



MOS 3325a

The University of Western Ontario

Dan Aubrey Program in Management & Organizational Studies

Faculty of Social Science

Fall/Winter 2008-2009

Instructor Information

Instructor: Adam Caplan
Office:
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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 4PM-7PM

Course Description

eCommerce is a natural extension of retail. Traditional retail organizations of all sizes operate within a business ecology framework identified by 5 pillars: Acquisition, Stickiness, Conversion, Retention and Service. Using real-world examples, project-driven learning, and textual guides to best practice methodologies, MOS3325A will explore the efficiencies and optimizations technology and global networks can bring to the retail business ecology.

Course Objectives

- Establish and explore retail's unique business ecology framework.
- Examine the key strategic drivers behind each of the retail framework's pillars.
- Compare and contrast the strategies for multi-channel retail and pure-play eCommerce retail.
- Use real-world research and case studies to outline the best practice methodologies in multi-channel and pure-play eCommerce retail.
- Develop a holistic vision for conceptualizing, strategizing and supporting a successful eCommerce operation.



MOS 3325a

The University of Western Ontario

Dan Aubrey Program in Management & Organizational Studies

Faculty of Social Science

Fall/Winter 2008-2009

Course Materials

Each student will be required to create an account at Forrester Research, a leading technology research firm that provides strategic best practices and methodologies across a wide gamut of topics. An account is made available to all Western students as part of their enrollment.

Assignments and readings will be provided through the class website or in-class by the course instructor.

Supplementary and Additional Readings (these books are NOT required)

Although there is no good textbook on e-commerce, there are resources that describe good, solid fundamentals for creating and managing an e-commerce venture.

- Underhill, Paco, *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping*. New York : Simon & Schuster, c1999
- Krug, Steve. *Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability*, Second Edition. Indiana: New Rides Publishing, 2005
- Negroponte, Nicholas. *Being Digital*. New York: Vintage Books, a division of Random House Inc, 1995
- Anderson, Chris. *The Long Tail*. Hyperion, 2006

NOTE: Please plan to spend some time every week 'surfing' and bringing observations of Websites to class.

Course Deliverables

Exams & Quizzes

There will be a short in-class quiz in the first hour on October 14th, 2008. **No makeup exam will be offered for students who miss this exam**, rather the weight of the mid-term quiz will be added to the final exam for students who provide official documentation.

There is a final exam. Date & Location TBD.

Written Assignments:

There is a single written assignment; a short research paper using the tools described by an in-class demonstration of the research resources available at



MOS 3325a

The University of Western Ontario

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Fall/Winter 2008-2009

Western. NOTE: This assignment is to be done independently, with research and analysis done solely by the student. *Due date TBD.*

Presentations:

Project #1 – Mid-Term Project

Students will make an in-class presentation of a business case for creating an eCommerce Website from an existing retail operation. Groups of 5 (or 6) students adopt roles and responsibilities as marketers, merchandisers, technologists, content producers and operations managers to develop and present a strategy as if it were a proposal to the management of their chosen retail store. Students will become intimate observers of the retail operation's demographics, product mix, and branding/marketing goals.

The business case must be supported by fundamental business concepts. Although not required, a mockup of the proposed Website will aid in presentation. Grading will be based on participation, presentation, and plausibility of implementation. The existing retail operation must be submitted to the instructor for approval no later than October 30th 2008. *NOTE: This strategy MUST include purchasing items and/or services through the Website!*

Project #2 – Final Project:

Much like Project #1, students will present a business case and strategy. This time, however, the subject will be an invented product or store. Focus is on again on the business case, but with a significantly greater emphasis placed on marketing, conversion and retention using the tools outlined in each of the classes through the second half of term. Grading will again be based on participation, presentation, and plausibility of implementation. Invented product or store must be submitted to the instructor for approval no later than November 4th, 2008. *NOTE: This strategy MUST include purchasing items and/or services through the Website!*

Presentation requirements.

For both projects, in-class presentations are to last no longer than 20 minutes – 10 minutes to present the business case and a 10 minute Q&A from instructor and peers. Presentations will be cut short if they go over. Students are invited to arrive at class early for the presentation in order to ensure that Powerpoint presentations, Websites and other material are correctly formatted and that they will work.

Notes Regarding Both Presentations

- All group members must participate in the presentation.



