

VISUAL MARKETING
MKTG 239/739, Spring 2021
The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructors:

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Overview

As consumers, we are constantly exposed to advertisements and experience visual messages from product packages in stores, retail displays, and products already owned. In essence, visual marketing collateral is omnipresent and is an essential part of corporate visual identity, strategy, branding, and communication. Some of this is captured through creative graphic design, but advertising, design, and marketing can also be significantly enhanced by knowledge of how visual information and its presentation context can be optimized to deliver desirable and advantageous messages and experiences. This course will emphasize how to measure, interpret, and optimize visual marketing.

Goals:

Using lectures, discussions, exercises and a group project, this course will help students understand the underlying processes that influence our visual perception and visual cognition. Students will learn about the theoretical processes and models that influence, attention and visual fluency. They will also be exposed to eye-tracking instruments that help measure eye movement. Finally, we will explore how visual stimuli can influence consumer memory, persuasion, and choice. We will examine practical applications in marketing, advertising, branding, packaging, retailing, and design contexts.

Evaluation and Grading:

Class Participation:

10%

Constructive participation is based on analysis rather than opinion and builds on the discussion flow (a good participant is also a good listener). Participation (both in class and online in the canvas discussion forum) will account for 10% of the grade.

For those who cannot make class (all class sessions will be recorded and posted to Canvas), be sure to post articles in the Canvas Discussion section that apply what we have covered in class or provide updates on examples discussed as well as offer thoughtful comments. Participation in the in-class exercises will also contribute to this grade.

Late Submission of Assignments:

Late submissions are penalized except in case of serious emergency or if a prior arrangement is made with both the professors. Unexcused late assignments are penalized one grade step, and a full grade if more than five days late. No assignments will be accepted for grading if more than one week late; a zero will be recorded and the assignment need not be turned in.

One Individual Out of Class Exercise (due 3/8/2021)

20%

Students will visit a physical retail store or mall (or an online shopping platform, if there are constraints about visiting physical retail) outside of class. In 1-2 pages double-spaced, address the following:

- (1) Using class concepts, describe your perspective on a consumer's shopping journey to the store
- (2) Specifically discuss how one aspect of visual search is optimized in this context
- (3) Specifically discuss a visual marketing challenge that is not optimal, and how it might be improved using class concepts
- (4) Provide 1 photo (and no more than 1) for each of the above three discussion points that illustrate and support your discussions as addendums (not counted in the 1-2 page maximum).

Two In-Class Team Projects

20% (total)

Visual Analysis Presentation (2/17/2021):

10%

The team will be assigned a static advertisement to analyze during class. In a 4-5 minute in-class presentation, your team should specifically discuss how this example illustrates the following concepts:

- a. Use of visual stimuli to get attention: (e.g., salience, location, movement, color, shape position)
- b. Use of visual stimuli to affect fluency (ease of processing)
- c. Use of semiotic codes and their impact on the advertisement's strategy
- d. Use of visual stimuli to affect interpretation (what is the marketing take-away?)

Designing Retail A/B Experiments (4/7/2021)

10%

At the end of the day after this class session (11:59PM ET) after the class exercise, hand in a one-page description of an experiment testing one aspect of your visual strategy for your project. It could be an A/B experiment to test a message, visuals, personalization, social media messaging, a call-to-action cues, elements on a package or in-store or website factors. What do you think will happen as a result of the test you are proposing

and why? Define your DV and hypothesize how much change you expect as a result of your manipulation.

One Group Analysis Exercise: (data given in class 3/17/2021, analysis due 3/24/2021) 20%

Your group will be given some eye tracking data output and will be asked to provide a relevant marketing insight and analysis for each different dataset provided. The full instructions for this exercise will be provided alongside the dataset on 3/17/2021.

Final Team Project and Presentation: 30%

- One in class team working session, with required feedback from the professors (3/31/2021). Each team must submit their final presentation proposal plan by the end of the day after this class session (**Submitted by 11:59PM ET 3/31/2021**).
- Final Recorded Narrated Slide Presentation (**Submitted by 11:59PM ET 5/7/2021**)
- All students must watch and score 3 assigned peer final presentations (**Submitted by 5PM ET 5/9/2021**)

Project Options: (see fuller descriptions at the end of the syllabus)

- (1) **Hershey's Project:** The Hershey Company is partnering with our class. This team project will address a real-world and critical business challenge presented in class by the Marketing Director at The Hershey Company for one of their brands that can be addressed by leveraging visual marketing class concepts for the brand.
- (2) **Grocery store Project (cpg):** Design a term project for a grocery cpg product that has a marketing problem objective that can be solved through visual marketing. Groups will need to formulate a visual solution (e.g., a package design, advertisement, retail display, commercial, website) that will solve the problem. Rationale for the solution should be based on concepts discussed in class. An experiment (either an A/B testing or a controlled experiment that can establish causality) should be designed to test the hypotheses used in the presented solution.
- (3) **Your choice:** You have the option of developing a project on your own for a company of your choice. You will need to formulate a visual solution (e.g., a package design, advertisement, retail display, commercial, website) that will solve the problem. Rationale for the solution should be based on concepts discussed in class. An experiment (either an A/B testing or a controlled experiment that can establish causality) should be designed to test the hypotheses used in the presented solution. Part of the grade here will be the formulation of the project scope, and justification for why you chose this firm

Please see the "Schedule of Class Meetings" in this syllabus for the class meetings, session descriptions, and readings.

