A Case Study on Effective Use of Active Learning Strategies to Increase Learner Engagement in Digital Marketing Course

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Abstract—*The usage of active learning approaches for the delivery of courses can enhance the learning ability of students. This case study establishes the effectiveness of active learning strategies and benefits in grasping the curriculum which is a central concept of student-centered learning, derived from the productive approach. This study focuses on the Course in Digital Marketing where there is a scope to enhance and encourage active participation of students to explore and configure recent tools such as Blogger, Google Ads, Facebook Ads manager, small SEO tools to name a few. The students can analyze and review the performance of advertising campaigns with the Analytics tool and suggest improvement plans based on performance metrics. The active learning approach enhances their interpersonal, and communication skills and a chance for employability in the field of marketing or have their own business ventures.*

Keywords—*Digital marketing, Active learning, Digital tools, Analytics*

I. INTRODUCTION

Technology is advancing rapidly and so is its emergence in the consumer market and product marketing. It also plays an important role in consumers' journey from awareness to deciding to buy or purchase a product or service. The role of a digital marketer is to effectively present to the consumer the product so that it remains at the top of their minds. Undergraduate Engineering students learning the Digital Marketing Course are introduced to the Awareness, Interest, Desire, and Advocacy (AIDA) modelas discussed by Elmo (1908) and Preston (1982) to understand the role of digital marketer consumer behavior.Fig.1depicts the AIDA model.Along with these various platforms/channels, online toolsare required to make an attractive marketing plan which guarantees a rise in sales compared to methodical practices. The success of any digital marketing campaign is measured by advocacy where people share positive reviews and recommend the products to friends and family.
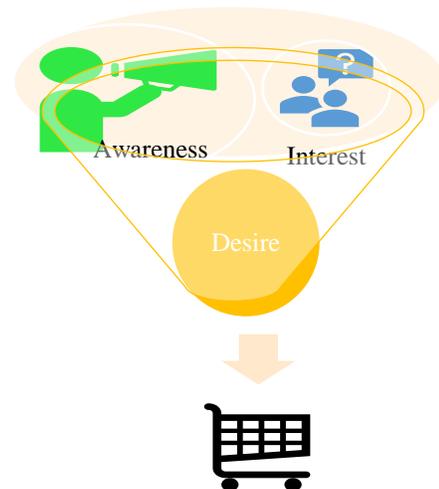

Fig. 1: AIDA- Elmo (1908) model and the purchase journey of consumer

In the course for Digital Marketing (DM), we ensure that the student is well acquainted with the top platforms/channels and tools required to make an attractive marketing plan. Digital Marketing students are encouraged to learn and apply various free resources available online required essentially in the real world.

Fig. 2 indicates some well-known digital advertising platforms viz., Google Ads, social media, Websites, Blogs, Email, and tools.
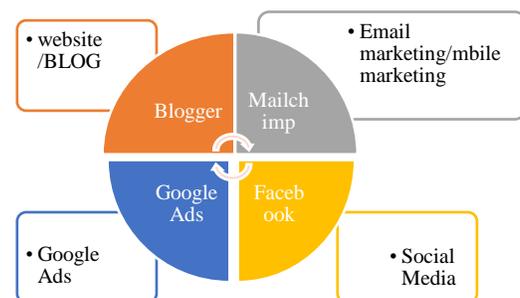

Fig. 2: Digital marketing platforms and tools

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Active learning (AL) strategies adopted in the teaching-learning process of the DM course are very pertinent to Dale E.'s (1969) cone of learning or cone of experience as shown in Fig.3As this model forms a basis for "active learning" or "learning by doing" instructional design. According to this theory, more information is retained by the learner by "doing" acts rather than just reading or hearing, or seeing. Learning with having hands-on experience applying appropriate tools is an "experiential learning" and its integration into course delivery help students to retain about 70% - 90% of what they have learned, for a longer time. Fig 3.shows this learning cone. The study has shown that after two weeks the reading approach will help to recall only 10 % of the reading. The hearing could help us to recall 20%. If we constantly see the information, we may recall 30 % of what was seen. On the contrary, students who are involved in only passive activities such as attending lectures or watching presentations (hearing and seeing only) can only retain about 10% - 30% of what they had learned.
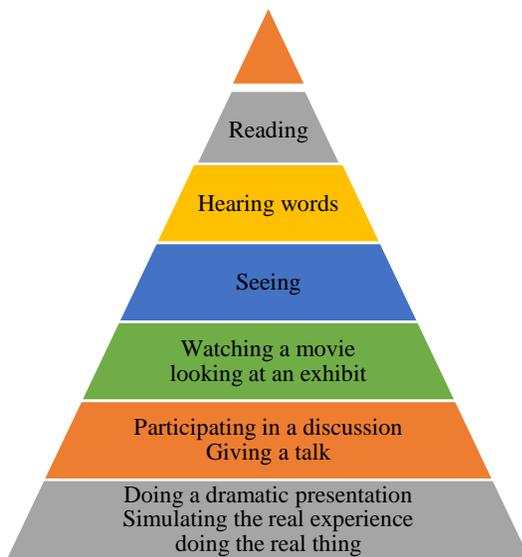

Fig.3: The cone of learning by Dale E. (1969)optimizing learning activities

In the process of making the learning experience enjoyable, the inclusion of active learning is very essential as demonstrated byJ. Shaaruddin(2017). Exposure to active learning is a roadmap to critical thinking and engaging students in classroom activities. An educational psychologist Ausubel (1968) has put forth an Assimilation Learning Theory (ALT). ALT suggests having prior knowledge of students, and what they have learned so that there is a proper bridging of the new course to be learned. The curriculum can be designed to cover simple subjects first and in a later phase, more complex ones. The example described by Patton (2015)has various strategies to improve and make learning more enjoyable. The strategies described the use of clickers. Clickers are wireless handheld response pads, resembling a television remote control that students use to choose a correct answer to a multiple-choice question. The result for this activity is available in a tabulated form which aids in the quick assessment. Another approach was Peer review -where thirty nursing students were requested to perform peer review. The rubric was given with grades to assess each other. Educators and students found the process to be effective. The approach seems to be a versatile learning tool that helps to develop higher-level thinking skills and collaboration. Another effective active learning strategy is game-based pedagogy. Collaborative learning styles were taken into consideration while creating the game. A PowerPoint slide exhibited the question and was read aloud by the tutor. Each team discussed the category, and dollar amount for each question, and the students acted as a team to arrive at the correct answer, sometimes depicting a lively debate. Throughout the game, discussion time occurred after the correct answers were revealed. Theme music, pictures, and applause added to the game show atmosphere.

In the next section, the various activities that were covered as an active learning approach in DM course are presented.

The active learning approaches in teaching DM course involves activities such as writing a blog, creating a website, Google Ads campaign platform, Facebook Ads Manager, Audit of the website for Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Google Analytics tool presentations, and report submission.

III. AL APPROACHES IN DM: A CASE STUDY

Participants in this case study consisted of Third Year engineering students who had opted for a Digital Marketing course under the Board of Humanities Science in Engineering curriculum. The course covers all the aspects required for Digital marketing.

The students created a Blog on the topic of their choice and submitted a google analytics report to gain insights into the blog created. The blog with Blogger (1999) resource was integrated with google analytics. Fig.4 shows an example of a blog written by students.
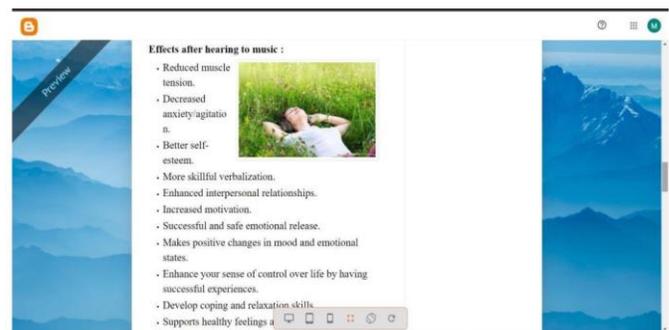

Fig. 4: Example of a blog written using Blogger (1999)

To analyze the engagement on the blog, Google analytics (2005) was used to record the number of users who visited the blog across the globe as shown in Fig.5.Another important component required for Digital Marketing is website creation. Fig.6 shows a sample of the website created by Wix (2006). Students were encouraged to make an engaging website with social media icons and a navigation tab so visitors visiting the

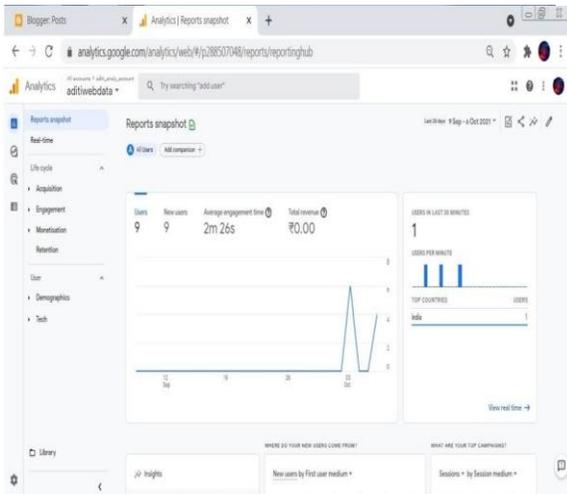website will have a good engagement on the website so the bounce rate is as less as possible.

Fig. 5: The google analytics (2005) resource applied by students to analyze blog
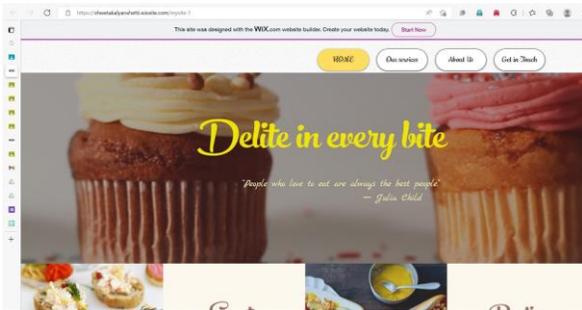

Fig.6: sample of the Websitecreated by the student for food items with the help of Wix (2006)

Google ads play a crucial role in advertising. Students can configure the google ads (2000) platform till the final ad copy is visible to a consumer as is shown in Fig.7.
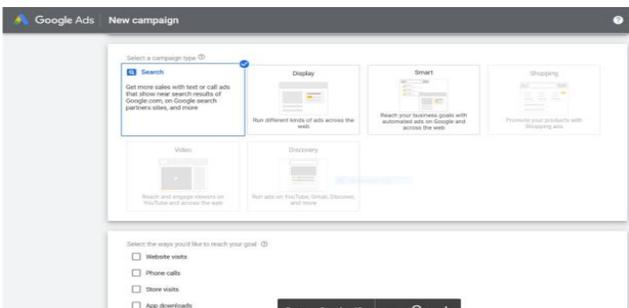

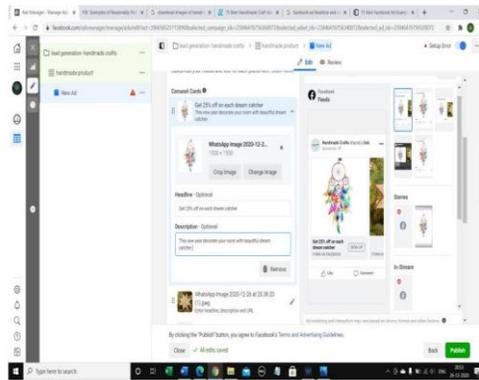Fig.7:Advertise Campaign for toys for children with google Ads(2000)

Fig.8:Facebook Ad Campaign for handmade accessories with Facebook (2004)

The students also explored social media platform which has the maximum engagement considering the current scenario of digital marketing. Fig.8 represents how Facebook ads manager can be applied to reach out to customers on social media platforms and helps to gain insight into the performance of the website. To do SEO the first step is to conduct the audit for the website built. A small SEO tool (2010) is one of the tools to do an SEO audit. Along with the audit, the students are encouraged to suggest an improvement summary that will improve the audit score as shown in Fig.9 for a website.
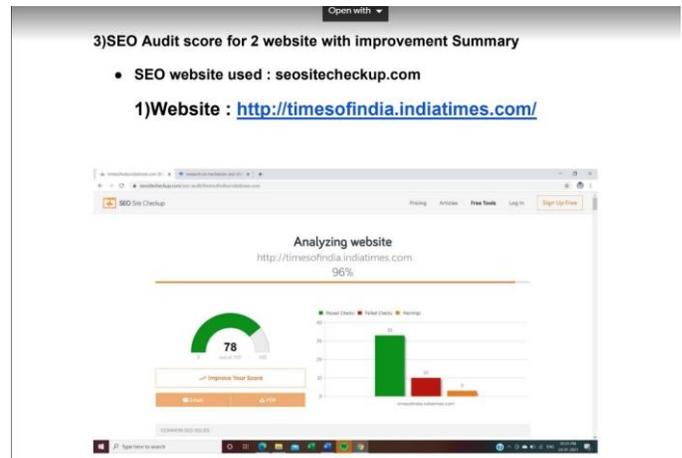

Fig.9:sample website audit score with SEO tools (2010)

By doing activities by themselves, the learning is more. Another activity that was conducted was to do a survey on search engine mechanisms. One of the objectives of this activity was to encourage students to search research papers and write a summary of any key findings or highlight any key features mentioned in the referred paper on search engine mechanisms.

