

Future competences pathways for marketing and ICT education (FuseIT)



A3: Guidelines for Digital Marketing competences integration in ICT related subjects SUMMARY

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
1. RESEARCH GOALS AND ACTIVITIES OF IO1	5
2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND LOCALIZATION	6



INTRODUCTION

"The European Union needs to ensure that the knowledge, skills, competence and creativity of the European workforce - especially its ICT practitioners - meet the highest global professional standard and are constantly updated in a process of effective lifelong learning." - Michel Catinat, Head of Unit, ICT for Competitiveness and Industrial Innovation, DG Enterprise and Industry, European Commission, 2015.

Bearing in mind that the significant shortage of professionals in information and communications technology (ICT) in the European Union (EU) creates a bottleneck for economic growth, European citizens do not have basic digital skills, the European Commission (EC) executes initiatives, like new skills agenda, The Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, awareness raising campaigns and etc. The aim of those initiatives is attracting and retaining digital talent, promote modernize education and training to provide all students and teachers with the opportunity to use digital tools and materials, to develop and upgrade their digital skills, raise awareness about the importance of digital skills for employability, competitiveness and etc. New skills agenda for Europe states „Formal education and training should equip everyone with a broad range of skills which opens doors to personal fulfillment and development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment. These include literacy, numeracy, science and foreign languages, as well as transversal skills and key competences such as digital competences, entrepreneurship, critical thinking, problem solving or learning to learn, and financial literacy.“ Marketing is open-ended discipline which does not have to be solely based on just the one subject. The nature of marketing allows students to develop marketing skills in the context of another subject, such as Consumer Behavior, Microeconomics, Copywriting, Big Data Analysis, WEB developing and etc. This course will be implemented by the participating universities in different study programs. The versatility of skills gained studying marketing determines wide professional career path: it offers work in many fields and diverse career choice. Having marketing skills there is the potential for a year in industry, which allows an invaluable period of experience in real-life marketing roles and facilitates personal lifelong learning activities. Having on mind fact that marketing area attracts the most foreign overseas students to universities (the figure is more than double than that of engineering & technology, the next highest subject group according Complete University Guide Ltd. 2007–17) it could serve as proper platform for increasing the attractiveness of ICT studies.

Fuse IT (Future competences pathways for marketing and ICT education) project addresses the education and labor market requirements for professional skills and knowledge for students and graduates in university (including life-long learning activities). The project will analyze, design, develop and implement an up-to-date curriculum, e-learning materials, blended learning environment, ICT knowledge and skills self-evaluation and knowledge evaluation system simulations. The main intellectual outputs are related to marketing and future competencies and they will include:

1. Guidelines and study analysis in HE;
2. Curriculum development and localization;
3. E-learning material in separate parts for different subjects;
4. Simulations for education;
5. Self-evaluation and knowledge evaluation system;
6. Methodological guidelines

There are 2 level of beneficiaries which will be impacted by the project. The primary target group includes:

1. Students at university;
2. Educators, university staff, adult education centers etc.
3. Business sector

This target group will benefit from the project by participating in training and knowledge evaluation, which will improve their knowledge and competencies in the labor market. Educators and university staff are responsible for skills upgrade and raising of qualification. The secondary target group are universities which could use project results and implement updated marketing study program and/or implement separate parts of marketing in ICT studies. How to implement project results and other useful information will be described in the Methodological guidelines for implementation marketing module.



1. RESEARCH GOALS AND ACTIVITIES OF IO1

The main goals of IO1 are to develop major requirements for building the Fuse IT program by using the IO1 results for target groups' DMC (Digital Marketing Competence) needs on a base of EU labour market, existing experience of partners best practices in marketing and ICT. ICT are essential skills for future workplaces (The use of ICT has increased significantly in the last five years in more than 90% of workplaces), but advanced users like technicians, professionals (both 50%) and managers (30%) are required to have specialist digital skills, especially in larger workplaces. This study will also identify the skills gap in the Digital Marketing area in Lithuania, Latvia, Portugal and Romania. The training needs will then be becoming apparent and become a base for creating learning and certification solutions in the following activities of the project.

