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YUNO LEARNING: BUILDING MARKETING CHANNELS FOR ONLINE BUSINESS

Rudranil Chakrabortty and Bishakha Majumdar wrote this case solely to provide material for class discussion. The authors do not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation. The authors may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to protect confidentiality.

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In April 2020, India, like many other countries worldwide, was in the second month of a nationwide lockdown. A novel coronavirus had sparked a global pandemic of COVID-19 and widespread lockdown of non-essential economic activities to avoid contagion.[[1]](#footnote-1) However, for Harman Singh and his team at Yuno Learning Global Private Limited (Yuno Learning), not much had changed with regard to their work.

Yuno Learning, one of India’s leading live online training platforms for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS),[[2]](#footnote-2) operated in a fully remote working mode. It held teaching sessions and preparatory tests online, solicited customers online through various digital marketing channels, and held work meetings over conference calls. Hence, Yuno Learning did not have to close business during the lockdown. Further, while the global health crisis was threatening to derail the economy in many countries and negatively affect employment, online education was expected to see an upsurge as a result of a renewed focus on upskilling in a downward market.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Website visits had, indeed, increased for Yuno Learning since the lockdown started in India; however, course sales had stagnated. But this was not a new challenge; Singh had already been facing that challenge before the crisis hit the world. Yuno Learning, among its peers, already had an impressive website visit rate thanks to a broad-based marketing strategy the firm had adopted early to build brand awareness. The firm had also made efforts to attract leads from various affiliate sources. However, as was the case with every other website, only a percentage of the visits and leads converted to sales. Singh needed to solve that problem. How could he ensure that the maximum number of those who reached Yuno Learning through organic or paid marketing subscribed to the IELTS test preparation courses?

ABOUT THE INDUSTRY: ONLINE EDUCATION

Valued at US$101.1 billion[[4]](#footnote-4) in 2019, the education sector in India was one of the largest and fastest growing in the world.[[5]](#footnote-5) The sector was buoyed by India’s large population of youth, projected to be the world’s largest population of youth in 2020.[[6]](#footnote-6) At the same time, the government made education a fundamental right in 2010,[[7]](#footnote-7) creating a massive market for public and private providers of education for youth. India was also home to one of the largest labour forces globally, which created a thriving market for professional training and certification.[[8]](#footnote-8) In 2018, the government of India allowed 100 per cent foreign direct investment in the education sector, expanding the market to encourage international players to enter India’s education space.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Online education consisted of web-based distance learning through live or pre-recorded resources. It became popular in India as a result of the country’s affordable Internet rates (one of the most affordable globally),[[10]](#footnote-10) increased security in digital payments, and widespread use of smartphones. The government of India actively encouraged digital adoption and digital education, particularly in the rural areas, through various policies such as Digital India, e-Vidya Vahini, Vision Digital India, and SWAYAM. The result was that e-learning in India was projected to grow from $247 million in 2016 to $1.96 billion by 2021—making it the second-largest e-learning market in the world, catering to 9.5 million users and growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 44 per cent.[[11]](#footnote-11) In 2019, there were 3,500 educational start-ups in India catering to primary and secondary education through online tuitions and supplementary training, professional skilling and certifications, and training for competitive examinations (see Exhibit 1).

With a CAGR projected at 50.84 per cent, the online test preparation segment was the fastest-growing segment in India’s educational industry, projected to reach $90.75 billion by 2024.[[12]](#footnote-12) The segment included private and foreign players, notably BYJU’s, Pearson Education, and Kaplan Inc. These businesses provided training for the Indian civil service and provided other screening examinations for government and public-sector jobs, common admission tests for business schools, medical and engineering entrance examinations, and international screening examinations such as Graduate Record Examinations (GRE), the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the Graduate Management Admission Test, and IELTS. Approximately 30 million Indians attended competitive examinations,[[13]](#footnote-13) with more than 50 per cent appearing for the civil service and other government entrance examinations.[[14]](#footnote-14)

