Graduate School of Management, DJ Kellogg at the Northwestern University of the United States, defines positioning as «the process of creating a service/product and image company based on the perception of consumers of competitive goods/services» [5, p. 243].

Consideration of the essence of the concept of positioning makes it possible to specify its content in relation to universities. According to one of the leading experts in the field of marketing E.P. Golubkova, «the positioning of educational services is to select the parameters of the educational product and elements of the marketing complex that, from the point of view of the target consumers, will provide competitive advantages to the educational services» [2]. This definition describes the positioning of universities as an instrument for the formation of a given image, which is most favorable from the point of view of the target audience.

So, the target audience when creating the image of universities will be mostly entrants, because choosing a university, they consider the prestige of the institution.

Considering the image of the university, it is necessary to consider the elements of the structure and representations that these elements cause in the target segment.

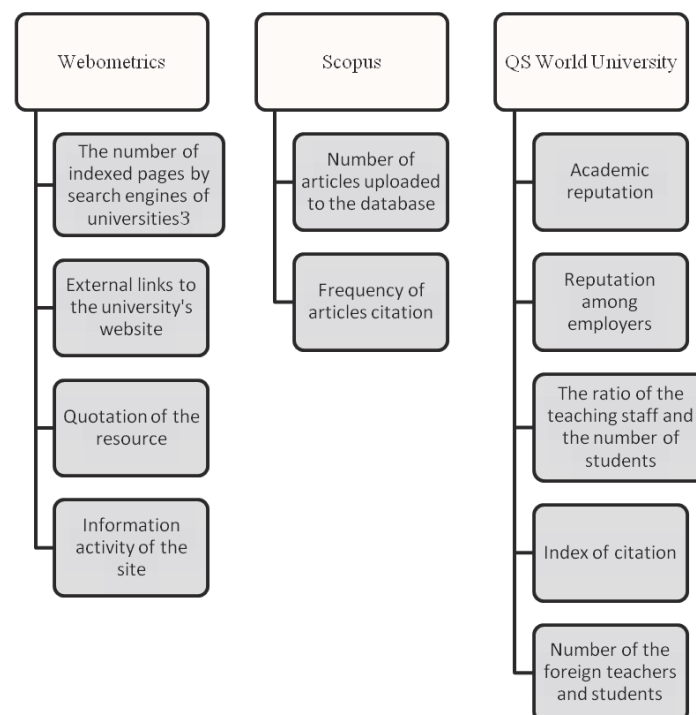
M. Kadochnikov, the leading manager of the educational sphere, defines the corporate or organizational image as an image of the organization in the presentation of various groups of the public. He highlights a number of factors that shape the image of educational institutions: experience and experience in education; popularity in the professional field and among the public; the reputation of the head of the organization, the professionalism of the management; Further development of the institution in the professional sphere; the demand for graduates in the labor market, their level of wages and career advancement; the level of professionalism, the popularity of teachers, their exactingness; the ratio of students to higher educational institutions, assessment of teaching; institution's location, infrastructure and interior design; the quality of management's work with the media (hereinafter referred to as the media) in promoting their services [9].

In our opinion, the process of forming the image of higher educational institutions is appropriate to define as a sequence of interconnected stages, the realization of which will ensure a stable positive attitude toward higher education and its stable reputation.

Today in the market of educational services of Ukraine the process of formation of a positive image of higher educational institutions is becoming more and more actual. The main source of information about educational institutions is official sites and social networks. Therefore, a special place in creating a positive image is higher Internet promotion.

Thus, the level of the Internet image of any scientific institution in the world can be traced back to the Webometrics Ranking of World's Universities, a special methodology developed in accordance with the Berlin Principles of the University Ratings [1]. This ranking is rather narrow, because it only takes into account the level of educational institution placement on the Internet.

At the current stage of development of the market of educational services there are dozens of world rankings of universities. Let's consider the parameters of evaluation of the main ones in Fig. 2



**Fig. 2. Characteristics of the parameters of the main world universities' ratings\*.**

\* Developed by the authors.

Thus, the ratings are based on Internet links and resources that are relevant in the digital age. The Webometrics rating analyzes the overall activity of the university website, including the official website of the university and its activity. In its turn, Scopus is a database that has publications from representatives of universities around the world, sets out strict requirements for their design, composition and informativity, and analyzes the activity of universities, based on the quality and quantity of scientific publications in its database. It is not possible to determine which rating is best, because it complements the general picture of the university's image. That is why it is advisable to implement an integrated assessment in accordance with the results of all these ratings. Another ranking that universities are evaluating is the QS World University, which analyzes the attractiveness of universities for foreigners.

