Eller College of Management

The University of Arizona

MIS 111 Freshman Honors Showcase

Padlet

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Executive Summary

Padlet is the easiest way to create and collaborate online. It works like a classroom social networking platform in which students and teachers have access to a wall that they can post documents, power-points, videos, pictures, links and even voice recordings. It can also be used as a community wall to post questions that either the teacher or other students can help answer.

An interesting feature that Padlet provides is the personal domain feature. This feature allows the admin of the Padlet to customize their Padlet’s domain. For example, the admin can create a Padlet that has the URL of padlet.com/MIS111L, if the domain is available to be used. Students can type in the URL and will be directly brought to the class’ individualized Padlet.

With the user management feature, the admin will have direct access to who can be allowed access to the Padlet. For instance, once the semester ends, the administrator has the ability to remove students from being able to access and edit the Padlet. The admin is able to do this while keeping all the information that students have contributed during the semester in the Padlet.

With the activity monitoring feature, teachers as well as students, will have access to a notification center in which they can keep up with all the latest posts. The admin also has the power to view who has viewed certain documents and files that have been uploaded to the class’ Padlet. For example, the teacher can upload the syllabus and schedule, giving every student access to it. The teacher will be able to view who has opened and viewed the syllabus with the activity monitoring feature.

Padlet works well for classes in which the teacher actively participates with students. At any time, students have the ability to work, and post on the Padlet at the same time. Padlet can create a lot of new and interesting opportunities both in and out of the classroom. Padlet allows the teacher to cater to all types of students so that each of them can learn to the best of their abilities.

Padlet has an extremely low cost in comparison to what Padlet can do for the classroom. Padlet Backpack edition, for the classroom, will cost either five dollars a month or forty-five dollars a year, with unlimited student accounts.

We approached the foreign language department because learning a second language is extremely difficult, and it doesn’t help when classes are only fifty minutes long. With Padlet, teachers can upload worksheets, videos, links, etc., all to the class’ individualized Padlet, things that the students can study to further enhance their learning experience. The student is also able to create a relationship with the teacher outside of the classroom. Students will be able to communicate with the teacher and other students in the class to receive the help they need. Padlet acts like a white board in which teachers can upload whatever they feel necessary and students will have access to everything, all in one place.

Padlet is relatively new, but has great potential. This company has a unique idea that has the potential to be applied in every classroom as well as many businesses around the world. Padlet has the funding and support from their investors necessary to grow as well expand across the country. There is an increasing demand for ways of communication incorporated into learning and Padlet is winning the race.
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Padlet works like a classroom social network. It works well for classes in which the teacher actively participates with students. It can be used as a community wall to post questions that either the teacher or other students can help answer. The teacher can upload important documents to the class’s individualized Padlet, such as the syllabus, giving every student access to it. If adopted, Padlet can create a lot of new and interesting opportunities both in and out of the classroom such as providing students with instructional videos, helpful PowerPoint presentations, and extra practice problems. These extra learning opportunities provide a unique way to help students learn. Padlet allows the teacher to cater to all types of students so that each of them can learn to the best of their abilities.

The value proposition for Padlet is that it allows students and teachers to communicate with one another through the use of sharing videos, photos, documents, website links etc. It allows for not only student teacher communication, but also allows for a great student to student connection. Padlet can be very useful in the classroom acting as a digital locker, storing key documents and files to help students with classwork. The customers that Padlet targets are the education, business and individual realms. There are three different packages that Padlet offers to users. Padlet offers a free package for all users and can be used for all intentions and purposes. Once you upgrade and move past the free package into the premium package, you have access to three new different settings; Backpack (for schools), Briefcase (for businesses), and Jetpack (for individuals). Padlet Backpack is “A private, more secure instance of Padlet for your school.” Padlet Briefcase is “A private, more secure instance of Padlet for your
business.” Padlet Jetpack is “Padlet on steroids. Not the kind Lance took” (Padlet). For what Padlet has to offer, the price is irrelevant.

