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EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE REVIEW

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As the market for tourism and hospitality courses becomes saturated, many universities are diversifying and coming up with innovative ideas for new courses. One such course is "Entertainment Management" at Leeds Metropolitan University. This area is novel in the United Kingdom although it has featured in the United States for the past decade. The following articles offer an insight into curriculum development in "virgin territory" and how the new course team coped with the lack of existing teaching resources; part of their solution was to produce their own resources. Included is an introduction to Entertainment Planet - the course blog - and the ICrEAM (Issues in Contemporary Entertainment and Arts Management) database. This is followed by a description and review, by a student, of how Facebook and Twitter were used on the Entertainment Management degree course. Finally, a review of the book *The Entertainment Industry: An Introduction*. It is hoped that these articles will encourage discussion and debate on the new subject area of entertainment management.

Stephanie Jameson, Educational Resources Review Editor

Social Media Resources in Entertainment Management

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Stuart Moss is a Senior Lecturer, Teacher Fellow and Course Leader for the BA (Hons) Entertainment Management at Leeds Metropolitan University. His publications include the textbooks "Employability Skills" and "The Entertainment Industry: An Introduction". His research interests include the growing integration of social media into our everyday lives, the entertainment industry and its transformation through technological advancements, and all aspects of nightclub promotion and management.

Background

The BA (Hons) Entertainment Management was conceived and developed at Leeds Metropolitan University in 2005, with its first cohort of students recruited for the 2006/07 academic year. The four years since have been a steep learning curve for the staff involved in the course in terms of gathering, developing and cataloguing a broad range of learning materials that cover the extensive entertainment industry. As a relatively contemporary academic discipline, dedicated entertainment management resources are limited, particularly from a European perspective. In North America, entertainment management has been taught in universities for almost a decade, although it was the experience of the Leeds Met team that many of the North American courses concentrated on a specific area of the vast entertainment industry; usually film, broadcast media and music; and as such the body of entertainment management literature that had been developed up to this time largely concentrated on these areas.

In these early days, we also encountered a stereotypical pre-conception that entertainment had to be something that made people happy. This was largely due to the term light

entertainment and also because broadcast media organisations typically call the department which produces “light” (song, drama and performance) output as their entertainment department, when in fact all of their output is designed to enthrall and captivate audiences. This also reflected the relative “newness” of entertainment management as an academic discipline.

At Leeds Met, we took a much more holistic view of the entertainment industry, as being something vastly greater than a provider of only live and media based music and film products, that were intended to make the audience happy. US economist Harold Vogel, shared this view and produced a textbook, *Entertainment Industry Economics*, in which he considered the entertainment industry as being a much vaster entity, which had shared commonality with other industries, particularly the tourism, events and hospitality industries. The one common denominator being that the entertainment industry provided a core of products that were concerned with attracting and captivating audiences through sensory stimulation, which would have an emotional impact on those audiences. Emotions derived from the consumption of entertainment products need not be positive ones. For example, it is accepted that a big-screen movie is entertainment but not all big-screen movies make the audience happy. Although many, such as comedies and dramas, make the audience happy, horror movies are designed to frighten the audience and factual movies may leave the audience feeling sad or remorseful.

Whatever the emotional output, something that can captivate an audience and affect them emotionally through sensory stimulation *is* entertainment. Our challenge was to compile and add to a body of literature that demonstrated this. So, we initially started with our course blog which we named Entertainment Planet.

Entertainment Planet

Initially the Internet was deemed to be the most accessible way to disseminate information that we ourselves had produced and in 2006 the course blog, Entertainment Planet (EP, www.entertainmentplanet.eu), was established. EP features reflections on the global entertainment industry, encompassing parts of the cultural industries, creative industries, tourism industry and events industry. The blog includes news and reviews, as well as contemporary issues that may have an influence on entertainment entities. The blog contains a wide variety of articles, including very academic essay type articles; slightly more journalistic reviews and opinion pieces; and reflections on course activities, such as industrial visits to entertainment industry organisations.

The content of EP is updated to reflect particular module content on the BA (Hons) Entertainment Management. For example, during Autumn 2010, students on the course studied the “Managing Nightclub Entertainment” module, therefore a range of articles relating to nightclubs and staging nightclub events were produced for the blog, and were uploaded throughout the semester. “Drip-feeding” articles in this way gives the students time to digest them properly, and does not “over-face” them.

All articles are fully referenced and the module lectures are often based on the articles so the research necessary for them is no more than the staff involved would need to do for traditional lecturers. Lecture slides are published within the University’s virtual learning environment and blog articles are referred to from lectures. This combination of visual, aural and written information is particularly helpful to engage students with a variety of learning styles, and we find that EP is well used both within and outside of Leeds Met. In a typical month the blog can receive in excess of 1,000 visits, with many visitors returning to view other articles. The visitor map for October 2010 is highlighted below.

