

**CMGT 544:
Creating Organizational Identity/Communicating Branding
Fall 2019**

Syllabus

"In this ever-changing society, the most powerful and enduring brands are built from the heart. They are real and sustainable. Their foundations are stronger because they are built with the strength of the human spirit, not an ad campaign. The companies that are lasting are those that are authentic."

- Howard Schultz, Former CEO, Starbucks

Adjunct Professor: Jeffrey Hirsch

Email: hirschj@usc.edu

Phone: 818-400-7922

Office Hours: Tuesday, 3:30PM-6:30, By appointment – Location TBD

Course Hours: 6:30pm-9:20pm Tuesday – Room ANN 210

Course Description and Aims:

Why should I buy your product?

A seemingly simple, innocent question that would seem to deserve a straightforward answer such as "it tastes better" or "it gets my laundry cleaner" or "it's easier to use."

However, when it comes to marketing, and the branding discipline in particular, the facts seldom matter. There is far more wrapped up in the consumer decision to buy one brand over another than the consideration of tangible features and benefits.

Access to technology has leveled the playing field to the point where creating a "great" product is simply the cost of entry. In fact, a knock-off PC provides essentially the same functionality as a Mac and an Android-based smartphone will accomplish nearly anything that can be done on an iPhone. The Walgreens house brand of acetomenaphin contains precisely the same ingredients as Tylenol. And you will likely notice absolutely no difference in your laundry if you use the house brand from Costco rather than Tide.

The art of branding, making a product emotionally resonant and distinct, is what differentiates one brand from the next. From packaged goods to enterprise software, customers seldom, if ever, make decisions based on facts. Rather, consumers actively seek meaningful connections to brands they perceive to align with their values and self-image.

The most successful brands understand this intuitively. Starbucks makes coffee but what they really make is community. Disney makes movies and theme parks but what they really sell is magic. Nike makes athletic shoes but what they really sell is aspiration.

This course will help students answer the "why should I buy your product" question from the marketer's perspective, providing the skills to develop products, services and

communications that will strike a responsive chord in an increasingly crowded, cluttered and hyper-competitive marketplace.

Students will learn vocabulary, concepts and frameworks to evaluate competitive brands, position existing brands to compete more effectively, and how to develop new brands to capitalize on unfulfilled consumer needs. You will study classical marketing theory along with the skills to “ladder up” from tangible product features to the emotional resonance, based on “bigger,” more aspirational ideals, needed to build solid relationships with consumers.

You will also become more comfortable with both professional and academic perspectives, and become less intimidated by denser academic material. You will read much, learning to summarize and synthesize the material, and re-present them in writing – clearly, comprehensively, yet succinctly.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Assess and analyze the state of a brand, in terms of its origin, its philosophy and stance, its position in the competitive space;
- Create a campaign to improve outcomes for the brand;
- Search through academic, professional and popular databases to locate relevant materials;
- Evaluate materials from popular, professional, and academic sources related to branding, to judge the different value of each source, and use each for specific purposes;
- Apply several key branding concepts to real branding cases.

Grading Scheme

A	95.0% or higher
A-	90.0%-94.9%
B+	87.0%-89.9%
B	83.0%-86.9%
B-	80.0%-82.9%
C+	77.0%-79.9%
C	73.0%-76.9%
C-	70.0%-72.9% (C- or lower is a failing grade)
D	60.0%-69.9%
F	59.9% or lower

Summary of Assignments

(Ongoing) “This Week in Branding”

Each week, students must read at least one article about marketing or branding, and be prepared to lead a class discussion on the topic. Sources may include major newspapers (New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Wall Street Journal, e.g.), business magazines/websites (Forbes, Fortune, Bloomberg News, e.g.), trade publications (Adweek, Ad Age, The Drum, e.g.) or other publications.

Essay/Blog

In order to assess your incoming thinking and writing skills, you will write a 500 to 750-word essay on any topic of your choice that concerns branding.

You can write about a new product, the dilemma facing existing, aging products, about an advertising campaign, personal branding (you or someone else) or anything else you like, as long as branding is the major theme. You have the choice to cite outside sources, but this is not required for this assignment.

Brief Branding Presentation

The brief branding presentation is to be done by the student individually. Two students will present each week, during the beginning of class. Each oral presentation is to last no more than 10 minutes. The time limit will be strictly imposed. There will be an additional 10 minutes allotted for questions and discussion.

The presentation’s purpose is to prompt you to become aware of developments in the branding space. Interesting developments can be about brands, or about a branding-related idea, problem or argument.

The instructor will coordinate and assign a specific week for you.

