**Engage.EU Certificate in Digital Transformation**

**Platform Strategies**

**Course Syllabus**

**Lecturer: Shiva Shekhar**

**17. – 18. March 2023 & 24. – 25. March 2023**

**Course Abstract**

The course introduces the multi-sided platform business model and the importance of platform orchestration and governance strategies. It provides insights on the best practices to successfully interact with existing platforms and optimize the symbiotic relationship, and finally discusses evolution of new technologies into potential platforms. Students will have an opportunity to apply concepts from platform economics and organization using game theoretical tools and case studies to real world problems.

**Course Objectives**

* The aim of the course is to provide participants with the most important concepts in Digital Platforms.
* After the course, students will be able to understand the basics principles on network effects in multi-sided platform markets, types of platforms, how platforms are designed and how platforms orchestrate interactions between multiple sides and create value.
* Use insights from theories in platform markets and apply them to platforms in real world, identify the different types of platforms.
* Analyze pricing and design strategies employed by platforms and the rationale behind them. Understand platform pricing decisions.

**Evaluation and Grading**

The course will use a mix of lectures, case discussions and guest speakers. Mini-cases and problems will also be employed to make students apply their learning to practical situations.

Participants’ grade will be composed of

* 30% Team assignment/presentation (team grade)
* 70% Written essay (individual grade)

Team assignment (30%)

The team assignment is a presentation that must be completed as a group project. You need to form groups upto 5 students. Each team / group is assigned a certain case study, that needs to be studied in detail and presented in class. Each team / group should be prepared to present the slides with their solutions to the individual tasks. The answers to the questions of the case should be summarized on slides. All students are requested to be present during all team presentations. This way, we create an interactive and constructive learning environment.

The evaluation of teamwork is based on the following criteria:

* Presentation will be graded on the soundness of students’ analyses and recommendations and the quality of the contribution to the discussion.
* Argumentation: The essential information in the case is used to answer the questions.
* Analysis and conclusions: Convincing analysis and conclusions supported by facts and logical argumentation.
* Link to the course: Use and application of appropriate strategy concepts and procedures discussed in the course.
* Presentation: Well-structured discussion with a clear flow and effective answers to the case questions.

Written essay (70%)

Students will write an individual essay on the contents taught in the Digital Strategy course**.** Details of the essay and due date will be announced in the lecture.

**Readings**

**Mandatory Readings:**

* Parker, Geoffrey G., Marshall W. Van Alstyne, and Sangeet Paul Choudary*. Platform revolution: How networked markets are transforming the economy and how to make them work for you.* WW Norton & Company, 2016.
* Belleflamme, Paul, and Martin Peitz. *The Economics of Platforms*. Cambridge University Press, 2021.

**Complementary Readings:**

* <https://platformchronicles.substack.com/>
* Van Alstyne, Marshall W., Geoffrey G. Parker, and Sangeet Paul Choudary. "Pipelines, platforms, and the new rules of strategy." Harvard business review 94.4 (2016): 54-62.
* Edelman, Benjamin. "How to launch your digital platform." Harvard business review 93.4 (2015): 21.
* Feng, Zhu, and Iansiti Marco. "Why Some Platforms Thrive and Others Don't." Harvard Business Review (2019).

**Sessions**

**March 17, 2023: 12pm – 6pm**

**Course Opening:** Introduction to Digital Platforms and core concepts

* What are multi-sided digital platforms
* Types of platforms.
* Network effects, types of network effects and economies of scale.
* How do platforms overcome the chicken and egg problem?

**Discussion of Lecture Unit 1.1:** Digital Platform Business Models

* Types of platform business models.
* “Free platforms”, “Device funded platforms”, and hybrid platforms, marketplace platforms and others.
* Ways to monetize a platform: Advertisements, data, sales.

**March 18, 2023: 09am – 4pm**

**Discussion of Lecture Unit 2.1:** Platform design, governance and orchestration

* What is platform openness? What degree of openness should platforms employ?
* The opportunities and challenges presented by opening up a platform.
* How to harness network effects while protecting value creation?[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Discussion of Lecture Unit 2.1:** Platform participation strategies.

* What is the chicken and egg problem?
* What strategies can platforms use to overcome this challenge.
* Discussion on cases where these strategies are used.

**March 24, 2023: 12pm – 6pm**

**Discussion of Lecture Unit 3.1:** The role of data in platforms

* What is the role of data on a platform?
* What are the different data types collected by platforms?
* How do platforms monetize data?
* What are data driven network effects?

**Discussion of Lecture Unit 3.2:** Platform pricing decisions.

* What are the different ways platforms choose to monetize?
* When are the different pricing instruments chosen by platforms?
* Which side of the market should be charged and which side should be subsidized ?
* How do network effect impact pricing decisions ?
* How can platforms leverage data to improve pricing decisions.

**March 25, 2023: 09am – 4pm**

**Discussion of Lecture Unit 4.1:** Developing a Digital transformation Strategy

* The opportunities and challenges of digital transformation into a platform?
* Digital transformation (into platforms) strategies?
* Case studies on platform digital transformation**, 2022: 12:00 - 18:00**

**About the Lecturer**

Shiva Shekhar is an Assistant Professor in Information Systems at the Tilburg School of Economics and Management (TiSEM). Shiva’s research focuses on strategies in platform markets and understanding their impact on the ecosystem supported by the platform. His research offers clear managerial and policy recommendations.

Shiva has a master’s and a bachelor’s degree in Economics and completed his PhD in 2017 at the Duesseldorf Institute for Competition Economics which was focused on platform and supply chain economics. Between 2018 and 2020, Shiva was an economist at a consulting firm and consulted with firms on Mergers and Acquisitions as well as on anti-trust issues. During his stint as a consultant, Shiva mostly focused on big tech firms and advised on anti-trust concerns. From 2021 to 2022, he had a short stint as an Assistant Professor in Information Systems at the University of Passau.

1. Source link: https://platformchronicles.substack.com/p/network-effects-and-defensibility?s=r [↑](#footnote-ref-1)