

Social Media Marketing and Blog Usage in Business Schools: An Exploratory Study

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Abstract : The following study of a preliminary character, presents a first step of multifaceted study on the usage of social media in HEIs. It examines a significance, potential, and managerial implications of social media marketing and blogs usage in HEIs - namely in the sphere of business schools. Social media - particularly: blogging and virtual platforms such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram have been covered at length in publications of both theoretical and practical nature as of late. Still, the amount of information related to the framework of application of social media in HEIs is rather limited. A pre-designed observation matrix has been used to collect primary data found at websites of different HEIs and to include blog observations. Additionally, a pilot study based on on-line questionnaires with marketing officers of HEI schools has been conducted. The main aim of the study was to identify and elaborate on matters like the scope of social media usage (and blogs in particular) in practice, recognition of the functions fulfilled by social media and blogs, or the anticipated potential of social media for HEIs. The study reveals that the majority of business schools highly ranked in Financial Times rankings use social media and interactive functionalities of their web sites, however, mostly for promotional reasons, and they are targeted at new students. The usage of blogs, though, is not so common and in most cases, blogs are independent platforms, not managed but supported by organizations. Managers and specialists point to lack of resources, insufficient users' engagement and lack of strategic approach to social media as the main reasons of not advancing in the usage of blogs and social media platforms.

Keywords : blogs, social media marketing, higher education institutions, business schools, value co-creation

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