

**CONCEPTUALISING THE LECTURER AS CUSTOMER: ESTABLISHING  
PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING A NEW MODEL FOR ORGANISING  
THE TOURISM, HOSPITALITY AND EVENTS SCHOOL,  
AN EXPLORATORY PAPER.**

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**ABSTRACT**

Higher education has, under the influence of global political, economic, social and other forces, undergone significant change, the results of which include a higher demand for user pays education and the positioning of the student as customer within a system that more and more resembles a managed economy. The concurrent emergence of management cultures, commoditisation and casualisation of education challenges traditional concepts of the role and status of faculty and the academic community. Within Tourism, Hospitality and Events education (THE), itself a relatively recent arrival, faculty status is further complicated by broader questions of legitimacy and sustainability as researchers continue to disagree on the very essence of the THE discipline and graduate. This paper seeks to develop the principles underpinning a new model of organising the THE School and its internal actors to negotiate these challenges and stake a claim within the new higher education market economy, advancing the debate between the traditional and the managerial approaches to higher education management. Identifying through a review of the literature a consensus on the THE graduate as the service thinker-doer, the paper then seeks to propose principles for organising the school that can best enable such a student to develop. The paper does this by identifying a gap in the approach of service marketing as hitherto applied to higher education; the paper uses an application of the 'internal service blueprint' to propose principles underpinning a model for realigning the institution around the core functions and missions of teaching, learning and research. Specifically, the lecturer is positioned as customer within the service blueprint and the student as service provider, an original exploration of the internal service blueprint within THE education.

**Keywords:** *Lecturer as customer, student as customer, services marketing, internal service blueprint, tourism and hospitality education, higher education.*

## INTRODUCTION

Over the last half a century or more, precisely the time when the numbers of available tourism, hospitality and events (THE) Schools and programmes experienced rapid growth, significant global and regional forces have had a revolutionary effect on higher education and academia (Altbach, 1998; Hobson, 2010; Dredge, Benckendorff, Day, Gross, Walo, Weeks, Whitelaw, 2013). The results of these forces include: the increased demand for user pays higher education (Hobson, 2010); ‘dramatic expansion worldwide’; and a subsequent international marketing push (Altbach, 1998, p.3). Emerging notions of academic capitalism, commoditization and casualization, as well as changes to the regulatory environment and government funding arrangements (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002; Pop-Vasileva, Baird & Blair, 2011) suggest that the traditional, ‘unwritten pact between society and higher education’ which meant resources for universities would continue increasing may have ‘broken down’ (Altbach, 1998, p.4). Amid the flux, market-economic realities emerge and ‘hard’ management cultures have evolved bringing with them, for better or worse, an increasingly casual teaching faculty (Knight & Trowler, 2000, p.71; Woods, Youn & Johanson, 2008) such that in many institutions the traditional notion of the tenured ‘Professor at the Centre’ is romantic at best (Altbach, 1998, p.4). Confusion prevails in many institutes in which senior ‘academics and administrators lecturers (publicly, at least)’, whether toeing the party line or with sincerity praise this shift, while ‘casual academic staff have been referred to as domestic servants, indentured labourers... and even slaves’ (Rothengatter and Hill, 2013, p.51). At the same time within this context of business, students have been given ‘increased bargaining power’ and positioned as customers, adding a further complexity to a confused system (Vuori, 2013, p.180). Yet, despite the transformations, the demands on institutions and lecturers to achieve the often mutually exclusive ideals of research, innovative teaching and learning, graduate job readiness and student satisfaction relent no less (Coaldrake, 2011; Dredge et al., 2013). There exists the need for a clear direction at institutional level to organise schools, people and processes to meet these demands in a sustainable way.

