



ILLINOIS  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

# i>CLICKER CASE STUDY: UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Business Professor successfully transitions to larger classroom  
increasing administrative efficiency and maintaining student intimacy

## Challenge:

Transitioning from a small to large class size without sacrificing classroom intimacy. A University Marketing Professor required an interactive tool that would help him both administer the course and gather student input of its effectiveness.

## Solution:

i>clicker provided a way for the professor and students to deal with excused absences utilizing interactive questions in class for students to earn extra credit.

## Benefits:

The professor is able to review material addressed in the previous class, assess understanding, and revive flagging student interest and attention deficits.

## Motivation For Using i>clickers

- To engage a large number of students in the classroom.
- To effectively and efficiently transition from teaching small classes to large classes.
- To assess student understanding during lectures and correct misunderstandings when large proportions of students answered incorrectly.

## Technology Implementation & Usage

**Obtaining/Registering i>clickers:** Students were required to purchase their clickers and to bring them to every class session. Extra clickers were not kept on hand in the event that students lost them or forgot to bring them to class.

**Taking Responsibility:** Students are required to bring their clickers to every lecture, including the first one.

**Classroom Technology:** PowerPoint presentations and tablets are used to hold student attention and to assist them with note taking and i>clicker questions appeared on screen at predetermined points in lectures.

**i>clicker Grading Policy:** 10% of the course grade would be a suitable weight for clicker usage which is enough credit to get students' attention but not so much that it diminishes the importance of examinations, projects, and other methods of demonstrating learning.

**Daily Use/Questions Asked:** i>clickers are used in every lecture, typically presenting students with 5 or 6 questions. Students view clicker questions as preparation for multiple choice exams and to review material addressed in the previous class, assess understanding, and revive flagging interest and attention. If students discuss a question and collaboratively determine the correct answer, they are learning from each other which is a very powerful learning technique.

“ With the writing-intensive course format utilized for smaller enrollments, a challenge was incorporating active learning activities. i>clicker provided a way.

Michael Preis, PhD, Department of Business Administration University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

**Question Examples:** 2–3 clicker questions are posed per lecture to achieve the following goals:

**(1) Definition and Application.** These questions require a knowledge of the definition and its application or use.

*A SWOT analysis is:*

- A. *Is typically part of a traditional marketing plan.*
- B. *Examines external factors.*
- C. *Examines internal factors.*
- D. *All of the above.*
- E. *None of the above.*

i>clicker responses allow further tailoring of the lecture based on student understanding.

**(2) Opinion.** After a use case presented in class, the following question requests a student opinion.

*Which company will win in the battle for the Chinese market?*

- A. *FedEx.*
- B. *UPS.*
- C. *Both.*
- D. *Neither.*

**(3) Application.** Gauges students' understanding and requires knowledge of a definition.

*An example of a latent problem or need is:*

- A. *Consumer buying replacement light bulbs.*
- B. *Business buying components for manufacturing process.*
- C. *Consumer buying milk.*
- D. *Consumer searching for information.*
- E. *Consumer changing long-distance telephone service.*

## Course Overview

**Course Title/Subject:** Principles of Marketing.

**Typical Enrollment/Student Information:**  
~325 students in the Fall and ~670 in the Spring offered as a required course for all business majors, advertising majors, and business minors.

**Course Structure:** In the Fall semester, 2 sections of the course are taught (~325 in each), and in the Spring semester, 1 section is taught (670–750 students). Four or 5 marketing PhD students help me to administer the course; these teaching assistants (TAs) are well qualified and, after serving as TAs, often teach Summer sections of the course (~35 students per section).

**Course/Student Challenges:** With the writing-intensive course format utilized for smaller enrollments, a challenge was incorporating and grading active learning activities in lieu of direct questions, discussions, presentations and short-answer or essay exams. The i>clicker technology help to engage students and make my transition into large classes easier.

**Course Grading Policy:** Students' grades are determined by the number of points they earn during the semester. Three exams are given, each worth 100 points, and up to 40 additional points can be earned by answering clicker questions correctly.

## Results

- ▶ **Ease of Transitioning to Large Class Sizes.** Using i>clickers has made the larger lecture format more meaningful and motivating while easing the administrative burden of more students.
- ▶ **Increased Student Attendance & Preparation.** i>clickers have encouraged students to review their textbooks outside of class and attend class for pop quizzes.
- ▶ **Inspired Student Promptness.** Using i>clickers at the beginning of class encourages students to be in their seats on time.
- ▶ **Evoking Student Participation.** 47.5% of the class was able to earn maximum credit answering questions correctly.
- ▶ **Increased Grading Opportunities.** Beyond traditional exams and quizzes, i>clickers provided additional methods for students to demonstrate their subject matter knowledge and understanding.

“ i>clickers made it easier to begin teaching large sections utilizing small class room techniques.

Michael Preis, PhD, Department of Business Administration University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

## Conclusion

After using a competing brand that had software and hardware reliability issues and raised doubts among students about the system, i>clicker was reliable, stable, and dependable.

According to surveys completed during the first year, students reported:

- Clickers were easy to use and made lectures more enjoyable.
- Clickers were helpful in learning course material.
- Clickers allowed them to participate more and stay focused.
- Clickers provided immediate feedback.
- Students appreciated that results were posted promptly to the online course management system.