

# 23E57000 Fashion Marketing

## *Guidelines for course deliverables and assignments*

### 1. HARVARD CASES (30p)

Case studies give you a practical arena or context to apply what you have learned into a real-life situation. We will follow the Harvard Business School case study method, which is described as follows:

[The] case method is a profound educational innovation that presents the greatest challenges confronting leading companies, nonprofits, and government organizations—complete with the constraints and incomplete information found in real business issues—and places the student in the role of the decision maker. There are no simple solutions; yet through the dynamic process of exchanging perspectives, countering and defending points, and building on each other's ideas, students become adept at analyzing issues, exercising judgment, and making difficult decisions—the hallmarks of skillful leadership. [...]

In class—under the questioning and guidance of the professor—students probe underlying issues, compare different alternatives, and finally, suggest courses of action in light of the organization's objectives. As you watch a case study unfold in class, you'll see students doing 85 percent of the talking, as the professor steers the conversation by making occasional observations and asking questions

Preparation is key for a good study experience. For you to get the most out of the case session, you need to read through and reflect on the case material. It is highly encouraged to share ideas and reflections with your group-mates before class. Within the classroom, you will be given an opportunity to argue your position and get feedback on your thinking by listening to other participants' ideas. To repeat: preparation is key for a good case experience, as the instructor's job is to merely facilitate the discussion.

Harvard cases are written in a very specific way. While a lot of information is given, it is incomplete by design, and the participant is expected to fill the gaps. So rather than thinking of “what is the right answer?” (in real life, there rarely is one), you should assume the mindset of “what is a good argument or plan of action based on these given facts?” In most case discussions, multiple plans of action will emerge, and participants will be quite split at the end as to which plan is the best. The key learning point is to develop your own analytical tools to look at similar situations in your own daily business.

We will cover each case for 90 minutes of class time, depending on how much class discussion it is able to stimulate. You are expected to submit a written report of the case study. In class, you will be discussing the case bit by bit, with the goal of ultimately forming some sort of consensus opinion on what the case was about and what potential courses of action might work best. The instructor will also participate in the case unpacking in a facilitating role.

The course contains three Harvard cases, 10p each (written case analysis 5p and class discussion 5p). The written part is done in groups (4-5 students), but in class you are graded individually. The written case analysis will be submitted via MyCourses prior to the session in which it is meant to be discussed and unpacked. Given that each case will be discussed right after it has been returned, there will absolutely be no late returns!

Detailed evaluation rubric for cases will be available in MyCourses. Below you will find a description of each case study and its questions. After that, you will find detailed instructions for how to prepare the case.

## 1.1. Cases, Case Questions, and Deadlines

### **Case: Predicting Customer Tastes with Big Data at Gap**

Deadline for turning in the written report: **April 25<sup>th</sup> at 13:00.**

Your written case report should provide adequate responses to the following questions:

1. Why was Gap doing poorly in 2017?
2. Was Peck correct in firing his creative directors and replacing them with a big data-driven creative process? Why or why not?
3. What has been the impact on Peck's changes to Gap Inc.'s value discipline?
4. Does the big data approach work for all three of Gap Inc.'s primary brands: Old Navy, Gap, and Banana Republic? Why or why not? Which brands are better/worse served by this strategy? Why? Reflect in terms of brand positioning, retail experience, supply chain management, and product offerings.
5. Should Peck allow Gap Inc.'s brands to be sold on Amazon? Why or why not? What opportunities and challenges does this plan present?
6. For which purposes is big data/predictive analytics more or less useful in marketing of fashion? As we move into a world filled with more data, what is the role of art versus science in marketing? Under which conditions should "science" rule and under which conditions should "art" rule?
7. Overall big question: What is your assessment of Product 3.0? How would you improve it?

#### Readings

Treacy, M., & Wiersema, F. (1993). Customer intimacy and other value disciplines. *Harvard Business Review*, 71(1), 84-93.

Moore, M. & Fairhurst, A. (2003). Marketing capabilities and firm performance in fashion retailing. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 7(4), 386-397.

