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Practicum by Yandex: Existing marketing approach identification and analysis of the on-line IT education market capacity and local consumer tastes in India

1.A Practicum by Yandex Project Summary

The Project - Practicum by Yandex. The project was started in 2019 by Yandex, a Russian multinational corporation specializing in Internet-related products and services, including transportation, search and information services, eCommerce, navigation, mobile applications, and online advertising. Yandex is the largest technology company in Russia.

About the project - The Practicum Service is a for-profit educational service with advanced professional training programs offered by Yandex.

Range of products on the English-speaking market: Practicum launched 3 IT professional courses on the English market: 1) Data analyst; 2) Data Scientist; 3) Web Developer. Coming soon: 4) Back-end Developer; 5) Data engineer; 6) Neural Networks specialist; 7) Interface Designer; 8) Product Manager; 9) Test Engineer.)

Customer base - B2C/B2B (mixed). The Practicum platform provides individual B2C educational services, as well can also start to provide corporate B2B CPD programs. The Russian language platform is targeting all Russian-speaking markets (Russia, Belorussia, Ukraine, and some CIS states). The English speaking platform is mainly North America market-oriented (the headquarters of the company are located in the USA), but it is targeting all the English-speaking users worldwide. The current digital marketing plan reviews only the English version of the Practicum Platform.

Main global competitors on the English-speaking market – Udacity, DataCamp, DataQuest, and Lambda-School**.**

	Practicum	**Udacity**	**Datacamp**	**DataQuest**	**LambdaSchool**
Area of Expertise	Web development Data analysis Data science	Programming and development AI Cloud computing Data Science Business Autonomous systems	Python Programmer Quantitative Analyst Data Analyst Data Engineer Data Scientist R Programmer Statistician Machine Learning	Data analyst-R Data analyst -Python Data Scientist -Python Data Engineer	Data science Full-Stack web iOS Development UX Design
Rating of Platform (based on the feedback of students)	Very high rating (on the average 4,65) on the consumer review websites by this moment of time (a lot of satisfied reviews on independent websites)	Very high rating (on the average 4,65) on the consumer review websites	High rating (on the average 4,3) on the consumer review websites	Very high rating (on the average 4,9) on the consumer review websites	Very high rating (on the average 4,8) on the consumer review websites
Content Strategy	**Not well-established content strategy.** The marketing strategy can be named as global without any additional local accents. There is a blog on Medium, but all the competitors in addition to the Medium blog have their internal blogs. Right now Practicum doesn't produce content that resonates with the major problems and reasons (pain points) of the targeted audience. **Why do people decide to start a new profession? How to do it in the best way?** Right now the articles, written on the Medium blog have very basic information about major technologies, which can be found anywhere online.	**Well-established inbound strategy.** Udacity blog has a really good organized content calendar and strategy. A true inbound content strategy. There are are a lot of articles not only about technologies but also like «UX designer salaries and how to become a UX designer». This topic resonates with the pain point of the targeted audience. **Why do people may decide to change their profession and start something absolutely new?** Udacity implements storytelling strategy as well. This approach motivates people.	**Well-established Inbound strategy**. Datacamp managed to build a TRUE engaged Data scientist and machine learning community where they share career insights and technological secrets with participants. They have a built-in platform for discussions, interaction, networking and exchanging of knowledge. Although Datacamp audience already knows what they are looking for there are still motivational articles like **Data Science Career Planning AMA: Answering Top Job Search Questions**	**Well-established Inbound strategy.** The blog topics are not only about technology but also resonate with the targeted audience's pain points and answers many questions on their minds. **What Do You Really Need to Learn for Data Science?** It Depends. **Success stories like** *Four years later still using data science skills from data quest every day* **How to find and choose the best data science courses**	**Inbound marketing strategy.** The company is producing a lot of new content on a regular basis containing inspirational storytelling from student success stories. For Example: *Improve Your Job Application Success With These 6 Hacks* *18 Tips For Success at Your First UX Job* *Its never too late to learn to code*
Email Marketing	Yandex collects approval from sending promotional emails and assignment reminders. However, this newsletter strategy is not actively utilized at this time.	Email-marketing is a part of the inbound content marketing strategy.	Email-marketing is a part of the inbound content marketing strategy	Email-marketing is a part of the inbound content marketing strategy.	Email-marketing is a part of the content marketing strategy

