Course Description
Approximately 95 percent of a brand manager’s responsibilities involves the development, execution, evaluation, and refinement of marketing plans. In this tremendously practical, semester-long course, developed based on best practices at top marketing companies, students are guided through the entire marketing plan process. Teams then apply the learning to create comprehensive plans for existing or new brands at the company & in the industry of their choice, or for their own entrepreneurial venture.

The course covers marketing plan pre-work, with student-generated marketing research and competitive marketing strategy & tactics observation. The ins and outs of brand positioning, marketing plan budget setting, pricing strategy, volume forecasting, and success measurement/ROI metrics are included. The student teams will develop media plans and advertising creative, as well as consumer promotion, trade promotion, direct marketing, digital marketing & viral/buzz marketing ideas & plans. The relationship of the annual Marketing Plan to the longer-term Strategic Planning Process is reviewed.

The course culminates with team marketing plan presentations to the class and (in many cases) to the corporate project sponsors. A written plan will be submitted that utilizes a format similar to what's typically used at large companies. Strategic, analytical, and creative skills are utilized in developing the plans.

Classes will consist of lectures, several relevant case discussions, guest speakers from the brand management, advertising, promotion, digital marketing and marketing metrics fields, and two separate team presentations to the class that will enable students to learn from each other about marketing across different industries and in different countries.

The course will help students in the interviewing process and with summer internships: making them totally conversant in the “language” of marketing plans, giving them an opportunity to develop in-depth insights in industries they may wish to work in, and enabling them to say they have done a complete marketing plan, with precise knowledge of what that entails. It’s a good choice for anyone interested in Brand Management, Advertising Account Management, Consulting for products, services, or non-profit organizations, and students starting their own entrepreneurial ventures.

Course Material
Detailed class notes will be handed out each session that will serve as the text. A Marketing Plan checklist, template, comprehensive formats for each plan section, and prior project examples will be provided to clarify the content that’s expected.
Evaluation
Competitive tracking & analysis 15% (team)
Marketing research & lessons learned 15% (team)
Class participation 20% (individual)
Marketing Plan presentation 10% (team)
Marketing Plan document 40% (team)

The competitive tracking portion will be evaluated based on the breadth of materials collected and the insights derived from them. The marketing research portion will be evaluated based on the quality and thoroughness of the questionnaire and the insights derived from it. Class participation will be based on attendance, questions asked in class, sharing of insights from your own experience, and project feedback sought. The marketing plans will be evaluated based on:

1) Quality of the marketing strategies
2) Creativity and “out-of-the box thinking” regarding strategies and tactics
3) Thoroughness and detail of each plan segment

SESSION CONTENT

Session 1: Tuesday, February 4th
- Overview of Marketing Plan Process & how it relates to Strategic Planning
- Key elements of the Marketing Plan
- Course expectations/deliverables/assignments/structure

Session 2: Thursday, February 6th
- Marketing Plan team formation
- Competitive tracking as a background for plan
- Information sources
- Industry analyses

Assignment
- Form teams & select a project topic
- Write a 1-paragraph description of your topic. Include team member names & e-mail addresses

Session 3: Tuesday, February 11th
- Marketing research questionnaire development

Session 4: Thursday, February 13th
- Marketing Strategy
  - Market structures & segmentation
  - Perceptual maps
  - Brand positioning
  - Sources of Volume
Session 5: Tuesday, February 18th

- Trend analysis
- Consumption chain to identify points of differentiation

Assignment Due
- 1st draft of marketing research questionnaires

Session 6: Thursday, February 20th

- Product strategy (differentiation, improvement, line extension, etc.)
- Branding/product naming
- Packaging strategies (functionality & communication)

Session 7: Tuesday, February 25th

- Marketing & financial objectives
- Pricing strategies
- Budgeting
- Spending Splits
  - Competitive marketing spending patterns
  - Budget splits by marketing element (adv., cons., trade, Internet, direct, MRD)

Session 8: Thursday, February 27th

Assignment Due
- Team Presentations: Smartest & Dumbest Competitive Tactics
  - What were they?
  - Why did they or did they not achieve the brand’s marketing objectives?
- Competitive tracking binders due

Session 9: Tuesday, March 4th

Guest Speaker: Brand Management

Session 10: Thursday, March 6th

- Geographic & seasonality guidelines: Brand Opportunity and Seasonality Indices
- Integrated Marketing Communications
- Upfront Analysis Template Review

Session 11: Tuesday, March 11th

- Advertising Media Plans

Session 12: Thursday, March 13th

- Advertising Creative
Session 13: Thursday, March 13th
Guest Speaker: Brand Management

