"Teaching Photoshop"

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Teaching Photoshop

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between teaching Photoshop in a marketing course and teaching effectiveness. At the end of a16-week semester course that followed the course outline presented in this paper, student course evaluation data was gathered and analyzed. Results suggest that marketing students enjoyed the course and found the teaching to be effective. Marketing educators can teach Adobe Photoshop skills and marketing graphics concepts by following the 16-week semester course outline presented in this paper. The 16-week semester course outline contains links to the weekly tutorials, Photoshop templates, and Photoshop add-ons to help students to learn Photoshop. A sample master syllabus accompanies the 16-week semester course outline to help marketing educators present the concepts and learning outcomes of this course to students and other marketing educators.

Introduction

The documentary *Art and Copy* demonstrates how advertizing agencies have created some of the most effective ads in history. Art refers to the graphics, music and videos the advertizing agencies use. Copy refers to the messages the agencies deliver. When art and copy are combined, powerful promotional messages can be created. Marketing educators and marketing students need to be prepared to use innovative marketing tools and software to create effective marketing promotional materials.

Research aim. The purpose of this paper is to examine the effect of teaching a class on Adobe Photoshop on marketing educator teaching effectiveness.

1. Reasoning for the focus of the paper

One of the most popular tools today used to combine art and copy at advertizing agencies is Adobe Photoshop. Powerful promotional messages can be created by combining graphics (art) and text (copy) with Photoshop. In addition to creating promotional messages, graphic designers use Photoshop to create logos, web elements, print documents, and more. In order for marketing students to be ready to work with graphic designers or to do graphic design work themselves, marketing students need to learn how to create and edit the Photoshop files that are used to promote products. In the past it has been difficult to learn Photoshop, but now with online websites like Lynda.com students have access to high quality instructional videos from the best Photoshop trainers at a reasonable price. Adobe Photoshop is the industry leader of graphic editing software and future marketing students deserve the opportunity to learn the power of Adobe Photoshop.

Research hypotheses. The hypothesis presented in this paper is that there is a positive relationship between teaching a course on Photoshop and teaching effectiveness.

Originality of the paper and contribution to knowledge. While the marketing education literature contains examples of research of new technology in the classroom and in higher education, such as social networks, virtual reality, blogging and digital marketing, there has not been research or course development on a marketing course dedicated to Adobe Photoshop. Furthermore, while there has been extensive marketing education research on course evaluations, no research has looked at how teaching an innovative marketing class on Adobe Photoshop influences teaching evaluations.

Conceptual and theoretical framework. This section outlines how Photoshop is graphic design software used in digital marketing. The definitions of these terms are provided and the model of teaching Photoshop influencing teaching effectiveness is offered.

Theory and the theoretical perspective. Photoshop is graphic design software that is used to edit images by photographers and graphic designers for promotional purposes in marketing applications. The marketing education literature contains many examples of how innovative courses are being offered in the marketing area.

Definitions and assumptions. Wymbs (2011) uses the digital marketing definition of "the use of digital technologies to create an integrated, targeted and measurable communication which helps to acquire and retain customers while building deeper relationships with them." Graphic Design falls under the umbrella of digital marketing, and Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines graphic design as "the art or profession of using design elements (as typography and images) to convey information or create an effect." Adobe Photoshop is the world's most popular graphic design software.

Student Evaluations of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is the extent to which instructors are enthusiastic, helpful, clear, well-prepared, respectful, enables student participation, encourages further independent study, provides opportunity to question ideas, provides clear goals, displays competency in course topics, makes difficult topics understandable, is available outside of class, and stimulates student interest in the course.

Structural model. The relationship between teaching Photoshop and teaching effectiveness is examined in this study.