SMM	Very neutral style, same posts on different platforms. No Twitter and Li icon on the Practicum website. Unified design and style. FB 196+ Tw 35+	SMM is a part of the inbound content marketing strategy. Udacity built a loyal community on Social Media platforms. FB 760 000+ Tw 225 000+	SMM is a part of the inbound strategy FB 879 563+ Tw 47 000+ YouTube 89 000+	High level of engagement on SM platforms, very loyal communities FB 60 000+ Tw 9000+	Proactive approach on SMM, FB 28 000+ Tw 52 000+
Global vs International Strategy	Application of a single marketing strategy in the worldwide market, for a product or service.	Application of a single marketing strategy in the worldwide market, for a product or service.	Application of a single marketing strategy in the worldwide market, for a product or service.	Application of a single marketing strategy in the worldwide market, for a product or service.	Application of a single marketing strategy in the worldwide market, for a product or service.
Price of Courses	$100-$140 a month	From $199 on sale to $399 a month on the average	Basic $25 per month Premium $33.25 per month	Basic monthly $29 per month Premium annual $33,25 per month Premium monthly $49 per month	Income Share Agreement Option 17% of income for the first 2 years after completion
UX/UI assessment	Amazing UI (most modern web design trends). Very stylish. Very good UX. Wow-effect	Very plain design (looks like Udemy or Coursera websites), very good UX, no wow-effect	Very plain and neutral design, very good UX, no wow-effect	Very plain and neutral design, very good UX, no wow-effect	Stylish UI design, very good UX, women-oriented design

According to quantitative and qualitative marketing research, the IT education in India has its own peculiarities and specific features, which have to be considered before localization of the marketing strategy and entering the local market with an educational online IT product or investing additional resources in the promotion (launching local campaigns).

Local competitors in India are:

1) Formal IT institutes, which provide real university degrees. It should be noted that traditionally the parents decide for Indian children which IT profession to choose and what institute to pick up.

2) Very cheap and basic online courses at Udemy and Coursera. Many Indians who don't have the means to attend a formal institute and are usually not able to invest a lot of money in any courses.

3) Many will choose Youtube videos and self-study tutorials to learn on their own.

	Practicum	**Formal degrees**	**Udemy**	**Coursera**	**Youtube (self-studies)**
Area of Expertise	Web development Data analysis Data science	Wide range of IT specializations (some of the technologies are outdated)	Broad specialization	Broad specialization	Any topic
Rating of Platform: Based on the feedback from students about the course	Very high rating (on the average 4,65) by this moment of time (a lot of satisfied reviews on independent websites)	Depending on Institute and its degree course.	Not very high platform ranking (on the average 2,5). Each course has its own rating system	The not very high ranking of the platform (on the average 3). Each course has its own rating.	Each Youtube channel has its own rating based on the number of followers

Channel of client acquisition	**Online** Not a well-established content strategy. There is a blog on Medium, but all the competitors in addition to the Medium blog have a blog on the platforms too. In Russia, the Yandex brand attracts clients because its brand is well-known to Russians.	**Online+Offline** Well-known brands use offline and online local campaigns to generate word of mouth recommendations of friends and relatives.	**Online** Well-established platform digital marketing strategy's with additional opportunities for course authors to boost their sales and market their courses.	**Online** Well-established platform digital marketing strategy with additional opportunities for course authors to boost their sales and market their courses. Very often top online academies and IT giants create courses on these platforms in order to boost brand awareness and show their level of expertise in this or that field.	**Online** Each YouTube channel has its own marketing strategy.
Price of courses	**$100-$140 per month**	**$70-$100 per month**	**$10 per course**	**$29-$99 per course** Students from emerging countries can get financial aid from Coursera and study for free	**Free**
UX/UI assessment	Amazing UI (most modern web design trends). Very stylish. Very good UX.	Formal institutes started to implement online education, but many of their platforms are outdated.	Very plain design, very good UX, very nice high-quality video explanations are available.	Very plain design, very good UX. The quality of videos and VoiceOver depends on the author and may vary from clip to clip.	The quality of video and VoiceOver depends on the channel author.
Why Indians would invest in this product?	To get a high-quality course with practical support and real coding experience.	Formal education means a lot in India. In India, you can't find a good job without a university degree. It is a very competitive environment. Parents in most cases decide what university to choose for their child.	To start work as a freelancer. To learn new skills and to be able to enter the IT profession. Best suited for those that didn't get a university degree. This option is popular because of the reduced costs.	To start work as a freelancer. To learn new skills and to be able to enter the IT profession. Best suited for those that didn't get a university degree. This option is popular because of the reduced costs.	To start work as a freelancer. To learn new skills and to be able to enter the IT profession. Best suited for those that didn't get a university degree. This option is popular because of the reduced costs.
The main challenge for Indian customers	High costs	Very often a lot of outdated information and technologies	Videos alone are not a very good system of education. They lack assignments and many find it hard to become motivated to continue learning.	Videos alone are not a very good system of education. They lack assignments and many find it hard to become motivated to continue learning.	Videos alone are not a very good system of education. They lack assignments and many find it hard to become motivated to continue learning.

1.B Analysis of the Indian market of online education, Indian career/education culture and nuances which need to be considered before launching Practicum in India

PEST Analysis

Political factors - 100 percent FDI (automatic route) is allowed in the education sector in India. The Government of India has taken initiatives like National Accreditation Regulatory Authority Bill for Higher Educational and the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill [1;2], to encourage more education.

Economic factors - The education sector in India is estimated at USD 101.1 billion in FY19. The number of colleges and universities in India reached 39,050 colleges and 903 universities in 2020. The country has become the second-largest market for e-learning after the US.

