



Digital Marketing Communications (MKT 30160)

Summer 2019

Version Number: 1.0 (*Draft – last updated December 2018*)

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Office Hours: By appointment, Smurfit Campus, S315

Lecture Times:

- Monday 10th June – 2-5.30pm
- Tuesday 11th June – 2-5.30pm
- Thursday 13th June – 9-12.30pm
- Friday 14th June – 9-12.30pm
- Saturday 15th June – 9-12.30pm
- Friday 28th June – 9-12.30pm
- Monday 29th July – 2-5.30pm
- Tuesday 30th July – 2-5.30pm

Introduction

It's an exciting time to be in marketing. Today, we can measure marketing efforts in real time with pinpoint accuracy unthinkable just years ago. We can beta test versions of webpages and emails and disseminate the winner widespread, all automatically. We can reach millions on a nil budget by creating content worth sharing. And we can bid for search engine keywords in a marketplace similar to the New York Stock Exchange. The course is designed to offer a comprehensive look at digital marketing through theory and hands-on experience. I teach a lot of theory so that you understand what makes good copy good and viral content viral, for instance. However, I know that people retain best by doing. That's why hands-on learning is a major part of the course.

The Main Learning Objectives

Including but not limited to:

- Crafting strategic content
- Search engine optimizing the right keywords
- Engineering virality
- Making data-driven decisions
- Writing compelling emails and headlines
- Designing strategic social media posts
- Optimizing for design and usability
- Writing compelling AdWords ads that show in top spots
- Auditing a brand's digital presence and improving it

Required Materials

1. Please bring a laptop or tablet each class for activities

Assessment

Assignment	Weighting	Individual/Group
Buzzfeed Traffic Challenge	25%	Individual
Digital Communications Audit	30%	Pairs
Content Marketing Plan	35%	Group (4)
Participation/Mini-assignments	10%	Individual

Buzzfeed Traffic Challenge (25%)

I'd wager that many of you have clicked on BuzzFeed articles (I certainly have). Their headlines are a master class in catchy copywriting, and you're going to write one. In fact, you're going to write an entire, real BuzzFeed article (anyone can post to BuzzFeed!). But while anyone can post, only some strike gold in views.

Your challenge: Write a BuzzFeed article and promote it. You decide what to write about and how to write it (e.g., "5-minute Recipes to Get You Stoked for Fall!"). But writing a catchy headline (and then delivering on it) is only half the challenge. The second half is getting views, and your goal is 1,000+. While view count matters for your grade, what matters most is the logic behind your choices (i.e., how you chose your topic, how you wrote it, and how you promoted it). Once the challenge is over, we'll do some collective analytics and discuss what worked well and what didn't.

Digital Communications Audit (30%)

This assignment lays the groundwork for the content marketing plan. Together with a partner, you'll gather data on each major digital channel for an assigned brand and its competitors, answer questions, and provide recommendations.

Content Marketing Plan (35%)

Stellar content is a cornerstone of digital marketing. In teams of 4 you'll use your findings from the digital marketing audit to generate a portfolio of strategic content, from mobile app prototypes to YouTube storyboards. On the last day of class, you'll pitch your plan to the class.

Participation/Mini-assignments (10%)

In business, speaking up is important to your success, and there is no better time to build your confidence. The first component of this grade aims to reward you for being in class and speaking your mind, from asking questions to sharing insights. The second component comes from "mini-assignments". Mini-assignments are brief in-class activities or homework assignments that get you thinking about a topic or give you practical experience. When grading these, I am looking for effort not right answers. If you put forth the effort, you will get full marks! Note that assignments are always *due the evening before the class they are assigned* unless otherwise stated. This gives me time to review and incorporate them into that day's lecture!

Preliminary Course Schedule At-A-Glance¹

Class 1 – AdWords, Headlines, Subject Lines, & Fundamentals of Good Copywriting (Jun 11)

Class 2 – Optimizing the Look and Usability of Websites (Jun 12)

Class 3– Stellar, Findable Content Part I – SEO Optimization (Jun 14)

Class 4– Stellar, Findable Content Part II – Going Viral (Jun 15)

Class 5– Influencers (Jun 16)

Class 6*– Social Media (Jun 29)

Class 7– Course Wrap-Up and The Future of Digital Communications: AI, AR, VR (Jul 30)

Class 8*– Group Presentations (Jul 31)

*Major Due Dates

1. Post BuzzFeed Article by 5 pm on June 24th
2. Digital Communications Audit – June 29th (by midnight)
3. BuzzFeed Traffic Challenge – July 8th (by midnight)
4. Content Marketing Plan – July 31st (1 hour before class)

Preliminary Course Schedule

Class 1 – AdWords, Headlines, Subject Lines, & Fundamentals of Good Copywriting (Jun 11)

We’re starting with the simplest form of marketing communication which also happens to be one of the most important—short written text. You can think of AdWords ads, headlines, and subject lines as gateways. If they’re bad, it doesn’t matter how good your content is beyond the gate.

