

“LIBERAL ARTS” DOWN TO A NEUROSCIENCE

Overcoming Challenges Facing Marketing in Higher Education

THE CHALLENGE

With rising college costs and student debt – and the demand for more science, technology, engineering and math courses – arts education has been under scrutiny. Using consumer neuroscience, Nielsen sought to understand how educators could best communicate the value and importance of a liberal arts education.

THE SOLUTION

Two statements regarding general liberal arts were crafted and tested to identify which components of each statement did and did not resonate with prospects. Using EEG and eye tracking technology, primary metrics, such as emotional motivation, memory activation, and attention processing were measured directly from their source – the brain!

THE RESULTS

Both statements that were tested drove an average level of engagement with prospects. In addition, while the two statements were inspiring to both men and women, they were less associated with value.

When individual components of the statements were analyzed, multiple insights surfaced.

Small classroom environments where students have a greater opportunity to participate and be heard are more compelling.

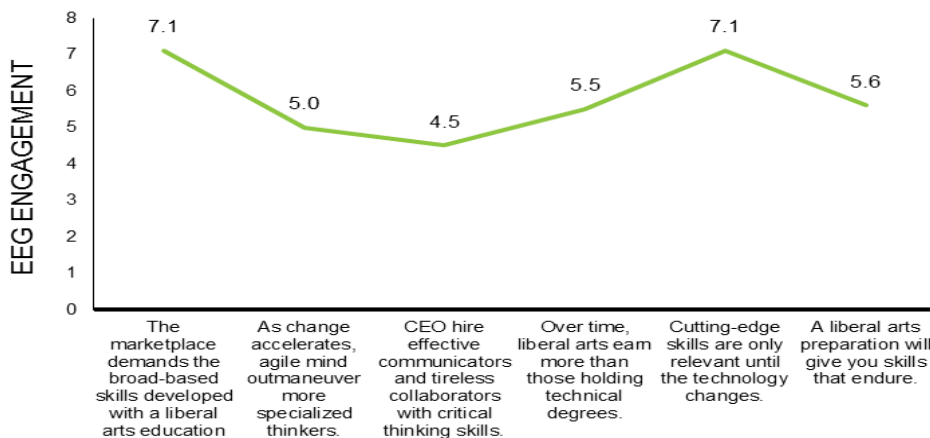
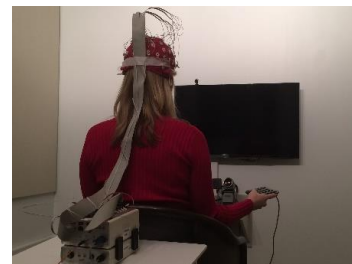
Emphasizing the marketplace demand for broad-based skills while highlighting the drawbacks of specialized skills also engaged prospects.

Messages that mentioned the corporate hierarchy were found to be unappealing.

Statements focused on the experience of a liberal arts education were gender agnostic, while women appeared to counter-argue statements that discussed the outcome of a liberal arts education.

Additional studies done at an institution level could provide further insights that would allow universities to optimize their specific message and target appeal.

CONCEPT CASE STUDY



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