

SPECIAL SESSION ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF AN E-COMMERCE COURSE

CHAIRS

Neil Granitz, California State University, Fullerton, College of Business & Economics, Fullerton, CA 92834; (714)278-3934

Stephen Koernig, California State University, Fullerton, College of Business & Economics, Fullerton, CA 92834; (714)278-3235

PARTICIPANTS

Thomas Matula, National University, School of Business and Technology, La Jolla, CA 92037; (858)642-8421

William Perttula, San Francisco State University, College of Business, San Francisco, CA 94132; (415)338-7431

Daniel Toy, California State University, Chico, College of Business, Chico, CA 95929; (916)898-4823
Lauren Wright, California State University, Chico, College of Business, Chico, CA 95929; (916)898-5666

SPECIAL SESSION RATIONALE

The emergence of e-commerce as a major business force has been both sudden and unexpected. E-commerce is profoundly changing markets, industry structures, products and services and their flows, consumer segmentation, consumer values, and consumer behavior. Marketing practitioners and educators are moving fast to understand how this new environment currently works and how it will evolve. Looking across universities at marketing department web sites, one third of schools offer an e-commerce business course. Interestingly, the vacuum of knowledge about e-commerce has led to many different approaches to teaching e-commerce.

In developing an e-commerce course, there are several philosophical issues that need to be addressed. For example, should it be a marketing course or a business course? What topics should be in the course? Should it be a technical or non-technical course? A list of these philosophical issues appears below.

As marketing educators trying to develop practical and relevant e-commerce courses, it would be useful to discuss these topics. The objective of this special session is not for every marketing professor to create identical syllabi for their e-commerce course. Its end-goal is to create awareness of the issues; the different philosophies that exist on the issues; and the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to teaching this course.

SESSION FORMAT

The topics listed below have been identified as important in the development and teaching of an e-commerce course. After a discussion of these (and other) topics by the panel members, an open forum discussion will be held with the audience.

Domain of Marketing?: What department(s) should teach e-commerce? Marketing? MIS? Accounting? Or by its very nature is it cross-disciplinary?

Stand Alone versus Integrated Course: Should e-commerce be integrated into existing courses or viewed as a completely new paradigm that necessitates an independent course?

Place in the Curriculum: Should e-commerce be an elective course in the curriculum or should it be a required core course for all marketing students?

Course Topics: A review of e-commerce syllabi shows a wide variety of topics covered. What is the purpose of each and how relevant will they be 5 years from now?

Technical versus Non-Technical: There are two genres of Internet Marketing courses: technical and non-technical. Which type best serves students?

Appropriate Course Materials: Because e-commerce is such a rapidly growing field, is a textbook already out of date by the time it is published?