MBA team one of three national finalists in Barnes & Noble marketing contest

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When Barnes & Noble announced a nationwide marketing plan contest to help promote Nook Study, its new digital textbook reading software, a team of Tulane marketing students stepped up to the challenge, developing a set of tactics that earned them one of three finalist slots and a trip to New York to present their recommendations at Barnes & Noble headquarters.



The Tulane Bookstore promotes the new Nook Study digital textbook reader. A team of Tulane business students developed a marketing plan for Nook Study, becoming finalists in a national contest. Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano.

The plan was one of several client-based projects to come out of adjunct professor of marketing Kim Davis' Marketing Planning and Implementation class, in which MBA students act as consultants and develop and implement targeted marketing plans for clients.

Working with businesses, the students combine market research and field research with a dash of creativity to come up with innovative and customized plans.

“We started by interviewing professors and students to understand the existing perceptions, needs and wants in the academic community for this software,” says Tom Connor, a member of the Nook Study team. Others on the student team that traveled to New York to make the presentation in late April included John Padavan, Will Marshall, Bill Laird and Dare Mangus-Lawson.

“We included around 20 individual recommendations [in our proposal],” says Connor. “The big idea was to change B&N’s marketing from a rational base to an emotional one ... using scholarships and giveaways, cause marketing, on-campus events and even the creation of useful mobile apps.”

“Marketing planning begins with gaining a deep understanding of a client’s business,” says Davis. “It’s about identifying the different internal and external factors, understanding what’s happening with their business and choosing the right goals and strategies.”

For Davis, this mixture of old and new techniques is crucial to marketing to today’s savvy consumers.

To learn more about Nook Study and the Nook Study Marketing Plan Contest, visit www.barnesandnoble.com/nookstudy.

—Cody Wild