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Overview
**COURSE INTRODUCTION**
Welcome to the Certified Digital Marketing Associate program. My name is Kristin Shine and for the past 10 years I've worked with a number of companies on how digital can transform their business.

This course is designed to give you an understanding of digital, its meanings, uses, tools and technologies – how they are applied within business and the opportunities for your own role.

This six-hour program is at Associate level and is assessed via a one-hour exam.

There are six modules within the course, covering: The Foundations of Digital, Web & Email, Social Media, Social Customer Service, Challenges & Risks and Digital Mindset.

There are interactive practice exercises throughout the course, and when you have finished and are ready, you can book your test. You can find information on this and further resources including a practice test in the additional resources section.

**MODULE INTRODUCTION**
Today, we'll be going over the Foundations of Digital – how it has changed customer behavior and the implications for organizations and also your role.

We start by taking a look at the growth of online interaction on the Internet and how this has affected customer's expectations. Over the past 10 years, the number of Internet users has gone from a billion to over 4 billion users. Today, around 54% of the world's population are connected by the Internet and this has had a massive impact on the way people communicate and how they purchase products and services.

We'll walk through the steps that customers go through from becoming aware of a need through buying a product and how that has changed – and also how businesses can take advantage of it. Businesses can interact with more customers, more often with digital, but that's not all. Digital is continually changing conventional notions about how businesses are structured and how they interact.

This module is designed to help you understand the opportunity of digital – not just for your organization but for you.
Section 1:
Customer Behavior
CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR AND EXPECTATIONS
First, we’re going to look at how consumer behavior and expectations have changed with the advance of digital technology.

We'll discuss the effect the growth of the Internet has had on the way people communicate and do business - how mobile technology has increased reach and social media has increased communications online. We'll explore why online interaction has overtaken traditional ways of interacting and see that customers are more informed and have more choice as a result.

With the advance of digital technology, customer’s expectations have also changed in that they expect services to be accessible online. Furthermore, as technology provides instantaneous results, while customers expect more, they expect it faster. Customers also expect the overall user experience to be intuitive – if not, they can easily and quickly find alternatives. And that, right there, is at the heart of what digital brings – a shift in power to the consumer.

ONLINE GROWTH
Two developments in particular, over the past few years, have changed the way consumers interact online. The first is the growth of mobile device use, which has increased the reach of the Internet. For example, mobile devices now account for more than 50% of web page views worldwide. This growth is set to continue in the coming years.

The second is the growth of social media, which has increased the amount of communication. For instance, in early 2018, the total number of Internet users is 4 billion while the number of social media users worldwide is 3.2 billion.

ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE INTERACTION
For consumers, there are many advantages of online interaction. This explains why it's overtaken traditional forms of interaction. These include:

- It’s available anytime (through email, web, social media etc.).
- It’s accessible anywhere (through mobile devices).
- Online interaction is faster.
- It’s also cheaper.
- And you also have a record of it.

Customers are now more informed and have more choice because they can search for and evaluate products and services online before buying.
SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE
The amount of time spent by consumers on social media is increasing year on year. The average user spends close to 2 hours a day on social media.

If you look at this over an average lifetime, it works out at around 5 years and 4 months, which is more time than an average person spends eating over their lives!

KEY TERMS
- **App**: An application, downloaded by a user to a mobile device.
- **Ranking**: The position which a particular site appears in the results of a web search.
- **Digital**: The term digital describes the convergence of social media, mobile and the web which has resulted in new ways to do business.
- **Search Engine**: A system that searches for and returns content in response to a web search query.
- **Digital Transformation**: The change in products, services, processes and strategies within an organization through leveraging digital technologies.
- **User Experience**: The overall experience of a person using a website rather than just the look of the site.

CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS
It's not just consumers' behavior that has changed with the advance of digital technology – their expectations have also changed. In particular, customers now expect the services and products they use to be available online. For example, 40% of mobile-enabled customers expect online ordering to be available.