The educational sector in India is expected to reach $1.96 billion (USD) by 2021 with around 9.5 million users. India's higher education segment is expected to increase to $35.03 billion (USD) by 2025.

Regarding the IT industry, Gartner forecasts IT spending in India to reach a total of $94 billion (USD) in 2020, up 6.6% from 2019 [12].

Table 1. India IT Spending Forecast (Millions of U.S. Dollars)

	2019 Spending	2019 Growth (%)	2020 Spending	2020 Growth (%)
Data Center Systems	3,726	2.7	3,819	2.5
Software	6,383	13.6	7,354	15.2
Devices	33,379	-2.4	35,468	6.3
IT Services	15,786	12.0	17,897	13.4
Communications Services	29,203	-0.1	29,788	2.0
Overall IT	**88,476**	**2.0**	**94,326**	**6.6**

Source: Gartner (November 2019)

Social factors - India has the world's largest population of about 770 million in the age bracket of 18-45 years and this provides a great opportunity for the IT EdTech sector. India has a huge English-speaking population which makes the delivery of educational products easy. India was ranked 34 out of 80 countries in English Proficiency Index 2019 [14].

According to HackerRank, the percent of self-taught developers in India is higher than in all other countries. The average age when developers start to code is 16-20 (university age) [4]. Although Indians are rather conservative and rarely change their career path [11], the Linkedin research in the 2019 New Career Pathways Survey revealed that one in three Indian professionals feel like they are career sleepwalking and feel stagnant like they are on a treadmill going nowhere [8].

Nearly 61 percent of all Indian Millenials (those born in 1980-1999) said they would consider switching careers compared to only 18% of baby boomers (born in 1940-1959) [7,8]. More and more often you hear success stories about young Indians who changed their professions and jobs, (culturally chosen for them by their parents) are being published.

The global mid-age crisis trend of career switching in their early 30s starts to grow and develop in India also. Of course, the majority of respondents change some IT professions for a more creative sphere, but we believe that there are also people who want to become developers, data scientists and data analysts in India.

According to HackerRank research, India has the highest amount of women web developers in the world, 22.9%. [15]

Which Country Has the Largest Proportion of Female Developers?

Share of HackerRank Tests

Rank	Country	Female	Rank	Country	Female
1	India	22.9%	26	France	9.4%
2	United Arab Emirates	21.0%	27	Switzerland	9.0%
3	Romania	20.6%	28	Egypt	8.9%
4	China	19.6%	29	Netherlands	8.3%
5	Sri Lanka	19.0%	30	Greece	8.3%
6	Italy	16.7%	31	Belarus	7.8%
7	Bulgaria	16.5%	32	Russia	7.8%
8	Singapore	15.2%	33	Spain	7.4%
9	Philippines	15.1%	34	Germany	7.4%
10	Indonesia	15.0%	35	Portugal	7.2%
11	United States	14.8%	36	Turkey	6.7%
12	New Zealand	14.6%	37	Colombia	6.5%
13	Malaysia	14.4%	38	Pakistan	6.5%
14	Hong Kong	13.8%	39	Mexico	6.3%
15	South Korea	13.6%	40	Venezuela	6.3%
16	Israel	12.9%	41	Belgium	6.0%
17	Japan	12.8%	42	South Africa	5.9%
18	Ukraine	12.6%	43	Brazil	5.8%
19	Bangladesh	11.9%	44	Sweden	5.7%
20	Canada	11.4%	45	Austria	5.4%
21	Vietnam	11.3%	46	Hungary	5.0%
22	Australia	10.7%	47	Argentina	4.5%
23	United Kingdom	10.3%	48	Czech Republic	4.5%
24	Poland	10.2%	49	Denmark	3.3%
25	Ireland	9.7%	50	Chile	2.9%

