

THE YOUTUBE PROJECT: UNLEASHING CREATIVITY AND EMPOWERING STUDENTS

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Creativity has been a topic of interest in education for a long time and has received a lot of attention recently in the business press (Seelig, 2012; Sawyer, 2013; Kelley and Kelley, 2013; Gelb, 2014). Academically, and more specifically in marketing, there has been a call from around two decades to teach creativity throughout the marketing curriculum (Ramocki, 1994). Yet, creativity is still not taught much or encouraged.

The YouTube project was a project assigned to undergraduate students taking their first course in marketing (principles of marketing) to encourage creativity and learning. The project was performed in two phases. In the first phase, student teams were required to create a video that helps explain a topic, concept, or chapter on marketing in a creative way. The second phase involved uploading all the videos on a YouTube channel¹ (created for the project's purpose) and a competition was launched publicly online which ran for 5 days. The teams were encouraged to market their videos in any way they liked. The videos that received the highest views and likes received a bonus². The YouTube project was run for two semesters and a total of 23 videos were uploaded in the YouTube channel.

To better assess the impact on students, a study was conducted using focus groups. The focus groups were conducted with the winning teams of the YouTube competition. Students were asked to participate on a volunteer basis and a total of 5 focus groups (5 teams) were conducted³. The focus groups lasted between 1:17 hours to 2:49 hours. Each focus group had between 3 to 4 team members. The focus group sessions were digitally audio recorded and later transcribed.

The study showed that the YouTube project helped unleash creativity and empower students. Creativity was unleashed through the process of transforming marketing knowledge to video content, which was found as a challenging yet exciting endeavor. Perhaps even more importantly, the YouTube competition was a unique first time exposure for the students to the "real" online world of marketing resulting in what seemed like a lifetime unforgettable experience.

References

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¹ YouTube Channel: <http://www.YouTube.com/user/tasweeeging/videos?sort=p&view=u>

² The first place team received 5%, second, and third places received less.

³ It is important to note that the focus groups were conducted 5 months or more after the project and course was completed.