

University of California, Riverside
A. Gary Anderson Graduate School of Management

BSAD 112
Consumer Behavior

Spring, 2003

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IMPORTANT NOTE: In marketing, there may be answers that are so poor that they are clearly “wrong”—but there are rarely if ever any answers that are unquestionably right. Marketing involves a great deal of thinking on rather **ambiguous and unstructured issues**. We must ultimately choose between different alternatives that all have their strengths and weaknesses and involve a great deal of risk and uncertainty. Clear and rational thinking is important, but most decisions are inherently subjective. **Also please note that in this class, we will focus on the “big picture” in understanding consumers.** To paraphrase a popular TV commercial, **we will not study how to do any one or a few things in particular**, but rather how to approach marketing activities more effectively by understanding consumer thinking, perception, environment, and behavior. As with real life in the marketing world, this class will require a great deal of *individual initiative and independent judgment*. **You must be willing and able to translate broad project descriptions into meaningful and managerially relevant papers.** If you do not feel comfortable with this, please reconsider taking this course and marketing as a career choice!

TEXTS

“Required:”

Paco Underhill (2000), *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping*, Touchstone Books, ISBN 0684849143. (One copy is on reserve in the Rivera Library.) (“Why”)

Malcolm Gladwell (2002), *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*, Back Bay Books; ISBN: 0316346624. (One copy is on reserve in the Rivera library.) (“Tip”)

Recommended:

BSAD 112 course notes. Available at the Printing & Reprographics near the bookstore. These PowerPoint slides and other handouts will be available on the course web site but are being offered as a package for your convenience.

Wayne D. Hoyer and Deborah J. MacInnis (2001), *Consumer Behavior*, 2nd edition, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. ISBN 0-618-01326-1. (One copy will be on reserve in the Rivera Library.) (CB)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will study how to improve the effectiveness of marketing efforts through a better understanding of the consumer. We will consider issues such as behavioral approaches to segmentation, social influence, the diffusion of innovation, learning, motivation, perception, attitudes, decision processes, and the research needed to understand these issues within the context of the requirements of the firm.

**Missing classes is not just iffy—it could be
F_{fy}!**

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Appreciate the importance of considering the consumer's perspective in the making of marketing mix decisions;
- Understand the types of decisions that can effectively be addressed by the study of consumer behavior and those which cannot;
- Understand the impact of assumptions and beliefs often taken for granted by marketing managers, although their validity between, and even within, cultures is questionable (e.g., why do consumers use a particular product?);
- Develop skills useful in finding and analyzing information needed to make global marketing management decisions;
- Develop the communication skills needed by managers to function effectively in the global business world; and
- Appreciate the roles of formal analysis and creative work in approaching global marketing problems.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Week	Date	Day	Topic(s) and event(s)	Reading	
				Required	Recommended
1	4/1	Tue	Review of syllabus and project options	Why: 1-2	
	4/3	Th	Introduction to consumer behavior	Why: 3-4	CB: 1
2	4/8	Tue	Secondary sources of consumer information. PLEASE MEET IN ROOM 140 IN THE REFERENCE SECTION IN THE RIVERA LIBRARY for a demonstration by Mr. Peter Bliss, business librarian.	Why: 5-7	CB: 2
	4/10	Th	Consumer research: Primary methods	Why: 8-9	
3	4/15	Tue	Diffusion of innovation	Why: 10-11	CB: 19
	4/17	Th	In-class activity	Why: 12-13	
4	4/22	Tue	Diffusion of innovation	Why: 14-15	
	4/24	Th	Demographics and segmentation	Why: 16-17	CB: 15, 16
5	4/29	Tue	Motivation, Ability, and Opportunity	Why: 18-19	CB: 3
	5/1	Th	In-class activity		
6	5/6	Tue	Catch-up		
	5/8	Th	Review for midterm		
7	5/13	Tue	Midterm. (Individuals not taking the midterm need not show up).		
	5/15	Th	Knowledge, Learning, and Understanding	Tip: 1-2	CB: 5

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Week	Date	Day	Topic(s) and event(s)	Reading	
				Required	Recommended
8	5/20	Tue	Knowledge, Learning, and Understanding	Tip: 3-4	
	5/22	Th	Attitudes and attitude change	Tip: 5	CB: 6
9	5/27	Tue	Attitudes and attitude change	Tip: 6	CB: 7
	5/29	Th	Culture	Tip: 7	CB: 13
10	6/3	Tue	Culture	Tip: 8	CB: 14
	6/5	Th	Review for final		
Final examination:			Tuesday, June 10, 3:00-6:00 p.m.		

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

It is my strong belief that different individuals can contribute to their organizations in different ways. This course has been structured to allow you some choice in the types of assignments you will complete. From the following list of options, you must attempt at least 1,000 points, subject only to the constraint that, by University policy, everyone must take the final examination. The final score must be weighted as a part of the final course grade.

Quality is more important than quantity, and thus there are no minimum lengths of papers per se. The guidelines below, based on double-spacing with a 12 point proportionally spaced font, may be useful, but are advisory only.