### **Case: Branding in an Emerging Market: Strategies for Sustaining Market Dominance of the Largest Apparel Brand in India**

Deadline for turning in the written report: **May 16<sup>th</sup> at 13:00.**

Your written case report should provide adequate responses to the following questions:

1. How often, when, and why should fashion brands reposition? Do you feel Peter England has done wisely to change its brand positioning so often?
2. What are the pros and cons of each of the repositioning options being considered by Peter England? Consider Peter England's brand history/DNA.
3. How can the chosen new positioning be effectively communicated to the target consumers?
4. What are the pros and cons of having sub-brands? What should Peter England do about its current sub-brands? Should those be removed? Or should more be added? Why?

5. What should Peter England do about pricing its clothing?
6. What should Peter England do about its bricks-and-mortar retailing?
7. Peter England is facing competition from global brands. What are its advantages and weaknesses against such competitors? What should it do to prepare?
8. What should Peter England do about its online retailing? Should it participate in a centralized platform along with parent company Aditya Birla's portfolio of other apparel brands? Should it start its own independent online distribution? What are the trade-offs?

## **Case: H&M's Global Supply Chain Management Sustainability: Factories and Fast Fashion**

Deadline for turning in the written report: **May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 13:00.**

Your written case report should provide adequate responses to the following questions:

1. What industry forces have contributed to the rapid growth and accelerating success of H&M over the past decade?
2. Who benefits most from H&M's current business model? How?
3. What are the main challenges or hindrances fast fashion companies such as H&M meet when pursuing towards sustainability (think both environmental and social)?
4. Concentrate now on the social responsibility. Whose role (multinational corporations, governments or factory owners) is it to ensure that safety standards, working conditions and minimum wages of workers are acceptable? Justify your answer.
5. After the factory collapse H&M announced they will work towards providing living wages by 2018. [They have made some progress towards the target.](#) Was this the correct approach for H&M after the catastrophe or would you choose alternative approach to enhance social responsibility issues? Elaborate and explain why.
6. Eyes on the horizon: How can H&M differentiate itself from the other fast fashion companies and prove that it takes social and environmental issues seriously in the future? What should H&M do, and what are the possible trade-offs?

### Readings

Shen, B. (2014). Sustainable fashion supply chain: Lessons from H&M. *Sustainability*, 6(9), 6236-6249.

## 1.2. Preparing a Case Analysis

There are four distinct steps for reading through and analyzing a case.

1. **Thoroughly read through the case.** Be sure to take notes, highlight relevant facts (especially numbers) and try and identify what you think are the key problems. Highly encouraged to share ideas and viewpoints with other students!

2. **Focus your analysis.** There are usually two to five key problems. What are they? How do they relate to each other? Why do these problems exist? What is their impact? Who is responsible for them and/or has the ability to solve them?
3. **Identify possible solutions.** There is never only one potential solution to a Harvard case, you need to identify multiple potential avenues! Link back to course topics, ideas, and discussions. Do outside research. Rely on your own experience.
4. **Find and argue for what you think is the best solution.** Review the tradeoffs between solutions (pros and cons). Consider the feasibility of different solutions. Make your pick.

### 1.3. Writing the Case Analysis

Once you have agreed on what you are going to argue, it is time to write it all up into a report. The report should be a uniform narrative—it is not recommended to write the case in “case question – case answer” manner! Subheadings may prove helpful but are not absolutely necessary. However, good writing is; be clear, consistent, and show care for concepts and grammar. From a structural standpoint, the report should include the following:

1. **An introductory section or paragraph.** Here you identify the key problems of the study, a brief statement relating to your solution, and a few sentences relating to your analysis. The introduction is an overview of the entire report.
2. **Background section.** Set the scene for the reader. Inform them about the relevant background information, facts, and the most important issues. Here your goal is to convince the reader that you have understood the problems of the study and have done enough research (within the case, and possible “outside” of it through external sources).
3. **Outline the alternatives.** What possible courses of action are there? What are their strengths and weaknesses? Do they exclude one-another and why? Explain why you favor one (or more!) alternative over the others. Why are some possibly lucrative solutions not feasible? What data supports each course of action? What are the constraints and possible caveats for each possible solution?
4. **Give your proposed solution.** Make your choice and outline your plan of action in a sufficiently detailed manner. Continue elaborating why this course of action was chosen and support your choice with evidence. Link back to class concepts and ideas to support your argument the best you can and draw from outside evidence or personal experience to bolster your argument.
5. **Conclusion and recommendations.** Brief summary of what you have proposed. Here you can also “hedge your bets” and explain what kind of changes or investments need to be made to make sure your solution is viable. Outline future courses of action and key responsibilities. Close the report.
6. It is emphasized that a good case answer does not answer each question separately, but rather presents a unified, essay-like argument. Overall, we encourage you to not waste space by using too many subheadings. Offer your recommendation in concise form.
7. **Important!** Be sure to identify the authors of the case report for example in the header or footer of the document! Use 1.5 line spacing, 12-point Times New Roman, and 1” margins. The length of the report must not exceed 5 pages!

