

SYLLABUS
MBA, MSCM 627 E
Marketing Management
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Instructor: Larry Garber
Office: KOBC 236
Telephone: 336 278 5931
Email: lgarber@elon.edu
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Overview

This course provides a strategic and tactical overview of contemporary marketing practice, with emphasis on competitive strategy and positioning. We will review marketing issues with respect to target segmentation and consumer decision making, the design of products that meet consumer needs, pricing, channels of distribution, and marketing communication.

Readings

Assigned readings are available in Moodle, arranged by class discussion topic. Should you wish to be able to reference an integrated text on marketing principles as a resource for background reading, I would suggest any available standard text on the principles of marketing or marketing management.

Cases

Currently, five cases are assigned. Four are obtained from Harvard Business School Publishing (HBSP) via the following URL.

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/570864>

The four from HBSP are:

- John, Leslie K., Michael Norris, and Michal I. Norton, *Making stickK Stick: The Business of Behavioral Economics*.
- Quelch, John A., & Heather Beckham, *Metabical: Pricing, Packaging, and Demand Forecasting Recommendations for a New Weight Loss Drug*.
- Murray, Meghan, *Hamilton Won More than Twitter*.
- Tybout, Alice M., & Natalie Fahey, *Positioning the Tata Nano (A)*.

They cost \$4.25 apiece, or \$17.00 for all four.

Deliverables

In this course, you will be participating in three forms of learning exercise, cases, learning games and a term project.

1. Cases

We will be preparing and discussing four cases in this class. Each student will be assigned to one of four groups, and each group will lead discussion for one of the cases. All other students are to prepare the case for discussion. Additionally, each individual will write up and turn in one of the four cases, at their discretion.

The written analysis is to consist of two sections, text and appendix. The text portion is limited to four pages, and should include presentation of key issues, recommendations, and supporting arguments. Supporting tables, charts, quantitative analyses, etc. are to be placed in the appendix, and has no page limitation.

How to Prepare a Case

A following brief case analysis outline providing key questions to which you should respond follows. For a discussion of case analysis preparation, you might refer to “*Marketing Decision Making and Case Analysis*,” on Moodle. This reading discusses how to *write* a case, and, though you will only be *presenting* a case, it may help you know how to prepare your case for presentation.

Case Analysis Outline

What is the date? Who is the protagonist? What is her or his position?

What is the problem? These first two sections should offer only a *brief* synopsis. Do not reiterate the front end of the case itself in detail, nor copy over tables or figures. We all will have read it, and can reference it directly. Save time and space for the next section, which is the key one for your write-up.

Summarize key background points most pertinent to the problem and recommendations.

What are all the possible solutions to the problem that one might take? Present all the options. It is important to think of and consider all possible approaches to solving the problem.

What are the pros and cons of each option? This is the meat of the case. You will want to be thorough in conceiving of all possible options and reviewing the pros and cons of each option.

Pertinent quantitative analyses? Not all cases involve quantitative analysis, but, if numerical data is presented, then it is likely that some sort of numerical analysis is expected, and some sort of prediction is to be made on that basis of it.

What are your recommendations? Your case should begin with an executive summary. An executive is not an introduction, but a brief, direct listing of your final recommendations with neither preamble nor coda.

2. Games

Three in-class games are to be played, in class, during the third, eighth and ninth classes, as they are currently scheduled. Each of them will take two to three hours to complete. They are all played against the computer. *BrandPRO* is a positioning game, *stuKent* a digital marketing game, and *MixPRO* a marketing mix game. The meanings of these short descriptors will come clear as the course progresses. Game descriptions and instructions for playing will come in class, in Moodle and within the games themselves.

BrandPRO and *MixPRO* will be played in teams, and *stuKent* will be played individually. Each student will need to register directly with the game provider prior to that class. Instructions for registering follow, and posted on Moodle. The registration cost of *BrandPRO* and *MixPRO* is \$30 apiece, and registration for *stuKent* is \$19.99.

Games as Learning

"Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first, the lesson afterwards."

Vernon Law, former major league baseball player

The games you will be playing are in-class experiential learning exercises in the Elon pedagogical tradition. As its name suggests, it will be a learning experience rather than a directed exercise, conducted largely by the firms themselves without the constant oversight and guidance of the professor. In other words, you will learn by doing, not by my telling you. Hamer (2000, p. 27) describes computer simulations as a form of loosely structured experiential activity because they are relatively broad in scope, relatively long in completion time, and relatively uncontrolled. Hamer (2000, p. 27) goes on to list those complex activities, as follows:

- students are faced with unstructured, ambiguous situations;
- a great deal of student learning may take place outside of class and away from the instructor;
- students must deeply process course materials and creatively apply those materials to the situation; and
- Students have a great deal of control over what they learn from the activities and the process through which they learn.

