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| http://esn-utrecht.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/HU-English.jpg |
| Intenship Report IBMS |
| Linguistadores |

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| André Erdmann 1598600  01.06.2014  andre.erdmann@student.hu.nl |



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Internship Company

Linguistadores ,headquartered in the Netherlands is a young start up company that started its business in February 2012. Via its web site customers can learn foreign languages. Instead of sitting in a classroom, users have the opportunity to learn languages online in their preferred environment and whenever they feel like. Through genuine news, popular videos and latest songs of the designated country can users learn Dutch, Spanish, French, German and English language so far.

**Schiekade 105

3033 BH Rotterdam

The Netherlands

http://www.linguistadores.com

Linguistadores offers a language learning service and is accessible via the internet. The industry can be called edutech or education and technology. The biggest competitors in that area are Duolingo, Lingua.ly and Live Mocha as well as offline software services provided by Rosetta Stone and others.

The company structure is a line-staff relationship while the two managing partners take care of the business side, the product developer of the service or product side. Besides the three managers, Linguistadores works also with pop ambassadors and advisors to end up with a total amount of 9 employees as of June 2014.

At this moment Linguistadores relies on funding and investments from external investors as well as a small proportion of premium customers. In the near future the freemium a mix of free and paid services shall take over.

During my time at Linguistadores, my position was a marketing & sales intern and my supervisor was Jozef Misik. He is running the sales side of the business and is responsible for first contacts and investor relationships.

# Internship in General

Before I applied for internships I was trying to figure out what I would like to try for the next 6 months. Based on my previous work experience and working in a multinational company or a medium sized enterprise, I thought a start up company would be the best option for me. Not only for my personal development but also because of the flexibility and potential things I can learn and develop.

Via the website dutchstartupjobs.nl did I find my internship. One e-mail application and interview later I had the offer to start my internship end of January 2014.

In the beginning I had to deal with the 'normal' start up problems, that everybody is responsible for everything. Within a short period of time I got used to it and tried to follow the flow in order to fill the position I was supposed to fill. As a marketing and sales intern you have certain responsibilities such as reaching out to prospects as well as making decisions on how to proceed in specific situations. As an undergraduate with the basic knowledge in the field of marketing and sales I managed to keep calm throughout the entire time. In the beginning however it was tricky to find the right message that would make people respond or rather react.

On a daily basis I had contact with my company supervisor who helped me to develop. With my internship supervisor I had contact at least once a week as well as one company visit and two visits in school. My supervisor provided me with enough space to develop skills both on a professional level as well as business level.

# Project and Activities Performed

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Marketing | Search Engine Optimization | Project |
| 88 hours | Improving the search engine activities of Linguistadores. It required A/B testing and time so that it was a project throughout my entire internship. Approximately *4 hours* a week I spent on monitoring the effects of certain campaigns and messages | |
| Marketing | Social Media Management | Daily Activity |
| 87 hours | Twitter, Facebook and Google+ are the social media channels Linguistadores uses. To attract new customers and language learners to the platform I had to engage per day approximately *4 hours* to make people actually visit the website. Approaching people on Twitter, Facebook and Google+ were my activities I did throughout the time. | |
| Marketing | Translation | Weekly |
| 44 hours | Because Linguistadores has not only customers who speak English my responsibility was also to translate once in a while e-mails and newsletter that were sent out to customers in German. Approximately *2 hours* | |
| Sales | Data collection | Project |
| 80 hours | For about *80 hours* my main task was to collect data about institutions in the business-to-business market for a later reach out strategy. | |
| Sales | Reach Out | Project |
| 183 hours | Over approximately 4 weeks I had to reach out to approximately 150 institutions and other organizations. | |
| Sales | Social Media Alignment and Investor presentation | Project |
| 42 hours | Preparing presentation and language workshops as well as increase the visibility of Linguistadores. | |
| Content | Provide content for the platform | Weekly activity |
| 173 hours | As part of the service of Linguistadores, I gathered content on YouTube and other streaming sites and added that content to the platform. | |
| Excursion | Presentation Goethe Institute Amsterdam | Project |
| 7 hours |  | |

704 hours working and 176 hours for the graduation thesis

# Evaluation of your internship position

The company is very task and assignment oriented. The work environment as such does not really exist because everybody can work how he or she pleases. As an observation I have experienced that it is rather result oriented. If you cannot solve the issue you group and discuss it within a group but other than that it is very much focused on individual work and assignments.

In the beginning of the internship I was looking for structure and in week three I came up with the suggestion to use a tool that everybody can use and would improve the transparency of what people are actually doing as well as what has to be done. The tool was implemented and I assume it will be used for much longer than my actual stay.

My supervisor talked to me on a regular basis if not on a daily basis. My role was something between an intern and a personal assistant what was not really an issues as much but rather a nice experience to work with somebody as well as for. Working with different agendas and align them in cases of meetings or other events was a challenge.

On a bi-weekly basis I received feedback from my supervisor about my work as well as the quality. My general perception was that he was quite satisfied with my work and my proactive behavior within the company.

# Intercultural Competence

Communication between me and the managing partner from the United States of America.

**S:**The situation was that while we had discussion about the customer persona she took her personal opinion as a given and therefore described the customer behaviour as what she would like to see. I told her that this should not be the case. It backfired hard and in my feedback I got from her was the situation exactly the other way around and not as it actually was.

**T:** In this particular situation I tried to make her aware of the possible mistake to take her perception and opinion as a given rather than being objective and look at the broad picture.

