Strategic Brand Development Course

USCMarshall
School of Business

Professor
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DETAILS

This course was developed in response to Marshall student requests for a crash course in strategic brand development. Course practices are an extraction of methods Sasha Strauss and Innovation Protocol use to research, define and build client brands.

This is not a course in "Brand Management". Brand Management ensures that once a brand is built, it is effectively distributed, promoted and monetized. Brand Strategy on the other hand, is the business process that defines why a business should matter to its target audiences. Once the brand has been defined and packaged, it can be more effectively managed and monetized.

BACKGROUND

Sasha Strauss has worked for the world's leading communications consulting firms, including TBWA\Chiat\Day, Rogers & Cowan and Siegel+Gale. During that time, Strauss was also commissioned to travel globally to teach Fortune 1000 executives the practices of strategic brand development via a series of original, practical-application workshops.

After a decade of category leadership, Strauss was asked to formally lead graduate studies courses at USC Annenberg, and now teaches one class a year at both the USC Marshall School of Business and the UCLA Anderson School of Management.

CLASS TOPIC: STRATEGIC BRAND MANAGEMENT

What the class **is** about:	
Strategic Brand Development:	The research, strategic planning and construction of a brand that either has yet to exist, or needs to be refreshed/rebuilt → Authoring and positioning a brand's original voice/tone/character, organizing, packaging and naming product portfolios via brand architecture, defining visual strategies for audience recall, etc.

What the class will **not** be about:	
Brand Management:	The management of a brand that has already been built → Pricing, distribution, shelf placement, strategic partnerships, promotions, etc.
Brand Marketing:	The active communication of a brand that has already been built → Selecting marketing channels, assessing impression opportunities, development of a brochure, website, sales presentation, etc.

COURSE OUTLINE

Brand Elements: comprehensive immersion into strategic brand development.

Brand Research: research methodology designed to study a brand's business.

Brand Platform: a brand messaging system, from positioning to tagline.

Brand Architecture: defining and managing a brand's portfolio of offerings.

Brand Naming: verbal and written identifications of a brand.

Brand Visual Expression: visual assets that communicate a brand.

Brand Extension: identification and analysis of market opportunities to create new brand offerings.

Case Studies: Brand strategies that Sasha Strauss and his company have built, told stage by stage.

COURSE READINGS

Book (optional):

Aaker, David A., (1996). Building Strong Brands: Simon & Schuster, Inc.: New York, NY.

Articles:

1. Tan, M. (2011) *The hard science of branding.* The Business Times Singapore.
2. Mikkelsen, P. *Brand Personality, Communicating Character and Authenticity in a Digital World.* The Yellow Paper Series.
3. Ross, P. *Brand Value in the Airline Industry.* The Yellow Paper Series.
4. MacMilan, D. (2007) *What's in a Name?* Bloomberg Business Week
5. (2007) *Google Sued in China over name.* Reuters.com.
6. Igor. (2010) *Building the Perfect Beast.* The Igor Naming Project.
7. Manjoo, F. (2009) *To Sell or Not to Sell?* Fast Company.
8. Larin, M. (2008) *Rough Measurements.* BrandWeek.
9. Hafner, K. (2007) *Inside Apple Stores, A Certain Aura Enchants the Faithful.* The New York Times.
10. Heath, D. & Heath C. (2009) *The Power of Razzle Dazzle.* Fast Company.
11. Whisman, R. *Internal Branding: A University's Most Valuable Intangible Asset.* BrandED Consults Group.
12. Viton, R.L. & Maddock G.M. (2008) *Why the Pressure to Innovate Won't Stop.* Business Week.
13. Newman, E. (2008) *Lysol Looks to Clean Up In Hand Sanitizer Space.* BrandWeek.
14. Facenda, V. (2008) *The Commander.* Brand Week.
15. Shayon, S.(2011) *Cause Marketing Does Affect Brand Purchase.* Brand Channel.
16. Shayon, S. (2011) *USA Network Characters Welcome, Passion Required. Brand Channel.*
17. *Herman, D. The Surprising Secret of Successful Differentiation.*
18. *Moore, F. (2011)* Abercrombie asks 'The Situation' to shop elsewhere. The Wall Street Journal.
19. Shayon, S. (2011) *TOMS Shoes, Stepping in a New Direction.* Brand Channel.
20. Sokolowsky, J. (2011) *High West, The New Spirit of Utah.* Brand Channel
21. Young, P.M. (2011) *Nation Branding led by Government?* The Korean Herald.
22. Jonshon, J. (2010) *Wonk if you love American U.* The Washington Post.
23. Elliott, S. (2009) *AOL Revamping Its Logo, Hoping to Revive the Brand. The New York Times.*
24. Arnell Group (2008) *Breathtaking Design Strategy.* Arnell Group.
25. (2011) *Does a Brand Still Require a Website?* Haymarket Publishing Services Ltd.
26. (2008) *Merging on the ridiculous.* Haymarket Publishing Services Ltd.
27. (2011) *Ekiti Joins Rebranding Brandwagon – Unveils New Media Campaign.* All Africa, Inc.
28. Zucker, A.P. (2009) *Pepsi Logo Design Brief: Branding Lunacy to the max.* Fast Company
29. Mitchell, A. (2011) *Reinventing Marketing – Hard talk is the key to P&G's Success. Haymarket Publishing Services.*
30. Elliott, S. (2009) *Tropicana Discovers Some Buyers are Passionate About Packaging.* The New York Times.

GRADING

Reading Quizzes: | 20% of grade
1. Article comprehension and strategic insight
2. Book theory application

To ensure that students comprehend the assigned readings, there will be three in class quizzes, throughout the semester. Each quiz will cover information from the readings due the same day as the quiz, but may contain information covered in previous lectures and readings.

