

· Step 4: Final Application: Team Project. For the final step in the visual analysis module, each team of students is required to conduct an original visual analysis project that involves data collection (still photographs), data analysis (using the visual analysis coding sheets), and open coding based upon grounded theory techniques they learned earlier during a qualitative data analysis module. The final deliverables are a print report and flash drive including a comprehensive visual analysis and interpretation of the images (using grounded theory), prints of the visual images, and all accompanying visual analysis worksheets.

### **Results:**

While the final products of this visual analysis project were impressive and effectively implemented for a first-time attempt on the part of the students involved, two key challenges emerged. First; since the preliminary priming (Step 1) takes place during an online session, many students chose to forego completing the session assignments in an attempt to “wing it” during the face-to-face session the following week. Another challenge takes place during Step 3 when students conduct the small group active learning exercise. When asked to describe the foreground, background, people, objects, and activities in the image; students often fail to provide enough detail.

### **Value to Marketing Education:**

In conclusion, the visual analysis project in the recently-launched qualitative marketing research course offers a promising opportunity for students to gain visual analysis skills that can be applied in the real world to help them dissect and understand important components of the marketplace such as corporate and brand identity (Borgerson and Schroeder 2002; Schroeder 2002, 2006). In the area of transformative consumer research (TCR), this project can also help students in the real world of social and policy changes by taking them into the field to capture visual images of pressing social issues and helping them to understand the complexities of such issues in a contextualized manner (Ozanne et. al 2013, Petkus 2010). With minor adjustments, this visual analysis project could also have applications in other courses such as consumer behavior, social marketing, advertising, and even international marketing. In the end, all marketing students can benefit from learning visual analysis and qualitative marketing research methodologies in an increasingly image-driven marketplace. And, it is our hope that the future will bring more marketing education scholarship and textbooks to support this effort.

### **References available upon request**

**Title:** When the Class is the Crowd: Capturing the Wisdom within a Mass Class to Increase Student Engagement and Creativity in Applied Problem-Solving Assignments

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### **Purpose of the Study**

To produce graduates who are more than walking dictionaries, we need applied assignments that demand creative solutions to ambiguous, unstructured problems. In large classes, however, the

workload to implement and grade such projects quickly becomes unfeasible. A common solution is to refashion an individual assignment into a group project (Tomcho and Foels 2012). When a group project is implemented out of convenience, rather than pedagogical best practice, however, learning effectiveness is debatable. Introducing group projects to better cope with the workload in a mass class is not only an ineffective solution, it misses an opportunity: rather than resisting the large number of students in a mass class, why not embrace them? Mass classes are, effectively, crowds. And outside of academia crowds are not evils endured because of resource limitations; they are valued as intelligent forces that can achieve positive societal change and business growth (Surowiecki 2005). Drawing on crowdsourcing best practice, this abstract reports on a project that replaced the *group project* with the *crowd project* in a mass class.

Crowdsourcing refers to any practice which involves distributing a project across a vast collection of users with different skills and abilities. While not restricted to web-based activities, improvements in technology have undeniably accelerated the use of crowdsourcing in recent years. When the term first appeared ten years ago in Wired magazine very few companies looked outside their own employees to creatively solve problems (Howe 2006). Today, however, most of the world's most valuable brands have adopted crowdsourcing practices (Roth 2015) primarily in the areas of product development, market research and marketing communications (Gatautis & Vitkauskaitė 2013). Crowdsourcing is not simply a buzzword in industry. It is a strategic model, proven to deliver solutions that are superior in quality and quantity to those that traditional forms of business can provide (Brabham 2011). The small body of research examining crowdsourcing within the classroom comprises two areas: (1) the crowdsourcing of educational content (e.g. Soleman Ariffin, Md Din, Md Anwar; Brainly; Sleeth-Keppler, 2014; Penciner 2015; Hills 2015) and (2) the crowdsourcing of assessment (Durverger and Steffes 2012). Neither of these applications operationalizes crowdsourcing the way it is typically used in industry. That is, the crowd is not being used to generate creative solutions to a specific business or social problem. In a *crowd project*, I propose all students work together to find *class level* solutions to real business problems. Through the wisdom of the crowd, I expect a greater quantity of more creative solutions will emerge compared to a *group project*, when individuals only collaborate with their immediate team members.

### **Method/Design and Sample**

The crowd project was introduced in an entry level business class with a total of 124 students. After a real-world client briefed students on a problem, the project progressed through three stages, broadly following IDEO's design thinking principles (Brown, 2008). In each stage, the students first worked individually and then shared their work with the crowd (i.e. the whole class). Classes in the week(s) prior to each stage taught the necessary skills to conduct the required activities. In stage one, the students each conducted a minimum of two interviews and two unstructured observations to better understand the problem. They analyzed their data to identify a minimum of three insights which they posted on virtual "sticky notes" on Stormboard, an online whiteboard site. Over 350 individual insights were posted. Students read peer insights and were required to comment on three. Stormboard provides reports in multiple formats that allowed for easy grading of both the insights and the peer feedback. In class students discussed their findings in small groups and the whole class. The instructor moderated the latter exercise, clustering recurring themes that emerged, ultimately yielding nine unique and robust consumer

insights. The second and third stages proceeded in a similar manner, focusing on ideation and prototyping respectively. During ideation all 124 students had to generate twenty ideas each and post their favorites on Stormboard. Peers voted on ideas they considered innovative and made suggestions to improve one or more ideas. The best ideas, as determined by the crowd, moved forward to prototyping and testing.

## **Results**

In this project, the class was the crowd. Students worked on each stage independently, which helped to limit social loafing and generated thousands of solutions – far more than in a typical group project. Sharing information prompted additional ideation and peer to peer learning while also allowing duplicate solutions to be culled. Since the students were not stuck in one group, there was no team member conflict. A semester end study found student perceptions of the project uniformly positive. Compared to a traditional group project, students believed the Crowd Project led to more creative, and more effective, solutions and found the exercise enjoyable, less competitive and more helpful. An unexpected professor benefit was that because each student got a clear sense of the quality of work across the class, grading complaints were reduced at the semester end. Anecdotal evidence indicates the students were particularly motivated by the peer voting and feedback loops.

## **Value to Marketing Education**

Drawing on industry crowdsourcing best practice, this teaching method replaces the *group project* with the *crowd project*. The crowd project is an assignment that embraces, rather than struggles against, the vast quantity of students in a mass class. Moving between individual and collaborative phases, the method captures the wisdom of the crowd while holding students accountable for their personal contribution. Certainly, replacing the group project with a crowd project will not work for all exercises. A large pool of contributors is necessary and strong classroom management skills are required to coordinate the information flow and help interpret the results. In many instances, though, the crowd project offers promising opportunities for marketing professors to increase student engagement and learning. It is time to use the intelligent forces of the mass class to our advantage.

**References available upon request.**

**Title:** Not Your Momma's Professionalism: Student Judgments of the Importance of Image- and Ethos-Related Professionalism Attributes/Behaviors to the Work Environment and Their Shift over Time

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## **Purpose of the Study:**

With Millennials and the iGeneration entering the workforce, who grew up with a larger technology-to-human interaction ratio than did Baby Boomers and Gen Xers, employers have noted a lack of professionalism with potential new hires. As such, business colleges around the