

Innovation in the Sport Management Classroom: Student Interpretation of YouTube as a Learning Tool

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Technological innovations have revolutionized our society. Specific to education, the advances in e-learning have made it one of the fastest growing trends in education (Zhang, Briggs & Nunamker, 2006). While the virtual learning environment can present educators with a number of challenges, the platform also affords a number of opportunities that can enrich learning experiences and foster student curiosity. The purpose of this research is to begin to explore some of these possibilities in a Sport Management e-learning course through the investigation of YouTube videos as a supplemental learning tool.

The use of video in the classroom has been lauded for creating motivation and interest (Puntill, 2002), addressing different learning styles, and engaging student curiosity (Berk, 2009). Physiologically, the use of video as a teaching tool has been shown to engage both hemispheres of the brain and even impact brain wave frequencies (Berk, 2009). Previous research has examined the use of video in traditional classroom settings (Carville & Mitchell, 2000; Chen, Horrocks, & Evans, 1998) and the effective use of video in the maintenance of student attention (Young, Robinson, & Alberts, 2009). This research looks to expand on these studies by exploring the strategic use of YouTube in a Sport Management e-classroom while providing insight into how various strategies are interpreted by students.

The visual stimulation offered through the video-sharing site YouTube allows educators to provide students with a diverse educational experience. YouTube is localized in 43 different countries and across 60 languages; 70% of the site's traffic comes from outside of the United States (YouTube, 2012). With over 800 million unique user visits to YouTube each month and more than 72 hours of video uploaded every minute, the site offers unparalleled opportunity to connect students to the world around them and offer global sporting perspectives (YouTube, 2012). YouTube has made the incorporation of video into course lectures both a more convenient and plausible strategy; perhaps most importantly, it allows educators to adapt twenty-first century literacy skills into their course delivery. The strategic use of YouTube allows educators the opportunity to bring sport issues to life for students—it can give them experiences to learn from as opposed to stories. If a picture is worth 1,000 words, we believe a well-selected YouTube video can be worth one million.

In an effort to explore the effective use of YouTube in Sport Management education, this research began by integrating various YouTube strategies into the course design of an International Sport Management e-learning course. YouTube sharing strategies included interviews with industry experts, lectures from leading scholars, historical video, and the inclusion of international perspectives on a wide variety of global sport issues. The intention is now to evaluate the perceived effectiveness of these strategies in a follow-up course evaluation.

Joosten (2012) offered an initial framework for measuring the effectiveness of social media in an educational setting. Based on this framework, an online survey has been created to reflect the context of the e-learning International Sport Management course and measure the perceived effectiveness of the YouTube strategies we employed. The survey includes both Likert scales and open-ended questions. Factors under investigation include: engagement, satisfaction, learning, and course performance.

The students currently enrolled in the International Sport Management e-learning course will serve as the study participants (N=50). The course uniquely features representation from three different countries, which it is hoped will allow for diverse interpretation. Students will be notified of the survey at the conclusion of the course and provided with a link to complete the survey and submit their feedback.

Results will be analyzed to determine the strengths and weaknesses of our YouTube strategies as well as possible interpretive variation by gender and nationality. Descriptive statistics will be examined using the Statistical Package

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for Social Sciences (SPSS). Open-ended questions will be investigated through the process of emergent coding which will allow the inductive identification of themes representing the effectiveness of YouTube videos in an e-learning context. All open-ended survey response data will be managed by the data analysis software NVIVO (Weitzman, 2003).

This study is unique in that it features a global perspective by way of its participants, in addition to the international sport context of the course itself. While extending the limited body of e-learning literature, it is hoped that these findings will provide insight into the value of YouTube innovation as an e-learning strategy in Sport Management. This study will also present Sport Management educators with an awareness of how video sharing in an e-learning environment might be implemented into their own courses, as well as how our strategies might be refined to further enhance the overall student learning experience.

Selected References

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