For those purposes there is the plan:

- **Prepare recommendations** about which competencies are required for target group being well prepared, self-confident and competitive in the digital market. This will be done after analysis of existing programs and curricula at project targeted DMC (Digital Marketing Competences) available at EU partner organizations and comparing with Digital Competence Frameworks such as The Digital Competence Framework for Consumers and The Digital Competence Framework for Citizens 2.1 (1.1);
- **Prepare study analysis** of future digital marketing competences. This will be done by performing surveys and interviews: at least 50 marketing and ICT students interviewing through each HEI, marketing specialists interviewing, at least 10 through each HEI; DC training centres representatives interviewing, minimum 5 per participate country.
- **Prepare guidelines** how Digital Marketing competences could be integrated in ICT related subjects. This will be done by using target group' surveys and interviews results.

The outcomes of the IO1 will be used for building effective DMC training module based on mentoring of DMC needs. All project partners take active roles in delivering these results. As the leading partner, the VU is responsible for the smooth and efficient management of IO1 and selection of partners' institution on the leading role in special task of IO1.

The goal of IO1 A3 - prepare recommendations about which competencies are required for the competence consumers need to function actively, safely and assertively in the digital marketplace.

Results of IO1 will be free available and could be easy integrated in other countries' universities or training organisations.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND LOCALIZATION

Marketing is open-ended discipline which does not have to be solely based on just the one subject. The nature of marketing allows students to develop marketing skills in the context of another subject, such as Consumer Behaviour, Microeconomics, Copywriting, Big Data Analysis, WEB developing and etc. Designed course should be implemented by the participating universities in different study programs. The versatility of skills gained studying marketing determines wide professional career path: it offers work in many fields and diverse career choice. Having marketing skills there is the potential for a year in industry, which allows an invaluable period of experience in real-life marketing roles and facilitates personal lifelong learning activities.

After necessary information and data collection Project Team for Curriculum development and localization, e-learning material development and recommends:

-Workload of created module 4-5 ECTS;

-Language of module English (national language- as added option);

-Level of developed competences: Advanced-Highly Specialised (levels 5-8 regarding The Digital Competence Framework for Citizens 2.1)

-**Focus on current competences** necessary for digital marketing specialist, which technically possible to divide into 2 main groups (basic marketing competences; digital marketing competences):

Table 1. Recommended competences for development necessary for digital marketing specialist

Competences to develop necessary for digital marketing specialist	Group of competences
Understanding of customer personas and their needs	Basics marketing competences
Strong communication	
Strategic creativity	
Customer loyalty, retention, and satisfaction campaigns design and execution	
Customer Engagement	
Digital Strategy	Digital marketing competences
Web Experience Management	
Bussiness Intelligence	
Targeting & Optimization	
Usability / Design	

- **Focus on current professional skills** necessary for digital marketing specialist which conditionally possible to divide into two groups: professional skills adapted to digital marketing needs and professional skills created to digital marketing needs (see Table 2)

Table 2. Recommended professional skills for development necessary for digital marketing specialist

Professional skills to develop necessary for digital marketing specialist	Group of professional skills
Excel	Professional skills adapted to digital marketing needs
CRM	
Building and managing customer experience teams	
Social Media Marketing	Professional skills created to digital marketing needs
Digital Analytics	
Mobile Marketing	
Search Engine Marketing (SEM)	
Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	
Video Marketing	
Email Marketing	



- **Recommended target group of learning material implementation** which conditionally possible to divide into three groups regarding types of professional activities: specialists, managers, analytics (Table 3).

Table 3. Recommended target groups of learning material implementation

Professional positions	Type of activity (functions)
Social media specialist	Field specialist
E.marketing information specialist	
Internet research specialist	
E.marketing web designer	
Social media development administrator	Management
Internet marketing content manager	
E. marketing project manager	
Marketing Metrics Manager	
Expert in Web Analytics/Data Analytics	Analytics
Expert in Business Intelligence	
Market analytic	

- **Recommended types of stakeholders for learning material development and implementation** conditionally possible to divide into two groups: traditional business activities which adapts digital marketing solutions; businesses based on digital marketing (Table 4)

Table 4. Recommended target groups of learning material implementation

Stakeholders	Types of stakeholder
E.sales and marketing department (in business companies)	Traditional business activities which adapts digital marketing solutions
Advertising agencies	
Market analytic service companies	
E.marketing and internet communication companies	Businesses based on digital marketing
Media and technology companies	
International internet content organizations	

Provided recommendations will be used for learning material design (building DMC training module), Projects activities related with IO2.