

Business Marketing Strategy in Promoting Criminology Program: Basis for a Marketing Plan

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the effectiveness of business marketing strategies in promoting the Criminology program among selected Private Higher Education Institutions during the academic year 2025–2026. Specifically, it assessed the effectiveness of digital marketing, conventional marketing, and community-based social marketing, identified the respondents' reasons for enrolment, examined the relationship between demographic profile and marketing strategies, and formulated a proposed marketing plan. A quantitative descriptive research design was employed involving 246 first-year Criminology students selected through stratified random sampling. Data were gathered using a validated and reliable researcher-modified questionnaire and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. Findings revealed that the overall business marketing strategy was highly effective, with community-based social marketing obtaining the highest rating. School reputation emerged as a primary reason for enrolment. A significant relationship was found only between sex and business marketing strategy. A proposed marketing plan was developed based on the findings.

Keywords: business, marketing strategy, criminology, digital marketing, conventional marketing, community-based social marketing

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary business landscape, organizations need to develop unique marketing strategies to satisfy the changing demands of consumers and markets for products and services (Kaur et al., 2022). The effective application of marketing strategies is commonly regarded as a significant contributor to organizational growth and performance (Morgan et al., 2025). As competition continues to intensify in highly saturated markets, achieving success relies not only on the quality of products and services but also on the efficiency of marketing efforts. Promotional marketing, in particular, is considered essential in capturing customer interest, fostering loyalty, and maintaining a competitive advantage (Bondarenko & Vyshnivska, 2023).

Furthermore, marketing is defined as the process of promoting and selling products and services, which includes activities such as market research and advertising, and plays a crucial role in supporting organizational development (Hansika, 2022). In today's digital age, organizations are required to adapt to the evolving digital environment by improving customer experiences, transitioning from time-oriented to data-driven decision-making, and incorporating emerging technologies into existing services and business models (Munandar et al., 2025). Within the higher education sector, particularly among private institutions, the growing level of competition has made students more careful and selective in choosing colleges, as these choices can greatly influence their future career and employment opportunities (Elpisah et al., 2023).

In today's educational landscape, marketing practices are crucial for institutions striving to remain competitive amid rapidly changing social demands. Educational institutions, like other organizations, must adopt effective marketing strategies to enhance student satisfaction, attract enrollees, and improve retention as internationalization raises expectations for quality education. In the Philippine context, where higher education is highly competitive particularly among private institutions effective marketing is essential for long-term

sustainability. Institutions must therefore focus on key factors such as facilities, quality of education, and affordability to attract and retain students (Ramos & Briones, 2024).

Although numerous studies have explored business marketing strategies, program assessment, and institutional evaluation, only a limited number of researches have concentrated on the promotion of the Criminology program as a foundation for crafting marketing plans in academic institutions. This research gap emphasizes the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of marketing strategies employed by Private Higher Education Institutions in promoting the Criminology program. Hence, this study was undertaken to formulate an appropriate strategic plan that may guide the institution's long-term direction.

Research Objectives

This study determined the extent of effectiveness of the business marketing strategy of the Marketing Office of Private Higher Education Institutions for the academic year 2025 – 2026. The result of this study will be the basis for formulating a marketing plan. Specifically, it sought to: (1) describe the respondents according to sex, school type, and senior high school track; (2) determine the extent of effectiveness of business marketing strategy in terms of digital marketing, conventional marketing, community-based social marketing; (3) determine the reasons for enrolment of the respondents; (4) determine the significant relationships between the demographic profile and the business marketing strategies of the Marketing Office of Private Higher Education Institutions; and (5) determine the what marketing plan may be proposed