IELTS TRAINING: THE GATEWAY TO INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Home to the world’s largest youth population, India featured prominently in international education. Driven by the competition at home, many meritorious students sought to complete their education abroad. In 2019, India was among the world’s largest sources of outbound students, second only to China. The top three destinations were the United States, Canada, and Australia, followed by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.[[15]](#footnote-15)

IELTS was conducted by IDP Education Limited, an international education service, and the British Council, an international organization for cultural relations and education. The test of English language proficiency was compulsory for those who sought to migrate to English-speaking nations for education or work. IELTS scores were accepted in most countries that had English as the first language, such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, contributing to the popularity of the test among aspiring migrants to these countries. IELTS training alone was estimated to be a $150 million industry in India in 2019.[[16]](#footnote-16)

The IELTS industry was highly fragmented, with roughly 5 per cent of the industry falling into the organized sector.[[17]](#footnote-17) There were three types of providers: (1) local and regional coaching centres that delivered in-class training to students, (2) online training institutes, and (3) distance education institutes that provided educational materials for self-study. Some of these institutes, such as the British Council, Jamboree Education Private Limited, Fateh Education Consulting Private Limited, Triumphant Institute of Management Education Private Limited, and Edwise International, had a presence across India and even had branches outside the country. Others were well known at a regional level, such as Megamind Consultants Private Limited and Manya Education Private Limited in north India and Camford Academy and IELTS Academy in the south. Start-ups also featured prominently in this sector, with some of the popular companies being Magoosh and TheScoreBooster.com.

Typical customers for IELTS coaching were students or professionals who were price-sensitive and wanted value for money. Customers generally subscribed to a preparatory course two months before they planned to appear for the examination. The in-class model of education usually attracted young students, whereas working professionals preferred the more flexible options of online classes or self-paced study. Students also opted for the free media, such as tutorials on YouTube, free courses on Udemy and Coursera, and free IELTS materials available on educational websites.

The IELTS training industry also attracted students from other countries, such as Bangladesh, Malaysia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Iran, Turkey, and Brazil.

SINGH AND THE INCEPTION OF YUNO LEARNING

Educational innovations and entrepreneurship had always fascinated Singh. While undertaking his master of science in computer science at North Carolina State University in 2000–2002, Singh was the president of the university’s entrepreneurs’ network. It was also during this time that Singh developed an interest in the field of online education.

In 2002, soon after he graduated, Singh launched his first venture, Sikhya Solutions, which provided e-learning solutions to educational institutions such as Duke University, North Carolina State University, and the University of North Carolina System. In 2006, Singh launched AuthorSTREAM.com (AuthorSTREAM), a free platform for sharing PowerPoint presentations, which became the second largest platform of its kind. In 2007, AuthorSTREAM became a part of Singh’s next venture, WizIQ, a cloud-based platform for hosting online courses. In 2015, WizIQ was ranked among the world’s top five learning management systems,[[18]](#footnote-18) with over 70,000 courses catering to more than 4.5 million customers. By 2017, WizIQ had partnered with Microsoft Corporation to provide online teaching technology and services to the government of India for the SWAYAM initiative.

In an interview with UpGrad in 2017, Singh said,

The most fundamental question one has to answer is why do they even want to be an entrepreneur. There are different reasons for different people. It could be the opportunity staring [you] in your face, and you just don’t want to let it go. Jeff Bezos started like that. The other is that you really want to make a dent in the universe, as Steve Jobs puts it, and you get on an activist kind of mission to do that. Another is, you just want to be your own boss and you want to start your own business. . . . For me, it was definitely the more activist kind where can I really make a huge dent in the universe. And there I narrowed down to education because education has that possibility. . . . I was always interested in the education industry. I love teaching. I was a tutor in my career; I was a teacher at several stages. . . . I think I’m a good teacher. . . . And I was in a unique position as a technologist. [At] the same time, I saw an opportunity. So . . . several things got together and [there was a] kind of a voice inside [that] said, “This is my space.”[[19]](#footnote-19)

As WizIQ was scaling new heights in online education, Singh’s attention moved to a new opportunity. While on a trip to his hometown, Chandigarh, he noticed a surge in IELTS training advertisements, indicating a booming market with possibilities for business innovation. Singh noticed that while IELTS training institutes were plentiful, the presence of online training was relatively low. This absence of online training was a challenge for the aspirants, many of whom were working professionals and could not make time for the regular classroom. Students from small towns were also compromised because city-based training centres were inaccessible to them. What was available online almost entirely depended on recorded video lectures, limiting the scope for real-time problem-solving and interaction with the faculty members.

