

**The Role of Students and Alumni in Relationship Marketing:
An Exploratory Study at the Cape Peninsula University of
Technology, South Africa**

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ABSTRACT Universities seek alumni associations for ongoing support and, therefore, should attract, maintain and enhance ongoing relationships with their alumni. This is usually done by the alumni association, which becomes a marketing instrument and mouth-piece for the university and its alumni. The objective of this study is to examine the perceptions of senior students (at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology) in respect to the university's efforts to attract, maintain and enhance ongoing relationships with students (and eventually alumni). This paper concluded that senior students at CPUT are not yet convinced that the university's efforts to attract, maintain and enhance ongoing relationships with students (and eventually alumni) are successful. This further means that a relationship between the alumni association and the alumni of the university will be difficult to start and develop. This is not an ideal situation for a university that is longing for strong lifelong relationships with its alumni. It further shows that more than half of the respondents are unaware that CPUT uses an alumni association as a marketing instrument to maintain good relations with its alumni. This again indicates that the alumni association and its functions are not well known to senior students who are future alumni.