



Strategic Brand Management

Marketing 2780

Spring 2024

T/TH 10:15-11:45am, JMHH G55

Instructor

Stefano Puntoni
Sebastian S. Kresge Professor of Marketing
Co-Director, AI at Wharton
puntoni@wharton.upenn.edu
<https://marketing.wharton.upenn.edu/profile/puntoni/>

Note: I will communicate course information via Canvas announcements.

Teaching assistant

Andrew Morningstar
PhD student in Marketing
atssmith@wharton.upenn.edu

Office hours

Mondays: 11:00 - 11:45, open door
Office: JMHH 760

Faculty lunches

Optional lunches will be scheduled during the term. The lunches will take place on Mondays. The dates will be announced at the beginning of the course.



Course Overview

Which brands make you happy? What draws you into these brands? How do companies create compelling brand experiences? How could you cultivate a brand that fosters customer engagement? This course takes a customer-centric approach to explore such questions with the goal of identifying the ingredients for building and managing inspired brands.

To bridge theory and practice, the course interweaves lectures, guest speakers, and case discussions. The course culminates in a Brand Audit Project, which provides a systematic way to inventory existing brand assets and develop a forward-looking strategy. The project requires students to select an existing brand for which they conduct their own insights research and to apply their learnings in order to assess the current state of the brand, and to provide recommendations for the brand going forward.

The course objectives are to:

- Provide an appreciation of the role of brands in customer decision making and in creating shareholder value.
- Increase fluency with the core principles underlying a customer-centric approach to brand strategy, and create familiarity with research tools that illuminate the meaning and strength of any particular brand.
- Augment student ability to think creatively and critically about the strategies and tactics involved in building, leveraging, defending and sustaining inspired brands.
- Encourage the application of brand principles to oneself—so as to be aware when building and communicating one's own personal and professional brand.

Course Structure

This course is organized into three blocks that collectively address the course objectives.

Block 1: Foundations

The course starts with a series of sessions designed to help you develop a strong understanding of foundational topics in strategic brand management. We will examine topics like what a brand is, what functions brands serve, the relation between brand strategy and overall firm strategy, how brand-related constructs can be measured, and more.

Block 2: Brand Strategy

In the middle section of the course, we will go deep into the topic of brand strategy, and consider through a series of lectures and case discussions how firms can design and build brands. We will examine topics like brand positioning, differentiation, product-market fit, and brand purpose.

Block 3: Managing Brands

This final section focuses on the challenges that confront brands as they seek growth and relevance over time, and the stewardship, skills, and perspectives that enable sustained brand health. Collectively, the sessions in this section convey the complexity and significance of the long-term task of brand maintenance. We will cover topics like brand repositioning, brand architecture, brand extension and how to leverage brands to spur market-driving innovations. We will also bridge from strategy to implementation by looking at brand communication and at specific industries (e.g., luxury).

Session types

The course is composed of four types of sessions: (1) Toolbox sessions, (2) Experiential sessions, (3) Illustrative sessions, and (4) Student presentations.

Toolbox sessions are interactive lectures, where I will present core concepts and theories in strategic brand management and provide opportunities for interaction and discussion around the key difficulties emerging in their practical application.

Experiential sessions are case discussions, based on videos or readings. For sessions based on readings, it is crucial that you all come to class well prepared and ready to participate. The course emphasizes case analysis. You will learn by doing (at least vicariously). You will also learn to navigate ambiguous decision problems where there is no right solution but where there are better or worse solutions. The case method is essential to develop the kind of problem-solving and communication skills highly valued in brand managers.

Illustrative sessions will feature presentations by industry leaders. Expert professionals will tell you about their work and the challenges they face. You will have the opportunity to learn about interesting business contexts and about brand management “in the wild”.

Adding to the insights into specific brands from the illustrative sessions, all the student groups will present the outcome of their Brand Audit project across two sessions at the end of the course (more below).

