Marketing: The Key to Successful Teaching and Learning

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The AIDA model assists marketers in developing vibrant, memorable, and persuasive television, radio, print, and electronic communications. Communication of this nature motivates consumer engagement and action, in regards to goods, services, and ideas. This paper explores the use of the AIDA model in educational settings. Specifically, the AIDA model can be used to improve teaching and learning techniques for educators. Furthermore, the use of the AIDA model in educational settings can improve subject comprehension and enthusiasm in adult learners. Consistent and continuous societal and technological changes make it necessary for educators to adapt and adopt new teaching and learning strategies.

INTRODUCTION

No matter the discipline, the learning objectives of teaching a collegiate course are the same. Educators are charged with developing students into integrative thinkers while taking upper level courses (Guillory, Beitelspacher, Page, & Wellington, 2016). The aim is to prepare them for future courses and careers, while broadening their interests and expanding their knowledge of practical and theoretical subject matter. Business theorist Arie de Geus, stated, "The ability to learn faster than your competitors may be the only sustainable competitive advantage" (Andersen, 2016, p. 98). Using innovative teaching and learning techniques can help adult learners compete against others in the workplace. The mix of textbook readings, cases studies, quizzes, discussions, and lectures are typical learning approaches that have worked well over the years. However, the influx of technology and societal changes require new and innovative learning approaches be incorporated into upper level courses (Guillory et al., 2016). This provides a sustainable competitive advantage.

The use of marketing strategies across educational disciplines for the purpose of teaching and learning is an innovative concept. Marketing is defined as "The activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large" (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2013, p. 3). The definitive goal of any marketing campaign is to get people to buy a good or service, or to take action of some kind (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2017). The AIDA model assists in this effort. The AIDA model is a well-known communication model used in marketing. AIDA was coined by American advertising and sales pioneer Elias, St. Elmo Lewis in the late 1800s, The acronym AIDA stands for Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action. Originally the AIDA model was presented as a sales strategy aid (Lee & Hoffman, 2015). Most recently, AIDA is used by marketers as tool for accomplishing promotional goals and a guide for persuasive communication techniques (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2013; Lee & Hoffman, 2015). According to experts, the AIDA model "proposes that consumers respond to marketing messages in a cognitive (thinking), affective (feeling), and conative (doing) sequence" (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2013, p. 589). Marketers use the model to persuade potential consumers to consume or simply become aware of a good or service (McElhone, 2013). Although not all educators' lessons are based on business and marketing principles the AIDA model can apply to all educators. Successful teaching requires educators to get students to "buy-in" to the lesson. Implementing the AIDA model can be used to gain the attention of students in multiple educational disciplines.

ADULT LEARNERS AND LEARNING STYLES

Educators are called to, "Provide our students with a sound theoretical basis on which to explore their creativity and inspire their imaginations" (Guillory et al., 2016, p. 165). This occurs when educators share their excitement about their discipline in hopes that it spreads to their students. However, the over use of passive learning strategies, such as lecture style instruction, may not be the best technique for adult learners. Educators agree that games, quizzes, case studies, riddles and course structure play a major role in student success (Courth & Molesworth, 2003). However, "although scholars recognize that there is no one 'right' approach they have tended to give little attention to different learning styles amongst students" (Courth & Molesworth, 2003, p. 676). Learning styles, teaching methods, and student perceptions are intimately linked (Courth & Molesworth, 2003). Adult students learn differently than traditional college aged students.

Adult learners likely begin their post-secondary education with a gap in their academic development (Kenner & Weinerman, 2011). For some this gap may be quite significant, depending on how long they have been in the workforce gaining practical knowledge, instead of classroom theoretical knowledge. For adult learners it's imperative to bring awareness of the gap, so that it can be used to sculpt their future classroom work.

Adult learners are typically more goal and task oriented (Knowles, 1984). Therefore, it is reasonable to structure their learning so that they view academic work as a direct benefit to the remainder of their academic and professional careers (Kenner & Weinerman, 2011). Adult learners possess four main characteristics:

- 1. Adult learners resist when information is haphazardly forced on them.
- 2. Adult learners have experiences that serve as the underpinning of their self-identity.
- 3. Adult learners are more willing to learn and often actively engage in the learning process.
- 4. Adult learners are motivated by tasks, specific goals, and internal drive (Knowles, 1984).