The articles within EP have a wide readership from academic institutions globally, and the blog itself has helped us to establish an identity as a leading provider in entertainment management education. It has also led to a number of conference invitations for me, as Course Leader, and as a result of a conference presentation on the subject of entrepreneurship and video assessment I was invited by publisher CAB International to write a text-book about the entertainment industry. To this end, *The Entertainment Industry: An*

Introduction, contributed to by a range of academics and edited by me, was published by CAB International in October 2009 (see review page 149).



Location of visitors to the Entertainment Planet blog – October 2010

Issues in Contemporary Entertainment & Arts Management (ICrEAM)

A textbook is, of course, only as up-to-date as when it was written, and in the fast paced entertainment industry things can and do change very quickly. The industry itself is a phenomenon of the 20th century and has seen continual growth since the 1950s. With growth comes competition, innovation, legislation and inexorably change. The rise of the commercial Internet is less than two decades old, but the impact that this has had on all sectors of the entertainment industry has been unparalleled. Illegal downloads, virtual museums, virtual tours, online auctions and online stores are largely a 21st century phenomenon. With change that affects the industry occurring so regularly, we have begun compiling a contemporary issues database, called Issues in Contemporary Entertainment and Arts Management (ICrEAM, www.icream.eu).

ICrEAM has been created for students, academics, researchers and those working in the field of entertainment/arts management; or a related discipline including leisure, events, tourism, cultural studies, creative industries and media studies. It is designed to provide up-to-date links to (mostly) contemporary news articles in the various sectors of the entertainment industry identified in Moss (2009). Articles are added and displayed within ICrEAM in reverse chronological order, with the most recent first.

ICrEAM will be a continually growing resource, where entertainment and arts management related articles will be summarised and linked to according to which sector(s) of the entertainment industry they most relate to. Articles are discussed in class during lectures and their inclusion is broadcast via a dedicated ICrEAM Facebook page, which also generates updates on the course Twitter account. The Facebook page and Twitter accounts are followed by students on the course and any interested others. ICrEAM can be searched either by looking through the industry sectors displayed to the left of every page or by using a search box.

We are always looking to work with new academic partners in the fields of entertainment and arts management globally. ICrEAM has been created using Google Sites, which is a collaborative platform that allows multiple users to edit it, and our intention is to create a global network of contributors to help build and maintain ICrEAM so that it becomes a well used and up-to-date resource.

Our experience so far has been that Web 2.0 and social media technologies have allowed us to develop and share academic resources in a relatively expedient manner. This has benefited not only our students but also our reputation, as the work we have produced ourselves and collated from others has been accessed, used and shared globally by both the academic and non-academic communities alike.

Reference

Vogel, H. L. (2007). *Entertainment industry economics: A guide for financial analysis* (7th ed.). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Using Social Media on the BA (Hons) Entertainment Management Degree

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Prior to studying Entertainment Management at Leeds Metropolitan University, Lisa worked within the music industry as a manager and professional performer for the last 12 years. In 2005, she started her own corporate entertainment business where she was responsible for organising live entertainment for corporate events and award ceremonies across the UK. Lisa graduated with a first class honours degree in 2010 and is currently lecturing on the BA (Hons) degree in Entertainment Management.

During my time on the BA (Hons) Entertainment Management at Leeds Metropolitan University, we were encouraged to engage with social media in order to support our studies. This review describes how Facebook and Twitter were used on the course as information resources and support tools.

Facebook

Facebook became an invaluable online resource that was used throughout the duration of my degree. Facebook not only allowed me to engage with other students in a social manner, which played an important role in initially getting to know my fellow students, but it also helped with my academic work. Using the private messaging option, I was able to regularly discuss module assignments with other students. We would offer general support and advice to one another, as well as arrange meetings as required for group assessments. This facility was particularly useful for group work, as messages could be sent to multiple recipients, with replies also reaching multiple recipients, generating collaborative discussion that had a "trail".

The course itself had several private (approved members only) groups that were created for staff and students to share information in an online environment, which students did actually use for idea sharing, discussion and collaboration (unlike the "official" virtual learning environment). There was a dedicated Facebook group for the whole course, and then individual groups for each year group. Some modules that relied heavily on group work also had dedicated Facebook groups, where discussion could take place that would not "cloud" the groups of those not involved in such modules. A specific example of this is for the Entertainment Consultancy Project carried out in the final year. In this module, students in groups of five carried out actual consultancy work for an industry client. Each project had its own private Facebook group that was only visible to those involved in the project.

The course tutors used the Facebook groups for a number of purposes, some of which are outlined below:

- informing students about work placement opportunities that had arisen (all students were required to undertake placements at each level)
- sharing up to date news and contemporary issues, via links to online news content and blog articles
- generating discussions based on tasks we had been set to do via the discussion forums

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