UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Brand Strategy

2526-2-F7701M125

Learning objectives

The course of brand strategy aims to offer students marketing instruments and tools to manage a brand today and in the future. To reach this goal, teaching is structured according to a sequential logic that starts from the brand's basic elements and ends with the management of secondary associations aimed at aligning the brand with the “spirit of the times”. To help students better understand how a brand is built and managed over time, the course will move from the hypothesis of constructing a brand from scratch.

Knowledge and understanding
Students will acquire a solid understanding of the main marketing theories and practices, particularly related to the creation, management, and development of a brand. They will comprehend the fundamental principles of branding, market dynamics, and the strategies used to align a brand with changes in the socio-cultural context and the evolving needs of the audience. Furthermore, students will learn how secondary associations influence the perception of a brand.
Applying knowledge and understanding
Students will be able to apply the principles learned during the course to create a coherent and sustainable brand strategy, building a brand from scratch. They will be able to develop and implement a branding strategy, which includes identifying the brand’s key elements, defining its positioning, and aligning the brand with the contemporary socio-cultural context. The application of these skills will allow students to create a strategy that meets the needs of a continuously evolving market.
Making judgements
Students will be able to analyze and evaluate the market context and the distinctive characteristics of a brand, using a critical approach to make autonomous decisions regarding the creation and management of a brand. They will be able to identify the opportunities and challenges a brand must face, choosing the best strategies to build and manage a brand over time. Judgment autonomy also reflects the ability to assess how to adapt the brand to new trends and consumer needs.
Communication skills
Students will develop the ability to communicate clearly and persuasively the strategic choices related to the brand, both in writing and orally. They will be able to present and justify their branding strategies. Communication skills also include the ability to explain and discuss the implications of branding decisions, using technical and

appropriate language.

Learning skills

Students will be able to independently learn new theories and trends in branding and marketing, staying updated on industry developments. Their learning ability will allow them to adapt and refine their branding strategies over time, addressing changes in consumer preferences, technologies, and socio-cultural contexts. Furthermore, students will be able to practically apply what they have learned to tackle real branding cases and develop innovative solutions.

Contents

1. Introduction: a) definitions of the concept of brand and distinctions with the concept of product or trademark; b) history of the brand; 2) Strategic planning: a) definition of the area of business; b) analysis of the competitors' marketing strategies; c) consumer behaviour; d) definition of the brand architecture; e) definition of the points of parity and of the points of the difference; e) analysis of the Corporate Social Responsibility activities; f) analysis of brand's secondary elements; 3) Brand identity; 4) Marketing, Communication and Corporate Social Responsibility strategies to activate brand associations over the 4 CBBE's pyramid steps (awareness, goodwill, commitment, relation); 5) Measurement of results and updating of the brand.

Detailed program

Introduction

1. Presentation of the course
2. Definitions of the brand
3. Distinctions with the concept of product or trademark
4. History of the brand

The brand "as a country".

In this part, the course will focus on defining the best strategy to create strong brands. To this end, the brand will be metaphorically considered as a country, as already discussed by Giampaolo Fabris and Laura Minestroni in "Valore e Valori della Marca" (Franco Angeli, Milan, 2004). More specifically, the topics covered will be: a) definition of the area of business; b) analysis of the competitors' marketing strategies; c) consumer analysis; d) description of the brand architecture; e) definition of the points of parity and of the points of the difference; f) analysis of the Corporate Social Responsibility activities; g) analysis of brand's secondary elements. From a didactic point of view, the basic hypothesis will be the creation of a brand from scratch.

Brand identity

Two lessons will be held. In the first one, the attention will be focused on one of the most critical aspects of brand management: the design and implementation of the brand's so-called "DNA". To this end, the most important brand identity models will be proposed, including Aaker, De Chernatony, Kapferer and Semprini. Particular attention will be paid on the Kapferer model. The second one will focus on Keller's Customer Brand Based Equity model, one of the most important brand management models. A model that is important both to understand the brand's functioning better and to develop a correct omnichannel marketing and communication strategy.

***Building brand value.*

In this part, the attention will be focused on the Marketing, Communication and Corporate Social Responsibility strategies useful to activate brand associations over the 4 CBBE's pyramid steps (awareness, goodwill, commitment, relation)

***Measurement of results.*

In this part, the focus will be on brand performance measurement techniques.

Prerequisites

None

Teaching methods

Lessons organization:

- 3 lessons of 3 hours in-class live lectures
- 3 lessons of 3 hours online
- 13 lessons of 3 hours - in-class live lectures for the first part to engage with students and interactive activities in the second part. These lessons are in-class lessons.

Managers and CEOs from Italian and international companies and organisations will also participate as testimonial during the course.

All sessions will be highly interactive. Students are expected to participate in classroom activities, casework and two group presentations.

Assessment methods

There is **NO difference between attending and non-attending students**
The students have **two alternative options**
First option – Project works

1. Group work (oral presentation) of a case study concerning the definition of brand architecture: 40% of the grade; Tentative date: 19 April 2024
2. Group work (oral presentation) on the creation of a new brand & brand launch communication strategy: 60% of the grade. Tentative date: 7 June 2024
   The final grade will be communicated by the beginning of the first session of the exams.
   The presentations must be developed in the form of a pitch deck.
   The oral presentations will be evaluated based on criteria such as: clarity of presentation, completeness, logical structure, context analysis, definition of the target and personas model, coherence of the communication strategy, and storytelling.

Second option – Traditional written exam

1. The students will be examined with a written exam of 5 single-choice questions and 3 open-ended

questions on the one mandatory reference text and on course slides

Textbooks and Reading Materials

1. Course slides;
2. Kevin Lane Keller, Vanitha Swaminathan, *Strategic Brand Management. Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity, Global Edition (Fifth Edition).* Pearson, 2020 (also available in electronic format);

**Additional Readings:*

AAKER D., JOACHIMSTHALER E., *Brand Leadership*. New York, The Free Press, 2000

KAPFERER J.N., *The New Strategic Brand Management*. London, Kogan Page, 2012.

SCHMITT, B. *Experiential Marketing: How to Get Customers to SENSE, FEEL, THINK, ACT, and RELATE to Your Company and Brands*. New York, Free Press, 1999

Semester

Second semester

Teaching language

English

Sustainable Development Goals

INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE