



Syllabus



Course Name

BMIS 2678
Electronic Commerce



Faculty

Richard Franklin, Asst. Professor of Business Administration



Class Meeting Times

Thursdays 6:20 - 9:20
531 Alumni Hall



Course Introduction

E-Commerce is no longer a new phenomenon. It is totally mainstream. The incredible hype of the late-90's has been largely discredited and forgotten as the business world has moved from "irrational exuberance" to real, practical and *profitable* utilization of network and computer capabilities.

That e-commerce is now the norm does not, however, mean that there are not important aspects of the 21st century business environment that differ markedly from the prior century. Significant innovation continues.

In the late 90's, a course in E-Commerce would have spent considerable time teaching students about HTML and building web-pages. Another project would likely have been to propose a business plan for a new, Internet-based company.

Just ten years later, the technologies that enable e-commerce have grown far beyond HTML -- indeed they have become enormously complex. Business information technology has developed so much that an entire separate course, *Business System Platforms*, has been added to the MBA/MIS dual-degree curriculum to address the topic.

And just ten years later, the sophistication, complexity and diversity of business models that enable businesses to leverage e-commerce have advanced as much -- if not more -- than the technologies that support them. These 21st century business models are often quite different from the e-commerce models of the dot-com boom. And it is now far more probable that you will be involved with an *existing* business looking at new ways to leverage e-commerce than you are to start a whole new online enterprise -- though certainly that still could happen.



Course Description and Objectives

Electronic commerce is at the forefront of modern operations, marketing and strategy. Over the Internet, electronic commerce accounts for billions of dollars in transactions. *Trillions* of dollars move daily through private, non-Internet electronic commerce systems such as SWIFT. Competition and cooperation between firms of all sizes have been changed forever. There are new media outlets like iTunes and YouTube. There are huge online communities like Facebook and MySpace. There are new models of collaboration like Wiki and Blogs. While these are creating and reshaping industries and opportunities, long-existing business models such as those employed the music industry are failing.

This course is designed to familiarize students with important aspects of the business world that are changing as a result of technology and the Internet, and from a managerial perspective focus on issues related to e-commerce such as:

- 21st century business models
- strategy development
- competitive advantage
- current and emerging technologies
- pricing, distribution, and promotion
- new revenue streams and cost structures



Course Approach

Although E-Commerce is a familiar concept, it remains highly dynamic and subject to dramatic developments. Like many topics related to information technology, it is not optimally served by a conventional "textbook" approach. There has, of course, been valuable academic research, and there are important organizing principles and taxonomies that are useful. Indeed, we will explore and discuss some of them.

However, E-Commerce is a subject that is most effectively understood by directly examining what real businesses are actually doing. This is best accomplished by the use of case studies. In this course, we will use a case study each week as the primary means of learning about the principles, business models, and critical capabilities e-commerce makes available. Supplemental reading materials will be posted directly or linked from within CourseWeb. In addition, students will be expected to utilize the internet *on their own* to get a basic feel for the subject being covered -- much as they would if they were invited to a business meeting on the topic at their job and wanted to appear at least somewhat literate on the subject. This approach also means that each student must participate in and contribute to all class discussions.

Preparation for class most weeks will be fairly consistent. Students will:

1. Read the case and prepare a case write-up
2. Read posted or linked supplemental materials
3. Search the web for and read other material than explains or is relevant to the topic for the week.



Course Outline

Week	Topic	Case or Project
1	E-Commerce Intro	
2	Long Tail	Nettwerk Digital Music
3	Disruptive Innovations	Nintendo's Disruptive Strategy
4	Supply Chain	Zappos Supply Chain
5	Advertising	Google 2010
6	Electronic Payment	PayPal
7	Take Home Mid Term	
8	"Free"	Student Presentations
9	Business to Consumer	Netflix
10	Web 2.0: Collaboration	Innocentive
11	Web 2.0: Media	Google & YouTube
12	Web 2.0: Communities	Facebook 2008
13	Web 2.0: Marketing	Hubspot Web 2.0
14	Monetization & Promotion Projects	Student Presentations
15	Final Exam	



Course Materials

Text Materials

Students will be required to purchase a packet of cases. In keeping with the fact that this is a course in electronic commerce, the cases will only be available electronically at the following link:

<http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cb/access/6047270>

For those students who are interested in the detail and referencability a textbook on the subject of E-Commerce would provide, I recommend the following:

Kenneth Laudon, Carol Traver

E-Commerce: Business, Technology, Society, 6/E

Prentice Hall, 2010

ISBN 978-0-13-610057-0

This text has worthwhile chapters highly relevant to virtually every class session.

