

#### **Session 4: Workshop 7**

**Title:** Partnerships in delivering learning: what use can/should universities make of the media?

**Presenter:** Ms Karen Pole, Managing Director, Telematica

**Chair:** Professor Bryan Gould, Vice-Chancellor, University of Waikato, New Zealand

**Rapporteur:** Lisa Rothenberg, ACU

#### ***The Proposition***

*There is a role for business-based learning intermediaries in helping universities to access the corporate market.*

Education is increasingly subject to the needs of the global market, which brings with it a set of requirements to re-shape the traditional educational infrastructure. Higher education faces strong competition from the ever increasing number of for-profit institutions that focus on flexibility, convenience and close attention to learner needs as their competitive differentiators.

Publishers have always operated in the educational sphere and media companies are also now active in the education arena. The growth of technology has opened up new opportunities for them to use their intellectual property to build global distance learning offers. Increasingly they are seeking to build brands that are based on educational inclusiveness and accessibility. Many education institutions have moved successfully into the global market but many more are unsure of how to achieve this profitably. Universities and education institutions therefore have great potential for partnerships with the private sector and there are strong opportunities for partnership, particularly with media and technology based companies.

Media organisations have, in the last couple of years, increasingly become intermediaries helping education to access a more global market. E-learning and the use of new technology to make age-old techniques of education available and accessible to a wider audience have allowed universities to access an international market and, with the help of the marketing skills of the intermediaries, to move beyond national barriers. The accreditation and access to research that a university partnership offers enhances both the quality and creditability of a private sector organisation. In essence, therefore, a two-way partnership.

#### ***The Agenda:***

- needs of the corporate market

- value added role of the university
- value added media industry/for-profit training provider

***The Corporate Market (and what it wants):***

- increasingly looking for global scale and markets
- needs high quality people with core skills and competences
- access to research, up-to-date thinking and benchmarks
- self-drivers learning and continuing professional development
- speed and relevance

***The University (how does it stand against this):***

- can provide research, new thinking and benchmarks
- can provide world class development programmes
- qualifications
- global scale and consistency ?
- speed and relevance?

Relevance – yes: universities provide key training programmes; but speed of development – question mark. Universities are simply not geared to rapid product development.

***Partnership Models***

Three examples of partnerships between the media and higher education are:

*Pearson (FT Knowledge)*

Pearson has formed partnerships with a number of universities, eg., Michigan, Walton, Nottingham Trent and Heriott Watt and is planning far more collaborations in the future.

*News Corporation (Worldwide Learning)*

Has recently launched its own distance-learning division (Worldwide Learning) to access the lucrative global corporate market-place. The Corporation has the means of delivering the content and has established partnerships with universities.

*Thomson Corporation (Unext.com)*

Big publishers of e-information, the Thomson Corporation has established the Cardean University Consortium between LSE, Stanford and others.

Each of these models is achieving profitability through:

QUALITY + CONSISTENCY + SCALABILITY

In Pearson's collaboration with the Walton Business School, for instance, both parties contributed their respective strengths, as follows:

- Walton did not want its programmes to be re-designed but did want scalability
- Pearson (and the training provider) provided help with content and process development
- Transformation capability emerged from the partnership, as evidenced in material capable of self-study globally
- Sales and marketing was provided by Pearson
- Delivery was/is a partnership between the university and the provider (mostly on-line)
- Assessment components: how the programme is assessed is very largely the responsibility of the university
- Quality assurance – both parties responsible

### *Issues*

The issues that are common to most of these partnerships, and that need to be addressed, include:

- those relating to intellectual property rights (IPR) - who, exactly, owns the course contents and materials
- the importance of being responsive to the market
- there must be a genuine desire to build and resource a partnership that enables both parties to achieve their corporate ambitions. Both parties must understand the core values and business imperatives of the other if such relationships are to succeed in the global market
- recognition that tensions are likely to be encountered, most of which are cultural and arise from the different ways in which the media and higher education approach the market

### *Points for Discussion – themes to pursue*

- What do universities need to do themselves
- What sort of partners should they look for
- What are the financial implications/are there any hidden costs to the institutions
- Are universities giving away their brand