Component	Points possible	Due date	References expected	Suggested length (pages)
Midterm	100	5/13	N/A	N/A
Final	200	6/10	N/A	N/A
Research design	100	4/17	No	2-3
Segmentation analysis	100	5/01	No	2-3
Diffusion study	200	5/06	Yes	4-7
Personal web site	200	5/15	N/A	N/A
Perception study	200	5/22	No	3-5
Attitude change strategy	200	6/03	No	3-5
99¢ store analysis	200	5/29	No	2-3
Information search analysis	200	6/05	No	3-5
Empirical research project	200	5/29	No	4-6
Discretionary product papers				
Literature review	300	4/24	Yes	6-10
Historical analysis	200	5/13	Yes	4-5
Interviews	400	5/20	No	7-12
Web search	200	5/27	Yes—to actual sites	4-5
Strategies paper	300	6/05	Yes	6-10
Individually proposed project	Variable	As negotiated	As negotiated	Variable
TOTAL	3,400			

From the above list, you can choose which components you wish to attempt subject only to the condition that the final must be included. An example of one person's choice might be:

Component	Points possible	Attempted	Score	Percentage	Counted	Points counted	Points attempted counted
Midterm	100	No					
Final (REQUIRED OF EVERYONE)	200	Yes	173	86.50%	Yes	173	200
Research design	100	Yes	91	91.00%	Yes	91	100
Segmentation analysis	200	No					
Diffusion study	200	No					
Personal web site	200	No					
Perception study	200	No					
Attitude change strategy	200	No					
99¢ store analysis	200	Yes	174	87.00%	Yes	174	200
Information search analysis	200	No					
Discretionary product papers							
Literature review	300	Yes	264	88.00%	Yes	264	300
Historical analysis	200	Yes	150	75.00%	No		
Interviews	400	Yes	335	83.75%	Yes	335	400
Web search	200	No					
Strategies paper	300	No					
Individually proposed project	Variable	No					
TOTAL	3000+					1050	1200

In this case, the person achieved a total of 1050/1,200 points (87.50%). Because this person already had over 1,000 points and the percentage on the “historical analysis” paper was lower than the course percentage without this score, it was not included.

If you wish to work on a project (other than the exams!) as a group, you may do so, with the points available being divided evenly between the participants (e.g., if a group of two people attempts a “strategies” paper worth a total of 300 points, each would attempt $300/2=150$ points). **Please note that electing team activity will be at your own risk—if you do not find individuals whom you can trust, you should work alone.**

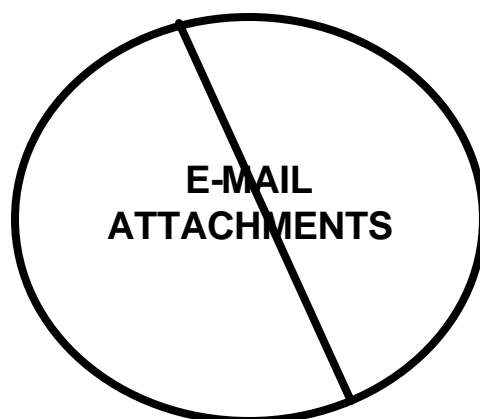
The individual’s total score will be determined by dividing the total number of points accumulated by the total number of points attempted or 1,000, whichever is higher. It is anticipated that final grades will be based on essentially on a “straight” scale, although minor curving in your favor may be done to attain the most natural breaking points between grade-cutoffs.

The point-worths assigned to each course component are intended to fairly represent the amount of effort involved, and it is not my intention to grade one type of assignment more

severely or leniently than another. However, please note that real businesses do not face questions that be meaningfully answered by objectively “right” multiple-choice answers. In fact, most businesses face problems and opportunities that are highly unstructured, and a major complaint that business schools face from employers is that our graduates have difficulty in handling ambiguous tasks. Therefore, please note that there is a great deal of subjectivity involved in grading, even though I am guided heavily by the following criteria:

- A demonstration of a *genuine understanding* of the material discussed, rather than unexamined “parroting” of others’ ideas;
- Evidence of a balance between analytical thinking and creativity;
- Well documented, *thorough research*, with documentation of facts as needed from credible sources;
- An *application of material to the specifics of a situation*—a clear indication of how this material can be applied to the needs of the specific firm;
- A demonstration of thought going beyond what a firm is currently doing, emphasizing *new* ideas for the firm to consider in improving its performance and/or adapting to changing conditions;
- *Organization* and clear, concise writing.

Please note that assignments papers and projects must be truly exceptional to receive 100% scores. It is not appropriate to view a score as being the result of having “points taken off.” The appropriate grade for a merely “OK” paper is a grade of “C.” A “fairly good” paper might warrant a “B-” or “B.”



COURSE COMPONENTS

MIDTERM. A midterm, scheduled for May 13, will cover material up to and including “motivation, opportunity, and ability” unless otherwise notified in class. This midterm will consist of

- *eight short answer questions* (worth a total of 60%). You will be asked to answer six of these questions, leaving two blank, such that you will have an opportunity to address those questions on which you feel most confident. You will be provided up to one half page to respond to each question; some of these questions can be answered in two to three sentences.
- Two “*issue spotter*” cases, of which you respond to one. Here, you will be given a one to two paragraph description of a situation of a firm. You must (1) identify which course issues are *relevant and important* to the firm and then (2) *apply* those concepts to the *specific situation of the firm*. These “issue spotter” exam cases, a technique borrowed from law schools, will be graded based on:
 - the *significance* to the firm of the issues that you identify (you must decide which issues are applicable and are genuinely important for the specific firm);

- how well you relate the ideas to the specific *situation of the firm in question* (merely regurgitating class notes in the abstract will yield no credit);
- the extent to which in-depth knowledge of the ideas applied is expressed (note that your reasoning must be evident and explicit); and
- the extent to which the answer is well organized.