However, please note this is *not* required and also be aware that due to the dynamic nature of the topic, new editions come out about every one to two years.

Notebook/Laptop PCs

You will *not* normally need to bring a laptop PC to class. If you like to bring a PC to classes to follow lectures and take notes electronically, that is permissible. However, you *may not* do other work, surf the web, answer EMAIL, watch basketball playoffs, etc. You will be asked to turn off your computer should you be caught doing any of this. Repeated episodes will result in your being told to leave your computer at home and possibly in a lowering of your participation grade.

All computers must be turned off and be closed during case discussions.



Course Requirements and Grading

Case Writeups: 25%

All cases will be written up and turned in on a credit/no credit basis.

Participation: 20%

You must be prepared to contribute every week. Grading will be determined by how frequently one contributes as well as the quality of the contributions. Please note, however, that students need never fear they will be downgraded or "punished" for being "wrong". In a good company, brainstorming and "off-the-wall" ideas are highly valued. If you have something to say, say it!

Also please note that you should bring a tent card with your full name on it to class every week to ensure you are getting credit for your contributions to the discussion.

Team Projects 30%

Exams (Mid Term and Final): 25%

Scoring, grading, testing, and assignment policies

- Unless prior arrangements are made, no late work will be accepted. All work is submitted electronically and is time-date stamped. Please prepare and submit enough in advance so that you will not encounter technical difficulties that will result in your work not being accepted.
- Exams will be delivered electronically over the Internet. Typically exams will be made available for a week so that students can take them at their convenience. For this reason, make-up exams will not be offered.
- Unless otherwise specified, assignments are to be done on an individual basis. Collaboration on individual assignments will be considered a violation of academic integrity (see below) and will result in a *zero* (0) grade for the assignment and additional

- discipline consistent with University of Pittsburgh policies.
- It is expected that all assignments will be your own original work, not copied and pasted from any source (friends, web sites, etc.). Failure to cite a source and mark quoted material is a serious violation of academic integrity (see below), no matter how small the assignment, and could result in a zero (0) grade for the assignment and additional discipline consistent with University of Pittsburgh policies.
- Exams are objective (i.e. multiple choice & true-false). Scores for tests will be made available via the course web site. Students' test papers will not be returned.

The testing philosophy is that examinations are the vehicle by which students' knowledge of the subject material is evaluated and should not be considered part of the actual learning process itself.

Grade Ranges:

- A+ : 100.00 - 97.00
- A : 96.99 - 92.00%
- A- : 91.99 - 90.00%
- B+ : 89.99 - 87.00%
- B : 86.99 - 82.00%
- B- : 81.99 - 80.00%
- C+ : 79.99 - 77.00%
- C : 76.99 - 72.00%
- C- : 71.99 - 70.00%
- D : 69.99 - 60.00%
- F : < 60.00%

Grading

The Katz School of Business has established guidelines for final grade distributions:

Grade	Distribution
A+, A, A-	30 - 40%
B+, B, B-	55 - 60%
C+, C, C- and below	5 - 15%



Course Policies

Academic Integrity:

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the [University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity](#). Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

Disabilities:

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 216 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890/(412) 383-7355 (TTY), as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. A comprehensive description of the services offered by DRS is available at www.drs.pitt.edu.

Communication:

CourseWeb is the official mode of communication for this course. All materials and information pertaining to the course will be placed into CourseWeb. It is the student's responsibility to check

frequently for announcements that might affect them in the course.

Students are responsible for the completion of all assignments posted into CourseWeb, regardless of whether those assignments have been discussed in class or not.

Cellphones/Blackberrys/Pagers/PCs

Cellphones and all other messaging devices are to be turned off, no exceptions. Blackberrys and similar devices are not permitted. If you typically carry one, turn it off and stow it. Pagers -- and only if you are required to be on call -- should be placed in silent mode.

If you like to bring a PC to classes to follow lectures and take notes electronically, that is permissible. However, you *may not* do other work, surf the web, answer EMAIL, watch basketball playoffs, etc. You will be asked to turn off your computer should you be caught doing any of this. Repeated episodes will result in your being told to leave your computer at home and possibly a reduction in your participation grade.

EMAIL:

EMAIL will be used for one-to-one communication and as a supplement to CourseWeb announcements. Since CourseWeb is linked to student's *University* EMAIL accounts, it is the responsibility of each student to frequently check their *University* account for messages relevant to this class. In the event a student does not use or wish to check their *University* account, it is the student's responsibility to set up EMAIL forwarding to the EMAIL account of their choice. Click the link below to do this.



EMAIL Account Forwarding

Click this link to change how your University EMAIL is forwarded. You will have to log in with your University account and password (the same as you use to login in to CourseWeb).