**A:** When I got back my first feedback about my performance I realized how she perceived it. Thus I approached her and tried to talk about, what actually happened.

**R:** The result was that we had a massive misunderstanding that lead to this misjudgment of both of us. We solved the issue.

(State of New South Wales, Department of Education and Training)

(Delaney)

From this encounter I have learnt that communication needs sometimes clarification and maybe more than straight forward comments. Since then I have been trying to solve such situation in a reasonable time frame.

# Functional Key Area Competence

Marketing

**S:** Before the internship I have not been applying marketing a lot. Throughout my internship I have experienced that despite the marketing terms I am familiar with it is nowhere near to what I should know in that field. The situation refers to social media marketing, as well as brand management.

**T:** Social media marketing seems to be a new and different world. The world online is a different world and so I had to deal with the new world and its traits. As part of my internship I should take care of the Twitter and Facebook channels and interact with users.

**A:** In university we have not learnt anything about social media marketing. Instead of reading my way through the internet I bought books written by Dave Kerpen who is seen as the most influential person with respect to social media marketing. Besides that I enjoyed coaching sessions with advisors from Linguistadores as well as the managing partner.

**R:** With the mix of media I used it became somewhat clear to me what it is really about. After a couple of weeks I have acquired so much knowledge about a field I have not really heard of before.

# Learning and Self-Development

S

TRENGTHS

W

EAKNESSES

1. Adaptation to new situations
2. Fast learner
3. Interested in anything new
4. Over ambitious
5. Over structured
6. Expectations

* Creating complete idea proposals that includes: practical solutions, technology, business perspective and relevance
  + Being more specific in drawing conclusions and mind the following questions 'is this useful?' + 'how can it be applied?'
* Working on communication skills - Clear and structured discussion/communication
* Open up to learn from others experiences
  + Take a closer look at objective and subjective statements
* Work on getting feedback (constructive feedback)

For the most part I was not aware that in case of recommendation that I lack the skill of communicating it properly. Especially in the beginning Jozef made me aware of that and asked me to change it and so I created a learning objective. Of course it is an objective that depends on the receiver, however I have to admit that it lacked some information that should be in there.

The communication skills objective refers to the problem I described earlier. From my perspective I think I pretty much solved it and think I now know how to keep it that way. The third and fourth learning objective refers to the same encounter.

At this point I am sure that my assignment will be used at least to a certain extend by Linguistadores. However, it depends on how much the company things my recommendations are relevant as well as implementable.

# Analysis of the link between theory and practice.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Course | High |  |  |  | Low |
| Business Administration |  |  |  |  |  |
| Economics and Law |  |  |  |  |  |
| Individual Project |  |  |  |  |  |
| Business Economics |  |  |  |  |  |
| Communication Skills |  |  |  |  |  |
| Marketing |  |  |  |  |  |
| Organizational behavior and Culture |  |  |  |  |  |
| Business Project |  |  |  |  |  |
| Organizational behavior – HRM |  |  |  |  |  |
| Globalization Finance and Accounting |  |  |  |  |  |
| Globalization Outsourcing |  |  |  |  |  |
| Logistics and Information Management |  |  |  |  |  |
| Business & IT 1 QM |  |  |  |  |  |
| International Economics |  |  |  |  |  |
| People, Planet, Profit |  |  |  |  |  |
| Research Skills |  |  |  |  |  |
| Academic Skills 201 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Academic Skills 202 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Being Creative in Business Project |  |  |  |  |  |
| Development, CSR and Business Ethics |  |  |  |  |  |
| Global Supply Chain Management 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Global Supply Chain Management 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| International Finance 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| International Finance 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Strategy & Marketing 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Strategy & Marketing 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Development, CSR and Business Ethics 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Strategic Marketing Management 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Strategic Marketing Management 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Business & IT 2 AIS |  |  |  |  |  |
| Corporate Finance |  |  |  |  |  |
| International Sales Management |  |  |  |  |  |

Since my internship was a marketing and sales internship thus all related subjects were useful and the knowledge acquired.

## Strengths and weaknesses of the IBMS program

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| --- | --- |
| Strengths | Weaknesses |
| Flexibility in its program (e.g. study abroad, internship 2x) | Language (students and teachers) |
| Variety in its program (e.g. GLSCM, HRM, BA) | Content wise too much focus on NL |

One of the biggest strengths in my opinion is the flexibility of IBMS. Students have the opportunity to study abroad and do their internships abroad as well. Going out is very important especially if you want to prepare yourself for the real world after the academic world.

Specialization especially in a bachelor was something I tried to not do. Therefore this is strength for me because of so many different specializations within the IBMS program.

All foreign students have to provide the school with some sort of a language certificate in order to start studying at the HU. Throughout my studies at the HU I have met teachers as well as students who were practising their English on the shoulders of the students. Most of those students were Dutch who did not have to provide any sort of language certificate. Furthermore I have encountered two teachers who usually teach in the Dutch program but wanted to practise its English and therefore wanted to teach in the English program. In case of the students there is an easy way to solve that issue by increasing the requirements. For teachers as well as for all students a language certificate should be a requirement.

Content wise a lot of subjects were focusing too much on the Netherlands and issues here. I understand that it is a Dutch institution but I am sure the program is called International Business and Management Studies.

# Final assessment and advice

In general I would recommend anybody who is interested in joining a very dynamic and chaotic environment to try it out at least once. Linguistadores itself was a good learning experience for me personally but it totally depends on the individuals. In general Linguistadores provided me with the space I really needed in order to proceed as a ambitious young student interested in business.

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