According to Grasha (1996), "Learning styles are personal dispositions that influence a student's ability to acquire information, to interact with peers and the teacher, and to otherwise participate in a learning experience" (p. 126). Adult learning styles and theories stem mostly from organizational development methods (Kenner & Weinerman, 2011). Experts propose that "In the 1950s and 1960s, OD practitioners created new learning models because traditional higher education pedagogical models did not translate well into the workplace training environment" (Kenner & Weinerman, 2011, p. 88). Organizational development practitioners recognized the need to separate traditional teaching from adult learning strategies (Kenner & Weinerman, 2011). This is reasonable due to changes in technology and its use in classrooms. For adult learners with large gaps in their academic development, traditional teaching styles and techniques may be a deterrent to learning. Experts agree, "Students need to learn how to use, process, connect, interpret, integrate, and analyze the amazing quantity of information that is out there on any subject" (Lane & Farris, 2010, p. 54). Educators that implement the AIDA model can help in this effort.

AIDA MODEL

The AIDA model is the brainchild of advertising and sales pioneer Elias St. Elmo Lewis. The model was established through a series of consumer behavior studies that focused on the American life insurance market. His intention was to find a mechanism to increase the success of personal selling. Lewis discovered four cognitive phases that buyers go through while adopting a new idea or purchasing a new

product (AIDA sales funnel, n.d.). According to historians, "The aggregated information from the sales funnel allows a firm to construct an overview across sales representatives and departments and to deliver better structured sales forecasts" (AIDA sales funnel, n.d., para. 4). Lewis' model validated that timing is key to the sale process. His conclusion suggests that the mental state of potential buyers fluctuates, therefore buyers need different information at each phase in order to move on to the next phase (AIDA sales funnel, n.d.). Overtime the use of the AIDA model has evolved into complementary models. Furthermore, it is now a basis for measuring the effects customer satisfaction and successful online promotions. AIDA is regularly utilized in creating advertising communication (television, print, direct mail pieces, radio, billboards, and more (Joseph, n.d.).

Attention

The goal of first phase of the model is to provide potential buyers with a reason to notice a product. Attention is critical to successful marketing and sales revenue. According to Ghirvu (2013),

The purchase process begins from the moment when a consumer does not know about a certain brand, so he first has to find out about the existence of the product or service. This first step in cognitive hierarchy focuses on ways to catch and retain the consumer attention (p. 94).

Marketers understand that attention is an asset. It is something that needs to be attained (LePage, 2015). Often marketers will convey shocking pictures, spokespeople, celebrities, colors, layout, typography, statistics, or facts to gain viewer attention. Additionally, using elements of surprise and asking thought provoking questions are employed (Communication Theory, n.d.; Joseph, n.d.). According to Lamb, Hair, and McDaniel (2013), "The advertiser must first gain the attention of the target market" (p. 589). If implemented properly, potential buyers will want to learn more.

Interest

Attention alone does not lead to increased sales. Marketers must sustain attention by generating interest in a product (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2013). The interest phase requires marketers to draw on previously gained attention and motivate engagement. Similar to attention, personalization and customization are also factors to increase engagement and interest (Joseph, n.d.). Experts agree, "It's necessary to create interest in the viewers mind so that they will read more about the brand being advertised" (Communication Theory, n.d, para. 4). Descriptions of how the attention grabber affects viewers' lives is the focal point of the interest phase. Demonstrations, illustrations, and explanations lead potential buyers to actively pursue possible solutions. A large portion of marketer engagement should focus on product information. The use of brochures, research reports, and advertisements (television, print, radio, and internet) can be employed to increase potential buyer interest and stimulate demand or desire (Objectives of personal selling, n.d).