Specifically in Australia, the higher education sector has seen a ‘barrage’ of disruptions (Mukerjee, 2014, p.56) and in particular for THE programmes, relative latecomers to the higher education space (Hobson, 1995), challenges now exist in “establishing the legitimacy of TH&E in an increasingly competitive and market-oriented, yet research-driven, higher education system” (Dredge et al., 2013, p.98). These disruptions should serve as cautionary tales for other geographies. Constant changes, merging and even downsizing of THE schools, with the recent examples of THE Schools like University of Technology, Sydney being incorporated into the business faculty, undermine the claims to legitimacy of the study of THE fields of enquiry as disciplines in their own right. Remaining THE schools, though different by design and type, share legitimacy, status and sustainability concerns (Breakey & Craig-Smith, 2008, Pearce, 2005). This stems from many factors but is attributed by some theorists to a lack of consensus between the three disciplines and the various manifestations of institution that offer them as programmes as to a ‘shared understanding of the elementary basics required of any TH&E graduate’ to operate in a mobile and global industry (Dredge et al, 100). Without a consensus there can be no universal acceptance of the essence of the THE professional and, therefore, no way to organise, manage and prioritise competing obligations nor know what to teach and how to

teach it, let alone realise Altbach's 'classic university mission' of academic freedom (1998, p.4).

This paper seeks to develop the principles underpinning a new model of organising the THE School and its internal players to negotiate the aforementioned challenges of consensus, legitimacy and sustainability in relation to the role of research, teaching and learning and industry engagement by proposing service both at the core of curriculum and at the heart of the organisation of the institution in the form of 'internal service'. The paper aims to move the debate about roles within the 21<sup>st</sup> Century institution forward with the aim of promoting future research into the efficacy of the principles developed as applicable to models that may emerge to support sustainable THE educational management. In doing so the paper makes two important assumptions. The first is that it assumes the role of faculty at an individual and collective level to have obligations in all areas of teaching, research and industry engagement. The scope neither allows for in-depth discussion on the 'teaching: research nexus' (Taylor, 2008) so well represented in the literature, nor considers at depth the institution: industry connection. Secondly, in adopting a service orientated institutional approach, the model assumes the position of the emergent but highly contested managerial approach as dominant, but contests the nature of how and what it is that is being managed. This paper, lastly, does not ascribe to one of the four classifications of THE providers (Breen 2002 & Pearce, 2005, cited in Dredge et al., 2013) but instead attempts to offer the principles supporting a model that is applicable across the contested landscapes of public/private and traditional/managerial.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The objective of this qualitative exploratory paper is to establish the principles underpinning a conceptual model that considers the higher education institution in the case of tourism and hospitality schools as a service organization and the relationships of internal faculty, staff and students within an internal service blueprint. These principles further position the lecturer as a pivotal entity; thereby promoting a new paradigm reframing structural service relationships within the institution. The specific disciplines of Tourism and Hospitality were chosen for analysis and comparison because of the services nature of the curriculum itself, which becomes important when notions of service provider-customer notions within an educational setting are considered. We initially reviewed existing multi disciplinary literature sourced from education management, marketing, and service management disciplines concerning the state of higher education in general and THE education specifically, with a focus on the curriculum as well as the roles of lecturer and student. The paper, firstly, uses the literature to establish lines of congruence between the tourism, hospitality and events disciplines on the elementary basics required of the THE graduate as a service thinker-doer, a consensus necessary to enable discussion of the broader THE School as a service organisation. Secondly, the paper takes a comparative approach to discuss findings of secondary research on what we will call the 'traditionalist' and 'managerialist' perspectives in relation to the institution/school as a service organisation. This comparison reveals a gap in the literature concerning applications of internal customer service theory to the organisation of the school, and shows that no study to date has yet framed the THE school as service organization within which the lecturer is placed as customer and the

student as service provider. The contribution to new knowledge is found in the comparative table which demonstrates the principles of the ‘internal customer blueprint’ model, itself grounded in hospitality industry research, in relation to organizing the THE School (Kandampully, 2006) towards producing the service thinker-doer graduate.