2. Literature review

While the marketing education literature contains examples of research of new technology in the classroom and in higher education, such as social networks (Faulds and Mangold, 2014; Nemetz et al., 2012; Pentina, 2010), virtual reality (Drake-Bridges, Strelzoff and Tulio Sulbaran, 2011), blogging (Muncy, 2014), and digital marketing (Buzzard et al., 2011; Faulds and Mangold, 2014; Finch, Nadeau and O'Reilly, 2013; Harrigan and Hulbert, 2011; Wymbs, 2011), there has not been research or course development on a marketing course dedicated to Adobe Photoshop. Mentions of Adobe Photoshop in the marketing education literature is limited (Clarke III and Flaherty, 2007; Hannaford,

Erffnieyer and Tomkovick, 2002; Williamson, Brookshire and Wright, 2002). It is more common to hear marketing educators discuss graphic design in general (Burgess, 2012; Craciun and Corrigan, 2010; Elam and Spotts, 2004; Finch, Nadeau and O'Reilly, 2013; Gayle, Waller and Patti, 2009; Metcalf, 2011; Mitchell and Strauss, 2001).

The marketing education literature contains a great deal of discussion on the topics of course evaluations (Chen and Hoshower, 2004; Clow 1999; Mintu-Wimsatt, 2001; Mintu-Wimsatt, Milward and Russ, 2006; Ortinau et al., 1989; Schwartz and Thornton, 1986; Wilhelm, 2004) and student evaluations (Clayson, 2009; Neale et al., 2009; Paswan and Young, 2002; Simpson and Judy A. Siguaw, 2000; Webster, 1990). However, none of these studies have examined how teaching Photoshop influences teaching effectiveness.

3. Methodology

Teaching Photoshop. In order to teach Photoshop, the marketing educator reserved an on-campus computer lab where each student has access to a personal computer. The materials presented in this course are presented in a 16-week semester course outline. Table 1 summarizes the tutorials, templates and add-ons that marketing educators can use to teach Photoshop.

Table 1. 16-week semester course outline

Week	Topic	Tutorial, template, or add-on	URL
1	Course Introduction		
2	Introduction to Illustrator	Deke's Techniques 026: Creating a Classic Heart in Illustrator	http://www.deke.com/content/dekes-techniques-026-creating-a-classic-heart-illustrator
3	Illustrator Tutorials	Deke's Techniques 78: Creating a Superhero Shield in Adobe Illustrator	http://www.deke.com/content/dekes-techniques-78-creating-a-superhero-shield-adobe-illustrator
4	Illustrator Templates	Premium Quality - Retro Badges Vectors	http://graphicriver.net/item/premium-quality-retro-badges-vectors/2793783
5	Illustrator Add-Ons	3D Extruder - Vector Actions Pack	http://graphicriver.net/item/3d-extruder-vector-actions-pack/2167233
6	Introduction to Bridge and Camera Raw	Photoshop CC for Photographers: Fundamentals with Chris Orwig	http://www.lynda.com/Photoshop-tutorials/Photoshop-CC-Photographers-Fundamentals/124075-2.html
7	Introduction to Photoshop	Photoshop CC One-on-One: Fundamentals with Deke McClelland	http://www.lynda.com/Photoshop-tutorials/Photoshop-CC-One-One-Fundamentals/124096-2.html
8	Photoshop for Photography	Photoshop CC for Photographers: Fundamentals with Chris Orwig	http://www.lynda.com/Photoshop-tutorials/Photoshop-CC-Photographers-Fundamentals/124075-2.html
9	Photoshop for Design	Introducing Photoshop: Design with Deke McClelland	http://www.lynda.com/Photoshop-tutorials/Up-Running-Photoshop-CC-Design/108138-2.html
10	Photoshop Tutorials	Photoshop CC One-on-One: Advanced with Deke McClelland	http://www.lynda.com/Photoshop-tutorials/Copying-pasting-from-Adobe-Illustrator/124098/148213-4.html
11	Photoshop Templates	Logo / Badge / Insignia Templates Bundle	http://graphicriver.net/item/logo-badge-insignia-templates-bundle/6142317
12	Photoshop Add-Ons	Elegant Glass Text Effects & Styles	http://graphicriver.net/item/elegant-glass-text-effects-styles/48483
13	Introduction to InDesign	InDesign CC Essential Training with David Blatner	http://www.lynda.com/InDesign-tutorials/InDesign-CC-Essential-Training/120609-2.html

