

USE OF GAMIFICATION IN MARKETING

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ABSTRACT: *In this paper we deal with the application of gamification in the field of Internet marketing. We suggest the use of gamification to increase website traffic, increase the time spent on the website, and to increase the customer satisfaction with our product.*

KEYWORDS: Gamification, Marketing, Social Networking, Game Based Marketing

INTRODUCTION

We all live in world of digital economy and change. Each new day can bring us something new, something different and exciting, in a world ruled by our smart phones, computers, and other networked devices. No matter how much someone liked it, the fear of new must be overcome and accept the changes and try to draw from them as much as possible.

Internet is defined as a network of indefinitely many computers and it's a network which can exchange massive amounts of informations. The whole world is involved, and everything we can ever hope for is just a click away. It has created a completely new global marketing environment under its wings, which knows no borders, or any kind of physical boundaries. An increasing number of people are spending and increasing amount of time on the internet, so it obtains an ever increasing place in which we make decisions in selling and buying. Most of the biggest business systems are significantly investing in their Internet performance (marketing) in order to get closer to their consumers, in order to present their product and to hear the opinions of their consumers.

Thanks to its capabilities, the Internet has become the most significant media for new marketing strategies, new forms of trade, and the best channel for improvements of customer relation strategies, and product validation. And gamification is a great tool to further boost everything that the Internet provides us.

Gamification

Gamification is a relatively new concept that is used in education, business, and even private life. The very term “gamification” had its first appearance in 2002 and was created by Nick Pelling, a British developer and designer of video games. Although it was created in 2002 the widespread use did not come until 2010, when the language showed the need to name a process that was taking place within society. This process was related to the installation of game based elements and techniques to content that are not games. One could say that social needs created new professions, innovations and trends, and that it is an unrelenting process which is characteristic for progress of society itself. It has become quite normal and common for people not just to have fun while playing games, but to have fun while learning, working or even

consuming products. The need to facilitate access to the business and implement elements from games which are seemingly incompatible with the business has led to the concept of gamification that we know today. Nevertheless, that did not stop some of the world's largest companies and brands from introducing a new concept in their operations that provides their audience more involved and engaged and fully open new relationships with them. Gamification is currently most visible in business and marketing. Since money makes the world go round, some of the world's largest companies have accepted this concept for higher income and better connections with potential audiences.

If we look just a few years back, it is unlikely that we could find elements of games in the business world. If we turned back the clock, the companies that could show a business model that included games and fun would be few. With the development of society new social perspectives and needs are being developed that are created through everyday life. Initially, gamification was visible in science and education through various simulations that were used to run different scenarios through the virtual environment. Development of the simulation method was followed by the development of computers. According to the portal INFORMS, a specialized portal for simulations, the first extensive and complex simulation was carried out under the project "Manhattan" during World War II. Its purpose was to simulate the process of nuclear explosions by using clear set of parameters and initial assumptions. This concept soon proved to be a satisfactory way of modelling real or hypothetical situation on a computer, through which by changing values of given variables one can predict the behaviour of a system. Business world soon recognized it as significant relief in planning and predicting changes in the business. Very soon other concepts of simulation develop in different production systems, service industries or for sales of various products. These simulations are called "business games". The goal of these simulations was to develop different aspects of business such as strategic thinking and various financial and marketing analysis. Virtual marketplace is just one example of the simulation which can be useful on several different levels. It is not just a game where we buy fictional shares and create fictional profits, but has an educational character and teaches players how the rights marketplace works.

According to Kevin Werbach, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, the three most important characteristics of each game, are studying it, taking different elements that makes it useful and educational and entertainment as a powerful tool for motivation. Games are powerful and useful tool for learning by default it's visible in a particular behaviour that is formed during playing and creating different reactions of the player. According to Werbach, the essence of gamification is to analyse this kind of behaviour and responses, more specifically, to find out what exactly causes it and then implement these elements into other applications with the intention that such desirable behaviour and emotions are also generated during other activities that are not a game.

Various assets are used in gamification that track success and provide information on progress such as badges, getting different resources or additional points. Today gamification can be a powerful tool that affects people's behaviour and increases their interest and efficiency in activities in business and areas not related to playing. In the business area it can be turned into competition, because it creates a feeling that people can contribute more, and the more they are involved in activities that greater likelihood is they will respond to the challenge with enthusiasm and greater efforts.

This competitive side and inclination to proving oneself is inherent in every human being. Although the rewards and means by which the success is monitored are unreal, virtual, it does not mean that the reward for effort, work and a dose of innovation cannot be seen in the real world. The fact that work is constantly monitored, recorded and visible at some level, can be the basis for real prizes and bonuses. When it happens we succeed at something, we feel useful and inspired. That feeling is priceless because it motivates us just to be better; we give more of ourselves to the task and create new strategies to be even better. This is the result of the fact that each of us loves to succeed and carry out the task in the best possible way. When that success is instantly visible, as visible it is in the process of gamification, the greater chances are to persist in what we do. It is the same with prizes that can be virtual or can be transferred to the actual level. Virtual prizes do not have such an effect as real ones, but provide a certain degree of satisfaction and motivation. If, however, such virtual rewards are transferred to the real level and start to have a particular meaning and value, the greater are chances that the task will be carried out even above the expected level.

