

Course Outline

Course Code : MKT3702
Course Title : Consumer Behavior
Semester : Semester 1, AY 2025/2026
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Overview

“Our jobs as marketers are to understand how the customer wants to buy and help them do so.” – Bryan Eisenberg

Understanding customers is a cornerstone in marketing that have contributed to the success of many brands today. This course aims to teach students the principles and process of consumer decision making. For example, topics include how consumers learn and evaluate, how they decide, and also what they are influenced by. Students will also learn consumer research skills so that they are able to gather, analyse, interpret consumer insights.

Course Objectives

This course builds on the basic understanding acquired in a foundation marketing module. Learning outcomes include:

1. **Conceptual Understanding:**

- **Define** core concepts and theories in consumer behavior and **explain** its strategic importance to marketing management and business decision-making.
- **Describe and differentiate** the stages of the consumer decision-making process for various product categories, consumer types, and buying situations.

2. **Analyzing Influences:**

- **Analyze** the impact of **psychological factors** (e.g., motivation, perception, learning, attitudes, personality, lifestyle) on individual consumer choices and preferences.
- **Examine** how **social and cultural influences** (e.g., culture, subculture, social class, reference groups, family, opinion leadership) shape consumer behavior and consumption patterns.
- **Identify and evaluate** the role of **situational factors** (e.g., purchase environment, time pressure, mood) in influencing consumer decisions and consumption experiences.

3. **Critical Thinking:**

- **Critique** various marketing practices from a consumer behavior perspective.
- **Develop** actionable consumer insights from case studies and real-world scenarios, and **propose** relevant research questions to further investigate consumer motivations and actions.

4. **Understanding Oneself as a Consumer**

- Students can also look forward to understanding their decision making better.

A blended learning approach is used for this course where pre-shared videos and readings, optimize learning by allowing students to grasp foundational concepts at their own pace before class. This approach reserves valuable in-person time for higher-level learning activities such as applications, discussions, and case studies, fostering deeper understanding and critical thinking. Such an approach is suitable for motivated students who

are willing to 1) read widely, 2) prepare for class through keeping up with assigned readings and video content, and 3) invest time for group work. This course is not suitable for students who dislike group work.

Online learning should take approximately 1 hour. In-class sessions are 2 hours per week (but could be longer during case and project presentation weeks). On weeks of assigned case studies, students are expected to prepare the case analysis adequately before coming to class. Each case requires approximately 3 hours (varies among individuals) of preparation time.

Assessment

| Assessment Components | Weightage |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Class Participation | 20% |
| 2. Individual Assignments | 30% |
| 3. Case Study (Group) | 20% |
| 4. Project (Group) (Group work components are subject to peer evaluation) | 30% |

General Guide & Reading (e.g. Case preparation guide, project report guide, main textbook & supplementary materials, etc)

1. Soloman, Michael R. and Cristel Antonia Russell (2024), *Consumer Behavior: Buying, Having, and Being*, 14th Edition, Pearson
2. Schiffman, Leon G. and Joseph L. Wisenblit (2018), *Consumer Behavior*, 12th Edition, Pearson

Additional readings will be assigned during the semester.

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

Academic integrity and honesty is essential for the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge. The University and School expect every student to uphold academic integrity & honesty at all times. Academic dishonesty is any misrepresentation with the intent to deceive, or failure to acknowledge the source, or falsification of information, or inaccuracy of statements, or cheating at examinations/tests, or inappropriate use of resources.

Plagiarism is 'the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own' (The New Oxford Dictionary of English). The University and School will not condone plagiarism. Students should adopt this rule - You have the obligation to make clear to the assessor which is your own work, and which is the work of others. Otherwise, your assessor is entitled to assume that everything being presented for assessment is being presented as entirely your own work. This is a minimum standard. In case of any doubts, you should consult your instructor.

Additional guidance is available at:

- <http://www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/administrative-policies-procedures/acceptance-record#NUSCodeofStudentConduct>
- <http://nus.edu.sg/osa/resources/code-of-student-conduct>

Schedule and Outline

| Week | Session | Chapters(s) ¹ |
|-------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | Understanding Consumer Behavior How to Motivate Consumers Project Briefing | 1, 5 |
| 2 | Learning the Case Method How Consumers Set Goals and Make Decisions High versus Low Involvement Decisions | 5, 7, 8 (pp 242, 250) |
| 3 | How to Understand Consumers through Research: Gathering Consumer Insights Case 1: Saxonville Sausages | Appendices C and D |
| 4 | How to Catch Consumers' Attention Case 2: Pillsbury Cookies | 3 |
| 5 | How to Teach Consumers Case 3: Cerenity Toilet Sanitizer | 4 |
| 6 | How Consumers Form Attitudes Case 4: TruEarth | 6 |
| Recess Week | | |
| 7 | Project Consultations by Appointment | |
| 8 | How to Persuade Consumers Case 5: Crocs | 6 |
| 9 | Social and Family Influences Case 6: Gillette | 11, 12 |
| 10 | Deepavali and NUS Well-being Day (no class) | |
| 11 | Cultural Influences and Symbolic Consumption Case 7: UA Submission of projects via Canvas on 2 Nov | 9, 10, 14 |
| 12 | Group Project Presentation I | |
| 13 | Group Project Presentation II | |

¹ Chapters are mapped to Solomon and Russell. You may refer to corresponding chapters in Schiffman and Wisenblit (2018) if you prefer to.