

DEI 624: Understanding the Consumer Universe: Market Research in Digital Media
University of Waterloo
Masters in Digital Experience Innovation
Winter Term 2014 | Thursdays, 5-8 PM

Professor: Dan Quinn

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

Knowledge of consumer behaviour can lead to business success and is a vital goal of marketing and a core component of business anthropology. Using research to understand current and potential customers in terms of their buying behaviour is fundamentally important. As such, it is the focus of this course. You will be exposed to various aspects of consumer behaviour by examining a number of areas in the context of issues/questions/decisions relevant to marketing practitioners.

This course builds on the basics of exploratory and conclusive research for understanding consumer behaviour. Qualitative methods of market ethnography can be used to recognize business opportunity through interviews, focus groups and personal observation. Quantitative methods of market research may be used to measure the potential of business opportunity through sampling with consumer polls, questionnaires, and combined research strategies. This basic understanding of market research will be used to gain insight into consumer behaviour and how consumer needs and behaviours can influence marketing and business decisions. Analytics will play a key role in understanding consumer behaviour.

The primary objectives of the course are:

1. relate some essential theoretical concepts to consumer behaviour in day to day life;
2. understand business reasons for understanding consumer behaviour;
3. understand how micro (for example personality) and macro (for example culture) influence consumer thinking and behaviour;
4. understand the issues associated with facilitating consumer decision-making in different contexts and
5. apply research methods and consumer behaviour theory to practical marketing problems

Real life examples will be provided to provide a practical overview of how consumer behaviour will play a key role in the lives of marketing leaders.

Required Text

Consumer Behaviour: Buying, Having, and Being, Sixth Canadian Edition, 6/E

Michael R. Solomon, *Saint Josephs University*

Katherine White, *University of British Columbia*

Darren Dahl, *University of British Columbia*

Additional Readings

Links to and/or digital copies of additional required readings and/or documents will be provided online via **LEARN**.

Course Evaluation/Grading Scheme

- 20% Class Contribution
- 20% Real World Application
- 20% Digital Brand Audit
- 40% Group Major Project

Reading, Assignments and Deliverables: Students will be responsible for all of the work assigned, as noted under Topics to be Covered, Chapter Reading, and Additional Assignments.

Course Schedule

WEEK	DATE	TOPICS TO BE COVERED	CHAPTER READINGS	ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS
1	Jan 9	Course Overview Setting Expectations and Group feedback Introduction to Consumer Behaviour		Student Profile
2	Jan 16	Perception Learning and Memory	1,2,3	Groups to be formed by end of class
3	Jan 23	Motivation and Attitudes The Self	4,5	
4	Jan 30	Personality, Lifestyle and Values Placeholder for Guest Speaker	6	Major Group Project Proposal Due
5	Feb 6	Attitudes Attitude Change and Interactive Communications	7,8	Real World Application Report Due
6	Feb 13	Digital Analytics and Trendspotting Placeholder for guest speaker	LEARN	
7	Feb 20	Reading Week		
8	Feb 27	Social Influence and Social Media	11	Digital Brand Audit Due
9	March 6	Group Trip to visit Agencies and digital Marketing Partners (location and partners TBD)	10	Trip details to be provided Bus transportation will be arranged from Stratford.
10	March 13	Income, Social Class and Family Structure Individual Decision making	12 9	Note: March Break

11	March 20	Sub Cultures and Cultural Influence	13, 14	
12	March 27th	Group Presentations		Group Project Final report due

Class Contribution: Effective marketing management requires excellent communication skills. This course will provide you with the opportunity to practice and improve your own skills in this area. The class contribution mark recognizes the importance of developing excellent communication skills. Your level of preparation for class will directly impact on your class contribution mark, since quality of contribution, rather than quantity, will be recognized and rewarded. Students should come to class well prepared. This preparation includes reading assigned chapters before class, answering assigned questions, exercises and cases, and being willing to participate in class discussions. Quality contribution includes presenting a point of view, providing examples from outside reading or experience, drawing conclusions, or asking insightful questions. Simply coming to class will not achieve class contribution marks, as this is NOT an attendance mark.

