



3E CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Book of Abstracts

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LEARNING AND TEACHING THE BUSINESS MODEL: THE CONTRIBUTION OF A SPECIFIC AND DEDICATED WEB APPLICATION

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The success of the Business Model (BM) as a practical concept with regard to an actual specific economic context makes it a promising tool for shaping civil society in the 21st century. Teaching BM design to entrepreneurs appears essential. Surprisingly, the BM is not yet central to entrepreneurship courses and teachers in entrepreneurship lack specific tools for teaching the BM concept. To fill this gap, our research team has developed a new web learning application. It relies on an original academic model, the GRP model (Verstraete, Jouison-Laffitte, 2011), itself mainly anchored in conventions theory.

Questions we care about

With regard to the importance of the BM for entrepreneurship education and practice, how does a specific dedicated web application enhance BM learning by students? In this paper, relying on Bloom's taxonomy (revised by Krathwohl, 2002), we more precisely intend to analyse how the web application facilitates the learning of BM following different pedagogical objectives. To go on improving the web application beyond its pedagogical content, we also aim to test its design, its organization and its user-friendly quality.

Approach

A qualitative and a quantitative survey were carried out with 281 non-business students enrolled in seminars introducing entrepreneurship.

Results

The results show that the application enhances the learning of the BM by helping the students to remember, understand and apply conceptual knowledge. The experiment also provides guidelines towards improving the application.

Implications

Our findings lead to practical implications for educational institutions aiming to teach entrepreneurship and for entrepreneurs aiming to design business models. We found that a specific dedicated web application is useful for learning and teaching the BM concept. Can the application be extended to other courses? To answer this question, there is a need for other experiments. For example, we use the GRP Storyteller with business students and in particular with "students-entrepreneurs" aiming to create real businesses. We also intend to introduce entrepreneurship into secondary programs using the GRP Model. Another interesting perspective is to consider how the web application might be included into methods used in business incubators.

Value/Originality

The web application that we have developed is original. It is called GRP Storyteller, it is free and available on www.grp-lab.com. GRP Storyteller was developed to help students coached by teachers (and, more widely, entrepreneurs coached by mentors) in their efforts to specify their business model so as to make actors adhere to their project. Step by step, the students/entrepreneurs build and specify their business models by telling the story of their business. Our research shows the application's potential and limits. There is a satisfying fit between how we wanted to position the application when we created it (original, useful for teaching and learning the BM, collaborative, easy, with attractive design and accurate teaching material) and how the students perceived it. The application suits even nonbusiness students.

Keywords

Business Model, web application, entrepreneurship education, GRP Model