The pricing structure for Padlet is offered in monthly or yearly payments. Padlet Backpack and Padlet Briefcase offer the same payment structures. After a free thirty-day trial, you can pay five dollars per teacher/ per month with unlimited student accounts or you can pay forty-five dollars per teacher/ per year with unlimited student accounts. The yearly plan is twenty-five percent cheaper than the monthly plan. Padlet Briefcase uses the same payment plan but is offered per user/ per month and per user/ per year. Padlet Jetpack can be purchased for only twenty-nine dollars per year.

Padlet’s business plan mostly incorporates the fact that it is very easy to use and can easily be picked up by just about anyone. It can be used for free, and comes with a multitude of features that make communicating information very easy for anyone. Also, they pride themselves on high quality customer support saying that they will reply to any questions within twenty-four hours. Padlet wants to make technology easy to use for everyone so that communication will be a non-issue for its customers.

As of right now, Padlet is a private company. Padlet has done two rounds of investing, raising $1.3 million, with multiple big name investors including Cherubic VC and Y Combinator (Padlet Employees Estimate). Cherubic VC is an early-stage venture capital firm that has invested in eighty companies. These eighty companies have together raised over one billion dollars. Y Combinator has invested a smaller amount into Padlet, but has taken the initiative of moving them to the Silicon Valley in San Francisco, California to work with them directly. Y Combinator is expecting that this move will help Padlet raise their profits and increase brand recognition. Padlet is a
smaller company consisting of ten employees; but with help from their investors they hope to expand and continue to grow as a company.

Padlet offers many useful and unique features for its users. The first one to take notice of is its “user management and access control” feature. This feature is vital for up keeping your Padlet and making sure that the only people benefiting from it are people that are welcome. For example, if a Padlet is catered to a specific class and a student graduates; the “user management and access control” feature allows you to remove this student while still keeping their data contributions. This feature also allows you to add new users with ease, and instantly grant them with all of the data comprised prior to their addition. The “user management and access control” feature can also be useful when you need to add superiors to look over work, and review the Padlet’s functionality.

Another useful feature is the “more privacy” feature. This feature insures that your Padlet is only being viewed by those approved by the Padlet’s creator. A problem that Padlet cleverly took into consideration was social network sharing. This means people within the Padlet sharing its contents on their public pages. To counteract this problem, the “more privacy” feature allows the Padlet’s creator to close off all of the social networking features that Padlet provides by default. If the social networking feature is closed off, then social networks such as Facebook and Instagram will be inaccessible with that specific Padlet.

The third feature that will be displayed is the “extra security” feature. Although this feature can never be actually experienced by a Padlet user, it should definitely be appreciated. Padlet takes the content’s security exchanged within its database very seriously. That is why it takes every step necessary to ensure that it is protected. Padlet
utilizes the same technology used in banks to fortify its cyber walls, keeping any and all unwanted personnel out of its database.

Having a personal connection to your Padlet is something that the company also took into consideration. They understand that the user wants to be a part of the customization and differentiate themselves from other Padlets. That is why they created the “branding” feature for premium members. You can replace Padlet’s name and logo with your school’s name and logo as well as having the option to customize your own subdomain. The “branding” feature gives you total creative control of your page and makes it truly feel like a customized information center.

Staying on top of the current posts is a vital part of keeping tabs on the class. Padlet’s “activity-monitoring” feature allows you to stay on top of what is being shared and created. This feature is very useful for a teacher acting as the admin of the page: noting the major contributors, controlling what is being posted, and noticing any students who are behaving inappropriately. This will allow for a more efficient classroom environment and a more effective way of learning.

