‘PREMIUM BRAND STRATEGY’ – B8612 - Section 1
‘How Elevate Brands To Become Meaningful, Peerless and Priceless’
SPRING 2022 – XXXdays/5:40-8:55pm/Room TBD

Syllabus might change based on guest availability or where class interest takes us.

Watch course description video here: https://youtu.be/PswKngV2HRI
Contact me with questions/suggestions.

Communications from the instructor about the course will take place through Canvas. Students should make sure they check regularly for announcements.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Rapid technological development seems to make the marketplace more ‘perfect.’ Never before have we had access to as many product choices and transparency on their relative - but increasingly similar - performance. What are brand owners to do if they want to escape a competition focused on the 4Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) and the ‘tyranny of the Amazon recommendation algorithm’? – How can a brand make itself to be sought out, desired beyond reason and even sustain a premium price?

In this course you will learn how to develop and apply strategies that elevate brands and make them peerless and priceless in the eyes of customers. We will cover a broad range of industries - from Luxury to Lifestyle and CPG to B2B - and the brand management areas of consumer understanding, strategy development and key aspects of execution. In that context, we will also touch on aspects of product design, communications, experiential marketing, and growth strategies, as they relate to creating premium brands.

The lectures and related reading will introduce you to multiple tools to develop and assess the strength of a premium brand strategy. Together with guest talks they will also provide ample illustration of their application and serve as stimulus to discuss a variety of practical brand challenges. You are expected to demonstrate you understanding through active class participation, short individual assignments and your contributions to the ‘Ueber-Brand Project,’ in which you will join a team to assume the role of brand strategy consultants. Your team will apply the concepts taught to develop a brand elevation strategy for a real-world brand client.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
In this course you will learn how to assess and apply
- models and methods for the development of a successful brand strategy
- links between culture, society, psychology and building strong brand propositions
- principles behind successful product design, brand communications and manifestations
... all as they relate to building brands that are held in high esteem and can demand a price premium.

The course will be particularly useful for those who intend to consult with- or join brand management and those who want to build their own ‘Ueber-Brand’.
### COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Assignments (Type) / Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 1</strong></td>
<td>Jan xx – 5:40pm</td>
<td><strong>Brand Strategy and Brand Elevation</strong>&lt;br&gt;a- Introduction to course and instructor - Q&amp;A.&lt;br&gt;b- What is a brand and the evolution of branding.&lt;br&gt;c- Some Brand Strategy Models&lt;br&gt;d- How perform a Brand Audit (asynchronous learning video)&lt;br&gt;Note: Project teams to be formed and client contact made.</td>
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<td><strong>Session 2</strong></td>
<td>Jan. xx</td>
<td><strong>Brand Mission, Targeting and Creating Desire</strong>&lt;br&gt;a- Ueber-Branding and the power of brand purpose - Discussion&lt;br&gt;b- Consumer psychology, segmentation, targeting, relationship Some core concepts (incl. async. learning video)&lt;br&gt;c- Exclusivity and Inclusiveness - balancing longing and belonging</td>
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<td><strong>Session 4</strong></td>
<td>Feb. 3</td>
<td><strong>The Product and holistic Brand Manifestation</strong>&lt;br&gt;a- How make a product/service the essence of a brand?&lt;br&gt;b- <strong>Guest Expert (TBC):</strong> ‘Creating products and environments to behold’ – Agency or Brand.&lt;br&gt;c- How create equity through actions and environments? (incl. student presentation on Experiential Marketing Framework)</td>
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<td><strong>Session 5</strong></td>
<td>Feb. 10</td>
<td><strong>Managing Organization and Growth</strong>&lt;br&gt;a- <strong>Guest Expert (TBC):</strong> ‘Brand Elevation in a digital world’– Agency or Brand&lt;br&gt;b- Managing Growth and Organizing for Brand Elevation&lt;br&gt;c- <strong>Guest Expert (TBC):</strong> ‘Keeping it Fresh - Evolving and Ueber-Brand – Agency or Brand.</td>
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<td><strong>Session 6</strong></td>
<td>Feb. 17</td>
<td><strong>Ueber-Brand Presentations</strong>&lt;br&gt;a- Introduction client guests&lt;br&gt;b- Ueber-Brand <strong>Project Presentations</strong> - Teams present Ueber-Brand strategy recommendation to clients as consultants and answer their/class questions</td>
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### REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

**Course Book:** We will use the book *Rethinking Prestige Branding – Secrets of the Ueber-Brands*. It covers the brand building principles reviewed in the course and many case studies we will use for illustration and discussion.

**Other Reading:** You are encouraged to reflect on a variety of perspectives- and other models relating to brand strategy and volunteer to present them in class. In that context some additional reading are/will be suggested.

