



Sri Lanka

Marketer

SLIM

TABLE OF CONTENTS



04

Empowering
a Generation



10

"Not Just Products: A
Servitization Journey to
Boost Brands in Sri Lanka"



16

Can Marketers Manage?



20

Steering SLIM Through
Transformation and Triumph



24

Marketers! Be a Great
Leader to Create Great
Brands.



30

What are the Possible
Higher Education Marketing
Strategies for Sri Lankan
Universities?

"THE MARKETING INTELLIGENCE OF THE NATION"

TABLE OF CONTENTS



34

Crafting Strategic Customer
Experience Initiatives for a
Competitive Edge



41

Navigating Global Markets:
A Strategic Approach for
Sri Lankan SMEs



49

Can Marketing Help a
Company Build Brand Equity



55

Are Women-led Micro Small
Medium Enterprises
(WMSMES) in Sri Lanka Using
Social Media...



62

Important Modern Factors
that Sri Lankan Marketers
Have to Consider to



68

The Rise of Sustainable
Marketing Among Sri Lankan
Corporate Brands

"THE MARKETING INTELLIGENCE OF THE NATION"

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE

Higher Education Marketing Strategies for Sri Lankan Universities?

An Insightful Discussion with a Prominent Business School Leader in the United Kingdom



Professor Sankar Sivarajah

Head of Business School, Professor of Technology Management and Circular Economy at Kingston University London and Former Dean of the Business School at the University of Bradford, UK

Interview was conducted by:
Dr. Nirma Sadamali Jayawardena,
Assistant Professor in Marketing at the University of Bradford, United Kingdom

This article is based on a conversation with Professor Sankar Sivarajah, the former Dean of the School of Management and Professor of Technology Management and Circular Economy at the University of Bradford, United Kingdom. He is currently the Head of the Business School and a Professor of Technology Management and Circular Economy at Kingston University, London. He has also been interviewed and featured by Forbes, where he discusses how Business Schools can deliver social value and commit to socio-economic development. This interview focuses on possible marketing strategies for Sri Lankan universities.

Nirma: Can you briefly introduce yourself, your title, your job position, and your experience?

Sankar: My name is Sankar Sivarajah, and I am currently the Head of Kingston Business School at Kingston University London. Previously, I served as Dean of the School of Management at the University of Bradford from 2019 to 2023. Before becoming Dean, I established and led a new academic department at Bradford, focusing on Business Analytics, the Circular Economy, and Entrepreneurship, which began in 2017.

I started my academic career as a Post-Doctoral Researcher at Brunel University London in 2014. Most of my experience stems from UK University leadership and management roles, as well as exposure to external positions, including serving as a governing council member of the Chartered Association of Business Schools in the UK.

Nirma: Can you share your experience in the higher education marketing domain?

Sankar: Sure. My experience primarily stems from my roles as Head of Department and Dean of the School, where I have worked with international academic and industry partners. It mainly involves marketing our courses, promoting the University's strengths in research, accreditation, and rankings, as well as highlighting our faculty members. I bring these experiences to both our internal marketing team and external marketing agencies. So, that's some of my experience with higher education marketing.

Nirma: How can Sri Lankan private universities attract students? What is your opinion about Sri Lankan private universities in particular?

Sankar: I think the same principles apply to any institution, private or public. For private institutions, the key focus should be on distinctiveness. What makes them unique? Why should students choose a private or local university? For example, the type of faculty they attract, their unique offerings, and the overall experience they provide.

It's crucial to highlight why that particular private institution stands out. This distinctiveness, or value proposition, is essential.

Nirma: What are the biggest challenges, in your opinion, for Sri Lankan private or public universities when it comes to attracting students?

Sankar: The current stigma surrounding leaving the country to gain international experience, as well as the competition for international reputation in higher education, are significant challenges. These are driven by Sri Lanka's high cost of living and not just quality alone. The overall experience, including economic impacts, plays a significant role. Students seek affordable ways to gain international experience, which can lead to career opportunities. The instability of the economy and competing with the image of a global higher education experience are the biggest challenges. Fundamental factors, such as the product, people, and pricing, also matter. Private institutions may charge higher prices, but they need to offer value that justifies them.

Nirma: For example, a student just after their Advanced Levels might think, "Okay, I will go to a private university in Sri Lanka and spend some money on my degree instead of going abroad and spending more." What is your perspective on that?

Sankar: It's about what experience they can offer that might be internationalised. They might have partnerships with institutions in the UK, Europe, the US, Canada, or Australia to provide international experiences at home. It's a key reason why students choose to study abroad. Providing good career opportunities and global exposure through remote working opportunities with global brands can mitigate the challenges of brain drain.

