# **Brand management**

## Prof. Rossella Chiara Gambetti; Prof. Sharifah Alwi

***COURSE AIMS AND EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide students with a critical glance on contemporary brand management issues to reflect on how today brands, consumers, technology and culture are subtly interwoven and rapidly co-evolving. Hence, the course engages with brand management from a contemporary cultural perspective that looks at the brand and related managerial issues in the frame of an increasingly complex global market that is affected by a fast-evolving technocultural scenario. This scenario continuously challenges the brand to innovate and redefine its role for consumers, companies, society, and institutions.

The course develops a cross-disciplinary approach that combines basic and advanced conceptual foundations with up-to-date managerial issues and challenges that the brand must confront to face reality.

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

* identify and interpret multidisciplinary theoretical and conceptual foundations helpful to develop a critical understanding of the brand as a strategic cultural asset that is owned by both consumers and the company;
* understand how the social construction, negotiation and management of brand identity and brand purpose in current digital contexts supports ethical and societal decision making;
* develop conceptual knowledge on the design and use of brand management systems such as the brand book in global and local contexts;
* apply theoretical and conceptual knowledge of global issues affecting brands and their relationships with consumers to the design and implementation of consumption trends analysis in multicultural global and local contexts;
* develop critical decision making by recognizing, assessing, and analyzing complex cultural environments and developing sustainable cultural branding solutions to consumer brand engagement problems;
* operate effectively within an international multicultural trend-hunting team, where adopting a multicultural perspective proves particularly useful in managing consumption trend analysis and branding solutions.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Module 1: *Prof. Rossella Chiara Gambetti*

The following topics will be covered:

**–** *The scenario that the brand must confront*

\* Evolving consumers: craft consumers, working consumers, prosumers, proams.

\* Evolving communication modes, technologies and touch-points.

**–** *The basic of brand and brand management*

\* The concept of brand today.

\* Brand identity, consumer insight and brand positioning.

\* Exploring the brand book: brand philosophy and values, brand strategy, brand language and signs.

**–** *Capturing consumption trends for brand management*

\* Defining and understanding a trend.

\* Innovators, trendsetters, lead users.

\* Identifying and analyzing a consumption trend from the branding standpoint.

**–** *Brand management in the firm*

\* Characteristics and role of the brand manager (responsibilities, tasks and relationship management with communication agencies and research institutions).

\* Managing the brand on a daily basis.

**–** *The new challenges of consumer-brand relationships*

\* Bonding with consumers (consumer-brand engagement; consumer empowerment and how it gets reflected in actions consumers take in favor, against and beyond the brands; cultural branding referred to ethical, political and societal brand activism).

\* Consumers as brands: the rise of social media influencers and principles of influencer marketing.

Module 2: *Prof. Sharifah Alwi*

The following main topics will be covered:

**–** *Consumer behavior, segmentation and brand positioning process*

\* Understanding consumer insights through mental maps.

\* Designing brand messages, appeals for different segments.

\* Identifying and apply the concept of Points-of-parity (POP) and points-of-difference (POD) to a brand.

\* Relate core brand values and building brand positioning in different markets or contexts.

**–** *Luxury brands and luxury brand management*

\* Understand what creativity element in luxury brand is and how does creativity enhance brand differentiation in luxury context.

\* Introduces the material, symbolic and experiential dimensions of luxury.

\* Identify major sectors in the luxury industry: Fashion, Perfumes and Cosmetics, Wine and Spirits, Watch and Jewelry and Automobiles

\* Identifying and understanding the next major markets for the luxury brands: China and several markets within the developing economies in South-East Asian region

\* Understanding how segmenting, targeting, positioning (STP) and Marketing mix work in the luxury brand context.

\* Using several case studies, a comparison of luxury brand consumption across several continents parts of the world in particular, emphasis will be made on South-east Asian perspective, Europe & Middle east).

**–** *Beyond product/service brand: Introducing corporate brand and corporate brand management*

\* A new and fresh thinking of how to differentiate a brand using company or corporate brand.

\* Explain the different ways of brand positioning within corporate branding perspective e.g. from extending the marketing logic to embracing corporate citizenship and societal branding.

\* Appreciate the main objective of corporate branding - to achieve long term corporate brand equity and sustainable business performance

\* Acknowledge the corporate brand challenges and addressing it to a myriad of stakeholder.