#### 1.4. Preparing for Class Discussion

It is encouraged to bring a printout of your case solution into class, possibly with highlighted items that you can discuss in class. Be ready to discuss and defend your viewpoints of the case. The class discussion is about active participation and engagement. **Laptops and other digital devices are strictly forbidden for the case sessions!**

#### 1.5. How and where to find the cases?

The links for purchasing and downloading the Harvard cases are found on MyCourses.

**Important! All participating students must purchase and download their own version of the case files!** There will be no sharing of downloaded files. Harvard monitors the download numbers and compare them to what the professors reports as the class size being. If there is a discrepancy between the class size and the number of downloads, the educator handling the course can be banned from Harvard's system. Given how much I rely on Harvard materials, I do not want to risk this. Harvard also sends a list of all the students who downloaded the files. **If your name is not on this list, your case will not be graded.**

## 2. GROUP ASSIGNMENT (25p)

The group assignment relates to Háló, a Finnish design label launched in 2017. Háló's women's collection offers timeless treasures. They don't follow the regular fashion cycle rather all seasons are sold at the same time, year-round. New styles and series are introduced regularly. Every product and series designed has a meaning and a story to tell.

Háló wants to build awareness of their brand in new countries. They are looking for influencer strategy ideas to be implemented in a specific country.

### **Theoretical background**

The assignment aims to build on your understanding of fashion marketing communication, and in particular influencer marketing. Apply the theoretical understanding from the lectures and turn them into practice by planning an influencer strategy for Háló.

#### The assignment...

- provides hands-on experience of influencer marketing tactics
- enhances critical thinking to solve a marketing dilemma

### **Assignment questions**

1. Provide an overall description of your influencer strategy for Háló. What is your influencer strategy trying to achieve for the brand?
2. Determine the most important criteria to select influencer(s) for Háló based on your background research about the brand and country.
3. Identify the influencers' overall match with Háló. Please, provide a sufficient description of the influencer, including their reach. You must submit a minimum of three influencers and rank them in order of preference.
4. Provide your recommendation for what kind of relationship Háló should seek with each of the proposed influencers? What kind of content should Háló expect from the influencer/s and why?

### **Data collection & preparation**

- **Lecture:** Participate in the lecture (23.4) concerning branding & marketing communication of fashion. Half of the lecture is given by PhD Essi Pöyry (University of Helsinki), who will specify on influencer marketing strategies.
- **Data collection:**
  - Background work: First, build an understanding of the brand and its target groups. Second, explore Háló's marketing communication: how Háló is currently operating in terms of marketing communication; who are their current influencers; analyse how do these influencers reflect & link to the brand identity to your mind? Benchmark to other similar brands. Third, craft an understanding about the target country (*Netherlands/Germany/Denmark/United Arab Emirates/Norway/Japan/other*) and their influencer scheme.
  - Build criteria based on your background work to justify the influencer selection. Explore possible influencers in chosen country.
  - Craft an influencer strategy for Háló that clearly justifies and explains your recommendation.

**The assignment essay should show a) your understanding of the relevant literature and b) your ability to turn the learnings into practice.**

Readings and inspiration for the assignment

Casaló, L.V., Flavián, C. & Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2018). Influencers on Instagram: Antecedents and Consequences of Opinion Leadership. *Journal of Business Research*, (July).

Perthuis, K. & Findlay, R. (2019). How Fashion Travels: The Fashionable Ideal in the Age of Instagram. *Fashion Theory*, 23(2), 1–24.

Recommended:

De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V. & Hudders, L. (2017). Marketing through Instagram influencers: The impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(5), 1–31.