Padlet also goes above and beyond making sure that there is nothing holding back its users. With the “bigger file uploads” feature, there is no file too large for Padlet to handle. Videos up to 100MB, Photoshop files up to 50MB, and classic files up to 250MB are just a few examples of how the “bigger file uploads” feature gives the users a ‘no worries’ feeling when uploading any kind of file.

Taking the “more privacy” and “branding” features to the next level is the “controlled environment” feature. When you make a Padlet, it has the potential to truly become yours. The “controlled environment” feature allows your school’s IT department
to manage the domain for your Padlet. Padlet would let your school’s IT department on the inside, and be able to block students from certain features that they did not feel were appropriate for that specific class’s Padlet. This feature makes it so that everyone gets to be involved, and is satisfied with their Padlet experience.

Never feel alone with the “delightful support” feature. Customer service is a part that can make or break any business. Padlet understands that when adopting any new technology there will be some sort of learning curve. That is why the Padlet team dedicates themselves to see that they will be there for whenever a customer needs them. They ensure that a user of their product will be taken care of in the sense that all of their questions will be answered in a timely fashion. The Padlet team has made themselves available through all avenues of communication. Whether you prefer to chat online, email, talk on the phone, video chat through skype, or even write a handwritten letter to their office located in San Francisco, California, the Padlet team has made themselves available to all options. The Padlet team also added the “lots of love” feature for all of its users. This is where they will personally send you, the user, a handwritten letter just because they care so much about your Padlet experience.

Coming soon to Padlet are a wide variety of new features, firstly the “student reports and portfolios” feature allows you to create reports and portfolios for students involved in your Padlet. This new feature allows the creator of the Padlet, in most cases teachers, to create detailed reports on students’ work based on year, class, and even subject. Teachers can also create advanced portfolios based off of previous works done by students in the class. This interaction benefits teachers and students because teachers are able to directly critique student’s work, and the students can get feedback
on their work directly on Padlet. The “student reports and portfolios” feature will make Padlet an all-purpose central location for all class purposes.

The “analytics” feature is an important feature when it comes to monitoring students’ work. The “analytics” feature will allow the admin of the Padlet to see who has and hasn’t been working with Padlet. This new feature will also allow the admin to analyze students’ credibility when it comes to assessing whether or not students completed their assigned work.

Another feature coming soon is the “Google Apps, Edmodo, LMS Integration” feature. This feature allows you to integrate your previous Google Apps, Edmodo and LMS accounts with Padlet. Forget having to remember new passwords and updating the same information time and time again. The “Google Apps, Edmodo, LMS Integration” feature allows you to use existing logins from Google Apps, the same student data from Edmodo or “learning management systems to provision users” with the LMS Integration. This feature will allow Padlet users to do all that, integrating existing login information has never been easier (Padlet).

The “content filtering” feature is another highly anticipated feature coming soon to Padlet. This feature will automatically remove inappropriate content, such as vulgar words. With so much information being put into a class’s individualized Padlet, this is one less thing teachers will have to worry about.

One of the cool things about Padlet is that it can be delivered in two different ways, website form and app form. One of the perks of using Padlet on the website is that it gives you the power to create your own domain within each personalized Padlet. Padlet, the app, contains the basic functions of the website based Padlet but can be
accessed on the go. Padlet is free to download in the app store, for iPhone users, as well as in the google play store, for android users. Padlet is so attractive because of how versatile the program is.

Padlet is easily accessible on many different platforms. It is supported by PC, Mac, IPhone and Android. Padlet is available on mobile devices as well as in website form.

There are multiple markets that would be suitable for this product. Essentially, any individual or group of people that want to share their ideas and collaborate with one another would benefit greatly from using Padlet. Padlet allows for easy sharing of ideas as well as the creation of new ones, without any limitations. It allows for sharing ideas not only through words, but through videos and pictures as well.

The main groups that would benefit from Padlet are classrooms and businesses. There are many points in time when these groups need to be able to connect with each other and share their ideas. Although there are other sharing platforms available, no other platform allows for the level of interaction between peers than Padlet.

