A Guide to Using Open Educational Resources in Marketing Education

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The core content of this Guide can be summarised by the acronym OPEN ACCESS:

OER: are defined by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (2008) as “teaching, learning and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use or re-purposing by others”. The ethos of sharing, co-creation, improvement, re-purposing and re-modeling of knowledge, lies at the heart of the OER movement. In essence you take the wheel of another and you adapt and improve, re-purpose and re-use it to meet your own contextual needs and setting.

Places: OER are commonly deposited and accessed through content sharing systems, open source platforms, portals and repositories. Some of the more popular sites worth familiarising yourself with include JORUM, Scribd, Slideshare and your own institutional repositories. Web 2.0 technologies play a pivotal role in OER. These tools include social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn), collaborative tools (e.g. Wikipedia), self-expression tools (e.g. blogs, micro-blogs, vlogs, podcasts) and content tracking tools (e.g. url).

Exposure: In addition to personal gains, there are multiple generic benefits attached to contributing to the OER movement. These include sharing knowledge within and outside the teaching and research community and nation, breaking down barriers to education, enhancing formal and informal learning, supporting lifelong learning, widening participation and assisting with capacity building.

Numerous stakeholders: The contribution of OER rests both within and outside the formal education arena. Stakeholders include educators, formal and informal learners, institutions (academic and non-academic), organisations, educational policy makers, funding bodies, educational repositories, governments, citizens and society within the national and international arena.

Artefacts: There are multiple examples of OER including articles, blogs, briefing notes, case studies, course development materials, full courses, guidelines, letters, multiple choice tests, notes, photographs, podcasts, powerpoint slides, quizzes, simulations, templates, transcripts, tutorials, videos e.g. student work, webinars, wikibook and worked examples.

Challenges: The OER movement is fraught with areas to be cautious about. The common
Challenges you will need to consider when developing, or using, OER materials include questions of quality, trust, legal, technical, economic, social, policy, marketing, underlying beliefs and sustainability.

**Creative Commons:** Ownership of material (copyright, intellectual property rights (IPR)) is a central question to ask when developing and releasing OER. Most material is owned by someone, even images available through Google. Seeking written permission to use such material is paramount. Open licenses such as Creative Commons help to facilitate and safeguard the release of OER.

**Extra resource:** OER can play an important extra resource role in our teaching and learning strategies at a time when education is increasingly expensive and the learner population is faced with having to choose one resource over another.

**Shared intelligence:** OER have the capacity to allow us to be frugal with our time and budgets and, importantly, they encourage us to learn from the work of others. They stop us from wasting time re-inventing the wheel and encourage us instead to take someone else’s wheel and devote our energies to improving it. OER have a role to play in raising the visibility of our research at a time when the impact of our research is coming under increasing scrutiny.

**Sustainability:** tracking the long-term success and impact of OER remains a primary challenge facing the future development, and acceptance, of the OER movement.

It’s a highly valuable document!