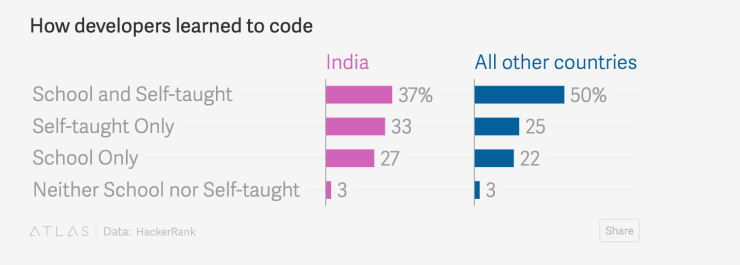
HackerRank

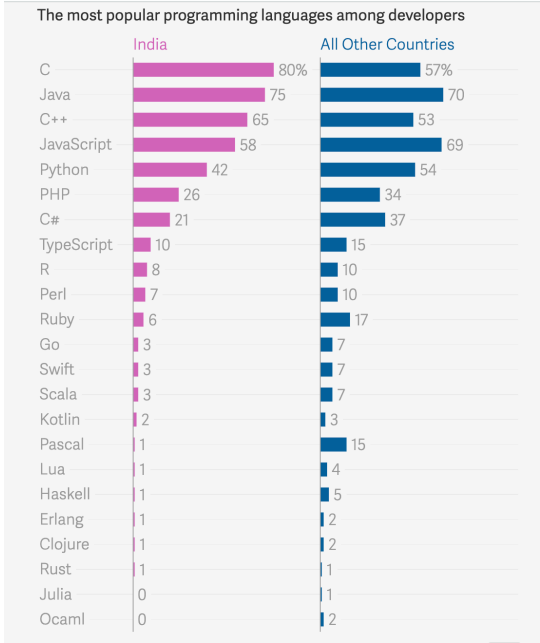
Technological factors - Increasing internet penetration is expected to help in education delivery. As of March 2019, there are 66 million internet subscribers in India in the age bracket of 5 to 11 years making this segment a large target market for the Practicum. With over 560 million internet users, India is the second-largest online market in the world, ranked only behind China. By 2021, there will be over 600 million internet users in India [3].

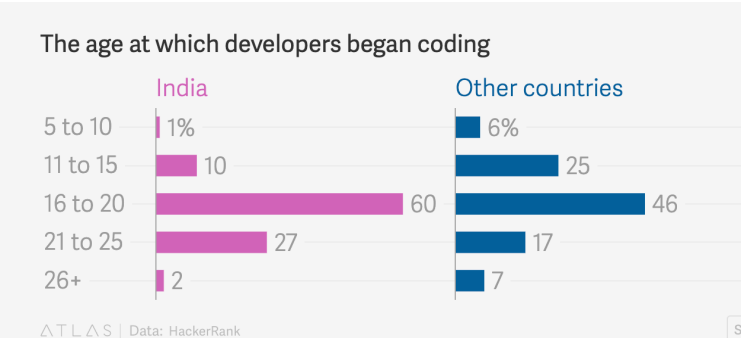
India has a very large English-speaking population which makes the delivery of educational products easy.

Although the role of formal education in India is preferred and to become developers or coders young people in most cases prefer to attend universities, the cost of a university degree is still prohibitive as it starts at USD$ 70 per month. This makes alternatives educational strategies attractive to students who need to get up-to-date skills and learn modern web technologies on an economy budget.

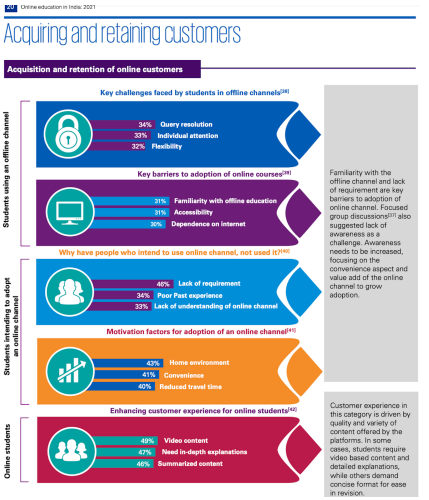
In India, the majority of institutions still teach Java, Turbo C++, and pre-standardized C++. So, for students starting a 4-year engineering degree, half of what they learn in their first year gets outdated by their third

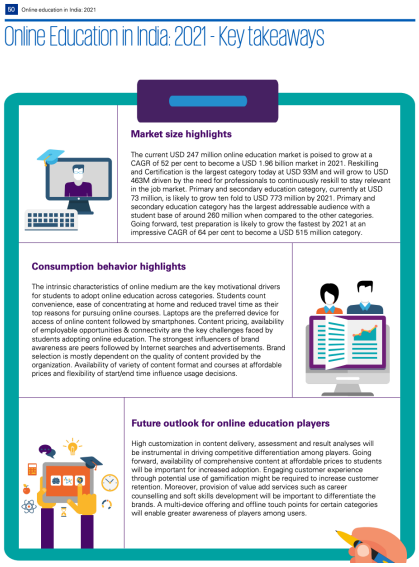






year of college. Research says, around 1.5 million engineers graduate every year in India, with 80% unemployable. Many choosing a career in teaching.





According to KPMG and Google research, the key challenges for acquiring and retaining online education students in India until 2021 will be query resolution speed, individual attention, flexibility. At the same time, the key barriers to the adoption of online courses will be familiarity with offline education, accessibility, dependence on the internet. The reasons why Indians didn't use the online education by this moment of time is lack of experience, poor past experience, lack of understanding of online channel [6].

The motivational factors for the adoption of an online channel will be the home environment, convenience, reduced travel time. The enhancing customer experience for online students will be video content, need in-depth explanations, summarized content. Awareness needs to be increased, focusing on the convenience aspect and value add services of the online channel to grow adoption [6].

Google and KPMG predict that the online education market in India is poised at a CAGR of 52% to become $1.96 billion (USD) in 2021. Reskilling and Certification will grow to $436 million (USD) because professionals do regularly need to update their knowledge and skills to stay relevant in the job market [6].