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IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Various activities under active learning were evaluated based on a set of rubrics. The rubrics were set to assess the students' performance. A survey was conducted to collect students' responses about different AL techniques they learned in the DM course.
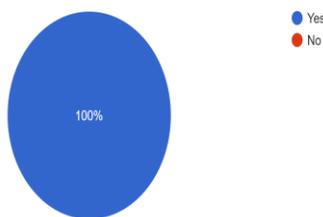
- *Rubrics for blog writing:* Assessment was based on whether the purpose of writing the blog is clear, the creativity is shown in the blog written, and how the blog has got the responses in the form of a comment, like ,and share.
- *Rubrics for website creation:* Assessment was based on navigation tab, headers, footers, social media icons, and Anchor placed for the website.
- *Rubrics for Google Ads:* Assessment was based on checking for the keyword type used, bidding strategy, and several extensions used to make the advertisement more visible on google search engine result pages.
- *Rubrics for Social media advertising platform:* It was assessed based on the unique idea and relevant content and the quality of image for carousel type of ads on Facebook.
- *Rubrics for SEO audit:* Assessment was done to check for the use of SEO tools employed for getting the audit score and suggesting some improvement plans for getting a better audit score.

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To understand how much active learning has helped the students we also conducted a survey to improve and incorporate new teaching-learning methods.

The questions for which response was recorded are:
Q1. Active learning improved skills to integrate various online resources
Q2. The digital marketing course helped to explore all aspects of marketing
Q3. Hands-on experience of utilizing Digital marketing tools was enjoyable
Q4. Improvement in learning ability
Q5. End Semester Project (ESE) motivated to do my best

ESE project motivated to do my best
33 responses
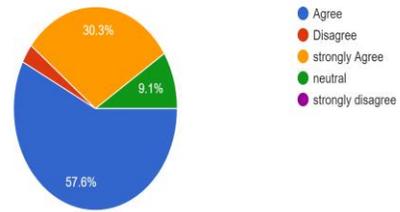
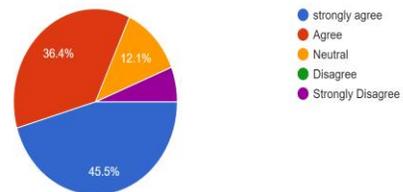Digital marketing course helped to explore all aspects of marketing
33 responses

Fig.10: Students' response to active learning strategies

The survey had a maximum response of 69.7% for active learning amongst the 33 students who opted to participate in the survey. Fig.10 shows the students' responses to the active learning strategies.

Active learning improved skills to integrate various online resources
3 responses

TABLE I
SUMMARY OF THE ACTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES
AND THE RUBRICS DEFINED TO ASSESS STUDENTS

Sr. No.	Activity	Rubrics for Evaluation
1.	Create and write a blog	• Purpose • Content and • Creativity • Sources • Integration of Google Analytics • comments, shares, likes
2.	Create a website	• Website structure • Website content • How well user requirements are considered
3.	Configure Google Ads	• Keyword type Used • Bidding Strategy • Sitelinks and other extensions Used • Ad copy • Target Audience • Other special Settings
4.	Facebook Ads manager	• Unique Idea • Relevant Content • Image Quality (Carousel Ad) Demographics, Audience, • mention of any other Feature Explored.
5.	SEO Audit (Search Engine Optimisation)	• Tools utilized for SEO Audit • Analysis of website • Improvement summary
6.	Survey for Search Engine /Search Engine Features and Mechanisms	• Standard Resources referred Transactions, Journal, Conferences • Summary /key points/Highlights of one paper referred
7.	Report on Recent Trends in Digital Marketing and Tools	• Chatbots • Augmented reality • DIY videos

V. CONCLUSION

Active learning integrated into the DM course encourages learners to develop their understanding to apply platforms and online resources to deliver effective marketing plans or strategies. Students' creativity to write blogs was at best as they had created blogs on the topic of their choice. DM students were able to analyze marketing campaigns with the google analytics tool and suggest improved strategies. AL created opportunities for interactions, exploration, and involvement in tasks. Active learning builds an additional skill sets, those can be deployed in the Digital Marketing of products or services. Various AL techniques practiced by students ensures how as an entrepreneur one can launch and campaign their services or products attractively in today's market.

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