Real World Application Report: 20%

Each week we will discuss an aspect of consumer behaviour, drawing from the textbook. One of the requirements for this course is to identify a current example of a topic and write a report about it. For example you may discuss how theory from the chapters on perception, motivation, learning and memory were evident in a recent consumer movement or product launch. Special focus should be given to digital aspects involved in the topic, e.g. how did social media play a role, how did other websites have an impact on the topic you are covering? Provide real world examples as supporting materials. This assignment must be submitted in Word document format to the LEARN dropbox by 5 PM on the due date listed under the “Additional Assignments” column of the Course Schedule.

Your report should be 6-8 pages, double-spaced. The content must be based on and related to a variety of theories presented in Chapters 1-5 and show the impact (or non-impact) of the digital realm. You should show how your example demonstrates a real-life application of the theoretical concepts studied. You may critique the example from a managerial and/or theoretical perspective, or point out ways the marketer could have used conceptual knowledge to make a better decision. Examples chosen should be interesting, relevant, timely and conceptually insightful.

Digital Brand Audit: 20%

Monitor a brand of your choice on Twitter over a period of 30 days. Keep track of sentiment and actual tweets which you will analyze and turn into insights based on consumer behaviour theory. Document these insights in an infographic. This assignment must be submitted to the LEARN dropbox by 5 PM on the due date listed under the “Additional Assignments” column of the Course Schedule.

Group Major Project: 40%

Throughout the term students will have many opportunities to work in groups. In addition to in-class group exercises and discussions, student groups will develop a group project during the course groups will be formed by the end of the 2nd class. Students will be allowed to form their own groups. Your group will identify a current business situation that has consumer behaviour implications in the digital

realm. Based on the issue selected you will be required to write a report analysing the situation and identify solutions and/or alternatives using consumer behaviour and digital concepts.

The objective of this project is to analyze actual, contemporary marketing decisions from a consumer behaviour perspective and demonstrate that you fully comprehend the applicability of the subject matter in the real world. To this end, you need to identify a current marketing decision, e.g. the launch of a new product, a service based pricing strategy, a brand repositioning, etc.

Almost all marketing decisions have consumer behaviour implications, so identifying one should be relatively easy. When selecting a marketing situation to analyze, try to pick one that has some impact on the brand, the company and/or the market conditions. For example, a minor change in package design may have consumer behaviour implications, however its impact and consequently your ability to analyze it in detail and demonstrate your understanding of consumer behaviour may be limited. Be sure to pick a situation with sufficient depth to enable a good discussion of consumer behaviour concepts. You may use primary information (i.e. talk to sales and marketing leaders, consumers of the product, conduct store visits, etc.) and secondary information (industry reports, online sentiment and customer feedback, financial reports etc.)

Your report must provide details about the marketing/consumer situation. The context at the company level or broader market level may also be relevant. Discuss all the relevant issues and identify the key consumer behaviour topics they may relate to. This should be followed by your analysis of the situation. Your discussion should demonstrate that you understand the theoretical construct relevant to your topic. Feel free to debate the relevance or applicability of a theory if your analysis warrants doing so.

Details of the format of the written report are as follows:

Report Specifications

Entire Report	12 pitch font (12 characters per inch) with 1-inch margins
Executive summary	Maximum 1 page, double-spaced
Body	Maximum 12 pages double-spaced
Appendices	Tables, figures, exhibits should also be included Double spacing not required
References (Mandatory)	Bibliography, double-spacing not required Footnotes/endnotes, double-spacing not required

The Group Major Project will be delivered in two stages:

1. **Group Project Proposal** (due Week 4): Each group will submit a one page, high-level overview on its chosen topic.
2. **Group Project Final** (Session 13): Final 15 minute oral presentation (accompanied by audio/visual aids) Final written report to be submitted to LEARN by 5PM on the due date listed in the course schedule

NOTE ON AVOIDANCE OF ACADEMIC OFFENSES

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of

Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all materials and sources in assignments is documented. Students will be given an option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>

Academic Integrity website (Arts): http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (UW): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.