


International Summer University^{WU} 2025

WU (Vienna University of Economics and Business)

Course Outline

Course Title	Marketing Innovation and Innovating when Marketing	
Instructor	Tatiana Karpukhina, Ph.D. tatiana.karpukhina@wu.ac.at WU Vienna University of Economics and Business Department of Marketing, Institute for Marketing and Consumer Research	
Language of instruction	English	
Course level	Graduate	
Contact hours	35 teaching hours (45 min. each)	

Aim of the Course
<p>"A diamond is forever", #likeagirl, "para-pa-pa-pa..." are just a few examples of now iconic innovations of marketing. Yet, marketing is not limited to a one in a million catchy slogan, viral hashtag, or a jingle that everyone can hum. The work of marketers is omnipresent, it is in almost every aspect of the business. It is pivotal in "[...] creating, communicating and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners and society at large" (AMA 2024).</p> <p>Figuring out what a customer wants, developing and marketing a product with limited resources, getting to your customer through all the information noise, standing out on a saturated market, getting users on board with your innovation and keeping up with an ever-changing industry landscape – are not easy tasks. More often than not, such tasks don't have a correct answer or a pre-defined game plan, they require an innovation, a creative solution that no one has thought of before. Such solutions come in all shapes and sizes: it can be as big as shifting your brand from hooliganism to haute couture, to simply having your wife drive your car.</p> <p>In this course you will be focusing on the three ingredients that make an innovative marketing specialist:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. experience-based expertise, 2. innovative problem-solving techniques 3. practice of innovative problem-solving. <p>1. Experience-based expertise: Just like an artist is a better artist when they've seen a variety of artworks, a marketer is a more innovative marketer, when they've seen a variety of innovative approaches to marketing. Throughout the course you will learn about some of innovative ways of marketing (innovative) products.</p>

2. Innovative problem-solving techniques:

In this course you will learn and experience creative problem solving. What helps and hurts creativity? What techniques can you use to boost your creativity? What problem-solving approaches can help you discover a more innovative solution?

3. Practice of innovative problem-solving – work with an actual company on their problem:

During the course you will start working on developing the habit of approaching problems more creatively. You will work with a local company on an actual marketing problem. In this work you will have a chance to apply the problem-solving tools that you've learned.

Learning Objectives

What will you be doing in the course:

In this course you will be learning and applying your learnings right away. At the beginning of the course, you will get to know the local company and receive a marketing challenge from them. Using the innovative problem-solving toolset, you will be working on the challenge during the course. At the end of the course, you will present your solution to the company.

The aim of this course is:

- to expose participants to cases of innovative approach to marketing innovation;
- to teach participants about factors and techniques that hinder and foster creative problem-solving;
- to have participants practice applying creativity and innovation problem-solving techniques to practical marketing cases;
- to give participants the experience of working on ill-defined business problems in a semi-structured way (i.e. giving idea development structure without impairing creative flow);
- to allow participants to utilize their professional marketing expertise and act as consultants for the partner company;
- to practice tailoring the communication of your ideas to the context and audience.

Application Requirements and / or Prerequisites

Application requirements for the International Summer University WU can be found [on the ISU WU website](#).

Applicants interested in participating in the International Summer University^{WU} need an excellent command of the English language. The English language requirements can be found at [ISU^{WU} Language Requirements](#).

Teaching Methods

A variety of didactic elements are utilised to facilitate the successful completion of learning outcomes.

This includes, but may not be limited, to the following:

- Lectures on theoretical concepts and practical examples;
- Interactive discussions;
- Student group work and presentations;
- Innovative problem-solving workshop;
- Feedback giving and receiving workshop;
- Other (e.g. use and analysis of contemporary technology for problem-solving enhancement)

While the format has a focus on participation, discussion and group work, there is ample guidance and input by the lecturer in order to maximize learning outcomes for students.

Pre-Course Assignment

Your task:

1. Please select a product or a service (such as online language app or an alcohol-free beer)

2. For your selected product, come up with:
 - A brand name
 - A logo
 - A product concept
 - A short video

Steps to take to complete the task (how to approach the task):

One you've decided on your product / service, please complete the following steps. Afterwards submit the required elements (see what to submit section).

1. **Product concept:** It is recommended to start with the development / ideation of the product concept.
 - a. Think about what your product / service is about, who it is for, or what is its USP. For example, an online language app's concept could be: online language app for people who want to learn the basics before traveling to the country where this is the main language.
 - b. Use the "be stupid" creativity technique for idea generation. How it works:
 - i. generate some stupid ideas for a possible product concept first.
 - ii. Once you've done that, approach the task formally and try to develop your product / service concept.
 - c. Distil your concept: you should be able to explain it in one short sentence (max 15 words).
 - i. Tip: Think of your favourite podcasts. Remember what they say at the beginning? "This is a podcast about". This is how short, precise and clear your distilled concept sentence should be.
2. **Brand Name:** Go online and find at least one creativity technique that you could try for developing a creative brand name for your product / service. Apply this technique to your brand name development.
3. **Logo:** Use AI of your choice to generate a logo for your brand. Make sure to do a few iterations. For example, you could use Canva, Leonardo AI, Midjourney or OpenArt. Make sure to save and submit the first and the last prompt and logo.
4. **Short video:** Generate a max. 30-seconds video for your product (this could be a video for the company website or an ad for social media). Make sure that the content of the video fits the purpose you've chosen (website / ad / social media reel, etc.) You can use in-video AI for the video generation.
 - a. To develop the idea for the video, go online and find another technique that would allow you to boost your creativity and get inspired.
 - b. Then start working with the AI to create your video.
 - c. Make sure to save the final prompt and the video.

What to submit:

Please make sure that your submission is well-structured and concise! Follow the required submission format below.

1. Submit product / Service name. Its concept in 1 sentence (see #1 in task steps section for details).
2. Submit 3 stupid ideas that you came up with when developing the concept (briefly in keywords). Did this exercise inspire the subsequent concept development in any way? Why/ Why not? (briefly in 2-3 sentences max.)
3. What creativity technique did you use to help you spark your creativity in developing your brand name (name and describe the technique briefly in max 2 sentences).
4. Submit your first and last prompt for the logo generation and your first and last logo.
5. Which technique did you use to get inspired for developing your video idea (name and describe the technique briefly in max 2 sentences)?
6. Submit your last prompt for the video and your video.
7. What drove most of the inspiration (which technique or AI interaction)? Why do you think that helped to spark inspiration? (2-4 sentences max).
8. What did not help to spark inspiration (which technique or AI interaction)? Why (2-4 sentences max)?

Course Contents	
Day 1	<p>Introduction to creativity & Innovation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course introduction, set-up and expectations • Practice and discussion on solving classic creativity problems • Theory: What is creativity and innovation • Theory: what fosters creativity •
Day 2	<p>Starting the work with the project partner (lecture + workshop)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to know the context (the project partner) • How to approach the problem (lecture) • Identify open questions and unknowns (workshop) • Problem definition (workshop) • Challenges and assumptions definition (workshop) •
Day 3	<p>Marketing innovation / Innovative marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture + discussion of practical case example <p>Defining the problem space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structuring the insights and identifying blank spaces (lecture) • Creating problem space (workshop) • Refining your problem definition and scope (workshop) •
Day 4	<p>Marketing innovation / Innovative marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture + discussion of practical case example <p>Ideation & solution-finding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem-solving techniques (lecture) • Applying problem-solving (workshop) •
Day 5	<p>Ideation & solution-finding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial ideation feedback rounds (workshop) • Problem-solving techniques (lecture) • Applying problem-solving (workshop) • Refined idea feedback rounds (with project partner, TBD) •
Day 6	<p>Ideation & refinement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating and stress-testing your ideas (Lecture) • Giving and receiving feedback (lecture) • Feedback rounds (peer2peer, TBD) • Ideation and idea refinement (workshop) •
Day 7	<p>Marketing innovation / Innovative marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture + discussion of practical case example <p>Idea refinement and delivery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final feedback rounds • Final presentation preparation (workshop) •
Day 8	Final Project Presentations

Comments
Please note that the daily syllabus may be subject to change. In particular, the distribution of specific elements of the course content over the duration of the course may be adapted at the lecturer's discretion. Pay attention to in-class as well as e-mail announcements.

The course contains workshop elements. Please make sure to bring your laptop and ensure that it is fully charged. The number of sockets for charging in the classroom may be limited.

Criteria for successful completion of the course

In order to successfully complete the course, the students should:

- Demonstrate their grasp of the concepts and techniques introduced in the course
- Demonstrate their ability to apply these to offer solutions to specific marketing problems
- Demonstrate their ability to give, receive and implement feedback
- Demonstrate their willingness and ability to communicate clearly and work in teams

The students will have a variety of opportunities to showcase their understanding of the course concepts through individual and group assignments as well as the in-class work.

Assessment

Grading will be based on the following components:

- In-class participation 25 pts
- Individual ideation exercises (pre-course assignment) 25 pts
- Group project (ongoing work project development) 35 pts
- Final presentation 15 pts

The group work grade elements (50 pts) will be peer evaluated. The peer review will be used to assess the individual contribution of each group member to the group tasks. Outstanding or poor peer evaluation score can result in the up-/down-grading of your scores for the group project tasks.

Grades are as follows:

- 90 pts or more: 1 (= excellent),
- 80 - 89 pts: 2 (= good),
- 70 - 79 pts: 3 (=satisfactory),
- 60-69 pts: 4 (= sufficient),
- 59 pts or less: 5 (= fail)

Course Literature

n/a

Further Readings suggested by the Lecturer(s)

- Boyd, D., & Goldenberg, J. (n.d.). Inside the Box: A Proven System of Creativity for Breakthrough Results. Simon and Schuster.
- Gino, F. (2018). Rebel talent: Why It Pays to Break the Rules at Work and in Life. HarperCollins.
- Adams, J. L. (2019). Conceptual blockbusting: A Guide to Better Ideas, Fifth Edition. Hachette UK.
- Amabile, T. M. (1996). Creativity in context: Update To The Social Psychology Of Creativity. Hachette UK.
- Terwiesch, C., & Ulrich, K. (2023). The Innovation Tournament Handbook: A Step-by-Step Guide to Finding Exceptional Solutions to Any Challenge. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- HBR's 10 Must Reads on Creativity (by Harvard Business Review, Francesca Gino, Adam Grant, Ed Catmull, Teresa M. Amabile)

Information on the Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools

For class assignments and projects, students can and are encouraged to use AI tools like ChatGPT or Claude as research, brainstorming, and learning aids. When using these tools, students should include: 1) the name of the AI tool used, 2) exact prompt(s), and 3) the AI's response in the submission. These tools should enhance learning and work process, not replace critical thinking

and analysis. Submissions should clearly demonstrate understanding of the material and unique perspectives. AI should serve as a supplement, not a substitute for learning and creativity.

Please note the following information on the total workload of the respective course:

Course level	ECTS credits	Pre-course workload	In-class activity	Outside of class workload during the program
Graduate	4	approx. 20 hours	27 hours (= 35 teaching units)	approx. 33 hours