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SCHOOL OF
ECONOMICS
& BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

Graduate Business Programs

Reviews of EMBA Technology Conference

Following the EMBA Technology Conference, held on April 4 and 5, 2010 in San Francisco, California, participants were invited to offer their impressions of the two-day event as well as their reactions to the presentations on our work in Graduate Business. Below are their responses.



Thank you for creating, organizing and delivering a wonderfully thoughtful technology conference! I've long considered St. Mary's to be a thought leader in successfully leveraging technology to deliver its EMBA programs. I'm grateful that you have expanded that role to assist in bringing the rest of us along with you.

Louise A. Kapustka
Executive Director, Executive MBA Program
Michael G. Foster School of Business
University of Washington

The conference was incredibly helpful. It helped me to rethink how technology should be used in our curriculum and how we can leverage technology to support student learning. What impressed me the most about St. Mary's was the sophistication and elegance of its technology given its small budget! St. Mary's is setting the pace when it comes to using technology in EMBA programs.

Katherine Lilygren
Executive Director
Berkeley-Columbia Executive MBA
Berkeley Haas School of Business

The EMBA Tech Conference staged in San Francisco in early April was a huge success in my view. As the leader of the association of EMBA programs throughout the world, it was extremely beneficial to have a group of individuals come together to discuss, debate, and share best practices as it relates to technology and our space. These kinds of forums ensure that our industry is aware of how technology can serve our needs and most importantly help us better serve the executive population that ultimately is the key stakeholder.

Michael Desiderio
Executive Director
Executive MBA Council

Thank you, thank you, thank you! I found the conference to be invaluable. I am responsible for the delivery of a suite of MBA programs across wide and divergent populations both locally and abroad. Looking at ways to improve how we deliver education is critical to both the survival of our programs and important to our growth and development. Additionally, better understanding the potential options that technology makes available to us will only expand and push the boundaries of our thinking – critical indeed if we are going to continue to learn and develop as universities, programs, and providers of education.

Cherie A Scricca
Associate Dean, MBA Programs
Marshall School of Business
University of Southern California

The EMBA Tech Conference sponsored by St. Mary's College was of tremendous value to me and to my school despite the fact that Stanford Graduate School of Business does not offer an executive MBA program. In a time when every business education organization needs to leverage its assets and improve the efficiency with which it delivers learning experiences, the EMBA Tech Conference offered insights and perspective not available in either large conferences or typical professional development venues.

St. Mary's College, with Barry Eckhouse's able guidance, has initiated a dialog among a motivated group of business educators and provided a rigorous example of how the tools at our disposal can cost effectively be used to advantage. While digital media is the bedrock for many executive MBA programs, it's rapidly growing in importance to full time residential programs such as ours. We're able to learn from the practices and experience of EMBA providers in areas of learning scaffolding, asynchronous student support, remote course content delivery, digital course material management, and a raft of other areas.

Richard Haukom
Senior Technologist
Graduate School of Business
Stanford University

Thanks for your great work in pulling us forward into the digital age. The balance in the conference across the IT issues and the professional education issues was handled superbly, and that is no mean feat. My colleague who came with me is primarily in information technology, and I am primarily involved in administration and teaching. We both gained further insight into the challenges of technology and teaching choices in dealing with the working professional audience, and the level of detail and depth was empowering for each of us.

Hugh O'Neill, Professor of Strategy
Associate Dean, MBA for Executives
Kenan-Flagler Business School
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

The EMBA Tech Conference was a GREAT gathering of like minded professionals who were able to bring forward common challenges and share best practices. Not only did I have an opportunity to speak with a number of the attendees at the conference, we have continued dialog after the conference in ways that we can continue the great conversations we had started at the conference! I look forward to future EMBA Tech Conferences and similar forums to continue the momentum started from this wonderful gathering!

Rand Morimoto
Chief Executive Officer
Convergent Computing

First of all, let me say again how rich an experience you created for all of us who attended the EMBA Technology conference. Numerous professions are currently employing content about and through technology; most typically this is occurring where the profession requires continued education credits for ongoing membership. Business education is somewhat behind in this arena and yet has the most to gain from a concerted effort to change this situation.

The EMBA conference on Technology that Professor Eckhouse designed and St. Mary's College hosted was a path-breaking effort to influence this change. Bringing together a set of innovators in this arena and a group of very interested colleagues, it catalyzed movement in our industry. St. Mary's College of Business is itself an innovator in this area and its willingness to share its own approach has been very well-received.

