

DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS

Course code	<i>MNG288</i>
Compulsory in the programmes	<i>Distribution Channels</i>
Level of studies	<i>Undergraduate</i>
Number of credits and	<i>6 ECTS (48 contact hours + 6 consultation hours, 106 individual work hours)</i>
Course coordinator (title and name)	<i>Prof. Dr. Filipa Fernandes, filfer@faculty.ism.it</i>
Prerequisites	<i>None</i>
Language of instruction	<i>English</i>

THE AIM OF THE COURSE:

The aim of this course is to understand the realities of distribution channels and namely the new distribution and communication formats. It should enable the student to understand the various forms of strategic, horizontal and vertical interdependencies that link producers and intermediaries, as well as their strategic implications. It also emphasizes the complexity of the distributor's retailing mix decisions (choice of point of sale location, optimization of the assortment, merchandising decisions ...) in an integrated omnichannel world. This course delivers high value content on how Strategic business channel management and retailing can improve the performance of the business regardless of the business model.

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

Course level learning outcomes (objectives)	Degree level learning objectives (Number of LO)	Assessment methods	Teaching methods
CLO1. Understand the recent evolution of the distribution channels and their influence on sales, marketing and company's strategy as a whole;	Learn, apply, create, evaluate, analyze 75%	Lectures, Challenges, Class Participation, Group Work, Seminars, Exam	Lecture, self-study, individual and group challenges
CLO2. Be aware of the new distribution channels and sales concepts and their strategic consequences on the marketing variables;	Learn, apply, create, evaluate, analyze, remember 75%	Lectures, Challenges, Class Participation, Group Work, Seminars, Exam	Lecture, problem solving, group homework, self-study
CLO3. Follow the evolution of distribution channels and understand the different points of change on the company strategic analysis (rationalization, consumer profiles and the rhythms they impose, competition, Win-Win relationships, technologies, family models, internationalization, franchising, outsourcing);	Learn, apply, create, evaluate, analyze, remember 70%	Lectures, Challenges, Class Participation, Group Work, Seminars, Exam	Lecture, group homework, self-study
CLO4. Understand the logistics function - physical distribution and marketing management (just-in-time and just-for-you);	Learn, apply, create, evaluate, analyze, remember	Lectures, Challenges, Class Participation, Group Work, Seminars, Exam	Lecture, group homework, seminar, self-study

	80%		
CLO5. Clarify the new management techniques at the point of sale and the connection with Technology;	Learn, apply, create, evaluate, analyze, Remember 75%	Lectures, Challenges, Class Participation, Group Work, Seminars, Exam	Lecture, problem solving, individual homework, self-study
CLO6. Understand the omnichannel world (offline + online) and the impact of data analytics on the distribution scope;	Learn, apply, create, evaluate, analyze, remember 75%	Lectures, Challenges, Class Participation, Group Work, Seminars, Exam	Lecture, group homework, self-study
CLO7. Critically analyse and provide practical examples of the best today's distribution approaches;	Learn, apply, create, evaluate, analyze 75%	Lectures, Challenges, Class Participation, Group Work, Seminars, Exam	Lecture, Group homework, self-study

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

The ISM University of Management and Economics Code of Ethics, including cheating and plagiarism are 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. With regard to remote learning, ISM remind students that they are expected to adhere and maintain the same academic honesty and integrity that they would in a classroom setting.

COURSE OUTLINE

DATE TIME	TOPIC	Class Hours		READINGS
		Lecture	Seminar	
14.04.2026 SESSIONS 1,2	Introduction to the Course: Course requirements and procedures. Individual tasks and team work. Reporting requirements. Overview of tasks for assignments.	1		
	Concept and origins of Distribution : The evolution of the distribution channels and their influence on sales, marketing and company's strategy Channels of distribution trends and emerging concepts. Challenge of the Day	1	1	Recommended bibliography + classroom articles