Singh felt that there was a chance to make a difference by offering IELTS aspirants in India live online English language training, which, at that time, was provided by only one other company in India, IELTS Ninja. In November 2018, Singh launched Yuno Learning—a dedicated platform for delivering live online training for IELTS examination.

YUNO LEARNING: STRUCTURE, CULTURE, PRODUCT, AND CUSTOMERS

Singh’s previous experiences in the software services business had taught him that often firms failed because of a lack of coordination between the marketing, sales, and product teams. Thus, Singh kept the structure at Yuno Learning relatively flat, facilitating interdepartmental coordination and flexible decision-making. He eliminated the slow email mode of communication and moved all discussions and coordination activities to Slack, a popular online business communication tool. For daily internal meetings, he implemented the use of Zoom meetings and Skype, and had everyone in the business trained on using these tools.

The core teams consisted of the instructors, responsible for the design and delivery of the classes, student evaluation, personalized mentoring, and demo sessions; the marketing team, responsible for increasing traffic and leads (potential customers, website visitors, or others who shared their contact details for product enquiry); and the sales team, responsible for converting leads and prospects into sales. The firm also used the services of a technical support team, responsible for designing and maintaining platforms and providing information technology support to employees and students. That team and a finance team were outsourced operations (see Exhibit 2).

Product Offering at Yuno Learning: Live Online Classes

Yuno Learning used Zoom’s meetings and webinar platform for delivering live online classes, and it used Google’s suite of products for other operational necessities. Students could select between a four-week focused course on writing and speaking skills or a six-week comprehensive course (see Exhibit 3). For a meaningful learning experience, students needed to be equipped with stable high-speed Internet and functional English speaking and writing skills. The student base at Yuno Learning was almost entirely made up of individuals from India. Still, there had been students from the United Kingdom and Dubai as well.

Yuno Learning offered certain key value propositions to its customers. These included separate live training for each of the IELTS components—writing, speaking, reading, and listening—which helped the student grow proficient in each area; recorded classes for revisiting the lectures at the student’s convenience; and more than 100 free practice tests. To ensure a comfortable live classroom experience and individualized attention to every student, each group was limited to 10 students. In addition, there were one-on-one live mentoring sessions for feedback on progress and speaking practice. All instructors had at least 10 years of experience in training for competitive examinations such as IELTS, GRE, and TOEFL.

The live classes ran in four batches: morning, afternoon, evening, and night, all on weekdays. An instructor typically taught two batches in a day. Most students preferred to join the 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. classes. In the one-on-one live mentoring sessions, students practised their speaking skills and received feedback from the trainers. Singh himself conducted many of these mentoring sessions.

Apart from individualized mentoring, Yuno Learning fostered peer learning. Students in a batch were connected to one another through WhatsApp groups where students could share queries and have their doubts clarified. Efforts were made to keep classes fun, updated, and personalized, curated to the needs of the audience. Singh described Yuno Learning’s approach:

The first thing you need to have in mind when trying to capture your modern learners’ attention is this: Don’t make them wait. This means you have to make your point right away; otherwise, they will get distracted and you’ll lose them. . . . Grab their attention by explaining exactly how the e-learning course will improve their individual performance and how it will benefit their personal or professional lives. In addition, make it brief; modern learners don’t have time to lose, so tell them what they need and want to know and nothing more. This goes for the rest of e-learning course too; use bite-sized chunks of e-learning content to get your message across, include only the most relevant data, and consider using infographics which are very popular among modern learners, as they make information very easy to grasp.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Once a course was completed for a batch, the instructor for that batch had a week off. During this week, the instructor conducted demonstration (demo) sessions on the website for new prospects, clarifying the design and content of the program and teaching a sample topic. Prospective students were likely to subscribe for a course if they liked the instructor who provided the demo, and they typically preferred to take the course with that same instructor. At the end of each week, all of the prospects who had newly subscribed to the course were assigned to one or more batches, to be taught by the same instructor for the next four to six weeks.

