

AoM 2023 Paper 1

Title: Bridging the gap between academia and industry: A social media case study.

Keywords: Social Media Pedagogy, practitioner skills, theoretical learning, case study, workshop design, module design.

Abstract: The social media operating environment is every changing, as such it is difficult for students to develop up to date theoretical knowledge and practitioner skills. Through a Management Knowledge Transfer Project (mKTP) with a new social media start-up company, a team of academics were able to create a real-time case study, offering business and marketing students tailored workshops and weekly interactions with industry, contributing to the development of the social media service. The academics followed the Theory – Application- Implication (TAI) framework.

Track: Revolutionising social media pedagogy to bridge the gap between academia and industry

Authors: Conlan, E., McGowan, K., Balaraman, P., and Fang, L.

Modo.net is a new innovative social media platform that connects all digital files from a range of sources including email, cloud storage facilities and social media accounts. Through artificial intelligence (AI), the digital files can be categorised and organised, giving the user one central log in point to find images, documents etc. with ease (modo.net).

Academics at the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) developed a relationship with modo.net through a government funded management knowledge transfer partnership (mKTP), funded by Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) (UKRI, 2023). This partnership gave academics a unique consultancy opportunity to be involved in the day-to-day practices of the company including gathering marketplace insights, developing communication strategies and product testing. The academic team used a real-life, real-time case study week- to- week in class. Setting explicit outcomes from the onset applying real designs, real events, and creating real interactions developed the student relationship with trusting the case study as being credible (Gabriel, 2023).

The case study design found that it followed the Theory – Application and Implication (TAI) framework coined by Ross Strong (cited in Gabriel, 2023). The first stage of teaching and learning would involve the delivery of theoretical knowledge, this was typically delivered in pre-recorded lectures, however, the theory would be recapped briefly in class, TEAMS classrooms were also used so students could engage in discussion with each other or ask questions in real-time via the chat feed. The second stage, application, were delivered via activities the students were asked to complete either as homework or in workshop settings where marketing managers and product support staff from the company would join the class.

The marketing staff would attend in person, the product support would dial in to the class via TEAMS. The workshop sessions were developed around real-time issues the company was facing, including environmental scanning activities, finding routes to market, product testing the new social media tool, collecting market research, usability testing, and analysing the data. MS Teams was used to give all students access to market research results for data analysis purposes. The third stage, implications, was delivered by a company presentation discussing the workshop scenarios in the context of what this meant for decision making such as approaches to market, product development and future investment.

The use of this holistic approach to case study meant students could apply knowledge and professional skills to, 'an authentic scenario,' whilst the variety of presentation methods adopted helped develop student understanding (Marton & Booth, 1997; Prosser and Trigwell, 1999; and Briggs et al, 2022). The study showed that some students found the workload challenging thus confirming McNaught et al (2007) findings. However, there were many benefits including moving passive learners towards being active learners (Biggs and Tang, 2011; Biggs et al, 2022), merging theory into practice rather than viewing as stand-alone entities, developing practical skills (Waring and Evans, 2015), and developing student confidence in a safe environment as they face moving into the workplace (Briggs et al, 2022).

References

- Biggs, J., and Tang, C. (2011) *Teaching for Quality Learning at University* (4th ed.). McGraw-Hill Open University Press
- Biggs, J., Tang C., and Kennedy, G. (2022) *Teaching for Quality Learning at University* (5th ed.). McGraw-Hill Open University Press
- Gabriel, C. (2023) *Why teach with cases? Reflections on Philosophy and Practice*. Emerald Publishing, UK.
- Kolb, D. A., and Lewis, L.H. (1986) Facilitating experiential learning: Observations and reflections. *New directions for adult and continuing education*, vol.30, pp. 99-107.
- Kreber, C. (2001) Learning experientially through case studies? *A conceptual analysis. Teaching in higher education*, vol. 6(2), pp. 217-228

Marton, F., and Booth, S.A. (1997) Learning and Awareness. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

McNaught, C., Lam, P., Ong, D., and Lau, L. (2007) Challenges in assessments in a case-based science course, in S. Frankland (Ed) Enhancing Teaching Learning Through Assessment: Deriving and Appropriate Model, pp.256-64. Dordrecht Springer.

Modo.net (2023) <https://modo.net/> Introducing Modo. Available at: <https://modo.net/> (Accessed: 15/01/23)

Prosser, M. and Trigwell, K. (1999) Understanding Learning and Teaching: The Experience in Higher Education. Buckingham: Open University Press.

UKRI (UK Research and Innovation) (2023) Funding Rules <https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/general-guidance/funding-rules/> (Accessed: 15/01/23)

Waring, M. and Evans, C. (2015) Understanding Pedagogy: Developing a critical approach to teaching and learning. Routledge Taylor and Francis group, London, and New York.