

**1/16/08**

**CMGT 544: Creating Organizational Identity: Meaning Through Messages**  
[Section 21742]  
**Annenberg School for Communication, Spring 2008**

**Instructor:** Sasha Strauss  
**E-mail:** sstrauss@usc.edu

**Class time:** Wed 6:30-9:20pm  
**Office hours:** Wed 5:30-6:30pm (by appointment)  
**Room:** ASC 331

**Course Description:**

This course will expose students to the essential phases of brand development. Built on career case studies and practical application assignments, students will learn first hand how to evaluate, research, strategize, develop, implement, launch and extend B2C and B2B brands.

The course subject will be divided as follows:

- 1) **Brand Roles and Elements:** introduction to the key phases and responsibilities within brand strategy and its relationship to marketing, public relations and advertising
- 2) **Brand Planning and Research:** preliminary analysis and “discovery” programs for kicking off a strong brand initiative
- 3) **Competitive Analysis:** brand directed study of direct and indirect competition
- 4) **Brand Strategy:** definition of a brand’s unique value proposition. The brand strategy is built as a platform and filter for all corporate communications programs. Positioning is complimented by personifications/personality attributes.
- 5) **Brand Naming:** Corporate and product identification methods and legal considerations.
- 6) **Brand Architecture:** relationship of sub-brands, products and features within a brand portfolio.
- 7) **Brand Visual Identity:** visual expression of a brand, from logo to fonts, colors, imagery and layout scheme.
- 8) **Brand Experience:** structural architecture, packaging and environmental design to create an interactive consumer brand experience.
- 9) **Brand Alignment:** implementing a brand program throughout an organization.
- 10) **Brand Management:** the role of managing and selling branded products post launch.
- 11) **Brand Innovation, Extension and Licensing:** leveraging brand equity in new categories, strategic partnerships and co-branded products.
- 12) **Brand Equity and Valuation:** building a case for a “successful” brand programs as well as measuring brand valuation and loyalty.

Potential Guest speakers:

Depending on the nature of the class, some guest speakers will need to present before class or on an alternate day.

- Hubble, Chris & Rice, Greg; **Hall & Partners**, Directors [Brand Research]
- Banks, Russell; **Gensler Studio 585**, Creative Director [Environmental Branding]
- Cohen, Jonathan; **Disney**, Corporate Brand Manager [Brand Management]
- Henricks, Christie; **Siegel + Gale**, Executive Director, Brand Alignment
- Adelman, Jason; **Madison Road Entertainment**, Producer, Brand Integration [Brand Advertising]

This course is designed for Communication Management Masters students interested in a career in brand strategy, marketing and/or management. Previous coursework (Comm 541) or work experience in marketing, advertising or promotions is useful but not required.

**Required Course Readings:** Industry authored titles will be supplemented by PDFs of the timeliest brand related news. Check our course blackboard website for announcements, assignments, readings, class notes.

TEXTS:

[For Course Phases 1-4, 7-9, 12]

Aaker, David A., (1996). *Building Strong Brands*: Simon & Schuster, Inc.: New York, NY.

[For Course Phases 5-6]

Aaker, David A., (2004). *Brand Portfolio Strategy: Creating Relevance, Differentiation, Energy, Leverage, and Clarity*. Simon & Schuster, Inc.: New York, NY.

[For Course Phases 10-11]

Joachimsthaler, Erich,(1999). *Harvard Business Review on Brand Management*. Harvard Business School Press: Boston, MA.

ARTICLES/READINGS:

Assigned weekly readings will be available on course blackboard: [blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu).

## Course Format:

The course will be a mixture of lectures, case study presentation and analysis, class breakout and presentation activities. Grades will be based on class participation, assignments for each of the three units, and a final project.

## Course Requirements and Evaluation:

There are a total of 1000 possible points in the course. There are 4 components to your grade:

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| 3 Individual Response Papers (10% each) | 300 total points |
| Brand Strategy Group Project:           |                  |
| Check-ins (10%)                         | 100 points       |
| Presentation (25%)                      | 250 points       |
| Final Report (25%)                      | 250 points       |
| Class Participation (10%)               | 100 points       |
| Extra Credit Brand Audits (max 2)       | 10 points        |

### Course grading scale:

|    |                    |    |                 |
|----|--------------------|----|-----------------|
| A+ | = 975 -1000 points | C- | = 700 - 724     |
| A  | = 925 - 974        | D+ | = 675 - 699     |
| A- | = 900 - 924        | D  | = 625 - 674     |
| B+ | = 875 - 899        | D- | = 600 - 624     |
| B  | = 825 - 874        | F  | = less than 599 |
| B- | = 800 - 824        |    |                 |
| C+ | = 775 - 799        |    |                 |
| C  | = 725 - 774        |    |                 |

**Individual Response Papers:** The response paper assignments are designed to prepare you for class discussion, case analyses, and the final project. There will be three short (2-3 pages *max.*, double-spaced) individual response papers that involve applying the concepts in the readings and the lectures. The topics for the individual response papers will be given at least a week in advance of the due dates. The response papers should not be long, may include concept maps/graphics and should demonstrate your understanding of the concepts in the weekly readings. Each paper is worth 100 points.