PLEASE BE SURE THAT YOU RELATE YOUR ANSWERS TO THE SPECIFICS OF THE FIRM—**GENERAL ANSWERS ARE NOT OF INTEREST!**

There will be *no credit* for:

- “No brainer” observations, such as the need for the firm to take culture into consideration (you must discuss likely cultural influences *in context* of the firm situation) or the need to do research (you must justify the issues and methods that you explicitly indicate);
- *Outside knowledge* (what you happen to know about this particular firm, beyond what was covered in class, readings, or in the case);
- *Ideas which are too vague* to be meaningful;
- *Ideas not related to issues discussed in this course* (e.g., issues not significantly related to consumers);
- “Buzz” words whose meaning is not discussed; or
- General ideas not tailored to the needs of the specific firm.

The exam will tend to cover *substantive* issues and applications to real firm situations. It is, for example, extremely unlikely that you will be asked to regurgitate a definition, but you may be *given* a definition and then be asked *to discuss its significant parts and implications*—a much more difficult task. Please be forewarned that one of my favorite words is “implications”—you should always be prepared to discuss why something is important to a firm in a given situation.

FINAL (Tuesday, June 10 from 3:00-6:00 p.m.): Although the final is cumulative, it will stress material covered after the midterm. The final will be of the same format as the midterm, with the short answer questions being worth 60% and the case worth 40%.

PERSONAL WEB SITE: Potential employers are frequently impressed with the initiative of students who have developed web sites. If you elect to make a web site, or adapt one you have already made, you may receive credit in this course. Although the specific format of a site is open to negotiation, the following are the default requirements for a grade of up to 80%:

- Index page
- A resume
- Two samples of your work (e.g., reports or projects from classes)
- At least ten links to web sites relevant to consumer marketing.

To receive a higher grade, you must add something extra—e.g., a collection of links on a specific topic (e.g., sites relevant to the exporting of computer technology) or an essay on why people who tell dirty jokes should be shunned or your views on capital gains taxation. The site must use proper HTML, SHTML, or Adobe Acrobat (*.pdf) files. **Word (*.DOC), PowerPoint, and Excel files are *not* acceptable!**

All content on the site must be created by you. You may have *links* to other people’s work but may not copy other people’s material onto your site.

Upon completion, **please e-mail the URL (address) of the web site to the instructor at lars.perner@ucr.edu** and *not* to BSAD112@larsperner.com . Due: May 15.

NOTE: It is not unusual for technology to create problems. Reasonable extensions will be given due to technical problems if the instructor is notified in advance.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you use GeoCities.com as your host, there should be no spaces in your filenames! (E.g., a file can be named "My_Resume.html" but not "My Resume.html.")

CONSUMER RESEARCH. First, (1) please identify a question about consumer behavior that you would believe to be of interest to a firm (e.g., How do consumers choose between brands of cereal? How many consumers can taste the difference between Coca Cola and a generic brand? What are some women's motivations for using cosmetics?) Please discuss why this is an important question and what types of decisions answers to this question would help support. Then (2) briefly design and describe a study, using one of the methods discussed in discussed in class that might help answer this question. Please discuss:

- *Why* you selected this method (e.g., observation, questionnaires, individual interviews) and the advantages and disadvantages associated with this method;
- *Who* should be sampled and why this group is appropriate; and
- *Any specific questions or variables to be addressed.* Why did you select these specific variables?

Please see examples on a separate handout on the course web site. April 17.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

1. Please do *not* use a cover-page. Your name, assignment description, date due, and e-mail address should be written in the top right corner of the first page. On the first page of the assignment, please write and sign the following statement:

This is my own work.

2. Please download, fill out, and attach the appropriate checklist to the end of the assignment.

3. Unfortunately, it has become necessary to scan assignments for possible plagiarism. Please "copy" the text of your assignment from your word processor and "paste" it into the message section of an e-mail. Please do *not* attach a file. In the "subject" field, please put

Your Name / Assignment Description (e.g., Segmentation)

CONSUMER SEGMENTATION. For a market of interest to you, please

1. Check out the *Best Customers* directory in the Rivera Library to see which variables appear to be related to the quantity or frequency of usage of the product category you have selected. What are some interesting observations, and what are their significance?
2. Suggest at least five of the most appropriate *variables* that you would use to segment the market. Why do you believe these variables to be most important? How feasible is it to segment on these?
3. Given the tradeoff between having segments being too small or not being clearly defined, in practice, how many of these variables do you think you would want to use simultaneously in practice?
4. For the variables selected, what are the *levels* of each variable that you use? (E.g., on price sensitivity, you could have the levels of "very price sensitive," "somewhat price sensitive," and "price insensitive." Note, again, that you need to make a tradeoff

between precision or creating too many segments. For example, in the case of price sensitivity, is it worth having a category of "slightly" price sensitive, or can this be subsumed under "insensitive?"

