

Arts, Technology and the Business of Innovation

IDSN 529 Marketing Strategy for Startups

Units: 3.0

Summer 2023—Thursdays—5:30pm-8:40pm PT

Location: Online

Instructor: Jay Clewis

Office: Virtual

Office Hours: By Appointment Contact: jclewis@usc.edu

IT Help:

https://uscedu.sharepoint.com/sites/IYAStudent/SitePages/IT-R

esources.aspx

Hours of Service: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. **Contact Info:** <u>iyahelp@usc.edu</u>

2U Digital Campus Online Technical Support

Contact Info: 1-855-487-3504, techsupport@digitalcampus.2U.com

USC Technology Support Links

Zoom information for students
Software available to USC Campus

Course Description

How do you attract your first 100, 500, or 1,000 customers? This course focuses on a subset of marketing strategies and tactics that are ideal for early-stage startups seeking to build communities of early adopters and beta testers for their products, services, and systems. We will take a strategic approach to developing an omnichannel content strategy that aims to build lasting customer relationships across all possible channels and touchpoints including digital and real-world environments. There will be an emphasis on audience acquisition tactics that align stakeholders in understanding who our desired audience is, how to find them, and engage them with quality content, incentives, and offers. Additionally, this course will explore customer retention, content delivery, performance, and measurement to optimize desired outcomes.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

Students in this course will learn how to design, build, and execute a strategic content marketing plan. Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the foundational components of a marketing plan for an identified audience
- Build a strategic content marketing plan aimed at building an audience for an early-stage product, service, and/or company
- Analyze and make recommendations for a communication business's content development strategy, business logic, and audience measurement systems
- Apply knowledge of search algorithms and search engine optimization (SEO) to analyze information quality and derive content quality score measures
- Make use of content development technologies and best practices to research and write actionable recommendations to optimize content for internet search and distribution

- Utilize human-centered design principles in content development and user research methods and practices
- Determine the ethical challenges of data capture and audience tracking through the design of content management and data storage that incorporate privacy standards

Prerequisite(s):

IDSN 510 Integrative Practices Residential; IDSN 540 Processes and Perspectives; IDSN 545 Integrative Project; IDSN 560 Narrative and Storytelling

Course Notes

This course will be conducted online, using a combination of the 2U Digital Campus (Canvas), group messaging, submission of deliverables, and grading. Google Drive will be used as a repository for all coursework, deliverables, and shared activity documents. Zoom will be used to conduct all live synchronous sessions. Students are responsible for all additional assigned material, video lectures, interviews, and reading materials offered by the instructor throughout the course.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Students must provide their own laptop. The laptop specifications take into consideration that students will be creating, streaming, and downloading audio and video; communicating using video conferencing applications; and creating and storing large multimedia files.

USC Technology Rental Program

The university realizes that attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students possess. If you need resources to successfully participate in your classes, such as a laptop or internet hotspot, you may be eligible for the university's equipment rental program. Submit an application to <u>USC Technology Rental Program</u>.

HOW TO PURCHASE SOFTWARE AT THE DISCOUNTED ACADEMY RATE

For classes that require them, the following software are available for purchase online through the USC Iovine and Young software catalog at the Academy discounted rate:

Software	IYA Short-Term License at USC Bookstore
Adobe Creative Cloud	\$70 2022–2023 annual license
Apple Logic Pro	\$35 semester licenses
Solidworks	\$35 semester license
Apple Final Cut Pro	\$35 semester license

To purchase:

- Visit: https://commerce.cashnet.com/IOVINE
- Select the software license(s) you would like to purchase by clicking "View Details" or the software title, and make your purchase
- You will receive an order confirmation receipt at the email address you provided
- You will be notified by email when the software license has been activated

If you have any questions about this process, please do not hesitate to contact Academy IT Support at iyahelp@usc.edu.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Required content and readings are outlined in the Course Schedule. Additional readings may be assigned by faculty during the semester. In addition, the following books are recommended and will referenced throughout the course:

