

Feature Focus: Class Pricing Options

Samantha Stierna's article "Feature Focus: Class Pricing Options" offers a detailed overview of the three areas that you can control class pricing in a Web-based learning management system. The author focuses on how to use each class pricing option to offer discounts and price breaks to various groups of customers. Stierna shows how each different pricing option can be effectively used to market a class to a particular subset of customers, creating unlimited options for use in a Web-based management system. The author concludes by showing how class pricing information is stored in the learning management systems database and finishes with a speculation on future reporting features that could use registration pricing data to create a more detailed analysis of registration trends for use in marketing classes.

Abstract

One effective way of marketing your courses is to offer your customers discounts on their class purchases. Most Web-based management systems offer a set of pricing options that you can use to offer discounts that will maximize your promotional efforts. The mix of class pricing options lends itself to many different ways of offering discounts to many different groups of customers. You can use pricing options to promote specific classes to individual market segments.

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In learning management systems there are three basic areas where you can manage pricing options, some of them more detailed than others. Let's take a look at each of these options.

Basic Class Cost

The basic class cost is simply the general fee that you set up for all users when you create a class. This is the most basic way of creating a class fee and will affect any other pricing option that you create. In a Web-based system, the basic class cost is set up by default from the course cost. When you create a class, you can deviate from the default course cost and create different basic class costs for each instance of the class you create. The class cost may vary depending on the costs of hosting the class or if you want to price a class so that more people will register for it. Included in the basic class cost are any fees for materials.

Item Level Discounts

Item level discounts apply to individual items in individual student's purchases. These discounts are set up as part of a normal course and class set up, but are configured to appeal to customers who fit certain registration criteria. Not all of the registration criteria are demographic or profile-based; there are certain discounts that can be offered to students who register early

or who register other students with them. Let's look more closely at some of these item level discounts:

Code Discount – The primary purpose for this discount is when you want to target a specific group of people, primarily through a publication. Example: You run an advertisement in *Nordic Needle*, a needlework publication. Those that read the advertisement will also see the code you provide for a discount on a cross stitch class. If they enter this code during registration, they will obtain this discount for the cross stitch class.

Date Discount – This will allow you to have a special that runs for a specific period of time. Example: You run a special on selected computer classes for those who register during the month of January.

Early Bird Discount – Provide the ability to discount a specific class for those students who register early. Example: Students who register for selected computer classes prior to January 1 will get the discounted fee.

Membership Discount – When a student purchases a membership they are offered certain privileges that go with memberships, one of which is a discounted price. You can also have different levels of membership depending on the size of the membership. Example: Members get a discounted fee on all crafts classes.

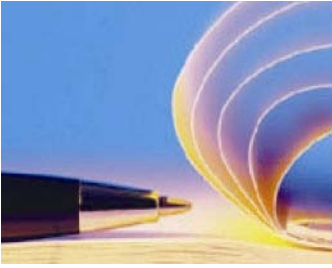
Profile Attribute Discount – There are 7 attributes associated with a student profile. These are resident, senior, alumni, employee and 3 user-defined attributes. This allows you to set up a discount for those students that meet this criteria. Example: You want to set up a discount for students that are seniors. You also want to set up some class where employees get a discount. These types of discounts will be applied automatically if a student has an attribute that matches the attribute in the discount.

Quantity Discount – A quantity purchase discount can be set up for those classes where you want to give a discount when more than one person registers for a specific class. Example: If you offer a partner dance class and you want to encourage couples to sign up, then you can offer a discount when two or more people register for the class at the same time. The quantity discount allows you to give a lower price for each registration.

Series Discount – A discounted fee can be created for students who register for all classes in a series. Example: Three classes will be given on Microsoft Excel, Word and PowerPoint. A student can register for classes individually, but will get a discounted price when registering for the series

Order Level Discounts

Promotional Discount – This discount operates in the same way as the Code Discount at the item level. However, the order level promotional discount will be applied against an entire order. Example: You send out a promotional mailing to advertise your online registration. Any student who registers online can use this code to get \$10 off of the entire order.



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Each registration that uses a discount also has the potential to give you useful feedback about how your program should store all registration data (including discounts used) in a database and this information can be retrieved by staff by looking at transaction records. It should also be possible to bring up a report which details which discounts were used when and by whom. This data will allow you to track very important trends and increase the efficacy of your marketing efforts.

There are many useful ways to use the variety pricing options that are available to you in a learning management system. They can be a powerful feedback tool that you can use to give your learners the education experiences they want.