What's more, as technology promotes instantaneous results, customers don't just expect more – they expect it *faster*.

USER EXPERIENCE
Customers also expect the user experience to be both intuitive and personalized. Because consumers have choice, when they come across an online interface that isn't obvious and requires effort to understand, it's easier to abandon it and go elsewhere rather than spend time trying to figure it out.

SMARTPHONE SHOPPERS
Shoppers on smartphone expect that services offered are mobile friendly. In addition, smartphone shoppers expect an app to be available. Of shoppers who make purchases via smartphones:
- 64% used a retailer's application.
- 60% researched products while in store.
- 53% checked in via social media.
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE
Social media, reviews, testimonials, and recommendations have a huge impact on consumers. According to studies, consumers are likely to spend 31% more on products or services from businesses that have excellent reviews. 85% of customers trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation.

Conversely, negative reviews drive away customers. Research has also shown that 86% of potential customers will not purchase products or services from a business with negative reviews. When negative reviews pop up on Google searches, businesses can lose up to 70% of future customers.

SELF-SERVICE FOR CUSTOMERS
Customers expect to be able to do things themselves when it comes to online service. A good example is the spread of online registration and self-service kiosks from airlines to the retailing and hospitality industries.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES ARE DISRUPTIVE AND A SHIFT IN POWER TO THE CONSUMER
Travis Kalanick, founder of Uber, looked at his own needs as a consumer and decided that the world was screaming out for a slick, convenient and cost-effective taxi solution that would allow people to ride in style for less. There are now over 47 million monthly riders worldwide.

SUMMARY
The growth of the Internet has changed the way people communicate and do business, with two developments in particular changing the way consumers interact online – the growth of mobile and social media.

There are many advantages for consumers of online interaction – it’s accessible anytime, anywhere, faster and cheaper. Customers are also more informed and have more choice because they can search for and evaluate online before buying.

It’s not just consumer behavior that’s changed – they expect services to be available online, and what’s more they expect it faster. Customers also expect the user experience to be both intuitive and personalized.

Digital represents a shift in power to the consumer – they expect to be able to do things themselves when it comes to online service.

And finally, thanks to social media, reviews, testimonials and recommendations are a key influence on buying decisions for customers.
Section 2: Key Concepts of Digital
INTRODUCTION
In this section, we'll explore some of the key concepts of digital and what it means to be digitally aware. We'll discuss how digital is changing conventional notions about how businesses are structured and the way they interact with customers. A major change which has occurred is that businesses have realized that customers are online - and therefore businesses are trying to reach customers online to influence them. And so, the traditional 'broadcast' or 'one-way' form of communicating has moved to a digital model, using a more open, engaged approach.

An important area we'll explore is the steps a customer goes through when becoming aware of, evaluating and buying a product or service – the customer journey. We'll see what the touchpoints are along the customer journey and look at examples of how aspects of digital – such as social media, search and email – can be used to convert prospects into paying customers.

DIGITAL AWARENESS
It's important to understand what we mean when we use the term digital. What we're talking about is the convergence of social media, mobile and the web, which has resulted in new ways to do business.

And digital awareness means recognizing the opportunities for digital to improve the communications, problem-solving and marketing and selling of products and services within the business.

KEY TERMS
Here we take a look at some of the key terms relating to the stages of the customer journey affected by digital.

- **Analytics**: Analytics measures online metrics like web traffic, leads, conversions and sales.
- **B2B**: Business-to-Business is a term to describe (commercial) transactions between businesses (as opposed to business-to-consumer).
- **B2C**: Business-to-consumer is a term to describe (commercial) transactions between a business and a consumer.
- **Content**: Any form of media online that can be read, watched, or interacted with. Content commonly refers to written material, but can also include images and videos.
- **Digital Marketing**: Digital Marketing involves using digital channels (such as email, search etc.) to promote or market products and services to consumers and businesses.
- **E-commerce Website**: A website where products and services are sold.