This paper is grounded in an epistemological approach recognizing an urgent need for institutions of higher education to re-conceptualize the relationship between the administrative body, the faculty and the student cohort. We acknowledge institutions of higher education have become critical to economies that increasingly rely on knowledge, information, innovation and graduate success to drive their economic growth. The next stage of the inquiry will seek feedback through interviews and focus groups on the efficacy of the principles underpinning the proposed model.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The Literature review contains three sections. Firstly, it will review literature to argue for a consensus around the essence of the THE graduate as that of the service thinker-doer, a position necessary to enable an institutional or school-level organisation that takes into account all three disciplines. Secondly, a comparison of traditional and managerial, market-based approaches to institutional organisation are considered, with a particular consideration of the notion of the ‘student as customer’. Thirdly, the review considers the ‘student as customer’ within the paradigm of services marketing, demonstrating a gap in the literature concerning ‘internal service blueprints’, principles of which are later applied to the various stakeholders within the institution and shown in contrast to traditional and managerial approaches by way of a comparative table.

### **The Service Thinker-Doer; The Essence of The THE Graduate and Curriculum**

The creation, maturation and diversification of Tourism, Hospitality and Events (THE) Education has occurred mostly within the period of biggest historical change to higher education (Altbach, 1998; Hobson, 2010; Sisson & Adams, 2013; Dredge et al, 2013). This, coupled with the very different academic directions of the three disciplines, has meant a lack of consensus on what constitutes the essence of the THE graduate (Dredge et al, 2013). However, generally speaking, the literature points to a shift in this century away from purely technical focus to a broader portrait of a more critical and reflective THE management graduate, as will be shown for each of the three disciplines, and this has an impact on the roles of the lecturer and student alike.

The heritage of hospitality education in the European school of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century has meant many theorists long emphasized technical skills and job-readiness upon graduation as essential, the practical and vocational craft manifest in food and beverage of particular importance (Ford & LeBruto, 1995; Formica, 1996; Gillespie & Baum, 2000; Tribe, 2002). However, the evolution of Hospitality Education into the Higher Education space and the research findings concerning industry emphasis on ‘soft skills’ well as ‘hard’ has resulted in a fundamental shift in perceptions of what is important for the THE professional. Morrison

and O' Mahony (2003) proffered the need to 'liberalise' hospitality curriculum and lecturers away both from 'traditional transmission' and vocational training of technical skills. Coleman et al. (2003, p. 3, cited in Alexander, 2007, p.213) also advocate the need for curriculum to move from a "purely practical skills to a mix of practical, leadership, commercial and transferable skills". In other words, to focus less on serving - service as a set of technical skills - and more on services management. This found support more recently in the findings of a Sisson and Adams (2013) who found the 'competencies in the soft domain, such as interpersonal skills, communication, ethics and leadership' in the management of service to be of most importance for a rewarding career (p. 138). Important to note is that these commentaries do not argue for the removal of the vocational focus and experiences. To the contrary, they seek to build upon the vocational foundation through reflective means.

Likewise, tourism with once a strong travel orientation yet arguably a larger and longer association within university higher education (Hobson, 1995; Dredge et al., 2013) has both vocational and more liberal means and ends. The seminal work of Tribe (2002) demonstrates this through a taxonomy of 4 parts of a whole curriculum, with which he proffers to take students through from 'vocational action' to 'vocational reflection' to 'liberal reflection' and lastly 'liberal action' (pp.342-345). The significance here, just as in contemporary views of hospitality curriculum, is the emphasis on service not only in the day-to-day delivery of 'efficient and effective services', but in a more universal management of service, in the case of tourism represented as 'stewardship for the wider tourism world' (338), a higher order of service, thinking and reflection.

Events education, the most recent member of the THE trio offers a much smaller body of literature but nonetheless, debates about the specific paradigm of enquiry notwithstanding ("Events Beyond 2000", 2000; Lee, Lee and Kim, 2009), shares the consensus among many researchers around the importance of developing soft skills. Fletcher, Dunn and Prince (2009) found among their industry subjects, 'relatively higher importance given to personal and social skills' (p.55). Likewise, Robinson, Barron and Solnet (2008) found the capstone University of Queensland industry-partnered 'Professional Development' Event Management unit to include outcomes with criteria such as "communication skills, initiative and eagerness" (p.7). Furthermore, events management education, like its hospitality and tourism counterparts, and reflected in Robinson et al.'s findings, emphasizes the importance of 'actual experience' (Fletcher et al., p.55) with industrial players, which echoes the findings of other researchers in the field (Beaven and Wright, 2006)