Another thing that Padlet offers is its level of innovation. As stated before, there are other platforms that allow for the sharing of data, but not on the level that Padlet offers. Padlet can allow for instructors to share vital information with their students in a timely and private manner. The instructor can post different helpful tools such as the day’s lesson, homework assignments, take home quizzes and tests, or even a motivational video for the day. This can allow for a more personal interaction between the students and the instructor that can help support a stronger relationship.
The students would use Padlet as a means of viewing the class’s content. Students would have access to links, videos, images and even documents that the teacher has made available to the students. The teacher will have access to uploading content to the Padlet as well as answering individual questions uploaded by the students. For example, a reading was uploaded to the Padlet and a student did not understand it. That student can post a question on the Padlet that both the teacher and other students can see. Both the teacher and the student’s peers can clarify something about the reading so that the student understands the material. This, along with some of the new features, will enable the teacher to have much more control over the Padlet. They will be able to answer questions, while also monitoring students’ activity levels in the Padlet.

With the “analytics” feature coming soon, monitoring students’ involvement will be much easier than it previously is. With this feature, an instructor will be able to verify who did their homework, quizzes, or even practice activities. It will give instructors an extra tool that will help them keep control of their class while making sure each student is getting the amount of practice and work done that is required to succeed in their class.

If an instructor adopted Padlet, the class would be much more organized. It is very difficult for a teacher to discuss an entire lesson in 50 minutes, thus requiring outside work, such as homework, preparation for upcoming class, etc. With Padlet, the teacher can upload content that would be easy to access, as well as beneficial for the students, in learning current course material. Students would be more likely to perform better on exams and other assignments because they will have all the information
available at the click of a button all in one place as well as optimal time to learn the course material. It will be mandatory for students to work on Padlet as well as view and practice the work assigned by the teacher. With the new features coming soon, teachers will be able to view students’ participation/ involvement on the Padlet. It all depends on the students whether or not they retain the material, Padlet won’t teach them, but it will better organize the class, while setting the students up for success.

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese is an appropriate candidate for adopting Padlet in their everyday classrooms because of the potential that it gives the department. Padlet would help students in a large way because of how interactive learning a language is. Students need to have hands on learning techniques and although instructors cannot always be there to help students learn, the instructor can post helpful tools to the class’ Padlet and allow for the students to gain a better understanding of the material.

This is all especially helpful for the level of Spanish that the instructor we presented Padlet teaches: Spanish 101. With students just beginning to learn the language, they need all the help that they can get. With instructors able to post different lessons, videos, and other tools on the class’ Padlet, these students can gain confidence in their skills as well as prepare themselves for the higher levels that they may take in the future.

Padlet creates new activities, offering an extension for both students and teachers to interact with one another. It acts as a place in which a teacher can offer additional material for students to work on, in an easily accessible place, outside the classroom.
The professor that we interviewed to inquire if they would want to adopt Padlet into their classroom is Rodney Zamudio. Professor Zamudio is an instructor for Spanish 101. He was very interested in adopting Padlet. He felt as though the students could really benefit from Padlet considering its features. The students would be able to help each other learn as well as receive advice and assignments from Professor Zamudio. Being able to present Padlet to an outside source really helped our group learn all of the features of Padlet and how it works. We needed to be prepared and so we all studied the site and app in order to be professional and to help our group's chances in getting our app adopted. We all benefited greatly from this presentation and were very ecstatic in how Professor Zamudio responded. Professor Zamudio was amazed at how easy Padlet is to use.

Using Padlet is extremely easy for any student. It does not require any additional technology that is normal for a student to have in 2015. One way to access Padlet is by using the internet on a desktop or a laptop. Another way to use Padlet is to download the app on a smartphone with access to the internet. With this option, the user would need access to a data plan or Wi-Fi. Padlet is easy to use and does not require much from the user. In terms of the class in general, the instructor will also need access to these materials in order to allow the students to access the class’s Padlet.