Class 1 Assignments (Due evening before class by midnight)

1. Take this [survey](#) on your present digital marketing knowledge & experience
2. Read: *Harnessing the Science of Persuasion* (to be posted on BB)
3. Read: [Finding the right job for your product](#)
4. Read: [Micro-Moments: Your Guide to Winning the Shift to Mobile](#) (download the pdf)

Class 2 – Optimizing the Look and Usability of Websites (Jun 12)

Visual design is another gateway. You’d be amazed how quickly people give up on your site if it takes “too long” to load (e.g., >3 seconds), involves too many clicks, or is generally confusing or ugly. We’ll cover not only the constituents of good design, but also the psychology behind it.

Class 2 Assignments (Due evening before class by midnight)

1. Evaluate the design and usability of several websites via this [survey](#).

¹ The course schedule may change to unfinished topics and so on. When changes are made, I will email the class and update the module outline on blackboard. If you are unsure if you have the latest version, compare your version number (see “version number” on page 1) to that on Blackboard. Please ensure you have the most up-to-date version of the module outline.

Class 3 – Stellar, Findable Content Part I – SEO Optimization (Jun 14)

You may think famous brands have it easy when it comes to SEO. After all, Google “ryanair” and ryanair.com is the first hit. But consider another query: “cheap flights from Dublin to Copenhagen.” Ryanair doesn’t even make the front page. Search engine optimization is all about knowing *which* keywords matter, and how to rank well for them. As you may have guessed, stellar content plays a pivotal role here, along with some technical prowess.

Class 3 Assignments (Due evening before class by midnight)

1. Watch (44 minutes): [The Story of Content: Rise of the New Marketing](#)
2. Watch (8 minutes): [How to Beat Your Competitor’s Rankings with More *Comprehensive* Content – Whiteboard Friday](#)
3. Watch (11:35 minutes): [How to Appear in Google Answer Boxes](#) -Whiteboard Friday
4. Read: [Illustrating the Long Tail](#)

Class 4 – Stellar, Findable Content Part II – Going Viral (Jun 15)

Going viral is perhaps the most alluring and elusive aspiration in digital marketing. If achieved, you’ve essentially consigned millions of people to disseminate and discuss your message for pennies. While there’s no magic formula, there is a science to it. So, although you won’t always strike gold, there are ways to stack the deck in your favour.

Class 4 Assignments (Due evening before class by midnight)

1. Read (HBR Case): *Mekanism: Engineering Viral Marketing* (will be posted on BB)
2. Read: Teixeira, T. (2012). The new science of viral ads. *Harvard Business Review* (will be posted on BB)
3. Read: [This Post Won’t Go Viral](#)
4. Read: [Introducing Pound: Process for Optimizing and Understanding Network Diffusion](#)
5. Explore: [75 \(More\) Content Marketing Examples](#)
6. Answer Reading Questions [Here](#)

Class 5 - The Power of Influencers (June 16)

Influencers are the new celebrity endorsers and have enormous sway in the market. But marketers need to be careful; which influencer accounts have *real* engagement, and which are falsely bulked by bots or other methods of gaming the system? Which influencers are right for your brand and which will backfire? We’ll cover how to strategically identify and vet influencers for your brand.

Week 5 Assignments (Due Tuesday before class by 5pm)

1. Read: [Influencers vs. Celebrities: Who Comes Out On Top?](#)
2. Read: [I Spent Two Years Botting on Instagram — Here’s What I Learned](#)
3. Read: [Popular Instagram bot site Instagress has been shut down](#)
4. Read: [Are Fake Influencer Deceiving Brands?](#)

Class 6 – Social Media (June 29)

Social media was a gamechanger for marketing communication. It has elevated the meaning of brand relationships and brand identity by giving brands a real-time voice and unlimited space. Here, we'll explore how to use social media strategically and analyse social media data.

