

Improving Communication with Students: The Use of Some Common Marketing Tools in Post- Secondary Education

Mark A. Adam

Thompson Rivers University, Canada

Abstract

A This study examines the use of SMS (short message service) and QR (quick response) codes in the on-campus learning environment. These methods of communication, popularized in marketing communication in recent years, are increasingly used in education as they are convenient and easily accessible. SMS allows for rapid information dissemination and QR Codes allow students to access information easily with technology that is literally ‘in-their-hands’. These methods allow for timely and targeted messages between educators and students. SMS can be used for items such as: assignment reminders, cancellations and exams or any time-sensitive information. QR codes can be utilized to take attendance, fill in forms, or guide students to relevant webpages or resources that are linked to their assignments. SMS and QR Code communication methods were introduced into the classroom and in combination with email were used to communicate with students. Students were routinely sent emails with SMS reminders, or SMS teasers directing a student to read their email. Often several messages were used for the same topic and distributed over many days. QR codes were used in the classroom to take attendance, distribute information, and direct students to surveys. At the end of the semester, students were surveyed about the use of SMS and QR Codes, and their attitudes towards them. The results show that students are in favour of their instructors using these methods. They particularly like the use of email in combination with SMS for delivery of timely information. Instructors can reduce attrition rates, missed and late assignments, and improve student satisfaction with the use of these methods and can play a positive role in student engagement, success, and retention. The use of these tools can improve the overall learning experience for post-secondary students.

Keywords: Communications, Email, SMS, Students, QR Codes