

The Economic Route

**SVC-Days „How to sustainably implement
elearning“**

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1. eLearning – a definition
2. The economics of eLearning – a contradiction?
3. The different eLearning markets
4. Conclusions

... is when a computer or new media is used as part of the learning process or learning strategy

Thus, nearly any learning activity is to some extent eLearning, ...

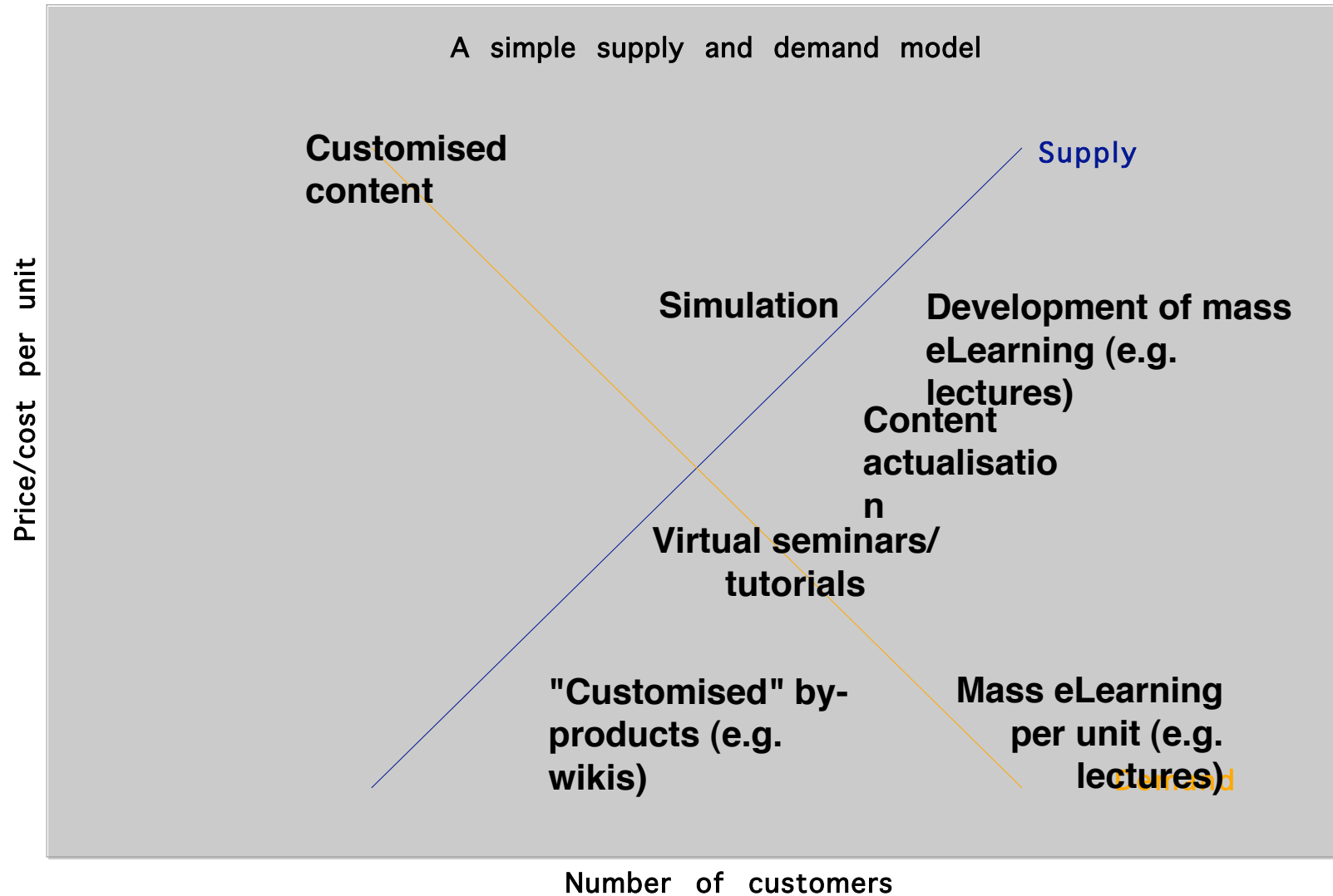
... but nearly no learning activity is only eLearning!

- eLearning, eKnowledge, eInformation, eSkills
- Computer and other new media are a medium for communication, research, simulation and learning etc.

Any business model is restricted to the future, but not to the past

- One needs to read the future
- Thus, sustainability means also future orientation

The economics of eLearning



Companies (in-service training, less pre-service)

Individuals (pre- and in-service training, adult education,
degree programmes)

Other universities/departments

Training often considered a cost factor, not an investment

Training on the job (usually informal or non-formal)

Training on-demand (i.e. when immediately needed)

- Product innovation etc.
- As response to arising needs during day-to-day work
- Strategic or systematic training is less important, though not irrelevant – and if relevant, clearly related to high-end and specialised, up-to-date content

Job-oriented training, often part-time

Education and training for „educational purposes“

- Small groups and, often, blended learning is preferred
- Ability or willingness to pay is often limited
- Full costs cannot be recovered (often) unless low-paid, but highly motivated staff is employed

Courses (lectures) could be developed once and delivered at different universities

Economies of scale, i.e. cost-reduction and increase in efficiency

Tutorials could be conducted separately at each universities, i.e., in fact, blended learning

Allows also to supply courses for which demand would be too small at one university

At the moment this seems to be the nearest route

- Open source or „you pay as you use“?

Decision on target group and market has to be taken first!

This decision clearly affects the product (content, learning strategy) and affects return options etc.

- SVC programme is mainly directed at eLearning for undergraduate and degree students (new: further ed.)
- Most content is inadequate for companies
- Serving to „other“ individual students could be a by-product and is depending on particular content
- eLearning-network of Swiss universities to exchange content (and other products)

If companies should be targeted, this suggests to take a new basic decision and to re-design the „organisational structure“ of SVC from a programme to a company

P.S. The question whether a certain course could be targeted to non-traditional students cannot be answered in general but depends on the particular course, i.e. its topic, content, mode of delivery etc.

Requirements:

- Short and well fitting (customised and specialised!) sequences, e.g. wikis, 5-minute „lectures“ etc.
- Practically oriented/action oriented
- Non-academic language
- Additional support, advice, evaluation and, if necessary, certificates

! The customer 's requirements are imperative! – whether you like it or not!

Demands a professional organisation structure that is oriented towards companies' needs

➤ This suggests co-operation with a private company or a separate distribution channel

➤ Such a distribution channel might even be useful for non-traditional students

➤ Options: redirecting SVC or establishing „Swiss e-Uni“