

DIGITAL MARKETING

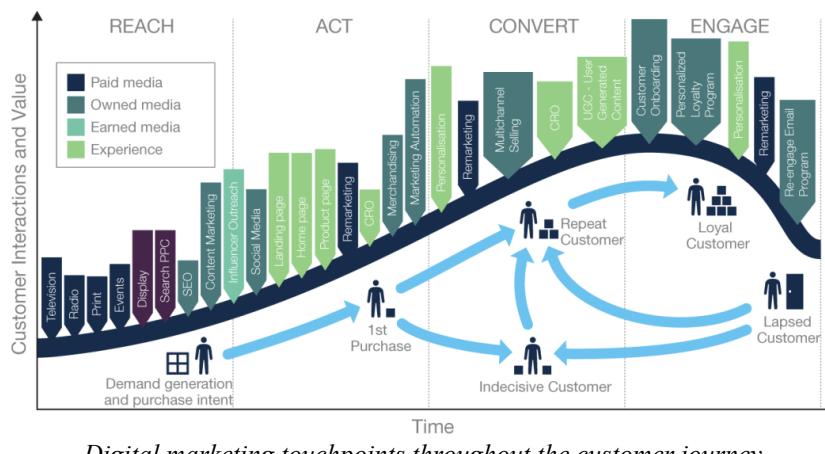
Class meeting time and location: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:15-13:45 in class U006.

Course Instructor: Assistant Professor Alexei Gloukhovtsev

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Course description

This course introduces the fundamental principles of digital marketing. We will cover how most organizations with an online presence ‘do’ digital marketing, focusing in particular on inbound marketing. We will examine the best practices associated with different online marketing channels, and how these channels should be managed to support the customer journey from initial awareness through to conversion and, hopefully, satisfaction and loyalty. We will also pay careful attention to the importance of managing customer privacy.



The goal for the course is to equip you with the necessary knowledge and vocabulary to understand the core digital marketing processes. By the end of the course, you should be able to walk into any company with an online presence and at the very least not feel out of place when discussing its digital marketing strategy. The course can also serve as a foundation upon which you can develop deeper expertise and specialization in the field.

Learning outcomes

Upon successfully completing the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the value and strategic role of different online marketing channels throughout the customer journey.
- Understand and be able to apply the principles of search engine marketing, online advertising, email marketing, social media marketing, and relationship marketing to reach strategic marketing outcomes.
- Understand the critical importance of managing online privacy, both from a marketer’s and customer’s perspective.

Assignments, workload, and grading

Contract grading – what and why?

Your grade for the course will be based on a system of evaluation called “contract grading.” In short, there is a prespecified amount of work that you need to do to earn a particular course grade (see below). At the start of the course, you decide how much effort you’re willing and able to put into the course, and sign up for the corresponding grade. At the end of the course, there are no surprises: if you have fulfilled the requisite obligations, you get the grade.

A key part of contract grading is that you will not receive numerical grades for your assignments. As long as you complete an assignment to a satisfactory level, it will be considered complete for the purpose of the grading contract. Note, however, that ‘satisfactory’ does not mean mediocre. The bar is set reasonably high. If your work does not meet the standard, you will be asked to revise it until it does.

A growing body of pedagogical research supports the use of contract grading, and it is increasingly common at top universities worldwide. Contract grading has several advantages for the student:

- It more accurately reflects the way you will be evaluated in your professional work – your boss or client will not give you an assessment of 75% or 90% on your work. They only care if your work meets the brief and is of sufficiently high quality.
- Contract grading encourages creativity and risk-taking. There is less temptation for students to play it safe by “ticking the boxes” required for a high grade.
- There is less ambiguity. Point grades (e.g., 16.5 out of 20) can seem arbitrary, especially for certain assignments such as essays and presentations.
- There is less uncertainty. No need to stress about whether you score high enough on an assignment or exam to get a particular grade. You do the work, you get the grade.

For the instructor, contract grading means that assessment and feedback can be relatively brief but detailed and tailored specifically to your work. There is no need to waste time with formulaic and superficial feedback that covers all facets of an assignment but is ultimately concerned with defending a particular grade (“here is why you scored 16.5 points out of 20 on your essay”). Instead, when giving you feedback, I can focus on what you did especially well, and highlight key areas for improvement.

How will it work in practice?

To earn a ‘2’ in this course, you agree to:

- Contribute substantially to all three group assignments and complete them to a satisfactory standard.

