WM9N4-15 Digital Startup & Business Modelling

26/27

Department
WMG
Level
Taught Postgraduate Level
Module leader
Dita Amry
Credit value
15
Module duration
28 weeks
Assessment
100% coursework
Study location
University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module provides aspiring entrepreneurs with a detailed and practice-oriented understanding of how new digital ventures are created, with particular emphasis on the role of artificial intelligence and the wider digital ecosystem in shaping modern startup opportunities. Building on core principles of digital venture creation, the module explores how AI-enabled tools, data-driven environments and platform dynamics influence value creation and entrepreneurial decision-making in early-stage startups.

A major learning component of the module is digital business modelling. Students will contextualize, synthesise and critically evaluate a range of business modelling approaches relevant to early-stage digital ventures, examining how startups design pathways to create, deliver and capture value in online settings. This includes making informed judgements about appropriate business design options, supported either by reflective engagement with AI tools or through interaction with external stakeholders.

Through the study of best practices and the application of practical methodologies such as Lean Startup principles students will be exposed to the complex, inter-related decisions involved in the pre-startup and startup phases of digital venture development. The module also emphasises how innovative digital business models can support sustainable competitive advantage and contribute to market disruption.

Students will apply selected business modelling design techniques to develop a new digital startup concept, working collaboratively within a venturing team to undertake business modelling activities and to present a team-based pitch. The module complements and integrates concepts, tools and techniques from other core MSc Innovation & Entrepreneurship modules, providing guidance on how to translate strategic ideas into viable digital business models.

Overall, this module equips students with the analytical, reflective and practical capabilities needed to design credible and competitive business models for new digital startups, integrating AI awareness, digital ecosystem insights and effective team-based venture development.

Module aims

1. To develop students' understanding of the contemporary digital ecosystem and its influence on new digital venture creation.
   This includes recognising the opportunities and challenges that digital tools, environments and practices create for early-stage startups.

2. To equip students with the capability to critically evaluate and apply business modelling approaches for early-stage digital ventures.
   Students will explore, compare and synthesise different business modelling options, and make informed judgements about how these can be used to design viable digital business concepts.

3. To enable students to collaborate effectively within venture teams to design, assess and communicate digital startup concepts.
   This incorporates applying business modelling techniques, reflecting on the design process, and presenting a coherent digital venture proposition.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

1. Foundations of Digital Venture Creation

- Key concepts and characteristics of digital startups
- The digital environment and its implications for new venture opportunities
- Early-stage processes involved in shaping a digital business idea

1. Approaches to Business Modelling for Digital Startups

- Principles and components of business models
- Exploration of different business modelling approaches and their purposes
- Evaluating options for value creation, delivery and capture in digital contexts

1. Business Model Design, Evaluation and Iteration

- Techniques for designing and assessing digital startup concepts
- Critical thinking and informed judgement in selecting business model pathways
- Reflective engagement with tools, processes or stakeholder insights to support business design

1. Team-Based Venture Development and Communication

- Collaborative practices in early-stage venture work
- Structuring and articulating a coherent digital venture concept
- Preparing and presenting a business model or startup proposition

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding on the role of artificial intelligence and the digital ecosystem in the new digital venture creation process
- Critically evaluate the process and various options of business modelling for early-stage digital business start-up
- Make informed judgements about appropriate options when undertaking a business design process for new digital start-ups
- Systematically evaluate and apply selected business modelling design techniques to develop a new digital start-up venture concept
- Perform effectively and co-operatively within a new venturing team to devise business modelling design activity

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis]

[Specific reading list for the module]

Research element

- Problem & Opportunity Validation
- Customer Segmentation & Jobs-to-be-Done
- Demand Sizing & Market Structure
- Competitor & Substitute Analysis
- Value Proposition Testing
- Pricing & Willingness-to-Pay
- Feasibility & Technical/Operational Assessment

Interdisciplinary

Synthesis of ideas from different diciplines to design and evaluate solutions across a wide range of markets.

International

Consider and factor in differences in markets, legal environments, social and cultural norms and their impact on Business Model design.

Subject specific skills

- Digital venture opportunity framing
- Business model analysis and comparison
- Application of business modelling techniques
- Digital Literacy on business operations
- Feasibility–desirability–viability assessment: Assessing the robustness of proposed models with respect to market need, operational practicality, and economic logic.
- Value proposition development
- Responsible and appropriate use of digital tools (including AI where relevant)
- Go-to-market pathway scoping
- The Lean Sprint as a project delivery tool
- Business Model Design
- Product-Market Fit
- Effective Pitching of Business Ideas

Transferable skills

Communication, reflective practice, team work, professionalism, leadership, digital literacy, problem solving, critical thinking, information literacy, team work and organizational awareness.

Study

Study time

Type	Required	Optional
Lectures	6 sessions of 1 hour (4%)	
Seminars	20 sessions of 1 hour (13%)	
Tutorials	(0%)	2 sessions of 2 hours
Online learning (scheduled sessions)	4 sessions of 1 hour (3%)	
Online learning (independent)	20 sessions of 1 hour (13%)	
Private study	40 hours (27%)	
Assessment	60 hours (40%)	
Total	150 hours	

Private study description

Independent reading of the additional lecture material and viewing of recommended videos to support the practical exercises undertaken in seminars and in-class workshops.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Business Modelling for a new digital start-up	40%	24 hours	No

This group-based assessment requires students to collaboratively design & pitch a new business model for a proposed digital startup. Students are assessed on the quality of the business model, the clarity of the pitch and their contribution to the team's venture-development process. Peer adjustment will also be used to determine final individual mark.

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Reassessment component			
Digital Start-up Business Model Portfolio			No

For the resit, each student must develop a business model proposal for a new digital startup that is different from their group work. The submission should apply business modelling concepts and outline the core logic of how the venture will create, deliver and capture value. This assessment must represent wholly new work.

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Business Model Design Report	60%	36 hours	Yes (extension)

The individual assessment is a written business report in which each student critically analyses and justifies the design of their digital startup's business model. Students must evaluate alternative business model options, articulate the rationale for their chosen design, and outline

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
launch plan for a business within the digital ecosystem.			
Reassessment component			
Evaluating Value Creation in a Digital Business Model			No
Students will complete a new individual written assessment that evaluates a digital startup business model of an existing business using concepts and frameworks from the module. The essay should demonstrate the student's understanding of digital business modelling, market and customer considerations, and the logic behind design decisions within a digital ecosystem.			

Feedback on assessment

Verbal / Written feedback (where relevant) would be provided after module activity milestones related to the 1st assessment component (40%).

Detailed individual feedback will be provided using the standard WMG assessment feedback template on Tabula/Moodle (where relevant).

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of TWMS-H1S6 Postgraduate Taught Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Full-time)