Specialization in Sales & Marketing - course descriptions

Knowing the Market & the Consumer
Product & Brand Management
Channel Management
Integrated Marketing Communication
Pricing
Creativity & Innovation Management
Services Marketing
Sales & Key Account Management
Search Engine Marketing
Marketing Strategy for Decision Making
KNOWING THE MARKET & THE CONSUMER

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Understanding how and why consumers make the decisions they do is fundamental for the elaboration of an effective marketing strategy. Even for companies dealing in B2B markets, understanding the end-consumer is a requirement. In addition, companies are constantly seeking information to inform their decisions. This course consists of two large blocks: Consumer Behavior and Marketing Research. First, students will learn the foundations of consumer behavior and the consumer decision-making process and how to use this knowledge in the formulation of effective marketing strategies and tactics. Second, they will learn the tools and methods to be able to effectively conduct (or hire) marketing research.

The first part will review the consumer decision making process, that is, the stages consumers go through from identifying a need to buying and consuming a product. This process will be then linked to marketing decision making. By analyzing how consumers make decisions at different stages of their process and the variables that influence those decisions, students will be better able to design an effective marketing mix.

The second part of the course will focus on obtaining market and consumer information to inform marketing decisions. While the first part provides a framework to understand consumer behavior, managers constantly need information that is specific to their context. The goal of the second part is to provide students with the methods and tools to translate a managerial decision problem into a research question, to design a research plan, to analyze data, interpret survey reports, produce an executive summary of the research, and to translate the results into practical recommendations.
PRODUCT & BRAND MANAGEMENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The objective of the program is:

1. To teach the student basic tools and concepts that guide product and brand strategy decisions.
2. To introduce the role of product portfolio within a corporation to create competitive advantage.
3. To stress the importance of the product and brand as an integrated and coherent element of the marketing mix.
4. To improve analysis capacity and writing skills.

We will home in on specific problems which the marketer will typically encounter such as:

- Adding new products to strong and powerful brands.
- Breakthrough product positioning.
- Identifying key competitive products.
- Creation of relevant product portfolios.
- Brand loyalty through emblematic products.
- The importance of superior products.
- Selling the product experience.
- How to market me too products.
- How to make the right product sell.
- Positioning of products and brands
- Advertising of products
- Distributor’s brands
- Brand repositioning
CHANNEL MANAGEMENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

For decades the main focus in marketing management has been on product/client. Being aware that both elements are key ones, product or service and the client, but there is a need to link the, through channels of distribution. In most cases, distribution policy is part of the goodwill of the brand, providing benefits and relevant aspects of competitive differentiation. Any company should be customer focused but not all of them are dealing straight with their final clients. That connection is done by channels of distribution; those operate in between the company and the customers. Is not just a matter of operations and logistics, being in any case a key performing indicator, as well as the power of negotiation. Besides that channels management is something deeper, linked with: strategic positioning, market approach and customer relationship management. Nowadays the distribution strategy is inside NDA of any company. Needs to be planned in the long run, adding up the following main areas: company profile, portfolio structure and price positioning, market approach policy, trade and retail marketing, ecommerce and global retail management.

In the last decade, there have been two main revolutions that have affected many industries, increasing the importance of channels management:

1) The IT revolution in internet, facilitating many companies to reach costumer through a 7/24 worldwide market, straight or by innovative channels of distribution. Companies like: amazon, groupon, ebay, and any .com is an open channel non leading the market.
2) The retail focus. Many producers have reoriented their efforts into retail, adding this last stage into company, as its own marketplace, as part of its own goodwill and strong weapon of competitiveness. Thinking about Apple today without their own store is not possible. Many other names are terribly linked to their retail approach: Zara, Abercrombie and Fitch, Mercadona, Nespresso, Have added the channel integration via retail as a company profile, strengthening their market position with it.

As a result, today, most of the companies, in a great variety of industries are adding to their main strategic guidelines both aspects: becoming key points in their top managerial decision process.

The structure of this course will be as follows:

1.- Distribution policy
2.- Trade Marketing
3.- Retail Marketing
4.- Global Retail Management
5.- New Technologies and Markets.

Just a piece of advice: I come from the distribution industry, dealing in many formats: wholesaling, retailing, franchising, retail-multiformat, ecommerce; being very much aware about what is going on in the marketplace, and how fast is moving on. My will is to share with you a very practical orientation, deepening into the channels of distribution world in a realistic perspective. On the other side another purpose is coaching you for the real world just out there that is plenty of opportunities, risks, fun and business.
INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Today marketers are increasingly challenged to develop effective communication programs that will drive brand equity, purchase intention and sales with limited budgets. This course involving integrated marketing communication (IMC) is designed to familiarize students with the traditional and newer concepts and techniques of integrated marketing communication. Through discussions, case analyses, and the development of a marketing communications project, students will gain the knowledge and skills that can help marketing professionals when they hire a Marcom agency or work with Communication people within the company.