In addition to their regular pay, the instructors received incentives based on the number of prospects who subscribed to the course after attending the instructor’s demo. This system encouraged the instructors to continuously improve their teaching, and it provided the instructors with immediate feedback on the efficacy of their demos.

Classes at Yuno Learning were highly rated for their interactive nature, flexibility, and individualized attention to students (see Exhibit 4).

Marketing Channels at Yuno Learning

The marketing and sales teams were involved in attracting prospects and facilitating their journey on the platform to a subscription (see Exhibit 5). Paid marketing mainly consisted of Google Ads (contributing to about 46 per cent of the subscriptions), affiliate marketing with aggregator platforms such as Sulekha (26 per cent), and Facebook advertisements. Yuno Learning’s Facebook page had 8,600 “likes,”[[21]](#footnote-21) and its Facebook Group on IELTS preparation had over 2,000 members.[[22]](#footnote-22)

Content writers from Yuno Learning regularly responded to IELTS-related queries on the question-and-answer platform Quora. Content from the live classes was also posted on YouTube and Facebook. The paid and organic social media marketing efforts yielded another 17 per cent of the subscriptions. Organic search—Google page ranking, referral traffic, and direct searches—contributed to 8 per cent of the subscriptions. Organic marketing efforts also included the frequent blogs posted on the Yuno Learning website on various topics related to IELTS.[[23]](#footnote-23)

Although Yuno Learning experimented with multiple marketing channels, Singh decided that, in keeping with prevailing industry practices, the marketing team would reduce the focus on those channels where the conversion ratio (i.e., the number of subscriptions in proportion to the generated leads) would be less than 5 per cent.

Multiple Funnels: The Customer Journey at Yuno Learning

Once a visitor reached Yuno Learning’s website, the most direct path for them was to read the product descriptions and subscribe to one of the two paid courses. However, the relative newness of the concept of live online classes in the IELTS space made it unlikely that visitors would readily subscribe without a demo or trial session. Hence, Yuno Learning made provisions for trial sessions, demos, and other free content that was made available on the website with a free user account (see Exhibit 6).

To attend a demo, the visitor needed to create a free user account and then register for the session. On registration, the visitor (now called a prospect) immediately received a welcome email from Yuno Learning, detailing the offerings. The prospect also received a counselling call from a member of the sales team, who gathered the prospect’s requirements and provided them with instructions for joining the demo session. The sales team also discussed with the prospect their preference for generic or academic IELTS, problem areas for the curriculum, and convenient schedules for joining live classes. The sales team observed the demos. At the end of the session, the instructor briefed the sales team about the prospects who seemed promising. The sales team followed up with the promising prospects, reassessing their requirements and matching them to the offering that best suited their needs. Those who subscribed for the paid courses were assigned to the next new batch.

Yuno Learning also offered unlimited access to free practice tests to those who subscribed with a free user account. Because the IELTS syllabus seldom changed, the battery of practice tests was created with a one-time effort from instructors—an investment with multiple returns. Free practice tests were a popular search online, and this strategy was adopted in the hope of bringing search traffic to the website. Users of free practice tests were also contacted with a remarketing pitch for Yuno Learning’s paid courses.

Before the demo sessions became the practice, Yuno Learning had experimented with other forms of customer engagement. The paid courses were preceded by a free class format; prospects who established a free account with Yuno Learning were offered unlimited free live classes, with no hidden costs. However, the content of these free classes was limited to only a few topics from the syllabus. Those who enrolled in the free classes were connected to an automated system using emails, text messages, and WhatsApp. The system sent regular communication, with reminders about classes and their times. During the class, instructors were responsible for convincing the students of the value of the paid course. Prospects keen on purchase were approached by the sales team to close the deal, while prospects who still seemed undecided became a part of the remarketing efforts through WhatsApp, text messages, Google Ads, and emails. While this marketing strategy resulted in subscriptions, Singh wanted to evaluate a few more strategies before finalizing the best funnel mix. Thus, in mid-2019, the free classes were replaced by a free trial format.

