

Project Case Study: Delcampe.net

> Family-owned Delcampe.net is one of the world's largest online auction houses. Based in Belgium, Delcampe.net is the premier expert on vintage stamps, coins, and postcards.

Delcampe.net has:

- 800,000 registered users
- Close to 55 million items on auction at any given time



Client: Sebastien Delcampe, Delcampe.net Founder and CEO
Website: www.delcampe.net

the PROJECT

Throughout Europe, sellers and collectors viewed Delcampe.net as the go-to site to buy and sell sought-after vintage items. The site had 800,000 users, most of whom were European. Per Sebastien Delcampe, the site's founder and CEO, the auction house had found it challenging to gain traction in the US market. He was ready to expand his operations, and that's when Olin's Center for Experiential Learning (CEL) contacted him.

CEL student team member Austin French, MBA'14, said the project involved developing a marketing strategy, completing a competitor analysis, and making recommendations for an overhaul of the company's website. Once Delcampe.net had this information, the company would be in a much better position to approach expansion into the United States.

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the PROCESS

Delcampe knew it was imperative that the CEL team become immersed in the Delcampe.net business and culture, which is why the company arranged for them to spend a week in Belgium.

For Delcampe, the project was an excellent opportunity to get support from a team in their target market. For the CEL team, they were able to apply their experience and classroom concepts to a

real-world challenge. French, the team lead, explains, “In business school, you spend an incredible amount of time learning about and discussing big-picture business strategy, and this project was a

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wonderful opportunity to apply business strategy concepts and actually advise the direction of an established company.”

CEL student team member Megan Greathouse, MBA ’14, embraced experiencing the inner workings of Delcampe.net. “I was taking marketing research classes and applying it directly to this project by developing a survey and analyzing the data to help Delcampe.net better understand

its consumers,” she said. “I learned a lot about the unique role and specific challenges of online marketplaces.”

***the* OUTCOME**

Delcampe and three other of the company’s top executives traveled to St. Louis to meet with the CEL team and review their analysis and recommendations. “Great things came as a result of this partnership,” said Delcampe. With the students’ help, Delcampe.net built a strategy for expanding its consumer base beyond 800,000 users.

The project became an immediate career stepping-stone for one of the CEL team members. Following the team’s recommendations, Delcampe determined that immediate implementation support was required. To ensure success, Delcampe.net retained a CEL team member over the summer to execute the first phase of market entry.

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***next* STEPS**

To get started, contact the Center for Experiential Learning at cel@wustl.edu or +1-314-935-4512.