Content pricing, availability of employable opportunities & connectivity are considered to be the key challenges. Brand awareness and trust are some of the key dimensions for choosing an online institute. Indians are a rather conservative society and people used to choose well-known names and companies. The availability of comprehensive content at affordable prices to students will be important for increased adoption. Provision of value-add services such as career counseling and soft skills development will be important to differentiate the brands

1.C Strengths and weaknesses of the current Practicum marketing position in regards to the Indian market and major competitors in India

SWOT analysis

Strengths A) Highly qualified staff - excellent for providing high-quality educational services and develop good produce/service. B) High-quality courses. C) Locally presented in the USA (gives reliability). D) The project is funded by a well-known brand: Yandex E) Soft skills and career development. F) Practical experience and top coding simulator. G) Freemium option - an opportunity to try the course for free for a limited period of time which is a very good strategy for the Indian market.	**Weakness** A) New and unknown products on the market; a weak digital marketing strategy. B) Russian brands can be both a good and bad thing at the same time. Indians are very competitive and famous for discrimination against other nations. Indians believe that there is an unofficial competition between Russian, American, Chinese and Indian Developers. C) Prices are high for Indians who plan to start careers at a Jr. level. According to six interviews with middle level and senior level Indian coders, the consensus was that $100-$140 (USD) a month is a reasonable and acceptable price for courses for Middle-to Senior Level or for some specific courses like Data scientist. Those who cannot afford to go to IT Universities are self-taught or Udemy taught. *Contact details of the interviewed Indians can be provided. D) Yandex search engine is not popular in India for English search and the company would have to use very expensive priced ad channels for promotion and growing brand awareness.
Opportunities A) Growing Educational Markets and Online Education in India open opportunities for Practicum. B) Experts predict the growth of the IT market in India which may drive the need for the IT professionals. C) Outdated technologies and methods of education in IT institutes will increase the interest of the young specialists to order courses at Practicum. D) Practicum helps get real coding practice and offers junior developers to build their first portfolio which may be very appealing. E) Many millennials in India are not happy with their career and profession and want to change it. Practicum may offer them a chance to do this within 6 months.	**Threats** A) Only Middle or Senior level developers in India can afford to pay $100-$140 (USD) a month for a web development course. The Practicum Web-development course is for people without any experience in IT. Such students in India would prefer another option. B) Formal IT education at a university in India starts at $70 (USD) per month. Indian parents more likely will send their kids to the real institute or university. C) Indians who plan to change their career path are in most cases IT specialists dreaming about creative work; coders by profession and not passion. D) The current Practicum digital marketing is at its starting point is a more global strategy without any local Indian orientation.

Summary: As we identified in 1 A, B, C the Practicum project has problems with digital marketing strategies and specifically with the content strategy.

The project has a very strong product and web development team, but the promotional activities both in the Russian and English-speaking markets are not so well-established. In Russia, the brand "Yandex" is well-known, reliable and recognizable by nearly every citizen. But in India and in the USA, it is not. Yandex needs to gain the attention and loyalty of foreign clients and students.

To promote the project on the global or local Indian market Yandex Practicum teams need to re-design its content strategy. To boost sales in India we recommend implementing an inbound marketing strategy. Inbound marketing is a strategy that utilizes many forms of pull marketing – content marketing, blogs, events, social media and more – to create brand awareness and attract new business.

In contrast to outbound marketing, where marketers attempt to find customers, inbound marketing earns the attention of customers and makes the company easy to be found. It is important to replace the outdated approach of "renting clients" attention.

Yandex Practicum needs to develop a new strategy, which is based on building awareness, developing relationships and community around the brand and generate leads.

Please take into consideration, that we are not setting any SMART objectives in this assignment because we have no real statistics and data of the project and it is impossible to predict any outcomes without this information and starting points.

Recommended Practicum global digital marketing strategy with local campaigns on the Indian market and how to find the balance between global and local

2.A Suggested Practicum digital marketing strategy in India and recommended key messages to the local audience

We recommend preparing and implementing an inbound digital marketing strategy, in which content marketing will be a subset.

According to Rebecca Lieb, Hubspot, a top US IT company, has reduced the costs of traditional marketing by several times due to their inbound marketing approach. We agree with this position and also believe that serious long-term commitment to content marketing may help Yandex Practicum to become industry leaders.

Hubspot is a pioneer of inbound marketing. Hubspot defines inbound marketing as a strategy, which helps to create valuable experiences with a positive impact on people and business, attracting prospects and customers to their website and blog through relevant and helpful content and then doing its best to engage with the user by means of conversational tools like email automation tools, newsletters, chat and by promising continued value, and continuing to act as an empathetic advisor and expert (Hubspot, 2018).

The inbound marketing approach means creating long-term relationships with potential or existing clients by means of content marketing and different interaction tools, as well as building trust. It is not just about

attracting or making sales. It is about producing clusters of content for each product and service (Hubspot, 2018).

A very important part of inbound marketing and digital marketing strategy preparation is the correct understating of the targeted audience. To achieve this we recommend using an STP framework.

STP strategy framework

Segmentation. For market segmentation, we suggest Practicum split the Indian market into segments.

We will use for private individuals segments measurements: gender, age, geographic location (India in all cases. For business interests and company measurements: industry and size.

Segment A – B2C clients, private individuals (male), 18-22 years old, without personal income (financial support of parents), university students of business-oriented degrees, who want to get an additional profession and learn to code (courses which may be interesting: Web Development, Data Scientist, Data Analyst).

Segment B – B2C clients, private individuals (female), 18-22 years old, without personal income (financial support of parents), university students of business-oriented degrees, who want to get an additional profession and learn to code (courses which may be interesting: Web Development, Data Scientist, Data Analyst).

Segment C - B2C clients, private individuals (male), 18-22 years old, without personal income (financial support of parents), university students of IT degrees, who want to get high-end technological skills, develop soft skills and build first portfolio (considering Practicum courses as an alternative to their first internship) (courses which may be interesting: Web development, Data Scientist, Data Analyst).

Segment D - B2C clients, private individuals (female), 18-22 years old, without personal income (financial support of parents), university students of IT degrees, who want to get high-end technological skills, develop soft skills and build first portfolio (considering Practicum course as an alternative to their first internship) (courses which may be interesting: Web development, Data Scientist, Data Analyst).

Segment E - B2C clients, private individuals (male), 18-30 years old, blue-collars, self-taught coders, who can't afford formal institutes and are willing to structure their knowledge and build their first professional portfolio (courses which may be interesting: Web development, Data Scientist, Data Analyst).

Segment F - B2C clients, private individuals (female), 18-30 years old, blue-collars, self-taught coders, who can't afford formal institutes and are willing to structure their knowledge and build their first professional portfolio (courses which may be interesting: Web development, Data Scientist, Data Analyst).

Segment G - B2C clients, private individuals (male), 25-35 years old, white collars/office employees (fx marketing specialists), who want to get additional knowledge and become project managers or marketing analysts (courses which may be interesting: Web development, Data Analyst).

Segment H - B2C clients, private individuals (female), 25-35 years old, white collars/office employees (fx marketing specialists), who want to get additional knowledge and become project managers or marketing analysts (courses which may be interesting: Web development, Data Analyst).

Segment I - B2C clients, private individuals (male), 25-35 years old, who feel stagnant at their current careers and were always dreaming about IT professions, but chose absolutely different spheres (courses which may be interesting: Web development, Data Scientist, Data Analyst).

Segment J- B2C clients, private individuals (female), 25-35 years old, who feel stagnant at their current careers and were always dreaming about IT professions, but chose absolutely different spheres (courses which may be interesting: Web development, Data Scientist, Data Analyst).

Segment Q- B2B clients (decision-makers- marketing department managers or IT department managers), who are looking for CPD programs to upgrade their employees' skills, so-called corporate clients (courses which may be interesting: Web development, Data Scientist, Data Analyst).

For each segment, we recommend to prepare 5-6 Buying Personas, JTBDs and build CJM.

Targeting

We suggest Practicum use a differentiated and personalized content marketing approach in order to find the right words and send the right key messages to the right segments. We recommend targeting all the identified segments. Content marketing will help to target each segment by means of producing relevant attracting, engaging and delighting content for each segment.

Positioning

To become more attractive Practicum should position itself as **"The best online school for getting real experience in web development and data science, teaching online advanced technologies"** for segments A, B, C, D.

For segments E, F, G, H, I, J, "**The best online school for starting web development, data scientist and data analyst profession without any prior experience in IT".**

For segment Q, **"The best online school for upgrading your IT department skills and most reliable IT corporate education provider".**

Practicum builds trust, and credibility for its brand by means of inbound marketing approach and content marketing strategy and preparing relevant content.

Key messaging to the targeted audience should be based on buying personas and jobs to be done, (JTBD). It is very important to understand what are the major problems, difficulties, and dreams of the targeted segments. Key messages are really important and we suggest they resonate with potential consumer feelings.

It is important to keep in mind that the **key messages are the core messages which the target audiences** will hear and remember.

They should create meaning and headline the main points to the client.

Key messages allow you to control communications and enhance relationships with your **target audiences** and are an **important** feature of any public relations campaign.

We also recommend Practicum vary key messages from platform to platform, from one type of content to another, as a means of keeping their message fresh.

Below are a few examples of key messages that can be used. It has to be noted that a piece of content may come from many formats: article, blog post, social media post, podcast, educational or aspirational video.

In India, well-known brands are usually creating social media commercials that are very honest and touch consumer's hearts. It is important not to lie to the audience, always be sincere.

Practicum messaging should a sincere passion that expresses how much they want to help every student to achieve their goals.

These messaging videos should show how the Practicum' project for Yandex is not just a business, but also a project that will make people's dreams come true.

Teaching is a very noble career.

Some examples of the key message:

	Buying Persona	Key messages to the potential client
	Hindi Bhatiha, 20 Last year's top student at the Institute in Delhi. This future marketer wants to be able to earn enough for life and be skilled and valuable for the company he will be working for in the future. His parents are funding his university, accommodation bills, and all extra courses.	Experts predict that coding will be the most important skill for job seekers in the near future. But this essential skill is no longer just for employees at Google or Apple; companies across the spectrum, from hospitals to retailers, are looking for team members with coding skills. Jobs that require coding skills offer salaries up to $22,000 above the average salary. For students looking to increase their potential income, web development and data science may open all the doors! **Be ready for real life!**
	Nairi Shinhka, 25 A marketing department content manager. Nairi wants to learn to code to increase her skills and her income but is scared to start.	Researchers found that code written by women was approved at a higher rate *(78.6%) than code written by men (74.6%). **Believe in yourself!** *Examples of successful women developers for inspiration can be given.
	Majurati Phagthiri, 33 A white-collar, senior manager at an international legal firm. Majurati is in a mid-age crisis and wants to change his career to become a freelance coder, live an easier life, travel and not be in the office all day.	Never stop reaching for your dreams! **Its never too late to change your life and start a new career!** Practicum experts will make sure you will be ready to start a new job by the end of the course. *A short social ad video how an Indian boy always dreamt about becoming an IT guy. Creating robots and programming them, but became a taxi driver!* Show examples of people who became coders at a later age.

2.B Recommended Practicum digital marketing communication mix for delivering the above-mentioned strategy

Product

In the current inbound digital marketing strategy, we are reviewing the core Practicum products - educational courses in; Web Development profession, Data Analyst and, Data Scientist. These educational courses are the first lifecycle stage for these products is called the “Introduction” stage.

Yandex can definitely move to the “growth” stage when the marketing team implements the **NEW** inbound marketing and content strategy. Our research shows that Yandex provides high-quality products and services. These products have a positive image, but Yandex can improve their growth by preparing more content regarding the product, explaining in more detail the benefits of the product for consideration and decision stages of the sales funnel, as well as more content for awareness stage.

Price

It is understandable that high-quality service cannot cost less than what Practicum asks now because the business has to generate profit. It is very important to explain to Indian customers what is the difference between Udemy/Coursera courses and Practicum and why the Practicum course price is higher than a year in some formal Indian IT institutes. There is a huge difference between outdated theoretical knowledge and real experience.

Practicum could launch some partially funded programs for emerging markets with low incomes. Google launched such a thing in India already, also in Indonesia and Africa. Google doesn’t provide an interactive free education platform, instead, they launched free tutorials and free coding simulators for those who are interested in starting a web developer profession. We think Yandex can consider doing the same and start to utilize this for promoting its Practicum courses. Actually, Practicum prices are very competitive. For example, they are cheaper than Udacity pricing.

Place

Online through the website for content publishing, social media platforms, paid advertising channels, email marketing.

Offline In the future, Yandex by Practicum can start to organize IT conferences, meetups and some college meetings in India for aspiring young developers and people who are thinking about starting this career, offering hands-on training, speaker sessions across multiple product areas, and inspiring stories from Indian developers, promoting web developer profession and launch Yandex web developer certifications, like Google. Indians love to take certifications and consider them to be the most important CPD activities according to Google and KPMG research.

Promotion

The key marketing element of the inbound digital marketing strategy is the Practicum by Yandex web-platform. The traffic comes from search engines, paid ads, social media, and hyperlinks on other websites (referral-based).

Content According to SWOT analysis, the major problem of the digital marketing strategy is lack of content, its irregular preparation, as well as unstructured content distribution. Practicum needs to prepare content for each segment and buying persona as well as for each stage of the sales funnel; awareness, consideration, and decision stages. Such content marketing activities can help Yandex to increase traffic, website conversion rate and reach the revenue goals.

SMM helps to drive traffic to the website, develop a relationship with the audience, increase their loyalty and engagement, flourish brand, and inspire new audience interest. Regular website content sharing on social media platforms can help to increase the number of the website returning visitors, and build community. The Practicum team needs to start to create different content for different SM platforms with backlinks to the platform. Practicum needs to launch targeted ads with creatives and key messages for each separate segment. We recommend continuing to develop Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Tiktok and Youtube.

Videos on YouTube can help to attract new students and help promote and build brand awareness. We suggest starting to cooperate with popular Indian business sector YouTube-bloggers, opinion leaders and

make them Yandex Practicum brand advocates. We recommend creating short educational videos as well as aspiring videos. Very short videos can also be redesigned for Tiktok which is popular in India.

Email-marketing helps to communicate with existing clients and deliver value to them – sharing new content with them by means of weekly newsletters. This will help to reach the objective of increasing the number of returning website visitors. Practicum will need to work more with those who canceled subscription after the test period to understand why this happened.

PPC advertising For increasing the number of returning visitors on the website we suggest use Google Adwords Remarketing, which enables the website to show targeted ads to users who have already visited the website, as well as basic Google ads for those who never visited the website before.