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Respondents

A quantitative descriptive research design was employed. The descriptive component was used to summarize the reported extent of effectiveness of business marketing strategy in terms of digital marketing, conventional marketing, and community-based social marketing. The respondents were 246 officially enrolled first-year students taking the Bachelor of Science in Criminology program in selected Private Higher Education Institutions during the second semester of academic year 2025–2026. Stratified random sampling was used to provide representation from the criminology students.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using an adapted and modified structured survey questionnaire derived from the works of Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick's Digital Marketing (2019), Navarro's Innovation in Print Media: Future Prospects of Print Marketing in a Digital World (2020), and McKenzie-Mohr's Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing (2011). The instrument was designed to assess the effectiveness of the school's business marketing strategies in promoting the criminology program. The questionnaire covered three marketing strategies: Digital Marketing, Conventional Marketing, and Community-Based Social Marketing. It consisted of 30 closed-ended and Likert-scale items measuring the respondents' perceptions, opinions, and experiences regarding the effectiveness of the school's marketing strategies. Responses were summarized using the study's Likert rating scale.

Data Gathering and Analysis

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the institution. Participation was voluntary, and the respondents were informed that their responses would be treated confidentially and used for academic purposes. After collection, the completed questionnaires were organized and subjected to statistical analysis. Frequency and percentage were used to describe the respondent profile. Weighted mean and standard deviation were used to determine the extent of effectiveness of business marketing strategy in terms of digital marketing, conventional marketing, and community-based social marketing. Chi-square test of independence was used to test among the variables at the 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Category	f	%
Sex	Male	167	67.89
	Female	75	30.49
	Prefer not to say	4	1.63
School Type	Public	70	28.46
	Private	176	71.54
SHS Track	Academic Track	213	86.59
	Technical Vocational Livelihood Track	33	13.41

A total of 246 first-year Criminology students from three different schools participated as respondents in the study. In terms of sex, 167 (67.89%) were male, 75 (30.49%) were female, and 4 (1.63%) preferred not to disclose their sex. Regarding school type, 176 (71.54%) respondents were enrolled in private schools, while 70 (28.46%) were from public schools. In terms of Senior High School (SHS) track, the Academic Track comprised the largest group, with 213 (86.59%) respondents, while 33 (13.41%) came from the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) Track. Overall, the respondents were predominantly male, enrolled in private schools, and graduates of the Academic Track.

Marketing Strategy

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Digital Marketing	4.21	0.58	Very High
Conventional Marketing	4.07	0.62	High
Community-based Marketing	4.24	0.61	Very High

The respondents demonstrated a very high level of effectiveness in marketing strategies ($M = 4.17$). Community-based Marketing obtained the highest mean ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.61$), followed by Digital Marketing ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.58$), both interpreted as Very High. Conventional Marketing obtained a comparatively lower mean ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.62$), which was interpreted as High. The findings indicate that the school's marketing strategies were generally perceived as highly effective in promoting the Criminology program, with community-based and digital marketing strategies demonstrating the strongest perceived effectiveness.

Reason for Enrolment

Reason for Enrolment	f	%	Rank
Others	157	21.16	1st
Well-known and has Good School Reputation	147	19.81	2nd
Peer/Parents Influence	129	17.39	3rd
Low-cost Tuition and Miscellaneous Fees	109	14.69	4th
Recognized and Influenced in an Advertisement	104	14.02	5th
Well-equipped School Facilities	77	10.38	6th
Convenient or Accessible School Location	19	2.56	7th

The results show that “Others” ranked first as the reason for enrolment, with 157 respondents (21.16%), followed by “Well-known and has Good School Reputation” with 147 (19.81%) and “Peer/Parents Influence” with 129 (17.39%). Meanwhile, “Low-cost Tuition and Miscellaneous Fees” ranked fourth with 109 (14.69%), while “Recognized and Influenced in an Advertisement” ranked fifth with 104 (14.02%). “Well-equipped School Facilities” ranked sixth with 77 (10.38%), while “Convenient or Accessible School Location” ranked seventh with 19 (2.56%). Overall, the findings indicate that various factors influenced respondents’ enrolment decisions, with other considerations, school reputation, and peer or parental influence being the most prominent.