### READING/VIEWING SCHEDULE – Please do all the required reading AHEAD of the respective session

| Session 1 – by Jan. 13 | Course instruction videos (incl. instructions for voluntary participation assignment for session1 and Group project next steps!) and questionnaire to be submitted - to be found on Canvas – (C)  
Course syllabus – please read carefully and have remaining questions ready (C)  
Kuehlwein/Schaeffer: ‘Rethinking Prestige Branding’ (RPB) – Part I  
**Reading Reflection:** What considerations have found their way into how marketers manage brand identity? Why? What might consumers be missing in mass-brands today? Think of current examples not in RPB. |
|---|---|
| Session 2 | Asynchronous Learning videos: (1) On Targeting (2) On Brand Equity Evaluation and Brand Audits  
**RPB** Part II, Principles 1 and 2 (excl. the case studies at the end). *How can Mission and ‘Balancing Longing vs Belonging’ relate to each other? How might they clash? Why might brands specifically decide not to follow a ‘higher mission’ and/or follow principle 2 and how might they still be successful in sustaining a premium-priced business?* Think of current examples not in RPB.  
**Suggested:**  
Case studies of Principle 1 and 2 in RPB and videos referenced (RPB) and (C)  
Watch Simon Sinek TEDx talk ‘Why’ on YouTube (C)  
Mark Ritson: ‘Stop Propping Up Purpose...’ (C)  
Watch ‘Rapaille on Culture Codes’ on YouTube (C) |
| Session 3 | Asynchronous Learning video: ‘Ueber-Brand Communication – Myth making and Un-selling’ (E)  
**RPB**, Part II, Principles 3 and 4 (excl. case studies) *What are the arguments for ‘myth-making’ versus ‘de-mystifying a brand’? For which kind of brands/when might one be the better strategy over the other? How do Brand Myth and Un-Selling relate? Think of current examples not in RPB.*  
**Suggested:**  
Case studies of Principle 3 and 4 and videos referenced (RPB)  
Watch ‘Campbell’s Hero’s Journey’ on Ueber-Brands YouTube (C) |
| Session 4 | **RPB**, Part II, Principles 5 and 6, (excl. case studies). *Is ‘Product’ the most important thing a brand has to offer? How might a brand owner assess if they have the right product to achieve their brand elevation goals? How does Principle 6 relate to Product? Think of current examples not in RPB.*  
**Suggested:**  
Asynchronous Learning video: On leveraging Digital Marketing for Brand Elevation (Echo360 - E)  
Case studies of Principle 5 and 6 and videos referenced (RPB)  
Watch short videos on the Ueber-Brands YouTube Channel: Trader Joe’s, Cucinelli, etc. (C)  
Read Schaefer/Kuehlwein ‘Brand Elevation – Lessons in Ueber-Branding’ Part II for processes, tools and techniques in developing an Ueber-Brand strategy (library) |
| Session 5 | **RPB Principle 7 and Summary Questions (excl. case studies). Are Growth and Brand Elevation at odds past a certain point? Why? When? How Can it be resolved? Think of examples of premium brands that are scaled and keep growing. How do they do it?**  
**Suggested:**  
Case studies of Principle 7 and videos referenced (RPB) |
- Read Schaefer/Kuehlwein ‘Brand Elevation’ Part I for a review of all seven Principles of Ueber-Branding and more case studies (library)
- JP Kuehlwein: ‘How Niche Brands Survive Acquisitions…’ (C)
- Listen on the Ueber-Brands Podcast to interviews with M.Fantachiotti on ‘Johnny Walker…’ and/or J. Geikie on ‘Burts Bees…’ (C)

### Session 6

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<th>EVALUATION CRITERIA</th>
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<td>You will be evaluated based on your understanding and application of the concepts taught as well as your ability to combine insight, strategic thinking and creativity in discussions and in making recommendations that are judged impactful.</td>
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### METHOD OF EVALUATION

| Class participation (incl. voluntary/asynchronous part. assignments) | 30% |
| Individual Assignments (two quizzes on course content/reading) | 30% |
| Group Project (Part I 10%, Part II 30%) | 40% |

### CONDUCT POLICIES

You are expected to attend all sessions, actively participate, complete assignments, and follow the honor code. **Students are expected to be:**

**Present:**
- On time and present for every session. (Asynchronous participants to watch recordings by day+1)
- Attendance tracked. – More than one no-show leads to elimination.

**Prepared:**
- Complete reading and pre-work for every class and expect cold calling based on it.
- Bring nameplates/have camera on and any documents you might need (eg. presentations).

**Participating:**
- Active and constructive participation/asynchronous part. assignment expected and part of grade.
- No electronic devices unless used exclusively for participation/note taking or as instructed.