SEO can help Yandex Practicum to increase organic traffic on the website and help with content promotion. Top 3 Search Engines in India: Google (98.64%), Bing (0.81%), Yahoo (0.44%).

People

To accomplish the digital marketing plan Practicum is recommended to use its own marketing department team to use available SMM platforms for marketing YouTube video-creations, SEO and PPC initiatives.

Summary: The Practicum STP framework (2B), SWOT analysis (1B), Digital marketing mix (2C) helped to identify the current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, targeted audience, positioning strategy, segments, as well as to understand which key elements Practicum needs to reach them. As a result of our analysis, we estimate that the best digital marketing strategy for Practicum in the current conditions is inbound marketing because it can help the project to achieve the objectives by means of content marketing and show its level of expertise in a longer perspective, not just driving short term results in India. It is important to create a lead generation machine. Of course, the high quality of courses and Word of Mouth will help to promote the products as well.

2. C 3-week express action plan in India (1 March - 21 March)

Digital Marketing Plan and Content Plan

Digital Marketing Activity	Mar 1	Mar 3	Mar 5	Mar 7	Mar 9	Mar 11	Mar 12	Mar 14	Mar 16	Mar 18	Mar 20	Mar 22	Responsibility
Preparing a documented strategy+content plan for the Indian market, sent for management approval, identification of key messages and value proposition for each segment.													Digital Marketing manager
Revision of comments and meeting with CMO for clarification, identification of budget and R&Rs													Digital Marketing manager
Revision of course sales pages and preparation hypothesis (A/B testing to get high conversion)													Digital Marketing manager

Content package (oriented on different segments and sales stages), active preparation for seeding blog articles (success stories, how-to become articles, job-seeking advice, inspirational content, viral video, course promotion video with Indian participants, blog posts), with CTAs													Digital Marketing Manager / copywriter/video editor
HARO service launch - free service for getting extra brand awareness, answering reports questions and getting valuable media coverage (Indian magazines use it too)													Digital Marketing manager
Live webinar for Indian market about becoming web developer (probably with influencer)													Digital Marketing manager
Webinar record promotion													Digital Marketing manager
Identify companies and influencers and offer a referral affiliate program for a commission													Digital Marketing manager
Identify local events on IT topic and try to offer them a cooperation scheme (affiliate program for bringing students)													Digital Marketing manager
Run a price promotion or extended freemium feature with a coupon for a limited time													Digital Marketing manager
CRM-system and existing Indian customer base empowerment (offering extra discount % for inviting friend) (after approval from management)													Digital Marketing manager

Starting Active social media campaigns seeding content (creative banners, viral videos, collecting leads)- targeted ads on Facebook, Instagram, Linkedin, Twitter, YouTube (A/B testing, see what works better for the targeted audience, what type of ads drive more traffic), attracting social organic and paid traffic.													Digital Marketing manager
Local Indian Influencers on YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Tiktok (offer preparation, cooperation agreements, launch)													Digital Marketing manager
ROMI analysis and optimization of marketing investments in channels - boosting channels bringing more traffic													Digital Marketing manager
LinkedIn Sales Navigator to target B2B segment and offer CPD programs													Digital Marketing manager
Post a vacancy for hiring local staff in India for Practicum website, (it will give an additional brand awareness), junior web developers, IT interns, marketing managers and so on to collect contacts, ask them to complete test assignment which will require test period activation													Digital Marketing manager
Contribute to other blogs and publications (promote the Practicum)													Digital Marketing manager

Summary:

Summarizing the overall research, I would like to say that entering any local market, even in the concept of PR/advertising and lead generation actions, should always correlate with prior accepted and documented global marketing strategies and plans.
I understand that this assignment's purpose is to evaluate candidates' research skills, knowledge of creativity as well as ability to be proactive and work under pressure.

A 3-week plan for entering any local market with an educational product can only concentrate on its promotion. A/B Testing of some product hypotheses and collecting information for further product development

and platform update needs more time than 3 weeks. I personally support step-by-step market conquering strategies than last moment organized marketing activities.

Taking all this into consideration, please review the provided action plan in the concept of lead generation and promotion of the existing product without its redesign and update.

The most effective marketing tools in this situation is the creation of content which resonates with pain points of the targeted audience and seeding it by means of paid ad channels, local influencers from SMM sites like Instagram, Youtube, Tiktok, and LinkedIn. Combined with CRM-marketing, the launching of affiliate programs and email-marketing to empower the passive base. Targeted ads on social media and viral video content that inspire can be created from stock videos to cut costs.

I don't recommend changing the global strategy of Practicum to move its attention from the North American market to the Indian market, because of cultural and economic reasons which were described in the attached paper, although for boosting brand awareness and attracting more potential leads Practicum can launch local campaigns on emerging markets in India.

As a source of information about the market I used highly credible official data, statistics, and reports by KPMG, Google, Deloitte, and LinkedIn. I organized several interviews with local developers (2 women and 4 men). Based on the collected information I formed several marketing hypotheses which can be proved by means of A/B testing and marketing metrics measurement.

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