MARKETING 552: 
CONSUMER MARKETING AND BRAND STRATEGY 
PROFESSOR MARK FOREHAND 

COURSE SYLLABUS 

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Office Hours: Email for an appointment. 

Course Materials: There are two separate course readers for the course. The first reader covers the consumer psychology readings for the course and is available through the UW Bookstore. The second course reader is available online from Harvard Business Publishing and includes a variety of branding articles and chapters. It can be found at: https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/569160 

Canvas: Lecture slides, descriptions of all the assignments and guides for the cases are provided on canvas. The lecture slides posted prior to class are stripped down versions of the actual lectures. Electronic copies of the full lectures with all examples and annotations from our discussions will be posted after each class period.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

More and more firms of all types have come to the realization that one of the most valuable assets they have is the brand name associated with their products or services. Consumer Marketing and Brand Strategy is an advanced graduate elective that provides a framework for cultivating and maximizing brand equity. Its basic objectives are to: 1) Provide students with a complete understanding of consumer psychology with particular attention to processes that influence brand identification, loyalty, and preference. 2) Familiarize students with a framework for developing brand strategy. This framework focuses on the creation of effective positioning, the selection of brand pillars, and the distillation of the positioning and pillars into a brand essence and narrative. 3) Discuss the specific tactics that can be used to strengthen brand equity and increase consumer engagement. This will focus on visual identity design, integrated marketing communications, external partnership selection, brand community formation and brand portfolio management. 4) Give students the opportunity to execute this framework in a series of live cases in which teams develop a brand strategy for existing brands. In each of these live cases, student teams will receive briefs from industry professionals who will also serve as guest judges on team solutions. The core emphasis of the course is on consumer-facing brands, but a variety of B2B brands will also be discussed.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

Consumer Marketing is a marketing elective that builds upon the lessons learned in the Marketing Core and delves deeper into two interrelated issues: consumer psychology and brand strategy. As such, the course is divided into two distinct segments. In the first segment, theories of consumer psychology will be presented, analyzed, and applied. In the second segment, an integrated perspective on brand strategy will be studied that draws upon the lessons of consumer psychology. Given that the development of a successful brand strategy begins with an insightful marketing strategy (the identification of appropriate market segments and the development of tailored positioning for these segments), I feel it is next to impossible to spend too much time studying your customer's needs and wants, their behavioral tendencies, and what you can do to provide mutually beneficial exchanges.

To articulate this perspective, the first three weeks of the course focus on consumer psychology. Theories from cognitive and social psychology will be communicated through lectures and a selection of readings from various psychology texts (all available in the reader). It is important to note that these lectures focus on consumer psychology and not on consumer behavior. The distinction between psychology and behavior in this instance is largely one of theory. Unlike the study of consumer behavior (which often focuses on aggregate level trends), the study of consumer psychology provides students with an understanding of how the mind of a consumer works and with theories that can be applied to branding efforts. This two-week section of the course will conclude with an in-class exam.
The last seven weeks of the course are focused on strategic brand management. Specifically, the course will analyze the product and brand strategy decisions that must be made to build, measure, and manage brand equity. The course is structured around an experiential learning process in which student teams will leverage course content to direct a series of live cases. To maintain course balance, the tools and frameworks necessary to complete the live cases will be delivered early in the brand management section of the course and the live cases themselves will occur during the last half of the quarter (11/1, 11/15 and 12/6). Each live case focuses on an existing brand currently undergoing a brand redesign and will be judged by individuals from industry. The first live case is a visual identity redesign for Ref Ratings, an app that brings together social media, analytics and sports. The outside judges for the RefRatings Live Case will be Maya Babish (Director of Corporate Marketing and Branding at INRIX) and Jack Khayoyan (co-Founder of RefRatings). The second live case focuses on the development of a brand narrative for American Giant. Shireen Jiwan, Founder and Chief Investigator at Sleuth, will visit class on 11/8 to present a framework for effective narrative development and will return on 11/15 as a guest judge for the American Giant live case. The final live case will focus on how to effectively develop and brand engagement for Darigold (presentations on 12/6). The guest judge for the Darigold live case is Christine Wise, Chief Strategy Officer at DNA Seattle. Christine will also be joined by an individual from Darigold. Although the guest judges will provide feedback on the presentations, final grading of the live cases rests solely with Professor Forehand.

Outside speakers will also join us on two occasions. First, on October 25th, we will be joined by Cal McAllister, Founder and Creative Director at Paper Crane Factory. Cal has a long history in the national advertising scene and is the former Founder and CEO of Wexley School for Girls. Second, we will be joined by Marja Koopmans from Amazon on November 29th. Marja is currently the Director of Mobile eSports at Amazon and has held previous positions running Marketing for the Amazon Appstore, as Director of Microsoft Search Advertising and as SVP Marketing for Phillips Lighting. Marja will be discussing data-driven branding at Amazon and the potential role of gamification in branding. Both of these guest lectures will occur in the evening so that both the daytime and evening sections of Marketing 552 can attend. The presentations will begin at 6:00 p.m. in Paccar 394.
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

This course will include both individual and team assignments. Individual assignments include the consumer psychology exam, a short take-home final and each student’s participation grade. Team assignments include the live cases on RefRatings, American Giant and Darigold. The same teams will be used for all team projects. The basic grading breakdown is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Psychology Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Case I (RefRatings)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Case II (American Giant)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Case III (Darigold)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take Home Final</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL: 400 100%

Grading Scale:
95% and above                               4.0
94%                                            3.9
93%                                            3.8
and so forth...