Readings:

There are a number of readings, including primary research articles and popular media, which will be distributed through Canvas or included in a course pack through Study.net. These readings will inform our discussion but are optional (unless otherwise noted).

Course Schedule (1/20/21-4/28/21)

Lecture Date	Topics and ASSIGNMENTS DUE	Recommended Readings	Class Session Title
Wednesday, January 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is visual marketing?• Packaging• Visual assortment• Branding• Retail design• Advertising• Social Media		What is Visual Marketing? (BK)
Monday, January 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is visual marketing?• Discovery vs. Need-based search• Visual Search Challenges and Developing Tools• Vision: An Overview• Using Visual Information		What is Visual Marketing? (ZJ)
Wednesday, January 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shopping revolution: how retailing is changing• Customer perspective vs. product perspective		Shopping Journey (BK)

Lecture Date	Topics and ASSIGNMENTS DUE	Recommended Readings	Class Session Title
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle of customer value • Principle of differential advantage • Different types of retail experiences 		
Monday, February 1			RETAIL PROJECT In-Class Retail Project Overview and Guest Speaker: Kurt Ivey, Head of Marketing, Macerich
Wednesday, February 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Journey • Touchpoints • Understanding customer journey • Top-down/Bottom Up 	Chandon, Hutchinson, Bradlow, Young (2009), Does in-store marketing work? Effects of the number and position of shelf facings on brand attention and evaluation at the point of purchase.	Visual Choice and the Shopping Experience (BK)
Monday, February 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulus-based: Attention, perceptual fluency, examples from physical stores, search patterns in store, changes in search, consideration sets, choice architecture, pricing strategies • Impacts on store design 		Visual Choice and Shopping Experience (BK)

Lecture Date	Topics and ASSIGNMENTS DUE	Recommended Readings	Class Session Title
Wednesday, February 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top down vs Bottom up processing • Gestalt theory & principles • Visual elements • Semiotic codes 		Visual Communication (ZJ)
Monday February 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saliency • Search • Limitations • Attentional impacts on marketing 	<p>Itti & Koch (2001), Computational modelling of visual attention;</p> <p>Pieters & Wedel (2007), Goal control of attention to advertising;</p> <p>Henderson & Hayes (2017), Meaning-based guidance of attention in scenes as revealed by meaning maps</p>	Visual Perception and Attention (ZJ)
Wednesday, February 17	Visual Analysis Presentations		In Class Project Day: Visual Analysis Presentations (ZJ)
Monday, February 22			Final Project Overview and Guest Speaker: Ryan Riess, Marketing Director, The Hershey Company
Wednesday, February 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological constraints and optimizations • Why does the biology matter for marketing? • Center of gaze • Representing visual space coordinates • Advantages and disadvantages of visual center and periphery • Eye movements and how we use them 	Higgins, Leininger, & Rayner (2014), Eye movements when viewing advertisements	The Eye, Visual Brain, Eye Movements & Consumer Viewing (ZJ)

Lecture Date	Topics and ASSIGNMENTS DUE	Recommended Readings	Class Session Title
Monday, March 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biases • Impressions & Stereotypes • Facial Standards 	<p>Ritchie, Palermo, & Rhodes (2017), Forming impressions of facial attractiveness is mandatory;</p> <p>Oh, Buck & Todorov (2019), Revealing Hidden Gender Biases in Competence Impressions of Faces;</p> <p>Ballem & Todorov (2007), Predicting political elections from rapid and unreflective face judgments</p>	Face Perception (ZJ)
Wednesday, March 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice set • Maximizing perceived variety • Visual images vs text 	<p>Huffman & Kahn (1998), Variety for Sale: Mass Customization or Mass Confusion?;</p> <p>Kahn & Wansink (2004), The Influence of Assortment Structure on Perceived Variety and Consumption Quantiles;</p> <p>Morales et al. (2005), Perceptions of Assortment Variety: The Effects of Congruency Between Consumers' Internal and Retailers' External Organization;</p> <p>Miller & Kahn (2005), Shades of Meaning: The Effects of Color and Flavor Names on Consumer Choice;</p> <p>Townsend & Kahn (2014), The "Visual Preference Heuristic:" The Influence of Visual versus Verbal Depiction on Assortment Processing, Perceived Variety, and Choice Overload;</p> <p>Kahn, Weingarten & Townsend (2013), Assortment Variety: Too Much of a Good Thing?;</p>	Visual Assortment (BK)

