

# Syllabus

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Over nine weeks, this course will blend perspectives of three of the major core marketing themes taught by the three professors in three, 3-hour sections each with the following sub-topics:

### 1. Branding

- Marketing Strategy and Brand Positioning
- Customer Decision Making and the Role of Brand
- Effective Brand Communications Strategies and Repositioning Strategies

### 2. Customer Centricity

- The Limits of Product-Centric Thinking
- The Opportunities and Challenges of Customer Centricity
- How Can Customer Centricity Be Profitable?

### 3. Go to Market Strategies

- Omni-Channel Strategy and Online-Offline Interaction
- How to Find Lead Users and Facilitate Influence and Contagion
- Targeting and Messaging, Pricing to Value, Customer Access and Distribution

*Below are more detailed explanations of each topic. Click on the link to jump to the week:*

[Week #1](#)[Week #2](#)[Week #3](#)[Week #4](#)[Week #5](#)[Week #6](#)[Week #7](#)[Week #8](#)[Week #9](#)[Information on Grading and Quizzes](#)

### **Week #1: Apr 21-27**

#### **1a. Branding: Marketing Strategy and Brand Positioning**

This week introduces the foundational concepts in marketing strategy and brand positioning. Beyond marketing promotions, marketing and brand strategies in today's business world requires consideration of buyers/sellers markets, customer segmentation, brand mantras. Strong brands are better positioned than the competitive brands. In order to understand how best to position a brand, we need to explore

the underlying mechanisms of brand positioning. We need to understand not only the cognitive associations with brands, but the social, behavioral, emotional, and cultural associations as well.

The session will cover:

- Marketing 101: Building Strong Brands
- Strategic Marketing
- Segmentation and Targeting
- Brand Positioning
- Brand Mantra
- Experiential Branding

Lectures	Discussion	Assignment
Released <a href="#">Here</a>	Found <a href="#">Here</a>	<p><b>[Optional]</b> Check out <a href="#">this excerpt</a> from Professor Kahn's book <i>Global Brand Power: Leveraging Branding for Long-Term Growth</i></p> <p><b>[Optional]</b> Branding Strategy As Your Secret Marketing Weapon - found <a href="#">here</a></p> <p><b>[Optional]</b> 4 Examples of Brand Strategy Driving Organizational Success - found <a href="#">here</a></p> <p><b>[Optional]</b> 6 Brand Strategies Most CMOs Fail To Execute - found <a href="#">here</a></p>

## Week #2: Apr 28-May 4

### 1b. Branding: Customer Decision Making and the Role of Brand Understanding the Underlying Processes that Consumers Use to Evaluate Brands

As the reverence shown to the Apple brand shows, consumers can have very deep relationships with brands. Such loyalty exists not only in consumer markets. Many IT specialists are very faithful IBM, OEMs respect Intel chips, logistics officers pledge fealty to Fedex. While customers do respond to marketing messages from the firm, they also form impressions based on their own experiences. To how consumers use and evaluate brands, it is essential to understand the underlying consumer decision-making process.

Customers' purchase process is staged and strong brands have an advantage at every stage. The session will cover the four critical stages of the purchase process:

#### **\*\*Awareness of a need and the brands that fill that need (Living Stage)\*\***

- Brands themselves can trigger a need if they are relevant and noticed
- Strong Brands have high brand awareness
- Brands must grab customers' attention

#### **\*\*Creating interest about considered brands (Planning Stage)\*\***

- Attention is not enough, people have to "get it"

- Customers' memory for brands are shaped by expectations
- Brand schemas are sets of brand associations in memory
- Strong brands have clear brand images

**\*\*Desire for the right branded product (Shopping Stage)\*\***

- Consumers make brand-quality inferences
- Strong brands evoke durable emotional reactions
- The critical role of trust

**\*\*Purchase and repurchase (Experiencing Stage)\*\***

- Strong brands have long-term customer relationships
- Credit or blame after the purchase

Lectures	Discussion	Assignment
Released <a href="#">Here</a>  The second Monday of the course at 12:01am EDT	Found <a href="#">Here</a>	<p><b>[Optional]</b> The Consumer Decision Journey (McKinsey) - found <a href="#">here</a></p> <p><b>[Optional]</b> The Future of Retail Touchpoints (Cisco) - found <a href="#">here</a></p> <p><b>[Optional]</b> The Best Way to Map the Customer Journey: Take a Walk in Their Shoes (SurveyMonkey) - found <a href="#">here</a></p>

**Week #3: May 5-May 11**

**1c. Branding: Effective Brand Communications Strategies and Repositioning Strategies**

To build a strong, one has to consider the tactical elements as well: What are reasonable strategies to creating a new brand name? What about brand slogans or brand symbols. Are celebrities effective for brand positioning? Further, once you have built a strong brand it is essential that the brand stays relevant and is responsive to changing environments. What are the best ways to reposition a brand once it has lost its way? What are appropriate ways for brands to respond to brand crises?

