UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS

APPROVED BY
THE STUDY COMMISSION
Minutes No. 02-12-2026-14
as of 24th August 2026

MARKETING STRATEGY

Course code	*GRAV036*
Course title	*Marketing Strategy*
Type of course	*Compulsory*
Level of course	*Graduate*
Year of study	*1st*
Number of credits	*3 ECTS, 16 hours of class work, 62 hours of self-study and consultations*
Lecturer	*Assoc. prof. Lineta Ramonienė, Dr.*
Prerequisites	*none*
Teaching language	*English*

THE AIM OF THE COURSE:

Marketing Strategy is an advanced graduate course that examines marketing strategy as the market-facing expression of business strategy. Rather than treating marketing as promotion or communications, the course focuses on how firms translate strategic intent into choices about customers, value creation, positioning, and go-to-market design. Building on prior knowledge of organization and strategy analysis, competitive advantage, and market analysis, students learn to connect firm capabilities with market opportunities and competitive realities.

The course develops students' ability to make strategic customer and market choices under conditions of uncertainty and resource constraints. Students analyze how firms decide where to play, which customers to prioritize, how to build customer-relevant advantage, and how to design coherent market systems through brand, pricing, channels, communication, and customer experience. Emphasis is placed on trade-offs: focus versus scale, premium versus mass positioning, short-term opportunity versus long-term defensibility, and uniqueness versus relevance.

By the end of the course, students will be able to diagnose whether a company's marketing strategy is coherent, defensible, and aligned with its broader business ambition. Through cases, practical exercises, and three assessed assignments, students will develop the analytical skills required to make evidence-based recommendations about target-customer selection, positioning, value propositions, and go-to-market architecture. These skills are integrated and demonstrated in the individual strategy portfolio.

MAPPING OF COURSE LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES) WITH DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES (See Annex), ASSESSMENT AND TEACHING METHODS

Course level learning outcomes (objectives)	Degree level learning objectives (Number of LO)	Assessment methods	Teaching methods
CLO1. Explain marketing strategy as the market-facing expression of business strategy and distinguish it from tactical promotion or communications.	LO1.1, LO3.2	Strategy memo; team case; portfolio	Interactive lecture; case diagnosis; guided framework application
CLO2. Analyze market opportunities and customer groups using strategic attractiveness, economic potential, accessibility, fit with firm capabilities, and likely competitive response.	LO1.1, LO3.1, LO3.2	Strategy memo; team case	Market-analysis workshops; evidence appraisal; case problem solving
CLO3. Make defensible targeting and market-selection decisions under uncertainty, recognizing trade-offs between focus, scale, profitability, and long-term defensibility.	LO3.1, LO3.2, LO4.1	Strategy memo; team case	Decision workshops; structured debate; peer critique
CLO4. Develop positioning logic and value propositions that translate firm capabilities into customer-recognized, relevant, and differentiated advantage.	LO1.1, LO3.2	Team case; portfolio	Case comparison; value-proposition design; feedback studio
CLO5. Design coherent go-to-market systems in which brand, price, channels, communication, and customer experience reinforce the chosen strategy.	LO2.1, LO3.2	Team case; portfolio	Go-to-market workshop; metrics clinic; peer review
CLO6. Evaluate the ethical, social, and customer implications of marketing strategy choices, including	LO5.1	Team case, portfolio	Ethical dilemma discussion; responsible-AI verification;

targeting, pricing, data use, and communication.			reflection
CLO7. Communicate evidence-based marketing strategy recommendations clearly in written and oral form.	LO6.1, LO6.2	Strategy memo; team presentation	Memo writing; presentation coaching; stakeholder-style Q&A

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

The ISM University of Management and Economics Code of Ethics, including cheating and plagiarism, is fully applicable and will be strictly enforced in the course. Academic dishonesty and cheating can and will lead to a report to the ISM Committee of Ethics. Regarding remote learning, ISM reminds students that they are expected to adhere to and maintain the same academic honesty and integrity that they would in a classroom setting.

AI USE POLICY

AI literacy is an important competency for contemporary marketing strategists, and this course treats AI tools as useful assistants for market research, competitive analysis, customer insight synthesis, ideation, scenario development, and drafting or improving presentation materials. Students are encouraged to use AI tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Perplexity, NotebookLM, and other appropriate platforms to support analysis and learning. Any AI-generated output incorporated into assignments must be clearly disclosed, checked against reliable sources, and critically evaluated by the student.

However, AI tools may not replace the core competencies being assessed. Students must not fabricate customer evidence, market data, interviews, cases, citations, or company information. They must not submit AI-generated text as their own original analysis without substantial human interpretation, judgment, and adaptation. Students remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of all submitted work, including proper citation of sources and disclosure of AI use where relevant.