The free trials arose from Yuno Learning’s temporary experiment with open classes. Rather than assign students to classes in batches, each open class was a stand-alone in terms of content and difficulty level, making it possible for students to join a course at any point in time. The prospect of peer-to-peer learning was low in these classes because the students and their capacities were different in each class, but the open class concept offered flexibility to learners who wanted to start immediately or had to miss a few classes midway. Yuno Learning offered a limited experience of these open classes as free trials, allowing interested prospects to join two ongoing live open classes for free. For their access to continue beyond the trial period, prospects had to pay for the full course. The open classes were, however, not successful because of scheduling issues and the instructors’ challenge in teaching an audience that changed daily. Participants also reported low engagement in the sessions due to the lack of peer-to-peer learning. Therefore, open classes were discontinued after a short while in favour of the batch system.

In mid-2019, the marketing team noticed that keywords related to IELTS mock tests were getting good traffic in Google Search. This meant that prospects were sometimes looking for not classes but practice for IELTS exams. Sensing vibrant traffic here, Singh structured a new mock test-only course. This course consisted of four comprehensive mock tests for IELTS, evaluated by Yuno Learning’s instructors, and a live four-hour discussion with an instructor to clarify doubts and discuss scope for improvement. When prospects registered for the mock test course, they were taken to a regular demo class to get a feel for the live discussion with an instructor.

The initiative looked promising initially, but as more and more prospects were consulted, it became evident that the mock test market was flooded with free or low-cost mock tests. Also, students cared little about the quality of the mock tests and looked for heavily discounted prices. Yuno Learning could match these prices only if it dropped the quality of its evaluation and decreased the number of evaluated attempts. The consultation would also have to be reduced from four hours to one hour, at best. Singh was not willing to compromise on quality, so the mock test-only course was taken down in early 2020. The team decided to hold the product until the market seemed ready for it. Free practice tests, however, were kept available on the website to draw organic traffic.

Apart from those who engaged actively on the platform, a significant flow of visitors came to the Yuno Learning platform but did not subscribe to any of the paid or free offerings (visit and drop). Other visitors would establish a free account on the website but never return for further engagement (register and drop). Then there were prospects with free accounts who expressed interest in a demo but did not attend it (interest and drop). There were also those who dropped out after attending the demo, choosing not to subscribe (attend and drop). Some prospects attempted the free practice tests but did not subscribe to the paid offerings (practice and drop). Finally, there were also cases, although infrequent, where customers subscribed to paid classes but did not attend them (subscribe and drop). Yuno Learning continued to engage these prospects and visitors through remarketing, employing various channels such as emails, WhatsApp, paid remarketing advertisements, and text messages (see Exhibit 7).

By 2020, the live online IELTS coaching industry had seen many new entrants. Other players in this domain offered differentiated features, such as a one-on-one classroom model at Mindmine Global and Simpli English, and unlimited live classes and one-month trial access at E2Language (see Exhibit 8).

THE DILEMMA: THE MOST EFFICIENT CHANNEL AND FUNNEL

The core team met over video conference in April 2020. The pandemic seemed to weigh on everyone’s mind as the IELTS examination was postponed or cancelled in over 70 countries.[[24]](#footnote-24) When the conversation returned to work, Singh noted,

The COVID crisis is both a challenge and an opportunity. Foreign travel seems out of the question for another quarter of a year, at least. What is worse, there will be a psychological impact of this crisis on people planning to move abroad for work or education. The virus has shown that countries worldwide, developing or developed, are equally vulnerable to such a pandemic; this might worry people about venturing away from home in a foreign land. At the same time, economic turbulence might turn people to plan for alternatives. Lockdown gives them more free time than usual to invest in education. It is time we pace up our activities, plug the holes in our strategies, and ensure that we do not stray from the target due to the turbulence.

Sunil, from the sales team, suggested, “To pace up, the straightforward way is to bring more people to the demo sessions. Leads have been up since we tied up with the affiliate firms. Sales have flattened, as I can see, but that could be due to the COVID crisis. I feel the affiliate model is working well for us.”

