



Wimba Classroom: Value Beyond Instruction

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Outline

- **Presenter Bio**
- **Post-Katrina Program Challenges**
- **Wimba Classroom (WC): Value Beyond Instruction**
- **Best Practice Tips**
- **Q&A**



Outcomes

At the end of this presentation, participants will discover:

- The value of incorporating marketing into their instructional philosophy
- The value of Wimba Classroom as an engaging and interactive instructional tool
- The value of Wimba Classroom as a recruitment, marketing, and public relations tool for their institution
- The value of Wimba Classroom experiences to the career placement and success of their students
- The value of Wimba Classroom to teaching and learning success (*i*PASS[®] instructional model)



Presenter Bio

- Instructor of Tourism Management, Southern Miss since Fall 2006
- B.S. Hotel & Restaurant Administration, M.B.A, M.S. in Instructional Technology
- Marketing professional background
- Developed the first online course for casino management and tourism
- Selected to participate in the University's Wimba Classroom and podcasting pilot projects



Post-Katrina Program Challenges



“At the beginning of the course I really thought that this would just be a boring textbook class with standardized test. I was so glad that that wasn’t the case.”

“I thought that this would be just like any other online courses when I signed up for it (just reading the book and taking quizzes). But I was very mistaken.”



Post-Katrina Program Challenges

CHALLENGE #1: STUDENT NEEDS

- Interesting course
 - Bad experience with online courses
 - Learner isolation
 - Faceless interaction
- Convenience (working part-time or full-time)
- Accessibility (24/7; no commute)



= BORING!



Post-Katrina Program Challenges



CHALLENGE#2: ADMINISTRATIVE/FACULTY NEEDS

- Increase student enrollment
 - *Lost students due to Katrina*
- Student retention
- Competition
- Industry support
- Lack of good text

= PRESSURE!



Post-Katrina Program Challenges

- Larry Gregory, Executive Director, Mississippi Gaming Commission

Gregory said he usually sees casino executives from other states come before the Gaming Commission and said he wants that to change. He believes the specialized training students receive at USM allows them rapid advancement.

Sun Herald, October 26, 2007

Post-Katrina Program Challenges



CHALLENGE #3: INDUSTRY NEEDS

- Mississippi institution, i.e., Southern Miss to establish leadership in casino management education (program progress and recognition)
- Mississippians in executive casino management positions
- Technologically-prepared students

**= MORE
PRESSURE!**

WC: Value Beyond Instruction

ADOPT MARKETING INTO INSTRUCTIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Develop a fully online course in casino resort operations management that:

- Is engaging, convenient & offers 24/7 accessibility to students.
- Will increase student enrollment.
- Will temporarily resolve faculty position vacancies.
- Can compete against competitor's gaming courses.
- Demonstrates program success to industry leaders.



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A VALUE-ADDED INSTRUCTIONAL TOOL (*engaging & interactive*)

- Wimba Classroom as a forum for industry leaders to share their knowledge and address students' learning needs.

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INSTRUCTIONAL ADDED-VALUES

- Recognize “Who’s Who” in the industry
- Acquire up-to-date information
- Interact with industry leaders
- Develop technology skills (how to set-up & use a webcam, how to download videos, etc.)
- Learn technology currently used in the industry
- Gain up-to-date knowledge of industry trends, position openings, etc.
- Generate industry leaders “buy-in” and hands-on involvement in our students’ learning success (Industry Professionals’ Assistance in Students’ Success (*iPASS*) model)

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INDUSTRY GAMING ELITES

Casino Resort Management Course

- **Larry Gregory, Executive Director, Mississippi Gaming Commission**
- **Brad Rhines, VP of Marketing & Player Development, IP Casino-Resort-Spa, Biloxi, MS**
- **Anne Mockler, Director of Surveillance, Beau Rivage Casino Resort, Biloxi, MS.**
- **Michael Cray, Director of Casino Operations, Isle of Capri, Biloxi, MS.**
- **Diana Goodsell, Marketing Product Manager, IGT Advantage, Las Vegas**
- **Kathi Meci, former VP of Casino Operations, Wynn Macau**

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INDUSTRY TOURISM ELITES

Dimensions of Tourism Course

- **Craig Ray, Director of Tourism, Mississippi Development Authority**
- **Webster Franklin, President & CEO, Tunica Convention & Visitors Bureau (MS. Tourism Hall of Fame, 2004)**
- **Rick Taylor, Executive Director, Hattiesburg Convention & Visitors Bureau (MS. Tourism Hall of Fame, 2006)**
- **Ivo Nekvapil, Chairman, MIHR Corp., Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia/Vice President of Malaysian Association of Hotels**



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STUDENT FEEDBACK

Students LOVE Wimba Classroom!

“The most beneficial part of this class in my opinion was the Live Classrooms. Not only did I learn from local industry leaders but I also learned how a webcam works (almost😊)!”



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STUDENT FEEDBACK

Students LOVE Live Classroom!

“The most beneficial aspect of the course to me was the Live Classroom because it not only allowed us to hear from a very successful person in the field but it also allowed us to interact with that person.”

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A RECRUITMENT, MARKETING, & PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOL FOR THE INSTITUTION

- Virtual Technology such as Wimba Classroom is SEXY!
- Attracts media attention
- Generates free publicity
- Creates community awareness
- Enhances town & gown relationships



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RECRUITMENT, MARKETING & PR VALUES

- Word-of-mouth publicity > Increased enrollment
 - Enrollment size: twice that of traditional classroom courses
 - Class is offered every semester
- Attract non-majors
- Media coverage





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SAMPLE MEDIA COVERAGE



Brad Rhines, vice president of marketing and player development at IP Casino, was a guest speaker for USM's Casino Resort Operations Management course. Using virtual classroom technology, Rhines was able to lecture to students at their homes via computer.