Lecture Date	Topics and ASSIGNMENTS DUE	Recommended Readings	Class Session Title
		Kahn et al. (2016), A "Wide" Variety: The Effects of Horizontal vs. Vertical Product Display on Assortment Processing, Perceived Variety, and Choice	
Monday, March 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choice and Reaction Time Measuring and Calculating Value Gaze Cascade and Drift Diffusion models and their impact on consumer visual choice <p>Individual Retail Analysis Write Up Due</p>	<p>Shimojo et al. (2003), Gaze bias both reflects and influences preferences;</p> <p>Krajbich, Lu, Camerer & Rangel (2012), The attentional drift-diffusion model extends to simple purchasing decisions;</p> <p>Polania et al. (2018), Efficient coding of subjective value</p>	Measuring and Modeling Visual Choice (ZJ)
Wednesday, March 10			NO CLASS (Spring Break Day)
Monday, March 15			GUEST SPEAKER: Scott Young BVA Nudge Unit
Wednesday, March 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis methods and tools for eye tracking data interpretation and insights <p>Eye Tracking Data Provided for Analysis</p>		Methods and Measures (ZJ)
Monday, March 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Color in Packaging Pantone colors; style and fashion Corporate color 	<p>New York Times (2018), How Pantone Picked 'Living Coral' as the 2019 'Color of the Year' by Wendy MacNaughton</p> <p>Deng & Kahn (2009), Is your product on the right side? The "location effect" on</p>	Packaging & Perceptions I (BK)

Lecture Date	Topics and ASSIGNMENTS DUE	Recommended Readings	Class Session Title
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shape in packaging 	<p>perceived product heaviness and package evaluations;</p> <p>Kahn & Deng (2009), Effects of Visual Weight Perceptions of Product Locations on Packaging;</p> <p>Sevilla & Kahn (2014), The effect of product shape completeness on size perceptions, preference and consumption;</p> <p>Folkes & Matta (2004), The effect of package shape on consumers' judgments of product volume: attention as a mental contaminant;</p> <p>Krider, Raghurir & Krishna (2001), Pizzas: pi or square? Psychophysical biases in area comparisons;</p> <p>Veryzer & Hutchinson (1998), The influence of unity and prototypicality on aesthetic responses to new product design</p>	
Wednesday, March 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JND and grabbing attention Beauty of boundaries Neatness & disarray Campbell's Case Study <p>Eye Tracking Analysis Due</p>		Packaging & Perceptions II (BK)
Monday, March 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Horizontal & Vertical Brand Extensions Category Brand Extensions 	<p>Marketing Luxury Branding Below the Radar, HBR;</p> <p>Young et al. (2010), Signaling Status with Luxury Goods: The Role of Brand Prominence</p>	Branding (BK)

Lecture Date	Topics and ASSIGNMENTS DUE	Recommended Readings	Class Session Title
Wednesday, March 31	Project Proposals Due by End of Day After Class Session		Final Project Group Working Session (ZJ & BK)
Monday, April 5			GUEST SPEAKER: Julie Bornstein, Founder & CEO, The Yes
Wednesday, April 7	One Page Write-up Due by End of Day After Class Session		In-Class Project Day: Designing Retail A/B Experiments (BK)
Monday, April 12			NO CLASS (Spring Break Day)
Wednesday, April 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is color? • Why is color vision useful? • Color output precision • Color statistics of objects • Color effects 	<p>On the psychological impact of food colour (2015), Charles Spence;</p> <p>Color Saturation Increases Perceived Product Size (2017), Hagtvedt & Brasel;</p> <p>Effect of colour of drugs: systematic review of perceived effect of drugs and of their effectiveness (1996), de Craen et al.</p>	Color (ZJ)
Monday, April 19			GUEST SPEAKER: JB Osborne, CEO and Co-Founder, Red Antler
Wednesday, April 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visuals to Build Brand (Positive vs. Negative Imagery) • Narrowing vs Broadening • Social Images 	"The Emotion of Form and Touchpoints to Create it: from <i>Built to Love: Creating Products that Captivate Customers,</i>" Boatwright & Cagan	Positive Emotions (BK)
Monday, April 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual associative learning and memory 	Albright (2012), On the Perception of Probable Things: Neural Substrates of Associative Memory, Imagery, and Perception	Visual Memory (ZJ)

Lecture Date	Topics and ASSIGNMENTS DUE	Recommended Readings	Class Session Title
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes an image memorable? • Measuring visual memory 	<p>Isola et al. (2014), What makes a photograph memorable?</p> <p>Bainbridge (2019), Memorability: How what we see influences what we remember;</p> <p>Bainbridge et al. (2019), Drawings of real-world scenes during free recall reveal detailed object and spatial information in memory</p>	
Wednesday April 28			Course in Review (ZJ & BK)

Academic Integrity

Please re-familiarize yourself with the students' guide to Academic Integrity at Penn (<http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/index.html>) and the Code of Academic Integrity: (http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai_codeofacademicintegrity.html).