Course Schedule

The course features different types of sessions. They are indicated below using different colors. **Black** for toolbox sessions, **Green** for experiential sessions, and **Blue** for illustrative sessions and student presentations.

Session/Date	Topic	Readings ¹ / Guest speakers	Assignments
#1: Thursday, 1/18	Introduction to Strategic Brand Management	This course syllabus	Send me a LinkedIn invite! (If you use the platform)
#2: Tuesday, 1/23	The power of brands, Measuring and tracking brands	Hoeffler, Keller (2003) Keller, Lehmann (2003) Roach (2020)	Loved & Hated Brands Assignment (not graded). Submit on Canvas, be prepared to discuss in class. See template at the end of this syllabus.
#3: Thursday, 1/25	Brand and Product: The Dasani videocase		
#4: Tuesday, 1/30	Leading the brand: The M&S videocase		
#5: Thursday, 2/1	Brand positioning	Keller et al. (2002) Ritson (2021) Urbany, Davis (2013)	Each group must sign up and submit a listing of 3 brands for the Brand Audit Project
#6: Tuesday, 2/6	Local consumers, global brands: The Pringles case	Case booklet	Prepare case for in-class discussion
#7: Thursday, 2/8	Positioning and laddering: The Cialis case	Case booklet	Prepare case for in-class discussion

¹ Full references below.

Session/Date	Topic	Readings ² / Guest speakers	Assignments
#8: Tuesday, 2/13	Brand purpose, sustainability, morphing brands		Submit Personal Gap Analysis
#9: Thurs day, 2/15	Building brands with analytics and creativity	Kim Gallagher, Director Marketing & Customer Success, Nuuly	
#10: Tuesday, 2/20	Guest speaker	TBA	
#11: Thursday, 2/22	Managing disruption: The TomTom case	Case booklet	Prepare case for in-class discussion
#12: Tuesday, 2/27	TomTom and the future of automotive brands	Matthieu Campion, Regional Marketing Lead, Shell Recharge (Formerly, Marketing manager, TomTom Automotive)	
#13: Thursday, 2/29	<i>Brand Audit Study Day</i>		Brand Audit Project Progress Report
#14: Tuesday, 3/12	Managing brands over time: Revitalization		
#15: Thursday, 3/14	Managing brands over time: Repositioning and Rebranding		

² Full references below.

Session/Date	Topic	Readings / Guest speakers	Assignments
#16: Tuesday, 3/19	The nation brand, and the Best Countries ranking	David Reibstein, William Stewart Woodside Professor, The Wharton School	
#17: Thursday, 3/21	Guest speaker	TBA	Submit Brand Resuscitation Analysis
#18: Tuesday, 3/26	Growth: Brand architecture, brand extension, co-branding	Aaker, Joachimsthaler (2000)	
#19: Thursday, 3/28	Open-source marketing and brand communication	Acar, Puntoni (2016) Puntoni (2014) Ritson (2016)	
#20: Tuesday, 4/2	Reaching New Audiences	Matt Chumra, Chief Marketing, Communications and Brand Officer, LPGA	
#21: Thursday, 4/4	The Wharton Way: Elevating the Wharton brand	Angela Bostick, Chief Marketing & Communications Officer & Chanelle Darden, Sr. Director, Brand Strategy and Content, The Wharton School	Submit Kickstarter Project
#22: Tuesday, 4/9	Community branding: The Andradas case	Case booklet	Prepare case for in-class discussion
#23: Thursday, 4/11	Lifestyle branding: The Red Bull case	Case booklet	Prepare case for in-class discussion

Session/Date	Topic	Readings / Guest speakers	Assignments
#24: Tuesday, 4/16	Luxury branding: The Chanel videocase	Kapferer (2012)	
#25: Thursday, 4/18	Blockchain, and the branding of digital goods	Jaclyn Lavy, Digital Art Desk, Sotheby's	
#26: Tuesday, 4/23	Brand Audit Project presentations: Part 1		All Brand Audit Presentations
#27: Thursday, 4/25	Brand Audit Project presentations: Part 2		
#28: Tuesday, 4/30	Grand Finale	Rust et al. (2010) Yalcin & Puntoni (2023) Korst & Puntoni (2023)	