Major Brand Project (For detailed descriptions, see “Project Specifications”)

Part 1	• Choose partners and brands, search for materials
Part 2a	• Description of Brand History and Relevant Branding Concepts
Part 2b	• Rewrite
Part 3	• Description of Brand’s Current State and Environment; Application of Branding; Concepts to Diagnose Weaknesses and Possibilities
Part 4	• Presentations

Components of the Grade

Assignment	Due	Weight
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essay/Blog 	September 2	5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual Brand Presentation 	As Scheduled	10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quizzes on Reading (3) 	TBD	10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Part 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choice of brand Compilation of materials (articles, cases, books) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See project specifications, in Blackboard 	September 10	5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project: Part 2a <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations of brand history; descriptions of relevant branding concepts that explain brand's success and/or failure 	October 1	10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Part 2b Re-write of Part 2a 		10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project: Part 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of brand's current state and environment; application of relevant branding concepts to diagnose weaknesses and explore possibilities 	October 22	15%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project: Part 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation 	November 27	25%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General discussion/readings Questions & responses to classmates individual branding presentations and final team presentations 		10%
Total:		100.00%

All assignments must be emailed to the professor no later than 11:59pm on designated date.

Late Policy:

Grades will be marked down one full grade, i.e. A to B, if assignments are not

submitted by the deadline. Even one minute past the deadline is considered late.

Assignments will not be accepted if more than one day (24 hours) late and will receive failing grades (F).

More on Class Participation

Each student must contribute to the learning in this class. In most class sessions, you must speak, ask questions, argue respectfully. To do so, you must prepare well: read the assigned materials before class; read, view or listen to other relevant and interesting content; think. Staying silent is poor behavior. Silence is especially unacceptable when we have guest speakers. It sets a poor impression of being disengaged. Judgment of participation is based on the instructors' aggregate impressions gained throughout the semester. If you participate frequently and enthusiastically, you will earn the full score. You will not earn the full score by merely attending classes. Simply attending classes and only occasionally participating will result in a mediocre score (e.g., half of the possible score). If you are absent, disengaged or disrespectful, you will earn zero.

The Importance of Great Writing

A graduate program in a globally renown graduate program demands great writing, as does the greater world at large beyond school. Marketers must be adept communicators. Clear, focused expression, both in oral presentations and in writing is critical. Branding and the development of Creative Briefs, in particular, require the very precise selection of appropriate language and nuance.

While writing assignments are limited in this class, or perhaps because they are limited, this course places a higher than usual degree of emphasis on the quality of those assignments.

Error free, grammatically correct papers are the cost of entry. All assignments must be spell-checked and grammar-checked. More important are ideas that are presented clearly and logically. There must be no confusion regarding facts presented or your perspective on those facts. Your individual voice must come through as well.

Your first written assignment, the essay/blog, will be carefully edited by the instructor. Individual meetings will then be set up for each student to review instructor comments and direction in detail, and to discuss a remedial writing action plan, if needed.

All written work due after the Essay/Blog will be graded strictly.

Attendance and Punctuality

Graduate school is in many ways preparation or refinement for successful professional lives. Professional success depends on a range of skills and behaviors; one foundational behavior is showing up, on time and alert.

So, come to class. Come to class on time. When you are here, be here.

Not being here (i.e., being absent or being late) will accumulate penalties. No unexcused absences are permitted. Students must notify the professor in advance of an absence, even if it is just before class starts. Most reasonable excuses (illness, family issues, emergencies, etc.) will be accepted.

Two excused absences will be permitted, though the professor will be less forgiving on the second absence.

Any unexcused absence will lower your final grade by one full grade. (For example, and “A” turns into a “B” and a “B” turns into a “C.”)

Two unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.

Attention and Mobile Screens in Class

Students must be 100% focused on lectures, discussions or other in-class activities when in class.

Notes should be taken by hand, written in a notebook.

Laptops, phones, tablets or other devices may not be used in class without explicit direction from the professor. Texting, checking emails, visiting websites, using apps, etc. are strictly forbidden in the classroom.

Violation of this policy may result in being asked to leave the classroom and will result in penalties on the final grade.

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Note: Any draft submitted to the instructors is a formal document, subject to the University’s policies regarding plagiarism. Plagiarism is not excused for drafts.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://capsnet.usc.edu/departments/departments-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>.

This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more.

Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Academic Integrity

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion of the Communication major or minor.

The School and the University is committed to the general principles of academic honesty that include and incorporate 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. By taking this course, students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. All submitted work for this course may be subject to an originality review as performed by TurnItIn Technologies (<http://www.turnitin.com>) to find textual similarities with other Internet content or previously submitted student work. Students of this course retain the copyright of their own original work, and TurnItIn is not permitted to use student-

submitted work for any other purpose than (a) performing an originality review of the work, and (b) including that work in the database against which it checks other student-submitted work.

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure this letter is delivered to the professor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday-Friday, 8:30 am -5:00 pm. The office is in the Student Union 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776

Readings and Viewing Materials

The following books are required:

Thompson, D. (2017). *Hit Makers: How to Succeed in an Age of Distraction*, New York NY: Penguin Press.

Moon, Y. (2010). *Different: Escaping the competitive herd*. New York, NY: Crown Business.

<http://www.amazon.com/Different-Escaping-Competitive-Youngme-Moon/dp/030746086X/>

Stengel, J. (2011). *Grow: How ideals power growth and profit at the world's greatest companies*. New York, NY: Crown Business.