The session will cover:

- Brand Names (criteria to consider, other brand elements, color)
- Use of celebrities with brands
- Cause Marketing
- Repositioning a Brand

Lectures	Discussion	Assignment
Released <a href="#">Here</a> on the third Monday of the course at 12:01am EDT	Found <a href="#">Here</a>	<p>Quiz found <a href="#">here</a> - quiz will be released with the video lectures for this week</p> <p>Due date - May 19 11:59PM EST</p> <p>Hard deadline - May 26 11:59 PM EST <b>***</b>(20% penalty if you submit your quiz after the due date and before the hard deadline)</p>

**Week #4: May 12-May 18****2a. Customer Centricity: The Limits of Product-Centric Thinking**

We start this portion of the course with an overview of the traditional product-centric approach and some of the evolving concerns arising from it. We discuss the common objectives and operational procedures that businesses follow, and the "cracks" in product centricity that create the need for a new strategic approach.

Lectures	Discussion	Assignment
Released <a href="#">Here</a>  The fourth Monday of the course at 12:01am EDT	Found <a href="#">Here</a>	Reading: 1) <a href="#">This free excerpt</a> from Professor Fader's book "Customer Centricity: Focus on the Right Customers for Strategic Advantage." Click <a href="#">here</a> to purchase the full version in English. It is also available in <a href="#">Mandarin</a> and <a href="#">Portugese</a> . 2) <a href="#">Walmart moving away from pure product centricity</a> (Forbes 8/13) 3) <a href="#">IBM should inspire pharma</a> (Forbes 7/12) 4) <a href="#">"How Stupidity, Short-termism, and Immorality Ruined Marketing"</a> (CustomerThink 8/13)

**Week #5: May 19-May 25****2b. Customer Centricity: The Opportunities and Challenges of Customer Centricity**

Here we bring sharp clarity to the concept of customer centricity, and we convey what executives really need to know about it. We discuss the key factors and challenges in implementing it successfully.

Lectures	Discussion	Assignment
Released <a href="#">Here</a>  The fifth Monday of the course at 12:01am EDT	Found <a href="#">Here</a>	<b>[OPTIONAL]</b> Suggested reading: 1. <a href="#">Why your organization is not customer-centric even if it is customer-centric</a> (CustomerThink) 2. <a href="#">Customer Centricity is Dead! What's Next?</a> (CustomerThink) 3. <a href="#">Why Aren't More Companies Shifting to Treat Their Best Customers Best?</a> (Ad Age)

**Week #6: May 26-Jun 1****2c. Customer Centricity: How Can Customer Centricity Be Profitable?**

We close this module by specifically addressing the profitability question: given the risks and costs of becoming customer centric, how can it be more profitable than the more traditional product-centric approach? We carefully examine the tactical "building blocks" underlying customer centricity, and point out some subtle but important insights about the interplay among them. We highlight a number of actionable suggestions to help managers make the most effective and efficient use of each of them.

Lectures	Discussion	Assignment
Released <a href="#">Here</a>  The sixth Monday of the course at 12:01am EDT	Lecture Forum Found <a href="#">Here</a>  Quidsi Case Study Forum Found <a href="#">Here</a>	Quiz found <a href="#">here</a> - quiz will be released with the video lectures for this week Due date - June 9 11:59 PM EDT Hard deadline - June 16 11:59 PM EDT ***(20% penalty if you submit your quiz after the due date and before the hard deadline)  [OPTIONAL] Suggested reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">"Embracing lifetime value"</a> (Godin)</li> <li>• <a href="#">"CEO Profile: Wells Fargo's Kovacevich banks on success as a one-stop shop"</a> (USA Today)</li> </ul>

**Week #7: Jun 2-Jun 8****3a. Go To Market Strategies: Omni-Channel Strategy and Online-Offline Interaction**

The "go to market" strategy offers more possibilities than ever before as firms have the potential to address consumers both offline and online, and through a variety of platforms. This session aims to define what "going to market" involves when firms can access customers in the virtual world, as well as in the physical world. We also briefly explain some unique demands and challenges that the "virtual world" creates for brands and customer centricity. We'll then explore two important concepts for customer selection and product selection, preference isolation and the long tail. Finally, we discuss the implications of transparency, customer reviews, and market feedback for the overall go to market strategy.