**Submitting Work:** Assignments are to be e-mailed to the TA before 12-noon on the date due. The filename should be the assignment title and your last name (e.g. <Competitive Analysis Strauss>). If you will miss class, you are welcome to submit your paper before the deadline.

**Late Work Policy:** Papers submitted within 10 minutes after 12-noon deadline will be accepted at a 10% penalty. Papers submitted after the 10 minute window will not be accepted.

**Strategic Brand Development Presentation:** The final project for the course will be a complete strategic brand development program, from positioning to brand extension strategy. Your self selected group will present on a current, classic or fictitious brand; its core assets, your strategy for identification, launch and extension/licensing in the future.

Time will be allotted at the end of each session for group planning and work. Projects will be delivered as a 45-minute PowerPoint presentation and supplementary summary document (which includes the PPT). The final two weeks of class will serve as presentation days with three groups presenting each night. Guests are welcome to attend the final presentations.

Specific guidelines for the project will be distributed later in the semester.

We expect all members to contribute equally to the team project. The highest possible individual grade is the group project grade. If you contribute less than other members, your individual grade will be lower than the group grade based on feedback in a post-presentation survey.

**Class Participation:** We want to reward students who take an active role in the course by attending every session, keeping up with the assigned readings and participating in class discussions. We will keep track of attendance, the frequency and quality of your class contributions over the semester. If you make at least one high quality comment during each class discussion, you will earn a high participation grade.

We will be discussing assigned readings each week – an optimal opportunity for participation.

Student posted articles on blackboard and related blackboard commentary is considered class participation as well.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** 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 from the Communication degree program.

It is particularly important that you are aware of and avoid plagiarism, cheating on exams, fabricating data for a project, submitting a paper to more than one professor, or submitting a paper authored by anyone other than yourself. If you have doubts about any of these practices, confer with a faculty member.

Resources on academic honesty can be found on the Student Judicial Affairs Web site (<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS>.)

“Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism” addresses issues of paraphrasing, quotations, and citation in written assignments, drawing heavily upon materials used in the university's writing program; “Understanding and avoiding academic dishonesty” addresses more general issues of academic

integrity, including guidelines for adhering to standards concerning examinations and unauthorized collaboration.

The “2006-2007 SCampus” (<http://www.usc.edu/scampus>) contains the university’s student conduct code and other student-related policies.

**Disabilities Policy:** 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 the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00. The office is in Student Union 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776.

**Tentative Topics and Reading Schedule:**

(Subject to change: Consult class website on blackboard for updates.)

**1/16 Course introduction, expectations, book review, assignment discussion and final project group planning**

**1/23 Session I: Brand Roles and Elements**

*Topic:* The purpose, process and key elements of a brand strategy program.

**Readings due:**

[Book]

Aaker, David A., *Building Strong Brands*; Pages 37-66

[Articles/Readings]

Aaker, David A., Think Big (WSJ.com September 2007)

Brand vs. Ad Agency (Brandchannel.com, June 2007)

Met Life Brand Strategy (PDF - 2006).

Cottingham, Patt (2007). Mission Statement Writing (BrandChannel.com, July 2007)

**1/30 Session II: Brand Planning, Research and Competitive Analysis**

*Topic:* Brand audits, market trend analysis, consumer preference research and competitive analysis.

**Readings due:**

[Book]

Aaker, David A., *Building Strong Brands*; Pages 1-36

[Articles/Readings]

Benson, Joseph (2006). Market Research Versus Brand Research.  
(www.BrandChannel.com).

Jelsema, Martin (2004). Positioning Research Process (Signature Strategies, February 2004)

Student, James (2006). The Testing Paradox: Is it accurate? (BrandChannel.com brandspeak, October 2006)

## **2/06 Sessions III: Brand Strategy**

*Topic:* Competitive differentiation, positioning, personification and brand platform development.

### **Readings due:**

[Book]

Aaker, David A., *Building Strong Brands*; Pages 68-106, 138-205

[Articles/Readings]

Ries, A. (2006) Why Volkswagen Phaeton Failed in the US Market. *AdvertisingAge*, (December 5, 2006).