COURSE OUTLINE

Date	Topic	In-class hours	Activities	Deliverable
Sept 29	Marketing Strategy as Market-Facing Strategy	4	Strategy versus tactics; translating business intent into customer choices; Spotify diagnostic; evidence quality and AI-verification exercise.	Portfolio item 1; team formation and company allocation
Oct 1	Choosing Customers Strategically: Market Selection, Trade-offs, and Defensible Targeting	4	Segment attractiveness, economics, access, capability fit and competitive response; decision workshop comparing Spotify growth priorities.	Portfolio item 2; Individual marketing strategy memo launched
Oct 6	Positioning, Value Proposition, and Customer-Relevant Advantage	4	Positioning logic, value proposition and willingness to pay; memo debrief; team case clinic and consultation.	Memo completed; portfolio item 3
Oct 8	Coherent Go-to-Market Design: Brand, Price, Channels, and Growth	4	Brand, price, channels, communication, customer experience, metrics, privacy and AI risks; team presentations; portfolio integration and completion briefing.	Team presentation; portfolio item 4
1-4	*AI Integration (cross-cutting)*	*Integrated*	*AI tools for source-backed market research, competitive scanning, customer insight synthesis, scenario development, positioning alternatives, and presentation refinement are embedded throughout the course.*	*AI use disclosure, where relevant*

FINAL GRADE COMPOSITION

Assignment	Weight	Type	Evaluator
Individual strategy decision memo	40%	Individual	Lecturer
Integrated team case presentation	40%	Team	Lecturer; peer contribution evidence may be consulted
Individual strategy portfolio	20%	Individual	Lecturer
Total	**100%**		

DESCRIPTION OF EACH ASSIGNMENT

1. INDIVIDUAL MARKETING STRATEGY DECISION MEMO - 40%

All students analyze Spotify using a common evidence pack. In a 1,000-1,200-word professional memo, each student recommends one primary three-year growth priority: increasing Premium conversion in established markets; expanding paid subscriptions in selected growth markets; increasing audiobook adoption and monetization; or growing the advertising business. The memo must evaluate attractiveness, customer need, willingness to pay, capability fit, competitive response, implementation requirements, risks and opportunity costs. **Due 5 October by 6:00 pm**.

2. INTEGRATED TEAM CASE PRESENTATION - 40%

Each team is assigned one company and one decision question by the lecturer. The assigned companies and questions are listed below. Teams diagnose the strategic problem, select one priority customer or market, formulate a positioning and value proposition, and design a coherent go-to-market system. The maximum is eight substantive slides, excluding references, with 12 minutes of presentation and approximately five minutes of Q&A. **Slides are uploaded before class and presented on 8 October.**

Company	Strategic question
Duolingo	Which customer segment and subscription proposition should the company prioritize for future growth?
Airbnb	Should the company prioritize its core accommodation business or growth through experiences and services?
Lululemon	Which international customer or market should the company prioritize without weakening its premium positioning?
Zalando	How should the company differentiate its propositions across Zalando, ABOUT YOU and Lounge by Zalando?
Oatly	Which customer segment and consumption occasion should the company prioritize to support profitable growth?
Ignitis	Which Lithuanian household segment should Ignitis prioritize for an integrated home-energy proposition, and how should that proposition be positioned and brought to market?
Vinted	Which customer segment and product-category proposition should Vinted prioritize in its established European markets to make second-hand purchasing more mainstream while preserving trust and marketplace liquidity?

3. INDIVIDUAL MARKETING STRATEGY PORTFOLIO - 20%

Students consolidate and revise four short Spotify-based course outputs: (1) strategy-versus-tactics diagnostic; (2) target-market selection rationale; (3) positioning and value-proposition map; and (4) go-to-market coherence map. Each item should normally fit on one page or one presentation-style slide. The portfolio is graded once for application, strategic reasoning, evidence of revision and clarity. **Due 12 October by 6:00 pm**.

COMPANY SELECTION RULES

- The memo and portfolio use Spotify; students do not select another company for these assessments.
- Team-presentation companies and decision questions are allocated by the lecturer to maintain comparable difficulty.

SUBMISSION, EVIDENCE AND FEEDBACK

- Submit each assessment as one readable PDF through the course e-learning page. Detailed file-naming and formatting instructions are provided in the assignment guide.
- Use APA 7 or another consistently applied academic citation system approved by the lecturer. All material claims, data and external exhibits require traceable sources.
- Feedback is provided through in-class discussion, assignment rubrics and written comments where appropriate.
- Late submission, extensions and special circumstances follow ISM University regulations and official study-office procedures.

KEY DATES AND SUBMISSION SEQUENCE

Deadline	Requirement
Before 29 September	Complete the pre-course reading and Spotify evidence pack.
5 October, 6:00 pm	Submit the Individual Marketing Strategy Decision Memo.