The development of the THE graduate to towards the service thinker-doer occurs concurrently with the emerging body of literature recommending and recording a curriculum shift. The shift is away from 'traditional university training which stresses the transmission of knowledge' (Fletcher et al., 2009, p.55) and mere 'teaching laboratories' like the ubiquitous training restaurant (Morrison and Laffin, 1995, p.26), towards curriculum which can enable a more reflective, communicative, softer skills set to emerge in THE students. Of particular interest to THE educators and this paper by virtue of its actual industry focus and higher plain of thinking is the application of reflective experiential learning across learning spaces (Morrison et al., 1995; Morrison et al., 2003; Robinson et al., 2008; Harris,

2012; Zopiatis and Constanti, 2012). Indeed, Scotland's categorisation of Hospitality and Tourism Education curriculum defines many approaches that are variously called "experiential education", 'work experience', and 'practicum' (2006, pp.804-806). Here the focus has shifted from transmission of pure skills training and knowledge whether in the classroom, a THE laboratory (training restaurant, travel desk, for example) or non-classroom/ industrial environment, to imagine different uses of these environments to facilitate a wider 'range of managerial skills and techniques taught in other parts of the curriculum' (Morrison et al, 1995., p. 26).

Such changes to learning environments and curriculum presuppose a view of the roles of the THE lecturer and learner, which are vital considerations in the alignment and organisation of THE Schools to allow for the realization of the service thinker-doer. The consensus argued around a more managerial, reflective, communicative and professional graduate logically demands an institution-wide approach to enabling this reality, what is a further consensus from the 'different actors in the university setting' (Benckendorff, Ruhanen and Scott, 2009). For example, the transmission teacher/trainer becomes the facilitator and mentor (Harris, 2012), the student audience member the actor, the training restaurant apprentice waiter-practitioner now the reflective manager (Morrison et al., 1995), to name but a few hypothesised roles in a hospitality school. The challenge with these roles coming to fruition is, as Benckendorff et al. point out, is that "many academics base their understanding of the students experience based on their own experience' but, 'the current generation of students are experiencing university study in quite a different way to previous generations' (2009, p. 84). In particular in Australia, students are often working as well as studying, increasingly paying and paying more for their studies (Hobson, 2010), and being portrayed, targeted and positioned as customers. As will be shown, the latter fact needs to be negotiated if THE schools are to realise the concept of their 21<sup>st</sup> century thinker-doer.

### **Students or Customers: A Comparative Analysis of Traditional and Managerial Institutional Approaches**

Concurrent with the re-imagining of what constitutes a THE curriculum, teaching environment and graduate has been an educational context that has seen an 'increase in user-pays student numbers' and an 'increase' in the amount these same users pay (Hobson, 2010, p.4), and this has spawned the classification by some educational management theorists, institutions, and students themselves of the student as customer. This part of the paper compares the change in the perception of the student's relationship to the institution and faculty as from that of a trainee under what we will argue is a 'traditional' university to the customer under a 'managerial' culture. We will claim that an analysis of both notions, traditional and managerial, reveals a gap in the literature concerning applications of principles underpinning internal customer service theory. These principles will be applied to the THE School in and discussed in relation to the development of the service thinker-doer graduate by means of a comparative table (See Table 1).

The metamorphosis of the student's relationship to the institution and faculty as seen to move from that of an apprentice to the 'student-customer' (Vuori, 2013, p.176) has permeated education, marketing and higher education management literature from the early

1990's and had a polarizing effect on faculty, students and administrators while nonetheless inspiring debate (Rinehart, 1993; McCollough and Gremler, 1999; Lomas, 2007; Vuori, 2013). The conclusions researchers inevitably reach relate to two schools of thought. Firstly, there is much literature which argues against the very notion that an academic institution can even be considered as analogous to a service organisation or business; a refusal to accept the primary definition has thus emerged. For example, Vuori categorises one set of responses from students in non-fee-paying Finland as those who argued that 'students are students, not customers' and that the "capitalist logic" was incongruous to the outputs of institutions and that "missions and visions" of institutions and businesses are in opposition (2013, p.180). Likewise, Lomas cites a group of educators who categorise institutions as the one 'exception to service organisations' (2007, p.40). This view we categorise as the traditionalist view, a term coined from the seminal work of Altbach who looks at the tradition of the 'common basic university European model... with the [autonomous] Professor at the centre', state funding in place and as distinct from the less successful 'student-dominated University of Bologna' model (1998, p.4).