Gamification of marketing

Marketing today has become one of the most important areas of business. According to Phillip Kotler, marketing is a social and managerial process by which, through creating, offering and exchanging products of value with others, individuals and groups obtain what they need or what they want. Primarily, marketing is focused on social needs, and accordingly, marketing experts are trying to find ways to satisfy those needs. Such needs are often influenced by factors such as culture, climate, personal views or lifestyle. But these needs result from us, so one can conclude that there is a need for information, learning and education for the purpose of personal growth. Besides education, marketing has been the first that recognized advantages brought by gaming and the process of gamification quickly became accepted in this business area. With the initiation and rapid development of social networks, this business concept has been accepted by global companies, which used the availability and cheapness of the new media to present their products and get close to their customers. In a study conducted by Forbes magazine in 2013 70% of companies of the two thousand largest public companies in the world, said that in the near future they will implement gamification concept in their business, for better profit and connections with targeted audience.

Marketing had to adjust to accelerated development of social networks and new media. According to Dorie Clark, the author of 'The End of the Expert: Why No One In Marketing Knows What They're Doing' "marketing experts had to adjust business concept to digital media and thus create a new branch of marketing that is in compliance with technological progress. Digital marketing has evolved because of need of different companies that wanted their products to get closer to the audience that was no longer dispersed as it was before the popularity of social networks. Mitigating circumstance was the fact that smart phones and watches, tablets and other gadgets have become massively available and widespread, so it was not hard to switch advertising and part of the business to new media and through them to spread a certain message. As people today spend a lot of time on social networks, marketers have realized that this is one of the easiest ways to achieve two -way communication with your audience. Except for the audience being numerous and located in one place, a great advantage of social networks and websites is that a large part of people spend daily many hours every day to create, publish and monitor content. They choose what they want or do not want to see in the presented contents and also choose channels through which they will be informed. The messages sent by such companies must be elaborated in detail in the communication plan and

adjusted to mass audience. According to Clark, special emphasis in digital marketing is placed on the user's interaction with the brand or company, and the increasing interest of the audience for specific products or services. Unlike marketing in the past, today it is not important how the product looks, but the story, efficiency and functionality of the product itself matters. The goal of any company is to create a network of satisfied customers who will use the products and give positive feedback about it. Nowadays it is not easy to deceive customers because before they buy they can find on the Internet all the necessary information and specifications. Additionally, a variety of feedback is coming from other users, so people who intend to buy a particular product can check the feedback from them, before they decide on the purchase.

Our take on gamification

We started with an idea, an idea to change the way we market our college to potential students. In this time when most of our targeted audience is spending a lot of time on their phones, using apps and social networks we are trying to combine the two in an interesting and fun way. Entertainment industries have realized that the consumers want to be more involved, so we see a shift even in it. People do not want to just sit back and watch something, they prefer to be a part in it. Our app will teach our potential students a bit about the school, a bit about the subjects that they will learn, and it will give some of them a chance to study at a discount.

The app itself will be gamified in a way where their “performance” in the online world will give them some advantages in the real world. They will get discounts on the scholarship, extra credits, and will broaden their knowledge in a fun and interesting way.

Gamification uses some elements of game design in a kind of a new way. We are implementing daily “quests”, ranking systems, quizzes in which users will be able to play versus others as well as versus a clock (beating your best time can sometimes be as challenging as beating someone else). The “quests” or tasks will be variable in difficulty, and will offer questions from different fields of science, as well as some facts about the school. Progress will earn users points, which will be used to purchase different kinds of improvements to their app. Daily quests can range from doing something in the app, to being challenged to do something in the real world, like write an essay, reading an article or attending a lecture.

Users will also need to have some sort of a marketplace where they will be able to spend their hard earned points. We wanted to give all of our students a chance to use the app, so we devised a lot of goodies to be sold through the store. Students will be able to get discounts on scholarship, bonus points in some of the subjects they are listening to, the ability to skip some of the homework they would in the other way required to do, and maybe even more. We did not want to exclude our current students, so they will have the chance to get all of those potential rewards, and in the future some more.

CONCLUSION

We are expecting that this new approach will turn some heads in our community, increase the number of students on our college, and show our country that some things can be done in a new way. Gamification in our opinion can, and should be more used in how we market our „products“ and even how we teach our students. We all need to adapt to the ever faster growth

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of the IT industries, and marketing should not be an exception. Gamification is here, and here to stay.

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