Session 14: Thursday, March 25th
- Trade and Intermediary/Channel Member objectives and strategies
- Trade (& intermediary) Promotion Plans
- Trade plan costing

Week of March 26th, Individual Team Meetings/Presentations to me
(To be scheduled individually)

Session 15: Thursday, March 27th
- Consumer Promotion Plan
- Consumer Promotion objectives & strategies
- Vehicle options & when they’re appropriate
- Plan considerations & costing
- Competitive consumer promotion tracking

Session 16: Tuesday, April 1st
- Event Marketing
- Cause Marketing
- Experiential Marketing
- Direct Marketing

Session 17: Thursday, April 3rd
- Guest Speaker: Digital Marketing

Session 18: Tuesday, April 8th
- Digital Marketing Cont’d

Session 19: Thursday, April 10th
- Digital Marketing Cont’d
- Public Relations
- Buzz/viral/undercover/stealth Marketing

Session 20: Tuesday, April 15th
Sephora Digital Marketing Case Discussion

Session 21: Thursday, April 17th
Guest Speaker: Return on Investment Analytics
Session 22: Tuesday, April 22\textsuperscript{nd}

- Marketing Research & Marketing Metrics
- Risks & Hedges
- Marketing Plan Execution

Session 23: Thursday, April 24\textsuperscript{th}

- Class sharing of best/favorite integrated marketing examples & why they were effective in standing out and accomplishing the brand’s marketing objectives

Session 24: Tuesday, April 29\textsuperscript{th}

Team Presentations

Session 25: Thursday, May 1\textsuperscript{st}

Team Presentations

Session 26: Tuesday, May 6\textsuperscript{th}

Team Presentations

**Final Presentation Content**

*(Approximately 15 Minutes/Team)*

- Brand Positioning Statement
- Integrated Marketing Message
- Marketing Spending Splits
- Program Descriptions
- Seasonality & Geography
- Integrated Marketing Flowchart
- Prioritization (must haves & nice to haves)
Marketing Plan Elements Checklist

Upfront Preparation & Analysis
- Industry analysis (trends, size, growth, players, market structure chart)
- Competitive analysis (key players, size, performance, marketing strategies, spending, advertising, pricing, merchandising, tracking notebooks)
- Competitive smartest & dumbest marketing tactics
- Past year’s analysis of marketing elements that worked & didn’t
- Marketing research (target refinement, key attributes vs. competitors, areas for improvement, how consumers find out about category products)
- Consumer “touch points map”
- Perceptual maps (3 minimum)
- Lessons learned from the above with IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PLAN
- SWOT analysis w/ IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MARKETING PLAN
- Brand positioning statement w/ rationale for target audience, frame of reference, point of difference & end benefit

The Plan
- Brand positioning statement w/ rationale for target audience, frame of reference, point of difference & end benefit
- Business objectives/Next year’s business goals
- Sources of volume & growth
- Product line identification, description & % of volume by item
- Packaging & branding strategies
- Pricing w/ rationale
- Geography/geographic strategy emphasis
- Seasonality strategy
- Marketing budget determination (overall & item emphasis)
- Marketing spending splits
- Communications strategy & examples (TV, print, radio, or banner ad)
- Media Plan (vehicles, timing, costs, rationale & flowchart)
- Consumer Promotion Plan (vehicles, timing, costs, rationale & flowchart)
- Channel of distribution strategy & % volume by channel
- Trade & Intermediary Plan (items “dealt” by channel, performance sought,
% discount, incentives, merchandising, training, timing, costs, rationale & flowchart
- Direct Marketing Plan (communications objectives, timing, media targeted, costs, rationale & flowchart)
- Internet Marketing Plan (site objectives, links, keywords, e-marketing lists, frequency, timing, costs, rationale & flowchart)
- Public Relations Plan (communication objectives, media targeted, sample press release, timing, costs, rationale & flowchart)
- Buzz/Viral/Stealth Marketing Plan (programs, markets, timing, costs)
- Experiential & Event Marketing Plans (events, scope, timing, costs)
- Integrated marketing flowchart
- Marketing Research Plan (issues to be researched in coming year, with costs & timing of studies)
- Marketing metrics (how will the success of the plan be measured overall, and how will each plan element be evaluated)
- Risk & Hedges (what could go right or wrong, financial impact, how to cover shortfall, prioritization of marketing programs)
- P&L with % change vs. year ago by line & explanation of variances vs. prior year