

The Instructor's Survival Guide For Virtual Teaching



Introduction



The 2020 global pandemic has forced educators to fundamentally transform how they conduct their courses. The transition from in-person classes to online or [HyFlex](#) has created a unique set of challenges and has pushed marketing instructors to find innovative and creative solutions to educate their participants. Many are still trying to find a balance that works and with such uncertainty moving forward, it is no easy feat.

If you are still struggling to implement your courses virtually with the right tools, fear not, this short but effective survival guide on virtual teaching will not only get you through some of the hardest challenges this new normal has thrown you, it will also ensure that you and your participants will thrive with your virtual programs.

The marketing instructor's dilemma in a pandemic teaching environment

As the likelihood remains that many classes will be held remotely in the foreseeable future, a lot of instructors will be facing participants who are less engaged, or who might not even be attending courses at all.

According to a recent [McKinsey report](#), almost 50 percent of US students may defer enrollment for the Fall 2020 semester if courses are held 100 percent online. Most of these students fear they will not be getting the same quality education remotely as a traditional in-person experience. Those who remain enrolled may feel less implicated in their coursework if virtual classes are not done in an engaging and impactful manner.

Marketing instructors themselves are also grappling with the task of migrating their coursework to online platforms and relying on virtual tools that may or may not deliver the same impact as traditional methods.

What's more, remote learning can also impede real world practice that is critical for participants to acquire through their coursework to be ready for the workforce.

Ensuring an impactful virtual learning experience

Opting for reliable, interactive online tools is key to making sure you can run impactful, engaging courses online seamlessly. So that your virtual classroom is ideal for you and your participants, pick a platform that offers:

A high-quality messaging house – The ability to type questions and responses allows everyone to feel more included, and it reduces the reliance on audio, which can be inconsistent with group calls over the internet.

A Learning Management System – Learning Management Systems (LMS) have become a cornerstone with online learning. Delivering your course through an LMS keeps everything centralized so participants have a single source of content, instructions, and questions. It also facilitates easy tracking & reporting so you can measure engagement and results.

Video calls – The ultimate virtual classroom will feel most like a real life classroom, and that requires participants being able to see others like in real life.

File sharing – An easy way to send attachments and share documents in real time. Microsoft Teams, Zoom and Google Hangouts offer this feature.

Screen sharing – The person leading the class needs the ability to switch between their video and their computer screen, so that they can show others what they are seeing. Zoom and Google Hangouts get the job done effectively for this.

Digital whiteboards – Like a physical whiteboard, it's a space where the teacher can write, draw diagrams, and place key information. At the hit of a button, students should also be able to interact with the board if called upon.

Participation and group settings – Being able to click that you've understood or 'wave' to get attention is important for individual learners so that it doesn't feel like a pre-recorded webinar. At the same time, group learners will be given extra features during activities, such as a breakout room or a virtual huddle, allowing for collaboration and competition.





Implement a web-based marketing simulation

Simulation-based learning works perfectly in online learning environments. A good marketing simulation will allow participants to take on real job roles, work together in teams, compete against each other, and make critical business decisions just like in the real world in a specific time frame.

In fact, there is no better way to incorporate [real-world business practice](#) in a virtual setting than with a marketing simulation such as [Digital Markstrat](#). Participants will learn to blend digital and traditional marketing strategy towards a common goal, segment, target and position a portfolio of brands, develop a long-term vision to grow their firm and manage digital marketing as a profit center. Coupling a strong marketing simulation with a reliable virtual classroom tool is a winning combination to ensure maximum engagement and learning retention for your participants.

If you are skeptical or apprehensive of using an experiential learning tool there are also focused simulations that are seamless to implement during your course and can replace many face-to-face or project-based assignments. For example our 3 to 4 hour simulations on [Targeting and Positioning strategies](#) or [Marketing Mix Levers](#) or even [Digital Transformation](#), allow your participants hands-on experience, with minimal set-up time for you, but tons of engagement for your participants.



Virtual teaching success stories with business simulations

Many instructors are thriving during the pandemic while using simulations in their remote marketing programs. Some are even finding some elements of the experience superior to face-to-face learning. Here are some first-hand accounts from instructors like you:

"We ran all of our summer 2020 courses remotely and I'm so happy to be using Markstrat with Zoom. It works great! The breakout rooms in Zoom offer students a chance to work very effectively as a team and I'm able to stop in and consult with them as needed."

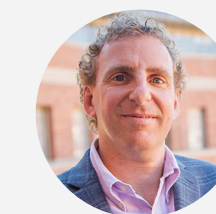
This actually works better than in our physical classroom environment where groups of students are buzzing about and trying to find spaces to work on their decisions."



Seth R. Ellis, PhD, Chair of the Marketing Department, Associate Professor of Marketing, University of San Diego School of Business

"As someone who is normally teaching Markstrat in a traditional classroom setting, transitioning to online teaching has been a surprisingly good experience. Platforms like Zoom allowed me to host general feedback sessions to show the simulation results and discuss marketing theories and frameworks with all students at once and, at the same time, use pre-assigned breakout rooms to help individual teams with their own company decisions and challenges."

It was very easy to meet the individual teams in their breakout rooms and it allowed me to get interesting insights from students who are normally too shy to speak up in the larger class setting. Moving the simulation online has proven to be a valuable lesson to me."



Andres Terech, Adjunct Associate Professor of Marketing, UCLA Anderson School of Management and Visiting Professor, IPADE Business School

"Our Blue Ocean Strategy Simulation executive programme was a great success. We ran the simulation in the afternoons, and it kept energy levels up and helped apply learnings from the morning"

Brian Worsfold, Head of Strategy Discipline and Professor of Practice, Ashridge Executive Education & Hult International Business School

"StratX Simulations is great in this situation when schools are closed, it is of great help to the students and teachers to complete the semester. Thank you for all of my 68 students...the future looks great for online teaching!"

Robert D. Gauthier, Chargé de course, Departement de marketing – Université du Québec à Montréal.



Our web-based platforms for learners and educators allow anyone to connect from anywhere in the world.



Teams manage distance group-work with tools in the simulations allowing them to take control on decision screens. Combined with their preferred tool for video conferences, they can work together from anywhere in the world.



Instructors can monitor the progress of their teams and students with their online dashboard, and share automated debriefs generated by the simulation, or prepare their own debriefs that will be delivered via their preferred tool for video conferences.



An online questionnaire and peer-to-peer platform allows learners to test learning outcome from the simulation, and educators to follow the success of the exercise.



An online grading tool will generate grades for your teams based on your chosen grading system.



All manuals and introductions are available online, and some sessions are recorded!

Make distance learning flourish with StratX Simulations

[Get in touch](#) with one of our simulations experts to see how to turn your online learning programs into highly-engaging and impactful experiences.



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