

UCT runs digital age marketing course

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The UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB) runs a course this month to guide South African businesses on how to use the latest cutting-edge Internet and mobile marketing techniques.



According to course director, Dave Duarte, the goal of the course is to bust the intimidating jargon that many businesses perceive as the realm of “techies”, and give companies clear insight on what is available to them and how to make the most of digital marketing opportunities.

“This is the first formal course on this topic offered by a South African business school and it has been specifically structured and contextualised for any businessperson to grasp and implement. It will cover the full range of avenues for engaging a dynamic, global market online with a strategic look at new trends and technologies such as Mxit, blogs and online social-networks,” he said.

The course, called Nomadic Marketing, will allow businesses to gain certainty about the fundamentals of the “new web” and become web fluent, will offer an understanding of the size, shape and trajectory of South African internet and mobile usership, and empower companies to use social media to facilitate participation and idea-sharing through their organisation and market.

Duarte said the course is targeted at non-technical, early-adopter visionaries and market leaders – whether they be Corporates, SMMEs or individuals – particularly those who are marketing executives, marketing managers, brand managers, entrepreneurs, and people whose business involves many dispersed stakeholders.

“The power of the media is being distributed from the few to the many through user-generated content on sites like YouTube. This new, conversational online marketplace is called ‘Web 2.0’, and it is significantly affecting the business world.

“It is therefore in every businesses best interest to get in touch with this trend and understand the way in which digital citizens work and use information in the dynamic global market online,” explained Duarte.

Insight on the course from South Africa’s foremost proponents and experts in the field will be combined with real-world experience on how South African companies have use the web to increase awareness and engagement with their brands.

One of the guest lecturers on the course is Graham Knox, co-owner of Stormhoek Wines, who has used the digital revolution to boost his brand and sales dramatically.

Duarte explained that launching a new wine label in a crowded marketplace is a very difficult task, but Stormhoek has made a name for itself as one of the first consumer brands to leverage social media for its launch and to differentiate itself in a packed marketplace.

“Stormhoek wanted to connect the brand with conversation, social interaction and good company, and Knox had the innovative idea of working with bloggers as a way of creating conversation around this idea.

“Stormhoek introduced a sampling programme for UK bloggers in 2005, making free bottles of their wine available to bloggers. 100 bloggers signed up for the initial programme and each received a personalised bottle with their blog address on the label.

“The programme was a huge success and the business is currently running a similar initiative in the US market. Stormhoek has become the wine of the blogging world and the hi-tech crowd, and in terms of the numbers the results have been sensational - shipments of Stormhoek to UK wine shops doubled, from 50 000 cases in 2005 to 350 000 cases projected to sell in 2007. The business was also recognised for their innovative approach to wine marketing with the prestigious Drinks Business Magazine Award for Best Consumer Campaign, beating out companies with huge traditional adspend such as Cobra Beer. The programme also made Advertising Age's Top 50 global marketing campaigns for 2006 along with major brands like Nike, Toyota, Microsoft X-Box, Sony and Apple.”

Dave Duarte is a director of Cerebra Communications, a leading Social-Media consultancy. Other guest lecturers on the programme include Vinny Lingham, Chief Strategy Officer of Incubeta and Yahoo Advisory Board Member; Rudolph Muller, a Lecturer in the Department of Business Information Technology at the University of Johannesburg and founder of MyADSL; Heather Ford, Executive Director of iCommons; Mike Stopforth, MD of Cerebra and Founder of Afrigator; and Emma Kaye, a Gaming and Mobile Marketing expert.

The course runs from 31 October – 02 November and is offered through the UCT GSB Executive Education unit which has a global top ten rating in 2005 and 2006 from the Economist Intelligence Unit.

For details contact Junita Abrahams (021) 406 1323 or email abrahams@gsb.uct.ac.za. You can also visit www.gsb.uct.ac.za/nomadic.

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