Komal, Sunil’s teammate, agreed, adding, “However, we need more hands if we must take care of all the leads we are receiving. I wish there was a way to know if a lead is actually planning a purchase or just browsing around, but I guess we are helpless there.”

Neil from the marketing team put his view forward:

We have seen the organic, direct, and advertisement traffic convert better than the traffic from the other channels till now. Last year, most of the students forwarded by the affiliate were interested only in local classroom coaching. This year, amid COVID-19, I have a hunch that the leads from the new affiliates will be more open to online coaching. But we are yet to see this in results.

Vinita, the most experienced instructor, offered her perspective:

Every now and then in the demo classes, I am finding many students have an erratic Internet connection. Even after all the preparation and effort, the Internet connection is creating a poor experience for the students. Another problem is that some students are not able to keep up with the curriculum because their English is too weak. Around 10 per cent of our students take a refund and leave either because of technical issues or because they cannot keep up with the curriculum.

“The first problem may have to do with customers who depend on low bandwidth mobile Internet,” Neil observed. “Initially, I believed that the low bandwidth was related to the location of the prospect. However, the CRM [customer relationship management] reports show that such problems may surface even in metropolitan areas.”

The team spent an hour brainstorming various solutions. They noted that the affiliate model was generating about 26 per cent of the total leads, so more money could be invested there. The sales team needed more people to keep up with the additional traffic. On average, each sales personnel made 20–22 calls a day, each call lasting over 15 minutes, to resolve queries and counsel the prospect about future directions. This led to backlogs. The chances of converting a lead who was approached after three days went down by 70 per cent.

The sales team suggested that when a prospect dropped out after a demo, a provision should be available to give the prospect a few ongoing paid sessions free of cost. This would help to convince the prospects of the value of the classes. The instructors observed that this practice would, however, affect the batch dynamics, with new people requiring extra attention mainly because they needed to be convinced of the value of a subscription. Instructors recommended continuing with the practice of sharing occasional live sessions on Facebook and directing prospects there for an experience.

The marketing team believed that while Google Ads was still a significant marketing channel for the business, it was necessary to invest in other channels so that the overreliance on Google Ads could be mitigated. Although the organic channel looked promising, it was a long-term wager for the business and would take another one to two years to generate a decent volume of prospects.

As Singh went through the recommendations, he noticed one trend. As usually happened in start-ups, the early months of the operations were spent experimenting. The core team tried multiple channels to engage customers based on popular industry practices and patterns noticed in customer behaviour. Many of these solutions were intuitively appealing, but a few of them were difficult to continue unless more resources were invested in them. While the innovator in Singh wanted to experiment, his founder’s acumen told him that since resources were limited (Yuno Learning was presently operating on seed funding), it was essential that the money went to strengthening the route that earned the maximum dividend. He wondered if it was time to take stock and get rid of all channels with a conversion ratio of less than 5 per cent.

As everyone fell quiet, Singh concluded,

It seems that we have tried a number of ways to bring people to our website, and I would not be surprised if each has led to some form or other of customer engagement. In the early months, our focus was on building word-of-mouth and awareness for our brand, so we went all out when it came to engaging with customers. However, every prospect we bring in imposes a responsibility on us to engage the prospect in the best possible way and to generate a positive customer experience. We must identify the workflow that smooths our operations and best engages the prospects. From now on, we want to invest only in quality traffic and focus on those leads that have a high likelihood of conversion. While approaching the problem with a broad brush has its own merits, it is time we discover who are worth our time and money.

As he pondered the data, the choice that prevailed in Singh’s mind was that of quality over quantity. How could he ensure that the people who reached Yuno Learning were valuable prospects who subscribed to the course?

EXHIBIT 1: SEGMENTS IN THE ONLINE EDUCATION MARKET IN INDIA

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Segment** | **Projected Size by 2024 (US$ Billions)** | **CAGR (%)** |
| Supplemental education (for primary and secondary students) | 1.62 | 46.48 |
| Test preparation | 1.24 | 50.84 |
| Re-skilling and certification | 1.23 | 36.95 |
| Higher education language | 0.06 | 40.74 |

Note: CAGR = compound annual growth rate; US$1 = ₹75.72 as of April 30, 2020.

