Enablers and barriers to adopting Digital Marketing in business schools: An exploratory study in Japanese HEIs

Author: Alessandro Comai, Ass. Prof. Marketing, International University of Japan.

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The purpose of this study is to enhance our understanding of the reasons why Japanese Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) show a lack of digital marketing (DM) activities. Specifically, we focused on the challenges faced by Japanese business schools when using and implementing DM. In order to accomplish this purpose, the research invited 91 Japanese HEIs to respond to a self-administered online questionnaire followed by semi-structured interviews. 13 valid responses were obtained and 3 interviews were performed afterwards. The preliminary results indicate five main areas that need specific attention, namely top management support, human resources, structured processes and planning, tools & technology, and personalization. In addition, the interview reveals the existence of certain contingencies such as competition, internalization, customer preferences and technology which influence the adoption of DM. Having pinpointed these challenges and factors, the paper concludes with some practical recommendations and guidelines for Japanese HEIs.