Special Topics in Marketing
(SECS-P/08)
Laurea Magistrale (MSc) in Marketing
Module 1
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Prerequisites/Requirements

The course requires advanced knowledge of marketing management, in addition to a basic understanding of digital marketing.

Module 1 - Marketing in an Age of Authenticity and Transparency

Expected learning outcomes

To serve as an academic provocation (event-based learning) about the future of marketing, inviting responses and critical discussion from participants

To juxtapose contemporary theory and practice of marketing against broader social forces such as the calls for more authenticity and transparency (in our dealings with the state, businesses and each other), as a way to surface and question deep-seated assumptions regarding the value of marketing and the values behind it

To catalyze a process of ongoing reflection that will sharpen participants' engagement with the rest of their university curriculum, and guide their search for better ways to square personal fulfillment with career advancement

Familiarity with the forces of change — sociocultural, technological, economic and political — that are prompting fundamental questions about the value of marketing and its future(s)

Exposure to critiques of marketing drawn from a range of disciplines and domains (media studies, political economy, moral philosophy, ecology, social movements, etc.)

Ability to articulate a point-of-view on the future of marketing, and use it as a lens to assess and guide one's education and career

Course Overview

This course is designed as a short, intense engagement (a 'shock-treatment') to jolt the participants out of the 'business-as-usual' mindset that is the normative frame for marketing education. It will combine characteristics of a social-science seminar and a design/foresight workshop and cover 5-6 half-day sessions (with the option of an added non-formal session that could double as a forum for public engagement).

Each half-day session will open with a topical provocation — usually a presentation from the professor or a media clip — that raises a set of related questions. Participants will then work in a lightly facilitated small-group setting to discuss their responses to the questions in light of the assigned preparatory material, and form concrete frames to express their agreements (or lack thereof) to the larger group. After each small group has shared its insights with the room, the session will end with a

plenary discussion that will attempt to discern key themes and lessons learnt.

Assessment

A typical university grading scheme is ill-suited to the goals of event-based learning, which attempts to create the conditions that will meaningfully influence learning journeys and outcomes over a long arc, and in highly personalized ways. That said, the course design includes two assessable tasks that create opportunities for professor feedback as well as function as markers for students' shifts in mindset and orientation:

Project 1 (in small groups of 3-4 people)

Create a scenario around a plausible future direction for marketing (using the assigned storytelling template).

Groups will form and be briefed during session-1. Scenarios will be presented during session-4 (which could also be reconfigured as a session open to the public).

Project 2 (in pairs)

Using one or more of the scenarios from Project 1 as backdrop, envision a future marketing job profile (using the assigned persona template)

Pairs will form and be briefed after session-4. During the final session of the course, the mini-'atlas' resulting from participants' envisioning of future marketing jobs may be contrasted to participants' introductions at the beginning of the course to highlight tangible shifts in mindset and orientation.

Course Schedule:

Session \ Date \ Time	Agenda
#1 Nov 20 Afternoon	Introductions \ A brief history of marketing
#2 Nov 21 Morning	Framing the problem: marketing vs. authenticity
#3 Nov 21 Afternoon	Framing the problem: marketing vs. transparency
#4 Nov 21 Evening *	Alternate scenarios for the future of marketing
#5 Nov 22 Morning	Can marketing be\made more ethical? If yes, how?
#6 Nov 22 Afternoon	Can marketing be\made more purposeful? If yes, how?
#7 Nov 23 Morning	The atlas of future jobs' \ Closing reflections

* optional public engagement \ open-forum

Reading materials

Required

- Watch Century of the Self - a BBC documentary by Adam Curtis (58 min)
- Read An illustrated guide to Guy Debord's The Society of the Spectacle
- Read You Are The Product - John Lanchester
- Read A History of the World in 7 Cheap Things - book review
- Read The Tyranny of Convenience - Tim Wu
- Read How to Build Brand Religion - HBR

- Read The Truth about the Drug Companies - Marcia Angell
- Read Native Advertising \ Advertorial - examples
- Read Dollar Shave Club - brand story
- Watch The Corporation - a documentary by Joel Bakan, Mark Achbar & Jennifer Abbott (2 hr 24 min)

Optional

- Read Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World - book review
- Read When Consultants Reign (the selling of Saudi Arabia Vision 2030)
- Watch Jason Hickel on the Divide - Renegade TV (28 min)
- Watch NPR Planet Money makes a t-shirt
- Watch The Story of Stuff project - short films (Story of Bottled Water \ Cosmetics \ Electronics \ Change)
- Read Introduction to Alternative Futures methodology - Jim Dator, University of Hawaii (Research Center for Futures Studies)

Module 2 – Retail Marketing Innovation

Expected learning outcomes

The rise of digital has disrupted the retail industry, causing a fundamental shift in the way retailers conduct business. More stores closed their doors in 2017 than in any prior year. The need to better control costs, operate more efficiently, and engage customers in new ways is driving retailers to transform the customer experience

The course aims at providing students with a framework to understand the impact of the so-called digital transformation on the retail sector.

We will address some of the key-issues of every retailer, answering questions like:

- How should I blend traditional and digital marketing to approach my retail strategy for the digital age?