### ASSIGNMENT TYPES

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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Preparation of submission</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>group/group</td>
<td>Permitted with designated group</td>
<td>By group</td>
<td>Same grade for each member of the group</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>group/individual</td>
<td>Permitted with designated group</td>
<td>Individually (No sharing of any portion of the submission.)</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>individual/individual</td>
<td>None of any kind</td>
<td>Individually</td>
<td>Individual</td>
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### KEY ASSIGNMENT DETAILS:

**Ueber-Brand Project (Type-A, 40% of grade):** Teams of 4-6 students diagnose the current state of a brand’s desired identity versus its image and then develop a holistic strategy on how to (further) elevate the equity of the brand. You simulate being brand strategy consultants and work directly with the actual brand client at briefing, optional check-ins and final presentation stage. The work will be graded in two steps:
1- Presentation of DIAGNOSIS (session #3, 10% of grade) - The team will have analyzed competitive landscape, current brand positioning, identity, image and strengths and derive areas for improvement, possibly proposing a preliminary mission statement or potential ‘Ueber-Target(s)’.
2- Presentation of RECOMMENDATION (session #6, 30%) - The team will have developed a brand elevation strategy and illustrate it through key ‘lighthouse’ executions.

Students will declare their preferred brands to work on by session 1 and will be assigned a brand and team to work with by session 2. Instructors will try to take into account everyone’s preferences, as possible.

Assignments are to be submitted on Canvas/via an FTP site before the in-class presentation. Assignment submissions include the presentation as well as an executive summary for the final recommendation. The written summary is to be submitted by Monday 6pm before the final presentation to allow clients to pre-read it (max 800 words+ any data tables, graphs, illustrations, etc.). The presentations will be done in the format of a ‘executive summary by a consulting firm’ and last a maximum 5 and 10 minutes respectively for Part 1 and Part 2 plus ~5-10 minutes of Q&A by the class, expert invitees and instructors. The number of slides or other materials used is up to the teams. Minimum content and format expectations for these materials will be discussed in-class. But never hesitate to ask, if you have any questions.

Witten Assignment (Type C, 30%) -- This will be two online quizzes (5-10 question) probing on the concepts and themes reviewed in class as well as the assigned pre-/reading up to the day of submission.

Class Participation (30%) -- Students will be assessed based on attendance, preparedness and the quality of questions asked/answers given and other contributions in class. Expect cold calling and to participate in heated discussions!

Students are strongly encouraged to pick one or more of the voluntary participation assignments on offer for most sessions to boost their participation score. They consist of contributing relevant illustrations of real-world examples and/or of presenting a concept in class (see schedule above and Canvas for details). Students participating asynchronously (because of illness or for other approved reasons) will complete a ‘Asynchronous Participant Assignment’ after reviewing each session video (on Echo360) for Participation credit.

APPENDIX - READING

COURSE BOOK
• Schaefer, Wolfgang and Kuehlwein, JP (2015) Rethinking Prestige Branding – Secrets of the Ueber-Brands. Kogan Page. (‘RPB’) – Make sure you have a copy before the course begins to prepare from session 1. We will use content from this book throughout the course.

SUGGESTED BOOKS
• Schaefer, Wolf and Kuehlwein, JP, (2021) Brand Elevation – Lessons in Uber-Branding. Kogan Page. This is a step-by-step guide to developing a brand elevation strategy – similar to what you will do on your project. It can be borrowed from the library or acquired at www.kogan.com together with RPB for the price of one (code ‘ueber’ at checkout).

In addition, the following books provide more foundational brand strategy theory or a richer context for the themes we will cover. – Ask me about these books, if interested.

### INSTRUCTOR BIO

**JP Kuehlwein** is principal at Ueber-Brands Consulting, advising large CPG groups and start-ups, alike, on brand strategy and execution – brand elevation, in particular. He previously was Executive VP at Frédéric Fekkai, a prestige hair care business and held Brand Director and Director of Strategy positions at Procter & Gamble. His broad marketing and management experience include developing a strategy for the world’s leading detergent, creating a new-to-the-world food storage solution, introducing the disposable diapers category in India, designing a premium skin care brand in China and turning around a Prestige business in the US. He was also on the board of Smith & Norbu, a luxury eyewear start-up in Hong Kong.

JP holds bachelor degrees in Business from the Ecole Supérieure de Commerce, Reims (France) and University of Reutlingen (Germany) and a postgraduate diploma in Business Analysis from Lancaster University (UK). JP teaches brand strategy at NYU Stern School of Business and Columbia Business School and is an advisory board member and lecturer in the Cosmetics and Fragrances Marketing and Management Master’s Program at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT). He is also a Senior Fellow and Leader of the Marketing Institute at The Conference Board. His work has won numerous internal and external Marketing and Advertising awards and he was named “International Marketer of the Year 2016” by The Internationalist and US Association of National Advertisers.


### Select articles by the instructor: