Teacher Instructions

Pick the best practices and teaching methods!

Module: Websites & SEO
Unit: 2
Topic: Websites

1. Introduction

The benefits of digital media have made it the main method for companies to communicate with their customers.

- *interactivity* - the customer can communicate with the company via the web browser, email or social media
- *speed* - an ad campaign can be launched in the internet within minutes versus the long lead times required in print media, broadcasting and other traditional media
- *ease of use* - anyone with a minimum experience with everyday internet tools is able to create and modify web pages, create content to social media or interact with customers
- *targetability* - digital technology enables targeted communication with your target customers defined demographically, geographically or even usage patterns, like time of day or device type (laptop, tablet, mobile)
- *cost savings* - digital space and digital advertising costs only a fraction of the prices in the traditional media
- *high ROI* - given all of the factors listed above the return on investment in digital marketing is very attractive for all kinds of marketing activities

The objective of this sub-module is to position corporate website in the overall digital ecosystem as the cornerstone in a company's digital marketing strategy. The topics covered will enable the students to understand the significance and possibilities websites provide in support of the company's business objectives. The specific learning objective is to give a hands-on competence to plan and design effective websites for corporate use. The module DOES NOT include the actual development of live websites, since the skill required to do that depends heavily on the technical platform adopted.

A prerequisite for the successful participation in this sub-module is a working knowledge of general marketing theory (for example Principles of Marketing - Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders, Wong).

As we know, there is a constant flow of new digital technologies, applications and communication services introduced to the markets which are adopted to everyday use as soon as made generally available. Although it does not receive a lot of attention and hype, there is one application which has stood the test of time throughout the digital revolution and is still the cornerstone in any company's marketing kit – the corporate website.

In the overall scheme of things, the website
- establishes the company in the virtual digital world and represents its virtual "brick-and-mortar" existence in the virtual world
- is the primary source for edited and official information regarding the company's business
- is the place where the company catches the visitor's 100% attention and is able to communicate with him/her on a 1-to-1 basis

This learning model teaches how to take best advantage of the corporate website and how to design it to ensure success. The following topics are covered:

- **Introduction to websites:**
    o the key aspects of a website which contribute to the online presence of a company
    o the basic principles and considerations when setting up a website
- **Insights in conversion and your target groups**
    o different kinds of web conversions
    o the role of website in a customer journey
    o the role of Usability in supporting the customer to reach conversion
    o persona's and segmentation
- **Attracting visitors**
    o website content
    o search engine optimization, SEO
- **Keeping the attention of your audience**
    o monitoring websites
    o usability surveys
    o website analytics

The teaching method in this module is interactive where "learning by doing" is the key. The general work flow is described below and starts with the teacher's lecture covering the basic principles of each topic after which the students are given their assignments. The purpose of the assignments is to give the students hands-on experience on designing websites and learning the best practices through a planned cycle of trial and error.

The assignments follow the flipped learning methodology where students work on an assignment based only on the general information provided during the lecture. The students' role is to work in teams and look for additional information and design tricks from the web and to learn in intensive discussions within the small teams and during the in-class discussions. Each assignment is reviewed and commented in in-class discussions. After the commenting round, the assignments may be redone to incorporate the learnings received during the discussions.

The reason for using the flipped learning methodology is that digital marketing is very interactive in nature. The customer interacts with the website directly and the marketer is able to monitor with analytics tools whether the customers liked or disliked what they saw. Reviewing the students' design work in class simulates this interactivity and enables the students to see and hear other people's reaction to their design

work and to draw their own conclusions for the required rework.

Evaluating a web design is also very subjective. A website loved by one customer may be hated and disregarded by another. Flipped learning enables the students to make their original design according to their best aspirations but teaches also humility and listening skills when their "perfect" design is subjected to the feedback from the "markets" represented by the students in the class.