Secondly, for those papers like this whose research subjects accept the basic analogy of higher education as a service, the debate emerges from the aforementioned confusion and flux within portrayed roles of lecturer as service provider and assessor, but in particular the perceived disempowerment many models assign to the faculty. The change in institutional structure towards customer service orientation imbues a perception that the 'students' bargaining power is seen to increase [and] the bargaining power of the university leadership and administration' (Vuori; 2013, p.180). Indeed, the lecturer seems forgotten in these rearrangements and academics, understandably, continue to cite preference for traditional academic cultures over more recent business arrangements, as evidenced in the preference of one set of academic subjects for 'academics over professional managers' in leadership roles (Kalargyrou & Wood, 2012, p.11) . Furthermore, the new (read non-traditional) service organisation model is criticized for the prevalence of 'Hard Managerialism and Greedy Institutions' (Knight and Trowler, 2000, p.71). In short, literature concerning this kind of management culture argues that it compartmentalizes and commodifies the teaching and learning experience through stringent record-keeping, which serves to constrain ideas of academic freedom and autonomy. Greed, the literature argues, is likewise manifest in the requirement of lecturers to log in and log out and has curtailed the traditional place of self-managed, trustworthy 'professionals' (p. 71,72). The issue here is that this kind of management reveals itself to be more production line than services focused and fails to allow for the necessary 'heterogeneity' assumed in a service (Fitzsimmons & Fitzsimmons, 2008, p.20) and manifest in notions of academic freedom and autonomy to emerge.

### **Services Marketing, Management and Institutions of Higher Education**

Conversely, research in the area of service management and marketing over the past 20 years seeks to offer approaches from within the services paradigm. In an earlier work, Shostack (1977) identified "education as the most intangible of products, prototypical in terms of heterogeneity, perishability, and coproduction" (cited in McCollough and Gremler, 1999, p.118) and later proposed a 'service design blueprint' (1984) to manage this

complexity at a micro or task/job level. Since this work, researchers firstly advanced the notion from linear input-output service encounter constructs portraying the graduating student as the 'product' of service transactions, an internal customer of sorts, with industry as the ultimate customer (Rinehart, 1993; McCollough and Gremler, 1999). In more recent investigations the notion emerges of an educational service co-producer partnership between students and lecturer mirroring concurrent theoretical movements in Total Quality Management, services marketing and service-dominant logic (Bay & Daniel, 2001; Kotze & du Plessis, 2003; Yeo & Li, 2013; Mark, 2013). The milieu includes empirical data on student and faculty perceptions of the constructs around roles of student-customer and institution-service provider (Lomas, 2007; Vuori, 2013) as well as others placing industry as the primary beneficiary of service, then with the student then placed as the penultimate customer and the graduate a product of the experience (McCollough and Gremler, 1999; 2002). The extreme end for this model of service experience is found in "the 'production' of students who are equipped with both the intellectual and practical qualities that will contribute to "optimal job performance", replete with a 'returns' policy should industry be dissatisfied (Yeo, 2008, p.268). Again, while these systems allow for more complexity than hard managerialism, the question of where the lecturer sits is largely looked over or simplified to that of 'performer' or 'service provider' (McCollough & Gremler, 1999; 119) and an opportunity missed in relation to notions of setting of quality standards and utilisation of knowledge that is at the core of the university mission, whether traditional or managerial. Furthermore, the positioning of the lecturer as service provider in the educational services paradigm is over-simplified and ignores the 'two-way, co-production' nature of services (Kotze & du Plessis, 2003; Ostrom, Bitner & Burkhard, 2011; Yeo & Li, 2013), not to mention the obvious flaw that a check and balance is missing in the form of an independent faculty gatekeeper and judge within the school. Ostrom et al. (2011) do acknowledge the lecturers' role in their work on blueprinting but this work, like others cited, views the entire non-academic experience from the student's perspective as customer and is not focused on the core experience of teaching and learning.