The efficacy of computer-based learning tools may be particularly pronounced for marketing education, where there is a performance aspect to a mastery of the subject. Marketing students must not only acquire a knowledge of the fundamental principles of sound marketing practice, but also realize the implications of having to integrate and apply those principles in a highly complex, dynamic and competitive environment; which they must confront with only partial information and an awareness of the need to act. Simulated marketing strategy games are highly valuable because they realistically portray such challenging environments and circumstances in the classroom. Students can first experience the vagaries of actual marketing practice in a relatively fail-safe context

and begin to develop the broad insights and coping skills that actual marketing practice requires.

As one may surmise from the above description, this exercise imposes demands upon students that they may not have encountered in a formal classroom setting. The relative lack of structure of the game, its uncertainties and its competitive aspects provide for the real chance for failure, a prospect that students may find unsettling. But, there is a great deal to be learned from participation in the game, and experiencing the conditions that it imposes, and learning how to cope with them in the relatively failsafe conditions of the classroom, before they are experienced in actual business conditions. Therefore, be prepared to be challenged, but also be prepared to have fun! The game is a powerful learning experience that most students come to both value and enjoy!

Reference

Hamer, Lawrence O. (2000), "The Additive Effects of Semistructured Classroom Activities on Student Learning: An Application of Classroom-Based Experiential Learning Techniques," *Journal of Marketing Education*, 22 (April), 25-34.

BrandPRO

The following description comes from *Stratx*, *BrandPRO*'s originator and provider.

With a clear focus on Targeting and Positioning, *BrandPRO* is designed to fit in one three hour session. In this *serious business game*, participants have to develop sound strategies for their two brands over 5 simulated years, and get ahead of two virtual but fierce competitors. Participants are in charge of marketing two brands in the *BrandPRO* world. Their objective is to maximize the value of their company represented by its Share Price Index (SPI).

Over the course of 5 simulated years, they will have to make:

- *Targeting decisions*: Decide which customer segments to target and allocate resources accordingly.
- *Product decisions*: Influence brand positioning through research & development
- *Pricing decisions*: Influence brand positioning through pricing
- *Positioning decisions*: Influence brand positioning through communication (and perceptual objectives).

The competition will be fierce and teams will have to monitor competitive actions and anticipate their next moves.

Exploiting market research studies effectively will be key to success.

How to Sign Up for BrandPRO

- Use *BrandPRO* on a desktop, laptop or tablet running Windows, Mac OS, iOS,

Android, Linux, etc.

- Open your favorite internet browser (Firefox, IE, Safari, Chrome, ...) and go to *brandpro.stratxsimulations.com*.
- You will need a *Participant Activation Key*, a *Team Name* and a *Team Password* to sign in *BrandPRO*.

Purchasing a PARTICIPANT ACTIVATION KEY (PAK)

- This is the license needed to access the software.
- Go to the StratX store at www.stratxsimulations.com to purchase a PAK.

Acquiring a TEAM NAME AND PASSWORD

- The course participants will be grouped in teams.
- Each team will manage a fictitious company for a total duration of 5 years.
- Your course instructor is in charge of assigning participants to teams and communicating your team name and password to you.

MixPRO

MixPRO, from *Stratx*, as is *BrandPRO*, is a powerful simulation to develop skills along Marketing mix's key dimensions. You will compete against firms which will start with a different situation in Year 1. Many differences exist in terms of product specifications, target consumers, awareness levels of their brands, market shares, sales, profitability, R&D expertise, etc.

Your objective is to maximize your Overall Performance Index (OPI) which is the sum of the Brand's Performance Index (BPI) of your two brands

The BPI evaluates the short term and long term value of a brand based on brand net contribution. In addition, the Coherence Index represents the coherence of your marketing MIX decisions for each brand. It is an evaluation by your Marketing Director of how well your MIX decisions follow the directives you were given. If the final value of your OPI is greater than its initial value in Year 0, it means that you have created value over the 5 years. Otherwise, you have destroyed value.

How to Sign Up for MixPRO

The procedure for registering for *MixPro* is the same as that for *BrandPro* above, only that, to do so, you go to *mixpro.stratxsimulations.com* rather than *brandpro.stratxsimulations.com* to do so.