- How can I analyze the journey of my customers and solve the pain-points of my offering?

- How should I choose the right technology to implement in order to stay competitive?

- How should I leverage data to personalize the customer experience?

- How should I earn my client's loyalty and foster brand advocacy?

- How could I avoid to be disrupted by smaller and more agile players?

Class meetings will revolve around lectures and in-class activities, such as case discussions, experiential exercises and workshops. The achievement of the objectives depends on the student; therefore, it is encouraged an "intelligent" and active participation to lectures and cases' discussions. Students are encouraged to ask questions, share their views and comments on the topics of the lectures and make examples of their experience as consumers. All this considering the needs and the harmony of the classroom.

To give you a chance to see how marketers apply the concepts that we will be discussing in class we will cover various case studies and invite entrepreneurs and managers to share their point of view. A substantial component of this course will be a team-work that involves a real retailer that has to address some of the above-mentioned challenges.

Students will have the necessary written and oral communication skills to convey ideas and information effectively and persuasively.

In order to succeed in this course:

1) Read assigned material.

2) Attend class regularly. Class discussions will give you opportunity to apply concepts discussed in the text. Class activities will give you a deeper understanding of the material and sharpen your analytical, problem solving, and reasoning skills.

3) Actively participate in class discussions and activities.

Assessment methods

Attending students:

Exams 45%

Project work (Group) 45%

Class participation 10%

Exam

The final exam will consist of multiple-choice questions on materials drawn from the articles, class handouts, cases, and guest speakers' lectures. These questions will be application oriented and will not typically test your recall of facts but will assess your understanding of marketing concepts and their applications.

Project work

You will have a chance to apply the material discussed in class to a real-world project, thus experiencing what it actually means to work as a manager in the retail marketing innovation field. Groups will be formed on the first day of class. Try to choose your group not on a relational or geographic proximity but on competences and abilities as it would happen in a company.

The groups will receive a brief detailing a retail marketing challenge.

This project will conclude with a presentation that should address the assigned challenge using the strategic framework proposed in class.

Requirements:

- 12-point font and one-inch margins.

- Please proof read the document before turning in. Excessive grammatical and spelling errors will affect your grade.

- Divide your case in 3 sections: (1) statement of the challenge, (2) your analysis, and (3) your recommended solution, which follows from your analysis.

- Please include the last and first name of all group members and send a pdf file.

Everyone in the group needs to participate in the presentation. Each group will have 20 minutes for the presentation. We will evaluate your work based on the following criteria:

- Depth and accuracy of analysis.

- Creativity.

- Depth of justification for the analytical, strategic and marketing choices.

Class participation

Class participation accounts for 10% of the total evaluation. We will monitor your participation. We strongly recommend participating actively, frequently, and meaningfully.

Non-attending students

Written exam 100%

The written exam will consist of multiple-choice questions on additional materials provided upon request by non-attending students.

Course Schedule:

16/10 | Course overview and Retail Marketing key-trends

17/10 | 10 Guiding Principles for the Digital Age + Project Work Briefing

06/12 | Disruptive Technologies (AI, ML, VR, AR, Big Data)

14/12 | Guest Lecture (Samsung) + Project Work Presentation and feedback

Reading materials

Leading Trends in Retail Innovation
https://www.prophet.com/2018/05/leading-trends-in-retail-innovation/

The Future of Retail Grocery in a Digital World
http://www.sipotra.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/The-future-of-retail-grocery-in-a-digital- world.pdf

The Age of Digital Darwinism
https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/industries/retail/our%20insights/luxury%20in%20the%20age%20of%20digital%20darwinism/the-age-of-digital-darwinism.ashx

The Ways Customers Use Products Have Changed – But Brands haven't Kept up
https://hbr.org/2018/05/the-ways-customers-use-products-have-changed-but-brands-havent-kept-up

Danone Rethinks the Idea of the Firm, "The Economist", August 2018
https://www.economist.com/business/2018/08/09/danone-rethinks-the-idea-of-the-firm

Winning Omnichannel: A Global View of Changing Trade Dynamics, Kantar Worldpanel, 2017
file:///Users/giuseppestigliano/Downloads/Kantar_Worldpanel_-_Omnichannel_report_2017_Low.pdf

Harnessing the Power of Entrepreneurs to Open Innovation, Accenture and G20 Young Entrepreneurs Alliance, 2015.
https://www.accenture.com/t20151005T162506__w__/us-en/_acnmedia/Accenture/next-gen/B20/Accenture-G20-YEA-2015-Open-Innovation-Executive-Summary.pdf

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https://www.atkearney.com/consumer-goods/article?/a/swimming-with-the-piranhas-and-reinventing-the-mass-consumer-model

Blank S., Why the Lean Start-Up Changes Everything, "Harvard Business Review", May 2013
https://hbr.org/2013/05/why-the-lean-start-up-changes-everything

Bokkerink M., Charlin G., Sajdeh R., Wald D., How Big Consumer Companies Can Fight Back, BCG,

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https://www.bcg.com/publications/2017/strategy-products-how-big-consumer-companies-can-fight-back.aspx

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https://hbr.org/2016/05/embracing-agile