DIGITAL INFLUENCE ON BUSINESSES
We've seen how digital is continually changing how consumers obtain services, information and goods. Now, digital is also changing how businesses are structured and how they interact. Digital has lowered the barrier to entry in many industries, because it's scalable and low cost – this has meant that traditional business models are under pressure. Furthermore, digital is often easier to change than traditional business structures, but the good news is that digital business
transformation opens the door to seizing opportunities. If adopted correctly, traditional businesses can be just as innovative as start-ups.

ONLINE INFLUENCE: CUSTOMERS
Because businesses realize that consumers are online, they are now trying to reach their customers online to influence them. Consequently, marketing or promoting of products and services has moved to online.

TRADITIONAL VS. DIGITAL MARKETING
Traditional marketing methods are considered ‘broadcast’, as they involve a one-way form of communicating to the target audience, via the radio, TV or newspaper. Further, these mediums are familiar to consumers as they have been exposed to them for quite some time.

However, digital marketing is an open, two-way channel for interacting with customers, which generates a more engaged approach which can be tailored to the target demographics, age, location, and so on. For the audience member, this has the advantage that they can choose how and what they want to receive the communication.

CUSTOMER JOURNEY
It's important for businesses to see things from the customer’s perspective – the steps that a customer goes through when becoming aware of, evaluating and buying a product or service is called the customer journey. Looking at these steps, and what the customer is trying to do at each one, allows you to make sure the journey is as smooth as possible to ensure your business success.

DIGITAL AFFECTS EACH STAGE OF THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY
Considering each step of the journey allows you to see how digital affects it.

Firstly, at the Awareness stage, the consumer is aware of a need or problem to solve.

At this stage, they will focus on searching for information online about the problem (or need).

Secondly, during the Interest stage, the customer is interested in options that will solve their problem – they may become familiar with your product but are still just looking. A company may be engaging by providing web content on pain points, challenges, or opportunities to improve results or sometimes the solution.

Consumers are asking, for example, “What solutions are available? What factors should I consider? What are the alternatives?”

The next stage is Consideration. At this stage the customer knows about your product/service and that it is a good fit, but they have others in mind also – your company may be in the top 5, for example. They are comparing your product with others.
At this point, your product web page can communicate key benefits, capabilities, and differentiators.

During the **Conversion** stage, the consumer is ready to purchase. They have done their research and decided that your product is the best solution. They have not purchased yet and you are encouraging a purchase. For example, from a digital standpoint, it’s about creating a sense of urgency or through promotional offers to bring the customer through to the purchase page.

Finally, **Retention** – this stage is about building a strong relationship with the customer, which is key to ensure recurring revenue. This is about the communications with the customer post-sale, for example through customer service or email newsletters.

**CUSTOMER TOUCHPOINTS AND DIGITAL**
As we’ve seen, there are many steps on the customer journey where customers access information about your product or service. Each of these touchpoints are an opportunity for your business to influence and move your customers along the journey.

**SUMMARY**
Being digitally aware means recognizing the opportunities for digital to improve the communications, problem-solving and marketing and selling of products and services.

Digital is continually changing how businesses are structured, how they interact, and how consumers obtain services and goods. Businesses have realized that customers are online and have moved away from traditional ways to influence them to online.

We also looked at the customer journey steps from awareness, to interest, to consideration, conversion and retention, and we’ve seen there are many opportunities to influence them at each step of the journey through digital.
Section 3:

Digital Opportunity
INTRODUCTION
We've seen that digital can be used by business to convert prospects into paying customers. In this section, we'll see that there are many places within a business where digital content is used and that digital encourages collaboration and communication within an organization.

From a commercial standpoint, digital allows businesses to interact with more customers, more often, and provide more value to customers and respond quicker. Furthermore, you'll see that while digital provides a competitive differentiator, you need to be proactive and innovate continually to survive.