To earn a ‘3’ in this course, you agree to:

- Contribute substantially to all three group assignments and complete them to a satisfactory standard.
- Complete the exam to a satisfactory standard.

To earn a '4' in this course, you agree to:

- Contribute substantially to all three group assignments and complete them to a satisfactory standard.
- Complete three individual assignments to a satisfactory standard.
- Complete the exam to a satisfactory standard.

To earn a '5' in this course, you agree to:

- Contribute substantially to all three group assignments and complete them to a satisfactory standard.
- Complete six individual assignments to a satisfactory standard.
- Complete the exam to a satisfactory standard.
- Complete a learning diary to a satisfactory standard.
- Actively participate in class discussions

NB: The assignments are designed such that to earn a '5', you will likely need to dedicate approximately 160 hours of work to the course (21 hours per week). This corresponds to the official guidelines for a 6 ECTS course. That said, I equally respect the student who only needs a '2' and diligently completes the required work to earn that grade.

The contract

Research has shown that the contract grading system works best when students formally sign up for a particular grade in advance. During the first week, I will ask you to submit a grade contract indicating the grade you plan to pursue during the course. You can always re-negotiate your grade contract as the course goes on by emailing me or meeting with me during office hours.

Assignments in brief

All deadlines are midnight at the end of the day, unless otherwise specified. Minor adjustments possible.

Group assignments

In groups of 4 or 5, you will develop a digital marketing strategy for a fictional entity of your own creation (e.g., a company, non-profit organization, university, political candidate, etc.). The assignments will focus on search engine optimization (Assignment 1), digital advertising (Assignment 2), and social media marketing (Assignment 3). For each assignment, you will be asked to submit a power-point deck, record a 10-minute video presentation, and provide short written feedback on other groups' work.

Deadlines: announced at the start of the course.

Individual assignments

Weekly short written assignments (approx. 1-2 pages in length) on key course topics. Assignments will be released weekly as we progress through the course and due approximately a week later.

Deadlines: **announced at the start of the course.**

Exam

An in-person exam consisting of 4-6 short essay and/or calculation questions. A list of possible exam questions will be given at the end of the course.

Exam date: October 20th, 9-12.

Learning diary

Informal reflections on how the frameworks covered in the course apply to specific examples of digital marketing that you encounter in real life. 10 entries in total, 1 page per entry plus screenshots or images where applicable.

Deadline: October 16th.

Participation

Participation means that you are actively engaged in the course. Come to the lectures in time, prepared, having read any assigned reading. Participate in class discussions, ask questions if you don't understand something, answer others' questions, comment on or debate the material if you disagree with what is presented. We will likely have a mix of students with no prior experience in digital marketing, and those who have worked in the field. All questions and war stories from your professional experiences are welcome and encouraged!

I do not expect every student to have something to say in every class. However, a good rule of thumb is that by the end of the course, I should be able to recall your name when thinking of students who took the course.

Preliminary schedule

Lecture	Topic
Tue 06.09.21 12:15-13:45	Course intro, digital marketing strategy
Thu 08.09.21 12:15-13:45	Conversion-oriented web design
Tue 13.09.21 12:15-13:45	Search engine marketing
Thu 15.09.21 12:15-13:45	Search engine marketing II
Tue 20.09.21 12:15-13:45	Display advertising
Thu 22.09.21 12:15-13:45	Social media marketing
Tue 27.10.21 12:15-13:45	Mobile marketing
Thu 29.10.21 12:15-13:45	Email marketing
Tue 04.10.21 12:15-13:45	Digital marketing analytics
Thu 06.10.21 12:15-13:45	B2B digital marketing
Tue 11.10.21 12:15-13:45	Privacy, online reputation management
Thu 13.10.21 12:15-13:45	Course wrap-up

While the lecture times are set, changes to the order of lecture topics are still possible depending on our progress.

Readings

In addition to the lecture slides, I will assign supplementary reading material (articles, etc.). I will post these on MyCourses at least a week in advance of the corresponding lecture.

Course policies

Registration

The course is likely to be heavily overbooked. Study spots will be allocated based on the prioritization rules described in Sisu. Once registration closes, I will notify all registered students whether they have been accepted to the course. If your registration has been approved but you are unable to take the course, I ask that you let me know via email as soon as possible so that I can give your spot to somebody on the waitlist. Failure to do so will lead to loss of prioritization privileges should you choose to re-enroll in this course next year.

