

USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE MARKETING CLASSROOM

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This panel discussion is designed to generate discussion on how to effectively incorporate social media into marketing curriculum delivery to improve student engagement and student learning. Much of the use of social media within the classroom has entailed faculty requiring students to view or use online video (e.g., YouTube and Vimeo). However, social media tools must be used beyond presenting content to students. Rather, educators must expand students' social media intelligence by developing their knowledge and skills to create a working social media strategy, which provides students with the ability to make assessments, enhancements, and recommendations. In this discussion, the panelists will show how students grasp ideas and listen more attentively, especially when their assignments become transparent after being broadcasted through the social media landscape. This transparency challenges students to critically analyze academic and industry research, both broadly and in-depth, to apply philosophy, concepts, theories, methods, and techniques, and to assess and modify their assignments. Moreover, educators use social media to improve engagement and collaboration among students. For example, social media provide opportunities for students to view each other's work, to provide recommendations, and to defend their recommendations. This process allows students to actively engage with their peers to improve in their strategies and methods.

Consumer Behavior is a relevant course to implement social media because students must develop an understanding of the ever fragmenting consumer segments in a saturated digital marketplace, which complicates marketing efforts and strategies in an effort to prescribe methods to influence purchase behavior, to increase customer retention, and to foster brand loyalty.

Strategic Electronic Marketing is another applicable course for marketing students where students engage in decision-making using the web and learn a holistic approach to develop a social media and content strategy that ties social media and traditional communication efforts together. Moreover, this course provides students with the ability to determine if their strategies and content influence how consumers think and act, while also learning how to build their social media clout.

Marketing and social media are inextricably linked in today's marketplace. Today's marketing students must be well-versed in the social media landscape to create and manage social conversations, while also influencing perceptions and attitudes toward brands among consumers. As a result, incorporating social media into the classroom is especially important for marketing students.

Although students may feel comfortable with using social media technology, students should become increasingly challenged in the classroom with how social technology and its content impacts organizations, brands, and consumers. Moreover, students must understand how to measure the effectiveness of their social media strategies by learning social customer relationship management, return on investments, and management of social conversations. Furthermore, educators must provide students with knowledge and skills that go beyond the fundamentals of creating a social marketing presence. Students have to develop a content strategy designed to influence consumer behavior through rhetorical and psychological content. By understanding and implementing persuasive appeals, identification, and repetition, students can learn how to capture opportunities to drive consumer change through the social media landscape.

An overview of the various types of social media (e.g. collaborative projects, blogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, and virtual social worlds) and the art and science of social media content is presented. Next, the social media tools used in two marketing courses (i.e. Consumer Behavior and Strategic Electronic Marketing) is described, including the learning goals, assignments, and specific tools used (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Slideshare, WordPress, Diigo, Flickr). Then, a discussion on how social media helps drive innovation among students by focusing on the development of ideas to create compelling and resonating content takes place. This aspect of the discussion focuses on the rhetorical and psychological principles that help students to influence consumer action through consistently good content that is published over time.

The benefits of social media assignments is then discussed, including how social media: 1) facilitate student-student and student-professor interactivity and engagement; 2) give students a voice; 3) allow and encourage student creativity; 4) provide students multiple pathways to demonstrate knowledge; 5) create stronger connections between students; 6) provide experiential learning; and, 7) improve grades. Finally, the panelists discuss the drawbacks and challenges in using social media in marketing classes.