THE FLOW OF THIS SUB-MODULE IS THE FOLLOWING:

Lecture #1A. Introduction to websites

In this lecture, students will learn the following key concepts:

-   **Why every business needs a website:** Gain an understanding of the critical role a website plays for businesses and the reasons behind its necessity.
-   **The big picture:** Explore the broader context of online business and discover how websites fit into the modern digital landscape.
-   **How websites can support different business objectives:** Learn how websites can be tailored to support various business objectives, from marketing to customer engagement.
-   **Best practices for a good website:** Acquire knowledge about the fundamental principles and strategies for creating an effective and user-friendly website, including design and content best practices.

How to Set Up Your Website: Get practical guidance on the step-by-step process of establishing your website, covering domain registration, hosting, and content management.

Lecture 1B. Technical aspects of a website

In this lecture, students will learn about various technical aspects of websites, including:

-   **Technical aspects of a website:** Dive into the technical underpinnings of websites, understanding the components and technologies that power them.
-   **The domain name:** Explore the significance of domain names, how to choose an appropriate one, and how it impacts your online presence.
-   **SSL Certificate:** Gain insights into the importance of SSL certificates for website security and user trust.
-   **What is web hosting:** Learn the fundamental concept of web hosting and how it enables your website to be accessible on the internet.
-   **Hosting architecture:** Discover the different hosting architectures and their pros and cons, helping you make informed choices for your website.
-   **Things to consider when choosing your web host:** Get guidance on the key factors to consider when selecting a web hosting provider, ensuring your website runs smoothly.
-   **How to find the right development platform for your company:** Explore the options for development platforms and find the one that aligns with your company's goals and requirements.

Lecture 2. Insights in your target groups and conversions

In this lecture, students will delve into the following critical aspects:

- **The role of websites in a customer journey:** Understand the pivotal role websites play in the customer journey. Websites act as central hubs for information and interaction between businesses and their customers. Learn how to provide a user-friendly, informative, and engaging website experience at each stage to guide customers toward conversion and nurture long-lasting relationships.
- **Defining conversions:** Learn the concept of conversions and how they relate to website performance, from lead generation to sales and other key business goals.
- **How to use buyer personas in website design:** Discover how to effectively incorporate buyer personas into website design. Tailor your website to resonate with the specific needs and preferences of your target audience.

(Learn more about customer journey/sales funnel from Module 3. Content marketing & social media.)

Lecture 3. Attracting visitors to your website

In this lecture, students will explore the following vital subjects:

- **Why SEO?:** Understand the significance of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and how it impacts a website's visibility and ranking in search engine results.
- **What is SEO?:** Learn the core principles and components of SEO, including keywords, meta tags, and on-page optimization.
- **Why SEO is important?:** Discover the reasons why SEO is essential for any website, from increasing organic traffic to enhancing online presence and competitiveness. SEO is essential for businesses and website owners who want to improve their online visibility, attract targeted traffic, build credibility, and ultimately drive business growth.
- **Creating an attractive website:** Explore the elements that contribute to an appealing website design, ensuring it captures and retains visitor attention.
- **The need for website content:** Recognize the role of content in engaging and informing website visitors, and how it contributes to SEO success. Content is crucial for attracting, engaging, and converting visitors on your website. It helps to establish your brand's authority, build relationships with your audience, and drive business growth.
- **Different types of content in a website:** Explore the various forms of content, including text, images, videos, and more, that can enhance a website's appeal and SEO effectiveness.
- **Basic rules for writing SEO content:** Gain insights into fundamental principles for creating SEO-friendly content, including keyword usage, quality, and relevance.

(Deepen your SEO knowledge with this module's SEO materials: 2.1-2.7., and learn more about content planning and e.g. the goals from The Module 3. Content marketing & Social media, part. 6.)

