

## Notre Dame University, Lebanon

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### LEARNING OUTCOME

Notre Dame University hoped to **increase student involvement in the learning process** by introducing MyMarketingLab as part of the course assessment. Students who took the assigned practice tests, quizzes, interactive case studies, and end of chapter exercises, **got higher grades on the exam.**

#### Course

Fundamentals of Marketing

#### Textbook in use

**Marketing: An Introduction**, 10th edition, 2011  
Armstrong and Kotler

#### Type of data collected

Grades and lecturer observation

#### Data collection period

2011

### Course design

Notre Dame University (NDU) is one of the leading universities in Lebanon following the American system of education. The Faculty of Business Administration and Economics is one of the biggest faculties, with a large number of students graduating with a BBA (or MBA) in Management.

Our students enjoy wide cultural diversity, with the majority coming from different parts of Lebanon and neighbouring countries. The course for which I'm using MyMarketingLab is an introductory course that new students take within their first year of enrolment. They are usually still transitioning from a school system of education to a liberal university setting, and, as such, are not serious enough to fully understand their responsibilities as students or the essential commitments they need to make to degree requirements.

To enhance student learning at NDU, we use Blackboard as a supplementary tool to post PowerPoint slides and assignments for students, and for testing purposes as well. For that purpose we have an exam hall equipped with computers that fits around 120 students at a time. Upon tracking student access to Blackboard, I realised that many students do not log into Blackboard except during and right before the scheduled exam dates. I needed to find a way to entice students to study on a regular basis and to practise with tests and interactive

assignments to enhance their critical thinking skills.

It was then that I was introduced by a Pearson representative to MyMarketingLab and the full range of tools that it offers. Training was done with all faculty members teaching the introductory course, and a pilot course was run in the summer of 2011 to test the new teaching tools. Pearson provided us with access codes that were used by the students, and the pilot course provided a good way for both the students and the teachers to familiarise themselves with MyMarketingLab.

**I was hoping to increase students' involvement in the learning process by giving them access to the study guide, the practice tests and quizzes, and the interactive cases.**

### Implementation

Through the adoption of MyMarketingLab, I was hoping to increase students' involvement in the learning process by giving them access to the study guide, the practice tests and quizzes, and the interactive cases. The latter were assigned with a deadline so that students were pressured to study in due time, as opposed to studying prior to the exam only. Using MyMarketingLab, students also got a chance to test their knowledge and how well they understood the concepts. The pre-tests and post-tests served to show them which learning outcomes were not yet met so that students could place an emphasis on the areas needing specific attention through the use of flash cards and continued reference to the book.

The first and foremost challenge was to get students to buy the original book (as opposed to copies of chapters), since some students considered it too expensive. This was dealt with in two ways:

- The syllabus of the course was modified to allocate points to work done on MyMarketingLab. Students who did not acquire the original book did not receive an access code to MyMarketingLab and could not do the assigned work, thereby forfeiting the assessment weight associated with it.
- A deal was made with the publishers and their distributors in Lebanon to provide price discounts to students registered in the course.

The second obstacle was student involvement. We tackled this by requiring that students buy the book and register to the created courses on MyMarketingLab within the first week of the semester. To facilitate this process, a Pearson representative was present on campus to help students register for the course and to teach them how to use the tools available within MyMarketingLab.

**MyMarketingLab actually tests students on the different 'learning outcomes' and notifies them of all outcomes met or failed.**

Third, we wanted to stop students from postponing all the work until their exam dates, so different assignments were allotted with starting and ending dates across the semester, thereby forcing students to do their studies in due time to avoid losing credit.

The use of MyMarketingLab is thus mandatory. When starting each chapter, the study guide, eBook, and PowerPoints are made available to the students. Upon completion of the chapter, we assign practice tests and quizzes, interactive case studies, and end of chapter exercises. As for testing, although the possibility to do it in MyMarketingLab is available, we still rely heavily on Blackboard. A shift to testing on MyMarketingLab is foreseen in the near future.

## Course results

To test the impact of the use of MyMarketingLab, this semester I gave the same exams that were offered last semester and compared the test averages. The results on both exams were considerably higher than last semester, and, furthermore, the grades of students who practised with MyMarketingLab were higher than those who did not use it.

**The average result this semester was considerably higher at 64/100.**

The average mark for the first exam last semester was 58/100, while the average result this semester was considerably higher at 64/100. Therefore the benefit of using MyMarketingLab is reflected in exam grades that are now higher than the pre-MyMarketingLab era.

Also, students who practised with MyMarketingLab resources had much higher grades than those who did not use the resources. For the second exam, all students used the resource after they realised the discrepancy between grades of idle students compared to active students.

## Conclusions

As an instructor, it is my responsibility to commit to learning objectives and to ensure that students achieve the learning outcomes set forth in the different courses. MyMarketingLab actually tests students on the different 'learning outcomes' and notifies them of all outcomes met or failed, afterwards referring them to links to improve understanding of those outcomes.

Students, especially in introductory level courses, need motivation to learn and to commit.

MyMarketingLab provides the perfect tool for that in terms of study guide items and practice tests and quizzes.

In view of the results achieved in the Fundamentals of Marketing course, I intend to start using MyMarketingLab, and other similar resources, in most of my courses, as both student involvement and performance are much higher. It is an amazing tool that benefits both students and faculty members. I strongly recommend its use.

## In brief

The use of supplemental instruction tools such as MyMarketingLab, Blackboard, and other web 2.0 tools, greatly enhances student learning and should be used, whenever possible, to ensure fulfilment of learning objectives.