5. *Based on combinations of the variables and levels you selected above*, please suggest which *segments* you would expect to exist you suggested. What are some characteristics of each segment? You do not have to discuss all segments if there are many, but you should discuss at least five of the most important ones.
6. Based on the issues you discuss above and the distinctive competencies of a firm or brand of your choice, which segment(s) would be most appropriate for that firm or brand to target? How did you reach this conclusion? Does the firm need to make any changes in its current positioning to accomplish this? Due: May 1.

DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION. Please (1) identify a product *category* not already discussed in class. You should address a general category (e.g., voice-enabled GPS guides for automobiles) and *not* a specific brand. Then please (2) try to find out about its diffusion history and/or potential and (3) discuss, based on factors that facilitate or inhibit the diffusion of innovation (e.g., relative advantage, compatibility), the prospects that you would expect this product to have. (For new products, you will want to focus most on potentials; for products that have been around for a while, you can focus either on the product history or potentials for revitalization). You must cite your sources.

Please note that the history of a company that may have manufactured or invented the product in question is usually *not* of interest. You may discuss specifically one or more manufacturers may have learned about consumers of this product, and their diffusion styles and buying behaviors, if applicable. The history of the technology per se is *not* of interest unless the consumer is discussed explicitly in this context.

You should do quality research and cite appropriate books and articles. Please note that web sites generally do not contain credible information and should *not* be cited or relied upon for information. Due: May 6.

PERCEPTION. Please find any marketing stimulus (e.g., advertisement, billboard, Internet "banner") that you feel has not been getting as much attention as it could and

- (1) Describe the stimulus;
- (2) Provide suggestions, **based on factors that determine the amount of attention that a stimulus will tend to receive**, as to what the marketer might realistically do to increase the amount of attention given.
- (3) Be sure to consider and discuss the cost and feasibility of such changes! (E.g., changing a newspaper advertisement from black and white to color will increase cost dramatically).

Please note that:

- You must discuss a specific stimulus (e.g., one specific billboard as opposed to billboards in general).
- **Your analysis should focus on issues of the amount of *attention* given to the stimulus. Persuasion and positioning are important but are *not* the focus of this**

advertisement. Due: May 22.

NOTE

In all papers, you must cite your sources in the body of the text and provide a complete bibliography at the end of the paper. You must cite a source when you use information from it even if you do not quote directly. For example:

It appears that rap music has so far met success in North America, Western Europe, and certain more affluent Asian countries, with penetration in Latin America and the Middle East so far being quite limited. (Intrascopolus, 2000).

(The author's last name and the year of publication are put in parentheses at the end of the sentence). The source should be listed completely (author, title, publication, date, and, if available, page numbers) at the end of the paper. E.g.,

Interscopulus, James Q. (2000), "Rapping Against a Cultural Wall," *International Journal of Rappology*, 4(2), 423-450.

Whenever three or more consecutive words are used from a source, these must be put in quotes, but whenever possible, you should attempt to **paraphrase what the source** said rather than quoting directly.

ATTITUDES AND ATTITUDE CHANGE: Please

1. Identify a firm that would like consumers to believe something different from what most or many currently do.
2. **Based on attitude change strategies discussed in class** (e.g., adding beliefs, changing affect, two-sided appeals), discuss strategies that could be used in an advertising or promotional campaign to bring about this change. Please be as specific as possible. You should consider cost effectiveness and feasibility in your evaluation. For example, it is very difficult to change currently held beliefs. Therefore, if you suggest trying to do this, you must specify how and how realistic you expect this effort to be. Note that if you suggest heavy repetition of an advertising campaign, the firm or organization in question should have the resources to be able to afford this.

Please be sure that you explicitly discuss **attitude change strategies**. Good ideas for addressing the problem in general are interesting, but this specific assignment requires that you explicitly discuss *attitude change* strategies. For example, if you suggest giving out a coupon, you might discuss how this would help change behavior. Due: June 3.

CONSUMER INFORMATION SEARCH: Please interview a friend, relative, or acquaintance about an important purchase that he or she made in the past. How well does this consumer's *actual* information search and decision making compare to the model of information search and decision making discussed in class? E.g., did the consumer make a decision immediately after identifying alternatives? What are some interesting ways in which the consumer's was similar to, or differed greatly from, the model. What are managerial implications for marketing strategies? Due: June 5.

99¢ STORE PRODUCT ANALYSIS: Why do some seemingly promising products fail? There are many reasons why some products end up being sold at very low prices in "99 cent" stores. Sometimes, a manufacturer needs to "unload" some merchandise because it manufactured too much, is introducing a new model, has inventory that is nearing its expiration date, or is selling less in a foreign market than it expected. At other times, the 99 cent stores can get great deals because they buy in very high volumes. Frequently, however, products end up in

99 cent stores because sales at higher prices, through conventional channels, have been disappointing.