Course Materials

Cases

1. Dasani, based on video materials presented in class
2. Marks & Spencer, based on video materials presented in class
3. Procter & Gamble Italy: The Pringles Launch
4. Product Team Cialis: Getting Ready to Market
5. The Coffee of Andradas: Building a Brand to Help a Community
6. TomTom: Mapping the Course from B2C to B2B
7. Red Bull Spreads its Wings
8. Chanel, based on video materials presented in class

Articles

- Aaker, Joachimsthaler (2000), "The Brand Relationship Spectrum," *California Management Review*, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/000812560004200401>
- Acar, Puntoni (2016), "Customer Empowerment in the Digital Age," *Journal of Advertising Research*, <https://www.journalofadvertisingresearch.com/content/56/1/4>
- Hoeffler, Keller (2003), "The Marketing Advantages of Strong Brands", *Journal of Brand Management*, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540139>
- Kapferer (2012), "Abundant Rarity: The Key to Luxury Growth," *Business Horizons*, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0007681312000638>
- Keller, Lehmann (2003), "How Do Brands Create Value?," *Marketing Management*, 12(3), 26-26. [Available via PennText]
- Keller, Sternthal, Tybout (2002), "Three Questions you Need to Ask about Your Brand, *Harvard Business Review*, <https://hbr.org/2002/09/three-questions-you-need-to-ask-about-your-brand>
- Korst, Puntoni (2023), "5 Ways Marketing and Sales Leaders Can Embrace GenAI," *Harvard Business Review*, <https://hbr.org/2023/11/5-ways-marketing-and-sales-leaders-can-embrace-genai>
- Puntoni (2014), "Marketing. Here, There, Everywhere," *RSM Discovery*, <https://discovery.rsm.nl/marketing/article/127-blog-marketing-here-there-everywhere>
- Ritson (2016), "If You Think the Sales Funnel is Dead, You've Mistaken Tactics for Strategy," *Marketing* <https://www.marketingweek.com/2016/04/06/mark-ritson-if-you-think-the-sales-funnel-is-dead-youve-mistaken-tactics-for-strategy/>
- Ritson (2021), "Three Axioms and Three Questions that Summarise all of Brand Strategy," *Marketing Week*, <https://www.marketingweek.com/mark-ritson-brand-strategy-marketing> [Warning: Contains swearwords. I apologize for that, but this is probably the single most important reading in the course]
- Roach (2020), "The Wrong and the Short of It", <https://thetomroach.com/2020/11/15/the-wrong-and-the-short-of-it>
- Rust, Moorman, Bhalla (2010), "Rethinking Marketing," *Harvard Business Review*, <https://hbr.org/2010/01/rethinking-marketing>
- Urbany, Davis (2013), "Strategic Insights in three Circles," *Harvard Business Review*, <https://hbr.org/2007/11/strategic-insight-in-three-circles>
- Williams, Puntoni (2023), "How AI Affects Our Sense of Self," *Harvard Business Review*, <https://hbr.org/2023/09/how-ai-affects-our-sense-of-self>

Additional materials may be posted on Canvas throughout the course.

Course Requirements and Grading

Your overall course grade will reflect your fulfillment of the requirements based upon the following weights:

➤ Class Participation	15%
➤ Individual Assignments	45%
• Personal Gap Analysis	15%
• Kickstarter Project	20%
• Brand Resuscitation Project	10%
➤ Brand Audit Project	20%
➤ Brand Audit Presentation	20%

Important: all assignments are to be submitted on Canvas using the appropriate submission page before the end of the day indicated in the session outline above.

