Frequently Asked Questions

2
MMC 5435
Messaging Strategy and the Centrality of the Value Proposition

3
MMC 5436
Messaging Methodologies and the Practice of Conversion Optimization
Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I choose the University of Florida?
Earning a certificate from the University of Florida makes you part of an elite group, a family of more than 360,000 Gator alumni across the globe. Backed by our high academic standards, being a UF alum opens doors to influential people and new career opportunities.

UF’s College of Journalism and Communications is one of the nation’s top programs in mass communication education and research, and Smart Money and The Wall Street Journal list University of Florida as the nation’s second-best tuition-to-graduate-salary payback.

Listing a University of Florida certificate on your resume may just be the thing to get your foot in the door of your dream job.

When and how can I apply?
There are three enrollment periods each year, and students must apply six weeks before the start of a semester. Application deadlines for the next three semesters are below.

- Summer 2016: April 1, 2016
- Fall 2016: July 1, 2016
- Spring 2017: November 1, 2016

Is financial aid available?
Financial aid is not available to students pursuing the graduate certificate, however private loans are an option.

What are the academic requirements for enrollment?
Applicants must meet the following requirements in order to be accepted:

- Bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university
- GPA of 3.0 or better for overall undergraduate studies
- GPA of 3.0 or better for all upper-division undergraduate work
- Statement of Goals
- Current Resume

Admission is determined by several factors beyond the application materials including space availability, and supervisory availability particularly in specialized areas. Meeting the minimum application requirements does not guarantee acceptance.
Is the GRE required for all applicants?
The GRE is not required for graduate certificate applicants.

Which careers will the communicating value and web conversion program prepare me for?
The whole world is online – if you’re selling products, services, or yourself, improving your ability to articulate what you and your company can do better than anyone else is vital to success. Employers look for individuals who have real-world experience, who know how to think quickly, can effectively evaluate customer needs, articulate their ideas and convert potential customers. This program is designed to provide you these experiences.

How will a certificate in communicating value and web conversion help me as a professional?
The program is designed for the marketing and sales professional committed to delivering the most effective customer messaging – either in their current role or seeking advancement. Improved effectiveness is sure to be noticed by your company and customers, and because the program reflects the University of Florida standards, it is well respected and valued.

I am an experienced professional. What will this program teach me?
More companies are moving toward the web for online sales and conversion, and every news organization is looking for ways to increase audience exposure and develop a stronger online presence while still making a profit. Even the most seasoned salesperson has plenty to learn to keep their companies competitive and relevant to today’s customers.

This program provides marketing and sales professionals real-world practice in leveraging their company, or their personal value proposition. Our program is highly interactive and you'll have the opportunity to learn, practice and fine tune your skills. The best sales people don't rest on yesterday's success but strive for tomorrow's goals.

How much time will I need for class?
In addition to the hours for instruction, you can expect to spend 3-10 hours each week on projects, collaboration and exercises that help refine your skills.

Do I have to attend classes live online or can I watch recordings?
All of our classes are pre-recorded, allowing you to watch each week on your own schedule.
How does distance learning work at the University of Florida?
UF's distance learning programs bring the full resources and faculty of a top public university to you. The programs are designed for working professionals who prefer not to relocate or resign from their job to pursue an advanced degree.

Through our learning management system Canvas, you'll have full access to your instructors and fellow students to ask questions, share knowledge and collaborate on projects. Our online programs stress enhancing professional knowledge and skills, ensuring that you graduate ready to apply your skills.

What technology and software will I need?
As this is an online program, students must have a high-speed Internet connection to effectively view course sessions. Sessions can be viewed and assignments completed using Macintosh or PC desktop or laptop computers.

To qualify, does my bachelor's degree have to be in a sales or marketing field or can it be in a different area of study?
A bachelor's degree in a marketing or sales discipline and/or experience in the industry is certainly beneficial, but not required. We accept students from a variety of backgrounds who have a passion and interest in changing career paths and exploring new opportunities.
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3 credit hours

Course Overview

A company’s brand outsells its competitors when consumers judge it to be the best value in the marketplace. However, choosing which qualities of a brand are most important to consumer perceptions of value can be challenging. How do you identify which aspect of your product to emphasize? Which part of your offer motivates your customer the most? These questions get to the heart of marketing strategy. At the center of these questions is the value proposition — why would someone say yes to you rather than anyone else? Answering this question correctly is the most important aspect of successful marketing.