- Start With Why, (Simon Sinek), 2009.
- <u>The Psychology of a Website: Mastering Cognitive Biases, Conversion Triggers, and Modern SEO to Achieve Massive Results</u>, (Matthew Capela), 2021.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Week	Topic	Assignments		
Module 1: Marketing Strategy and Planning				
1	 Unit 1: Marketing Strategy for Startups Course Introduction and Overview How is Startup Marketing Strategy Different? Content Strategy Basics Inbound Marketing vs. Content Marketing Diversity in Marketing Marketing Trends and Examples 	READ: What is Content Marketing (Mailchimp) Top Trends Shaping Media Strategy in 2022 (Marketing Drive)		
2	 Unit 2: Know Thyself, Know Thy Enemy Defining Brand, Vision, Mission, and Message The Importance of Brand and Content Pillars Market Research and Competitive Analysis Seeking Differentiation (Unique Value Proposition) Audience Definition, Targeting, and Personalization 	READ: 11 Steps to Defining Your Brand Identity (Indeed) The Beginner's Guide to Brand Pillars (HubSpot) COMPLETE: Assignment 1.1		
3	 Unit 3: Content Development and Management The PESO Content Model Content Atomization Websites, Blogs, and Owning Your Narrative The Magical Science of Storytelling The Power of Storytelling for Brands 	READ/WATCH: Close the Deal with the ABCDs for Action (Think with Google) The Magical Science of Storytelling (YouTube) COMPLETE: Assignment 1.2		
4	Unit 4: Setting the Stage: Semester Project Pitch • Initial Semester Project Presentations and Q&A Unit 5: If You Fail to Plan, You Plan to Fail	READ: OKRs vs. SMART Goals (Perdoo) How to Write Effective OKRs 2023 (ClickUp)		

	 How to Build a Marketing Strategy and Plan OKRs: Creating Clear Objectives and Desired Results Conscious Marketing: Path to a More Loyal Audience Data Ethics: Privacy, Transparency, and Trust 	COMPLETE: Assignment 1.3	
Modu	ıle 2: Audience Acquisition		
5	 Unit 6: Search Engine Optimization, Part I How Search Works On-Page & Off-Page SEO Techniques Keyword Research Measuring SEO Efforts SEM: The Paid Side of Search 	READ: What is Off-Page SEO? (Semrush) 6 SEO Challenges Brands Anticipate in 2023 (HubSpot) How to Do a Website Audit to Improve SEO and Conversions (HubSpot)	
6	Unit 7: Email Marketing Magic • Email Marketing Strategy and Automation • Email Design Best Practices • Landing Page Optimization and Testing • Semester Project Meetings and Consultations	COMPLETE: Assignment 1.4 READ: The Email Design Guide (Mailchimp) COMPLETE: Assignment 2.1	
7	 Unit 8: Social Media and Influencer Marketing Social Media Marketing Overview Organic vs. Paid Social Community Building Importance of Influencers 	READ: Brands are Obsessed with Building Community (Vox) COMPLETE: Assignment 2.2	
8	 Unit 9: PR and Promotions Press Releases and Media Relationships Conferences, Webinars, and IRL Events Contests and Giveaways Semester Project Meetings and Consultations Unit 10: Hacking Growth Through Marketing Guerilla Marketing Tactics Buzz, Viral, and Referral Marketing 	READ: How to Build a Startup Press Kit (Medium) 6 Steps to Write a Killer Press Release (Copyblogger) COMPLETE: Assignment 2.3	
Module 3: Performance and Measurement			
9	 Unit 11: Content Mapping, and Measurement Value and Importance of Content Calendars Measuring Content Performance 	READ: Complete Guide to Content Mapping (Semrush)	

	 Understanding Key Performance Indicators Semester Project Meetings and Consultations 	COMPLETE: Assignment 2.4 COMPLETE: Assignment 2.5
	Unit 12: Campaign Performance and Testing	READ: Social Listening: Your
	Social Media Listening and Monitoring	Launchpad to Success on Social
10	A/B and Multivariate Testing	Media (Sprout Social)
	How to Run a Smoke Test	
	Conversion Optimization	COMPLETE: Assignment 3.1
11	Unit 13: Building Your Dream Marketing Team	
	Setting Team Norms, Expectations, and Accountability	
	Key Roles and Responsibilities	
		COMPLETE: Assignment 3.2
	Unit 14: The Final Countdown	
	• Dry Run of Final Presentations in Breakout Rooms	
	• Instructor Feedback Ahead of Final Presentations	
12	Unit 15: The Big Show: Final Presentation • Final Presentations: Marketing Strategy Plans	COMPLETE: Assignment 3.3

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Below are brief overviews of each assignment and deliverable in the course. Unless specified otherwise, all assignments will be submitted within the 2U Digital Campus. If you experience technical difficulties submitting assignments, email the course instructor directly and utilize 2U student support for assistance. Additional assignment details will be provided and discussed during the live session meetings.