Relationships among the Study Variables

Variables	Chi-square	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Business Marketing Strategy – Sex	33.245	< .001	Reject H_0	Significant
Business Marketing Strategy – School Type	1.529	0.676	Accept H_0	Not Significant
Business Marketing Strategy – SHS Track	3.476	0.324	Accept H_0	Not Significant

A significant relationship was found between business marketing strategy and sex ($\chi^2 = 33.245$, $p < .001$). This indicates that respondents' perceptions of business marketing strategies significantly differed according to sex. In contrast, no significant relationship was found between business marketing strategy and school type ($\chi^2 = 1.529$, $p = .676$), indicating that respondents from private and public schools had similar perceptions of business marketing strategies. Similarly, no significant relationship was found between business marketing strategy and SHS track ($\chi^2 = 3.476$, $p = .324$), suggesting that respondents from the Academic and Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) tracks had comparable perceptions of business marketing strategies.

DISCUSSION

The results present a consistent but not uniform picture of the respondents' financial situation. All three major variables were rated high, but the dimension-level results show where strengths and possible needs are concentrated. Budgeting knowledge was the strongest component of financial literacy, while savings and investment knowledge was the lowest. This difference is meaningful because budgeting deals largely with organizing present resources, whereas saving and investment require individuals to think beyond immediate expenses and consider longer-term accumulation and growth of funds. The finding therefore suggests that employees may be more comfortable with managing available income than with making decisions about how surplus resources can be preserved or invested.

The high rating for financial management is consistent with the high level of financial literacy reported by the respondents. Spending behavior obtained the highest mean among the financial-management dimensions. This may indicate that respondents are generally attentive to how they use available income in their day-to-day lives. However, saving habits obtained the lowest mean. The gap between strong spending management and comparatively weaker saving behavior is worth noting. Knowing how to control expenses does not necessarily mean that a person consistently converts the remaining resources into savings. Workplace financial programs may therefore be more useful when they include practical mechanisms for regular saving rather than focusing only on general financial concepts.

The results for economic sustainability reinforce this point. Respondents reported the strongest position in managing financial obligations, while emergency preparedness was the weakest dimension. Meeting current obligations appears to be more established than preparing for financial disruptions that have not yet occurred. Emergency preparedness requires resources to be set aside in advance and therefore depends on the sustained practice of saving and planning. The parallel between the lower ratings for saving habits and emergency preparedness provides a useful institutional insight: strengthening regular savings may also help employees build greater capacity to respond to unexpected expenses.

The positive relationship between financial literacy and financial management ($r_s = .674$) is the strongest asso-

ciation observed in the study. This finding is consistent with the broader literature showing that financial knowledge is related to financial behavior. Hwang and Park (2023), for example, found positive relationships between financial knowledge, desirable financial behavior, and financial well-being. The present result should nevertheless be interpreted within the limits of a correlational study. It indicates that the two constructs move together among the respondents, but it does not establish that increasing financial knowledge alone will automatically improve financial practices.

The relationship between financial literacy and economic sustainability was also significant and positive ($r_s = .618$). This suggests that respondents who reported stronger financial knowledge also tended to report greater capacity to maintain their financial needs, manage obligations, prepare for emergencies, and sustain longer-term stability. The result is consistent with the view of financial literacy as an important resource for economic decision-making (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014). It also fits the Philippine policy emphasis on financial capability and resilience under the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (BSP, 2022). In the context of the present study, financial knowledge appears relevant to economic sustainability, although other factors not measured in the study may also contribute to employees' financial outcomes.

Financial management also showed a significant positive relationship with economic sustainability ($r_s = .622$). This association is particularly important because it connects financial sustainability with observable practices rather than knowledge alone. The respondents' relatively strong spending behavior and management of financial obligations coincide with their generally high economic sustainability. At the same time, the comparatively lower ratings for saving habits and emergency preparedness suggest that sustainability should not be understood only as the ability to meet present expenses. A stronger position would also involve the capacity to absorb unexpected costs and maintain financial stability over a longer period.

