

PREPARING MARKETING STUDENTS FOR 21ST CENTURY JOBS

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ABSTRACT

The primary directive of marketing programs in teaching-oriented business schools is the preparation of marketing students to be productive performers in businesses and organizations. Unfortunately, many marketing graduates discover that the jobs available to them after graduation use very little of the knowledge and skills they learned in business school (Taylor 2003). A marketing curriculum that prepares students for the jobs available in the marketplace may allow marketing graduates to get jobs that actually utilize the knowledge and skills they learned in marketing classes.

Business schools accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and those seeking or aspiring to future accreditation look to this organization for guidance in the development of business curricula that are relevant to the ever-changing environment of business. In its report on Management Education at Risk, AACSB points out the importance of technology in the business curriculum. This report states, "Employers demand graduates who are prepared to leverage technology in a scalable fashion to advance firms' strategies and operations" (AACSB, 2002, p. 11).

It appears, however, that marketing curricula have been slow to incorporate technological developments in the practice of marketing. For example, in 2005 only 15.1 percent of a sample of AACSB accredited business schools offered a database marketing (DBM) course in the business school (Teer, Teer, & Kruck 2007). These authors believe that DBM is important because it is at the

heart of the switch by businesses and organizations from mass marketing to ultimately a one-to-one marketing relationship with the customer. Though Teer, Teer, and Kruck (2007) applaud the 52.5 percent increase in the percentage of business schools offering such a course in the undergraduate curriculum since 2005, in absolute terms the number of schools offering such a course in DBM is small. And when a DBM course is offered, it generally focuses on management and information systems topics rather than the marketing-specific topics of direct marketing, market segmentation, customer relationship management, customer profiling, and internet marketing .

But, how important are database marketing and internet analytics courses for the preparation of marketing students? Do employers require such skills for entry level and advanced positions? This study examines the skills and conceptual knowledge employers require for marketing positions at different levels ranging from entry or lower level jobs to middle or senior level positions. The data for this research are based on a content analysis of jobs posted on Monster.com for Chicago, Los Angeles, and Seattle. There were notable differences between the skills and conceptual knowledge required for lower level and middle or upper level marketing jobs. Technical skills appear to be much more important at both levels than what was documented in earlier research. This study discusses the implications of these research findings for the professional school pedagogical model of marketing education.

References Available on Request