1. Visit a 99¢ or other liquidation store.
2. Identify one specific interesting product. **Please select a product of *reasonably good quality that likely failed for a reason other than quality concerns*.** For example, the product might be too difficult to use in practice or to store, or be messy to use). Please be sure to discuss your reasoning. The fact that a product label was printed in a foreign language suggests that the product was intended to be sold abroad, and thus that is not an interesting reason, either. You would then have to consider why the product did not make it in its home market.
3. Propose one or more hypotheses, based on what you have learned about consumers, as to why the product did not appear to succeed in the retail market.
4. If you proposed more than one hypothesis, does one seem to be more promising than others?
5. To attempt an especially high score, you may want to ask your friends to suggest their hypothesis and/or “bounce off” your hypotheses for comments. Please report your results.

Your analysis should be **based on course issues**.

Some local 99¢ cent stores are:

- In the Food 4 Less shopping center on Chicago;
- In the Stater Brothers/K-Mart shopping center on Iowa;
- 99¢ Cents Only Stores, 9915 Magnolia Ave., Riverside;
- 99¢ Cents Only Stores, 3477 Arlington Ave., Riverside (just off the 91 Freeway); and
- On Blaine, right before Watkins Dr., next to Tapioca Express.

NOTE: The point value for this assignment, and expectations, have been increased since the previous quarter. Due: May 29.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH. Some products are used more by certain kinds of people or by people in specific situations. For example:

- Many people at airports are business travelers, who are more likely to wear professional attire than people shopping in a mall.
- Customers at McDonald’s are more likely to be parents than patrons of a nightclub, and therefore, it is likely that more minivans are parked outside McDonald’s than outside a night time entertainment establishment.

Please:

1. Come up with a hypothesis of how the observable use of one type of product category or lifestyle choice may be more common in one situation than in another (e.g., that more men in attendance at a baseball game will have a moustache than will men shopping in CompUSA). Please note: It would be more impressive if you came up with a hypothesis that sounds intriguing but does not appear to be obviously true.
2. Provide a justification for this hypothesis (e.g., men at baseball games are likely to value the display of their masculinity. On the other hand, men who shop for computers are likely to be more “geeky,” and a moustache or beard would tend to get in the way).
3. If this is not obvious, state the criteria for how cases are to be classified and how you will make classifications. (For example, if you are interested in the percentage of women in two settings who have long hair, how many inches does it take for hair to be “long?” How will you “measure” this in collecting your data? It is OK to rely on your subjective judgment, but you must specify your criteria.)

4. Observe at least 100 cases in each setting. (E.g., count how many vehicles parked at two different locations are pickup trucks and how many are not; or count the number of women wearing or not wearing wedding rings in the mall and at a gun show).
5. State your null and alternative hypotheses. For example, if your hypothesis is that the proportion of men who bring along children is higher among shoppers in Ikea (p_I) than among shoppers in Albertson's supermarket (p_A), your would have:

$$H_0: p_I = p_A$$

$$H_a: p_I > p_A$$

You can test this hypothesis using either a Student's t -test of proportions or by Chi square (χ^2). A spreadsheet to facilitate calculations will be posted on the course web site.

6. State whether your null hypothesis was rejected or not.
7. Discuss your findings. Was your hypothesis supported or not? If not, does it appear that the hypothesis was actually wrong (e.g., more men actually brought children in Albertson's)? If the finding was in the right direction (e.g., more men in the Ikea sample brought children) but not significant, do you tend to believe that your lack of significant results was due to a sample size that was too small?
8. Please discuss any unexpected experiences or problems you had during the data collection. (E.g., if you were counting the number of people wearing wedding rings in two settings, some people's hands may not have been covered by gloves or otherwise not visible). Due: May 27.

Please note: The intention with this assignment is that you would collect your data at a location you would be visiting anyway and where you might have to waiting time on your hands (e.g., while waiting to board a plane, you could count number of people wearing tennis shoes).

ALTERNATIVE PROJECT: If you have a reasonable idea for a project, please feel free to write me a brief proposal indicating what you would like to do, the outcome you expect, and a suggested point weight. This must be approved by April 22.

DISCRETIONARY PRODUCT PROJECTS. Special emphasis will be given in this class to products whose use is discretionary—e.g., products that one does not have to use, but products that are used by one or more segments of consumers. Examples of such products, identified by actual consumers, are: perfume, nail polish, alcohol, cologne, jewelry, cigarettes, hair gel, basketballs, hats, and candles. This category is not intended to cover specific products where the consumer has a choice as to which specific product to use but not whether to use a product that serves the overall function. For example, jeans would not be discretionary because these represent a specific case of clothes, which a person must use (at least in decent society). Other examples: Sodas (specific instance of liquids), candy bars (specific case of food), and pencils (specific case of writing instruments). Certain products fall into gray areas: Beer (technically a liquid, but consumed more for alcohol than to quench thirst), coffee (technically a beverage, but in practice dehydrates more than the liquid it provides), high heeled shoes (technically for foot coverage but worn, at great discomfort, for style or professional appearance), and cell phones (may be needed for work by some people). Certain products may theoretically be discretionary but are in practice required for health or to meet common social expectations: toothpaste, dental floss, and deodorant. Certain products may be discretionary for some people but may be expected to be used in certain social circles or work situations: Razors, shaving cream, certain kinds of make-up, and ties.

