

## FIVE TECHNOLOGIES MARKETING EDUCATORS NEED TO UNDERSTAND

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### ABSTRACT

In the year 2015, Alexandra, age 17, sits in her ergonomically correct Lazy-Boy virtual learning station in her home in Paris, France. The Lazy-Boy doors close around her and she vocally calls up the UNL Global web portal. Using virtual reality technology, Alexandra maneuvers to the campus courtyard and greets her personal guide, "Good morning Miss Alexandra. Where would you like to go today?" Alexandra answers, "Dr. Kotler's MKT350 marketing strategy class – hurry, I'm late!" The two don rocket booster shoes and float in hyper speed to Johnson Hall. Alexandra opens the classroom door while instructing her guide to wait outside. Ten other students sitting around a large, translucent table welcome her – all of the students are virtually recreated from their own virtual learning stations around the world. To the left, Dr. Kotler utters, "Late again, Alexandra. Today, we are working on the IBM Demand Forecasting simulation. You are the vice president of research and must decide on one of five new product offerings." Alexandra voice activates her electronic journal on the screen side by side with the electronic version of Kotler's IBM text. After conferring with her classmates, she is ready to meet the simulation's challenge. When class is over, she "walks" over to the financial office to pay her tuition bill, then to the bookstore to buy her mother a birthday gift – a Huskers corn hat. She logs out of her UNL Global portal and exits her virtual learning unit for the day. Such a scenario is fun to imagine but of course would be even more enjoyable as a participant. New technologies emerge every year making it almost impossible to speculate how students will access their education in 2015 and beyond. As stakeholders of higher education, we must better understand technology and be prepared to integrate technology that enhances the learning experience. With change will come better ways to learn, teach and live.

### OVERVIEW

Technological advances continue to challenge faculty, students, and administrators. Indeed, not so long ago faculty wondered about the implications of email, Internet access and wireless laptops. These thoughts are almost comical today as we now contemplate the implications of the newest technologies that promise to redefine the future of higher education and the marketing

discipline. The latest technologies include but are not limited to web portals, e-books, virtual reality, electronic computer games, and electronic journals. This paper describes each technology, presents examples and discusses their affect on marketing education.

*Web Portal Description.* Today, it is unheard of for a post-secondary, educational institution of any size to operate without a web site. Educational institutions' web sites usually depict the hierarchy of the organizational structure and are historic in nature. Typically, these web sites provide information with limited services. This type of web model is referred to as "first-generation" web tools. For education and, of course, marketing educators the web portal is the next generation.

*E-books Technology Description.* E-books are another technological advancement in education, although a concept that has been slow to emerge as a transforming tool for academic delivery. However, e-books deserve the attention of educators as this technology does promise to revolutionize textbook, periodical, and all primary and secondary resource delivery.

*Virtual Reality Description.* Virtual reality (VR) is a term we hear often but when asked may be pressed to actually describe the concept. The American Heritage Dictionary (2002) defines VR as, "a computer simulation of a real or imaginary system that enables a user to perform operations on the simulated system and shows the effects in real time." In effect, a user is given the illusion of being immersed in a 3-dimensional (3D) space with the ability to interact with this 3D space.

*Electronic Computer Game Technology Description.* Today, every new computer purchased is pre-loaded with Solitaire and Freecell and every week new PC games are introduced. The electronic computer game and video game industry is strong and an ideal fit for education and learning.

*Electronic Journal Description.* An electronic journal is an alternative to traditional, privately-kept journals. Students may either email or post journal entries about course topics, reflective learning experiences or other professor described processes.