Lecture 4. Keeping the attention of your audience

In this lecture, students will explore key topics related to website monitoring and optimization:

- **Why monitoring?:** Understand the importance of regularly monitoring website performance, user behaviour, and other critical metrics to identify areas for improvement. Understand why monitoring the user experience play an important role in digital business and website development.
- **Why do we need web analytics?:** Explore the role of web analytics tools in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to make informed decisions and enhance website effectiveness.
- **Why do we need user surveys?:** Learn how user surveys can provide valuable insights into user preferences, needs, and pain points, helping in website improvement and optimization.
- **Monitoring website UX (User Experience):** Discover the significance of monitoring and improving the user experience on a website to ensure it meets the needs and expectations of visitors.
- **Creating content for a website:** Explore the importance of quality content creation, as content is a cornerstone for attracting and engaging website visitors.
- **Brief overview of Google Analytics 4:** Get an introduction to Google Analytics 4, a powerful tool for tracking website data, user interactions, and conversions, and its role in website optimization.

(Learn more about analytics from Module 5. Digital analytics & Monitoring.)

Final return of all assignments

- Assess and grade all assignments and give the final grade for the course.

2. Actionable learning outcomes

ACTIONABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES	
1A & 1B	Having completed the sub-module the student can explain recent developments in digital marketing. If 1B is also completed, the student will learn the basic principles of website technical development.
2	Having completed the sub-module the student will be able to define the key aspects of a website which contribute to the online presence of a company.
3	Having completed the sub-module the students will be able to define and document business objectives for a corporate website.
4	After completing this module, students will be able to understand the importance of monitoring websites, utilizing web analytics, and user surveys to optimize User Experience (UX) and create valuable content for websites. Additionally, they will have a brief overview of Google Analytics 4 and its role in website analytics and reporting.

3. Course content to be delivered in your unit

COURSE CONTENT TO BE DELIVERED IN YOUR UNIT

Topic	Introduction to Websites (Lecture #1A)
Bridge-In	In today's digital age, having a strong online presence is essential for businesses of all sizes and industries. This lecture explores the fundamental reasons behind the importance of a website for any enterprise. It provides a comprehensive overview of the big picture regarding websites, their role in supporting various business objectives, best practices for creating a successful website, and practical guidance on setting up your own.
Course content, in-class activities & homework assignments	**CONTENT** Explain the importance of digital marketing and websites. Use the course material (slides) provided. Additional/optional information: https://youtu.be/havPfN9RlLA **ACTIVITIES** **(Homework) Assignment 1** (can be done as an in-class assignment too): Divide the students into teams (max. 4-5 students/team). Instruct the students on the following assignment that they can begin in small groups during class and complete at home: In teams of 4 or 5 students, you are the management team of a recreational company offering lodging and recreational services. This assignment forms the basis for future tasks. Your tasks include: - Define the company's products and services. - Determine target markets and set marketing objectives for the next 12 months. - Choose a domain name for your business. In the next lecture, groups will present the outcomes of the first assignment.
Assigned readings	Teacher's material is the slideset in the course material. Supportive material: Business benefits of a website: https://youtu.be/kTKG1GNUrR4 Good vs. bad web design: https://youtu.be/usf8VFuce6I
Instructor preparation involved	Divide the class in groups of 4-5 students during class. Make sure students bring their laptops and check availability of a projector for presentations.

COURSE CONTENT TO BE DELIVERED IN YOUR UNIT	
Topic	Technical aspects of a website (Lecture #1B)
Bridge-In	This lecture will cover the technical aspects of websites, including domain names, SSL certificates, web hosting, hosting architecture, factors in choosing a web host, and how to select the right development platform for your company's needs. Open by introducing the concepts of *domain, web host and the development platform*. Explain that they are not in the core content of the course but that the students should be aware of these topics. These areas might seem unnecessarily technical for the students so it should be stressed that usually they are outsourced when setting up a site.
Course content, in-class activities & homework assignments	**CONTENT** Explain the concept of domain and domain name, web hosting and web development platforms. Give examples in class. **ACTIVITIES** **Homework for section 1B: Planning for a corporate website/basic concepts:** - Divide the class in teams of max. 4-5 students and give them a homework assignment where the teams analyse 5 different domain names, 5 different web hosts and 5 different development platforms. - Ask them to analyse them according to the criteria given in the assignment. - The teams should make one slide design for their company's homepage. **TIME ESTIMATE** In-class – 60 min for homework (assignment 1) review – 45 hours for lecture and giving out the homework assignment. Homework – 5 hours for students' homework.
Assigned readings	Teacher's material is the slideset in the course material. Supporting material: Domain names: https://youtu.be/qO5qcQgiNX4 Web hosts: https://youtu.be/qaMf4hHR2hg Web development platform (website builder): https://youtu.be/M-QxlUVINHs
Instructor preparation involved	Prepare to give examples on domains, web hosts and development platforms.

COURSE CONTENT TO BE DELIVERED IN YOUR UNIT

Topic	Insights in conversions and your target groups (Lecture #2)
Bridge-In	This lecture explores the pivotal role of websites within the customer journey. It covers topics such as defining conversions, the connection between conversions and the customer experience, gaining insights into business's customers, and the significance of customer segmentations and buyer personas in shaping the online strategy.

Open explaining the following topics:

Websites play a vital role in the customer journey, serving as digital gateways to connect with the target audience, provide information, and drive conversions. As the first point of contact for many customers, websites serve multiple functions. They provide information about products or services, establish brand identity, and facilitate interactions with potential customers. A well-designed website can captivate visitors, guide them through the buying process, and ultimately convert them into loyal customers.

Conversions are the desired actions that businesses want customers to take, such as making a purchase or subscribing to a newsletter. Tracking conversions helps measure marketing effectiveness and customer engagement. Defining conversions is important because it allows businesses to measure the effectiveness of their marketing efforts and determine the success of their customer engagement strategies. A positive customer experience is crucial for conversions. A seamless website customer journey, personalized content, and user-friendly interface enhance the likelihood of conversions. Usability is also essential for creating a positive user experience, driving engagement and conversions, and achieving business objectives. It contributes to user satisfaction, loyalty, and ultimately, the success of a website or digital product.

Customer understanding and customer-centricity are essential for building successful websites. Understanding your customer before website development allows you to tailor the user experience, meet customer expectations, create relevant content, target marketing efforts effectively, and differentiate your website from competitors. It helps you build a customer-centric website that engages, satisfies, and converts your target audience. In another hand, websites provide valuable insights into customer behaviour, helping businesses understand needs and preferences to optimize the customer journey.

Customer segmentation divides the target audience based on characteristics, while buyer personas create detailed profiles of ideal customers within each segment. Both aid in tailoring marketing efforts and increasing conversion rates. Customer segmentation and buyer personas can greatly influence website development by guiding decision-making processes and ensuring that the website caters to the specific needs and preferences of target customers. They enable targeted content creation, informed user experience design, personalized experiences, the inclusion of desired features, and ongoing optimization efforts. By leveraging these insights, websites can |

	be tailored to meet the specific needs and expectations of different customer segments, leading to improved engagement and conversion rates.

Course content, in-class activities & homework assignments	**CONTENT**
	Main topics are the role of websites in a customer journey, conversions and the customer experience, insights in business's customers, customer segmentations and buyer personas.
	
	ACTIVITIES
	In-class activity:
	What are the conversions on the website? You can choose the example website from your own country. Divide students into small groups and give approximately 10 minutes for task completion.
	
	In-class assignments / homeworks:
	Both assignments can be done either in class or as a homework.
	
	(Homework) Assignment 2: Continue with assignment from lecture 1 (own website) Student's task is to evaluate the powerpoint of their website from the next viewpoints:
	- Are the objectives of the site clear?
	- Are the conversions clear?
	- Which element contributing to the usability of a website are used? (see sheet 16)
	- Do you still like the site?
	
	(Homework) Assignment 3: Continue with assignment from lecture 1 (own website): Student's task is to continue with previous assignment by defining the most important customer segments and designin at least two buyer personas.
	
