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EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN A MARKETING TRAVEL STUDY COURSE

Abstract:

This presentation describes an undergraduate International Marketing travel study course and site visit at La Salle University in Philadelphia, PA, USA. In 2012, a collaboration began with La Salle University and Beaufort 8, an advertising agency in Stuttgart, Germany. We have worked together for seven years and during that time, we have improved the learning experience for the students by making the site visit more comprehensive. Now, two of the site visits for the trip are coordinated: in one day we visit the advertising agency in Stuttgart and we visit one of their client's marketing offices and their manufacturing facility.

In March 2018 we met Beaufort 8's client Blanco, a luxury sink brand near Stuttgart, Germany. In the morning, students met the client marketing team and visited the nearby factory. The afternoon creative session at the agency was like previous years; the students worked on creating original advertising content for Blanco. This year, the client marketing team attended the student's presentations of their work at the agency, so the feedback of their ideas came from two perspectives: the creative team at the ad agency and the client.

The literature supports experiential learning like this because the site visit creates an authentic experience which is a more effective way to learn (Montrose, 2002). Hands on learning, project-based learning, and engagement in a direct experience also improves learning (Carlson, Wurdinger, 2009)

Students love this activity and learn about both the advertising business and international marketing. Experiential learning benefits students studying abroad or doing a travel study course. Presenting students with a real brand problem integrated with a company visit to an international office increases knowledge and comprehension. The assigned projects integrated with the company visit increases learning about impact of culture on marketing decisions. The extension of the site visit to include coordinated visits to an ad agency and their client also allows us to assign a more comprehensive project at the site visit because the longer the site visit, the larger the project. (Duke, 2000)

An added benefit to creating a more immersive experience for marketing students like the one described in this presentation is that the immersion into the client's brand simulates the steps in the creative process: immersion, digestion, incubation, illumination, verification. Students learn about the creative process in their marketing courses and this experience applies the concept to a real brand and a real advertising agency.

Keywords:

Marketing, Advertising, International culture, experiential learning

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