Overview

Students sometimes think they don’t need to study marketing. I’ve heard comments like these:

“I know about marketing already. I’ve seen lots of ads.”

Marketing is more than advertising. Identifying the must-have features for the next version of the iPhone? That’s marketing. Setting a price for a new line of Nikes? That’s marketing too. Deciding to sell your unique, one-of-a-kind jewelry on the Internet or in a local boutique? Marketing again.

“I don’t need to know marketing. I’m going to be a software engineer.” (or a journalist or a chemist or …)

Do you hope to start your own business some day, or become a partner at a consulting or law firm? If so, you’re going to need to be good at marketing, because finding and keeping customers will be part of your job. And if your plan is to be a corporate executive, you need to understand all facets of the company so that you can work effectively with other executives.

Marketing connects a company with the outside world. Marketers strive to understand customers’ needs and wants in order to guide decisions about developing, selling, delivering, and promoting products. Marketing also focuses on developing strong customer relationships.

Learning Objectives

After successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Explain the role of marketing, both within a firm and in society.
2. Evaluate the marketing aspects of a business opportunity, including strategic options and the impact of the marketing environment.
3. Analyze potential customer segments (both consumers and businesses), assessing the attractiveness of each as a target market.
4. Explain the value of a brand and its impact on consumer behavior and customer loyalty.
5. Identify factors that influence marketing strategy and tactics for a new product or service.
6. Apply a variety of analytical tools to marketing decision making.
7. Critique the marketing strategy and marketing mix for a product or service.
8. Use various online tools to facilitate team collaboration in marketing decision making.

These goals are related to the following learning goals of the business minor program:
- Students will develop analytical, problem-solving and decision-making skills that can be applied in a variety of business situations within a global business environment.
- Students will understand the role of marketing and its linkages with other functions of the organizations, the marketplace and global society.

Prerequisites
Before taking this class, you should have completed 30 credit hours (i.e., sophomore standing).

Expectations
Taking a course online requires dedication and organization. In order to have a successful semester, it is important that you:
- Visit the course website regularly (at least weekly).
- Stay on schedule with the material covered, and complete all assignments on time.
- Participate actively in discussions.
- Check your Mason Live email (or, if you forward your mail, the forwarding location) daily.
- Dedicate five to seven hours per week, on average, for the class.
- Contact me promptly if a problem arises that is interfering with your performance in the class.

Learning Resources

Required Course Materials – Textbook and Connect

You will also need a subscription to McGraw-Hill’s Connect homework/quiz manager. The bookstore sells a package including the textbook and a Connect access code; you can also purchase the book and the access code separately. See the course website for more information on Connect and a link to the Connect site for our class.

Course Website
Our course website on Blackboard serves as the information hub for this course. To view the site, visit [http://mymason.gmu.edu](http://mymason.gmu.edu), log on using your Mason Live user ID and password, and click the “Courses” tab. You should see MSOM303-DL1 listed; if not, please email me immediately.

The website includes a Welcome video and a “Start Here!” area providing an orientation to the course and to online learning. Please review these before starting on other course materials.

Unit Folders and Lessons
Each week’s assignments and activities can be found in unit folders on the course website. Each folder contains one or more lessons containing a detailed list of readings, activities, and other assignments, and also provides perspective on the material. In addition, you can get the “big picture” of the course, with topics and major due dates, from the weekly course schedule available on the course website.
Availability of Learning Tools
This course is offered completely online (except for your textbook, if you choose a hard copy version). Course materials, including exams, are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Virtual office hours and live online sessions are offered at specific times; however, they are optional.

Communication

Announcements and Course Updates
You will receive an email (sent to your MasonLive email account) every Monday providing an overview of the week’s activities. I will also use email at other times of the week for reminders and announcements. All emails will be posted as announcements on Blackboard. I may sometimes post lower-priority announcements on Blackboard without emailing them.

Blackboard Collaborate
Blackboard Collaborate provides a virtual meeting area for our class. It supports audio, text chat, a whiteboard, and screen sharing. We will use it for virtual office hours and one-on-one meetings (see below), and possibly for optional live tutorials.

You need either a headset with a built-in microphone or a microphone plus headphones in order to participate in sessions using audio features. You can run it on a PC or Mac, and also on an iPad (with a reduced set of features). The course website has additional information on Collaborate.