	TIME ESTIMATE
	In-class
	    − 180 min for homework review
	    − 60 min for lectures and giving out homework
	Homework
	    − 6 hours for team work

Assigned readings	Teacher's material is the slideset in the course material. Supportive material: What is a conversion: https://youtu.be/Ge1W608-IJM Buyer personas: https://youtu.be/9aPAPANeMKg https://youtu.be/4Wd1g5P1PuU Eye tracking: https://youtu.be/lo_a2cfBUGc
Instructor preparation involved	Divide this topic into as many lectures as you want. Divide the class into groups of 4-5 students and prepare the assignment for the teams.

COURSE CONTENT TO BE DELIVERED IN YOUR UNIT

Topic	Attracting visitors to your website (Lecture #3)
Bridge-In	Open explaining the following topics: In today's digital landscape, businesses strive to maximize their online visibility and reach. Search engine optimization (SEO) is a key strategy used to achieve higher rankings in search engine results pages. By understanding the importance of SEO and implementing effective techniques, businesses can increase their organic website traffic, improve their online presence, and ultimately boost their bottom line. SEO is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, search engines are the primary way people discover information online. By optimizing a website for search engines, businesses can increase their chances of being found by potential customers. Secondly, higher search engine rankings translate to greater visibility, credibility, and trustworthiness. Users tend to trust websites that appear on the first page of search results. Lastly, SEO helps drive targeted organic traffic, resulting in more qualified leads, higher conversion rates, and ultimately, business growth. An attractive website is visually appealing, user-friendly, and engages visitors effectively. It incorporates elements such as intuitive navigation, compelling design, and well-organized content. An attractive website not only captivates users but also enhances their overall experience, increasing the likelihood of conversions and fostering a positive brand image. Content is the heart of any website. It provides valuable information, engages visitors, and communicates a brand's message. Quality content helps build trust, establish expertise, and differentiate a business from competitors. It also plays a significant role in SEO, as search engines prioritize websites that offer valuable and relevant content to users. Content, in the form of text, images, videos, and other media, attracts visitors, keeps them engaged, and encourages them to take desired actions. Websites can incorporate various types of content to cater to different user preferences and objectives. This includes informative articles, blog posts, product descriptions, customer testimonials, videos, infographics, case studies, and more. Each type of content serves a specific purpose, such as educating users, showcasing products or services, or providing social proof. Diversifying content types helps engage a broader audience and enhances the overall user experience. When writing SEO content, several rules should be followed. First and foremost, focus on high-quality, valuable content that meets the needs and interests of the target audience. Incorporate relevant keywords naturally throughout the content to improve visibility in search engine rankings. Create engaging and readable content that flows well and is easy to understand. Pay attention to proper formatting, meta tags, and

	headlines to enhance SEO. Lastly, regularly update and optimize content to stay relevant and maintain search engine visibility.
Course content, in-class activities & homework assignments	**CONTENT** Why SEO? What is SEO? Why SEO is important? Attractive website Why do we need content to the website? Different types of content in a website Basic rules for writing SEO content **ACTIVITIES** In-class activity about website content & homework assignment (Assignment 4). **In-class activity: Website content:** Students will form groups of 4-5 people. Discuss in groups: - What kind of content do you consume? - Why do you think you find it interesting? - Try to think the business goals behind the content? What is the content aiming you to do as a customer? - How the content is related to the firm's website? Students will provide a .ppt presentation about the insights. Each group will present their own, and other groups can comment. **Homework Assignment 4:** 1. Content. What kind of content do you want to use on your website? - Make a list different content types you want to add to your website (see sheets 22-24) - Add some of the different content types you selected in your website prototype 2. SEO - Write a title and description for your website - Execute a SEO keyword analysis and make a list of Keywords which are relevant for your website - Add the keyword list on an appendix sheet at the end of your website powerpoint.
Assigned readings	Teacher's material is the slideset in the course material.
Instructor preparation involved	Divide the class into groups of 4-5 students. Give feedback on the in-class activity.