MOS 3325a

The University of Western Ontario

Dan Aubrey Program in Management & Organizational Studies

Faculty of Social Science

Fall/Winter 2008-2009

- A copy of all presentation material is due 24 hours prior to the presentation.
- Students must remain in attendance through all presentations. Any departure before the end of class will result in a 0 grade being assigned for the individual's presentation.

Code of Behavior

1. Students are expected to engage and interact in a professional and academic environment.
2. Students are expected to attend all classes and to remain in attendance throughout the entire class. If a circumstance requires early departure, please show due consideration to the rest of the class. Repeated unexcused absences will adversely affect a student's participation mark.
3. Cell phones must be shut off. Students are more than welcome to check messages or make calls at one of the two breaks.
4. Laptop computers are allowed, and there is wireless access in the classroom. Please limit use to relevant websites or materials. Please do NOT check e-mail or use IM during class. Violations will be addressed at the instructor's discretion.
5. Any sources cited, whether verbatim or paraphrased must be referenced appropriately. Simply put, any fact, figure, or quote lacks credibility and effectiveness without context and shall be dismissed until citation is provided. Additionally, students may face disciplinary action if work is deemed plagiarized. Please see academic policies for more information.
6. Attendance is mandatory for each project presentation. If a student is absent for a presentation without due cause or prearrangement with the instructor, their grade for that presentation will be 0. Other team members' grades won't be directly adjusted.
7. If a student misses any class, it is the responsibility of the student to cover any materials missed. While lecture slides are posted at the discretion of the instructor, the in-class discussion may provide deeper insights.
8. Assignments are due on the indicated due date, either in class or electronically. If the report is late, the following punitive schedule shall apply:
 - a. 5% off report's mark for the 1st day late
 - b. 2% off report's mark for each subsequent day

Students are responsible for ensuring that the assignment was received.

Grading



MOS 3325a

The University of Western Ontario

Dan Aubrey Program in Management & Organizational Studies

Faculty of Social Science

Fall/Winter 2008-2009

The following weights will be assigned for each course evaluation component:

Mid-Term Project Presentation 20%

Final Project Presentation 20%

Mid-Term Quiz 10%

Final Exam 30%

Research Project 10%

In-Class Participation 10%



MOS 3325a

The University of Western Ontario

Dan Aubrey Program in Management & Organizational Studies

Faculty of Social Science

Fall/Winter 2008-2009

Class Schedule

09.09.08 – eCommerce Fundamentals

09.16.08 – Creating A Sticky eCommerce Site + Research Resources

09.23.08 – Selling Stuff: Merchandising & Conversion

Assignment #1 is due + Mid-Term Project teams assigned

09.30.08 – Operations: After you've sold it...

Mid-Term Projects subjects finalized

10.07.08 – Optimizing Retail: The Technology Value Chain

10.14.08 – Marketing I – Retail Marketing

10.21.08 – Mid Term Projects Presentation

10.28.08 – Marketing II – Online Marketing

Final Project teams assigned

11.04.08 – Marketing III – Search Engine Marketing

Final Project subjects finalized

11.11.08 – Retention Marketing

11.18.08 - Understanding Metrics

11.25.08 - Looking Ahead: The future of e-Commerce

12.02.08 - Final Presentations

Schedule may change at the discretion of the instructor. Changes will be communicated in advance.

Additional Statements

Use of electronic equipment during exams

While laptops are forbidden during examinations, students are encouraged to bring and use a standard mathematical calculator. No such item will be provided by the instructor or proctor.

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating



MOS 3325a

The University of Western Ontario

Dan Aubrey Program in Management & Organizational Studies

Faculty of Social Science

Fall/Winter 2008-2009

General Information

If, on medical or compassionate grounds, you are unable to meet your academic responsibilities, i.e., unable to write term tests or final examinations or complete course work by the due date, you should follow the instructions listed below. You should understand that academic accommodation will not be granted automatically on request. You must demonstrate that there are compelling medical or compassionate grounds that can be documented before academic accommodation will be considered. Read the instructions carefully. In all cases, action must be taken at the earliest possible opportunity, preferably prior to the scheduled examination, test or assignment.

1. Check the course outline to see if the instructor has a policy for missed tests, examinations, late assignments or attendance. The course outline should include the preferred method of contact (e-mail, phone, etc.).
2. Inform the instructor prior to the date of the scheduled time of the test or examination or due date of the assignment. If you are unable to contact the instructor, leave a message for him/her at the department office.
3. Bring your request for accommodation to the Social Science Academic Counselling Office, Room 2105, Social Science Centre, telephone 519 661-2011 or fax 519 661-3384. Be prepared to submit documentation of your difficulties.
4. If you decide to write a test or an examination you should be prepared to accept the mark you earn. Rewriting tests or examinations or having the value of the test or examination reweighted on a retroactive basis is not permitted.

Term Tests And Mid-Term Exams

1. If you are unable to write a term test, inform your instructor (preferably prior to the scheduled date of the test). If the instructor is not available, leave a message for him/her at the department office.
2. Be prepared, if requested by the instructor, to provide supporting documentation. Submit your documentation to the Social Science Academic Counselling Office.
3. Make arrangements with your professor to reschedule the test.
4. The Academic Counselling Office will contact your instructor to confirm your documentation.

Final Examinations



MOS 3325a

The University of Western Ontario

Dan Aubrey Program in Management & Organizational Studies

Faculty of Social Science

Fall/Winter 2008-2009

1. You require the permission of the Dean, the instructor, and the Chair of the department in question to write a special final examination.
2. If you are unable to write a final examination, contact the Social Science Academic Counselling Office in the first instance to request permission to write a special final examination and to obtain the necessary form. You must also contact your instructor at this time. If your instructor is not available, leave a message for him/her at the department office.
3. Be prepared to provide the Social Science Academic Counselling Office and your instructor with supporting documentation.
4. You must ensure that the Special Examination form has been signed by the instructor and Department Chair and that the form is returned to the Social Science Academic Counselling Office for approval without delay.

Late Assignments

1. Advise the instructor if you are having problems completing the assignment on time (prior to the due date of the assignment).
2. Submit documentation to the Social Science Academic Counselling Office.
3. If you are granted an extension, establish a due date.
4. Extensions beyond the end of classes must have the consent of the instructor, the Department Chair and Dean. A Recommendation of Incomplete form must be filled out indicating the work to be completed and the date by which it is due. This form must be signed by the student, the instructor, the Department Chair, and the Dean's representative in the Academic Counselling Office.

Short Absences

If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outlines for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate.

Extended Absences

If you are absent more than approximately two weeks or if you get too far behind to catch up, you should consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses. This must be done by the appropriate deadlines. (Refer to the Registrar's website for official dates.) The Social Science Academic Counsellors



MOS 3325a

The University of Western Ontario

Dan Aubrey Program in Management & Organizational Studies

Faculty of Social Science

Fall/Winter 2008-2009

can help you to consider the alternatives. At your request, they can also keep your instructors informed of your difficulties.

Documentation

- **Personal Illness:** If you consulted Student Health Services regarding your illness or personal problem, you should complete a Records Release Form at the time of your visit allowing them to notify Social Science Academic Counselling Office. Once your documentation has been assessed, the academic counsellor will inform your instructor that academic accommodation is warranted.

If you were seen by an off-campus doctor, obtain a certificate from his/her office at the time of your visit. The doctor must provide verification of the severity of the illness for the period in question. Notes stating "For Medical Reasons" are not considered sufficient.

- **In Case of Serious Illness of a Family Member:** Obtain a medical certificate from the family member's physician.
- **In Case of a Death:** Obtain a copy of the newspaper notice, death certificate or documentation provided by the funeral director.
- **For Other Extenuating Circumstances:** If you are not sure what documentation to provide, ask an Academic Counsellor.

Note: Forged notes and certificates will be dealt with severely. To submit a forged document is a scholastic offense and you will be subject to academic sanctions.

Academic Concerns

- You need to know if your instructor has a policy on late penalties, missed tests, etc. This information may be included on the course outline. If not, ask your instructor.
- You should also be aware of attendance requirements in courses such as Business and English. You can be debarred from writing the final examination if your attendance is not satisfactory.
- If you are in academic difficulty, check the minimum requirements for progression in your program. If in doubt, see your Academic Counsellor.



MOS 3325a

The University of Western Ontario

Dan Aubrey Program in Management & Organizational Studies

Faculty of Social Science

Fall/Winter 2008-2009

- If you are registered in Social Science courses but registered in another faculty (e.g., Arts or Science), you should immediately consult the Academic Counselling Office in your home faculty for instructions.