

**A COMPUTER BASED EXERCISE TO FACILITATE LEARNING TERMS IN
THE MARKETING PRINCIPLES COURSE**

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ABSTRACT

The marketing principles course requires that students learn the definitions of a number of terms which provide a common vocabulary for communication. One method of stimulating students to learn marketing terminology is to use the computer as a learning tool.

This paper discusses results of a pilot study which used a shareware program called Professional Crossword Creator (PCC) allowing students to use the computer in creating a crossword puzzle using marketing terminology. A questionnaire was administered to those students who used PCC in an effort to determine their perceptions of the experience.

Two sections of the principles course taught by the authors were used in the study. The Spring section taught by Kellam was tested on terminology from Chapters 4 and 11 of **MARKETING** by Boone and Kurtz. These students did not use PCC. The same test was administered to the Summer section taught by Wynd AFTER the students had used PCC to prepare a crossword using the selected terminology in Chapters 4 and 11. These students were then administered a questionnaire to determine their perceptions of the experience.

For Chapter 4, there was no statistical difference between the mean test scores of the two class sections. However, for Chapter 11, students using PCC had significantly better mean scores (beyond the .05 level). There is also considerable difference in the standard deviations for Chapter 11 (.456 for those using PCC, 1.014 without PCC).

It appears that the lower tail of the curve was eliminated when PCC was used. This indicates that the weaker students improved

their scores when using PCC. Perhaps using PCC provides structure to the learning experience which is needed by the weaker students.

Students who had used PCC agreed or strongly agreed (81%) that the process of creating a puzzle was enjoyable and it took less time to learn the terms than the way in which they normally learn. They felt that they would remember the terms longer when using PCC. Students overwhelmingly recommended that the PCC exercise be continued.

Further testing is in progress to determine if PCC really does improve student learning of terminology. The pilot study involved only two chapters, was inconclusive and some changes in the study design need to be made (ie. summer quarter may not be comparable to other quarters since it is so short, different instructors may make a difference, etc.).

More details are available in the complete paper which is available from the authors.