

BRANDING IN ACADEMIA – ARE THERE POSSIBILITIES TO CO-BRAND HIGHER EDUCATION AND FESTIVALS?

(WORK-IN-PROGRESS)

Kati Suomi • Turku School of Economics at the University of Turku, Finland
Ulla Hakala • Turku School of Economics at the University of Turku, Finland
Arja Lemmetyinen • Turku School of Economics at the University of Turku, Finland

ABSTRACT

This study contributes to the scarce higher education branding literature, the purpose being to explore co-branding possibilities of a Master's degree program and an annual international music festival arranged in the city. The qualitative empirical data covers interviews with internal and external stakeholders of the program, as well as a survey among the students of the program. The results imply that educational programs could gain differentiation and brand synergy from related festival brands but it demands close cooperation and networking with surrounding stakeholders, i.e. co-branding. This is particularly important when an educational program is new and operating with rather limited marketing budget and the brand is yet an establishing one. The results imply that close cooperation is favourable not only to the program but also to the festival.

Key words: *higher education, branding, co-branding, festivals*