Students completing this course and receiving a passing grade will have achieved the following learning goals:

• Students will demonstrate a clear understanding of the basic concepts of integrated marketing communication (IMC) and how marketers use effective marketing communication programs to assist in developing and maintaining brand equity.
• Students will be able to identify key marketing communication elements and show a level of understanding of these elements. These include:
  • Positioning & Brand Creation
  • Advertising: Creative and media strategies
  • Consumer and trade sales promotions
  • Marketing Public Relations
  • Signage and point of purchase communications
  • Social media in marketing
  • Buzz/viral/guerilla marketing and consumer generated advertising
  • Marketing Communication Evaluation and Measurement
• Students will be able to apply marketing communication knowledge and theory to real-life situations.
• Students will view marketing communication more broadly than media-delivered messages and understand that brands communicate at each contact point.
PRICING

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Pricing is one of the most important but least understood marketing decisions. This course is designed to equip you with the concepts, techniques, and latest thinking on assessing and formulating pricing strategies. The course concentrates on how firms attempt to capture value, as well as profits, in the revenues they earn. The objective of the course is to assist you in developing an in-depth knowledge relating to the formulation of pricing strategies for new and existing products and services. You will learn the process of making pricing decisions and explore innovative approaches for setting prices. Additional focus will be made on pricing dynamics and the reaction to and by competitors at the firm and product level. Hence the emphasis of the course is on ways in which you can help firms in diverse industries to improve their pricing.

The course covers a wide range of topics associated directly with the pricing of products and services. We will cover such pricing techniques as cost-based pricing, break-even analysis, and value-based pricing. Finally, we will explore issues related to pricing psychology. These issues will include price sensitivity, price effects on purchasing behavior, the concept of reference price, and price bundling.

The materials used in this course are intended to provide you with a comprehensive exposure to making managerial pricing decisions. You will be expected to understand theoretical pricing concepts and, more importantly, apply them to a variety of marketing scenarios. Upon successful completion of the course, (1) you will develop an understanding of the theory and techniques of pricing, (2) acquire the skills that will enable you to effectively develop and implement pricing strategies, (3) develop an understanding of price dynamics and life-cycle pricing, and (4) gain a solid understanding of pricing practices across different industries.
CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION MANAGEMENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Innovation is perceived as a must to grow by the top 100 Fortune companies. This year new products launches more than doubled reaching over 250,000 new products globally. However success rate is extremely low, around 10 to 30% depending on the market and category. Obviously, this fact represents a huge waste of company resources and this is why a better understanding of the innovation processes and key success factors are critical to ensure company success. Thus, this seminar's objectives are defined as:

1. Understand the challenges that innovation brings to the companies and to illustrate the impact of innovation decisions on different levels of the firm
2. Understand how managers can both recognize and respond to the opportunities that innovation creates for their companies.
3. Discuss the influence of company culture and processes in the success of managing innovation.
4. Study examples of different types and levels of innovation in different market environments.
5. Recognize the importance of dealing with and managing uncertainty in the innovation processes.
6. Discuss the importance of consumer understanding in the innovation success and new markets creation.
SERVICES MARKETING

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Services are becoming the dominant economic driver in the global economy and are critical for competitive advantage in companies, from all industrial sectors, all around the world. Even for companies not considered traditional service companies, services represent their primary growth and profitability strategies into the 21st century. For example, IBM and GE, two companies that gained prominence due to their product offerings, now generate approximately 40% of revenues and over 60% of current profits respectively from services.

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to services marketing as a separate and distinct area of marketing thought and practice and help you to understand its powerful influence in competitive markets. It is thus designed to supplement basic marketing and marketing strategy courses by focusing on problems and strategies specific to marketing of services. Specifically, we will focus our attention on understanding four main areas: the service experience and the special characteristics of services, the satisfaction of service customers and the need to integrate marketing, human resources and operations within the service and the importance of customer management. Strategies used by successful service marketers will be discussed.

The emphasis in the course will be on service universals rather than on any particular industry. It is designed not just for students who want to pursue a career in services industries but also in good industries with service components. All course activities are intended to help you become proficient in analyzing and judging the merits of services marketing strategies and to assist you in making strategic decisions in both business and consumer services industries.
SALES FORCE & KEY ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A glance at the profit and loss statement of any business shows that the top line – sales revenue – is the only item that contributes to the business. The rest of the statement tracks costs. It is clear that a buoyant sales revenue line is fundamental to the health of any company.

A company’s sales are the most commonly followed indicator of its growth and its relationship to competitors.

In the current economic downturn, a well structured and motivated sales organization provides a competitive advantage to any firm.

This course is designed to give students an accurate perspective of the importance of the selling function in any company, regardless of the sector in which it operates.

The course teaches a basic framework for strategic thinking and decision-making in the management of sales people. Students will be exposed to the mechanics of field sales force planning, as well as people management and the disciplines of global and key account management.

