TEACHING SOCIAL MARKETING: MARGINALIZING PIRACY PROJECT

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Abstract

The paper discusses approaches to teaching ethical behaviour. Theoretical courses in business ethics are not enough to change the students' attitudes and enhance moral values. Marketing education can provide opportunities to involve students into social activities and through this experience influence their set of values and behavior. Using the case of a marketing project of Plekhanov Russian University of Economics and Microsoft Russia in marginalising piracy the paper highlights the necessity of facilitating students' involvement developing social marketing campaign projects as part of their marketing training. The paper presents students' personal opinions on the changes in their perception of ethical behaviour as a result of project involvement.

.Introduction

Ethical considerations and values are important both for the internal operation of a university and for the formative role the universities play in society. Beyond such values as academic freedom, transparency, sharing of knowledge, collegiality, the higher education community needs to address the values and ethical principles that are linked to the safeguarding and promotion of a sustainable future for the society (Soule, 2005). Massification, demographic shifts, and development of the knowledge economy, have all contributed to changing the higher education environment (Illingworth, 2007). Authors from different countries (Bohatá, 1996, 1997; Bodkin, 2007; Brinkmann, 2007, Friedman, 1996) describe the way universities cope with these modern challenges. However, very few of them describe not only the content and sequence of special ethics courses and modules but the social marketing activities involving students and faculty and changing their attitude constructs including the cognitive, affective and what's more important the conative elements of the construct. Despite one's ready and mostly "right" responses to most ethical questions, the public-at-large is demanding that civil servants, managers, workers in general, and the organizations they represent all act according to high ethical and moral standards. The standards for what constitutes ethical behavior lie in a "grey zone" where clear-cut right-versus wrong answers may

not always exist. As a result, unethical behavior is sometimes forced on organizations or individuals by the environment in which they exist or commonly accepted practices.

Using the case of a marketing project of the Plekhanov Russian University of Economics and Microsoft Russia in marginalizing software piracy the paper highlights the necessity of facilitating students' involvement developing social marketing programs as part of their marketing training.

Approaches to Teaching Business Ethics at Universities

The requirement to teach ethics is growing throughout higher education. Many departments whose main academic interests lie elsewhere are now making room in their curricula for an introduction to the moral issues related to their primary discipline. The pressure to teach ethics comes from benchmarking statements, the requirements of professional associations, and the more general drive to provide students with key transferable skills.

Students need to study ethics in order to meet the expected demands of their working lives. Universities can only meet this need effectively if they tailor the learning and teaching environment to the requirements of different student groups so that students see ethics as relevant to their primary discipline and as a subject that they can tackle with confidence, and with the expectation of attaining an acceptable level of expertise (Moriarty, 2009). One of the primary motives behind the drive towards a greater ethical awareness among students and graduates is an appreciation of the consequences for any profession of a loss of public confidence. It will therefore be increasingly important for teachers of ethics to produce learning and teaching outcomes on three levels (Illingworth, 2004): (1) subject-specific level: students will need to understand the moral issues that arise most frequently within their own subject area and the perspectives of key stakeholders/service users in the professions served by that subject area; (2) inter-professional level: students will need to understand the perspectives of people from professionally related subject areas on issues of shared moral significance; (3) public level: students will need to understand the perspectives of private individuals and relevant social groups on moral issues arising within their subject area.

The ethical performance of an organization depends in no small part on a highly idiosyncratic factor: people. Specifically, it depends on their values, character traits, and will power. A manager therefore should be prepared and specially trained to develop those values

and motivate behavior patterns necessary to guarantee ethical performance of various organizations.

Plekhanov Russian University of Economics (PRUE) is a leading Russian University training managers in a variety of business related areas. Established in 1907 by a group of Russian merchants the university has been focusing on providing applied knowledge useful for building successful careers in business throughout its history. With the start of market reforms in Russia REU was the first among Russian business schools to establish a marketing department in 1990 and has been training marketers in its academic and professional courses since 1993. Some of the most popular marketing courses at Plekhanov are professional programs for people with various education and backgrounds working in managerial or marketing positions and wishing to get a marketing degree or diploma. These courses vary in length and final document. Professional Diploma in Marketing is a program developed by REU to prepare students for the Chartered Institute of Marketing (http://www.com.co.uk) 6th level examinations. These are offered by PRUE both to individual students in the open market, and to corporate partners.