This course addresses the critical concepts and theories of value proposition. It covers development, measuring, testing and expressing a value proposition throughout a company and its marketing. The student will learn how to position his or her offer to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, no matter what product or service they are marketing.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the value proposition framework and its key elements
- Describe the historical evolution of the concept
- Analyze the intrinsic and extrinsic value present in customer choice and motivation to distinguish between the value and cost dyad within every purchase decision
- Articulate the roles and relationships among the four derivative value propositions and the brand within an organization
- Identify effectively crafted value propositions, as expressed in the short, long, narrative and graphic Forms
- Measure the force of a company's value proposition in terms of Appeal, Exclusivity, Credibility and Clarity in order to assess the potential effectiveness of a company's messaging
- Formulate recommendations to intensify the force of a company's value proposition and increase the continuity or congruence of its expression
• Synthesize a primary value proposition argument and its key evidentials
• Compose a short-form value proposition argument from either a Long, Narrative or Graphic Form

**Required Texts**

• McQueen, Josh. *Building Brand Trust: Discovering the advertising insights behind great brands*. Xlibris Corporation, 2012.

**Weekly Detail**

**Pre-course: Course Introduction and Syllabus Overview Video**

**Description**
An introduction to course, instructors and lecturers as well as an overview of what students will learn during the semester.

**Week 1: Value Proposition and Understanding the Process of Choice**

**Lecture Description**
This week will be both an overview of the course objectives and an introduction to the concept of a value proposition. We will discuss the power of choice and how it relates to a consumer saying yes.

**Readings:**

• *The Marketer as Philosopher* — Reflection(s) 1-2, 27-31
• *Delivering Profitable Value* — Chapter(s) Introduction (p. 1-16)
• *Reality in Advertising* — Chapter(s) 1-3 (p.3-12)

**Reinforcement Assignment**
None this week
Week 2: Origins and Evolution of the concept “Value Proposition”

Lecture Description
This week, we will discuss the origins of the concept of the value proposition, even before the term was coined. We will survey the evolution of the concept in the academic and commercial literature, from usages a century ago to what it means today. We will specifically look at the works of Starch, Hopkins, Reeves, Ogilvy, Porter and Lanning.

Readings
- The Marketer as Philosopher — Reflection(s) 24
- Advertising: Its Principles (Daniel Starch) — Chapter(s) 1-2 (p. 7-17)
- Scientific Advertising (Claude Hopkins) — Chapter(s) 1-3, and 10 (PDF p. 2-12)
- Reality in Advertising — Chapter(s) 4-6 (p.13-24)
- Delivering Profitable Value — Chapter(s) 1 (p. 18-38)

Reinforcement Assignment
Examine a major purchase decision made in the last year through the perspective of the Value Exchange Fulcrum.

Week 3: The Primary Value Proposition Framework

Lecture Description
This week focuses on the role the value proposition plays as the primary force driving people up the sales funnel. We will learn about the flaws within the current understanding of the marketing funnel, and finally, we will define value proposition and discover why it is important.

Readings
- The Marketer as Philosopher — Reflection(s) 4-6, 8, 15-16, 21-22, 26
- Reality in Advertising — Chapter(s) 7-9 (p.25-36)
- Delivering Profitable Value — Chapter(s) 4 - 5 (p. 62-79), and 18 (p. 254-259)

Reinforcement Assignment
Use the value proposition framework to craft primary value proposition statements for a provided set of future technologies.
Week 4: The Role of the Value Proposition and Its Derivatives

Lecture Description
This week focuses on the various derivatives of the value proposition and when, where and how they are each relevant. We will then discuss how they relate to each other and overlap.

Readings
- Marketer as Philosopher — Reflection(s) 11, 18, 19, and 20.
- Reality in Advertising — Chapter(s) 10-12 (p 37-45)
- Delivering Profitable Value — Chapter(s) 13-15 (p. 180-215)

Reinforcement Assignment
Explore the effect of derivative value propositions on the perceived value of a given product.

Week 5: Measuring the Force of a Value Proposition — Appeal and Exclusivity

Lecture Description
This week focuses on the first dyad (Appeal and Exclusivity) that impacts the force of a value proposition. We will define each of the elements, their associated cognitive conclusion and then learn how to influence them.