Several project opportunities relate to such discretionary products. If you complete more than one of these assignments, you are encouraged to stay with the same product to economize on your research.

Literature review. Using library databases such as Lexus-Nexus, ABI/Inform, or PsychInfo, please find articles on your chosen product category and discuss your findings in a paper. Note that you should choose a product category generally and not a specific brand. You might address such issues as when individuals typically begin to use the product (e.g., baseball card collections may start between the ages of 8-14), consumer perceptions of and motivations for the use of a product, the social impact of the use of a product (e.g., coworkers may resent the use of strong perfume or cologne), and/or the economics of using a product (e.g, how much does it cost to smoke?).

NOTE: Web sites run by individuals or firms are generally not credible sources and should not be used or cited in this paper. You should base your research on articles written in legitimate *books, newspapers, magazines, or trade journals*. You should have a *minimum* of five quality sources.

Your paper should focus on issues related to *consumers* who are current and/or potential buyers of the product and their thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, and behaviors related to the product. You should not discuss companies manufacturing these products unless this discussion explicitly ties in consumers.

Historical analysis. To understand consumer attitudes toward a product and its associated behaviors, it may often be useful to examine the history of the product and its use. Some examples:

- Smoking was relatively uncommon in the U.S. before World War I. However, since the military issued cigarettes with rations, many soldiers came back with the habit started. Smoking rates began to decline significantly in the 1970s and 1980s after the health hazards of the practice became more widely known.
- Although ear piercing has been common among certain ethnic groups going far back in history, the practice was considerably less common among most Americans than it is today. Prior to the 1970s, a much smaller percentage of women—and very few men—had pierced ears. Ear piercing today also tends to take place considerably earlier than it did in past decades.
- Books on tape have been available at least since the 1970s, but these became increasingly popular in the late 1990s. Unfortunately, such recordings are most frequently used while driving, and many cars today come with CD players instead of tape recorders. It is more expensive to have both CD and cassette versions available, and books on CD are less attractive as it is more difficult to come back to the point you left off.

In a brief paper, please discuss the history of usage of the product of your choice, *emphasizing implications for current-day marketing of the product*. Please note:

- The paper should address the history of a product category (e.g., cologne) and *not* the history of a specific branded product (e.g., Calvin Klein).
- You should address issues of *consumer* experience. The history of firms is relevant only to the extent that you discuss specifically how consumers influenced these firms. Firm strategies are not of interest unless such strategies specifically influenced consumers.
- Technology is relevant only if it directly affected consumers, and any technological discussion must make this link very explicit.

You should base your research on articles written in legitimate *books, newspapers, magazines, or trade journals*. You should have a *minimum* of three quality sources. Due: May 13.

Interviews: Please at least three people who use a *legal* product of your choice. You might consider interviewing one “heavy” or frequent user, one “light” user, and one rare or non-user of the product. You should develop and ask managerially relevant questions such as:

- motivation for product use;
- economic costs and other downsides to the use of the product (e.g., perfume can be very expensive and others may object to its smell; smoking is expensive, harmful to one’s health, and may invite judgment by others; nail polish can “chip” and takes a long time to apply);
- frequency and occasions of usage (e.g., expensive wines are consumed at celebratory events);
- memorable experiences using the product;
- the influence of others on the usage of the product (e.g., a man may be influenced by his wife to wear a particular brand of after-shave); and/or
- decisions to use or not use the product and/or choosing which brand(s) to buy.

NOTE: Please be sensitive in performing the interviews. You should be sure to avoid any questions that are overly intrusive and inform participants that they should feel free not to answer any questions that they may feel uncomfortable discussing.

Please *analyze* your respondents’ answers, comparing and contrasting what each said. In what ways do these consumers appear to be relatively similar, and in what ways do they seem to differ? Please discuss managerial implications of your results (i.e., what might you suggest to a manager based on what you have learned?) Due: May 20.

Web search: This project is similar to the interviews project above, but involves searching for exchanges between consumers on the Internet. (Thus, you will not have the freedom to write the questions, but you will have the opportunity to find issues that consumers themselves have found interesting to discuss. Please find and analyze Internet newsgroup entries by at least three different individuals discussing their usage of, or search for information about, a product category (not a specific brand) of your choice. Please note that you should search for expressions *by* consumers and *not* general informational web sites. To search Usenet groups,

- i. Go to <http://www.google.com/> .
- ii. Double-click on “Groups.”
- iii. In the search box, enter your product category and any additional key words of interest (e.g., in searching for “cologne,” you may want to enter “date” or “interview” or “girlfriend” to search for a context).
- iv. Note down the URLs of each site examined.

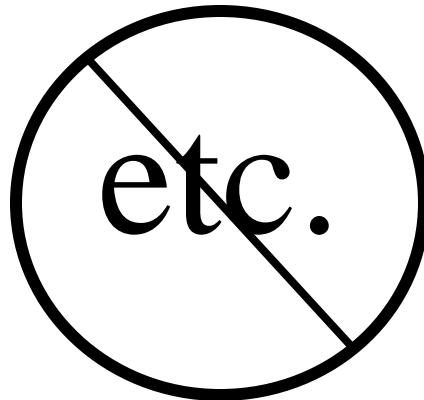
Please discuss and analyze what writers wrote, comparing and contrasting what each said. In what ways do these consumers appear to be relatively similar, and in what ways do they seem to differ? Please discuss managerial implications of your results (i.e., what might you suggest to a manager based on what you have learned?) Do you notice any “mavens,” “connectors,” and/or “salespeople?” May 27.