1.1 - Marketing Trends (individual)

Identify two strong examples of brands using one of the current marketing trends discussed in Unit 1. In a few short paragraphs, explain what tactic they're deploying, how you know, and your assessment on the execution. The deliverable should be a PDF (of a Google document or slide deck) and include images of examples and/or citations.

1.2 – Brand Stories (individual)

Identify two examples of companies using powerful storytelling to share their brand values, mission, and message. In your assessment, explain what content type(s) are they using, how is it being distributed, and the impact they are striving for. The deliverable should be a PDF (of a Google document or slide deck) and include images of examples and/or citations.

1.3 - Semester Project Pitch (team)

The semester project is a team project where you will select a company to create a full startup marketing strategy over the course of the semester. For this initial pitch, you will conduct research and identify: 1) the company (an existing business or IYA student project/company), 2) their stated or perceived brand vision, mission, and content pillars, 3) target audience, 4) core products and services, and 5) competition and current market positioning. The deliverable should be a PDF (slide deck) and include any relevant citations. Plan to present this pitch in the live session.

1.4 - OKRs: Objectives and Key Results (team)

Semester project teams will collaborate on setting clear objectives for the project and articulate the key desired results to track outcomes of the marketing strategy. The deliverable should focus on four marketing-related OKRs based on the semester project, include specific timelines, and result in a PDF (of a Google document or slide deck) to share in class.

2.1 - SEO Audit and Recommendations (team)

Semester project teams will conduct an SEO audit of their brand's website and/or its main competition to create benchmarks for keyword research, competition, on-page technical SEO recommendations, as well as content recommendations to improve SEO ranking. The deliverable, a high-level plan for improving search engine optimization, should be a PDF (of a Google document or slide deck) and include descriptions, examples, and screenshots of your work.

2.2 – Email Marketing Campaign (team)

Semester project teams will create an email marketing campaign to complement the content strategy of the project. The deliverable should include at least two sample emails (an offer email and a retargeting email); plus, a mockup of an optimized landing page for the campaign. The deliverable should be a PDF (of a Google document or slide deck) and include screenshots/samples of your work.

2.3 - Social Media Marketing Campaign (team)

Semester project teams will create a social media marketing campaign to complement the content strategy of the project. Include at least four sample social media posts (at least two different channels); pointing to your optimized landing page (from 2.1). The deliverable should be a PDF (of a Google document or slide deck) and include screenshots/samples of your work.

2.4 - PR and Promotions (team)

Students will independently research and identify two public relations or promotional opportunities for their teams to consider for inclusion in the overall marketing strategy. The deliverable should be a PDF (of a Google document or slide deck) and include screenshots/samples of your work.

2.5 - Growth Hacking (individual)

Students will independently create a detailed concept of an alternative marketing tactic covered in class for their teams to consider for inclusion in the overall marketing strategy. The deliverable should be a PDF (Google document or slide deck) and include screenshots/samples of your work.

3.1 - Content Calendars (team)

Semester project teams will create a content calendar (at least four weeks long) that complements the overall content mapping strategy of the project. The deliverable should be a PDF (of a Google document or slide deck) and include any relevant examples and/or citations.

3.2 – A/B Test Campaign (team)

Semester Project teams will collaborate on creating an A/B test (or multivariate test) for the one of the marketing tactics outlined in the team's strategy. The deliverable should be a PDF (of a Google document or slide deck) and include any relevant examples and/or citations.

