MKTG 458
Consumer Insight for Brand Strategy
(Spring 2014, section 71)

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Course Overview

A consumer insight is a causal inference that explains why a particular person or group buys a particular product or service. A good consumer insight will drill deeper than surface observations of behavioral patterns into the realm of psychological processes. Informed by a rigorous consideration of contemporary psychological science, this course uses a framework centering on the discrete cognitive processes that unfold in response to the marketing mix to give marketers a strategic advantage in uncovering consumer insights that will drive brand growth.

Teams

Teamwork is an essential component of the course. Students may assemble their own teams prior to the first class; otherwise teams will be assigned. Target team size is 5 members. Teams will remain fixed throughout the quarter.

Readings

This is an all-digital course. Readings are available through the digital coursepack and on Blackboard. Tablet computers are permitted in class. No paper handouts will be given.

Final Exam

This class has a final exam, which is sit-down and closed-book. It will be scheduled during the final exam week. The exam consists of a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Grade

Assignments	20%
Live Case	40%
Final Exam	30%
Participation	10%

Re-Grading

Requests for re-grading an assignment must be accompanied by a written explanation that justifies the request. Also, the request should come AFTER the student has examined the master solution (which is designed to answer many lingering questions). This request must be provided no later than a week following the date at which the grade was reported to the student. A re-grade may result in no change (most common), an increase, or a decrease in points awarded.

Week	Date	Topic	Case Reading	Supporting Reading	Assignment Due
1	Thurs Apr 3	Introduction		"The Characters of the Story"	
			XBOX One		
2	Thurs Apr 10	Attention	Lay's		Springhill Suites quiz (individual)
			Scott		
3	Thurs Apr 17	Interpretation			Experiential Audit (teams)
			Apple		
4	Thurs Apr 24	Memory		"Emotion"	
				"Mental and Physical Availability"	
5	Thurs May 1	Attitudes 1		"Harnessing the Science of Persuasion"	
			Sam Adams		Sam Adams case write-up (teams)
6	Thurs May 8	Attitudes 2		"Neuromarketing"	
			Reagan		
7	Thurs May 15	Choice	Tiffany		
					Fitness club (teams)
8	Thurs May 22	Loyalty	BMW	"Passionate Consumer Commitment"	BMW case questions (individual)
			Harley		
9	Thurs May 29	Conclusion	Netflix		Netflix case questions (individual)
			Costco		
10	Thurs June 5	Live Case			Live case: presentation and write-up (teams)

Assignments

Experiential Audit

This assignment familiarizes students with the use of the experiential audit tool. The assignment involves a field visit to retail or service environment, assessment using the experiential audit, and a class presentation of the results.

First, pick a retail or service category (e.g., shoes, ice cream, pizza, consumer electronics, clothing, etc). Then pick 2 particular branded examples that you feel involve relatively better vs. worse consumer experiences. For example, in a recent class, students compared the Apple store (better) with the Sony-Style store (worse), both located at Old Orchard mall. Next, your team will visit both locations and complete the experiential audit.

Use the experiential grid to analyze both retail/service settings separately. Make note of all the experiences falling into specific cells of the grid. You may focus on most, but not necessarily all, of the cells. Be careful to use both dimensions of the grid. It is fairly easy to describe the experience providers (e.g., environment vs. products vs. people). But also pay special attention to examine the distinct mental responses that are evoked (sensation vs. interpretation vs. attitude, etc.). One experience provider typically triggers a chain of responses. To capture this, fill out the grid vertically: i.e., begin with the first column (messages) and then go down the list of 5 mental responses.

Two teams will be selected to present their results in class. You will submit as the finished product of this assignment only a Powerpoint deck (by email to the professor), which should be ready to be used to present to the class. All teams will be graded on the contents of the Powerpoint deck. Be sure that this file contains sufficient detail (including recommendations, conclusions, etc) for grading.

Submit your powerpoint deck Professor Roese by email at least 2 hrs prior to class (week 3).

GRADING: Your powerpoint deck will be graded on the following aspects: a) clarity and specification of specific, concrete details, b) thoroughness in terms of specifying distinct psychological reactions and how they flow and fit together, c) specific actionable recommendations deriving from your observations, and d) a design of a new metric to describe the value of experiences (discussed in class).

<u>Live Case</u>
*Team assignment

        A "live" case is a current, contemporary business case (as opposed to an older case in which the outcome and historical significance are well known). This assignment represents your opportunity to demonstrate knowledge of and sophistication in use of the psychological principles and tools covered in this course. The assignment is to write about a current business case, focusing on a problem, challenge, or issue connected to a particular marketing initiative. Your case may derive from a team member's own work experience, or it may focus on a large company for which there is ample information publicly available. You may draw on any number of sources: online resources, books, interviews, and/or your own original market research (e.g., survey using Qualtrics; focus group; experiential audit, etc.). Include information about relevant past managerial decisions (e.g., retail prices, positioning) and consumer behavior (e.g., sales figures, market shares, consumer satisfaction, brand awareness). You should specify what managerial decision the company faces going forward, and you should specify concrete recommendations. Include relevant Exhibits as you see fit.

        Your team will present the live case in class. <u>Submit your powerpoint deck to the professor by email at least 2 hrs prior to the class in which you make your presentation.</u>

LENGTH: 5000 words maximum (not including references and exhibits).
FORMAT: Double-spaced, page-numbered, with standard font. Be sure that your team number and word-count appear on the cover page. Include an abstract / executive summary (length = one long paragraph) at the beginning.
DUE: Thurs, June 5, 2014. Submit by email to Professor Roese.
GRADING: Your written case will be graded on the following aspects: 1) psychological principles and insights, 2) quality of presentation (coherence, informativeness), and 3) quality of evidence used to justify claims.