Class Participation (12.5%)

You must participate in class in order to make the discussions interesting, insightful, and fun. Such participation is encouraged across the course, but is particularly important in the many “mini-case” discussions that will be sprinkled throughout the course. However, there is no need to contribute in every session. Some of the best contributors are those who participate in a subset of the sessions, but whose comments are always insightful and compelling. The key issue is one of quality, not quantity.

We should work together to make each class session a lively, stimulating, and intellectually rewarding venture in group learning. You are individually and collectively responsible to that end. Believe me, nobody (including me) wants to hear me ramble on endlessly about the course concepts without engaging in class discussion. The best classes are those that are highlighted by an interactive discussion about the potential marketing opportunities that arise from course concepts. As such, we are all co-producers of knowledge.

Below is a description of how your class contributions will be calibrated:
Outstanding Contributor: Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas offered are always substantive, and provide one or more major insights as well as providing a fruitful direction for the class. Arguments are well substantiated and persuasively presented. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of the discussions would be diminished significantly.

Good Contributor: Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive; provide good insights and sometimes a fruitful direction for class discussion. Arguments, when presented, are generally well substantiated and are often persuasive. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussions would be diminished considerably.

Satisfactory Contributor: Contributions in class reflect adequate preparation. Ideas offered are sometimes substantive, provide generally useful insights, but seldom offer a major new direction for the class. Arguments are sometimes presented, and are fairly well substantiated and sometimes persuasive. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussions would be diminished somewhat.

Unsatisfactory Contributor: Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, provide few useful insights, and rarely offer a constructive direction for the class. Class contributions are few and far between. Many contributions are “cherry picking” efforts making isolated, obvious or confusing points. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussions would not be changed or perhaps even improved.

In addition to these global evaluations, I will also collect peer evaluations of each student’s contribution to team projects at the end of the quarter.

Consumer Psychology Exam (25%)

An exam on the consumer psychology topics studied during the first couple of weeks of the course will be given in class. The exam will include short-answer/essay questions. Each student may bring a single sided half-page (8.5” x 5.5”) crib sheet to the exam. However, each student must prepare his or her own personal crib sheet (identical mass produced crib sheets will not be allowed).

Team Formation and Projects

Teams will be formed during the first week. Each team will be responsible for completing a series of projects. Since these projects will involve classroom presentation of the team’s conclusions, the team members should sit in close proximity to each other within the classroom. A seating chart will be passed out early in the quarter to establish this.
Live Cases (12.5% each)

As discussed earlier, teams will be completing three brand redesigns in a live case format. Teams will submit solutions to all three live cases. A subset of teams will be selected to present their solutions to the outside judges for each case. All solutions will be graded regardless of whether the team presents.

Take Home Final (25%)

A take home final that tasks each student with individually developing the core brand strategy for an existing brand will be the final component of the course. In the final, students will be given background research on a consumer brand and a short brief. Each student will be expected to develop a strategy for the brand following the framework used in the live cases. The solution will include the development of positioning statement for the brand, a brand essence statement, and the identification and description of brand pillars.

REQUIRED AND SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

All consumer psychology readings are included in the course reader available in the UW bookstore and the branding specific articles are available in an online coursepack from Harvard Business Publishing.

A number of sources of additional information are available to further supplement the course readings which, depending on your career interests and goals, you may want to read at some point. Two excellent consumer psychology texts (from which some of the readings were drawn) are Plous’ The Psychology of Decision Making, Cialdini's Influence: Science and Practice. The coverage of consumer psychology within the popular press is inconsistent, but Gladwell's Blink does an admirable job of discussing many of the issues we will cover in the first section of the course. Another popular text that is clearly inspired by consumer psychology is Mindless Eating by Wansink. Two chapters from this text are included in the reader. Three final texts you may want to look at include Buyology by Lindstrom, Predictably Irrational by Ariely, and Gut Feelings by Gerd Gigerenzer. Buyology focuses on neuromarketing and the new insights from fMRI research. Predictably Irrational provides a nice extension of the power of biases in our decision making. Gut Feelings focuses on the power and intelligence of the unconscious from an academic perspective (somewhat like a more academic version of Blink.

First and foremost on the branding side of the ledger is Keller’s Strategic Brand Management. Keller's text provides a very thorough overview of branding and several chapters from this text are included in the Consumer Psychology reader. Some other books with a brand and product management focus include Aaker on Branding: 20 Principles that Drive Success and Aaker's Brand Portfolio Strategy: Creating Relevance, Differentiation.