Strategies: Based on your combined findings from the different discretionary product projects that you have undertaken, please discuss strategic opportunities for a specific firm marketing the product. Many of the papers above have asked you to discuss strategic implications of your findings. This is your chance to (1) discuss strategic opportunities in more depth and (2) discuss strategies based on your *combined* insight from the different papers. Your recommendations should be ethically defensible (e.g., it would not be appropriate to suggest peer pressure to consume alcohol or tobacco). You must make explicit reference to at least two discretionary product projects. Due: June 5. **NOTE THAT YOU MUST HAVE DONE AT LEAST TWO DISCRETIONARY PROJECTS ON THE SAME PRODUCT CATEGORY TO BE ABLE TO DO THIS PROJECT.**

CLASS PARTICIPATION: Individuals who consistently contribute *exceptionally well* to class discussions may be rewarded with up to fifteen extra credit points. However, this reward will be made only for those who contribute in a truly impressive manner.

POLICIES

- 1) **Classes should be missed only under truly compelling circumstances.** Missing an excessive number of classes (more than 2-3) will be taken as a sign of serious deficiency in character, unmitigated sloth, and lack of dedication to the course and the university. Work obligations are not considered a sufficient reason for missing classes repeatedly.
- 2) **In view of the danger of the spread of viruses, e-mail messages sent to the instructor must never contain attachments.** Documents should be delivered by hand or "pasted" as plain text into the message section of an e-mail.
- 3) E-mails to the instructor should be written in **standard English with proper capitalization and punctuation.** Messages written in all lower case or without proper punctuation are considered unprofessional rather than "cool."
- 4) Please note that **papers containing the term "et cetera" or "etc." are likely to be evaluated unfavorably.** I am not at all convinced that most people who use this term know or have thought through what the "so forth" really includes. Therefore, the term comes across as an attempt—deliberate or not—to evade tough questions.



- 5) Standards of professionalism comparable to those expected in industry should be observed. Specifically:
 - a) You are expected to arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class. If you run late for anything but the most compelling reasons, it would be more considerate to spare others an interruption by not showing up at all that day. If you have to leave early for compelling reasons one day, please sit as close as possible to the door to minimize the disruption and do not sign up as present.
 - b) **In consideration of the rest of the class, private conversations should be entirely avoided.** This includes the passing of notes or non-verbal communication. It is *not* necessary to speak to others to pass along handouts or other materials.

- 6) Extensions may be granted under exceptional circumstances. Unless an explicit waiver is obtained in advance, extensions are expressly contingent on continuous attendance between the original due date and the extended deadline. To petition for an extension, please fill out the form at http://www.larsperner.com/bsad112/HTM/petition_for_extension.htm.
- 7) University regulations on academic integrity are in effect. All work submitted must be your own. **In writing papers, if you take any more than three consecutive words from any source—even if placed in footnotes or in tables—these must be put in quotes.** Even if you do not quote directly, you must still give credit, by way of a citation, to any author's ideas you use. The university provides serious sanctions for plagiarism.
- 8) In writing papers, you should attempt to paraphrase, rather than quoting directly, as much as possible. Direct quotes should be used only for very compelling reasons as discussed below. Ordinarily, **quotations should account for no more than 5% of the length of a paper, and any paper that contains more than 15% quotes will receive a score of zero.** Note that you must cite a source even if you do not quote it directly.
- 9) Students are responsible for having a correct e-mail address on record with the instructor and must verify the accuracy of grade reports each time those are sent electronically. Please make sure that your e-mail address listed on BlackBoard is correct. If you do not have an e-mail address, you can obtain a free account on sites such as Yahoo or Hot Mail.
- 10) Individuals who wish to claim as an excuse that "the dog ate [their] homework" must furnish proof of ownership of a dog of sufficient size to be plausibly able to consume an assignment of the size in question.

NOTE

On the first page of each assignment turned in, please write and sign the following statement: "This is my own work."

A PERSONAL NOTE

I have a mild case of Asperger's Syndrome, a neurological condition that in effect involves a "trade," albeit involuntary, of certain abilities for others. My symptoms are modest but frequently noticeable—the most significant ones involve difficulty in maintaining effective eye contact (I am often perceived as "staring"), impaired transmission and interpretation of non-verbal communication, excessive sensitivity to noise and other stimuli, poorly controlled body movements, limited spatial ability, and extreme difficulty in "learning" faces. Please understand that my mannerisms are not an indication of lack of interest or regard, that it may take me several weeks to learn your name even if I have a photograph of you available, and that I may need several extra moments to recognize you if we run into each other outside class.