Taken together, the three correlations point to a connected pattern: financial knowledge, financial practices, and economic sustainability are positively associated in this group of personnel. The findings are also compatible with systematic reviews emphasizing the multidimensional nature of personal financial management, including budgeting, saving, investment, and debt handling (Elliyana et al., 2025). The practical implication is not simply to provide more financial information, but to connect financial education with concrete behaviors such as regular saving, emergency-fund preparation, debt management, and long-term planning.

CONCLUSION

The study included 246 first-year Criminology students from various institutions, with the majority being male, enrolled in private schools, and belonging to the Academic Track. The findings revealed that the school's overall business marketing strategy was perceived as High, with an overall mean of 4.17 and a standard deviation of 0.55. Community-based marketing obtained the highest mean ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.61$), followed by digital marketing ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.58$), both interpreted as Very High, while conventional marketing received the lowest mean ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.62$), interpreted as High. The respondents' reasons for enrolment were influenced by several factors, with "Others" ranking first at 157 respondents (21.16%), followed by school reputation (147 or 19.81%) and peer/parents' influence (129 or 17.39%), while convenient or accessible school location ranked lowest with 19 respondents (2.56%). Furthermore, a significant relationship was found between business marketing strategy and sex ($\chi^2 = 33.245$, $p < .001$). However, no significant relationship was found between business marketing strategy and school type ($\chi^2 = 1.529$, $p = .676$) and SHS track ($\chi^2 = 3.476$, $p = .324$).

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the preceding findings and discussions, the College of Criminal Justice Education may strengthen its promotional efforts by highlighting the quality of its academic programs, student achievements, and career opportunities through engaging digital and community-based activities. The Marketing Office may further enhance its digital and social media strategies by developing interactive, visually appealing, and gender-sensitive promotional content while maintaining consistent online engagement. School Administrators may support innovative marketing initiatives by providing adequate resources for digital platforms, promotional materials, and community-based activities that enhance the institution's competitiveness and reputation. The Research and

Development Office, Community Extension and Development Office, and Office of Alumni Relations may intensify community engagement, outreach programs, and alumni involvement to strengthen public trust, increase school visibility, and encourage enrolment through positive community relationships and testimonials. Faculty and staff may actively contribute to promoting the institution by maintaining quality instruction, demonstrating professionalism, and participating in activities that enhance the school's image and credibility. Finally, future researchers may conduct similar studies with a broader scope of respondents and additional variables to further examine the factors influencing students' enrolment decisions and the effectiveness of business marketing strategies in educational institutions.

Limitations of the Study

The findings should be interpreted in light of the study's scope and design. The respondents were limited to 246 first-year Criminology students from selected higher education institutions, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to students from other programs or institutions. The study also relied on self-reported questionnaire responses regarding business marketing strategies and reasons for enrolment, which may have been influenced by the respondents' personal perceptions and experiences. Moreover, the study focused on the respondents' reported perceptions and enrollment considerations within a specific period, and therefore may not fully capture changes in students' preferences over time. These limitations provide opportunities for future researchers to include a broader and more diverse sample, examine additional factors influencing enrolment decisions, and use longitudinal or mixed-method approaches to gain deeper insights into the effectiveness of business marketing strategies in higher education institutions.

Ethical Considerations

The thesis documentation includes a Certificate of Ethics Approval and a permission letter for the conduct of the study. Participation was voluntary, and the research instrument stated that responses would be treated confidentially and used solely for academic purposes.

Conflict of Interest

The researcher declares no conflict of interest related to the conduct or reporting of this study.

Data Availability

The data are not publicly available because the study involved individual personnel responses and the research instrument stated that information would remain private and anonymous. Data access should therefore be subject to applicable institutional and ethical restrictions.

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