Table 1 (cont.). 16-week semester course outline

Week	Topic	Tutorial, template, or add-on	URL
14	InDesign Tutorials	InDesign Secrets with Anne-Marie Concepción 030 Making Professional Drop Caps	http://www.lynda.com/InDesign-tutorials/InDesign-Secrets/85324-2.html
15	InDesign Templates	Simple Resume	http://graphicriver.net/item/simple-resume/3118476
16	Project, Make-up, or Free		

Week 1. Course introduction. The goal of this week was to familiarize students with the course, the course materials, the computer lab on campus, and the class learning management system Moodle page. Students were encouraged to subscribe to Lynda.com. There are lots of other great online tutorial resources to learn Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign, but having students follow the tutorials from a single content provider kept teaching materials simple for students.

Students were also encouraged to browse GraphicRiver.net. There are lots of other great template vendors online, but having students customize Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign from a single website kept teaching materials simple for students.

Students submitted their weekly project files as attachments to a Moodle discussion thread so that the instructor had evidence of the work and so that students can see what other students did each week.

Week 2. Introduction to illustrator. The goal of this week was to familiarize students with Adobe Illustrator and to lead students through their first Lynda.com tutorial. Lynda.com has an entire section dedicated to Adobe Illustrator. Two great tutorial series to get started with Adobe Illustrator are Deke McClelland's Introducing Illustrator and Illustrator CC One-on-One: Fundamentals series. Students followed Deke McClelland's Creating a Classic Heart in Illustrator tutorial.

Week 3. Illustrator tutorials. The goal of this week was to have students continue to learn Adobe Illustrator. Students followed Deke McClelland's Creating a Superhero Shield in Illustrator tutorial.

Week 4. Illustrator templates. The goal of this week was to have students work with the types of professional graphics files that are created with Adobe Illustrator. Students were encouraged to search GraphicRiver.net's *Vectors* category to see the types of Illustrator files that are popular. Students were shown how to customize the text in an Adobe Illustrator file with their name or company's name. Graphic-River.net's *Premium Quality – Retro Badges Vectors* Illustrator file was given to students to customize.

Week 5. Illustrator add-ons. The goal of this week was to have students work with Adobe Illustrator add-ons that are used to create popular graphic design effects. Students were encouraged to search Graphic-

River.net's *Add-ons* category to see the types of add-ons that are popular. The *Add-ons* category is broken down into sub-categories of *Actions*, *Brushes*, *Styles*, and *Textures / Fills / Patterns*. Students created custom graphics with Illustrator brushes, graphic styles, patterns and actions.

Week 6. Introduction to Adobe bridge and camera raw. The goal of this week was to introduce students to Adobe Bridge and Camera Raw. Adobe Bridge is a digital asset manager that makes it easier to work with Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign digital files. Camera Raw is a tool in Bridge and Photoshop that makes it easier to process and customize photographs. In addition to Deke McClelland, Chris Orwig has great Photoshop for photography tutorials at Lynda.com. Students followed Photoshop CC for Photographers: Fundamentals with Chris Orwig Chapters 1., Strategies for Learning Photoshop. 2. Getting Started with Bridge. 3. Getting Started with Camera Raw, 4. and 5. Improving Your Photos with Camera Raw.

Week 7. Introduction to Photoshop. The goal of this week was to familiarize students with the Adobe Photoshop interface and to lead students through their first Lynda.com Photoshop tutorial. Lynda.com has an entire section dedicated to Adobe Photoshop. A great tutorial series to get started with Photoshop is Photoshop CC One-on-One: Fundamentals with Deke McClelland. Students followed Chapter 4. of Photoshop CC One-on-One: Fundamentals with Deke McClelland Using Layers, Chapter 6. Crop and Straighten, and Chapter 7. Adjusting Luminance in class.