Cuneo, A. (2006) AT&T Plans to Kill Cingular Brand. *AdvertisingAge* (May 2, 2006.)

Q & A with Vera Wang (PDF – WSJ.com September 2007)

**(2/06) Assignment #1 Distributed: Competitive Analysis**

**(2/06) Final Presentation Groups Assigned**

## **2/13 Session IV: Brand Naming**

*Topic:* Naming strategy, analysis, brainstorming, validation and legal considerations.

### **Readings due:**

[Book]

Aaker, David A., *Brand Portfolio Strategy*; Pages 3-94

[Articles/Readings]

Quinn, Michelle (2007) Dot.com Names get dottier (PDF – Los Angeles Times, August 2007)

Google Sued in China Over Name (PDF – Infotech Online, December 2007)

Igor International. (11/2007) Building the Perfect Beast, The Igor Naming Guide. <http://www.igorinternational.com/process/igor-naming-guide.pdf>

Jacobs, Rick. (2005) Top Tips for Selecting a Brand Name (BrandChannel.com.)

Capps, Brooke (2007). Want to Build a Powerful Brand? Don't Forget Core Values (April 24, 2007)

McMains, Andrew (2007). Crowded Space for Strategic Thinkers (AdWeek.com, July 30, 2007)

**(2/13) Assignment #1 Due By: NOON. Please e-mail Sasha Strauss at [sstrauss@usc.edu](mailto:sstrauss@usc.edu)**

**2/20, 2/27     Sessions V, VI: Brand Architecture**

*Topic:* The relationship between master, sub, ingredient, feature and partner brands in brand a brand portfolio.

**Readings due:**

[Book]

Aaker, David A., *Brand Portfolio Strategy*; Pages 97-186

[Articles/Readings]

Ford Nearing Decision on Jaguar. Land Rover ( PDF – WSJ.com December 2007)

O’Leary, Noreen (2007) New and Improved Private Label Brands (PDF – AdWeek.com October, 2007)

Chon, G. (2006) Henry Ford’s Model a Would Be at Home In Car-Name Game. *The Wall Street Journal*. (April 20, 2006).

Krazit, Tom (2007) Intel losing its joie de Viiv (Cnet News.com, July 20, 2007).

**(2/20) Schedule group check-in #1 – Please contact Biana to schedule your first group check in with Sasha (email [bianakirk@aol.com](mailto:bianakirk@aol.com))**

**(2/27) Possible Guest Speaker**

**(2/27) Assignment #2 Distributed: Brand Architecture Case Study**

**3/05     Session VII: Brand Alignment**

*Topic:* Implementing brand programs organization wide.

**Readings due:**

[Book]

Aaker, David A., *Building Strong Brands*; Pages 339-358

[Articles/Readings]

Dunn, Michael (2004). Creating The Brand-Driven Business: It's The CEO Who Must Lead The Way, (Handbook of Business Strategy, VL5 No. 1, 2004)

Hafner, Katie (2007) Inside Apple Stores (PDF – New York Times December 2007)

Nair, Mohan (2007). How Causes Can Animate Companies (Booz Allen Hamilton, Aug 28, 2007)

Colyer, Edwin. (2007). Promoting Brand Allegiance Within. (www.brandchannel.com)

### **Possible Guest Speaker**

### **(3/05) Group Check-in #1**

### **3/12 Session VIII: Brand Experience Design**

*Topic:* structural architecture, packaging and environmental design to create an interactive consumer brand experience.

#### **Readings due:**

[Articles/Readings]

Whitson, Rod (2006) Dell... A Brand in Flux? (Trademarklawyer4, 2006)

Kahney, Leander (2006) The Genius of Apple's Stores (Wired News, May, 02, 2006)

Stross, Randall (2007). Apple's Lessons for Sony's Stores: Just Connect (NYTimes.com, May 27, 2007)

Phillips, Brian. Forward - or backward – for the 7-Eleven Brand? (TenayaGroup.com, 2007)

**(3/12) Assignment #2 Due by NOON. Please e-mail Sasha Strauss at [sstrauss@usc.edu](mailto:sstrauss@usc.edu)**

### **(3/12) Group-Check-in #1 Continued**

### **3/19 SPRING RECESS – NO CLASS**

### **3/26 – Session IX: Brand Visual Identity**

*Topic:* Visual elements of a brand program, from logos to fonts, colors, imagery and graphic design.