Via extensive use of Case Studies, students will be exposed to a variety of real-life situations and to have the opportunity to comment on these and benefit from interactive discussions with the classmates.

The course objective is to familiarise students with the principles of sound field sales force management and key account management. This includes:

- To structure and manage sales forces, including: compensation, motivation and training.
- To develop an appreciation of the importance of Sales Force and Key Account Management as a key asset for maintaining competitive advantage;
- To understand the key issues and develop adequate resources for satisfying customer needs.
- To get a global view of Sales support systems that foster customer partnerships.
- To become familiar with current trends in Sales force management (i.e. outsourcing, e-detailing and e-business) and to understand the implications of these trends on people and organizations.
- To take into account ethical issues.
SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The incredibly rapid development of information and communication technologies is transforming the way brands engage with their customers. The Internet opened a world of opportunities for new-comers, and forced deep transformations among more consolidated players.

Lately, the combination of increasing “very high broadband” penetration, the proliferation of connected devices, and the mobilization of content and services thanks to smart phones and tablets is accelerating the pace of change. Whether these trends are seen as a threat or as an opportunity depends largely on the degree of knowledge and experience companies develop around them.

In this course, we will regard these “digital” trends as tremendous opportunities for existing and new companies in three key areas:

i) Communication: “Digital” as a new way to talk to the customers. We will discuss the benefits and techniques of online advertising, and the impact of the new social media.

ii) Service: “Digital” as a new way to offer customer service. We will explore the trends in e-care and e-support, and will illustrate the importance of online reputation.

i) Commerce (e-shop): “Digital” as a new acquisition channel. We will get familiar with the latest online sale strategies.

At the end of the course, students should have the basic knowledge and confidence to design the basics of a complete online strategy.
MARKETING STRATEGY FOR DECISION MAKING

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Marketing Strategy for Decision Making is a seminar designed to develop the knowledge and application of marketing strategy using a business simulation. Nothing teaches like the real world application of marketing tools. Marketing theory is certainly important. But it’s how each student applies it that makes the real difference. All too often, students have to wait until their first job to get hands-on training. That’s a costly way to practice. So in this seminar students will participate in a simulation game where they will encounter a real business scenario, albeit artificially constructed, and compete against each other in teams to come up with the best strategic marketing decisions using their understanding of marketing theory.

Why using a simulation to learn marketing strategy? The statistics speak for themselves.

The learning retention rate of a standard lecture is only 5%. This does go up a little when case discussions are involved mainly because students can apply their learning. However, give someone the chance to apply their knowledge through actual practice in a business setting, and their retention jumps to 75% to 80%. That’s a significant difference, and it’s what simulations deliver more than any other learning tool. It’s a risk-free platform for testing ideas. No one gets fired and no real budgets are on the line. Yet, participants leave the experience with a more analytical way of thinking, and are more prepared for the real world by testing contingencies and scenarios in advance.

The name of the game here is marketing strategy. Marketing Strategy for Decision Making allows a participant to condense a long-term perspective into a matter of days. You’ll see at once how a decision made today will affect the company’s value in the years to come. Not just in theory, but through learning the lessons in the presence of real market factors.

From actual market conditions to changing market forces, our Marketing Strategy for Decision Making seminar mirror the competitive landscape to the last detail during the process of participating in the game over multiple periods. Students apply decisions and see results at once. Nothing else translates ideas into results as quickly or accurately.

For masters’ level students, Marketing Strategy for Decision Making offers a comprehensive mix of marketing strategy and long-term planning. Through direct competition, participants pilot a company through a competitive landscape in which all of their marketing skills are required. Whether creating a new market or further penetrating an existing one, both strategic and tactical abilities are required: R&D, finance, portfolio management, segmentation and positioning, as well as pricing, promotion and distribution.
Because a winning strategy is nothing without perfect execution, operational decisions play a vital role in the course. From price points to advertising budgets and distribution channels, participants control every aspect of how their plans are realized, and constantly refine their decisions based on actual market performance. It’s learning on all levels.

The *Marketing Strategy for Decision Making* seminar also reinforces a strong focus on competitive thinking and market understanding. *Marketing Strategy for Decision Making* clearly reflects the impact a sudden competitive move or changing customer needs can have on a company, and encourages teams to look beyond their own corporate walls for insight and ideas.

Just as important, *Marketing Strategy for Decision Making* always engages students and professionals on a more emotional level. The fast pace and hands-on experience creates an intense energy, making participants eager to apply their new skills. It’s a lot of fun, but also hard work. Students and executives find the combination irresistible.

Finally, it’s absolutely mandatory to come to the first class with the simulation manual read. The manual is a very easy-to-read description and overview of the market, the products, the customers, and the general environment you are going to face in the simulation. Also it is suggested that students should attend all the sessions because of the intensive nature of the course – you miss a session and might find out the market scenario has evolved; it’s difficult to catch up in business!