QUALITY OF SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

Sources That Are Likely to Be of Higher Quality:

- **Books**
- **Periodicals**—can be found through library databases such as Lexis-Nexis and ABI/Inform
 - **General news** (Note: These sources are sometimes available online and it is fine to use any online version).
 - **Newspapers**—e.g., *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*
 - **Magazines**

- **Business oriented**—e.g., *Business Week*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *American Demographics*.
- **General**—e.g., *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Economist*
- **Specialty magazines**—if appropriate and relevant—e.g., *PC Magazine*
 - **Trade publications**—e.g., *Air Cargo World*, *Ice Cream Reporter*
- **Reference materials published by a reputable source—if relevant and appropriate**—e.g., encyclopedias and almanacs
- **Directories**—e.g., *Best Customers*
- **Government publications**—e.g., *Statistical Abstracts of the United States*
- **Selected web sites from credible sources:** U.S. Government, United Nations, World Bank. (Note: Most other web sites are not appropriate).

Sources That Are Likely to Be of Low Quality and/or to Be “Suspect” in Some Way:

- **Most web sites:**
 - **Private sites.** The person who wrote this may not be qualified to discuss this issue, may have done a sloppy job, or may have a special interest. This includes sites hosted on “.edu” domains unless the writer is clearly identified as a professor or researcher. If the source is credible this way, you must identify this fact in the citation.
 - **Company sites.** These are glorified advertisements for the firm and are intended to make the firm look good. Accuracy may be less important to the firm than coming across well!
 - **Trade group sites.** These are supposed to make the industry look good. See above!
 - **Foreign government sites.** Many of these are intended to make the firm look good. Some countries do not have the resources to collect accurate information. Much of the information contained may represent wishful thinking rather than reality.
 - **Political, social, or organizational sites.** Sites run by religious groups, social or ethnic groups, political groups, or other groups that exist to promote one kind of viewpoint, policy, or “truth” cannot be taken at face value.
- **Company advertisements and annual reports.** Selected objective and audited information may be useful, but management opinions and claims are suspect.
- **Trade group brochures.** Again, the publisher has an agenda!

Yes, it is easier to try to find things through search engines such as Google rather than consulting a reputable source. It is also easier to guess! Neither approach is acceptable.

NOTES ON QUOTATIONS AND CITATIONS

Quotations and paraphrasing. Generally, it is better to *paraphrase* statements made in articles and other documents. **A direct quote of more than a few words should ordinarily be used only under exceptional circumstances**—e.g., when it is exceptionally succinct, insightfully phrased, ironic, otherwise forceful, or revealing, as appropriate, of a significant player’s personality, predisposition, or strategy.

Note that occasionally using just a few judiciously selected words from a quote may add a nice flavor. For example:

John Smith, lead petrochemicals analyst at Arthur Anderson & Co., remarked that it is “quite unlikely” that Nigeria will be able provide a “sufficiently dependable” supply benzine for major industrial customers.

Frequently, direct quotes tend to be longer than a good paraphrase, and the reader will not be spending time thinking about what kind of point the direct quote was intended to make.

If you do decide to use a quote, it must be *introduced* in some way--e.g.,

According to Jack Intrascopolus, a leading authority on "rapponomics" (the economics of rap music), "The prospects for rap music in the Middle East, at the moment, appear to be...."

Citations. In all papers, you must cite your sources in the body of the text and provide a complete bibliography at the end of the paper. You must cite a source when you use information from it even if you do not quote directly. For example:

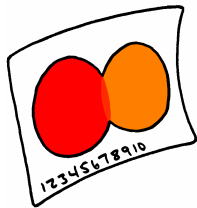
It appears that rap music has so far met success in North America, Western Europe, and certain more affluent Asian countries, with penetration in Latin America and the Middle East so far being quite limited. (Intrascopolus, 2000).

(The author's last name and the year of publication are put in parentheses at the end of the sentence). The source should be listed completely (author, title, publication, date, and, if available, page numbers) at the end of the paper. E.g.,

Intrascopolus, James Q. (2000), "Rapping Against a Cultural Wall," *International Journal of Rappology*, 4(2), 423-450.

Reminders

- All work turned in must be your own.
- On the first page of all papers turned in from now on, please write and sign the statement: "This is my own work." When web sites are submitted, this statement must be made in the e-mail announcing the URL (web site address).
- If more than three consecutive words are used from any source, these must be put in quotes.
- All sources used must be cited, even if they are paraphrased and not directly quoted.
- **You must have read each source listed in my references.**



EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY— *Secondary Marketing Research*

For up to 10 points of extra credit:

1. Identify a question related to consumer marketing that would be of interest to a firm. Please discuss clearly how the answer to this question would be useful to the firm. E.g.,
 - How frequently does the average household buy cereal and how long is spent on making a selection?
 - How likely are consumers to switch between different brands of coffee?
2. Use any *two* sources of secondary marketing research to answer this question.
3. Briefly discuss your findings and the implications for the firm.

Please note:

- You must use at least two different tools to get full credit. No matter how many periodical articles you cite, they will count together for no more than one source.
- You may use Web sites created by the U.S. Government, United Nations, the World Bank, or other independent organization, but Web sites run by private companies and individuals do *not* count.

If you choose to do this extra-credit assignment, it is due on April 17.

Creativity (within limits of good taste) is encouraged!