Mimic Intro

Mimic Intro, from stuKent, is the the world's first Internet Marketing simulation. Participants manage roughly \$40k in ad spend creating and optimizing Pay Per Click (PPC) campaigns using data from Google. In doing so, participants optimize landing pages, build PPC ad campaigns, perform keyword and competitor research.

You register directly with stuKent using the following link:

<https://home.stukent.com/join/78F-CA0>

3. Group Term Project Presentation: Positioning Study

Each group needs to choose a product category for study (for example beer or dog food). The project will consist of five parts:

1. Industry Analysis. What's happening in the market for this product? How competitive is it? What is the competition like? Who are the leading brands/ competitors? What are prices like? Are new styles/flavors/colors/packaging being developed? Use Standard & Poor's industry analysis or Simmon's market analysis (and/or current articles related to your product category) to get a good overview of your product category. Betty Garrison (bgarrison@elon.edu), our estimable business librarian may be of great help here. Next, go to a store that sells a wide selection of your product category to get a feel for what the current trends are. You can use other sources of information, including your own expertise and the Internet, to supplement this section.

2. Informal benefit segmentation. You are to conduct an informal survey of about 30 of your friends, neighbors, family, etc., asking (1) What brand(s) do you buy/own? and (2) Why do you buy/own that brand? Based on their answers, decide what major benefits consumers seek from the product, what major benefit segments there are, and what segments the various brands in the product category are targeting (i.e., how is each brand positioned relative to the benefit segments you identified?). For example, one segment in the dog food market might be people who want large quantities for low prices; you might identify this segment as "price-sensitive heavy users." Brands targeted at this group might be Hunter's Choice and Ol'Roy. What other segments are there and what brands are trying to reach them? You may also include psychological benefits in this analysis.

3. Retail analysis. You are to visit at least 3 major retailers (different types) that sell products in this category (e.g., a grocery store, a discount store, and a specialty store). For example, you might go to Food Lion, a pet store, and a feed and seed store to look at dog food retailers. Compare the stores on the following factors: amount of service, depth and width of product line sold, display/shelving of product category, relative prices, control of outlet, and type of store cluster. What segment(s) is (are) each store targeting? You may want to visit a few websites as well and compare them to the stores you visit.

4. *Promotion analysis.* You are to Find as many examples of print advertisements and sales promotions (e.g., coupons, free samples, special deals) for products in this category as you can. Turn them in along with a description of who you think each is targeting (i.e., what type of consumer). Make sure to include the name of the publication you found each ad in. Television/radio ads and Internet homepages/ads can be described and included as well. Write up a 2-3 page summary of what is happening in the promotion of this product, including new trends, campaigns, appeals, etc. Also do a brief social media analysis by looking at the Facebook pages (and other forms of social media if you choose) of the leading competitors and describe their digital presence.

5. Using a positioning map based on key benefits for this product category, come up with a new entry in the product category that occupies an unoccupied space. Describe its positioning in terms of key benefits and marketing mix.

Grading Summary

Cases	25%
Games	30%
Group Term Project	45%
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TOTAL	100%

Grade Scale

93-100	A	73-76.9	C
90-92.9	A-	70-72.9	C-
87-89.9	B+	67-69.9	D+
83-86.9	B	63-66.9	D
80-82.9	B-	60-62.9	D-
77-79.9	C+	Below 60	F

COURSE SCHEDULE

Lecture Topics and Associated Readings, Key Dates, Due Dates

Assigned readings are referenced on Moodle, organized by discussion topic.

#	Day	Date	Topic	Assignments
1	Mo	9/17	Course Introduction. What is Marketing? The Marketing Concept. Video: "La Riviera"	
2	Mo	9/24	Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning.	Case: <i>Positioning the Tata Nano</i> (HBSP) Video: India Driving https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RjrEQaG5jPM
3	Mo	10/1	Game: <i>BrandPro</i> (Stratx)	
4	Mo	10/8	Consumer Behavior	Case: <i>Proctor & Gamble, Inc., Scope</i> (Moodle)
5	Mo	10/15	Marketing Research	Case: <i>Making StickK Stick: The Business of Behavioral Economics</i> (HBSP)
6	Mo	10/22	Pricing	
7	Mo	10/29	Branding	Case: <i>Metabical</i> (HBSP)
8	Mo	11/5	Integrated Marketing Communications	Case: <i>Hamilton Won More than Twitter</i> (HBSP)
9	Mo	11/12	This is Advertising	Game: <i>Mimic Intro</i> (stuKent)
	Mo	11/19	NO CLASS - Thanksgiving	Enjoy!
10	Mo	11/26	Game: <i>MixPro</i> (Stratx)	
11	Mo	12/3	Group Term Project Presentations	