How to Get Help

You may require one-on-one help from time to time during the semester. Please don’t let yourself get frustrated if you’re struggling with a concept or assignment. Asking for help isn’t failure—but giving up because you didn’t seek help is.

The previous paragraph assumes that you have first taken advantage of all course resources related to the topic—readings, videos, and practice activities. One-on-one help is available to supplement these resources, not to replace them.

If you need help or have a question, here are two good options for quick questions:

- **Ask the Professor forum:** The course website includes an "Ask the Professor" discussion forum. You may post questions there, and I will answer them within 24 hours Monday through Friday, and usually on weekends as well (but see “Three Before Me” below).
- **Email:** I check email frequently. I will respond within 24 hours or less Monday through Friday, and usually on weekends as well (but see “Three Before Me” below).

Here are some options for getting help when the question isn’t quite as simple:

- **Virtual office hours:** Virtual office hours using Blackboard Collaborate will take the place of traditional office hours. I will announce a schedule at the start of each week. If you have a question or problem, you are welcome to “drop by” at these times.
- **One-on-one sessions:** If you need individual help and the scheduled virtual office hours don’t work for you, please contact me to schedule an online meeting. We can meet on Blackboard Collaborate, Skype, or the phone, whatever works best for you.
- **Telephone:** If an emergency arises and you need to reach me right away, my phone number is at the top of Page 1 of the syllabus.
“Three Before Me”

The website and readings are your first sources for finding answers to your questions. It is your responsibility to use them—and then to ask for help if they do not provide the answers you need.

Unfortunately, students have too often asked me questions they could have answered themselves—emailing me seemed easier than checking the website, and I am known for quick responses to email. In other words, they took advantage of my willingness to help. This used up time I could have spent with students who genuinely needed help.

As a result, all emails and “Ask the Professor” posts MUST be accompanied by a list of three appropriate places in the course materials where you sought the answer but didn’t find it (e.g., the syllabus, the unit folder, or a relevant video, depending on the question). If you don’t include this information with your request, you should not expect an answer. The exception is if you found an answer but you’re not sure you understand. In that case, just tell me where you found the answer (you don’t need three sources).

This is called a “Three Before Me” policy and is becoming commonplace in education. It benefits both the instructor and the student: employers want to hire (and promote) people who are able to work independently, and who understand when it’s appropriate to ask for help.

However …

As I said at the start of this section, don’t let yourself get frustrated or upset if you run into problems. Do your best with the resources provided, but then if you still need help, ask.

### Grading and Assignments

Weeks begin on Monday and end on Sunday. All assignments are due before midnight on Sundays, except for initial posts in online discussions, which are due on Thursday in order to allow time for responses later in the week. See the Class Schedule for specific due dates.

Each unit in the course will be available one week in advance so that you can work ahead of schedule if you choose; however, you must take exams and participate in discussions during the week in which they are assigned.

The assignments in the class will earn the following maximum point values (each type of assignment is described in the sections that follow):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th># assigned</th>
<th># scores dropped</th>
<th>Points each</th>
<th>Total points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Startup activities</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect quizzes and activities</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short written assignments</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global outsourcing discussion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Team project:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion moderation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final team blog (Individual score)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final team blog (team score)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1,000</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Grades will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>900-1,000</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>600-699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>800-899</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>700-799</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Exams**

There will be three exams during the semester. Exams are non-cumulative, except in the sense that later material builds on early material. Exams will be “closed book” with one exception. You may use one sheet of letter-sized paper (measuring 8.5 x 11 inches) during the exam, with whatever you like written or printed on both sides. See the Exams area on Blackboard for more information on exam format, content, and preparation.

You will take exams online at a time of your choosing within a one-week time range, using a service called Respondus Monitor. You need to install a special browser, the Respondus Lockdown Browser, and you must have a webcam and microphone (they are used to record you while you take the exam). See “Technology Requirements” below for specific hardware and software requirements.

If you have a conflict with an exam period that makes it impossible for you to take it by the deadline, contact me at least two weeks in advance to discuss it. Note that personal travel plans are not an acceptable reason for a schedule change. Otherwise, failure to complete an exam by the deadline will result in a score of zero, except in case of a documented emergency.

