

PMGT 218 – Videography, Marketing and Messaging in the Digital Era
DRAFT
Spring Semester, 2009

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This advanced course will teach students how to conduct political marketing and messaging online, including search engine marketing and optimization, paid online advertising, web video, blogger outreach. Coursework will include technical projects, such as designing online banner ads and creating videos for release on the web; practical projects, such as building a search engine marketing plan and conducting blogger outreach; and analytic projects, including using web metrics to measure return on investment, cost-per-click, reach, and persuasion. Students will learn how to develop cohesive online marketing plans, work with vendors, conduct research and measure success in online marketing and messaging.

The course begins by examining the online audience and discussing the roll online marketing plays within a larger, comprehensive offline political marketing effort. Next, the class will take up the technical components of paid political marketing and messaging online, including display advertising, blog advertising, search engine marketing and optimization. This will be followed by a discussion about unpaid political marketing and media, including user-generated content and blogger outreach. The class will then discuss web analytics. The concluding section examines incorporating these online elements into an offline marketing campaign.

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Develop a strategic understanding of the Internet as marketing tool to reach and mobilize voters within a larger, offline marketing campaign.
- Gain technical expertise in developing different types of paid and unpaid online advertising, including banner ads, search engine marketing, blog ads and blogger outreach, and social media.
- Developing an understanding of the online audience.
- Learn how to analyze and measure the effectiveness of online marketing tactics.
- Understand the web campaign's role in a larger organization, advocacy group, or political campaign.
- Learn how to budget their organization's finances and human resources in their online effort.

REQUIREMENTS:

The class will be based on a series of projects and simulations that will require students to develop their own online marketing applications, build an online marketing strategy, and track and analyze results. Students will be expected to complete several written exercises that culminate in a final paper (approximately 20 pages of material). In addition, students will generate other work product, such as material that would be placed online in support of their organization's goals.

The final grade will be awarded based on the following formula: 20% for the basic strategy; 40% for the major paper; 20% web applications; and 20% for class participation. Attendance and participation in the class are an absolute must.

BOOKS FOR PURCHASE: (from Amazon.com):

Ian Bogost, *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames*, (MIT Press, 2007).

Gradiva Couzin and Jennifer Grappone, *Search Engine Optimization: An Hour a Day* (Sybex, 2006).

Jay Dedman, *Videoblogging* (Wiley, 2006).

Karen Jagoda, *Crossing the River: The Coming of Age of the Internet in Politics and Advocacy* (Xlibris Corporation, 2005).

ONLINE RESOURCES:

Institute for Politics, Democracy & the Internet, *Best Practices for Political Advertising Online* (<http://www.ipdi.org/UploadedFiles/BannerAdReport4.pdf>), March 2008.

Institute for Politics, Democracy & the Internet, *Person-to-Person-to-Person: Harnessing the Political Power of Online Social Networks and User-Generated Content* (<http://www.ipdi.org/uploadedfiles/PtPtPCompositeNov07.pdf>), September 2007.

Christopher Locke, Rick Levine, Doc Searls, and David Weinberger, *The Cluetrain Manifesto* (2000).

CLASS SESSIONS:

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|-----|-------------|---|
| 1. | January 12 | Introduction and initial discussion |
| | January 19 | Martin Luther King Day: NO CLASS |
| 2. | January 26 | The Online Audience |
| 3. | February 2 | Online Political Message Development |
| 4. | February 9 | Display Ads |
| | February 16 | President's Day: NO CLASS |
| 5. | February 23 | Search Engine Marketing and Search Engine Optimization |
| 6. | March 1 | Marketing on Blogs, Social Media & Social Networking Sites |
| 7. | March 8 | Analytics |
| 8. | March 15 | Spring Vacation: NO CLASS |
| 9. | March 22 | Incorporating Multimedia (Video, Animation & Games) into Online Marketing |
| 10. | March 29 | Video production and editing |
| 11. | April 5 | Unpaid Political Video and User-Generated Media |
| 12. | April 12 | Video on- and offline: Creating a Cohesive/Comprehensive Video Plan |
| 13. | April 19 | Presenting the Final Product. |
| 14. | April 26 | Summing Up |

SESSION ONE

JANUARY 12

Subject: Introduction – The historical role of political marketing; the evolution of the Internet in political marketing; and the growing importance of new vehicles for reaching and mobilizing constituencies.