Desire

Customers may enjoy the concept of a product, but still aren't convinced to purchase the product. Therefore marketers must build desire (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2013). Marketers believe to do this properly, they must carefully select those characteristics that are the most applicable and that can be adapted for the product (Ghirvu, 2013). Convincing potential buyers to make a purchase is the most important objective for advertising and personal selling (Objectives of personal selling, n.d.). Often 'before and after' techniques and demonstrations of how other people have used and approved of products are employed during this phase (Joseph, n.d.). Furthermore, the Scarcity Principle is used to build desire. The Scarcity Principle is

An economic theory which states that limited supply, combined with high demand, equals a lack of pricing equilibrium. Typically, demand and supply will gravitate prices to a stable balance; however, scarcity of a good or service changes the way buyers will value the purchase, thus leading to new market conditions (Scarcity principle, n.d., para. 1).

Simply put, products become more attractive when the quantities are low. The Scarcity Principle is a marketing strategy that has been used since the 1960s (Cialdini, 2001). At that time marketers in the diamond industry purchased diamonds in bulk and controlled their availability. Making them more available and affordable at selected times of the year. Simultaneously, marketers launched advertising campaigns which linked diamonds to romance and sentimental emotions (Wolfe, 2016). The campaigns along with controlled quantities and limited availability inspired desire, in addition to increased diamond sales.

Marketers understand that actual scarcity can be imagined or real. No matter the case, potential buyers view quantity as a basis of value (Cialdini, 2001; Levine, 2003). Scarcity draws on potential buyers' emotions. They feel compelled or often obligated to buy due to low quantities (Levine, 2003). Wolfe (2016) suggests, "By obtaining something that is difficult to get we demonstrate an ability to control our environment. This need to control is not just about self-worth, but also about 'keeping up with the Jones' (para. 1)."

Action

Although attention, interest, and desire have been established, potential buyers may not have actually made a purchase yet. To complete the process, potential buyers must be motivated to take action (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2013). During this phase marketers focus on finalizing the consumer's cognitive process with the definitive action of purchasing a product (Ghirvu, 2013). Marketers must ask for the sale. Providing information such as retail location address, toll free numbers or website addresses can lead to sales (Communication Theory, n.d., para 4). Also generating a sense of urgency often helps in this effort (Joseph, n.d.). This can be done through point of purchase materials, price reductions, mobile apps, sales personnel, and more. The effectiveness of these strategies is contingent upon product or brand familiarity, frequency of promotions, and location (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2012).

It's important to note that following the AIDA model does not guarantee sales nor does it account for the amount of time individuals spend in each phase. According to Lamb, Hair, and McDaniel (2017), "The AIDA concept does not explain how all promotions influence purchase decisions. The model suggests that promotional effectiveness can be measured in terms of consumers progressing from one stage to the next" (p. 274). Also, the time in which consumers spend in each stage will differ. This may also be the case for the order in which consumers go through which stage (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2013). The AIDA model's success is dependent upon the viewers or readers ability to recognize and comprehend the advertisement's message (Communication Theory, n.d.). Advertising literature proposes that intellectual cognition is based on rational and mental processes that are exposed during the spreading of advertising information (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961). Experts suggest, "This sum of effects reflects the learning process, thoughts and the intellectual state" (Girven, 2013, p 92).

USING AIDA IN THE CLASSROOM

Traditionally, the AIDA model helps marketers determine which promotional strategies will be most effective (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2017). However, when utilized as a teaching and learning aid the AIDA model can be of great assistance to students and educators alike. Business educators have acknowledged that constant changes in society greatly affect adult learners. Rapid societal changes make it necessary for educators to adapt and adopt new teaching and learning strategies. Lane and Farris (2010) notes.

Students are changing rapidly as each wave has had more technology then the last. They have been raised in different ways and look at the world very differently. It is your job as a marketing person to at least try and understand the market each time you get up in front of them. Your night class can be different than your day class and your nontraditional students will be different than the traditional age cohort, add in your non-working students, and your international students and you have a lot to understand (p. 52).

It is essential that physical and online classrooms are developed with clear strategies, so that course objectives are well defined for students. Informational and transactional classes should be designed using the AIDA model (Roberts & Zahay, 2013).