DATE TIME	TOPIC	Class Hours		READINGS
		Lecture	Seminar	
14.04.2026 SESSIONS 3,4	The new distribution channels and sales concepts and their strategic consequences on the marketing variables Channels of distribution: a) Nature and function; b) Objectives; c) Services to clients. . Design, behaviour and organization of distribution channels Challenge of the Day	1	2	Recommended bibliography + classroom articles
15.04.2026 SESSIONS 5,6,7,8	The logistics function - physical distribution and marketing management (just-in-time and just-for-you); Inventory management The Role of the Warehouse Layout Options, Methods, and Equipment	3	3	Recommended bibliography + classroom articles
21.04.2026 SESSIONS 9,10,11,12	New management techniques at the point of sale and the connection with Technology a) Managing the Store, Layout, Design, and Visual Merchandising b) Improving outgoing service levels c) Effects of substandard service d) Effectiveness and efficiency of channel activities by leveraging emerging technologies Introduction to the Group Work	3	3	Recommended bibliography + classroom articles

DATE TIME	TOPIC	Class Hours		READINGS
		Lecture	Seminar	
22.04.2026 SESSIONS 13,14,15,16	Omnichannel world (offline + online) Multichannel versus Omnichannel Retailing The impact of data analytics on the distribution scope Challenge of the Day	3	3	Recommended bibliography + classroom articles
23.05.2026 SESSIONS 17,18,19,20	Power, Conflit & Cooperation in channels; Relationships & Motivating Channel Members	4	2	Recommended bibliography + classroom articles
24.05.2026 SESSIONS 21,22	Practical examples of the best today's distribution approaches. Group Work Presentations	1	2	Recommended bibliography + classroom articles
24.04.2025 SESSIONS 23,24	Group Work Presentations. EXAM	1	2	

DATE TIME	TOPIC	Class Hours		READINGS
		Lecture	Seminar	
CONSULTATIONS		12		
	Total	48 hours		

FINAL GRADE COMPOSITION

Type of assignment	%
Group Components 45%	
Group Work Report and Oral Presentation	45%
Individual Components 55%	
Exam	30%
Class Participation and Challenges	25%
Total:	100

DESCRIPTION AND GRADING CRITERIA OF EACH ASSIGNMENT

(Provide short descriptions and grading criteria of each assignment)

Group Components:

Group Work Report and Oral Presentation – Working in teams is a common part of the business environment and the objective of this Group Work Report and presentation is to challenge the students to solve a situation applied to a real company and present it like they were presenting to a Board of a Company.

Individual Components:

- Exam - educational assessment intended to measure the student knowledge's and skills.
- Class Participation and Challenges – Class participation and small practical exercises to generate engaging and faster learning of the subjects

RETAKE POLICY

Students who receive a failing final grade shall have the right to re-take the exam, which will comprise 30% of the final grade and cover all topics of the course. Final exam result will be annulled.

REQUIRED READINGS

Moretti, L. (2018): Distribution Strategy: The BESTX® Method for Sustainably Managing Networks and Channels (Management for Professionals) (Springer).

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Dent, J., White, M. (2018): Sales and Marketing Channels: How to Build and Manage Distribution Strategy (KoganPage).

Palmatier, R., Sivadas, E. (2019): Marketing Channel Strategy: An Omni-Channel Approach (Routledge).

ANNEX

DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning objectives for the Bachelor of Business Management

Programmes:

International Business and Communication,

Business Management and Marketing,

Finance,

Industrial Technology Management,

Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Learning Goals	Learning Objectives
Students will be critical thinkers	BLO1.1. Students will be able to understand core concepts and methods in the business disciplines
	BLO1.2. Students will be able to conduct a contextual analysis to identify a problem associated with their discipline, to generate managerial options and propose viable solutions
Students will be socially responsible in their related discipline	BLO2.1. Students will be knowledgeable about ethics and social responsibility
Students will be technology agile	BLO3.1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in common business software packages
	BLO3.2. Students will be able to make decisions using appropriate IT tools
Students will be effective communicators	BLO4.1. Students will be able to communicate reasonably in different settings according to target audience tasks and situations
	BLO4.2. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively through an oral presentation
	BLO4.3. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively in a written paper