
MGP/B 493V: Strategic Branding (DRAFT)

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Course Description

Welcome! How does your favorite brand seem to understand you so well? How did their marketing team get inside your head like that? How do marketers come up with creative ideas?

Good news: You don't have to consider yourself creative to succeed in branding... you just have to be aware, organized, and strategic.

In today's marketing landscape, branding and content marketing that drive conversions are some of the most essential and sought-after skills in marketing. This course will provide students with a comprehensive understanding of branding strategies and implementation. We will explore strategic branding through brand positioning, brand building and creation, brand implementation, brand growth, and brand management. Through these topics, we will explore applications of branding in both the traditional and digital marketing landscape.

Case studies, readings, templates, and guided exercises will enhance the learning experience, concluding with an experiential learning assignment designed to help students gain skills and expertise to enhance their marketing careers.

Course Materials

- **"Aaker on Branding: 20 Principles that Drive Success"** (David Aaker) Morgan James Publishing, ISBN: 978-1614488323
- HBR Textpak Noted as **[HBS]** in the listed readings
- (OPTIONAL) **"Building a Story Brand: Clarify Your Message So Customers Will Listen"** (Donald Miller) Harper Collins Publishing ISBN: 9781400201839

Linked items through the UC Davis library. If noted, some links will need to be accessed from on campus or by using the [library VPN](#). Some items will need to be searched for directly. The link will take you to main the HBR page of the library. Click on "Search within this publication" and then search for "AN [Insert number]" in the second field.

Course Requirements

This course will receive a letter grade made up of the following components (listed in chronological order).

Assignment 1: Self introduction and Pepsi/Coke note to instructor, due March 25: class (5%). Send a note (in Canvas) to the instructor formatted as shown below (due by 5 p.m. on March 25). Please be succinct.

- 1) Your name, MBA Program, year in the program, emphasis, expected graduation date.
- 2) Your current job, your future career goal, and why you are taking this class.
- 3) Please state whether you like Pepsi or Coke with one reason why.

Assignment 2: Group Project Part I: Brand Statement (5%). Group Assignment Brand Statement Due (instruction for this will be provided during week two).

Assignment 3: Group Project Part II: Positioning Statement (10%): Revised Brand Statement, draft brand positioning rationale, and perceptual map or strategy canvas.

Assignment 4: Park Hotels case analysis (20%): Questions provided in Canvas. Total response is 500 words or less.

Assignment 5: Group Project Part III: Collateral redesign (4%): Each group will provide logo redesign specs (explained in week 4).

Assignments 6: AWAY Luggage case brief: (10% each). Guidance provided in Canvas. Total response is 250 words or less.

Assignment 7: Final Group Project (Part IV) (25%). Groups will produce and present a creative brief for a brand of their choice (details, templates, and examples will be provided on Canvas and in class).

Note 1: Graphic design, photography, video, etc. skills are NOT needed for this project (this is a common question that comes up). I will teach you what you need to know in this area.

Note 2: Parts I-III of the group project are included in the final group project, so after week 5, you're halfway done.

Assignment 8: Class participation and participation journal (21%). Each week students will write a *brief* (200 word or less) reflection on two insights that they gained in branding following that week's lecture/discussion.

Class Behavior and Operations

1. In order to facilitate a learning environment where all students feel safe to grow, it is expected that all students treat each other with respect and dignity, encouraging learning, sharing, and new ideas.
2. Of course, it is not acceptable behavior to insult, harass, or demean any member of the class. Professional business behavior should be modeled in the classroom.
3. Students are required to adhere to the UC Davis Principles of Community, [linked here](#).
4. Engagement and discussion will be significant learning tools for this course. Students are expected to be focused on the discussion at all times and to participate as much as possible. Use of devices (smartphones, laptops, etc.) is permitted, as long as they are being used to find examples that enhance class discussion and activities.
5. Marketing is a dynamic and complex field and when practiced properly can introduce new perspectives, change behavior, and even change the world. That's pretty incredible. Students should come open to learning new ideas and strategies. Above all, I hope that students are prepared to have some fun and be amazed at the ideas they can produce when given the right tools and frameworks. Marketing is one of my great passions in life and I hope it rubs off on those I teach!