Finally, we'll see that digital affects just about everyone directly and indirectly and provides you with the opportunity to streamline or improve the processes within your own role to save time, money or even provide you with better metrics. Right now, there is a shortage of digital talent worldwide – by keeping yourself up to date with digital, you safeguard your professional development for the future.

CUSTOMER JOURNEY
When you think about the customer journey and all the digital touchpoints, from awareness of your product or service through to becoming a loyal customer and beyond, it touches all departments within an organization.

DIGITAL CONTENT ACROSS DEPARTMENTS
Places within the business in which digital content is used:

- **Human Resources**: Promo video or images of the work environment to aid recruitment.
- **Customer Service**: Announcements about services on an organization's Twitter account.
- **Marketing**: Forthcoming product release promotion on the company website.
- **Distribution**: Instructional video explaining the distribution process to customers.
- **Production**: Design review of User Interface web pages with external stakeholders.
- **Sales**: E-books or White papers on how your solution addresses customer's problems.

COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION
Another characteristic of digital is that it encourages collaboration and makes it easier to communicate between departments within an organization – for example, through collaboration tools such as Google Drive.

DIGITAL STRATEGY
When you consider all of the digital touchpoints along the customer journey, all of the departments involved, the digital assets – website, social media, email, and so on – it really requires a coordinated approach to maximize the benefits of your organizations digital efforts – this is a digital strategy.
DIGITAL AND BUSINESS GROWTH
The adoption of digital has meant from a practical perspective that businesses can interact with more customers, more often, and provide better value to customers and respond quicker.

By 2020, 47% of sales will be influenced by digital.

ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE INTERACTION FOR BUSINESSES
Let’s go through the specific advantages of online interaction for business.

Firstly, the web is accessible 24/7 for customers – generating sales anywhere, anytime.

Secondly, online interaction is faster than phone or face to face.

It’s also less costly – building business operations around digital technology means the cost per transaction is lower.

And finally, because it’s online, records of transactions are available (and easier to access) for both the consumer and the business.

CONTINUAL INNOVATION
While digital provides the opportunity for business to disrupt traditional models, it’s important for businesses to continue to be proactive and innovate continually to survive.

40% of mobile-enabled customers expect online ordering to be available.

DIGITAL ANALYTICS
Digital analytics can also be used to better understand the performance of your business – for example, by measuring customer behavior.

81% of digitally advanced organizations say digital efforts have differentiated them from competitors.

DIGITAL AFFECTS ALL EMPLOYEES
The reality is that digital affects all employees both directly (for example, anyone involved in a digital project, managers reviewing metrics and so on) and indirectly for anyone using or affected by the systems.

WORLDWIDE DIGITAL SKILL GAP
Digital training is a requirement for employees everywhere and therefore is important for your professional development for the future.
50% of organizations lack qualified individuals in hard digital skills.

**STREAMLINE OPPORTUNITIES USING DIGITAL**

Finally, don't forget that there may be opportunities within your own role to streamline or improve processes using digital. There are many tools available which save time, lower costs and report metrics for you.

**SUMMARY**

The customer journey touches all departments within a business and there are many places where digital content is used – from HR, through to customer service.

Digital also encourages collaboration and communication across departments within an organization. Because of the breadth of digital assets used, it makes sense to have a plan or strategy to maximize the use of your resources.

There are many advantages of online interaction for businesses – including speed, and generating sales anytime, and also importantly you can use digital analytics to better understand the performance of your business – for example customer behavior or measurement of key metrics. While digital provides a competitive differentiator, it's also important to be proactive and continually innovate to survive.

There's also a shortage of digital talent in organizations worldwide – so keeping yourself up to date with training is important for your professional development, and because digital technology is designed with ease-of-use in mind, it's designed to be easy to pick up and take advantage of.

Finally, don't forget that digital provides you with the opportunity to streamline or improve the processes that you use in your own role – allowing you to maximize your time and improve metrics.