Deadlines and missed assignments

All deadlines are firm and non-negotiable. Barring force majeure circumstances (e.g., a documented illness), assignments submitted late will be regarded as ‘missed’ - not completed. Tech difficulties are to be expected and do not constitute a force majeure circumstance. Please backup your work and do not leave things until the last minute.

Missing one group assignment will result in a 1-point grade deduction. If you miss more than one group assignment, you will not be eligible to receive credit for the course.

Revisions and incomplete work

If you submit an assignment that does not meet the standard of ‘satisfactory’, I will ask you to revise your work until it meets the standard. However, assignments that are clearly incomplete and indicative of rushed last-minute work – stream of consciousness text with no coherent logic or structure, very superficial treatment of required components, or missing components altogether – will be regarded as ‘missed’ and will not be sent back for revision.



Homer Simpson returning a last-minute assignment. Don't be like Homer.

Dropping the course

All students who submit the minimum amount of coursework to pass the course (i.e., at least 2 group assignments) will receive credit and a grade for the course. If you would rather drop the course and not receive a grade, please notify me before the end of the course. Students who drop the course and wish to re-enroll next year will no longer qualify for prioritization benefits during registration.

Group work

There will be an opportunity for you to form teams for the group assignment during the first lecture. If you are unable to attend, you can instruct one of your classmates to add you to their group if you so wish. Alternatively, if you wish to be allocated to a group at random, you may email me after the first lecture.

We are all adults and I hope that there shouldn't be any problems with collaborating on group work assignments. However, in the unlikely event that problems arise, please contact me as soon as possible. Do not wait until the deadline to explain why someone failed to do their part of an assignment or did not contribute and should be left off the deliverable. I want this class to be a positive and valuable experience for you, but I can't help you if I don't know what's going on.

Communication

Lectures

Lectures will be held in person. Attendance is not mandatory, but active participation is requisite for receiving a 5 for the course. If you do choose to attend the lectures, I ask that you come on time and stay for the duration of the class.

Lectures will also be recorded. Ultimately, you are responsible for your own learning. Watching recordings on 2x speed is obviously no substitute for attending and actively participating in class.

MyCourses

All official communication will take place via MyCourses. Announcements will be posted in the ‘Announcements’ forum, and these messages will be automatically forwarded to your Aalto email address. Please check it regularly, especially in the days leading up to the course and during the first week of the course.

Should you have a question regarding the course, please first check the FAQ section on MyCourses. If you can't find an answer there, ask yourself if there's the slightest chance that your question could be relevant to another student on the course. If yes, check whether someone has already asked the question in the Q&A forum on MyCourses. If you can't find the question, please post it in the forum. This is the quickest way to receive an answer – perhaps another student will be able to help you before I even see your message! Once your question has been answered, other students with the same question will be able to quickly find the answer.

Email

Please email me only if your question is of a personal nature and not relevant to others (e.g., you need a deadline extension due to a sudden illness or there is a free rider situation in your group). Emails with general questions will receive an automatic reply directing you to the course FAQ or asking you to post your question on the message board.

I will do my utmost to answer questions posted to the Q&A forum or via email within one working day (24 hours – hopefully quicker than that). That said, I don't usually check my email or MyCourses in the evenings or on the weekend. This means I likely won't be able to offer last-minute help with assignments on the evening that they are due. Please plan accordingly.

Office hours

I am also happy to chat in person. Feel free to approach me after class or send me an email to schedule a meeting at the Department of Marketing. The Department is located in the Aalto BIZ building, on the floor above Restaurant Arvo. Topics that you may want to discuss in person may include, but are not limited to:

- Detailed feedback on your work
- Issues with group work
- Suggestions for improving your and others' course experience
- Potential topics for a master's thesis

Ethics policy

We conduct ourselves in a way that is respectful of others in all interactions during the course. We also follow the Aalto University Code of Academic Integrity:

<https://into.aalto.fi/display/ensaannot/Aalto+University+Code+of+Academic+Integrity+and+Handling+Violations+Thereof>

Accessibility and individual teaching accommodations.

Your experience in this class is important. If you have already established individual teaching accommodations with School of Business Learning Services (LES), please communicate your approved accommodations to me before the start of the course. If you have not yet established accommodations through LES, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), please contact LES first: study-biz@aalto.fi.

Detailed information regarding individual teaching accommodations:

<https://www.aalto.fi/en/services/individual-study-arrangements>