Course Schedule

Mondays: 6:00-9:30 p.m.; Zoom

Week One: Introduction to Strategic Branding Brand positioning

Reading

HBS Core Curriculum - Marketing Reading: Brands and Brand Equity (Deshpande, Keinan) HBS 8140 [HBS]

HBR Article: [Three questions you need to ask about your brand](#) (Keller, Sternthal, Tybout) [Needs VPN, search for, "AN 7269414"]

HBS Core Curriculum - Marketing Reading: Brand Positioning (Avery, Gupta) HBS 8197 [HBS]

Optional: Aaker: Parts I & II

Assignment Due

Self-introduction and Pepsi/Coke note to instructor.

Week Two: Brand Building and Creation: Storytelling, Vision, and Messaging Persuasion and Influence

Reading

Miller: *Skim* sections I & II

HBR Article: [How to Persuade People to Change their Behavior](#) (Berger) [Needs VPN]

HBR Article: [Harnessing the Science of Persuasion](#) (Cialdini) [Needs VPN, search for, "AN 5329110"]

HBS Case: Gillette and the #MeToo Movement (Rowe, Khambati) HBS W20544 [HBS] (*Read Only*)

Assignments Due

Group Project Part I: Brand Statement

Participation Journal

Week Three: Brand Building and Creation: Persuasion and Influence Continued Content and Collateral

Reading

HBS Core Curriculum: Sections 2.1 & 2.2 (through p. 12): Marketing Reading: Marketing Communications (Avery, Teixeira) HBS 8186 [HBS]

HBS Case: Selecting a New Name for Security Capital Pacific Trust (Fournier, Wojnicki) HBS 500054 [HBS]

Assignments Due

Group Project Part II: Group Positioning Statement

Participation Journal

Week Four: Brand Implementation: Brand audit and applications in rebranding Group project workshop

Reading

HBS Case: The Park Hotels: Revitalizing and Iconic Indian Brand (Avery, Chekitan) HBS 314114 [HBS]

Assignments Due

Case analysis: Questions provided in Canvas

Participation Journal

Week Five: Brand Implementation: Applications in digital marketing and traditional marketing

Reading

Miller: *Skim* Section III

HBS Core Curriculum: Sections 2.3 & 2.4 (p. 12-48): Marketing Reading: Marketing Communications (Avery, Teixiera) HBS 8186 [HBS]

HBR Article: [Secrets of Social Media Revealed 50 Years Ago](#) (Aaker) [Needs VPN]

HBR Article: [Branding in the Digital Age](#) (Edelman) [Needs VPN, search for, "AN 55461895"]

Assignments Due

Group Project Part III: Logo redesign specs

Participation Journal

**Week Six: Brand Management: Managing Brand Growth and Brand Extension
Building Brand Communities**

Reading

Aaker Part III- IV

HBR Article: [Getting Brand Communities Right](#) (Fournier, Lee) [Needs VPN, search for "AN 37022046"]

HBS Case: AWAY: Scaling a DTC Travel Brand (Avery, Fuller) HBS 520051 [HBS]

Assignments Due

Case brief: Questions provided in Canvas

Participation Journal

**Week Seven: Brand Management: Internal Branding
Conclusion: Personal Branding and Wrap Up**

Reading

HBS Case: Best Self or Best Company? Peloton Searches for a Voice (Murray) HBS UV7898 [HBS]

HBS Background Note: Applying the principles of branding to build personal brands (Petersen) HBS ES1466 [HBS]

Assignments Due

Participation Journal

**Week Eight: Conclusion: Capstone lecture and discussion
Presentations and Feedback**

Assignments Due

Final Group Project

Participation Journal

Thank you... now go change the world with your brand messaging, stories, and value!