Anne Donnellon
Faculty Director, Fast Track MBA
F.W. Olin Graduate School of Business
Babson College

It was my great pleasure to attend the EMBA Tech Conference at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco, April 5th & 6th, 2010, sponsored by St. Mary's College. While not directly associated with our MBA programs, I am responsible for the most of the technology used in all of our programs. I was more than pleasantly surprised by the diversity in both EMBA program pedagogy and technology. It was obvious that there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution and that each program (and pedagogy) well services the students attracted to each program. Both Dave Stewart, our MBA program director, and I continue to have conversations regarding the various hybrid solutions discussed at the conference. It was an excellent experience and would return again if asked.

As part of the conference presentations, Barry Eckhouse made a presentation on how technology is supporting the educational enterprise at St. Mary's College. All I can say is "wow!" I have many years of IT (both Instructional Technology and Information Technology) and innovation experience, and it takes a lot to impress me, but he and his team did just that. Not only did they provide the means for students to be engaged and collaborate in their coursework, but also outside of their courses by the use of social networking and student portals. I hope the students appreciate the services they have been provided via Barry's IT team.

John M. Morris
Chief Technology Officer
Director of Operations
Center for Graduate Studies
Drexel University

The EMBA Tech conference addressed technology issues that are critical in supporting student/employee knowledge and capabilities. Delivery modality, technical course content and knowledge of the latest tools were discussed, current models shared and new technologies introduced. These topics provided valuable information for our business learning and development strategy and planning.

The St. Mary's EMBA Hybrid Program is a fantastic example of how education can provide students and instructors with the most current technical tools to enhance their digital proficiency and learning experience. Their model is the most cost effective, efficient and effective use of technology that I have seen in an academic environment.

Albert Maggio
National Director
Learning and Development
Kaiser Permanente

Schools are not able to keep up with the rapid advances in technology field evidenced by the old and archaic technology infrastructure and delivery mechanisms. In fact there does not seem to be a focused effort in discussing relevance, impact and evaluation of the new technologies. This is a gap. Saint Mary's under the leadership of Prof. Barry Eckhouse, has taken a leadership role to facilitate this dialogue under EMBA tech conference in order to bridge this gap. The recent conference was a great success as participants were able to share their technology implementation and evolving needs. This effort needs resources to conduct this dialogue at a larger level with certain frequency.

Mihir Choudry
Chief Executive Officer
Pagewell Digital Publishing

In this one two-day conference, we learned how much we didn't know, we realized that as educators, we needed to change some of our foundational ways of thinking about technology and finally, we realized that we are not alone in our explorations on this topic.

It is often the case in higher education that change or something new is discussed but the actual activity or result rarely sees the light of day. This is all the more likely when the discussion turns to something as ostensibly radical as creating a virtual learning environment. The obstacles to creating a program that uses technology as a primary delivery method are many, especially at universities that regard themselves as traditionally face-to-face, and who value the interaction in the classroom as one of their highest achievements. However, Barry Eckhouse, with the support of a team of undergrads, administration and several faculty, as well as his own unique background and interest in technology in education has produced at Saint Mary's College one of the most interesting academic exercises in organizational entrepreneurship that I have ever seen, both in my academic experience and also in my private corporate life. They navigated many obstacles both internally and externally resulting in a nimble, highly functional, financially viable, and evolving platform by which to deliver an educational experience to a global audience. They have educated their faculty in new technologies, thus enhancing their overall skills with the tools and innovative course delivery.

Thus, I see what Barry and his team have done as brave, exciting and infinitely valuable as we at the universities who are not formed to digitally deliver content explore further how we can educate our students for the next generation of knowledge work.

Christina Wassenaar
Director, Executive MBA Program
The Drucker School of Management
Claremont Graduate University

The two day EMBA Conference held in early April was an extremely valuable discussion and framework for understanding the value of incorporating technology into the curriculum for graduate education. The input from universities as well as industry offered a current perspective for this rapidly changing area. We look forward to next steps.

Jennifer W. Taylor
Senior Director of Admissions
Graduate Business Programs
Santa Clara University

I found the EMBA Tech conference hosted by Saint Mary's to be of great value to me in my understanding of both the breadth of technologies being applied in graduate business education and in learning more about the leading edge applications of educational technology. I was very impressed with the collection of attendees who were attracted to this conference as they represented a broad and impressive group of institutions. The range of speakers covered topics from very specific details in the use of technology to broad, strategic issues regarding the overarching goals of EMBA programs. In all, a thoroughly thought-provoking experience.

The technology-facilitated EMBA program at Saint Mary's clearly represents a careful and insightful application of an array of education technologies. These days the variety of educational technology tools is vast, and creating a program that uses these tools is challenging in both deciding what to apply and what not to include in a learning model. I was very impressed with the integration of tools in the Saint Mary's program.

Daniel A. Szpiro, Director
Cornell-Queen's Executive MBA Program
The Johnson School, Cornell University