A review of the course outline, expectations, and assignments. Discussion of why candidates, advocacy groups, elected officials, and political managers are beginning to invest financial and human resources in online marketing, as well as the obstacles.

Reading assignments for next class :

A.

B.

Written assignments for next class: None.

January 19 - NO CLASS (MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY)

SESSION TWO

JANUARY 26

Subject: The Online Audience – A look the online audience. How do American voters consume online media? What are their online habits? What is the demographic breakdown? How do political marketers research the online audience? How do they apply this research in the development of an online marketing plan? What is microtargeting and how does can it be applied to online advertising?

Reading assignments for next class

A.

Written assignments for next class: Choose an organization for which you will simulate the role of online marketing director during the initial part of the course. Bring a description of the organization and an analysis of its online presence to class. Be prepared to present a description of your organization to the class.

SESSION THREE

FEBRUARY 2

Subject: Online Political Message Development – How do online marketing managers develop messages online that reflect the values, events, and platforms of their organization? How can these messages be used across different mediums – online and offline – and in many forms – video, animation, advertising, etc. Discussion will be given to the issue of whether the Internet is a better reach medium or mobilization medium

Assignment due: There will be in-class presentations of the organizations that students have selected as possible candidates for group projects.

Reading assignments for next class

A.

B.

Assignment for Next Week

Each member of the class will complete an analysis of the online marketing presence of their selected group to be presented to the class in the next week. For now, this will include information about who the audience thinks the online audience is, an outline of the organization's major goals for an online marketing campaign, and the development of a message to help meet those goals.

SESSION FOUR

FEBRUARY 9

Subject: Display Advertising – How do organizations plan, design, and execute online display ads? How are display ads used to meet the different goals of a political or advocacy organization? What are different strategies for purchasing and placing ads? What are ad networks, and how can they be used to place ads?

Much of this session will be given over to student presentations of their analysis of the online presence of the organizations they would like to suggest for class projects. Analysis should include an assessment of the visibility of the organization in comparison to its friendly competitors or outright opponents and the use of various elements of online advertising. At the conclusion of class, the students will offer the instructor(s) their opinion of which organizations offer the best prospects for the group projects that will become the heart of the coursework.

Reading assignments for next class :

A.

Written assignments due for next class: Design three different types of display ads for your chosen organization and list the sites on which those ads will be placed.

FEBRUARY 16 - NO CLASS (GW BIRTHDAY)

SESSION FIVE FEBRUARY 23

Subject: Search Engine Marketing – How do organizations develop search engine marketing plans? What is the difference between search engine marketing and search engine optimization? How can search engine marketing be used to reach voters about your candidate or issues?

In this class, students will be assigned to one of four groups, each of which will take on an interest group, association or corporation as a “client” and will also adopt an election campaign as an object of comparative study. From this point on, the two continuing projects will have fundamentally different tones: the election campaigns will be monitored, described, and analyzed, while for the issue advocacy organizations we will simulate consulting services that could assist the organization in its online presence.

Reading assignments for next class (3/3):

A.

B.

Written assignments due for next class: Present a basic goal that you believe your client should achieve in its online marketing plan. In addition, present an analysis of the chosen campaign's basic marketing and messaging strategy. This should include: goal(s), situation analysis, strategy statement, assumptions, theme, key messages, and target groups. It should also include sample display ads and the sites on which those ads should be placed and a search engine marketing and optimization plan.