The learning ability as well as the thinking ability required in order to use Padlet is extremely low. Padlet.com tells you what to do in order to create a Padlet and how to post various content on that Padlet. Padlet.com also tells you about the different features that they offer and what these features are meant for on their site. If for some
reason the user is not able to figure out how to work a particular part on padlet.com, then there is a “help” button that is full of very helpful information regarding Padlet.

If all of these tools are not helpful enough, padlet.com supplies a “help” button to help each user with their individual needs. The first section of this help button is building. It describes a step-by-step process on how to create a Padlet, how to modify the different settings for the Padlet, and some of the common problems that may occur when creating a Padlet and how to solve them.

The second section of this help button is reading. This section gives the user instructions on how to expand a post that is particularly long, and how to navigate this extended post past this point.

The third section of this help button is the most extensive, writing. This section of the help button brings help to the user on how to write a post. This section also provides various shortcuts for the user that can be helpful in their Padlet such as how to bold and italicize sections, and how to create a numbered list on a post. Other parts of the writing section include how to drag a post, resize items, and the rules that are in place on who can edit a Padlet.

The final part of this section is extremely important because it gives the user the instructions on how to add media to their Padlet such as videos, pictures, and much more. This can bring a Padlet to life and help personalize the Padlet as well. It also works as a way of explaining how a user can share their Padlet on various kinds of social media as well as blogs.

If what you are trying to do is not located in the help button, then there are pages of YouTube videos available that will give a step-by-step process on how to work
Padlet. Padlet is a very simple website to learn and the teacher should not have difficulty teaching the website to the class.

There are few costs in order to use Padlet. For the user, they will need a laptop or a smartphone. Within each platform comes different costs, including the cost of the laptop and/or smartphone. In addition, if the user decides they want to use their smartphone then they will need to pay for a data plan in order to use the app or the internet when the phone is not connected to Wi-Fi.

For the instructor, they will need to find a way to pay for the forty-five-dollar cost per year for Padlet Backpack. They may want to approach the institution in order to pay for this cost, ask the students to pay for the cost, or they can take the money needed out of a yearly budget if they are allotted one.

The costs to the institution include a computer in order for the instructor to participate in the use of Padlet. The institution also would need to pay for the forty-five-dollar cost if they feel that it is appropriate enough for them to pay for it. Padlet is extremely versatile and is very cheap in comparison to what it allows students to do.

Padlet is a very simple website that easily organizes data for a teacher to use. If for some reason Padlet services go offline, it would not be difficult for a teacher to use an alternative website as long as the teacher has made backups of all the important data that was being used on Padlet. Luckily for teachers, Padlet backs up all data everyday so if there is ever an issue, the teacher can contact the customer support to access their data. There are other technologies out there that have some of the same attributes as Padlet such as Piazza (an app for posing questions) or Google Apps, but Padlet takes the convenience of these websites and puts them all into one convenient
For Padlet to make an impact on the class, it must pass all the requisites to act as a tool for students at a university.

Padlet would not break any of the rules associated with FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act) because there is no sharing any educational records on Padlet. The sole purpose of Padlet in the classroom is to create more student to teacher interaction. If there is any misbehavior on the class Padlet, it is the teacher’s responsibility to take action. It even states in the Terms of Service for Padlet that, “you [the teacher] (or your school) assumes the responsibility for complying with the U.S. Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (“COPPA”) and, to the extent applicable, The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”).” (Terms of Service). Most of the content on Padlet will be posted by the teacher, so it is the teacher’s responsibility to stay within all of the students’ educational rights.

Padlet is a very good tool to use for anyone. Padlet users with disabilities will still be able to access and use all of the features available to them because all it involves is sight. If a user is visually impaired, it is very easy for that person to tell an aid to either read them any important information or to post anything they wanted to say. Padlet is extremely user friendly and can be a useful tool for just about anyone.

Based on the Terms of Service and Privacy Policy of Padlet, there are no requirements that conflict with a student’s expectation of privacy. According to the Terms of Service, “Subscribers retain ownership of all intellectual property rights in their Subscriber Content.” (Terms of Service). Any user retains ownership of any intellectual property put on the site that was made by the user. The user is responsible for maintaining who can and cannot view his or her own Padlet. All that is required to sign
up for Padlet is a valid email, username, and password. It is up to the user to maintain privacy regarding this information and keep the account secure. Padlet will only use the email in regards to recovering your account, or if any of the Terms of Service has changed. Your account will only be sent to third parties if you so choose. You would have to provide your account information to Padlet for that third party service (Privacy Policy). Padlet complies with all the terms of privacy necessary for university students and keeps information safe. Since Padlet protects students’ privacy, it is very easy for a university to implement it into classrooms.

In completing the adoption of Padlet, a few key events need to take place. First a faculty instructional seminar would have to take place. This seminar will serve as a time to walk the teachers, who plan on adopting Padlet into their classrooms, through all of the features and navigational techniques. Making sure that the teachers have a strong foundation in working with the Padlet domain is going to be the core element leading to the successful adoption of Padlet. This is largely due to the fact that even though the Padlet team in San Francisco has made themselves available for all questions; students will probably approach their teacher for any Padlet problems. All student integration will be taken care of by the teacher with Padlet support. In class, the teacher should walk students through creating their accounts, and show them some of the basic features of Padlet. Using the Padlet domain should then take place immediately. A homework assignment or article should be posted on the classroom page that night. The quick student adoption of Padlet will be the key in getting it to be an integral part of the classroom. In terms of the cost to upgrade to premium, Professor Rodney, who was the faculty member that endorsed Padlet, offered to cover the low cost that the premium
version requires. For other classes, if the teachers are uncomfortable with spending the forty-five dollars that it costs for a year of premium, they can have their students buy in for their equal share of the account. This buy in can be labeled as a classroom technology fee, and the cost would vary depending on the class size. The overall adoption of Padlet in classrooms will be very grass-roots oriented, starting with basic fundamentals, and then working up exponentially. The key to implementing the system into the class will be on the class instructor, constant encouragement and familiarity with the technology will be extremely beneficial.

Padlet is a website as well as a mobile application designed for both students and teachers to interact with one another. It also functions as a place where important documents can be stored and used. Padlet offers an extension to the student-teacher relationship outside the classroom. It allows for student-teacher communication on a personalized wall created specifically for your class. Teachers can share videos, documents, links, or photos; anything necessary to enhance the learning experience of the course material in the classroom on your unique class Padlet. This can help students excel in their studies by giving different methods of learning and different ways to have a more personalized relationship with their peers and instructors. Padlet functions as a unique learning environment to help make the classroom more accessible outside of the allotted class time.
Bibliography


Appendix A

We targeted the foreign language department, reaching out to multiple professors. Within a few days, we received a response from Spanish 101 instructor Rodney Zamudio. He agreed to meet us during his office hours located at the think tank in the Recreation Center. It was there that our group presented Padlet, and showed him how it worked and the various functionalities that it could be used for in his class. He quickly saw the potential that Padlet could offer, but he questioned how it was different from the D2L site that he was already using. We explained that Padlet offered a more interactive environment for his students. With Padlet, Mr. Zamudio will be able to see which students are viewing his posts, who is sharing what, and how the students are interacting with each other. We also showed him how Padlet offered a more visual learning experience where all the information is displayed in one place. On D2L, everything is formatted using links and tabs which causes confusion for students and faculty alike. Mr. Zamudio was impressed by Padlet, and saw how its interactive platform would benefit his students’ learning experiences. After our meeting, Mr. Zamudio expressed interest in using Padlet in his future classes.