Deadline	Requirement
8 October, before class	Upload the Team presentation slides; present during class.
12 October, 6:00 pm	Submit the consolidated Individual marketing strategy portfolio.

RETAKE POLICY

The course consists of three graded assessment components. Only the **Individual Marketing Strategy Decision Memo** is eligible for a retake. The **Integrated Team Case Presentation** and the **Individual Marketing Strategy Portfolio** cannot be repeated, replaced or resubmitted after the course has concluded. The retake requires the student to submit a substantially revised Individual Marketing Strategy Decision Memo. The revised memo must respond to the original feedback, strengthen the strategic analysis and supporting evidence, and satisfy all requirements stated in the assignment instructions. Minor editorial corrections to the original submission are not sufficient. The retake must be completed individually and submitted by the deadline communicated by the lecturer. The retake grade replaces the original grade for the Individual Marketing Strategy Decision Memo. Grades awarded for the other two assessment components remain unchanged.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Kotler, P., Keller, K. L. & Chernev, A. (2022). Marketing Management. 16th ed. Pearson. Selected chapters.
- Aaker, D. A. & Moorman, C. (2023). Strategic Market Management. 12th ed. Wiley. Selected chapters.
- Porter, M. E. (1996). What Is Strategy? Harvard Business Review, 74(6), 61-78.
- Ries, A. & Trout, J. (2001). Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind. McGraw-Hill. Selected chapters.
- Anderson, J. C., Narus, J. A. & van Rossum, W. (2006). Customer Value Propositions in Business Markets. Harvard Business Review, 84(3), 90-99.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

- Kumar, N. (2004). Marketing as Strategy: Understanding the CEO's Agenda for Driving Growth and Innovation. Harvard Business School Press.
- Levitt, T. (1960). Marketing Myopia. Harvard Business Review, 38(4), 45-56.
- Christensen, C. M., Hall, T., Dillon, K. & Duncan, D. S. (2016). Know Your Customers' Jobs to Be Done. Harvard Business Review, 94(9), 54-62.
- Wirtz, J. & Lovelock, C. (2022). Services Marketing: People, Technology, Strategy. 9th ed. World Scientific. Selected chapters.
- Gupta, S. & Lehmann, D. R. (2005). Managing Customers as Investments. Wharton School Publishing. Selected chapters.
- Selected Harvard Business School, INSEAD, and Kellogg cases distributed via the course platform.

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ANNEX

DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Competency goals and learning objectives for Master of Business Management
Programs:
Global Leadership and Strategy
Innovation and Technology Management
International Marketing and Management

Competency Goal	Learning Objectives
Students will demonstrate advanced disciplinary knowledge.	LO1.1. Students will demonstrate advanced discipline knowledge through the independent development of a Master's thesis, showing a deep understanding and appropriate application of theories, concepts, and methods relevant to their field of study.
Students will be digitally competent.	LO 2.1. Students will demonstrate digital agility competencies by selecting and applying appropriate tools, platforms or technologies, integrating digital insights into business decision-making, and adapting digital approaches in response to evolving project requirements and contextual changes.
Students will be critical thinkers	LO3.1. Students will be able to define the business problem and develop innovative solutions LO3.2. Students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking in problem solving
Students will be independent learners	LO4.1. Students will become independent learners and develop their own comprehension of scientific theories, models, and concepts.
Students will be socially responsible leaders	LO5.1. Students will be able to evaluate past and current practices in their discipline from an ethical perspective.
Students will be effective communicators	LO6.1. Students will develop and deliver a coherent oral presentation LO6.2. Students will develop and deliver a coherent written research paper

Competency goals and learning objectives for the Master of Social Science
Programmes:
Financial Economics

Competency Goal	Learning Objective
Students will demonstrate advanced disciplinary knowledge.	LO1.1. Students will demonstrate advanced discipline knowledge through the independent development of a master's thesis, showing a deep understanding and appropriate application of theories, concepts, and methods relevant to their field of study.
Students will be digitally competent.	LO 2.1. Students will demonstrate digital agility competencies by selecting and applying appropriate tools, platforms or technologies, integrating digital insights into business decision-making, and adapting digital approaches in response to evolving project requirements and contextual changes.
Students will be critical thinkers	LO3.1. Students will be able to identify underlying assumptions, limitations of previous research; evaluate managerial solution alternatives.
Students will be independent learners	LO4.1. Students will become independent learners and develop their own comprehension of scientific theories, models, and concepts.
Students will be socially responsible leaders	LO5.1. Students will be able to evaluate past and current practices in their discipline from an ethical perspective.
Students will be effective communicators	LO6.1. Students will develop and deliver a coherent oral presentation LO6.2. Students will develop and deliver a coherent written research paper