Nirma: How can digital marketing methods or tools increase student enrolments for Sri Lankan universities?

Sankar: Digital marketing is critical. Connecting with students through digital media they're already using is crucial. As a marketing institution, you must stay current with these media technologies. Utilise a pull strategy by being present on the platforms your target audience uses, such as TikTok. Social media campaigns, digital campaigns, TV campaigns, and other media channels should be leveraged to maximise reach and impact. It's essential to target digital channels that work for the Sri Lankan audience. Creative content, such as short films on YouTube or similar emerging platforms, can also attract learners.

Nirma: So, you mean short films?

Sankar: Yes, short creatives. TikTok-style videos or similar content can be used on various channels. The content needs to be attractive and personalised to the audience. It should tell an authentic story and connect emotionally with the audience. This could be about education being a life-changing experience, successful business people, or celebrities as role models.

Nirma: How do you suggest Sri Lankan universities leverage Alumni networks to enhance their reputation and attract new students?

Sankar: Leveraging alumni networks is critical, and showcasing successful alumni, such as local entrepreneurs or medical doctors, as role models is essential. Sharing their success stories and how their education transformed their lives is critical. Alumni can also contribute financially or through expertise, serving as brand ambassadors, industry speakers, or advisory board members.

External links for further information:
[What are the possible Higher Education Marketing Strategies for Sri Lankan Universities?](#)

[An insightful Discussion with a Prominent Business School Leader in the United Kingdom](#)

Nirma: Is there a way to highlight a university's academic achievements and unique programs in marketing materials to attract students?

Sankar: Yes, 100%. Academic achievements are key. Highlighting research and social impacts, such as significant studies on addressing local health issues like diabetes, which is also a global concern, and linking this to the courses offered can be very attractive. Connections with industry and practical applications also matter. Promoting these achievements and connections can attract students.

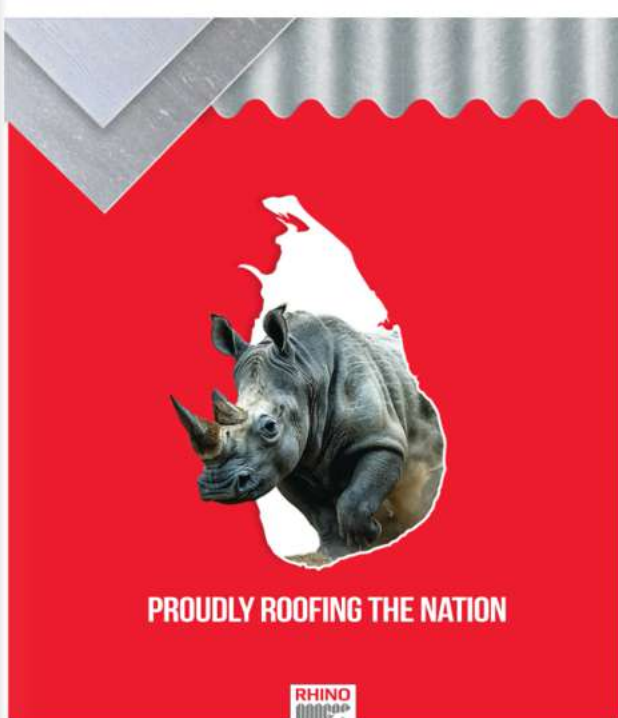
Nirma: How do you stay on top of the latest developments when it comes to higher education marketing trends and innovations?

Sankar: It's a constant learning process. Attending educational conferences and networking is essential for learning about what competitors are doing. Staying up to date is crucial for external exposure. Formal learning processes, such as CPD courses, also help keep knowledge and skills up-to-date.

Nirma: The last question is: Can you suggest a creative marketing campaign for a Sri Lankan university to increase the number of local students?

Sankar: It needs to be an authentic campaign with an emotional link. For example, addressing the current economic challenges and brain drain by showcasing that students don't need to leave the country to get a similar experience. Highlighting the benefits of staying close to family and giving back to the community while still gaining a global expertise through partnerships and faculty exchanges can create a strong emotional tie. Emphasising the opportunity to rebuild an economy and contribute to socio-economic development can drive a powerful campaign.

Nirma: Thank you so much for your time and effort on this very insightful discussion.



PROUDLY ROOFING THE NATION

RHINO
60 YEARS

#1 Roofing and Ceiling Sheet in Sri Lanka

Hotline 1396 | www.rhino.lk



Scan to witness
our journey of pride...