Week 6 Assignments (Due Tuesday before class by 5pm)

1. Read: [News Feed FYI: Bringing People Closer Together](#) (2018 Newsfeed Algorithm Update)
2. Read: [We Studied Brands Around The World. What Consumers Want Isn't What You Think](#)
3. Read: [Driving Quality Mobile Traffic from Instagram](#)
4. Read: [Made.com Growing a Pinterest Ecosystem](#)

Class 7 – Course Wrap-Up and The Future of Digital Communications: AI, AR, VR (July 30)

Google Cardboard, Snapchat, Amazon's Echo...VR, AR, and AI are entering the mainstream. These technologies are still in their infancy from a marketing standpoint, but several clever brands are putting them to work.

Week 7 Assignments (Due Tuesday before class by 5pm)

1. Read: [Are Brands Wasting Their Money on Virtual Reality?](#)
2. Read: [How Brands Are Using AR to Engage Consumers and Measure Results](#) (if link doesn't work, search title in Google)
3. Read: [How Augmented Reality Is Creating a New Target Market on Social Media](#) (if link doesn't work, search title in Google)
4. Read: [How Marketers Are Using AI To Improve The Brand Experience](#)

Class 8– Group Presentations (July 31)

Today all groups will present their content marketing report.

****Content Marketing Plan and Presentation Due 1 hr before class.*

Grading

This section of the Study Guide provides students with details of the UCD grading system and also explains criterion referenced grading (UCD Policy). Under criterion referenced grading, *students are graded on the quality of their work without reference to other students* (norm referenced). For instance, the submission that meets the required guidelines in terms of writing style, analysis, description and / or summary will be awarded according to the standards set out. All students' work is graded to indicate the standard attained using the criterion referenced approach.

Grade	Description	Grade Point
A +		4.2
A	Excellent	4
A-		3.8
B+		3.6
B	Very good	3.4
B-		3.2
C+		3
C	Good	2.8
C-		2.6
D+		2.4
D	Acceptable	2.2
D-		2
E	Marginal	1.6
F	Fail (unacceptable, no compensation)	1
G	Fail (Wholly unacceptable; no compensation)	0.4
NG	Fail (Wholly unacceptable; no relevant attempt)	0

General Grade Guidelines from UCD

Grade	Characteristics	
A	A deep and systematic engagement with the assessment task, with consistently impressive demonstration of a comprehensive mastery of the subject matter, reflecting;	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a deep and broad knowledge and critical insight as well as extensive reading; • a critical and comprehensive appreciation of the relevant literature or theoretical, technical or professional framework • an exceptional ability to organise, analyse and present arguments fluently and lucidly with a high level of critical analysis, amply supported by evidence, citation or quotation • a highly-developed capacity for original, creative and logical thinking. 	
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	A substantial engagement with the assessment task, demonstrating	
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a thorough familiarity with the relevant literature or theoretical, technical or professional framework 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • well-developed capacity to analyse issues, organise material, present arguments clearly and cogently well supported by evidence, citation or quotation; • some original insights and capacity for creative and logical thinking.
C	<p>An intellectually competent and factually sound answer with, marked by,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of a reasonable familiarity with the relevant literature or theoretical, technical or professional framework • good developed arguments, but more statements of ideas • arguments or statements adequately but not well supported by evidence, citation or quotation • some critical awareness and analytical qualities • some evidence of capacity for original and logical thinking
D	<p>An acceptable level of intellectual engagement with the assessment task showing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some familiarity with the relevant literature or theoretical, technical or professional framework • mostly statements of ideas, with limited development of argument • limited use of evidence, citation or quotation • limited critical awareness displayed • limited evidence of capacity for original and logical thinking
D-	<p>The minimum acceptable level of intellectual engagement with the assessment task with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the minimum acceptable appreciation of the relevant literature or theoretical, technical or professional framework • ideas largely expressed as statements, with little or no developed or structured argument • minimum acceptable use of evidence, citation or quotation • little or no analysis or critical awareness displayed or is only partially successful • little or no demonstrated capacity for original and logical thinking •
E	<p>A factually sound answer with a partially successful, but not entirely acceptable, attempt to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrate factual knowledge into a broader literature or theoretical, technical or professional framework • develop arguments • support ideas or arguments with evidence, citation or quotation
F	<p>An unacceptable level of intellectual engagement with the assessment task, with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no appreciation of the relevant literature or theoretical, technical or professional framework • no developed or structured argument • no use of evidence, citation or quotation

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- no analysis or critical awareness displayed or is only partially successful
 - no demonstrated capacity for original and logical thinking
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G

- No intellectual engagement with the assessment task
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