

## INTERACTIVITY IN MARKETING FOUNDATION CLASSES

Dhruv Grewal, Toyota Chair of Commerce and Electronic Business, Marketing Division, 213 Malloy Hall, Babson College, Babson Park, MA 02457; (781) 239-3902, Fax: (781) 239-5020, dgrewal@babson.edu, www.mhhe.com/grewal-levy

Michael Levy, Charles Clarke Reynolds Professor of Marketing, and Director, Retail Supply Chain Institute, Babson College, 215 Kreibel Hall, Babson Park, MA 02457; (781) 239-5629

### ABSTRACT

Over the last several years, successful retailers and service providers have increased the level of interactivity on their websites. A key benefit of the interactivity has been increased stickiness of the site, greater loyalty and usage.

In a similar fashion, a key take-away for marketing educators is that **interactivity is key**. Increased interactivity adds value to the educational experience. Our students today have grown up on interactive games, instant messaging, iPods, and the Internet.

A critical question on our minds as we approach our classes is how to enhance their learning experience. Again, the answer is **interactivity is key**. Over the course of developing our textbook (Grewal and Levy 2008), we have developed an interactive toolkit with seven tools.

These tools have received extensive feedback from instructors at various symposiums. They offer interactive exercises designed to allow students to gain a richer understanding of some of the core concepts of marketing. The Toolkit addresses the following topics:

- Conducting a SWOT Analysis (Strategy chapter),
- Understanding Consumer Decision Rules (Consumer Behavior chapter),
- Vendor Analysis (Business to Business chapter),
- Creating a Positioning Map (Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning Chapter),
- Developing a Zone of Tolerance Model (Services chapter),
- Break-Even Analysis (Pricing chapters),
- Advertising Creation (Advertising and Sales Promotion chapter).

The toolkit is hosted at the OLC at [www.mhhe.com/grewal-levy](http://www.mhhe.com/grewal-levy). In the session, we will demonstrate a few of these tools and lead a discussion on them

and other methods to increase interactivity with students both in the classroom and on their own.

How did we identify the tools to develop? We focused on concepts that students struggle with, concepts that they really need to know, would increase their learning experience, and would help them be better prepared for careers in business (both for marketing and other majors). Thus, these tools would empower the students to showcase more skills on their resume.

Each tool has three exercises. Thus, the instructor can demonstrate the key concepts in class with one of the tools and assign the other two as exercises for the students to do on their own. Alternatively, an instructor could assign the three exercises as practice prior to the class and then cover the material. This would help them be prepared for class and make the instructors' task a little easier.

Let's look at some of these tools. They all start with a business scenario, employ drag and click technology, drop down menus with possible answer options, a self grading mechanism and the option to print, save and e-mail the completed exercise.

Today, AACSB is increasingly asking schools to demonstrate that the students have successfully mastered key learning objectives. The successful accompanying three exercises per tool, provide completion of the seven tools, and the evidence that the students have mastered seven important learning objectives associated with seven chapters.

In conclusion, these interactive tools can provide multiple benefits to instructors, students and institutions. These are:

1. increased student involvement;
2. ability to use them in class to demonstrate key concepts;
3. ability for students to work outside the classroom on their own on the various exercises; and

4. ability to help develop expertise on key learning goals and provide evidence that students have mastered these goals, which is useful for AACSB reports).

The interactive toolkit, supplemented with other in-class and outside of class activities are key to increasing interactivity and the student experience.

#### REFERENCE

Grewal, Dhruv, and Michael Levy, 2008. *Marketing*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Burr Ridge, IL: McGraw Hill/Irwin.