

Elevating Excellence: Wharton's Google Marketing Academy Shapes the Next Generation of Marketing Leaders

GOOGLE LLC



The Challenge

How does Google's marketing team attain its objectives in a dynamic environment of rapidly evolving technology, consumer behavior, market dynamics, and data-driven decision making? And how do its junior members, many of whom have joined the team without a traditional marketing background, learn the basics of the function?

The Goal

Google's marketers needed a learning experience that would give them a solid understanding of the tools and tactics currently used by marketers to better understand their customers, plus the professional skills that would help them embrace change, continuously experiment, and support rising marketing leaders.

The Solution

Google partnered with Wharton Executive Education in 2010 to create a two-week *Google Marketing Academy*.

The Impact

Kate Fleming, head of Global Marketer Skills Training, was tapped to attend the *Marketing Academy* when she was a relatively new hire on a global marketing team. A few years later, she was invited back to present a case study, and she got her first glimpse of how responsive both Google and Wharton are to the program's participants.

"Feedback showed a desire for more opportunities to apply the learnings in the classroom, because they are



"Our initial idea that we could create a cohort of Googlers over a reasonable time horizon who speak the language of marketing, and do it the Wharton-empirical way, has been realized. The *Marketing Academy* is impacting the way decisions are made and creating younger change agents who bring our ideas back to their teams."

— **ERIC BRADLOW, PhD**

The K.P. Chao Professor; Professor of Marketing; Vice Dean of Analytics, The Wharton School; Professor of Economics; Professor of Education; Professor of Statistics, University of Pennsylvania

WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN MORE?

Client Relations, Custom Programs:

+1.215.898.1776 • execed@wharton.upenn.edu

www.WhartonCustomPrograms.com



much harder to implement once you go back to your day job,” Fleming said. “One idea was to bring in a real project that we were working on, Google Pixel, and pose it to the participants as a capstone experience. They would develop marketing plans and bring together all the learning from their two weeks at Wharton. I positioned the case, watched all the presentations on the final day, and served as a judge.”

Fleming says the partnership with Wharton allows program content to be continually optimized and refined. The Wharton team makes suggestions for new sessions based on popular MBA course content, such as advances in customer behavior, AI, and data and analytics. A recent development divided the *Marketing Academy* into two modules: the first includes marketing theory and fundamentals, and the second covers professional skills including negotiations, working with the CFO, and other topics that are instrumental to the working lives of marketers.

As a result, the *Marketing Academy* has become one of Google’s most in-demand, highly selective training programs. It accepts one person for every three to four applicants, but there are current discussions about expanding the program to include more Googlers.

Wharton marketing professor Eric Bradlow, who serves as co-academic director of the Google-Wharton *Marketing Academy*, says, “I have heard comments from ‘This changed how I think,’ to ‘I went to business school but didn’t learn these concepts.’ The program has been a highlight for me as an educator, and our initial idea that we could create a cohort of Googlers over a reasonable time horizon who speak the language of marketing, and do it the Wharton-empirical way, has been realized. The *Marketing Academy* is impacting the way decisions are made and creating younger change agents who bring our ideas back to their teams.”

“At Google, we don’t just say marketing ideas come from everywhere—we live it,” says Fleming. “Just because you’re not a VP, it doesn’t mean you don’t have good ideas. We want our top talent to be better educated and more thoughtful and to have better insights, and then bring that back to Google where they will be listened to.”



WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN MORE?

Client Relations, Custom Programs:

+1.215.898.1776 • execed@wharton.upenn.edu

www.WhartonCustomPrograms.com