Djafarova, E. & Trofimenko, O. (2018). “Instafamous” – credibility and self-presentation of micro-celebrities on social media. *Information, Communication & Society*, doi:10.1080/1369118X.2018.1438491

Kapitan, S. & Silvera, D. H. (2016). From digital media influencers to celebrity endorsers: Attributions drive endorser effectiveness. *Marketing Letters*, 27(3), 553–567.

Talkwalker (2018). What is Influencer Marketing? Your ultimate Influencer Marketing Guide.

Wigley, S.M. (2015). An Examination of Contemporary Celebrity Endorsement in Fashion. *International Journal of Costume and Fashion*, 15(2), 1–17.

## Instructions

- **The assignment will be completed in groups of 4-5 students.**
  - The groups are in charge of allocating their workload in a balanced manner. If there are any problems, contact Linda.
- **The submission deadline is 3.5.2019 by 1pm through MyCourses in pdf-format.**
- **The groups will present their work in class on 7.5.2019. Company representative will be present.**
- **Maximum length is 4000 words excluding appendices and references.**
  - Recommended to have visual examples in the text (as in a magazine), also possible to use appendices if many.
- **Evaluation: max score of the group assignment is 25 points, which represents 25% of the final grade.**

## Evaluation

Maximum scores of the assignment: \_\_\_\_\_ 25p

Breakdown:

**Theory & Practice** 10 p

Q1 (2,5p)

Q2 (2,5p)

Q3 (2,5p)

Q4 (2,5p)

**Data collection and analysis** 5 p

**Evaluation together with company** 6 p

e.g. innovativeness

relevance & fit for the company

possibility to execute

**Conclusions and coherence, structure of the essay,  
usage of references** 4 p

(Detailed evaluation rubric will be available in MyCourses)



### 3. INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT (30 p)

Choose a fashion brand and write **an academic essay that analytically explores the marketing strategy of fashion brand of your choice in the light of topics we have covered in the course** (lectures and readings). Tie your evaluation also to **current retail and market trends** that you believe have the biggest influence on the fashion company of your choice, explain how and why.

Note: The essay needs to reflect your learnings, and show you are able to critically apply the topics in practice. You must apply the theories and relevant course literature to structure your analysis and exploration. Use academic references and enrich and justify your analysis with visual material (if many, put them in the appendix).

#### Instructions

- To be completed **individually**.
- Maximum length of **4500 words** (+ possible appendix); Times New Roman 12pt, 1,5 spaced.
- The submission deadline for the final assignment is **9.6 by midnight**.
- Please, submit the final assignment through MyCourses in pdf-format.
- Evaluation: max score of the individual essay is 30 points, which represents 30% of the final grade.

#### Evaluation

Total score of individual assignment: \_\_\_\_\_ 30p

Breakdown:

**Fashion brand analysis** 20p  
(e.g. business model, branding, marketing comms, retail..)

**Retail & market trends exploration** 5p

**Conclusions and academic coherence, structure of the essay, usage of relevant academic references** 5 p

(Detailed evaluation rubric will be available in MyCourses)

## 4. BE PREPARED FOR THE LECTURES & GAIN ACTIVITY POINTS!

Active participation throughout the course will bring you activity points. These deliverables may bring you activity points, but they are not compulsory.

### **The maximum of activity points is 15p. Sources of points:**

- Active participation during the lectures
- Read the assigned papers, provide questions and comments, contribute to a good learning environment

### **Optional avenues for gaining activity points:**

- Class readings-specific questions answered & submitted prior to lecture: maximum 5p
- Course feedback given after the course: 2p

Read the compulsory class readings before the lecture and prepare a short answer (max 150 words) to reflect the readings. Submit your answer **at 1pm before the lecture** via MyCourses. Late submissions are not accepted.

### **Thursday 18 April: Business Models in Fashion**

Q: What are the key differences between two business models in fashion (choose from the readings)?

### **Thursday 23 April: Branding, Brand Management, and Brand Building**

Q: What are key dimensions for successful luxury fashion brands and how may social media challenge them?

### **Thursday 2 May: Retailing and Supply Chains**

Q: What is a recipe for outstanding retail experience?

### **Tuesday 14 May: Magic in Luxury Fashion Branding**

Q: What is the role of charismatic authority and art in luxury?

### **Thursday 21 May: Sustainability and the Supply Chain**

Q: Can fashion be sustainable? If so, how?