Week 8. Photoshop for Photography. The goal of this week was to familiarize students with how photographers use Photoshop. Students followed Photoshop CC for Photographers: Fundamentals with Chris Orwig Chapters 12. Making Selections and Adjustments, 13. Advanced Control with Masking, 14. Improving Exposure with Adjustment Layers, and 15. Adding, Changing and Removing Color with Adjustment Layers.

Week 9. Photoshop for design. The goal of this week was to familiarize students with how graphic designers use Photoshop. Students followed Introducing Photoshop: Design with Deke McClelland Chapters 4. Type and Effects, 5. Paint and Pen, and 7. Smart Objects and Filters.

Week 10. Photoshop tutorials. The goal of this week was to lead students through another Photoshop tutorial. Students followed Photoshop CC One-on-One: Advanced with Deke McClelland Chapter 24. Smart Objects.

Week 11. Photoshop templates. The goal of this week was to have students work with the types of graphics files that are created using Adobe Photoshop. Students were encouraged to search GraphicRiver.net to see the types of Photoshop files that are popular. Students customized the Photoshop template file at GraphicRiver.net named *Logo / Badge / Insignia Templates Bundle*.

Week 12. Photoshop add-ons. The goal of this week was to have students work with the types of Adobe Photoshop Add-ons that are used to create popular effects. Students were encouraged to search GraphicRiver.net's Add-ons category by sorting the *Add-ons* category by sales and searching across the sub-categories of *Actions*, *Brushes*, *Styles*, *Shapes*, and *Textures / Fills / Patterns*. Students worked with the Photoshop add-on from GraphicRiver.net titled *Elegant Glass Text Effects & Styles*.

Week 13. Introduction to InDesign. The goal of this week was to introduce students to InDesign. Students followed InDesign CC Essential Training with David Blatner Chapter 1. Learn InDesign in Thirty Minutes and Chapter 4. Managing Pages.

Week 14. InDesign tutorials. The goal of this week was to have students continue to learn InDesign. Students followed InDesign Secrets with Anne-Marie Concepción 030 Making Professional Drop Caps.

Week 15. InDesign templates. The goal of this week was to have students work with the types of graphics files that are created using Adobe InDesign. Students were encouraged to search GraphicRiver.net's *Print Templates* category to see the types of InDesign files that are popular. Students customized the InDesign file available at GraphicRiver.net titled *Simple Resume*.

Week 16. Project/make-up/next. The last week of classes was used to allow students to work on an individual project, allow students who had missed a weekly assignment to make-up a past weekly assignment. Students were also shown Photoshop extensions such as Google's *Nik Collection* and *Alien Skin Software*.

Teaching effectiveness. In order to examine the teaching effectiveness of the 16-week semester outlined a priori, a survey of student evaluations of teaching effectiveness was conducted during the final week of the Fall 2012 semester. 27 responses were obtained to 14 statements about teaching effectiveness rated on a 5-point scale were 1="ineffectively", 2="somewhat ineffectively", 3="moderately effectively", 4="effectively", 5="very effectively".

4. Findings

The 14 statements measuring teaching effectiveness and their averages are presented in Table 2. These results suggest a positive relationship between teaching Photoshop and teaching effectiveness.

Table 2. Student evaluations of teaching effectiveness

1. My instructor displays enthusiasm for teaching the course 4.8/5.
2. My instructor is actively helpful when students have problems 4.77/5.
3. My instructor clearly presents course information 4.77/5.
4. My instructor seems well-prepared for class 4.73/5.
5. My instructor clearly explained the goals of this course 4.81/5.
6. My instructor respects different viewpoints 4.88/5.
7. In this course, my instructor enables me to participate in learning 4.77/5.
8. My instructor encourages me to do further independent study 4.73/5.
9. My instructor provides opportunities to question ideas in class 4.92/5.
10. The stated goals of this course are consistently pursued 4.73/5.
11. My instructor displays competency in course topics 4.73/5.
12. My instructor makes difficult topics understandable 4.76/5.
13. My instructor consults and advises effectively outside of class 4.71/5.
14. My instructor stimulates interest in this course 4.73/5.

