**Syllabus ideas for a 15-week Digital Entrepreneurship course**

*Version 1.0 2/15/19 by JP Allen  
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In this course, you will learn about the future of digitally-enabled entrepreneurship and commerce, by designing and launching your own digital business. We want you to be able to test and improve your own business ideas. No previous technical experience required.

**High-Level Learning Objectives:**

ENTREPRENEURSHIP: Learn how entrepreneurial ventures use digital technology to design and offer new products and services, acquire and retain customers, analyze customer data, and provide satisfying user experiences online. Learn how to identify and exploit business opportunities online. Learn how to test new business ideas on real customers.

TECHNOLOGY: Without coding, learn how modern technology applications are designed and deployed. Be able to exploit modern business technology trends, including: cloud, open technology, mobile, social, data analytics, software-driven services, and experimental business.

THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS: We expect that digital products and services will be the norm going forward for businesses. This course will help you begin to understand this new reality, and to develop the skills needed to deliver and manage digital business offerings.

**Specific Learning Objectives:**

* Create an online business design, consisting of a coherent set of activities for attracting customers online, providing a satisfactory online experience, and achieving business objectives digitally.
* Launch a business-quality online presence, using widely available services and software.
* Understand the basics of a content management system, and how it can be used as the foundation for an internet business presence.
* Set measurable business objectives (such as conversion goals), and monitor the success of those objectives through the use of web analytics.
* Implement multiple revenue streams, including web payments.
* Perform basic search engine optimization techniques for attracting online customers.
* Create a basic social media plan to attract and engage online customers.
* Perform basic usability and user experience tests; understand simple experimental techniques such as A/B testing.
* Ensure that a business online presence works correctly across multiple devices, such as mobile and tablets.
* Understand go-to-market and scalability issues such as security, performance, and legal protections.

**Calendar**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Due** | **Topics and Activities** |
| 1 |  | Chapter 1 Digital Entrepreneurship: New Opportunities and Challenges |
|  |  | Chapter 2 Choosing a Digital Business Idea |
| 2 |  | Chapter 3 Creating a Digital Business Design |
| 3 | Assignment #1 | *Design Presentations* |
| 4 | Peer Review for #1 | Chapter 4 Building a Business Prototype |
| 5 |  | Chapter 5 Digital Content for Business |
| 6 | Assignment #2 | Chapter 6 Business Prototype Look and Feel |
| 7 |  | Chapter 7 Business Prototype Functionality |
| 8 | Assignment #3 | Chapter 8 Web Analytics |
| 9 |  | Chapter 9 Creating and Tracking Business Goals |
| 10 | Assignment #4 | *MVP Prototype Presentations* |
| 11 | Peer Review for #4 | Chapter 10 Usability and Customer Experience |
| 12 |  | Chapter 11 Customer Acquisition in a Digital World |
| 13 |  | Chapter 12 Digital Business Experiments |
| 14 |  | Chapter 13 Launching a New Digital Business Venture |
| 15 | Final Presentation | *Final Project Presentations* |
|  | Final Report | Turn in Final Report online |

**Deliverables**

**Assignment #1: Digital Business Design**

Turn in a one-page report with your digital business design.

**Peer Reviews of Assignment #1 and Assignment #4**

A peer critique lists the top two specific features or points that are best about the posted assignment, and why; and your top two specific suggestions for improvement going forward. Include a relevant web link (URL) to a reference, tool, or technique that support your points. As a rough guide, each item should be a short paragraph, or 4 short paragraphs all together.

**Assignment #2: Web Basics**

Turn in a link (URL) to a web page available through your own domain.

Create the web page using a text or web editor, and upload the web page file to your own server or hosting service. The page should be about a personal accomplishment.

The page must include:

1. a link to another web page   
2. an image   
3. a list (using <ul> or <ol> tags in HTML)   
4. at least two style sheet rules (written in CSS)

**Assignment #3: Local Business Site**

Turn in a link (URL) to a prototype WordPress-based site installed on your own domain, for a local business that is NOT your final project.

This site should be a prototype site for a local business that exists today (i.e., NOT your final project site). It should display a level of professionalism that would allow the local business to test your site on real users, but you are not required to contact the actual business.

The site must include:

1. an ‘About Us’ page   
2. a ‘News’ menu item that points to at least two blog posts   
3. a working ‘Contact Us’ page   
4. at least one other plugin, in addition to the contact page plugin (stating on the home page which plugin)   
5. a new theme not included with WordPress by default   
6. at least one category that is visible on the home page   
7. at least one widget that is not visible by default

**Assignment #4: MVP Prototype Demo**

Demo your minimal viable product (MVP) business prototype in a class presentation up to 3 minutes in length. Highlight the main elements of your online business design, and how you hope to test this design on the site. The site should have sufficient content to begin testing its effectiveness on potential customers.

The site must have a working connections to google analytics, and must have implemented at least one conversion goal. To receive credit for your analytics, **your instructor** must be added as a user to the Google Analytics account, property, or view corresponding to your demo site. To receive full credit, the analytics must show at least 10 unique visitors to your prototype.

Turn in a report with your updated online business design. Include in your report the URL for your prototype, and the name and ID number of your Google Analytics account.

**Final Project Presentation**

Demo your online business site in a presentation up to 5 minutes, and be prepared to answer any questions about the main elements of your digital business design, including: business objectives/plan, customer acquisition, user experience, and business outcomes. Show us the greatest thing about your site from a user experience points of view. Emphasize in your presentation what you have learned so far from the data about your digital business design, and what are the most important questions remaining.

**Final Project Report**

Submit a report that briefly reviews the main elements of your digital business design: business objectives/plan, customer acquisition, user experience, and business outcomes.

Discuss what you have learned about your proposed business idea through online prototyping, using data from your project. Identify and discuss the two most important improvements you have made to your prototype, based on data from analytics, usability testing, or elsewhere. Discuss the specific steps that need to be taken to improve business performance in the future, based on data you have collected.

Your report should list the steps you have taken to implement your internal and external SEO strategy. If social media is an important traffic source, your report should refer to a sample page on your most important social network that has at least one week’s worth of sample material.

Your report should also include the results of usability testing on at least 3 users, including the scenarios used, and the actions taken in response to the testing.

Finally, the report should also mention steps taken towards business launch, including privacy and terms of service, site performance, and legal policies.