Team Project: | 40% of grade
1. Brand Platform development (positioning, brand vision, brand character definition, etc. for assigned client)

To reflect your mastery of the core ingredients of brand strategy, students will be assigned to groups that will research, strategize and deliver an in-class presentation on an assigned brand. Specific details will be provided once class registration is finalized after week two.

The final weeks of class will serve as presentation days which are **mandatory** for all students to attend. If you miss these classes, points will be deducted from your grade. Extremely rare (and administration-approved in writing) exceptions will be made on a case by case basis, please notify the TA, Eric Huang, as soon as you know you will miss class.

Individual Writing Assignment: | 30% of grade
1. Response essay on a real-world brand challenge where course practical-application content must be applied to effectively "solve" the brand challenge.

Starting on the 2nd week of class, Professor Strauss will assign 5-10 students with a writing assignment based of reading material and lecture content. Those selected students will turn in their assignments via the class Facebook page. All students are encouraged to comment on writing submissions with thoughtful insight for participation points.

Participation:
1. Class attendance / Discourse | 10% of grade
2. Online Discourse (Facebook)

SASHA STRAUSS SPEAKING BIO

Clients, agencies, media and academic institutions call upon Sasha Strauss' award-winning forums worldwide; from Romania to China, Switzerland to Mexico. Media channels like National Public Radio (NPR), Forbes and The Wall Street Journal regularly seek his expertise on branding everything from presidential candidates to innovative start-ups and Fortune 500s. He has keynoted with speakers such as Magic Johnson, Tony Hsieh, Frank Gehry, Biz Stone and Simon Sinek.

With 18 years in strategic brand development, Mr. Strauss has built brands at the world's leading advertising, PR, marketing and branding agencies.

In 2006, Mr. Strauss founded Innovation Protocol, a brand strategy consulting firm that exclusively serves innovators. As the Managing Director, Mr. Strauss leads a practiced team of strategy consultants that serve clients such as Warner Bros, Johnson & Johnson, Korn/Ferry International, ADP, Evite and PayPal. Innovation Protocol also allocates 10% of the company's brand development services to non-profits, with millions of dollars in pro-bono work being delivered since the firm's founding.

When not supporting Innovation Protocol's international clientele, Mr. Strauss teaches graduate brand strategy at USC's Marshall School of Business and the UCLA Anderson School of Management. At Anderson, Mr. Strauss is an Executive in Residence, coaching EMBAs in corporate and professional brand development. Mr. Strauss also guest lectures at preeminent graduate programs such as MIT Sloan and The Johnson School at Cornell.

Mr. Strauss holds a bachelors degree from UC Irvine, a masters in strategic corporate communication management from USC and an executive business management degree from UCLA's Anderson Graduate School of Management.

Mr. Strauss is a certified Toastmaster, an Entrepreneurs Organization leader, a Big Brother (mentor), an Eagle Scout and a swooning husband.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to your TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.   For more information visit www.usc.edu/disability .

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. S*Campus*, the Student Guidebook, (www.usc.edu/scampus or http://scampus.usc.edu) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/ . Failure to adhere to the academic conduct standards set forth by these guidelines and our programs will not be tolerated by the USC Marshall community and can lead to dismissal.

COURSE CALENDAR
Subject to change depending on speaker availability and class comprehension of lecture topics.

Week 1 (August 28th 2012)
Course Introduction
Lecture
Individual Assignment explained
Readings Due:
- None

Week 2 (September 4th 2012)
Lecture
Group Project Assigned
Inside the Brander's Studio
5 Individual assignments due
Readings due:
- Article 1, 2, 3
- Chapter 1 from Aaker's book

Week 3 (September 11th 2012)
Lecture
Quiz
5 Individual assignments due
Readings due:
- Chapter 2 from Aaker's book
- Article 4, 5
- Review Article 6

Week 4 (September 18th 2012)
Lecture
Guest Lecture
5 Individual assignments due
Readings due:
- Chapter 3 from Aaker's book
- Article 7, 8, 9

Week 5 (September 25th 2012)
Lecture
Guest Lecture
Inside the Brander's Studio
5 individual assignments due
Readings due:
- Article 10, 11, 12

Week 6 (October 2nd 2012)
Lecture
Case Study
5 individual assignments due
Readings due:
- Article 13, 14, 15
- Chapter 4 from Aaker's book

Week 7 (October 9th 2012)
Lecture
Guest Lecture
5 individual assignments due
Quiz
Readings due:
- Article 16, 17, 18

Week 8 (October 16th 2012)
Lecture
Guest Lecture
5 individual assignments due
Readings due:
- Chapter 5 from Aaker's book
- Article 19, 20, 21

Week 9 (October 23th 2012)
Professor will meet individually with each team
5 Individual assignments due
Readings due:
- Chapter 6 from Aaker's book
- Article 22, 23, 24

Week 10 (October 30th 2012)
Lecture
Brander's Studio
5 Individual assignments due
Readings due:
- Chapter 7 from Aaker's book
- Article 25, 26, 27

Week 11 (November 6th 2012)
Lecture
Guest Lecture
Quiz
5 Individual assignments due
Readings due:
- Chapter 8 from Aaker's book
- Article 28, 29, 30

Week 12 (November 13th 2012)
Presentations
5 Individual assignments due
Readings due:
- Chapter 9 from Aaker's book

Week 13 (November 20th 2012)
Presentations

5 Individual assignments due
Readings due:
- Chapter 10 from Aaker's book

Week 14 (November 27th 2012)
Presentations
5 Individual assignments due