










Technology Entrepreneurship
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Independent Study

Assignment 1: Team Formation Assignment

Venture lab provides a tool that allows students to create a team and add team members to the team. I created a new team and called it "The International Information Station." Then I started searching for potential partners and specialists who may be able to help with the project. I spoke to some people I knew who specialized in Online Learning, but many of them were not interested and one was not able to work on it at this time. I then began to use the online tool to search for members to add to the team. I was searching for students I thought might have similar interests. Many students rejected the offer. One kindly offered his help by introducing me to potential venture capital. It took some time to find team members. By the end of the week I was willing to accept anybody to join my team. Finally, two members joined. The first was a French PhD business student who spoke Arabic and was interested in the financial aspects of the business. The second was an Egyptian engineer who was planning on a career change and was interested in online learning.

Finally the team consisted of three members. Arranging a meeting proved to be impossible: I contacted them many times through emails and messages on the course platform but I did not receive an answer. One of the students worked on the first assignment and posted his work. However, I could not understand it because there was no communication whatsoever about the work. Soon after that, both members became inactive on the course. Their profiles showed that they were not logging in. I redid the first assignment and continued to work on the other assignments on my own.

Assignment 2: Business Model Canvas

<p>Key Partnership </p> <p>Owner Educational <u>Advisors</u> University Professors Universities</p>	<p>Key Activities </p> <p>Platform Development and Maintenance Sales/ Marketing App Development Educational Standards Regulation</p>	<p>Value Propositions </p> <p>Provide free, easy to access, high quality courses taught in Arabic (for students) Make knowledge free and accessible for everyone Provide the platform to publish courses online (for teachers and institutions) Advertise the courses (for teachers and institutions) Provide education advisers and instruction designers to review the courses (for teachers and institutions)</p>	<p>Customer Relationships </p> <p>Partnerships with Universities Marketing team User friendly website Social learning platform</p>	<p>Customer Segments </p> <p>All Individuals seeking knowledge HE Students</p>
<p>Cost Structure </p> <p>Operation and design of platform Marketing Administration (Offices 1000 euros per month other expenses 1000 per month)</p>	<p>Revenue Streams </p> <p>Benefits Dividends Advertising App Sales</p>			
<p>Key Resources </p> <p>Capital: Bank loans Donations Human Resources: Web developers, designers Mobile Education Consultant Education Consultants, specialists and Instruction Designers Access to Universities (Educators)</p>	<p>Channels </p> <p>Bank Invest Partner Course Subscriptions/ enrollment Mobile App</p>			

Assignment 3: Low Fidelity Prototype

For this assignment, I built the front end of the website via weebly.com. I built only a few basic pages as a prototype to show what the site would look like. I named the site Mawad Online, which means courses online. I am already thinking of changing the name. <http://mawadonline.weebly.com/index.html>

Assignment 4: Marketing Opportunity/Testing Value Proposition with Customers

For this assignment, I interviewed potential customers and potential users of this service. These interviews were conducted in an informal setting. I discussed the idea with them and asked for their input and their opinions.

Three people were interviewed. None of the interviewees were aware of MOOCs. The first interviewee was a university professor who teaches business courses at Qassim University. He also served as the Dean of the Business School for 5 years. After explaining the idea to him he asked many questions about how it was different from Blackboard and how it would be different from the university's online platform. He was a little skeptical of the project at first. However, when the idea was explained in depth he showed more enthusiasm. When asked if he would be willing to put his courses online, he said yes, if given the opportunity he would do that to serve knowledge and he would not expect anything in return. I asked him what he would think about the revenue being shared with the course providers including the universities and course instructors. His response was that this would motivate many instructors to participate and put their classes online.

The second interviewee was a PhD student and a Teaching Assistant at the same university. She teaches a course on fashion design at the College of Art and Design for girls. She was asked whether she would consider putting her course online and she said yes. She explained that for her master's thesis she created a program that shows the action steps to some stitches that are usually taught in traditional courses. She said she would like to put her work online and is planning on doing this soon. She got the idea to develop the program and post it online when she met some students who did not want a degree in fashion design but were interested in taking a course out of curiosity and interest. She tested her program by instructing a non-certified course on fashion design. Most of her students were housewives and unemployed girls who were taking the course as a hobby.

The third person interviewed was a mature student in her final year majoring in Islamic Studies. The student is in the “Intisab” program, a form of distance education wherein the student is given the resources at the beginning of the term and learns the material at his/her own pace and then attends the assessment at the end of term. Students are not expected to attend any lectures at the university and are not provided with any online resources either. This form of education has already been canceled in most universities and this student is in the last class to graduate from the program. She explained that she chose this program because she has many responsibilities at home and could not travel to the university every day. She is a housewife and did not want to leave her home and kids for too long, yet she wanted to continue her education. She was asked if she would enroll in an online course that was in her subject area. She said she could see how this would benefit her and enhance her performance in her studies. She said that “having the lessons and the lectures online would help me understand the books better.” She said she would like to take online courses that count towards her university degree. When asked if she would consider taking the course even if it did not count towards her degree, she said yes of course but she would not feel as motivated to do the assessment for the course; still, she would use the content and resources to enhance her knowledge.

To further enhance this analysis, I plan to conduct an interview with the Director of Education Technology and Online Learning in the Ministry of Higher Education. I also plan to distribute two questionnaires: the first to potential content providers such as university staff and the second to everyone to check for potential students. Their input will provide the data needed to shape the project further. I plan to use social media and personal connections to gather information.

Assignment 5: Opportunity Analysis Project

Customer feedback from the previous assignment was taken into account to shape the project. The feedback has not entirely changed the original idea, but it has given me a more specific and detailed view of what I would like to build. It has also brought my attention to the importance of reaching customers and getting their views to shape the service to meet their needs.

The idea is to develop an open online education provider in Arabic. The service will provide online courses to those who register on the website and enrol in the course desired. The courses will be provided by universities and certified institutions that are also responsible for regulating the content. The service

provides technical assistance for getting instructors' courses online and making them accessible to everyone. Sponsors and institutions will be relied upon to fund the service. Other monetary solutions will be considered in the feasibility study.

This service will benefit the Arabic-speaking communities as it provides free high quality education to anyone with an Internet connection. Students are expected to comprise a wide and diverse range of people. Some students could be housewives and unemployed girls looking to pursue their hobbies and others could be employed personnel looking to expand their knowledge. University students could also benefit from the courses taught online, especially if they can get degree credit for the course.

In conclusion, the idea appears to be worth pursuing. There appears to be a market for it in Saudi Arabia. In order to estimate the size of the market I would have to collect more data from customers. I would also have to do a feasibility study. Once I have that information I will be ready to apply for funding.