



Course Syllabus

Course Title: Management of Ecommerce Operations

Academic Year: 2023

Time: Thursdays 18:00-21:30

Instructor: Pavel Zaslavsky

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Meeting time for students: by appointment

Number of credit points: 2

Course Goals and Description

- Understanding the different business models of online retail;
- Understanding the building blocks of the online retail site;
- Understanding the influence of UI and UX design on business performance;
- Learning various types of content and challenges in creation and maintenance of thereof;
- Understanding the global and social repercussions of content management;
- Understanding the underlying operations behind the online retail;
- Learning the mechanics of user traffic, performance criteria and levers that influence them;
- Analyzing online retail related marketing and buyer acquisition strategies;
- Understand user conversion funnel and stages;
- Understanding and using Google ads and basic principle of ads and keywords;
- Understanding online marketplaces and their respective search optimization challenges;
- Global online retail perspective, trends and recent developments around the world.



Course Content/Topics

Online retail course covers the business models and mode of operation of online retail businesses in various segments. The basic building blocks of an online retail company are analyzed from the operational and business perspectives. The course examines significant examples of successful and less successful online retail enterprises from the last 20 years and gives an outlook onto the current and future trends of the industry.

Along with examination of global online retail, special attention is given to the geographical and cultural perspectives of online retail - customers, managerial practice and operations. These are done through insight into successful and less successful cross cultural implementations of business models.

The theoretical materials combined with practical application of knowledge during execution of the course project. The course is based on a practical and applicable knowledge accumulated from various global and local online retailers, marketplaces and shopping comparison engines. It provides the overview of the business area of online retail with an insight into the day to day challenges and seasonal fluctuations. It provides the practical knowledge in most of the aspects of online retail including marketing, operations, content management, customer support, payments in online and offline world.

The project and the following presentation will be graded based on the following criteria:

- Timely execution of all project stages
- Sound approach to content creation and insertion
- Successful implementation of user tracking
- Clarity of verbal and visual presentation of the project
- Final outcome of the activity – sale closure, selling price (bonus)



Assignments and Grading Procedures

Attendance in lectures personally or over video is mandatory as the presented materials are unique. Student discussions and interaction cannot be substituted or documented.

(Maximum of **one absence** may be excused).

- Class participation 10% (individual grade)
- Online retail project – selling online 30% (individual grade)
- Final presentation of project process and outcome - 60% (team grade)

The presentations and group discussion will be done at the last session – team attendance is mandatory

Course Requirements & Course Policies

The course consists of 6 sessions presented on various aspects of ecommerce operations. Guest lecturers will be invited to some of the lectures, these will include high ranking managers of global online retail related multinationals. Business cases of successful and failing enterprise moves will be presented and examined in the class.

The course includes readings, competitive, hands on, online retail project and a final presentation of the project process and outcome (group).

For the project (groups of 3-4) the students will embark on a selling process on a major retail platform and conduct sales process in all stages from account setup, product insertion onto platform, content creation, pricing research, product pricing, communications with potential buyers, sale and payment clearance, shipping and potential follow up.

Accommodation for Students with special needs

- The course can be translated live to the special needs students
- Course recording will be uploaded on Moodle post lecture



Text book(s) and/or other materials

- Krug Steve (2014). *Don't Make Me Think. A Commonsense Approach to Web Usability (3rd Edition)*. New Rides
- Schwartz Barry (2004). *The Paradox of Choice*. Harper Collins
- Anderson Chris (2008). *The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business is Selling Less of More*. Hyperion
- Mikitani Hiroshi (2013). *Marketplace 3.0: Rewriting the Rules of Borderless Business*. Palgrave Macmillan
- Hsieh Tony (2013). *Delivering Happiness: A Path to Profits, Passion, and Purpose*. Business Plus
- Liu Shiyong, Avery Martha (2009). *Alibaba - The Inside Story Behind Jack Ma and the Creation of the World's Biggest Online Marketplace*. Harper Collins
- Walton Sam (1993). *Made in America*. Bantam
- Kaushik Avinash (2009). *Web Analytics 2.0: The Art of Online Accountability and Science of Customer Centricity*. Wiley Publishing

Academic Integrity

- The students are expected to execute their assignments as a part of the team, “hitch hiking” on the team is considered to be an academic integrity breach.
- The usage of materials – texts, images, social posts etc. created by other teams – current or past can be done only after explicit permission of the said team.
- Any inside bidding, cross team bidding or sales rigging is considered to be breach of conduct

Course Schedule

Session 1: Introduction and Basic Online retail business models – Oct 26th

Lecture

- Course overview
- Course requirements
- Basic online retail business types
- Online retail in various industries
- Understanding the online retail economics and conversions



MBA – Focusing on Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology Management

- Online retail and ethics
Business case
- Shopping comparison - The life and death of a pioneer

Session 2: Website design and content – Nov 2nd

Lecture

- Ecommerce site and visitor types
- Attention ratio on site
- User conversion types
- AIDA sales funnel model
- Fogg behavioral model

Business case

- Alibaba & Taobao – Crocodile on the Yangze river

Session 3: Landing pages design and performance tracking – Nov 9th

Lecture

- Product vs Service
- Website UI basics
- Wireframes review
- Information architecture principles
- Landing pages
- Principles of persuasion

Guest Lecture

Meet an Industry professional: Yuval Matalon – Live person, GM. Ex Ebay Israel GM
2011-2018

Session 4: Marketing and sales in online retail – Nov 16th

Lecture

- Search engine principles
- How Google works
- Search engine optimization (SEO)
- Search engine marketing (SEM)
- SEM key performance indicators



Business case

- Silk road – the dark side of ecommerce

Session 5: SEM and Google Ads– Nov 23rd

Lecture

- Google ads – how does it work
- Google ads – setting the account
- Google ads – campaign structure
- Google ads – keywords – types and usage
- Google ads – quality score and its impact
- Google ads – ad auctions
- Google ads – remarketing

Guest Lecture

Meet an Industry Leader: Dan Oron – Fiverr marketplace Product Manager, previously Etsy product manager, previously Ebay ads product manager

Session 6: Online marketplaces – Nov 30th

Lecture

- Marketplace definitions and types
- Direct commerce vs marketplace commerce
- Specific marketplaces deep dive – Amazon, Ebay, Etsy and more
- Marketplace content tactics
- Marketplace search engine optimization

Business case

- Zappos – customer service is the business

Session 7: Online retail project presentations – Dec 7th

Lecture

- Team presentations of the project – setup, process, outcome, learnings

Please note that guest appearance dates may change at a short notice. In case of lack of availability these will be replaced by case studies. The case studies may be changed in case of newer and interesting studies and events.