One of such partners of PRUE is Microsoft Russia Company (MS-RUS). MS-RUS is one of very active players on the Russian market. According to the International Data Corporation's (http://www.idc.com) estimation, every dollar of Microsoft turnover creates another $17 turnover for Microsoft partners, which makes Microsoft an active driver of the Russian GDP. MS-RUS is keen on developing its employees marketing skills and competences and requires all participants of company funded training courses to use company cases and business problems to prepare their assignments. The company also requires all students of corporate programs to present and defend a final assignment based on MS-RUS materials. Team work is an important corporate value for MS-RUS, and though the CIM examinations require individual assignments submission, this final assignment for the company is done in teams. CIM Professional Diploma program does not include a separate module in Business Ethics, though ethical problems, alongside with corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainable development are discussed within the courses in Delivering Customer Value through Marketing and Project Management in Marketing. The courses include cases on various organizations, including charities and not-for-profit, which offer excellent opportunities to discuss social and ethical issues and offer students possibility to develop their own project on CSR or ethical issue. One of the ethical issues which were defined by MS-RUS management to conduct CIM final assignment problem was problem of unauthorized use of MS software (in other words Piracy). This project was planned,

conducted and implemented and now results of this project can be used in previously mentioned marketing courses on university master level, or for professional courses. Piracy is a problem for any IT, software, music/ or film producers, as well as producers of other non-digital products (fashion apparel, accessories, watches, jewelry, etc.).   Piracy can be defined as a war-like act committed by private parties (not affiliated with any government), which unauthorized use or reproduce of copyrighted or patented material. Software piracy is defined as an unlicensed, unauthorized reproduction and illegal distribution of software, whether for business or personal use (http://portal.bsa.org/globalpiracy2010/ 8th annual BCA and IDC Global PC software piracy study, 2010). Nowadays digital piracy happens more often than violence at sea. One of the most significant reasons that computer ethics deserves special attention is because of our inclination to view one's actions in the intangible, virtual world of information technologies as being less serious than one's actions in the real world. Software piracy (the illegal duplication of computer programs) costs the computer business billions of dollars each year.   An act of piracy is being committed when watching a movie downloaded from the Interne or listening to a song, one did not get the legal rights to play, working with unlicensed software at schools or universities.

The level of software piracy is a bigger concern for the emerging markets, especially with the rapid increase of PC installation. Emerging economies account for 45 % of the global hardware market, while in software they have less than 20 % market share. According to the 8th Annual BSA/IDC Global PC Software Piracy Study, the value of unlicensed software hit $51.4 billion, with United States, China, Russia, India and France bearing the largest costs. Piracy harms not only global software companies, but also local producers, service companies and distributors. For every dollar of software sold in a country, another $3 to $4 of revenue is generated for local service and distribution firms (http://www.idc.com).

Microsoft continually participates in different initiatives to reduce piracy. Company is a member of different international organizations, which work to overcome different kinds of piracy (for example, NPA SS) (http://www.appp.ru/english/ Non-profit association of software supplier).

Research Method

MS-RUS research team was created and provided with the topic for their project: How to marginalize software piracy for MS-RUS. This work was planned as classic research project. MS students combined desk research and qualitative methods of field research in form of in-depth interviews with representatives of MS partners (distributors of software) on the Russian

market, and round-table discussions (in format of focus-group with different consumer segments). During research team members defined that several consumer segments of social marketing program can be interesting for anti-piracy project: young generation of software users (those who just started use computers), and decision makers. Segment of decision makers (DMU) can be divided into two sub-segments: educational and life-style (parental), because both are so influential for the main targets: beginners.

Research Results

Within the project the issue of piracy was analyzed using a wider marketing approach and bearing in mind the tree levels of ethics learning outcomes. Researchers first tried to understand why consumers use pirated software or other illegal product/ or service. They found the following answers to this question: (1) consumers were attracted to free downloads of pirated products either by low costs of these products or no costs at all; (2) access was easy and numerous providers of pirate product/ service exist.   Russian Government has taken important actions to prohibit using unlicensed software at schools, universities and other government controlled organizations, but in spite of these actions Russian consumers can easily download a lot of unlicensed products. Another channel of distribution for illegal software, music, films, databases and even PCs and other gadgets are open markets in Russia (e.g. Gorbushka, Electronny Ray in Moscow), which known by Russian consumers or even foreign visitors of Moscow.

Researchers had discovered that Russian consumers do not understand why legal software is better than the pirate copies.   Putting their findings against the theoretical attitudes change construct the project team concluded that attitude-behavior relationship would be stronger when the attitude components are consistent, so their marketing activities should target not only the cognitive part of the piracy attitude, but also the feelings to result in behavior patterns change.

