

MOBILE BUSINESS "ON WHEELS:" A NEW PLATFORM FOR STUDENT LEARNING

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Introduction

The purpose for our working paper is to develop classroom-learning projects using a Mobile Business or businesses on wheels as the platform for marketing students. Often times marketing projects based on the large corporations open large amounts information and data that may limit the student's organic analysis and critical thinking. However, smaller businesses force the student to look more closely at the project details, use social media analysis tools and focus on new trends in the business community. For this purpose we have found success utilizing mobile businesses or businesses on wheels in principles of marketing plan development. For example, Best Buy has developed a relationship with the Geek Squad. This company, which houses itself inside Best Buy brick and mortar locations, brings the computer repair services directly to the consumer. According to the National Federation of Independent Businesses, businesses on wheels have come to encompass everything from hair salons, high-tech repair shops and even the makers of artificial limbs (Wee, 2013).

Mobile businesses are not just food trucks anymore. Explosive growth in mobile businesses continues to develop in order to decrease the overhead cost for small businesses eliminating the traditional brick and mortar storefront. Trends in business continue to show how consumers with less time seek out more products and services to physically come to them. Internet shopping and home delivery, from groceries to diapers to pet grooming, has become popular even outside of the metropolitan area.

Mobile business is not a new concept, merely a developing area of business platforms due to changes in technology and business concepts (Linnekin, Dermer, Galler 2012). There are obvious reasons for the influx of mobile business such as no rent or mortgage and free mobile marketing based on the use of automobiles as a billboard. Additionally, technology and fluid work environments, paying for stationary retail space and waiting for a landline phone to ring seems antiquated (Wee, 2013). The new business generation (i.e. millennial and generation Y) may prefer to run a business out of a truck. Individuals within the millennial generation see the allure of nontraditional work environments (Wee, 2013). Additionally, the next generations of business owners often reject the traditional work lifestyle and continue to look for new opportunities in a stagnant economy. Besides the financial benefits of eliminating a storefront, the mobility of business and creative marketing approaches may be an effective method for individuals entering a new market. Why would an individual want to work out of an office when you can work from home, from your favorite coffee shop or even out of your car? Autonomy has become the key to success not the corner office.

Building Mobile Business Brands

Reducing business costs leads mobile business owners to viral marketing campaigns as the key foundation for the marketing mix. A successful mobile business is reliant of the owner's brand strategy, consumer's perception and co-creation of this marketing campaign. However, neither the business owner nor the consumers are interacting in the most effective manner to create the story development for the brand image. A recent study on Botox looks at the shifting of the brand image over time. The actor-network theory is used to describe how brand-mediated conflicts over nature-technology relationships influenced Botox's marketing success over time (Giesler 2012). Actor-network theory states that success of anything relies on its ability to tie the competing interests of multiple actors together (Giesler 2012). What we need to understand is how important connectivity is to the consumer (Armano 2012). For a business to be mobile, it

Mobile Business Example2: Celebrity Boutique



Mobile Business Example3: Games 2 U