Attention

Gaining the attention of adult learners requires educators to be authentic. Just as marketers must treat their audiences with respect, so must educators. Through informal and formal conversations educators are able to gather data that can be used to modify lessons toward students' interests and experiences. Using customized and personalized assignments and lessons appeal to learners. Appeal on a personal level is crucial. It helps educators build trust with their students (LePage, 2015).

In addition to authentic and customized lessons, active learning techniques should be applied to gain adult learners' attention. Active learning as defined by Prince (2004) is "Any instructional method other than lecture that engages students in learning" (Hyun, Ediger, & Lee, 2017, p. 108). Studies have explicitly confirmed the effectiveness of active learning on students' ability to maintain and comprehend new concepts (Hyun, Ediger, & Lee, 2017; Prince, 2004). Active learning increases students' thinking and writing abilities (Hyun, Ediger, & Lee, 2017). Active learning consists of informal or formal actives, such as informal classroom discussions during lectures and formal case studies. In contrast passive learning focuses mostly on instructor lead lectures where students receive information but do not participate in the discussion (Riley & Ward, 2017). Scholars contend that it is important for educators to focus on "visuals and creating an engaging user experience rather than just regurgitating content on a screen" (McElhone, 2013, para.5).

One active learning method is to relate classroom concepts to entertainment. Viewing clips of television shows, plays, games, movies, advertisements, or skits grabs a learner's attention. It reduces the tedium of textbook readings. Likewise using entertainment in the classroom demonstrates the practicality of classroom lessons. "Collegiate level coursework requires adult learners to explore different ways for examining and incorporating information" says Kenner and Weinerman (2011, p. 91). A variety of novel learning approaches has been identified in literature, but surprisingly, was not extensively practiced by students or educators (Courth & Molesworth, 2003). Courth and Molesworth (2003) research found that "almost two-thirds (63.1%) of students had not taken part in role-play and over three quarters (75.8%) had not experienced games" (p. 688).

Another active learning method is the use of in-class or online group discussions in which students are required to comment to the class. This provides evidence of understanding, builds on their recall abilities, and helps their performance on quizzes (Guillory et al., 2016). According to Mora, Ferrández, Gil, & Peral (2017),

The resurgence of the web as a collaborative platform where users can share information and take advantage of the interactions of other users to enhance their experience provides numerous benefits such as increase of the student's motivation and creation of collective intelligence" (p.

Scholars have discovered that "frequent engagement by the instructor in online threaded discussion, in which the instructor remained neutral but questioned or challenged the student's statement or offered additional viewpoints, was positively associated with critical thinking" (Nold, 2017, p. 20). Moreover, how faculty members interact with students is especially significant to student success (Nold, 2017; Arend, 2009). The use of comparison and contrasting questions, causal explanations, predictions, and investigating the trustworthiness of sources all are positively related to student learning success that gain students' attention (Nold 2017; Alwehaibi, 2012). In addition, thinking routines have been touted by experts as aids that help students practice deeper thinking (Nold, 2017; Ritchhart & Perkins, 2008). Thinking routines lead adult learners to reflect deeper on questions and explore further justifications by asking how and why (Nold, 2017). Finally, in regards to attention, educators are advised to "Do not be afraid to have some fun as fun is involving and involvement can lead to awareness and that can lead to learning" (Lane & Farris, 2010, p. 51).

Interest

Adult learners' interest can be generated by encouraging professional skepticism. Professional skepticism is the ability to respectfully question course concepts (Hayes, 2016). Louwers et al (2015) suggests that it is not a student's responsibility to accept classroom claims without justification. Professional skepticism is a firm foundation for engagement (Hayes, 2016).

Asking students to generate misstatements and related counter-explanations is key to professional skepticism (Grenier, 2017). Kenner and Weinerman (2011) found that "By learning that they can critically examine the written word and form their own opinions, adult learners will be empowered to take a more active role in the learning process" (p. 92). Encouraging counter arguments or explanations, will help adult learners think more critically about concepts introduced in the classroom. As students become more interested in course work/concepts emphasis on analytical reviews and professional skepticism will continue unprompted (Grenier, 2017). Moreover, motivating students to resist personal biases while searching for alternative solutions or viewpoints allows for learning growth. It pushes learners to acquire fundamentally different capabilities. Skepticism can be used across academic disciplines for a myriad of lessons. For example in relation to academic writing, Kenner and Weinerman (2011) suggest that,

Specific questions that can encourage adult learners to compare their practical knowledge with the skills needed in their academic career can include analyzing citation usage in academic writing but not in professional memos and the role of first person in different writing forms (p. 91).

