Benefits And Problems With Developing Social Media/Networking Skills In Marketing Students

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Introduction
Two uses for social media in the marketing classroom:

• Course management
  • 80% of college faculty are using social media, with half using social media tools to support their teaching (e.g., communication with students, online teaching) (Pearson Education 2010)

• Skills development
  • Using assignments and projects
Poll

• How many use social media for course management?
  • Facebook
  • Twitter
  • Course blog
  • Other

• How many use social media for skills development (branding: personal or company)?
  • Facebook page
  • Twitter
  • Blog
  • YouTube
  • Pinterest
  • Google+
  • Other

• How many teach a Social Media Marketing course?
Our Social Media Experiences

- **Marketing Management**
  - PLN, Google+ Profile, and LinkedIn assignments (Marketing Education Review, Vol. 22, 2012)

- **e-Marketing**
  - Blogging assignments (article almost completed)
  - Multi-platform personal branding project – PLN, Google+ Profile, Blog, Twitter, Facebook page, YouTube channel, and one other
  - PLN, Google+ Profile, and Twitter assignments for personal branding

- **Social Media Marketing (beginning Spring 2013)**
  - Multi-platform personal branding or small business branding project – PLN, Google+ Profile, Blog, Twitter, Facebook page, YouTube channel, and two others

- **Global Business Minor, Study Abroad**
  - Blogging requirement
Need for Social Media/Networking Skills

• According to Wanted Analytics (Sept. 2012), job postings requiring social media skills rose 216% from 2010 to 2012.

• Among Fortune 500 companies, 73% now have active company Twitter accounts, 66% have Facebook Pages, 62% have YouTube accounts, and 28% have corporate blogs, (Forbes Sept. 2012).

• Among 2,100 companies surveyed by Harvard Business Review, a meager 12% of those using social media feel they use it effectively (2011).
Benefits to Students

- **Personal Learning Network (PLN)**
  - theory of connectivism (Siemens 2005)
  - needed for sharing/curating content
  - improves knowledge management and content management skills
  - adds currency to course content
  - tool for lifelong learning and future career

- **Real-World Experience and Professional Interaction**
  - no limits on geography
  - post comments and ask questions
  - promotes professional behaviors

- **Social Learning (learning by observing others behavior)**
  - symbolic model of social learning theory (Bandura 1977)
  - social cognitive theory (Miller and Dollard 1941)
  - formats, set-up, design
  - examples and best practices
  - from professionals, other students in class, and professor’s social media activity
Benefits to Students – cont.

- Experiential Learning (learning from experience)
  - applied theory of experiential learning (Kolb and Fry 1975)
  - strategies are implemented
  - receive real-time feedback
  - easily monitored and measured

- Marketable Skills
  - taxonomy of learning domains (Bloom 1956)
  - technology, critical thinking/problem solving, communication, and creativity (Granitz and Koernig 2011)
  - Social media marketing skills
Problems/Obstacles for Students

• Student management of time and procrastination
  • need time to build relationships and obtain engagement

• Set-up and management of social platforms
  • technical know-how and adaption to platform changes
  • attention to detail

• Potential for unprofessional and even unethical student behavior
  • affects image of student, professor, College, and University
  • incomplete source citation or link attribution/credit
  • plagiarism
  • copyright infringement, particularly with photos
Problems/Obstacles for Students – cont.

• Social networking that is more personal and less strategic in focus
  • student personal use of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, may be a lot different

• Increased work load due to individual rather than team assignments/projects
  • for students and professors

• Personal privacy
  • more prevalent with creating original content, such as blogging, rather than sharing/curating others’ content
  • sharing personal information thru profiles
  • social media anxiety
Recommendations and Solutions

• Make it personally relevant and career adaptable (e.g. personal branding option).
• Break into manageable parts with interim due dates (with weekly minimum requirements).
• In-class and lab demonstration and workshops.
• Provide web links to “how-to” (Mashable.com)
• Recognize the mid-term and final best practices with bonuses and titles (e.g., Facebook Fanatics, Twitter Superstars, Posterous Ninjas, YouTube Wizards).
• Provide LinkedIn skills endorsements for the best social media marketing students.
Recommendations and Solutions – cont.

• Discuss privacy settings and expected professional behaviors.
• Monitor for inappropriate student activity and take immediate action when needed.
• Encourage or require social learning within class (e.g., Blogrolls, Twitter lists, blog commenting).
• Do it yourself, as a social learning example.
• Address planning, strategy and tactics for personal branding and company branding.
• Encourage students to solicit social media marketing internships for advanced skill development.
Questions?

• Thanks.

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