<http://www.amazon.com/Grow-Ideals-Growth-Greatest-Companies/dp/0307720357/>

Barnes, B. (2011) *Everything I Learned About Business I Learned From The Grateful Dead*. New York, NY: Hatchett Book Group

<https://www.amazon.com/Everything-About-Business-Learned-Grateful-ebook/dp/B004QZ9P6A> - nav-subnav

Other readings, including articles from academic journals, will be specified in the week by week agenda below (most are now TBD but will be added). Many will be provided on Blackboard, the course management system.

For your major course project, you should be prepared to spend some funds (about \$50) to acquire additional materials.

Students are required to read all current (starting as of August 21) Jeff Hirsch Blogs & Podcast.

You can subscribe to the Right Brain Studio mailing list here:

<https://www.therightbrainstudio.com/category/blog/>

However, notifications are NOT sent out for every blog. You'll have to check the website weekly.

The Right Braincast can be found on iTunes, Spotify, Google Play, IHeartRadio and other platforms. Subscribe on one of those.

Other Reading:

Successful marketers must be in sync with the popular culture and the world around them. Most possess an insatiable curiosity, fueled, in part, by a wide range of reading.

Readings in addition to the required books will be assigned before each class. Students are also strongly encouraged to read on a daily basis, including:

- Newspapers on a daily basis, particularly the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal.
- Non-business related magazines and blogs: The New Yorker, The Atlantic, Salon, Slate, Vanity Fair, Rolling Stone.
- Business related magazines and blogs: Ad Age, Adweek, Brandweek, Forbes, Harvard Business Review, LinkedIn, (The everyday feed and "Pulse" sections offer a wide range of blogs by "Influencers" and other marketing professionals).
- Non-business books: Novels, history, bios and other non-fiction
- Most importantly, whatever interests you!

Course Schedule & Assignments

WEEK	TOPICS/ACTIVITIES	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS (To be read/prepared before class that week.)
Week 1 August 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Week in Marketing • Course Introduction • Assignments & expectations of performance • Aspirational Marketing/Laddering up to higher values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course syllabus • Course project specifications • Most recent 3 blogs on The Right Brain Studio website
Week 2 September 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Week in Marketing • Lecture: Brand Myth, Brand Ideals & Brand Principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow, pp. 1-54 • Grateful Dead, pp. 1-84 • Jeff Hirsch Essay: Positioning is Dead! Redefining USP as "Unique Selling Personality" • Essay due no later than 11:59PM on Monday, September 2
Week 3 September 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Week in Marketing • Student Branding Presentation • Working with Clients: Lessons Learned <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional Intelligence • "The Mental Health" framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow, pp. 55-114 • Grateful Dead, pp. 87-159 • Video: "Long Strange Trip," Episode 5, "Dead Heads," on Amazon Video (Contact instructor if you do not have access Amazon Prime to arrange viewing.) • Jeff Hirsch Essay: Kate Spade, Anthony Bourdain & Imposter Syndrome

WEEK	TOPICS/ACTIVITIES	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS (to be read/prepared before class that week)
Week 4 September 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Week in Marketing • Student Branding Presentation • Creativity, Ideation & Concept Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class exercises • Guest Speaker: Leah Smith, CMO, Veggie Grill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow, pp. 115-199 • Grateful Dead, pp. 163-204 • Project Part 1 due no later than 11:59PM on Monday, September 16
Week 5 September 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Week in Marketing • Student Branding Presentation • The Art of the Creative Brief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P&G format and its evolution • Brand Awareness/Self Awareness • How to work with creative people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow, pp. 200-296 • • Readings TBD
Week 6 October 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Branding Presentations • Lecture TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different, pp. 1-46 • Hit Makers, pp. 1-95 • Academic Journal Articles/Other Reading TBD • Project Part 2a due no later than 11:59PM on Monday, September 30

WEEK	TOPICS/ACTIVITIES	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS (to be read/prepared before class that week)
Week 7 October 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Week in Marketing Student Branding Presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different, pp. 47-103 Hit Makers, pp. 96-162
Week 8 October 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Week in Marketing Student Branding Presentation Lecture/Activity TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different, pp. 107-178 Hit Makers, pp. 163-230 <p>Project Part 2a due no later than 11:59PM on Monday, September 30</p>
Week 9 October 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Week in Marketing Student Branding Presentation Lecture/Activity TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different, pp. 179-232 Hit Makers, pp. 231-307
Week 10 October 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Week in Marketing Student Branding Presentation Guest Speaker: Lynda Resnick, Vice Chairman, The Wonderful Company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readings TBD
Week 11 November 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Week in Marketing Student Branding Presentation Project Part 3 Presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readings TBD <p>Project Part 3 due no later than 11:59PM on Monday, November 4</p>

WEEK	TOPICS/ACTIVITIES	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS (to be read/prepared before class that week)
Week 12 November 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Week in Marketing Student Branding Presentation Branding and The Advertising Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief History Structure/Roles/Process Business Model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readings TBD
Week 13 November 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Week in Marketing Student Branding Presentation Team Meetings with Professor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readings TBD
Week 14 November 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations 	Project 4 Due PowerPoints for <u>all</u> teams due no later than 11:59PM on Monday, November 25
Week 15 December 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations 	
Week 16 December 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study Week, No Class 	
December 11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project 4 Written Assignment Due