\* Illustrate how corporate brand could be used at several levels (product, service, Internet/digital as well as small, medium and large corporations).

***READING LIST[[1]](#footnote-1)***

Required readings

J.N. Kapferer, The new strategic brand management: creating and sustaining brand equity long term, Kogan Page, London, 2008, Fourth Edition (Chapter 7).

T. Heding, C.F. Knudtzen, M. Bjerre, Brand management. Mastering reaserch, theory and practice, Routledge, London, 2020, Third Edition (Chapters 8, 9 and 10). *[Acquista da VP](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/autori-vari/brand-management-mastering-research-theory-and-practice-9780367172589-711751.html)*

R.V. Kozinets, U. Gretzel, R. Gambetti, Influencers and creators. Business, culture and practice, Sage, London, 2023 (Chapters 1, 4, 7 and 13)

Additional course materials (e.g. lesson slide decks, academic journal articles, book chapters, conference papers, research reports) that constitute required readings will be provided by Prof. Gambetti and Prof. Alwi throughout their modules and will be uploaded on the Blackboard platform.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will be based on critical interactive lessons, group case study discussions, discussion of digital and video materials, a group assignment sharpening analytical skills and a group project work facing a real company issue. A few brand management experts will be invited as guest speakers to provide their points of view on the role of the brand manager in the firm and on the contemporary brand challenges he/she needs to face.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students can choose between a multiple assessment route and a single assessment route.

Multiple assessment route (requiring attendance)

The assessment will consist of four components including analytical assignment, case study discussion, business project work, and written test that each student is required to take either in a group (groups of students will be purposively multicultural in their composition) or on an individual basis as follows:

– a group assignment aimed at analyzing and designing a current consumption trend from the standpoint of branding (15% of the final grade);

– a group analysis and discussion of a branding business case (15% of the final grade);

– a group project work facing a real brand challenge provided by a partner company, with an empashis on consumer brand engagement, strategy, and tactics (20% of the final grade);

– a final individual written test composed of both two open-ended questions relevant to the theoretical and conceptual foundations faced in the course (40% of the final grade), and an individual critical reflection on the key learnings drawn from the group project work including assessment of criticalities, barriers, unexplored opportunities and avenues for improvement (10% of the final grade).

For a PASS in the multiple assessment, the following conditions must be met: (i) the four components are mandatory; (ii) the final weighted average mark must be greather or equal to 18.

Students who do not pass the multiple assessment are evaluated according to the single assessment. The partecipation to group activities requires attendance.

Single assessment route

The exam consists of two components:

– a written test based on three open-ended questions relevant to all the course materials uploaded in Blackboard and the required readings (60% of the final grade);

– an individual assignment aimed at analyzing and designing a current consumption trend from the standpoint of branding, and formulating a brand strategy and related guidelines for the brand to take advantage of the trend (40% of the final grade).

Attendance is not mandatory for a PASS in the single assessment route.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

N. ECTS - 8

Enrollment requirements - Basic knowledge of marketing is highly recommended. Students who do not have such knowledge are encouraged to acquire it to the extent necessary during the course.

Language of instructions - English

Attendance –Attendance is required to participate in group activities of the multiple assessment route.

Associated courses – Customer-based Marketing; Business Communication

International dimension – The course is co-taught by an Italian professor and by a Malaysian professor. Moreover, international teaching materials are used throughout the course.

Business connection - The course makes extensive use of contemporary business cases and examples. Examples are also supported by guest speakers from business companies.

Professional context - In professional life, brand management is deeply interrelated with consumer culture. Understanding the cultural context, which today is increasingly configured as a technocultural context as technologies and culture are highly interwoven, and how it affects consumers’ lifestyles, habits, needs, and desires is fundamental for brand managers and brand professionals who are in charge of introducing, managing, and growing the brand in increasingly global and multicultural contexts.

Further information – Additional information regarding the course schedule and delivery, learning assessment, expectations and policies, general announcements, and additional course materials will be posted on Blackboard.

*EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES*

Students are invited to behave according the norms of courtesy and respect both towards the professors and towards each other. Respect includes politeness, openness to active listening and constructive dialogue, and diversity in all its forms.

1. I testi indicati nella bibliografia sono acquistabili presso le librerie di Ateneo; è possibile acquistarli anche presso altri rivenditori. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)