Generative AI

Generative AI tools are allowed in this course without restriction. However, keep in mind the following:

- Generative AI models are not always producing output that is accurate and/or appropriate. For example, Large Language Models can make up facts and fake citations. You will be responsible for any inaccurate, biased, offensive, or otherwise unethical content you submit.
- If you use generative AI, its contribution must be acknowledged in the assignment; you will be penalized for using an AI program without acknowledgement.
- The university's policy on plagiarism still applies to any uncited or improperly cited use of work by other human beings, or submission of work by other human beings as your own.

Class Participation

Critical to being part of our classroom community is being present in class, both physically and mentally. The course is developed to be an ongoing conversation, and like any meaningful conversation, it requires all parties to be present as much as possible.

Your in-person attendance in each class session is strongly encouraged and class participation will count for your final grade. There will be many opportunities for you to contribute to our discussions.

To allow the rest of the class to benefit from your engagement and thoughtful insights, speak up and become part of the conversation. Grading this aspect of class participation is necessarily subjective. Some of the criteria for evaluating class participation include:

1. Are you prepared? Do your comments reflect evidence of deep case analysis (vs. simply stating case facts)?
2. Are the points you make relevant to our discussion? Do they move our discussion forward (vs. hinder our progress)?
3. Are you an effective communicator? Are your thoughts presented in a concise and convincing fashion?

My main tips are to focus on quality, NOT quantity, and to come to class prepared. In particular, for case sessions based on readings, **you should know the cases inside out** when we discuss them.

Personal Gap Analysis

In this assignment you will apply core brand strategy concepts to help you understand your own strengths and weaknesses. Brand concepts can be very useful in assessing and managing one's "personal brand". To conduct an image-identity gap analysis for your personal brand, do the following:

1. Assess your identity (i.e., how you see yourself), by writing down:
 - a. What are 5 words that you strongly associate with yourself?
 - b. What are 3 (positive) things you are not? For example, what are three areas of incompetence?
2. Assess your personal image (i.e., how others see you), by asking at least 10 people—family, friends, classmates/colleagues:
 - a. What are the first 5 words that come to mind when they think of you?
 - b. What are 3 (positive) things you are not?
3. Visually capture your personal image by creating two separate word clouds, for example using a website like www.wordart.com. The first word cloud should include the characteristics that your respondents provide in 2a above. The second word cloud should include the (positive) things people said you are not (2b above).
4. Analyze your findings:
 - a. Are there discrepancies/gaps between your identity and image? What are they? What do you think has led to those discrepancies?
 - b. Would it (ever) be important to address those gaps? If yes, what steps can you take to close them? If not, why is it not important to address the gaps?
 - c. Given this image and identity information, and with respect to a certain group (e.g., Wharton students, all students or young professionals, your family, your gender, etc.), what are your points of parity? What are your points of differentiation? That is, with the insight you gained from assessing your identity and image, how should you position your personal brand?

Summarize the findings in a three-page document (single-spaced). Across these three pages you should display the word clouds, summarize the findings, and provide an analysis of the insights you can glean from the clouds and the comparison between them. Include a conclusion section.

Besides helping you understand brand concepts, I hope this exercise will prove a useful moment of reflection!

Kickstarter Project

In this assignment, you will select a currently ongoing project on Kickstarter (www.kickstarter.com) and develop a brand positioning analysis for this project using the 3Cs positioning framework.

This is not necessarily an analysis of the product's positioning as explicitly (or implicitly) stated on the project description. The chosen positioning for the product can be based on an independent analysis.

The task is straightforward: follow the process we used in class to articulate a brand positioning. Start with an analysis of customers. Make the core target segment explicit, focusing as much as possible on needs-based segmentation and discussing the segment's characteristics as it relates to the product category. Then discuss competition and company. For competition, consider the core

brand associations of preeminent competitors. In the case of a highly fragmented market, focus on the top-level differences between different types of players. The relative amount of space dedicated to each element of the framework rests on your own judgment (as the relative difficulty will vary case-by-case).

For some elements, you may struggle to find extensive information. For example, the materials on Kickstarter might include very little information about some crucial elements. Do your best to fill the gaps. For example, you can do desk research, reach out to the founders, interview some consumers, or simply make assumptions. If the assumptions are explicit and reasonable, that's fine.