**Quizzes and Activities**

Without the discipline imposed by regular class meetings, it’s easy to drift away from an online course. Missing assignments and cramming for exams will compromise your learning and hurt your grade. Successful online students allocate regular time slots to the class.

In order to help you to stay involved and up to date with the course material, and to give you opportunities to practice new skills, each unit of the course will include small assignments to complete. Some will be graded; others will be ungraded practice activities with solutions provided so you can check your work. These activities fall into the following categories:

**Startup Activities**

The Start Here! folder contains a combined quiz/survey designed both to test your understanding of “how things work” in the class, and to help me to learn more about you. In addition, during the first week of the semester, you will be asked to post an introduction to the class. Each of these activities is worth ten points. Finally, you will test Respondus Monitor, our online exam software, to make sure it works on your computer. Completing this test at least one week before the first exam is worth five points.

**Connect Activities**

In most units, you will take a quiz on McGraw-Hill’s Connect website summarizing the textbook material; in addition, two interactive activities will be usually be assigned. After completing the quiz or activity, you may take it once more to improve your score. Your three lowest scores will be dropped; this means you can skip three of these quizzes/activities without a penalty. For this reason, there are no extensions offered on these Connect activities.
Extra Credit Activities
The Connect website contains one LearnSmart exercise for each chapter in the text. LearnSmart is an adaptive question-and-answer tool; it chooses questions to ask based on your previous answers. You may complete these exercises in the current week for extra credit. You may also use them for exam preparation as non-credit exercises.

“Reflect” and Practice Activities
In addition to graded activities listed above, the unit folders also contain ungraded practice activities. These are short exercises that help you to check your understanding of concepts by applying them to a specific situation. Sample answers will be provided. They are of two types:

1. Short “Reflect” exercises asking you to use course concepts to evaluate a business situation or to provide examples of a concept in action.
2. Interactive practice activities on Connect asking questions about a concept.

Sometimes students are tempted to skip practice activities since they aren’t graded; however, unless you are already competent in the concepts or skills covered by the activities, you need to complete them. They allow you to practice skills in isolation, helping you to prepare for exams and assignments where you must apply several skills to more complex examples.

Written Assignments
The course includes a series of short writing assignments posted to a private online journal. These assignments ask you to apply course material to your own experiences and to analyze the experience using marketing concepts. These activities are worth 20 points each.

Team Project and Discussions
Two types of activities are extremely important to deepen your learning beyond definitions of terms. One is to discuss ideas related to the current topic. Discussions require you to crystallize your thoughts so you can explain them to others. They also expose you to other viewpoints.

The second important type of activity is to use course concepts to solve a problem, make a decision, or develop something new. The written assignments accomplish some of that by asking you to analyze or evaluate a real-world marketing example; however, that’s not enough.

You will participate in a team project combining these two activities—discussing and applying course concepts. In this project, you and your classmates will perform some of the steps involved in developing a marketing plan for a new product.

You will make various decisions about marketing your new product in a series of discussions. Each team project discussion will earn you up to 20 points, and your lowest score will be dropped. For each discussion, you will be required to make your initial post by Thursday of the given week, followed by at least two comments on others’ posts before the end of the week. In addition you will serve as discussion moderator once, and your team will prepare a blog documenting your decisions. See the Team Project area on Blackboard for more details.

The final discussion, on global outsourcing, is unrelated to the project, but will take place within your project team.
Technology Requirements

To take this course, you will need the following hardware and software (this information is also in the “Start Here!” area of the course website):

**Hardware**
- A PC running Microsoft Windows XP/Vista/7/8, or a Mac running OS X 10.6 (Snow Leopard) or higher, with at least 2GB of memory. It’s best to have a screen size of at least 13 inches.
- A fast, reliable broadband Internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL). A wired connection is strongly recommended for taking exams.
- Computer speakers or headphones to listen to recorded content.
- A headset with microphone, or an integrated or external microphone plus headphones, to participate in live audio sessions using Blackboard Collaborate.
- Sufficient hard disk space to download required software and save your course assignments.
- A webcam (internal or external) and a microphone, for use during exams.

**Software**
- A web browser supported by Blackboard (see Blackboard Support for more information)
- Access to Blackboard Collaborate. To verify, complete the Blackboard Collaborate System Check. Collaborate has its own software requirements (including an up-to-date version of Java), which the system check will verify.
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (free download)
- A current version of Adobe Flash Player (free download)
- The Respondus Lockdown Browser, which has software requirements of its own (see the “Exams” area of the course website for more information).

