Marketing 555 – Entrepreneurial Marketing
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Class web site: http://marketing555.wordpress.com

Course Objective:
This class is designed to give students a hands-on opportunity to take academic frameworks and use them to develop, plan and execute a Customer Acquisition Strategy for a product that does not currently exist.

This is a class on Entrepreneurial Marketing, so we will be focused on how to develop strategies around Customer Discovery, Customer Validation and Customer Acquisition. We will not be focused on “building a company” as much as we will be focused on identifying and reaching potential customers.

Textbooks:
We’ll use a book by Steve Blank entitled, “The Four Steps to the Epiphany,” as a guide. The cheapest way to buy it is via Amazon, and you can choose Kindle, Hardback or Paperback.
http://www.amazon.com/Four-Steps-Epiphany-Steve-Blank/dp/0989200507

If you are really interested in joining a start-up, I’d also recommend you getting, “The Lean Start-Up” by Eric Ries. We won’t use it, but most people you meet in the start-up world will be familiar with it.

Grading:
In a real entrepreneurial marketing organization, you would be evaluated on your ability to develop a solid strategy, execute what is expected by your management team, produce quality content and materials to promote your brand, do your part to make your team better, analyze data to make good decisions quickly and adapt your plans as necessary. We’ll try to replicate that experience in this 10 week classroom setting. You’ll be evaluated on the following assignments:

1) Individual articles on the MKTG 555 public facing blog in which you take a look at certain marketing facets of entrepreneurial organizations that interest you.
2) An individual paper in which you interview an entrepreneur and give your advice on a problem they are facing, based on your ability to look at their situation.
3) If all goes well, we will have a couple of real life “case studies” to work on as groups, where you will get to hear directly from the company how they solved the problem.
4) Participation in your group’s Customer Acquisition Strategy, which will be delivered in front a panel of entrepreneurs and marketers the final week of the quarter.
5) Your in-class or social media participation that brings value to the overall learning experience of the class.

Note: You have a Final Presentation to deliver the last day of class. But you will be working on the project throughout the quarter, and the final presentation is simply a recap of your learnings throughout the 10 weeks.

The Class Format
The first week of class, each student will get one minute to pitch an idea they have for a new product. We’ll vote on 8 to move forward with, and self-select into 8 groups.

Then each week, the class will be split into 3 parts:

1) A guest panel with expertise in the topic area we are studying, moderated by one of the 8 groups.
2) A conversation about the group or individual assignment you worked on during the week.
3) A lecture introducing a new topic area.
UNIT 1: CUSTOMER DISCOVERY

9/30 - Week 1: From Class Intro to Finding the market
Guests: Former students and other people in the Seattle start-up scene talk about the state of entrepreneurship in Seattle.
In Class: New Company Pitches, Voting and Team Construction
Lecture: The Steve Blank Customer Development Model and Lean Startup Methods, Market Analysis, Market Identification and Segmentation
Homework: GROUP - Set up group. Choose a week to present. Pick a team name. INDIVIDUAL - Set up Wordpress presence. Write one post identifying a start-up in the Geekwire 200 and what market segment they are going after.

UNIT 2: CUSTOMER VALIDATION

10/7 - Week 2: From Finding the Market to Building a Basic Online Presence – Websites, social media, blogging, video
Guests: Discussing Market Analysis and Positioning.
In Class Discussion: Homework 1 and groups
Lecture: How to build a cheap and effective presence online using Wordpress, Squarespace, Wix, Social Media channels, etc...
Homework: GROUP - Set up an online presence

10/14 – Week 3: From Building an Online Presence to Refining Your Positioning and Storytelling
Guests: Web experts giving advice on any problems the groups had getting their web presence launched
In Class: Show off your online presence
Lecture: Who are you? What is your story? Why do you exist? Look at other stories
Homework: INDIVIDUAL - Pick a company in your product’s general market. Try to identify the story they are telling customers. If they don’t have one, what could it be?

10/21 – Week 4: From Refining Your Positioning and Storytelling to Leveraging PR and Community Management
Guests: Web experts giving advice on any problems the groups had getting launched
Lecture: Outbound marketing strategies and tactics, editorial calendars, budgeting, agile marketing plan
In Class: Class Show and Tell
Homework: INDIVIDUAL - TBA

UNIT 3: CUSTOMER ACQUISITION

10/28 - Week 5: From Leveraging PR and Community Management To Developing an Outbound Marketing Campaign with ads, social media, pr, events, sales and more
Guests: PR professionals and reporters
In Class: TBA
Lecture: Outbound marketing strategies and tactics, editorial calendars, budgeting, agile marketing plan
Homework: GROUP - Build a campaign on FB, Google, Bing, LinkedIn, etc...

11/4 - Week 6: From Developing an Outbound Marketing Campaign to Creating Retention and Referral Strategies
Guests: Advertising professionals
In Class: Look at results of your campaigns
Lecture: Retention and Referral strategies
Homework: Look at a company you are a customer of and analyze how they keep you and encourage you to promote their product to others.

11/11 - Week 7: From Creating Retention and Referral Strategies to Optimizing Pricing and Distribution Plans
Guests: Talking retention and referral
In Class: TBA
Lecture: Pricing Strategies and types of distribution

11/18 - Week 8: From Optimizing Pricing and Distribution Plans to Developing a Fundraising Plan
Guests: Talking Pricing and Distribution
In Class: TBA
Lecture: Raising Money via Crowdfunding, Angels or VC’s

11/25 - Week 9: From Developing a Fundraising Plan to Getting Ready to Present Your Plan
Guests: Angel investors and VC’s
In Class: TBA
Lecture: Recap the course

12/2 - Week 10: Final Presentation / Discussion
Guests: Four entrepreneurial marketers
In Class: Presentations and Discussion