



## Marketing concept of the Basel medical simulation center

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**Introduction:** The Medical Simulation Center at the Department of Anesthesia, University Hospital Basel started with simulation training in team performance of OR personnel in the early nineties of the last century. In the meantime, several different course formats for anaesthesiologists and emergency physicians have been developed. To better adjust the offered courses to the actual needs of the "medical education market" in Switzerland, the faculty of the center decided to generate a comprehensive marketing concept.

**Methods:** The main part of the concept consisted of a written survey for a presumed test market (anaesthesiologists and nurse anaesthetists of a university and peripheral hospitals), in which we asked test persons for their interest concerning different course products and for their opinion concerning different simulation-related topics. Together with an environmental and SWOT analysis and with definitions of USPs (unique selling propositions), target groups and competitors, this survey was used to describe the actual market situation. Based on these findings a vision and objectives were defined together with the faculty of the center. From these objectives, a more concise marketing strategy was derived. The strategy led to the development of a classical marketing mix (according to the categories Product, Price, Promotion, Place) and to a catalogue of measures.

**Results:** The survey of the test market showed a high requirement for simulation based training, especially for courses with training of algorithms, management of difficult airway, team leadership and critical incident management. There was lower rating for training of isolated technical skills. The answering test persons indicated to invest on average 2.1 days of their annual training time in simulation-based training. They were willing to pay on average 574 SFr. ( $\approx$  370 €) by themselves for a 2 day simulation course in a group of 8 persons (which is about one third of the effective course costs).

Together with interviews of active course instructors, the survey presented ideas for new attractive course products (e.g., training for inhouse residents during special rotations) and potentials for optimization of existing course contents (more comprehensive didactic concept).

**Conclusions:** According to our experience, a marketing concept may be a useful tool to more reliably focus on important target groups. It supports the pricing process and identification of important sponsors. In addition, a marketing concept may be helpful for defining of relevant distribution channels and for using the most appropriate promotion tools for external communication.