

The growth of e-learning in marketing education and its implications for librarians

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The Learning & Teaching Support Network (LTSN) is funded to provide support and information for lecturers and tutors on a subject basis and is a UK national initiative. BEST (the Business Education Support Team) is the LTSN for Business Management and Accountancy and includes marketing within its constituency. With its national networking role and a focus on learning and teaching, BEST has accumulated a wide knowledge of practices within many institutions in the UK. On behalf of the Academy of Marketing, BEST organises the Academy's Special Interest Group for Education and therefore has close contact with UK marketing educators.

Over the past few years there has been a large increase in the number of courses with an e-learning component. Some of these are entirely on-line, some provide support for traditional courses, while others are a blend of these two approaches. The mode adopted depends upon the main driver for the adoption of the technology. This can simply be an institutional requirement or a well grounded belief in the internet as a tool and resource to enable the development of independent learning skills. For marketing educators the internet is a wonderful and wide ranging resource with links to a variety business and educational materials. However this brings with it the need for constraints and careful handling if the learner is not to be swamped by the extent of the resources available. Just as in traditional modes of teaching & learning, the librarian and lecturer need to collaborate in facilitating access to the most useful materials.

The paper will explore some of the rationales for the adoption of electronic components of marketing courses in the UK Higher Education context, consider how lecturers implement the e-learning component in different ways and open discussion on what the implications are for librarians.