The results suggest positive student reactions to teaching a marketing class on Photoshop. The focus on Lynda.com tutorials and template and add-on files from GraphicRiver.net gave students clear assignments (statement 3) and helped the instructor seem well-prepared (statement 4). When students are actively following tutorials in computer labs on campus they feel as though they are participating in learning (statement 7). Lynda.com offers hours of tutorials on Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign, so students can do further independent study (statement 8). The 16-week semester course outline presented clear goals (statement 10). The quality of tutorials at Lynda.com are great, so difficult topics are understandable (statement 12).

4. Discussion

To help marketing educators present this class to students and other marketing educators a master syllabus is included in Figure 1. The master syllabus includes the course description, concepts and learning outcomes.

Master syllabus

I. Catalog description: Introduction graphic design, photography, typography, digital asset management, creating and editing vector graphics, creating and editing photographic images, and creating and editing multi-page documents. This knowledge will be applied to edit common marketing materials such as logos, icons, illustrations, decorative elements, product mock-ups, flyers, brochures, resumes, newsletters, and magazines.

II. Course learning outcomes: Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand graphic design concepts.
2. Understand vector graphic elements such as paths, fills, strokes, and points.
3. Understand the difference between file types such as .jpg, .png, .gif, and .tiff.
4. Understand common vector graphic file applications such as logos, icons, illustrations, and decorative elements.
5. Understand vector graphic possibilities including actions, brushes, styles, and textures / fills / patterns.
6. Understand photography concepts.
7. Understand digital asset management.
8. Understand how to capture and download digital photographs.
9. Understand layered compositions.
10. Understand how to resize, crop, and straighten images.
11. Understand how to adjust image luminance levels.
12. Understand how to select parts of an image.
13. Understand how to mask parts of an image.
14. Understand how to adjust image color.
15. Understand fundamentals of typography.
16. Understand photographic filters that can be applied to images.
17. Understand common photographic files applications such as product mock-ups, flyers, and brochures.
18. Understand how photographic files can be edited with actions, brushes, styles, shapes, and textures / fills / patterns.
19. Understand how vector graphics and photographic elements can be incorporated into multi-page documents.
20. Understand how common multi-page document file applications such as resumes, newsletters, and magazines.
21. Understand how to create .pdf and other multi-page document file types.

III. Course content:

1. Graphic Design
2. Photography
3. Typography
4. Digital Asset Management
5. Creating and Editing Vector Graphics
6. Creating and Editing Photographic Graphics
7. Creating and Editing Multi-Page Documents
8. Creating and Editing Marketing Materials

Conclusion

Students feel a great deal of accomplishment when they come to a class in a computer lab and, during a single class period, they are able to start with nothing and end up creating a cool graphic file by following a tutorial, editing a template file, or applying a stylish add-on.

Students have a wide variety of computer skills. Some students will be more proficient in Photoshop than the instructor. Other students will have few computer skills. This combination of students with varying computer skills in a class will force the instructor to try to move at a slow pace and be as clear as possible while leading students through tutorials, template files, and add-on files.

The student evaluation of teaching effectiveness data presented in this study suggests that students found a course on Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign consistently effective across 14 statements.

Teaching Photoshop is a logical precursor to teaching Adobe Premiere Pro or Final cut. Photoshop is great at editing graphics and text, but the application is not designed to edit video and text. But, it is important for students to have the ability to edit graphics before they edit motion graphics. Similarly, before students can add graphics to web pages, it is good for students to know how to edit graphics with Photoshop. Teaching Photoshop is a logical precursor to teaching Adobe Dreamweaver, WordPress, or other web design or content management applications.

As new versions or features of Photoshop are introduced by Adobe Lynda.com will add new tutorials to its website and GraphicRiver.net will continue to add new template and add-on files.

By following the 16-Week Semester Course Outline in Table 1 students will be able to combine art and copy and understand how promotional materials are created with Photoshop.

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