SESSION SIX

MARCH 1

Subject: Marketing on Blogs, Social Media, and Social Networking – How do political and advocacy organizations reach and mobilization voters using marketing and advertising on blogs, social media sites, and social networking sites? What is a blogad and how does it differ from a regular display ad? What are paid and unpaid tactics for reaching supporters, voters, and donors on social sites?

Assignments due this class: A detailed statement of the basic goal to be pursued by your “client” and an analysis of the communications strategy of the campaign organization assigned to your group.

Assignments due next week: Develop a social marketing strategy for your client. This includes developing three different blogads and social marketing ads, a list of the blogs and sites on which those ads will be placed, a suggestion of who those blogs are intended to reach, and a budget.

SESSION SEVEN

MARCH 8

Subject: Analytics – Corporations, political campaigns, and advocacy groups have a variety of tools to analyze their online advertising campaign. This class will include a discussion of each of those analytical tools, as well as a discussion about how vendors can assist with the process.

Assignments due this class: Class presentations of social marketing strategies

Reading assignments due for next class:

- A.
- B.

Written assignments due for next class: None

MARCH 15 - NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)

SESSION EIGHT

MARCH 22

Subject: Incorporating Multimedia (Video, Animation & Games) into Online Marketing – Organizations are increasingly turning to multimedia to marketing their ideas, clients, and candidates. How does multi-media, including video, animation, and gaming be used to meet the goals of a political or advocacy organization? How can you add multimedia into your budget?

This class will include a more focused discussion on how animation and online gaming can be used to market, message, and train voters and supporters.

Reading assignments due for next class :

- A.
- B.

Written assignment due for next class: Present a “multimedia” plan for your client. Address the following issues. What target groups are critical for you to reach? What goals will your plan meet (fundraising, earned media, voting, etc.)? What online multi-media techniques should your “client” develop (video, animation, games)?

SESSION NINE

MARCH 29

Subject. Video Production & Editing – Video production and editing are highly developed skills. This class will include discussion about video production techniques, editing software, and distribution

Reading assignments due for next class:

A.

Written assignment due for next class: Each group will present a script, outline, and budget for a video for their client. Include a discussion about what goal(s) the video will meet and how it will be distributed. Over the next three weeks, each group will tape and edit its own video.

SESSION TEN

APRIL 5

Subject: Unpaid Political Video and User-Generated Media – Some of the most well know videos of the 2006 and 2008 elections weren’t produced by the campaigns, but by supporters. Does this type of user-generated media pose a threat for political campaigns and advocacy or an opportunity? Some companies, such as Doritos and Dove, and some political organizations, such as the Mitt Romney campaign in 2008, hold user-generated media contests. How can organizations take advantage of user-generated media?

Most of this class will be devoted to class discussion about the video projects.

Reading assignments for next class: T.B.A.

Written assignments for next class: Each group will present recommendations for their client on handling user-generated media.

SESSION ELEVEN

APRIL 12

Subject: Video On- and Offline: Creating a Comprehensive, Cohesive Marketing Plan – How do all of the marketing and messaging techniques discussed in this class come together in one comprehensive, cohesive effort? How can a YouTube style ad and a television commercial reflect common themes and reach the goals of the organization? This class will include guest speakers, who will walk the class their online and offline video marketing efforts.

Reading assignments due for next class: None.

Written assignments due for next class: Major presentation of “client’s” online communications strategy, including the final video project.

SESSION TWELVE **APRIL 19**

Subject: **Presenting the Final Product.** Each team will present its online work product for its “client” organization. If we have been able to achieve client buy-in, representatives of the client organization will attend this section to ask questions and comment on the proposed strategy.

Reading assignments due for next class: None.

Written assignments due for next class: None.

SESSION THIRTEEN **APRIL 26**

Subject: **Summing Up.** A review and critique of the work product. The teams will have an opportunity to question and discuss the efforts of the other teams. Criticism and suggestions for revising the course for future years will also be solicited.