BOTTLENECKS IN SCIENCE SHOP ACTIVITIES

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IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS

- Characteristics of Flemish higher education system
- University’s structural organisation
- Society’s culture
PILOT CASE

- **Client:** Communication Agency (Verbal Vision)
- **Research:** Press covering of migrant issues in Antwerp-based periodicals
- **Research Period:** September 2003 – Juli 2004
- **Researcher:** Senior student in Communication Sciences
- **Science Shop:** Brussels (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)
BOTTLENECKS & REMEDIES (1)

- **Strict academic calendar**
  - Increased communication about rigidity of Flemish educational system
  - Calls for new research questions only in October or Februari

- ‘Social questions’ remain unanswered
  - Expanding research service package
BOTTLENECKS & REMEDIES (2)

- Too high or wrong expectations about student (thesis) research
  - Extra focus on intake discussion with client
  - Intake discussion with thesis director
  - Thesis market

- Contact (student)researcher – client
  - Intensified mediating activities
BOTTLENECKS & REMEDIES (3)

- Strict rules for writing thesis reports (structure and jargon)
  - Student workshops to increase scientific writing skills
  - Popular report (with extra cost)

- Press release (Content? Ownership?)
  - Strict rules for press releases
CONCLUSION

Problems due to rigidity of Flemish higher education system and university structure are solved by intensified communication (content & timing & thesis market), increased regulation and extra research options.

Problems due to society’s expectations about student (thesis) research are solved by intensified communication (content) with clients and thesis directors.