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**Texting and Twitter and Laptops! Oh My!”  
Student Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Computer Technologies in  
Sport and Entertainment Management Education**

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Synopsis:

Today's students have grown up in a world surrounded and influenced by computer technology. The impact of these technologies on the educational experience of students is currently under intense analysis. This large usage encourages the investigation of the usefulness and effectiveness of text messaging and related services (Twitter and laptops) in the educational setting. Therefore the purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of undergraduate sport management students regarding the use of text messaging and related services in sport management education.

Abstract:

Today's students have grown up in a world surrounded and influenced by computer mobile technology. The impact of these technologies on the educational experience of students is currently under intense analysis. In the Horizon Report of 2009, six area of emerging technologies were identified as potentially having a significant impact on education. Of the areas, mobile technologies (Laptops, Tablets and Smartphones) may provide the most obvious impact for students and instructors. Eighty-three percent of adult Americans own a cell phone and seventy-three percent send and receive text messages (Pew Research, 2015). Research also indicates that younger adults are more actively engaged in receiving and sending text messages and related services than older adults. This large usage percentage encourages the investigation of the effectiveness of text messaging and related services and technologies in the educational setting (Huss & Eastep, 2013). Therefore the purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of undergraduate sport management students regarding the use of mobile technologies in relationship to text messaging, Twitter and laptop computers in sport and entertainment management education.

A three-stage approach was utilized as methodology for this study. A total of six hundred and twelve subjects enrolled in Introductory Sport and Entertainment Management Courses, participated in the project.

The first stage (N=164) investigated the use of text messaging in the sport management education. During this phase the instructor utilized a commercially available one-way text messaging system (Remind.com) to communicate with subjects. Specifically, the text messages were used to 1) remind students of class and exam dates, 2) prompt to check for additional email communications, 3) to identify important course related information, 4) to identify course related activates and events and 5) raise issues for future classroom discussion.

Stage two (N=94) specifically investigated the use of Twitter as an ancillary educational tool. During this phase, students were required to follow the instructor's twitter page in order to receive Tweets related to ancillary materials utilized in the classroom. Two or more tweets were posted following each class session linking students to materials utilized in class to support and stimulate class discussion. Students were then accountable for the entirety of the materials posted.

The third phase (N=177) investigated the student use of laptop computers in the sport and entertainment management classroom. Students were allowed to choose to use or not to use a laptop use throughout the semester during the first week of class. Students selecting to use a laptop were seated together in the auditorium style classroom in order to avoid distracting non-laptop users. (Kay and Lauricella, 2011). No additional conditions or restrictions were paced on laptop users. In addition to the survey items and open-ended question responses, a comparison of the scores of students utilizing laptops and those who did not was conducted.

At the conclusion of the course, subjects completed a demographic survey that identified classification, gender, race, and age. The survey instrument asked subjects to indicate their level of satisfaction regarding: 1) method of delivery; 2) length of material; 3) quality of material, 4) topics of materials; 5) ability to reflect current trends; 6) ability to identify important information; 7) usefulness as an educational tool; and 8) ability to stimulate classroom discussion. Responses were recorded on a likert-type scale with answers indicating 1 = very satisfied, 2 = satisfied, 3= unsure, 4= dissatisfied, 5 = very dissatisfied. Subjects were also asked to identify 1) the type of digital devices they owned, 2) preferred operating system, preferred method of communication from professor, 3) frequency of communication from professor, 4) impact of specific protocol on connectivity with professor, 5) importance of instructor's use of cutting edge technology and 6) to indicate their familiarity with the specific protocol prior to this course. An open-ended question asking for personal reaction and suggested changes and/or additions were included in the instrument. Survey results indicated an overall high level of satisfaction by subjects in all areas measured. Subjects also indicated they supported the continued use of this type of material and that the use of the computer format improved their computer abilities. The open-ended responses offered

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interesting insights into student perceptions regarding the boundaries of personal and professional use of each these technologies. Interestingly, laptop users in Phase three submitted twice as many comments as non-laptop users.

The results of this study may contribute toward advancing our understanding of student perceptions towards electronic communications and the development of professional preparation resources.

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