After reviewing the 3Cs, and similar to the way we worked in class, you should include arguments to provide a solution to the positioning question. At the end of this analysis, articulate the positioning strategy in two ways: (1) as a positioning statement and (2) as a brand mantra. When describing the positioning strategy, make sure to highlight tradeoffs and potential problems (both strategic and operational).

In formatting the assignment, follow these guidelines:

- The assignment should be no longer than 3 single-spaced pages, excluding tables, exhibits, and bibliography.
- Make sure to include information that can allow a reader to find the project on Kickstarter (e.g., project name, company name, URL).
- The content should be organized as clearly as possible. Bullet points and/or tables are generally a good idea.
- Leave one-inch margins on all four sides.
- Use a font size no smaller than 12 characters per inch.
- Make sure to include your name on the first page.

Brand Resuscitation Project

It is a fact of life that plenty of brands exit the market every year. Usually that's because the company shuts down. But there may be other reasons. For example, the company may be acquired, and the brand eliminated, as part of a brand consolidation effort by the acquiring firm.

Sometimes, such "dead brands" are resuscitated, when someone identifies valuable intellectual property in a brand no longer on the market, and is able to acquire the rights. The brand could be valuable because of residual customer-based brand equity, like awareness or specific associations, or because of the history of the brand, which affords opportunity for enticing branding and storytelling.

Can you find a brand that is a good candidate for resuscitation? What brand is it? What's the story of this brand?

And why do you think it could be successfully resuscitated? Is it because it is likely to still have awareness or valuable associations in the market? Or is it because of the story of the founder, a particular product, or brand-relevant events? If so, for which target market? And for which benefits?

The deliverable for this assignment will be brief. To complete the assignment, use the worksheet that you find at the end of this document. Be concise and highlight the main arguments when addressing the questions above.

Brand Audit Group Project

Students will form teams (between 5 and 7 members) to work on this project. Please take the time to put together a team that will work well together in terms of schedules, skillsets, goals, etc. All groups must be formed, and potential brands identified by the date listed on the syllabus.

Your assignment is to select a real brand (new or well-established) and conduct an audit of that brand. Every team must study a different brand, so a pre-approval from me is necessary (see below). Feel free to pick a service (e.g., non-profit or for-profit) or product (e.g., consumer, technology, etc.) brand. You can choose a brand that you think is currently very strong, one that you think might be currently under-performing, or one that for whatever reason triggers your interest.

The goal of the brand audit is to assess the brand's sources of equity and suggest ways to improve and/or leverage that equity. To do so, each team will conduct an audit that includes a brand inventory (comprehensive summary of the existing marketing and branding program) and brand exploratory (the result of empirical research), followed by recommendations for brand strategy and strategy implementation.

Brand Inventory: A current, comprehensive profile of how all products and services are marketed, branded and sold under the brand name.

- Identify all brand elements (logos, symbols, characters, packaging, slogans, trademarks, etc.).
- Discuss and distill the brand's heritage, stories, and historical equity
- Identify the inherent attributes of the product/idea/service (pricing, communications, distribution policies, other relevant marketing activities).
- Profile direct and indirect competitive brands for points of parity and points of difference.
- Using all of this, gain an understanding of:
 - What customers' current perceptions might be based upon
 - Assess the consistency and continuity of marketing program
 - Assess perceptions of line and product extensions by customers and important collaborators
 - Identify brand strengths and weaknesses

Brand Exploratory: An investigation of customer brand knowledge, awareness, associations (strength, favorability, uniqueness), attitudes, preferences, relationships, community, etc. Research activity should be focused on understanding what relevant customers think and feel about the brand, in order to identify sources of brand equity, challenges, and opportunities for the future.

- Analysis of prior research studies that might be available (internal, external)
- Analysis of media coverage/interpretation of the brand and product category
- The team's own qualitative research
- The team's own quantitative research

For your qualitative research, conduct (at least) *either* three one-on-one interviews *or* one 6-8 person focus group. For your quantitative research, conduct a survey among a larger number (30+) of relevant customers. Your goal is to learn about the brand associations, brand relationships, sources of equity, etc., possessed by your focal brand.

