

Building a successful online education platform: A benchmark of top industry players



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For an innovative and fast-growing player in the maternity education space, Renspire Insights performed a benchmarking study that led to specific and actionable recommendations for our client's new product launch strategy.

These findings are useful for companies who are planning to take their educational businesses online. Most of the ten players studied are globally recognized online education platforms that have succeeded in retaining online learners on their platform through diverse content, business model, and user experience strategies.

With our client's permission, we share our key findings and then dive deeper on three of them.

Key Findings

- Top online education platforms use **short videos** and **community creation** as key pillars of their content delivery
- They also utilize **easy, open navigation** and **frequent examinations** in order to be more effective service providers
- Most players make money through **course sales alone, and use a freemium subscription model** that focuses on **individual consumers**
- The **Enterprise Market** is an attractive strategic option to most players, and most are making moves into it, if they have not already done so
- Top players who target **premium users** differentiate themselves through **top-notch video production** and the creation of a **glamorous experience** for their audience. They also emphasize building a **unique community inside their online environments**.

Spotlight 1: Top education factors focus on four areas for impact



- **Video:** highly professional, short, with almost no distractions away from the speaker
- **Navigation:** easy and intuitive. Users have an open view of a course's content at all times via a side navigation pane including units and subunits. A bottom menu is always visible, and it includes: learning resources, Q&A, student notes, and course overviews
- **Examination:** most top platforms use it as a way to retain user engagement and cement learning of key concepts

Exhibit 1: Four pillars of online education success

- **Community:** offers users an opportunity to engage with students from common courses through Q&A as well as with the whole student community through dedicated spaces built around incentivizing community interaction. Top platforms also take advantage of this space to curate community content, engage with users through community managers, and gather feedback from their customers.

Spotlight 2: For top players, freemium models are the way to go



Exhibit 2: % of top players by business model type

- **70% of top online education platforms offer some form of freemium service**
- Examples of these forms are: 1) free subscriptions for 30-days; 2) upfront payment + 30-day refund option; 3) a select number of courses offered for free to all registered users
- Platforms offering free content do it because their educational often have other purposes, such as marketing or community engagement for adjacent businesses

Spotlight 3: Top platforms place significant emphasis in the consideration and retention phases of the consumer journey

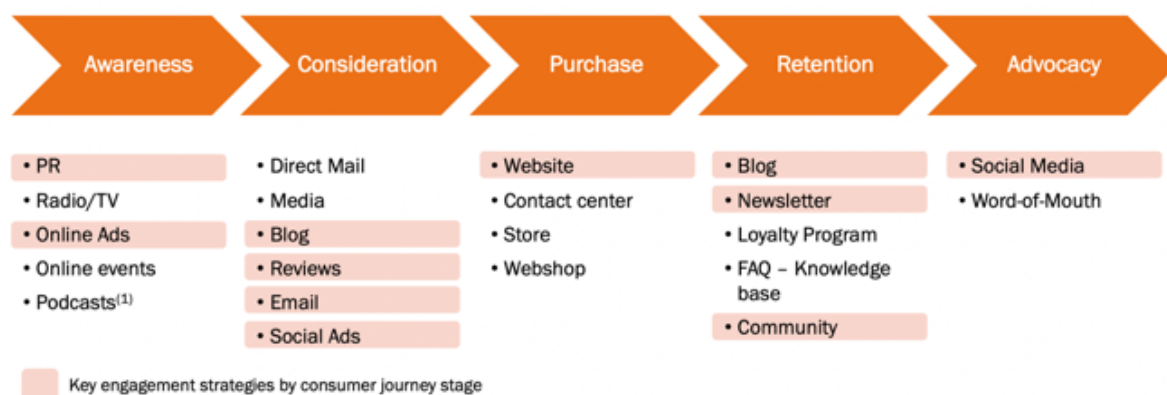


Exhibit 3: Engagement strategies of top online education platforms along the consumer journey

- To create awareness, PR and online advertisement are the most popular strategies used by top educational platforms
- In the consideration phase, the most popular strategies amongst top players are Blogs, Reviews, Email, and Social Ads
- 100% of the top platforms studied prefer to sell on their own website, rather than any other channel
- Community-building is a top strategy used to retain users, together with the use of a Blog and a Newsletter
- Top players rely on social media outlets to enable consumers to become advocates of their brands

An opportunity for all education players across the globe

The 2020 pandemic has shown significant challenges for offline education players around the world. Creating online experiences is a huge challenge and many are in the process of figuring out specific strategies for their niches.

Current market conditions have forced the education industry to make a leap and revisit the way in which they deliver content and do business. There is an opportunity for all players – from K-12 to vocational and niche educators - to be part of this wave.



About Renspire Insights:

We are a go-to-market strategy consulting firm focused on helping technology start-ups enter the Latin American market.

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