Lectures	Discussion	Assignment
Released <a href="#">Here</a>  The seventh Monday of the	Found <a href="#">Here</a>	[OPTIONAL] Suggested reading: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <a href="#">This excerpt</a> from Professor Bell's book "Location is (Still) Everything" Click <a href="#">here</a> if you would like to purchase the full version.</li> <li>2) <a href="#">"Grocery Deliveries in Sharing Economy"</a> (NYTimes)</li> </ol>

course at 12:01am  
EDT

3) "[Competing in the Age of Omnichannel Retailing](#)" (MIT Sloan Management Review) (You get free access to this article once you sign up for a free account)

### Week #8: Jun 9-Jun 15

#### 3b. Go To Market Strategies: How to Identify Lead Users and Facilitate Influence and Contagion

A critical goal of the “go to market” market is the identification of lead users, i.e., those who will be most enthusiastic and who will potentially influence others. We start by looking at classical models of diffusion, and then extend these to include recent ideas about patterns of influence. Furthermore, we illustrate by concept and example, the important notion of “extreme” customers and how they can fuel growth. This session also introduces the idea of customer networks, neighbors and contagion. We explain the important distinction between identifying groups of customers who are likely to behave the same way (“birds of a feather, flocking together”) and identifying contagion. We also show how and why firms can build “viral features” into their products and how this works in practice. Finally, we explore the important relationships between traditional and earned media and the role each plays in creating and sustaining growth in the customer base.

Lectures	Discussion	Assignment
<p>Released <a href="#">Here</a></p> <p>The eighth Monday of the course at 12:01am EDT</p>	<p>Found <a href="#">Here</a></p>	<p>Quiz found <a href="#">here</a> - quiz will be released with the video lectures for this week</p> <p>Due date - June 23 11:59 PM EDT</p> <p>Hard deadline - June 30 11:59 PM EDT ***(20% penalty if you submit your quiz after the due date and before the hard deadline)</p> <p><b>[OPTIONAL]</b> Suggested reading:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) "<a href="#">E-commerce retailers open physical locations in Dallas to augment online stores</a>" (Dallas News)</li> <li>2) "<a href="#">It's Not the Size of a Person's Network That Matters; It's What They Do With It</a>" (Wired)</li> <li>3) "<a href="#">Crossing the New Chasm: Focusing on Addiction, Not Just Adoption</a>" (All Things D)</li> <li>4) "<a href="#">The Neighborhood Effect</a>" (The Chronicle of Higher Education)</li> </ol>

### Week #9: Jun 16-Jun 22

#### 3c. Go To Market Strategies: Targeting and Messaging, Pricing to Value, Customer Access and Distribution

So far, we've discussed important aspects of three key elements of the go to market strategy: the channels, the lead users, and the product. Here we explore the fourth: what needs to be said, and to whom. First, we ask whether targeting decisions can be improved through use of "social data", i.e., knowledge of the behavior of a customer's friends' behavior, and if so, under what conditions. Next we ask discuss the merits of social advertising, how to construct traditional display advertisements for maximum effectiveness, and key principles for bidding in keyword auctions. Finally, we look at what makes content persuasive and what increases the possibility that it will go viral. Again, we illustrate all concepts with data and examples.

Lectures	Discussion	Assignment
Released <a href="#">here</a>  The ninth Monday of the course at 12:01am EDT	Found <a href="#">Here</a>	Final exam found <a href="#">here</a> - final exam will be released with the lectures for this week Due date (and hard deadline) - Monday, July 7th at 11:59PM EDT (Philadelphia time) (Please note that you will not be allowed multiple tries for this exam - in other words, the hard and soft deadlines are the same) The exam will be 40 multiple-choice questions with unlimited time.

### **Readings from our professors (optional):**

Please find below brief excerpts from Pete Fader's book, *Customer Centricity: Focus on the Right Customers for Strategic Advantage*, and from Barbara Kahn's book, *Global Brand Power: Leveraging Branding for Long-Term Growth* here .

1. [Location is \(Still\) Everything](#), by David Bell
2. [Customer Centricity: Focus on the Right Customers for Strategic Advantage](#), by Peter Fader
3. [Global Brand Power: Leveraging Branding for Long-Term Growth](#), by Barbara Kahn

### **Information on Grading and Quizzes**

There will be three quizzes and one examination. The first quiz and second quiz will be given at the end of Professor Kahn's section and at the end of Professor Fader's section, respectively. The third quiz will be at the end of Professor Bell's second module. The examination will be at the end of the course, following Professor Bell's section.

Quizzes - 20 multiple choice questions with 3 attempts (untimed)

Final exam - 40 multiple choice questions with 1 attempt (untimed)

The passing grade for this course in order to obtain a statement of accomplishment is 70%, which is an *overall* percentage, which means you do can do worse than 70% on an individual quiz or on the exam and still manage to reach an overall percentage of 70%. 70% is the same cutoff for students who are doing Signature Track and for those who aren't.

You also have five "late days" to use (total), which allow you to push back the deadline for your quizzes at no penalty. There is a 20% penalty if you complete the quiz after the initial/soft deadline and before the final/hard deadline (and if you haven't used your late days).

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