



**Experiential Learning:
Lessons from Private, Public, and Non-profit Partnerships**

Jeff Goldman, Stacy Kosko, Bill Kules, Steve Kutchi, Jessica Roffe



UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND

Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Experiential Learning Success Stories
- UMD-Industry Experiential Learning Partnerships
- What Makes These Partnerships Successful?
- Q&A
- Activity/Brainstorm – How Can You Partner With UMD for Experiential Learning Projects?

Project Scope: Create a more profitable customer service screen with a better customer experience for in-store self-order kiosks.

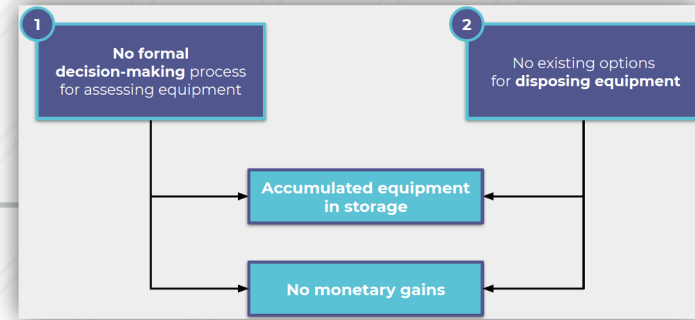
Key Reasons for Project Success

- Advance preparation - Defined scope of work in advance, with in-depth kickoff meeting
- Field research on self-order kiosks at competitors, in addition to literature review
- User research - deep interviews to identify customer needs, pain points and opportunities in existing order entry screens
- Iterative development of screen designs; evaluated and refined through user testing to yield a final high-level screen design
- Regular communications with Royal Farms staff



THALES

Project Scope: Establish processes and tools to evaluate out of service or end of life engineering test equipment and sell or trade old equipment to recover any remaining value



Key Reasons for Project Success

- QUEST brought a fresh perspective to evaluate TDSI's processes
- Leveraged quantitative data from a previous QUEST project
- Used candid feedback from key stakeholder interviews
- Multidisciplinary team:
 - Fostered holistic view of our problem
 - Created two-pronged solution including process definition AND automated data processing to inform the process
- Communication was key – weekly coordination and early review of draft presentations





Manna Project International
Communities Serving Communities

Project Scope: Outline a mental health program for underserved communities

■ Key Reasons for Project Success

- Students generated ideas Manna didn't have the time to create yet, such as a help line for referring community members to local organizations
- Students gathered useful research to explain community needs and possible solutions
- Students contributed skills MPI didn't yet have, such as an [animation](#) (show 5:40-6:10) for marketing to the community



Project: [“AyudaMente”](#)

QUEST Honors Program Capstone

- **Program Overview**
 - Semester-long capstone project
 - Focused on improving efficiency and increasing productivity for a corporate client
 - Teams of 5 undergraduate honors students with multidisciplinary backgrounds (business, engineering, science)
 - Past partners: Thales Defense & Securities, Lockheed Martin, Pinterest, HelloFresh, Facebook Reality Labs
- **Benefits for Client**
 - About 600 hours of consulting services
 - Fresh eyes looking at the company's processes, bringing knowledge of the latest trends in business and technology
 - Qualitative and quantitative data collected from interviews with key stakeholders
 - Valuable recommendations in terms of improved efficiency, increased productivity, and reduced costs
 - Opportunity to identify top talent at the University of Maryland
- **Contributions from Client**
 - \$10,000 sponsorship fee
 - A project champion to provide the team with data, contacts, and other items which may be necessary for project success (meet about 1 hour per week with team)
 - Commitment to post-project feedback calls 1 and 6 months after project completion

The iConsultancy Experiential Learning Program

- **Program Overview**

- Semester-long capstone projects with community, government, NGO & corporate partners
- Undergrad and Masters programs (AY21-22: 590 students / 115 projects / 19 course sections)
- Expertise: Data science/analytics/visualization, user experience/user interface design (UX/UI), website design/evaluation, information needs analysis

- **Benefits for Client**

- Solve data problems
- Optimize information and data use
- Research and design software products and services

- **Contributions from Client**

- A project contact, 1-2 hours per week
- Business-specific knowledge that students do not have
- Data, contacts, and other items which may be necessary for project success
- Request donation up to \$6000

Minor in Int'l Development and Conflict Management

- Program Overview
 - Semester-long capstone course; Client-based; Project-based
 - Prepares students for the research, analysis, entrepreneurship, and innovation required in international development and conflict management professions.
- Benefits for Client
 - Research
 - Idea generation
 - Project video & concept note
- Contributions from Client
 - Organization contact; contacts in the field
 - Guidance

Thales: Successful Projects

- Clearly defined scope with room for exploration
- Alignment with corporate strategic plan and Sr. Management support
- Upfront planning before student engagement
- Project should be important to the organization, yet not time sensitive
- Address pain points that organization may not have time or resources to address
- Can build on prior projects
- Assign corporate Project Champion to guide and facilitate, not lead
- Communication and working arrangement planning
- Plan for further development, implementation, and sustainment afterwards
- University faculty advisor to guide and help students navigate challenges
- Ideal project allows students to explore ideas, analyze data, narrow the solution set, simulate or prototype the solution, and rerun with new data to validate

Thales: Benefits to the Corporation

- Student teams do what others within the organization cannot
 - Bring fresh new ideas, methods, perspectives, energy, and excitement
 - Not tainted by preconceived notions, entrenchment, internal history, politics, and management influence
 - Provide access to modern cutting edge research, methods, and ideas within the university
 - Can work on important problems that the corporation may not have time or resources to address
 - Tend to uncover new issues and problems the corporation wasn't aware of and these can be used for future student projects
 - Employees tend to be less guarded and more open with student teams than internal teams, management, or external professional consultants
- Experiential Projects bring real value to the organization

Manna Project: Successful Projects

- From Class
 - Efficient communication to partner, usually led by one student
 - Show genuine interest in the work and project, not just to pass a class!
- From Partner
 - Focus the project so it fits capacity of student group and partner org
 - Provide context and assumptions to make the project a balance of realistic/educational and useful

Activity

- What projects can you begin to think of that may work for your company?
- What barriers most concern you?

Thank you!
Any Questions?



**UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND**

Jeff Goldman (jeff@mannaproject.org)
Stacy Kosko (sjosko@umd.edu)
Bill Kules (wmk@umd.edu)
Steve Kutchi (steve.kutchi@thalesdsi.com)
Jessica Roffe (jroffe@umd.edu)