COURSE CONTENT TO BE DELIVERED IN YOUR UNIT

Topic	Keeping the attention of your audience (Lecture #4)
Bridge-In	Open explaining the following topics: Monitoring is essential for businesses to track and assess the performance of their websites and digital strategies. By closely monitoring various metrics and data, businesses can gain valuable insights into user behavior, measure the effectiveness of their efforts, identify areas for improvement, and make data-driven decisions to optimize their online presence. Web analytics provides businesses with detailed data and metrics about their website's performance, user interactions, and conversions. It helps answer important questions, such as how users find the website, what pages they visit, how long they stay, and what actions they take. Web analytics enables businesses to understand user behaviour, identify trends, and optimize their website and marketing strategies for better results. User surveys provide direct feedback from website visitors, allowing businesses to understand their needs, preferences, and pain points. Surveys can uncover valuable insights that may not be captured through analytics alone. By collecting user feedback, businesses can improve their website's user experience, tailor their offerings, and address any issues or concerns that users may have. Monitoring website user experience (UX) involves assessing how users interact with a website and evaluating their satisfaction levels. By tracking metrics such as bounce rates, page load times, and conversion rates, businesses can identify usability issues, optimize navigation, improve page performance, and enhance the overall user experience. Monitoring website UX helps businesses retain visitors, increase engagement, and drive conversions. Creating compelling and relevant content is essential for engaging website visitors and driving conversions. High-quality content provides value to users, establishes credibility, and helps in building trust. By understanding their target audience and their needs, businesses can create content that resonates, educates, and inspires action. Content should be well-written, optimized for search engines, and tailored to the target audience's preferences and interests. Google Analytics 4 is the latest version of Google's web analytics platform. It offers enhanced features and insights compared to its predecessor. With a focus on cross-platform tracking, Google Analytics 4 allows businesses to gather data from multiple touchpoints, such as websites, mobile apps, and offline interactions. It provides advanced insights into user behaviour, customer journeys, and conversion paths, enabling businesses to gain a deeper understanding of their audience and make data-informed decisions to improve their digital strategies.

Course content, in-class activities & homework assignments	**CONTENT** Why monitoring Why do we need web analytics? Why do we need user surveys Monitoring website UX Creating content to a website Briefly about Google Analytics 4 **ACTIVITIES** In-class activations - Usability testing - Card sorting **In-class assignment: Usability testing:** 1. Continue with assignment from lecture 1 (Assignment 1) (alternative: the teacher selects websites) 2. Each group: - defines the most important tasks of their website - Creates a list of short assignments related to these tasks. 3. Put two groups together. Students from one group perform the top tasks of the other group and than the groups switch. The group that has developed the tasks: - Observe and make notes during the test. - Evaluates at the end: How easy did it go, what did the test group run into? **In-class activity: Cardsorting:** - Create cards for every page of the website, or topic of your website - Ask two other groups to execute a cardsort session with the stack of cards, by organizing the cards into groups that they think make sense. - If necessary, the participants may also change the name of the cards. The goal is that by grouping the cards, a navigation structure / layout comes out that they find useful. - The participants can work individually or in pairs. **Homework Assignment 5:** 1. Usability survey summary Process the results of your usability test. Try to answer the following questions: - How easy is it for the visitor to achieve the goals? - What is the customer experience like? - Is the visit to the website positive? Work out a list of improvement for the website based on the usability test. 2. Card sort

	- Process the results of your cardsort session. - Work out a new navigation for your website.
Assigned readings	Teacher's material is the slideset in the course material.
Instructor preparation involved	Card sorting materials (post-its etc.) Divide the class into groups of max. 4-5 students and prepare the assignments for the teams.

Disclaimer

The DEMS material aims to enhance digital marketing skills in higher education, comprehending the essential needs in organizations. You have access to extensive slide sets with in-class activities and assignments, as well as detailed user instructions for teacher.

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