Using all of this:

- Uncover current knowledge and feelings for the core brand and its critical competitors (existing or emerging).
- Develop a detailed and accurate profile of the brand's image, identity, etc.
- Determine depth and breadth of brand awareness, brand image, and necessary points of parity and points of differentiation with respect to critical competitors.

The final project will include an in-class presentation to the entire class and a final written report. Both the written and oral components of the project should summarize the key insights from the Brand Inventory and Brand Exploratory and utilize key course concepts and tools to structure your analyses and recommendations.

Based upon the insights from your team's Brand Inventory and Brand Exploratory, make recommendations to best position the brand for the future:

- Which (if any) new meanings should the brand develop?
- Which (if any) existing meanings should be strengthened or eliminated?
- What is the optimal positioning going forward? Identify and elaborate a marketing strategy/program to deliver that recommended positioning.

In-class presentations will be short, due to time constraints. Your written report is an opportunity to go beyond, in depth and breadth, what your team is able to cover during the in-class presentation.

Progress Reports: Each team will submit a progress report just before Spring Break. The progress report should sketch your preliminary understanding of your target brand in terms of salient brand meanings/associations, summarize the most important insights from your qualitative research, and sketch your preliminary plan for your quantitative research. This progress report should be no longer than 2 pages, single spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins all around. The purpose of this progress report is to keep you on track and to provide an opportunity for feedback and guidance to each team. Make sure to indicate names and group number in the Progress Report!

Participation Assessment: Each member of the group will be asked to assess the contributions of each group member to the overall brand audit project. I will collect these assessments upon completion of the brand audit project. This information will contribute to my final assessment of each member's final grade for the brand audit project.

Final Presentation: Each team will present its brand audit during one of two dedicated class sessions. (Presentation date, order and time restrictions will be provided in-class.) Treat this as if you were an outside consulting group presenting your recommendations for the brand's next steps to the brand's senior leaders. Realize that to convince your audience of your proposal, you will need to substantiate your recommendations with a clear understanding of the brand and empirical insights. Be sure to leverage key course concepts in your analysis and recommendations. And, perhaps most importantly, your presentation must be vivid and engaging. You may use PowerPoint, Google Docs, video, or any other compelling and engaging format—*be creative and have some fun!*

This grade component is peer-graded. **Final presentations will be evaluated by all students.** Thus, you will give a score to each group to reflect your assessment of performance. These are the criteria that you will consider when grading the presentations:

1. The extent to which the presentation demonstrates understanding of the target brand
2. The insightfulness of the qualitative and quantitative research insights
3. The quality of the team's recommendations to the brand
4. The overall creativity of the presentation.

Final Report: Your team's final report should convey your understanding of the brand's current status and offer guidance for its future. You will use the insights from your research to formulate a positioning strategy. The final report will use all of this information to identify the sources of brand equity (and missed opportunities), thereby providing the basis for your recommendations going forward.

Final Report Page limitations: 1-page executive summary; 12 additional pages of text (single spaced, 1-inch margins all around; 12-point font); up to 5 pages of appendices/exhibits.

Name: _____

Loved/Hated Brands Worksheet

Complete this sheet and upload it to Canvas. Be prepared to share your responses in class.

1. What is a brand that you love? Why?

Brand Name	Why do you love this brand?
1.	
2.	
3.	

2. What is one brand that you hate? Why?

Brand Name	Why do you hate this brand?

Name: _____

Brand Resuscitation Worksheet

Complete this sheet and upload it to Canvas. Can you find a brand that could be resuscitated? That is, a brand no longer in the market that could be brought back. (See information in the course syllabus.)

Brand Name & Product category	
Summarize the story of the brand.	

Why do you think this brand could be resuscitated? For which consumers? For which symbolic benefit/brand association?