



The Lee Kong Chian School of Business
Academic Year 2024/25
Term 2

MKTG217 STRATEGIC BRAND MANAGEMENT

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Brands are everything – from commercial brands to political to personal branding. But how to build a brand, in your first Brand Manager role or for your startup? How to develop your personal brand - to be successful in interviews and in your career?

That's what this course is all about. It helps students to better understand the process and techniques used by brand managers when building and leveraging their brands as the company's strategic assets. This course is designed to develop students' understanding of the importance of brand equity as well as how to build, measure and manage brand equity. Topics will include understanding brands from the consumer's perspective, building brand equity, measuring brand equity, leveraging brand portfolios and managing brands over time and in different marketing contexts.

As this is an SMU-X class (no, they are not harder or more work-intensive – just more real), we will be developing a brand strategy for a real client in groups and present it to the client for their feedback towards the end of term. Many previous clients have executed strategies developed by this class!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the key concepts and frameworks used in brand management decisions
- Understand the elements that comprise brand equity and how brand equity is built and managed
- Describe the key stages of the brand management process
- Apply the use of brand audits to evaluate brands
- Understand the behavioural dimensions of brand relationships with customers
- Analyze and evaluate brand strategies used in different contexts covering consumer, business-to-business, services and non-profit organizations.

Special emphasis will be placed on the emergence of Asian brands and how brands connect with consumers in a given cultural, geographic and historic environment.

PRE-REQUISITE/ CO-REQUISITE/ MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSE(S)

Please refer to the Course Catalogue on OASIS for the most updated list of pre-requisites / co-requisites for this particular course. Do note that if this course has a co-requisite, it means that the course has to be taken together with another course. Dropping one course during BOSS bidding would result in both courses being dropped at the same time.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Class Participation	15 %	(Throughout the term)
Brand Audit Presentation (in teams of 2)	15 %	(Throughout the term)
Group Project Assignment and Presentation	40 %	(week 12 and 13)
Midterms	30 %	
Total:	100%	

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS

The course will be taught in the format of lectures accompanied by class discussions. There will be a number of short case studies, exercises and videos that will form the basis of discussion in the class. It is important that student relate the various concept of consumer behavior taught in class and its related applications to the formulation of brand strategies.

There will be four key activities that the students will engage in during the course:

1. Class Participation (15%)

This class is meant to be a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas. This class will also act an incubator for new ideas and even strategies that could effectively be deployed in the real world. Hence students' participation in the class is not only vital but a basic expectation that will directly contribute to performance. Here, "participation" means the ability to (i) critically evaluate the readings, (ii) be well prepared for cases, (iii) share your thoughts and raise questions about the course material, and (iv) actively contribute ideas.

2. Duo Presentation (15%)

The 15-minute duo presentation (in self-selected teams of two students) consists of the assessment and evaluation of an existing brand and its challenges (Brand Audit), often by methods of consumer research, and proposals regarding the improvement of brand positioning, differentiation, target relevance, using methods discussed in class. These presentations will be ongoing throughout the term.

3. Group Project Presentation and Report (40%)

Students are encouraged to find their own group members (5-6 individuals to each team). The aim of this group project is to provide students with hands-on experience of a branding project for a real client that would often be assigned to third party brand consultants. The idea is to give students the opportunity to systematically cover all methodology related steps that would start at the brand audit phase and conclude at the "brand blueprint" phase. It is not the aim of this project to encourage students to choose consulting career paths, but rather familiarize them with a critically important process regardless of the "side" they work in. All teams will be required to do an in-class presentation of their findings, preceded by submission of their presentation deck. No other report is required.

4. Midterms (30%)

In Week 9, students will take an open book written online exam where learnings of the course will be applied to a case in four open questions. There are no finals for this course.

CONSULTATIONS AND TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Consultation with the lecturer or TA can be done before and after class – alternatively, time slots can be booked by email.

CLASS TIMINGS

This course will be taught in 15 3-hour sessions. For consultation, please contact me to make appointment. I can be reached via email.

RECOMMENDED TEXT AND READINGS

Reference texts include:

The Century of the Asian Consumer, Bernd Schmitt, Asian Business Insights (2012)

Brand Management: Research, Theory and Practice 1st Edition by Tilde Heding, Charlotte Knudtzen and Morgens Bjerre. 2009 Routledge

Brand Breakout: How Emerging Markets Will Grow Brands 1st Edition by Nirmalya Kumar and Jan-Benedict Steenkamp. 2015 Palgrave Macmillan

Additional readings may also be assigned. Students are also expected to keep abreast of developments in the current research in the field of consumer behavior. You are also recommended to take your own initiative to keep abreast of recent developments of Asian and international brand marketing campaigns in order to assemble a good set of examples that can be used with much impact in midterms and class discussion..

A reminder that Strategic Brand Management is an elective marketing subject. As such, it is expected that all students have by now a firm grounding in the principles and concepts of Marketing as these will not be taught again in this advanced marketing subject.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity

All acts of academic dishonesty (including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation of acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized possession of exam questions, or tampering with the academic work of other students) are serious offences.

All work (whether oral or written) submitted for purposes of assessment must be the student's own work. Penalties for violation of the policy range from zero marks for the component assessment to expulsion, depending on the nature of the offense.

When in doubt, students should consult the instructors of the course. Details on the SMU Code of Academic Integrity may be accessed at <https://smu.sharepoint.com/sites/oasis/SitePages/DOS-WKLSWC/UCSC.aspx>.

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Accessibility

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability, please let me know immediately. You are also welcome to contact the university's student accessibility support team if you have questions or concerns about academic provisions: accessibility@smu.edu.sg. Please be aware that the accessible tables in our seminar room should remain available for students who require them.

Digital Readiness for Teaching and Learning (DRTL)

As part of emergency preparedness, instructors may conduct lessons online via the Zoom platform during the term, to prepare students for online learning. During an actual emergency, students will be notified to access the Zoom platform for their online lessons. The class schedule will mirror the current face-to-face class timetable unless otherwise stated.

SESSION OUTLINE

Week	Topics	Readings
1	Introduction to Branding / How this works You are a brand	To be assigned
2	Product vs Brand The Singapore Brand Client Brief	
3	Brand Equity and Brand Value(s) Brand Ingredients Duo Presentations	
4	Guest Speaker (Brand Owner) TBC Brand Audit Duo Presentations	
5	Brand Audit (contd) Duo Presentations	
6	Brand Archetypes Brand Positioning Brand Image and Identity Duo Presentations	
7	Brand Expression (Logo, Typeface, Tagline, Colours etc) Duo Presentations	
8	RECESS WEEK	
9	Brand Storytelling Brand Ambassadors Duo Presentations Midterms	
10	Guest Speaker (Brand Owner) TBC Touchpoint Management Internal Branding Duo Presentations	
11	Creating branded Experiences Duo Presentations	
12	Group Presentations (first 4 groups) (No leave to be allowed for this session) (Presentation decks to be submitted before class start for all groups.)	
13	Group Presentations (next 3/4 groups) (No leave to be allowed for this session)	
14	STUDY BREAK WEEK	
15	FINAL EXAMINATIONS	

Note:

This course will be taught from a practitioner's perspective (both agency- and client-side).