**USM breaks ground with
virtual classroom technology**

Mississippi Gaming News, July 2007



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A CAREER PLACEMENT SUCCESS TOOL

- Creates networking opportunities for students with industry leaders
- Encourages relationship building with industry leaders
- Results in Post-Wimba Classroom “bonding”
- Builds industry leaders’ vested interest in both the students’ and program’s success

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VALUES FROM STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

“The Live Classrooms also gave us a chance to speak and converse with the industry leaders that on a normal day we would probably never get a chance to hold a conversation with.”

“What I found most beneficial were the contacts I made, and the people I now know are supportive of the program here at USM.”

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VALUES FROM AN INDUSTRY LEADER'S PERSPECTIVE

Anne Mockler, Director of Surveillance, Beau Rivage Casino Resort,
Biloxi, Mississippi (MGM Mirage property)

- Recruitment opportunities
- Outreach opportunities
- Exposure to future leaders
- Instant Feedback
- Prepares students for technology in industry

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A TEACHING & LEARNING SUCCESS TOOL

- **iPASS[®]** instructional model
 - Industry Professionals' Assistance in Students' Success

Stage 1

- Students view the *Partnering with Professionals* video series (introduced in Fall 2007) on a selected topic prior to the Wimba Classroom session.

Stage 2

- The **Wimba Classroom** features the professional partner from the video series. Students attend the Wimba Classroom session (introduced in Summer 2008), where they enjoy a 30-minute live presentation and an-hour interactive Q&A session with the *Partnering with Professionals* member.

Stage 3

- Upon completion of the Wimba Classroom session, students use the **Wimba Voice Recorder** (introduced in Spring 2008) to submit post-discussion questions and the *Partnering with Professionals* member uses the Voice Recorder to record his/her response.



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A TEACHING & LEARNING SUCCESS TOOL

- High scores on student course evaluations
- Positive customer satisfaction feedback from students



Summer 2007 – TM 378 Course Evaluations (CASINO RESORT MGMT)

15.	Overall rating of the course.				
	Highest	9	75.0%		
	High	3	25.0%		
	Neutral	0	0.0%	Mean :	4.75
	Low	0	0.0%	Median:	5.00
	Lowest	0	0.0%		
	Not Applicable	0	0.0%		
16.	Estimate of how much you learned in the course.				
	Highest	9	75.0%		
	High	3	25.0%		
	Neutral	0	0.0%	Mean :	4.75
	Low	0	0.0%	Median:	5.00
	Lowest	0	0.0%		
	Not Applicable	0	0.0%		
17.	Effectiveness of the instructor in stimulating your interest in the subject.				
	Highest	9	75.0%		
	High	3	25.0%		
	Neutral	0	0.0%	Mean :	4.75
	Low	0	0.0%	Median:	5.00
	Lowest	0	0.0%		
	Not Applicable	0	0.0%		
18.	Effectiveness of this course in challenging you intellectually.				
	Highest	9	75.0%		
	High	2	16.7%		
	Neutral	1	8.3%	Mean :	4.67
	Low	0	0.0%	Median:	5.00
	Lowest	0	0.0%		
	Not Applicable	0	0.0%		



Fall 2007 – TM 340 Course Evaluations (DIMENSIONS OF TOURISM)

15.	Overall rating of the course.				
	Highest	12	75.0%		
	High	3	18.8%		
	Neutral	1	6.3%	Mean :	4.69
	Low	0	0.0%	Median:	5.00
	Lowest	0	0.0%		
	Not Applicable	0	0.0%		
16.	Estimate of how much you learned in the course.				
	Highest	12	75.0%		
	High	4	25.0%		
	Neutral	0	0.0%	Mean :	4.75
	Low	0	0.0%	Median:	5.00
	Lowest	0	0.0%		
	Not Applicable	0	0.0%		
17.	Effectiveness of the instructor in stimulating your interest in the subject.				
	Highest	12	75.0%		
	High	4	25.0%		
	Neutral	0	0.0%	Mean :	4.75
	Low	0	0.0%	Median:	5.00
	Lowest	0	0.0%		
	Not Applicable	0	0.0%		
18.	Effectiveness of this course in challenging you intellectually.				
	Highest	11	68.8%		
	High	4	25.0%		
	Neutral	1	6.3%	Mean :	4.63
	Low	0	0.0%	Median:	5.00
	Lowest	0	0.0%		
	Not Applicable	0	0.0%		



Value Beyond Instruction

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

“I was very impressed with the learning experience in this course. I had expected an impersonal list of readings and work, but the course was very interactive and connected me to not only my classmates and the instructor, but also to important members of the industry. My expectations were far exceeded by this course. It was the best online course I have ever taken.”



Value Beyond Instruction

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

“In this course I found the Live Classroom the most beneficial. My reason for that is because we were actually able to get a one-on-one or at least face-to-computer conversation with some of the top personnel in the casino and gaming industry. With all that, we actually were able to get a feel of what they do, how they do it and actually get a response back to many of our questions that we wanted to ask of them.”



Best Practice Tips

- Use your faculty development resources
- Check and test compatibilities: hardware & software; hardwire vs. wireless
- Conduct trial runs prior to actual session: students and guest presenters
- Explain classroom tools & protocol to students & presenters
- Post Wimba Helpline phone & Web access
- Beware of corporate firewalls
- Use visuals to aid visual learners
- Provide learning alternatives to those unable to attend sessions: archives and summary
- Give back to guest presenters: display corporate logos in branding window
- Don't overuse synchronous tools! Flexibility is key to online success



Q & A

- Questions?
- Contact:
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- Presentation URL:
http://ocean.otr.usm.edu/~w304223/Wimba_Connect_051608.pdf