Such ratings are also used to evaluate the performance of higher educational institutions in Ukraine. The rating of the leading universities of the Rivne Oblast of the III-IV accreditation levels is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

**Rating of the leading higher educational institutions  
of the Rivne region III-IV accreditation levels in 2017 \***

Name of the educational institution / Position of the higher educational institution in the rating	Place	Place in the overall ranking	Top – 200 Ukraine	Webometrics	Scopus	Final score
National University of Water and Environmental Engineering	1	66	67	88	79	234
The National University of Ostroh Academy	2	95	98	73	137	308
Rivne State University of the Humanities	3	164	176	138	137	451
International University of Economics and Humanities named after ac. S. Demianchuk	4	174	151	182	137	470

\* Written by authors on [10].

In accordance with Table 1, the National University of Water and Environmental Engineering is the leader in the ranking. But this does not give the university an unmistakable image. That is why it is necessary to pay attention to the continuous improvement of the positive brand and associations of the universities.

The formation of a positive image is possible with the help of both Internet resources and other events. Let's consider the main tools that will improve the position of the university in the ranking.

It should be noted that in the market of educational services the potential consumer collects as much information as possible on the basis of which he chooses in favor of this or that university. That is why it is necessary to use the possibilities of mass media and publicly use the image and position on the market.

Higher educational institutions should attract and maintain customer loyalty throughout the entire lifetime of educational services. It means not only attracting new students, but also connecting with other actors in the market of educational services (parents, sponsors, employers, etc.).

The main purpose of the university's image is to create an idea for consumers as an ideal supplier of educational services in comparison with competitors, that is, to create the qualities that would correspond to a university-leader.

Cooperation between science, education, business and government is an important aspect of creating a positive image of a regional university. This is manifested both in the implementation of social policy, as well as during the training and retraining of personnel, conducting national research. Today, representatives of leading companies are not satisfied with the quality of training graduates and a set of specialties, which universities are training staff of economic specialties.

The main objective of positioning is to identify the range of potential users of educational services. Of course, the main goal of each higher education is to attract as many students as possible. But do not forget that the image of higher educational institutions is created by the students and graduates of the latter. Speaking about creating an image, here it is necessary to pay the greatest attention to the results of the work of the university, and more specifically on the correctness of its positioning strategy, the realization of which ultimately had an impact on the creation of the image would be the graduates. This position on image building is one of the components of this complex process. The level of employment and the demand of graduates in the labor market should be a key criterion for solving the issue of public procurement.

Thus, having formed the positive image of the university in the market of educational services, one can proceed to construct the latter brand on the basis of the previous work.

Often, the brand is formulated as a combination of properties and a complex of impressions, or as a complex of representations, associations, emotions, value characteristics of a product or service in the minds of the consumer, «capital in the head», the mental shell of a product or service.

It should be noted that the process of constructing a successful brand is a long-term process that can only be realized in a strategic perspective, and it is not worthwhile expecting a rapid return on the implementation of a brand-driven development strategy [8, p. 28-29].



The process of building a brand should cover three main areas [8, p. 106]: pre-selection, experience from purchase and use, and constant relationships and recommendations. Students, their parents and employers, in other words, the customers of educational services, and the peculiarities of the functioning of educational institutions in the process of developing a strategy for the development of universities should adapt the relevant fields of brand and consumer relations, which focus on the fullest coverage of the entire spectrum of relationships. So, in the pre-selection process, areas such as PR and advertising, specialized exhibitions, presentations, customer-to-customer information transmission, and the active use of the capabilities of websites and web banners should be covered.

In this aspect, when developing a brand-oriented strategy for the development of an institution of higher education, it is necessary to foresee the development and implementation of an advertising campaign aimed at establishing the (explicit and potential) clear association of the university brand with certain characteristics and properties, emotional and physical benefits. In addition, promotion of educational and R & D services of higher educational institutions should take place not so much as individual products, but as part of the university's corporate brand. Many Ukrainian universities already have a well-developed historical brand that attracts future students and inspires graduates. However, this brand needs to be backed up with new ideas over the years.

**Conclusions.** Consequently, the formation of the image of an institution of higher education and its effective administration favor the positioning in the market of educational services in a competitive environment. A steady positive image of the consumer of educational services is an incentive for the primary election and the main motive of the advantage over competitors. Therefore, a positive image is a component of a great brand of high school.

Thus, in order to improve the image of higher educational institutions, an innovative ideology must be created, and hence favorable conditions for the creation of various forms of partnership between science, education, business and government. And the brand of higher education, created on the basis of fruitful cooperation of entrants and graduates, will become an attribute of the latter's attractiveness in the market of educational services of Ukraine and the world.

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