Source: Netscribes (India) Pvt. Ltd., *Online Education Market in India Report (2018–2023)*, October 2018, accessed April 30, 2021, https://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/4667727/online-education-market-in-india-2018-2023#rela0-5013095.

EXHIBIT 2: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AT YUNO LEARNING

CEO

(HRM & Strategy)

Finance

(Outsourced)

Technical

(Outsourced)

Marketing

(N = 3)

Sales

(N = 3)

Instructors

(N = 6)

*Average experience of 8 years*

*Average experience of 2 years*

*Average experience of 10+ years*

Note: CEO = chief executive officer; HRM = human resource management.

Source: Prepared by the case authors based on company documents.

EXHIBIT 3: DETAILS OF PRODUCT OFFERINGS AT YUNO LEARNING

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Comprehensive Course** | **Writing & Speaking Course** |
| Why enrol? | 5-week comprehensive and rigorous IELTS program | 4-week program focused on writing and speaking |
| Price | ₹7,800 (US$103.95) | ₹4,900 (US$65.30) |
| Program duration | 38 days (5 weeks) | 30 days (4 weeks) |
| IELTS skills covered | Writing Task 1, Writing Task 2, Speaking, Reading, and Listening | Writing Task 1, Writing Task 2, and Speaking |
| Total hours of instruction | 40 hours | 20 hours |
| Group classes | 34 hours (each class 90 minutes long) | 15 hours (each class 90 minutes long) |
| 1-to-1 classes | 6 hours (12 sessions of 30 minutes each):  • 8 speaking sessions (4 hours)  • 4 writing feedback sessions (2 hours) | 5 hours (10 sessions of 30 minutes each):  • 8 speaking sessions (4 hours)  • 4 writing feedback sessions (2 hours) |
| Class days | Monday to Friday | Monday to Friday |
| Timings | Batches available at different times, morning until late evening | Batches available at different times, morning until late evening |
| Homework assignments | Yes, at least 1 hour every day | Yes, at least 1 hour every day |
| Skill-specific practice tests | 45+ hours of practice tests available on each skill of IELTS | 45+ hours of practice tests available on each skill of IELTS |
| IELTS vocabulary and grammar guides | Yes | Yes |
| Writing assignments with correction | 18 | 12 |
| Full-length mock tests with analysis and feedback | 3 full-length mock tests | 1 full-length mock test |
| *The Official Cambridge Guide To IELTS* (book) provided | Yes | No |

Note: ₹ = INR = Indian rupees, US$1 = ₹75.72 on April 30, 2020; IELTS = International English Language Testing System.

Source: Prepared by the case authors based on company documents.

EXHIBIT 4: SAMPLE STUDENT FEEDBACK AT YUNO LEARNING

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Student** | **Feedback** |
| Gurbir Singh | The modus operandi of the instructors is according to the psyche of the students. Moreover, the mock tests that I took helped me assess my strengths and weaknesses. |
| Sheetal Issar | The best part of Yuno Learning online course is that they were approachable all the time. They will even help you after your course. |
| Angelin Rachel | The flexibility in time is a boon for working people. |
| Akriti Pandey | Harman Sir and Sunita Ma’am have helped me a lot in my IELTS preparation. Nobody can feel any difference between physical classes and online classes because they even take one-to-one sessions to work on the weaker areas of students. |
| Rajat Yash Bajaj | It is difficult to find an institute that is not into money-making like other institutes. You must join the institute to achieve your goal. |

Source: Prepared by the case authors based on company documents.