Having done that, the team decided to develop a social marketing project aimed at a significant piracy attitude change among the young generation consumers – school children and students who should be brought up with the right ideas about intellectual property, consumer rights and piracy.

There was a need for partnerships to be developed to plan and implement this social marketing program, so the team members talked to their business partners – distributors and

vendors, as well as MS-RUS divisions. Team members decided to focus on 3 most attractive groups of their target segment, discovered in the research (Table 1).

Table 1. Target groups for anti-piracy communication

Group name	Group characteristics	IT usage purpose
Beginners	6-12 years old, studying at elementary school	Games, Internet search, educational materials and communication
Advanced users	Teenagers 13-17 years old, studying at high schools	Education or entertainment and communication
Educational and Lifestyle decision-makers (DM)	Educational DM: Ministry of education, school directors and teachers	recommend/purchase IT for their organisations, influence previous groups' decision making and attitudes
	Lifestyle DM: parents	purchase IT for home use, influence previous groups' decision making and attitudes

1. Beginners and advanced users are very sensitive to various interactive contests, actively taking part and being fully engaged. Direct communications via open lessons were recommended as the most effective. Internet was considered to be the most important channel of communication due to its availability and coverage (Russia is second market in Europe on Internet Penetration Rate after Germany. 43% of total population in Russia is on-line in 2011(http://www.newmediatrendwatch.com/markets-by-country/10-europe/81-russia (Internet world statistics).

   Based on these facts Internet was chosen as the main media for all segments.

Communication activities included:
   - creative communication activities for kids: such as painting, composing, story-writing and creative contests to get full involvement of the target audience and gather some

additional information, which is always available once personal and creative input is required;

- advertising (printed posters or Internet banners), which can be used in communication targeted both Beginners and Advanced users. Posters were to be produced and placed at secondary and high schools, universities, popular entertainment centres, banners could be used in the most popular web sites, search engines.

- educational program suggested open communication with DM, in the form of open lessons, always very informative, full of discussions and live interest. Parents overall respond well to any information which could make their kids life better, and, which is very important, more secure. Therefore information about intellectual property rights and their violation can be of great help.

Key message addressed to Beginners was: "Everything belongs to somebody and every work should be rewarded. You don't want your work to be taken or used without your permission, neither do the others". This idea of fairness and justice was appealing for kids. Key message for advanced users included more sound reasons like consumer-benefits and legal punishment: "Know when you infringe copyright and what your risks are. Genuine product rocks, pirate copies are not cool. Genuine products provide technical support, updates and bonuses. Using pirated copies may result in punishment". Another message was based on social responsibility idea: "Pirated software steels money from my country".

Communication messages developed for Educational DM and parents were aimed to raise their awareness level and provide a message to be communicated to kids. The main message for the teachers was "Learn to defend your intellectual property rights" and "Learn how to explain students why they couldn't copy somebody else's essays as well as any intellectual property without permission". Parents' attention was drawn to the risks encountered when their kids or they infringe copyrights.

<div align="center">Further Discussions</div>

The project report presented to the examination board including REU professors and MS-RUS division managers and marketing director not only was graded high, one of the division managers offered a budget to implement the program. Twelve articles and banners about "Marginalizing piracy" were placed on the most visited web-sites and in popular Russian social networks like Vkontakte.ru and Odnoklassniki.ru. MS-RUS also used search engine marketing so that the top line for requests for pirated products provided the link to the MS-RUS

marginalizing piracy site. Several contests were organized for schoolchildren: for the best story, best picture, best anti-piracy idea. More than 5000 kids participated in this competition from 10 different regions of the Russian Federation. MS-RUS involved the sales force of their regional business partners. Sales managers were working with selected schools to motivate kids to explain how they understood piracy and how this piracy affected their life and PC.   Open lessons explaining intellectual property rights and piracy issues for beginners and advanced users were delivered by teachers, and volunteers from Russian pedagogical universities.

The most rewarding conclusion of this social marketing program was the responses received from the project team members surveyed three months after their successful presentation of the assignment. They were asked to assess their own piracy attitude changes. Four out of six team members said they became very strict about using illegal digital products and do not allow their family members to use them. One of the team members said he was sometimes using free downloads, but not if he suspects the sites are illegal, and the sixth team member said he was strictly controlled now by his teenage son, who became true evangelist of the legal use of digital products. The project in marginalizing piracy was a social marketing activity, as the participants took tangible actions to make important social changes rather than tried to influence the others to take actions. It can also be considered a distributed entrepreneurship project, as circles of activities with a wider group of external stakeholders (student volunteers, secondary school directors and teachers) were involved.

References by Request