You may and are encouraged to discuss class topics with other students in the class. However, your individual and group assignments, responses, and contributions to class are to be your own original work and must truthfully represent the time and effort you apply.

Consult with the instructors if you have any questions about academic integrity expectations for this class. If you are unsure whether your work constitutes a violation of the Code of Academic Integrity, it is your responsibility to clarify any ambiguities.

Policies

Accommodations: The University of Pennsylvania provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities who have self-identified and been approved by the office of [Student Disabilities Services](#) (SDS). If you have not yet contacted SDS, and would like to request accommodations or have questions, you can make an appointment by calling SDS 215-573-9235. The office is located in the [Weingarten Learning Resources Center](#) at Stouffer Commons 3702 Spruce Street, Suite 300. All services are confidential.

FINAL PROJECT DETAILS:

Grocery/CPG Project/Hershey's:

In thinking through your ideas for this project, remember the following strategic considerations when designing a solution for a cpg company that distributes through the grocery channel.

(1) The consumer is not their customer:

Customer: The buyers – who purchase the product at scale and intend to re-sell to deliver their own value proposition and satisfy their own goals (e.g., the retailers like Walmart, WholeFoods, Shoprite, etc.)

Shopper: Their customer's marketing target – the one who decides to purchase the product from their customer at shelf or online. Thus, to deliver value to their customer they have to persuade the shoppers to buy

Consumer: The end target of the marketing. This is the end-user who enjoys the product and thus the marketing proposition has to speak to this user.

(2) Brand's role in the category:

From the retailer's point of view, they are concerned with sales from the overall product category. The brand is concerned with its share of the category. There are various ways a brand can bring value to themselves and to the category. For example, the brand can deliver value by being the future of the category and by driving true category growth through **incrementality**. Their marketing tries to bring in:

More users: They try to bring in shoppers who haven't been purchasing in the category (or back to) the category

More usage: They try to inspire more usage occasions

More value: Their goal is to justify a higher price for the assortment they bring to their categories.

(3) Their category's role in the store:

Basket driver: Their customers (the retailers) care about more than just the money they make off the brand, they care about who the brand attracts, and what else that shopper will purchase on their trip to the store.

Did you know? Most retailers sell turkey at a loss on Thanksgiving – and lots of it. If they can get you to buy the turkey, what else might you purchase?

Rationale for the solution should be based on concepts discussed in class. An experiment (either an A/B testing or a controlled experiment that can establish causality) should be designed to test the hypotheses used in the presented solution.

Projects that you can consider in this domain include:

1. Design an In-store Display or Experience

Think about how a mature or new cpg brand can come to life with one or two strong grocery partners (think ShopRite for example) in a powerful, exciting way for retailers and shoppers? What are the key elements to be successful and drive awareness, engagement, education, talk-ability, consideration, and, of course, purchase A deliverable could perhaps be a brief to a design agency.

2. Create in-store Visual Cues to Drive Consumers to the Brand/Product Category

Design in-store visual messaging that would drive consumers from popular spots within the retail store to push shoppers towards the location of your brand. For example, one brand tossed around the idea of putting stickers on avocados in produce that would cue shoppers towards their avocado oil products that were on a shelf in a different part of the store.

3. Design a Visual Branding Strategy

Re-design a branding strategy for your brand that works in advertising, social media and for in-store or online shopping. Here the ideas should be based on visual principles but should leverage the different aspects of the media channels to create synergy. In-store or online shopping messaging should reinforce social media or advertising themes. If you are designing for a big company, like P&G or Unilever, think about how their omni channel branding for individual products can work together to create an overall bigger category impact.

4. New Brand Packaging Design:

Design a brand “refresh’ for your product that will connect the consumer through product, pack, shelf placement, social, website, advertisements etc. to land the refresh and increase awareness (and certainly not lose any of their loyal consumers along the way).

Final Project Deliverable will be a narrated and recorded slide deck and presentation that is NO LONGER THAN 10 MINUTES.

Students will also watch and score 3 assigned presentations other than their own by May 9th, 2021. Students who do not watch and score their peers will have their own final project grades lowered. The peer scores will contribute to the final project grade, alongside the professors.

Final Project Grading Criteria: (30 points)

- (1) good use of class concepts (6 points)
- (2) creativity (6 points)
- (3) managerial implications/practicality of suggestions (6 points)
- (4) quality of experiment (6 points)
- (5) presentation style (6 points)