#### **Readings due:**

[Articles/Readings]

The Hub (2005). DHL's Flying Colors (www.TheHub.com, July/August 2005)

Clegg, Alicia (2006). Senses Cue Brand Recognition (BrandChannel.com, March 6, 2006)

Crampton, Thomas (2006) Rancor Over Rights To The Smiley Face (International Herald Tribune , June 26, 2006)

Wallace, Rob (2006). Be Smart, Be Simple - New Visual Strategies Are Connecting Brands To Consumers At A Visceral Level Via Stripped-Down Brand Identities And Communications (www.TheHub.com)

Frost, Randall (2006) Global Packaging: What's the Difference? (www.brandchannel.com, January 16, 2006)

Mininni, Ted (2006) Communication Hierarchies in Packaging (www.brandchannel.com)

London Olympic Logo Lambasted (2007). (The Australian, TheAustralian.News.com.au, June 5, 2007).

**(3/26) Schedule group check-in #2 – Please Contact Biana to schedule a date and time to meet Sasha for the second group check-in ([bianakirk@aol.com](mailto:bianakirk@aol.com))**

**Guest Speaker: Jonathan Cohen, Disney, Corporate Brand Manager**

#### **4/02 Session X: Brand Management**

*Topic:* Managing and selling branded products post launch.

##### **Readings due:**

[Articles/Readings]

Capell, Kerry (2006) How Philips Got Brand Buzz, Business Week (August 1, 2006)

Sapsford, Jathon (2006) Toyota Introduces New Luxury Brand In Japan: Lexus, The Wall Street Journal (August 3, 2005)

Geller, Adam (2005). Carmakers Target Gen-X, Hit Grandpa (The Modesto Bee, December 29, 2005)

Interbrand (2004) A Powerful New Paradigm, Integrated Brand Communications (www.BrandChannel.com, August 2004)

Gregory, Jim (2005). Retailers Rising, P&G, Unilever and Colgate-Palmolive are losing their “mojo” to Wal-Mart, Costco and Target. (www.TheHub.com, 2005)

Fowler, Geoffrey A. (2005) Chinese Firms' Buying Binge Bet On Value Of Western Brands (The Wall Street Journal, June 23, 2005)

Interwoven Brand Management Solution Helps Companies Increase Brand Value Through Greater Agility and Consistency (Interwoven.com, April 2007)

**Guest Speaker: Rebecca Bernard, Lions Bridge, Business Development Director**

**(4/02) Schedule final presentation times – please contact Biana to set up the date and order of your final group presentations. ([bianakirk@aol.com](mailto:bianakirk@aol.com))**

**4/09, 4/16, Session XI: Brand Licensing, Extension and Innovation**

*Topic:* Leveraging brand equity in new categories, strategic partnerships, co-branded products and leading product innovation through brand strategy.

**Readings due:**

[Book]

Aaker, David A., *Building Strong Brands*; Pages 269-302

Joachimsthaler, Erich, *Harvard Business Review on Brand Management*; Pages 105-146

[Articles/Readings]

Binkley, Christina (2007) Like Our Sunglasses? Try our Vodka! (WSJ.com November 2007)

Han, Jin K. (1998); Brand Extensions in a Competitive Context: Effects of Competitive Targets and Product Attribute Typicality on Perceived Quality (Academy of Marketing Science Review, Volume 1998 No. 01, [www.amsreview.org/articles/han01-1998.pdf](http://www.amsreview.org/articles/han01-1998.pdf))

McGregor, Jena, (2006). The World's Most Innovative Companies (BusinessWeek.com, April 24, 2006)

Facenda, Vanessa L. (2007). At Disney, 'Million Dreams' Is Not The Price Tag, But Close (Adweek.com, August 20, 2007)

de Mesa, Alycia (2007). Vera Wang – unbridled business sense (BrandChannel.com, July 9, 2007)

**(4/09) Check-in #2**

**(4/09) Guest Speaker: Jason Adelman Madison Road Entertainment, Producer, Brand Integration**

**(4/16) Check-in #2 Continued**

**(4/16) Assignment #3 Distributed: Brand Extension Strategy IN CLASS**

**4/23 Session XII: Brand Equity, Research and Valuation**

*Topic:* Building a case for a “successful” brand programs as well as measuring brand valuation and loyalty using a range of agency developed models.

**Readings due:**

[Book]

Aaker, David A., *Building Strong Brands*; Pages 304-338

Joachimsthaler, Erich, *Harvard Business Review on Brand Management*; Pages 169-187

[Articles/Readings]

Interbrand (2004) A Chapter from *Brands and Branding*, An Economist Book Brand Valuation ([www.BrandChannel.com](http://www.BrandChannel.com), February 2004)

AC Nielsen Press Release. (May 17, 2007)

**4/30, 5/07 Session XIII, XIV: Group Presentations**

(Groups to arrive early to set up presentations BEFORE class)