EXHIBIT 5: THE FLOW OF PROSPECTS FROM VARIOUS MARKETING CHANNELS AT YUNO LEARNING, averaged per month

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Channels** | **Time** | **Marketing Resources and Promotion Cost**  **(US$ Approx.)** | **No. of Prospects** | | | | |
| **Website**  **Traffic** | **Sign-Ups to Free User Account** | **Registered in Demo, Free, or Trial Classes** | **Attended Demo, Free, or Trial Classes** | **Subscriptions** |
| Google Ads | 2018 to current | 1,624.4 | 3,536 | 800 | 390 | 210 | 40 |
| Direct website visit or visits through organic search | 2018 to current | 660.3 | 3,800 | 141 | 75 | 42 | 18 |
| Affiliate | mid-2019 to early 2020 | 237.7 | **\*** | 450 | 67 | 30 | 2 |
| Social media (paid and organic) | mid-2019 to current | 198.1 | 752 | 300 | 53 | 25 | 4 |
| Remarketing (WhatsApp, text messages, emails, Google Ads, Facebook) | early 2019 to mid-2019 | 33.0 | 232 | 51 | 22 | 17 | 3 |

Note: \*Leads through affiliate partners are treated as direct sign-ups to Yuno Learning. Other channels (referrals, emails) led to a small but negligible number of traffic and conversions. Figures have been disguised and are representative. US$1 = ₹75.72 on April 30, 2020*.*

Source: Prepared by the case authors based on company documents.

EXHIBIT 6: FUNNEL MIX AT YUNO LEARNING

Register for the live demo session

**Subscription**

Sales

Sales

Sales

Arrive at the website

Arrive at the website

Arrive at the website

Arrive at the website

Arrive at the website

Arrive at the website

Sign up on the website

Sign up on the website

Sign up on the website

Sign up on the website

Sign up on the website

Sign up on the website

Register for the live demo session

Avail of the free practice tests

Register for the mock test course

Attend the trial classes

Attend free unlimited classes

**1. Direct**

**2. Demo Session**

**3. Practice Test**

**4. Mock Test**

**5. Trial Class**

**6. Free Class**

Sales

Sales

Sales

Sales

Sales

Sales

Point at which sales team reaches out to the prospects

Non-operative funnels

Sales

Source: Prepared by the case authors based on company documents.

EXHIBIT 7: FUNNEL DETAILS of Customers’ Journeys, Averaged per MOnth

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Funnels** | **Time** | **Marketing Resources and Promotion Cost**  **(US$ Approx.)** | **No. of Prospects** | | | | |
| **Funnel Entrances** | **Sign-Ups to Free User Account** | **Registered in Demo, Free. or Trial Classes** | **Attended Demo, Free, or Trial Classes** | **Subscriptions** |
| 1. Direct | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* |
| 2. Demo sessions | Late 2019 to current | 1,914.9 | 8,230 | 1,224 | 480 | 238 | 62 |
| 3. Practice test | Since inception | 660.3 | 748 | 615 | 60 | 34 | 5 |
| 4. Mock tests | Mid-2019 to late 2019 | 118.9 | 1,956 | 210 | 30 | 20 | 5 |
| 5. Trial classes | Mid-2019 | 264.1 | 1,240 | 145 | 69 | 20 | 0 |
| 6. Free classes | Early & Mid-2019 | 792.4 | 3,670 | 678 | 450 | 120 | 20 |

\* Not considered in this table, as no marketing resources were invested to optimize this funnel.

Note: Figures have been disguised and are representative; US$1 = ₹75.72 on April 30, 2020.

Source: Prepared by the case authors based on company documents.

EXHIBIT 8: MAJOR COMPETITORS IN LIVE ONLINE IELTS TRAINING, INDIA

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Company** | **Specialties** | **Price Range (US$)** |
| IELTS Ninja | * Focused skill-based programs * Extensive programs with unlimited hours of personal training | $65.31–533.12 |
| Simpli English | * Completely 1-on-1 training * Other services: spoken English and corporate training | $199.92 |
| E2Language | * Unlimited live classes * Other services: training for PTE, TOEFL, and OET | $119–289 |
| Mindmine Global | * Both online and off-line models * Other services: SAT, PTE, TOEFL, OET, voice and accent training, spoken English | Figures not available |
| Individual freelance trainers | * Highly localized presence * Personalized attention with small batch sizes or 1-on-1 teaching | $39.97–106.60 approx. |

Note: IELTS = International English Language Testing System; OET = Occupational English Test; PTE = Pearson Language Tests; SAT = Scholastic Aptitude Test; TOEFL = Test of English as a Foreign Language; US$1 = ₹75.72 on April 30, 2020.

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