

Abstract

My fellow marketing colleges and I often complain that our students do not retain the core marketing concepts needed to be successful in the business world. In an effort to solve this problem, I have conducted research in the area of whole-to-part educational models; models that are designed to deepen a student's comprehension and retention of a discipline's core concepts.

I have developed a whole-to-part model that I believe deepens my student's comprehension and retention of core marketing principles. Furthermore, I have incorporated this model into an interactive internet experience. Unfortunately, I have not had the exploratory time and focus to fully integrate the internet based "business ecosystem" model into my curriculum; the Wisconsin Teaching Scholar grant provided me with a block of summer time in which I could redesign my marketing curriculum.

Course Redesign Objectives:

1. Review the literature as it relates to incorporating whole-to-part internet based marketing environmental models into the curriculum.
2. Identify key "touch-points" in my marketing curriculum that will allow students to gain maximum benefit from the internet based "business ecosystem" model.
3. Integrate the internet based whole-to-part "business ecosystem" model into the identified "touch points".
4. Teach my Marketing Management course with the internet based "business ecosystem" fully integrated into the curriculum.
5. Present findings as it relates to my course redesign.

Methods or approach you used to investigate the question, problem or issue.

I completely revised my marketing management curriculum around the whole-to-part business model that I have developed; the business model is shown below. A website has been created to support the business model: www.catscanner.com

The first week of the semester involved a broad introduction of the whole-to-part business model; Using the whole-to-part model, I briefly explained the model's external environmental forces; forces that marketing managers need to continually monitor. As shown on the business model, these environmental forces include the marketplace, the industry, the competition, the value-added dimension, production inputs, economic, technological, political, legal, social/cultural. More importantly, I described the positive or negative impact that these forces could potentially have on an organization's marketing strategy.

After the broad introduction of the business model, I broke the rest of the semester into modules; each module was dedicated to an in-depth discussion and evaluation of a particular environmental force. Throughout the semester, each student evaluated the external business forces as they related to "Legacy Chocolate"; a locally owned gourmet chocolate company. The students were given an exam at the end of the semester that asked them to fully describe the potential impact of the environmental forces on a

hypothetical firm. The students exhibited a deep understanding of their business environment and of the forces that can bring about changes in the marketing strategy.

I have informed my colleagues about my curriculum change and have received positive feedback on my efforts. It is my hope that several of my colleagues will implement the business model into their course for evaluation. At the end of the 2007 spring semester, I will conduct in-depth interviews in an effort to evaluate the effectiveness of the model on student comprehension and retention of core marketing concepts. Based on my in-depth interviews, further research topics may emerge.

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