Fundamentals of branding

Instructors: Lluís Mas and Sara Vinyals Mirabent
E-mail: lluis.mas@upf.edu and sara.vinyals@upf.edu

Course description

Nowadays, brands have become one of the most valuable assets of a company. This course focuses on the understanding of the strategic challenges faced by brands and their communication. But why are brands so important? What is a brand and what is it compounded by? Understanding the brand's persuasive power and how consumers establish relationships with them; learning the opportunities that brands' communication provides, or the importance of the brands' stability and coherence across the messages are some of the major topics of this course. In a highly competitive market, building and communicating strong brands becomes a valuable competitive advantage.

ECTS Credits

4 ECTS Credits

Specific competences

At the end of the course, the student will be able to...

› To understand the role brands play in today's society.
› To apply branding constructs to different types of brands and scenarios.
› To identify brand strategies.
› To analyze brands are psychological constructs.
› To define the brand identity.
› To design co-branding strategies.
› To plan and design comprehensive branding strategies.

Learning outcomes

At the end of the course, the student...

› Will have acquired the fundamentals of Branding: key concepts and main constructs involved in the branding effort.
› Will have learned the advantages, outcomes, challenges, and process of branding different-nature brands.
› Will be able to outline branding strategies to position a brand in the market.
› Will have developed a critical eye to analyze the brands' positioning and competitiveness on the market.

Content

1. The era of consumer society: the new role of brands
2. Different brands, different challenges
3. Brand equity, awareness, and brand image
4. Brand identity
5. Strategic Plan
6. Brands social responsibility and brand advocacy
7. Co-branding strategies
8. The psychology of brands
9. Brands in unique scenarios

Method of presentation

The course dynamic combines different teaching styles: lectures, case studies, readings, and debates. Every session will start with a lecture presenting the main concepts and content related to each topic of the above mentioned. The lecture will combine theory and cases to exemplify the central concepts presented. Furthermore, several case studies will also be proposed as a matter of debate. The debate's goal is to increase the students' knowledge about the topic through the independent work preparing reading material, the capability to use concepts presented at the lecture, and own reasoning of the student.

Course assessment

This course is evaluated through three different activities: participation in class (debates, activities, case-studies and readings), individual assignments, and a final project. On the one hand, several debates and other activities will be organized along the course, participation is mandatory. Each activity will address a relevant topic related to the content of the class and will be conducted at the end of it. Different readings and additional documents will be provided to allow the students to prepare for it. On the other hand, the students will develop a branding strategy as a final course project. The details of the project requirements will be provided at the beginning of the course. All in all, the different activities' weight in the final grade is the following:

› Attendance/participation: 10%
› Assignment 1 (individual - In-depth analysis of a selected brand): 20%
› Debates, readings, and case studies: 20%
› Final project (in group – Development of a brand strategic plan): 50%

Course schedule

Weeks	Content of the class	Practical activities
Week 1	The era of consumption society: the new role of brands	Brainstorming Debate
Week 2	Different brands, different challenges	Reading 1
Week 3	Brand equity, awareness, and brand image	Reading 2
Week 4	Brand identity	Reading 3
Week 5	Strategic Plan	Assignment 1 – poster session
Week 6	Brands social responsibility and brand advocacy	Reading 4
Week 7	Co-branding strategies	Reading 5 & debate
Week 8	The psychology of brands	Case-study
Week 9	Brands in unique scenarios	Project follow-up
Week 10	Final project presentation	Project public defense

Required reading

R1. Keller, K. L. (2009). Building strong brands in a modern marketing communications environment. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, *15*(2–3), 139–155.

R2. John, D. R., Loken, B., Kim, K., & Monga, A. B. (2006). Brand Concept Maps: A Methodology for Identifying Brand Association Networks. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 43(4), 549–563.

R3. Kornum, N., Gyrd-Jones, R., Al Zagir, N., & Brandis, K. Anthoni (2017). Interplay between intended brand identity and identities in a Nike related brand community: Co-existing synergies and tensions in a nested system. *Journal of Business Research*, 70, 432–440.

R4. Rubén Huertas-García, Jorge Lengler, Carolina Consolación-Segura, (2017) "Co-branding strategy in cause-related advertising: the fit between brand and cause", *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 26, 2, 135-150. https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-07-2015- 0939

R5. Mas-Manchón, Ll., Lopez-Gonzalez, H., & Guerrero-Solé, F. (2021). Snapshot and Insights on Theories, Methods, and Topics in Branding and Advertising Research. In Ll. Mas-Manchón (ed.), *Innovation in Advertising and Branding Communication*, pp. 8-26. New York, US: Routledge.

* Other reading materials can be provided during the course.

Recommended reading

Bedside book:
Kapferer, J.-N. (2012). *The New Strategic Brand Management. Advanced insights & strategic thinking* (5th ed.). London: Kogan.

Other journal articles:
Brodie, R. J., Ilic, A., Juric, B., & Hollebeek. L. (2013). Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 66, 105–114. doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.07.029

Keller, K. L. (2003). Brand synthesis: The multidimensionality of brand knowledge. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29(4), 595–600.

Mas-Manchón, Ll. (2021). *Innovation in Advertising and Branding Communication*. New York, US: Routledge.

Newmeyer, Casey E., Venkatesh, R., & Chatterjee, R. (2014). Cobranding arrangements and partner selection: a conceptual framework and managerial guidelines. *J. of the Acad. Mark. Sci.*, 42:103–118. DOI 10.1007/s11747-013-0343-8

Schau, H. J., & Muniz, A. M. J. (2002). Brand communities and personal identities: Negotiations in cyberspace. *Adv Consum Res*, 29 :344–9. Available online at: http://acrwebsite.org/volumes/8673/volumes/v29/NA-29

Wallpach, S. v., Hemetsberger, A., & Espersen, P. (2017). Performing identities: Processes of brand and stakeholder identity co-construction. *Journal of Business Research*, 70,443–452. Available online at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.06.021

Digital tools

WARC. Marketing and communication database. It provides numerous case studies, media and advertising reports, and scientific papers. It is available digitally through UPF library.