**Employer-provided Computers**

If you are planning to use an employer-provided computer for class activities, please verify with the system administrator that you will be able to install the necessary software and access course materials. Corporate firewalls may restrict access to some websites and media types.

University Policies and Resources

**Academic Integrity Policy**

You are expected to adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits actual and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing. These rules apply to this course:
- You may use one sheet of letter-sized paper (8.5x11 inches) as a reference during exams. Both sides of this page may contain anything you choose, hand written or created on a printer. You may use no other information sources during the exam, whether hard copy, electronic, or human. Your answers on exams must be entirely your work, with no assistance given or received.
- For Connect activities, discussions, the team project, and written assignments, you may use both hard copy and electronic references for general information when preparing your answers. However, your answers must be entirely your own work (or, in the case of the team project, yours and your teammates’) with no assistance specific to the assignment given or received, with one exception: you are encouraged to seek assignment-specific help from the instructor if you need it after using resources provided as part of the course.

The School of Business recommends a minimum penalty of an F in the class for a first-time Honor Code violation. We take the Honor Code seriously; so should you. Consult the Office of Academic Integrity website for more information about the Honor Code issues.
Disability Policy
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services to make arrangements.

Accessibility
GMU has services available to create recordings, transcripts, or other materials to meet the needs of students requiring accessible media. In addition, I have done my best to provide an accessible course (see the “Accessibility” area on Blackboard for specifics); however, I could easily have missed something. Please contact me immediately if:

- You have problems using a course resource due to an accessibility issue.
- You need access to a resource that is not yet accessible.

If you would prefer not to identify yourself, you can also report the issue anonymously on the Accessibility Issues Form provided by the GMU Web Accessibility initiative. Please be sure to provide the course number and my name so that the information reaches me quickly.

University Policies
Students must follow the GMU University Policy and the Responsible Use of Computing Policy.

University Resources
GMU provides a number of resources to facilitate student success and assist students with academic or personal issues (e.g., Counseling and Psychological Services, Learning Services, University Career Services, Writing Center). If you need assistance, please consider taking advantage of these services.

Weekly Schedule
See the next page.
Weekly Course Schedule – Spring, 2015

Weeks start on Mondays and end on Sundays. All assignments for the week are due before midnight on Sunday except for initial discussion posts (due on Thursday, and highlighted in red text below). See the unit folders in the Course Content area on Blackboard for details about all assignments.

In addition to the activities listed below, you have the following due each week on Connect:

- Two interactive activities plus a quiz, or sometimes three interactive activities
- One or two LearnSmart activities (optional for extra credit)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Team Project (initial posts due Thursday)</th>
<th>Other Graded Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/12-1/18</td>
<td>“Start Here!”</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td>Course Orientation Quiz/Survey Personal Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/19-1/25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to Marketing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Blog post: Favorite Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/26-2/1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mktg Strategy, Environment</td>
<td>Discussion #1: Marketing Strategy Sign up for discussion moderation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/2-2/8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mktg Environment (cont.), Consumer Behavior</td>
<td>Discussion #2: SWOT analysis</td>
<td>Blog post: Consumer Behavior Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9-2/15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning</td>
<td>Discussion #3: Target market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/16-2/22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Marketing Research</td>
<td>Discussion #4: Mktg Research</td>
<td>Exam #1 (Covers Units 1-5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/23-3/1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Product and Branding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2-3/8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>New Product Development</td>
<td>Discussion #5: Product/Branding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/9-3/15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Spring break – no assignments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/16-3/22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Services Marketing</td>
<td>Discussion #6: NPD issues</td>
<td>Journal post: Service Nightmares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/23-3/29</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Pricing</td>
<td>Discussion #7: Price</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/30-4/5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Integrated Marketing Communication, Social Media</td>
<td>Discussion #8: IMC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/6-4/12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/13-4/19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Distribution and Retailing</td>
<td>Project blog comments due</td>
<td>Journal post: Saving Offline Retailers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/20-4/26</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>B2B Marketing/Sales Mgmt</td>
<td>Final project blog posts due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/4-5/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Journal post: Course Reflection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Exam #3 (Covers Units 11-14)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>