The gap in the literature concerning the aforementioned internal service systems is that complimentary principles of the internal services management theory do not ascribe the core function of teaching, learning and research (not the student's perception of these but these themselves), when considered and applied to higher education. We hold that such an assignation may offer THE Schools a *modus operandi* that enables it to organise the competing interests within the organisation to align in order to develop the service thinker-doer.

Kandampully (2006), writing within the field of hospitality services management, applies Shostack's (1984) idea of the service organisation to be conceptualized around a 'blueprint' or map of 'service delivery processes' within an organisation but, rather than looking at a particular role or series of tasks within that role, instead looks at the service relationships between associates within a service delivery process (p.3). The concept of internal customer can be better understood by mapping out the service-delivery process for use as a management tool. Kandampully argues that each step along the process between staff of the same organisation adds value to the ultimate service encounters. In this way, all actors along the process flow are simultaneously customer and service provider, and Kandampully uses the relationship between the chef and a waiter to demonstrate this effect

with the chef accountable for the food delivered to the waiter as much as the waiter is to the paying customer.

The key difference in this from more one-way linear models is the emphasis on the dual role of all actors within the system. For example, the Waiter must give feedback to the chef on the quality of the food presented in much the way a customer might to the waiter and as a means of quality assurance, ipso facto the waiter is required to be knowledgeable in this area. When applied to the academic institution we replace the chef with the student whose academic output is delivered to the lecturer and we see that this is left out of the literature to date. For while we have shown that many researchers have demonstrated the student as customer, the recipient of education, their responsibility 'internally' as service provider is ignored for the emphasis on output to industry. In relation to higher education, "the students' position as the focus of the service and the target of the transformation through knowledge acquisition" (Ostrom et al., 2011, p.2) is crucial to all staff but it is the lecturer, the judge and communicator of the level of acquisition and ability, whose role is critical. Therefore, a vital step in the service delivery process is hitherto forgotten, the role of lecturer as judge or customer of the student's 'service' (like the waiter is to the food) which, in this context, is the student's demonstrable action and reflection on acquired knowledge.

Our hypothesis is that the principles herein espoused are applicable across institutional type and mission and regardless of the task performed by the students in the form of assessment, coursework or other demonstrable actions as students. That is, we hold that the principles are applicable regardless of whether nearer the vocational or liberal ends of the THE continuum (Tribe, 2002). The emphasis is always on the student, like the Chef in Kandampully's example (2006), ensuring they understand the requirements communicated by their customer, the Lecturer. In this way, just as the restaurant is organised around the core business of the service of food and beverage, so is the institution around teaching and learning, research and other academic activities, but still with a service focus with the student as proponent (read service provider) of these skills. The student is both free to interpret, perform, innovate and critically assess academic experiences, but with the freedom is the responsibility to meet the needs of the faculty in their demonstration of acquired knowledge and skills. Moreover, the obvious soft skills - communication, reading the lecturer, problem solving and innovation, to name a few - and accountability these principles promote are the very skills industry demands from graduates (Fletcher et al., 2009; Robinson et al., 2008).

## **DISCUSSION**

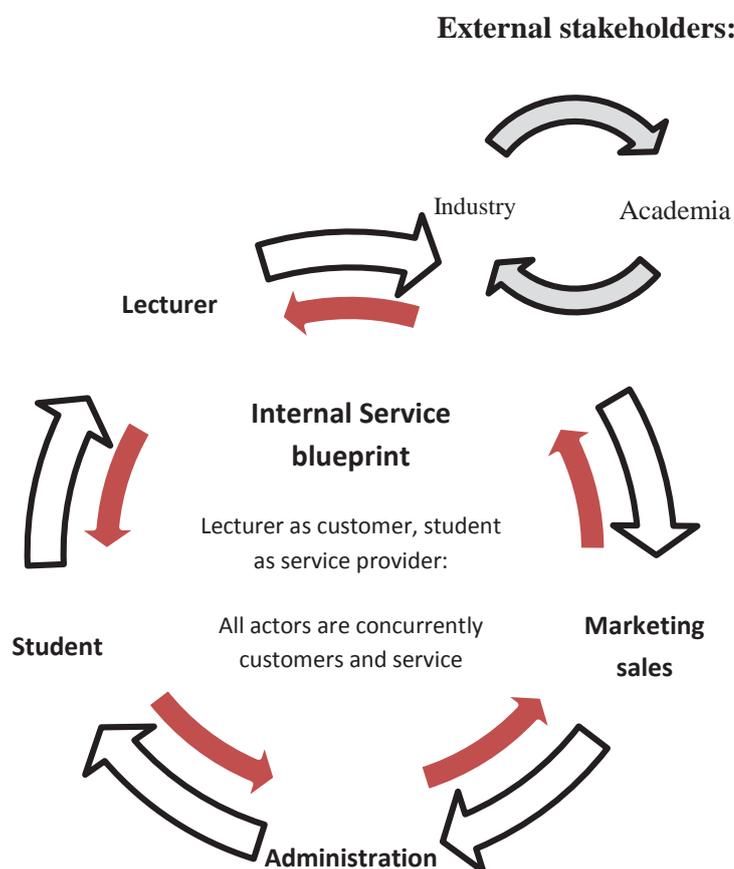
The table below reflects the existing literature and depicts the comparison between the so-called traditional and managerial Schools in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> columns, thereafter offering principles for the development of a new model based around a consensual view of the THE graduate as the service thinker-doer in the 3<sup>rd</sup> column and a re-organisation of the service perspective to that of the Lecturer not previously studied in higher education blueprints (Ostrom et al., 2011). Crucial to this is the relationship of the lecturer as ultimate quality judge or customer prior to graduation (more of a traditional view) of the student thinker-doer who is ultimately responsible for their own performance of both vocational-operational and managerial-reflective skills and knowledge (more the contemporary view). The role of the student is founded on the internal service blueprint, within which all players in the educational service organisation are both customers (in this case to the non-academic staff, a fact previously explored by Ostrom et al., 2011) and service providers in the form of demonstrable aspects of action and reflection as determined by the expert lecturer/ quality judge (left out of previous research). For their part, the lecturer is empowered to maintain the academic standard but to remain current in their industry and related knowledge, hence the nomenclature ‘discerning’ is prefixed and this is further realised in the relationship to industry and the academy depicted in the recommended model below.

**Table 1: A Comparison of Institutional Approaches to Management of Faculty, Administration and Students from Existing Literature to An Internal Service Blueprint Approach.**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Traditional</b>	<b>Managerial</b>	<b>THE School Internal Service Blueprint</b>
Role of lecturer/ professor/ tutor	Expert, truth-seeker, Thought leader Autonomous	Service provider, administrator Head Count Accountable	Discerning customer, quality judge, expert Strategic Empowered/ accountable/ collegial
Role of Student	Apprentice	Customer	Service provider, thinker-doer
Role of Administration	Support	Strategic	Support through Internal marketing of academic mission; add value to student experience by managing academic expectations; as a case study
Teaching and Learning Approach	Lecturer-centred	Student-centred	Student as performer, reflective
THE Curriculum	Social Sciences, emphasis on tourism (biggest milieu of research)	Business (more economies of scale, graduate jobs)	Inter-disciplinary to allow for soft and hard skill development
Core function	New knowledge	Student satisfaction & graduate success	Developing graduates who can move throughout the THE sectors/ researchers
Role of Industry	Subject and beneficiary of R & D	Valued Employer, curriculum consultant, adjunct faculty Managerial	Subject of research, model for service provision, curriculum advisor, employer
Leadership	Professorial	Stakeholder, regulator	Professor-Managers
Role of government	Pay Master, employer	Vital to maintain industry	Regulator
Role of Practicum	Short experiences to compliment theory	connection & for marketing	Reflective practice on pre-practicum learning and preparation for post-practicum learning
Role of Sales and Marketing	Sell tradition and quality: research profiles, Professorial PR	Selling complete student experience, benefits, programme as product	Selling immersive T & L environment and experience, students as new members of both professional and academic communities; innovative teaching approaches