The willingness to experiment, welcome and overcome uncomfortable subject matter and problems can increase and expand interest (Anderson, 2016).

Desire

Often when confronted with new concepts or problems adult learners are not eager to approach them. In regards to student desire, Anderson (2016) states,

It's easy to see aspiration as either there or not: You want to learn a new skill or you don't; you have ambition and motivation or you lack them. But great learners can raise their aspiration level -- and that's key, because everyone is guilty of sometimes resisting development that is critical to success (p. 99).

Linnenbrink-Garcia, Tyson, and Patall's (2008) examination of 90 studies found that the majority of students' desire to learn and performance progressively decreases from elementary school to college (Dompnier, Darnon, & Butera, 2009). A students' desire to learn is directly related to academic achievement (Dompnier, Darnon, & Butera, 2009). Psychologists propose that students can increase their willingness to confront required tasks by investigating how they could do the work differently to make it more interesting and desirable (Anderson, 2016). Furthermore, the desire to learn and academic achievement is greatly correlated on the social value adult learners assign to utilizing concepts outside of the classroom (Dompnier, Darnon, & Butera, 2009). Often negative thoughts, both consciously or unconsciously, are formed and reduce a student's desire to learn. Educators should acknowledge the initial disinterest in new concepts, and encourage students to ask questions. Guillory et al. (2016) suggest, "Be prepared for constant change and assess what you do and why you do it consistently to remain contemporary and relevant but keep your eye on the prize" (p 165).

Action

A great deal of the information that adult learners have acquired was developed in the workplace (Kenner & Weinerman, 2011). Therefore, it is essential to encourage participation and utilization in adult learners, through the use of combined classroom concepts and prior knowledge. Furthermore, it is critical that learners apply the information to real world scenarios they have faced in the past or may encounter in the future. Students learn by doing, redundancy, novelty and intensity (Guillory et al., 2016). A useful technique to induce action is to identify specific concepts and collaborate with students to determine how they can and should adapt classroom concepts to meet individual needs. This may be done through role playing, case studies, group discussions, or research. When used in combination these practices create

deeper understandings. Students are expected to master skills and concepts, and more importantly develop connections among them (Lane, Hunt, & Farris, 2011). Learning which classroom concepts work for them and which do not, allows adult learners to better utilize the concepts, which leads to greater achievements in the workplace; Additionally it increases their desire to continue with their studies (Kenner & Weinerman, 2011). Anderson (2016) contends, "When we do want to learn something, we focus on the positive -- what we'll gain from learning it -- and envision a happy future in which we're reaping those rewards. That propels us into action" (p. 99).

Stimulating engagement among adult learners and educators can also lead to increased action. Based on the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) study conducted by Boyer and Usinger, three types of classroom interactions have been identified with consistent positive student results: positive student reinforcement by faculty members, request for and use of student generated ideas, and high level in-class student participation (Nold, 2017; Smith, 1977). Supplementary studies discovered that faculty feedback, independent research, group work, and in-class presentations are crucial for positive student results with lead to increased action (Nold, 2017; Tsui, 1999).

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE STUDY

The concepts reviewed are relevant to all subjects, majors, concentrations, and specializations of adult learning. Further research in this direction can expand the foundation established here. For example, the relationship between the AIDA model and general adult learning could be expanded to include specific business subject areas. At this time, there is sparse literature that focuses on teaching and learning techniques for adults who are studying Management, Economics, Accounting, Finance, or Management Information Systems. Furthermore, this research could be extended to include areas outside of business. This exploration can lead to a richer understanding of how adult learners differ from that of traditional college aged learners. Moreover, extending exploration could bring about drastic improvements in student retention, graduation rates, and chances of career success.

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