3.3 - Marketing Strategy Plan and Final Presentation (team)

Finalize your team's semester project by creating a cohesive marketing strategy plan (template provided) and a presentation aimed at the selected company's stakeholders to demonstrate your vision for audience acquisition and growth, as well as the tactics and measurements used to achieve the desired results. Full requirements, grading criteria, and a rubric will be shared early in the semester. The deliverables should include two PDFs (Word/Google document for the plan and slide deck for presentation). Teams will formally present their marketing strategy decks in class.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Participation (individual)	150	15%
1.1 – Marketing Trends (individual)	20	2%
1.2 – Brand Stories (individual)	20	2%
1.3 – Semester Project Pltch Presentation (team)	100	10%
1.4 – Objectives and Key Results (team)	50	5%
2.1 – SEO Audit and Recommendations (team)	70	7%
2.2 – Email Marketing Campaign (team)	70	7%
2.3 – Social Media Marketing Campaign (team)	70	7%
2.4 – PR and Promotions (individual)	50	5%
2.5 – Growth Hacking (individual)	50	5%
3.1 – Content Calendars (team)	50	5%
3.2 – A/B Test (team)	50	5%
3.3 – Marketing Strategy Plan and Final Presentation (team)	250	25%
Total	1000	100%

Assignment Rubrics

The instructor will provide evaluation and grading criteria for assignments throughout the course.

Grading Scale

Final course grades will be determined using the following scale:

Letter Grade	Numerical Score
А	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
В	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
С	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Assignment Submission Policy

All assignments must be delivered by the date and time (Pacific Time) that deliverable is listed as due per instructor guidelines. The instructor(s) will provide due dates for all assignments and deliverables during the first week of the course. Late assignments will be subject to the late submission policy indicated below. **All assignments must be completed to pass this class.**

Late Submissions

Assignments will be accepted after the deadline with the following grade penalties. Do not ask for extensions; the extensions are noted below.

Submission in the 24 hours after the deadline

Submission between 24 hours and 3 days after the deadline

Submission after 3 days after the deadline

10% deduction

100% deduction

Academy Attendance Policy

The Academy maintains rigorous academic standards for its students and on-time attendance at all class meetings is expected. Each student will be allowed two excused absences over the course of the semester for which no explanation is required. Students are admonished to not waste excused absences on non-critical issues, and to use them carefully for illness or other issues that may arise unexpectedly. Except in the case of prolonged illness or other serious issue (see below), no additional absences will be excused. Each unexcused absence will result in the lowering of the final grade by $\frac{1}{3}$ of a grade (e.g., an A will be lowered to A-, and A- will be lowered to a B+, etc.). In

addition, being tardy to class will count as one-third of an absence. Three tardies will equal a full course absence.

Students remain responsible for any missed work from excused or unexcused absences. Immediately following an absence, students should contact the instructor to obtain missed assignments or lecture notes and to confirm new deadlines or due dates. Extensions or other accommodations are at the discretion of the instructor.

Automatically excused absences normally may not be used for quiz, exam or presentation days. Using an excused absence for a quiz, exam or presentation, such as in the case of sudden illness or other emergency, is at the discretion of the instructor.

In the case of prolonged illness, family emergencies, or other unforeseen serious issues, the student should contact the instructor to arrange for accommodation. Accommodation may also be made for essential professional or career-related events or opportunities. Additionally, students who need accommodations for religious observations should provide advanced notice to instructors and student athletes should provide Travel Request Letters. All accommodations remain at the discretion of the instructor, and appropriate documentation may be required.

Summer 2023 addendum:

- Unless students provide an accommodation letter from USC's Office of Student
 Accessibility Services (OSAS) or a letter from IYA Student Services detailing visa or travel
 restrictions, attendance and active participation is expected in the classroom. Any student
 with such accommodations should submit their accommodation document to the
 instructor as soon as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations. Either classroom
 recordings or live remote access to the class via Zoom will be provided.
- Students who are experiencing illness should not attend class in person. Please inform the
 instructor in advance of any class sessions that you can't attend for medical reasons, and
 accommodations will be arranged to view recorded lectures and submit alternatives to
 any missed class participation. Students will not be penalized for not attending class in
 person under these circumstances.
- If you find yourself experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, in keeping with university recommendations, you should Stay home! This is the best way to prevent spreading COVID-19 as supported by scientific evidence; Please do not come to an in-person class if you are feeling ill, particularly if you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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 Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osas.frontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

Studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086 eeotix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298 usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - (213) 740-0776

osas.usc.edu

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC) ombuds.usc.edu

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - (323) 442-3340 or otfp@med.usc.edu chan.usc.edu/otfp

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.