## RECOMMENDATION

### Lecturer as Customer, Student as Service Provider – the “Internal Service blueprint” Approach.



**Figure 1: The Tourism, Hospitality and Events School Internal Service Blueprint Model Aligning All Interactions to the Student-Lecturer (Teaching, Learning, Research) Relationship.**

The recommendation of an application of the principles espoused in the comparative analysis on the previous page (See Table 1) is Figure 1 above, which offers an internal service blueprint in which all actors within the institution are aligned through their relationships and interactions to the core business, teaching, learning (depicted by the lecturer at the top) and research (the lecturer’s engagement with industry and academia). Unlike other ‘blueprints’ where the ‘lines of visibility and internal interaction’ represented in horizontal/vertical ‘above the line/ below the line’ diagrams that show where a customer is present or not are not applicable (Shostack, 1984, p.138; Ostrom et al., 2011, p.12). The flow is depicted cyclically because the student takes the place within the institution as

service provider rather than an external customer. Service provision in this context is the delivery of a demonstrable ‘transformation through acquisition of knowledge’ (Ostrom et al., 2011, p.2), specifically amounting to evidence of the service thinker-doer contextualized to the academic requirements of the specific THE unit or study. The roles of the institution’s marketing, sales and administration are respectively to: externally promote this student transformation and performance to would-be students, much like tourism marketer promotes the experience over the destination; and to internally promote and manage students’ expectations of their role to best equip them for (that is, add value to) the academic journey.

The lecturer, quality judge and expert customer is deemed discerning because of their relationship to industry and the academic community, the external environment, thereby ensuring the institution is not a closed system, a common criticism of the traditional university. Within this kind of blueprint, the institution itself and its component parts and actors may be the subject of case studies and should expect to be, given the nature of the liberal reflection expected of its student body and their positioning as ‘internal’, this may lead to further investigations of the blueprint as a catalyst for new insights into meta-cognitive teaching and learning approaches and the institution itself as a ‘learning organisation’ (Smith, 2001) as depicted by the anti-clockwise arrows in Figure 1, the feedback loop.

The next stage of the inquiry will be to seek feedback through interviews and focus groups on the efficacy of the principles underpinning the proposed model and look for opportunities to these principles on institutes of THE.

## **CONCLUSION**

In the haste to embrace the market economy and seek models with which to apply for the altered 21<sup>st</sup> educational landscape, we in the academy have forsaken our most important role, as expert and quality judge prior to the student’s graduation. In many ways by excluding the lecturer or repositioning them as a glorified administrator and hired gun, we may have out-reasoned reason itself, forgotten the core business mission and thrown out the baby with the bath water where the essence of education, knowledge, is concerned. Perhaps the traditional university model as described by Altbach (1998) has had its day, but should all facets of that system simply be brushed aside as realities of market economics prevail in the new world of higher education?

As shown through a new application of service blueprint principles, an institution’s management of service relationships can explore the student-lecturer relationship within a contemporary marketing approach without forsaking the lecturer. With the application of an internal service blueprint, a model that is also fittingly part of the subject matter of services management curriculum within the area of THE, the lecturer serves as quality judge and the student, in meeting the needs of the lecturer/ academy customer, is demonstrating soft and hard skills required within their industry of choice. At the heart of this study is the consensus argued about the active and reflective, vocational and liberal service manager that might be the ideal THE graduate and the necessity to agree as the thought leaders in the area on that which constitutes a professional in this field. Indeed, this model and the sustainability and

legitimacy of the discipline depend on such an agreement (Dredge et al., 2013). It only remains to be seen whether this model and the underlying principles can also help to sustain THE's place in higher education for this decade and those to come.

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