Readings
- Marketer as Philosopher — Reflection(s)17 and 32
- Reality in Advertising — Chapter(s) 13-15 (p. 46-59)
- Delivering Profitable Value — Chapter(s) 6 (p. 80-88)
- Scientific Advertising (Claude Hopkins) — Chapter(s) 11 and 17 (PDF p. 40-42, 62-63)

Reinforcement Assignment
Examine a set of provided value propositions and determine how you could increase their Appeal and Exclusivity.
This week focuses on the second dyad (Clarity and Credibility) that impacts the force of a value proposition. We will define each of the elements, their associated cognitive conclusion, and then learn how to influence them.

**Readings**
- *Marketer as Philosopher — Reflection(s) 9-10, 13-14, 28, and 34*
- *Reality in Advertising — Chapter(s) 16-18 (p.60-66)*
- *Delivering Profitable Value — Chapter(s) 7 (p. 89-115)*
- *Scientific Advertising (Claude Hopkins) — Chapter(s) 7 (PDF p. 25-27)*

**Reinforcement Assignment**
Explore the force of multiple provided value proposition statements and identify specific changes that could increase the Appeal, Exclusivity, Credibility and Clarity.

**Week 7: A 5-Step Framework for Crafting an Effective Value Proposition**

**Lecture Description**
This week students will walk through a methodology for crafting a value proposition. This will be a highly interactive session.

**Readings**
- *Reality in Advertising — Chapter(s) 19-21 (p. 70-83)*
- *Delivering Profitable Value — Chapter(s) 8 (p. 116-135)*

**Reinforcement Assignment**
Use the 5-step framework to craft a value proposition argument for one of the provided organizations.

**Week 8: Expressing Value Propositions in Long Form, Short Form, Narrative and Visuals**

**Lecture Description**
This week, we will discuss how to take a value proposition and package it in the short form, long form, narrative and visual form.

**Readings**
- *Delivering Profitable Value — Chapter(s) 12-13 (p. 176-189)*
*Scientific Advertising (Claude Hopkins) — Chapter(s) 5, 8, and 9 (PDF p. 17-19, 28-34)*

**Reinforcement Assignment**
Select a company of your own choosing and craft a long-form statement for its primary value proposition.

**Week 9: A Holistic Approach to Expressing a Value Proposition**

**Lecture Description**
This week we will discuss how to begin expressing a value proposition in promotional and sales materials. We will start with a website and move to some of the more common digital and traditional channels. Students will learn how to express a value proposition in a holistic way through the principles of continuity and congruence.

**Readings**
- *Marketer as Philosopher — Reflection(s) 6, 10, 12 and 25*
- *Reality in Advertising — Chapter(s) 22-27 (p. 84-107)*
- *Delivering Profitable Value — Chapter(s) 19 (p. 160-281)*
- *Scientific Advertising (Claude Hopkins) — Chapter(s) 6 (PDF p. 29-24)*

**Reinforcement Assignment**
Examine the concepts of continuity and congruence as seen on the live purchase funnel for Zappos.

**Week 10: Brand: The Aggregate Experience of the Value Proposition — Part 1**

**Lecture Description**
This week we will examine how value proposition and brand are connected. Students will learn how to leverage a value proposition to create a brand experience that deeply resonates with the customer in such a way that it becomes a brand expectation.

**Readings**
- *Marketer as Philosopher — Reflection(s) 23 and 26*
- *Reality in Advertising — Chapter(s) 28-30 (108-123)*
- *Building Brand Trust (Josh McQueen) — Chapter(s) 5-8 (p. 108-208)*
Reinforcement Assignment
Choose three brands from a provided list and examine their latest advertising campaigns and other marketing/brand collateral to identify the conclusions they are trying to foster in the mind of their prospects.

Week 11: Brand: The Aggregate Experience of the Value Proposition — Part 2

Lecture Description
This week we will further explore how value proposition and brand are connected. Students will be able to identify desired resulting experiences associated with brand and appropriate short-hand symbols for a brand that can be implemented across the customer journey.

Readings
- Reality in Advertising — Chapter(s) 31-33 (p. 124-137)
- Building Brand Trust (Josh McQueen) — Chapter(s) 9 -12 (p. 209-311)

Reinforcement Assignment
Define what it means to be your brand as a multi-national coffee company.

Final Project: Value Proposition Analysis and Critique

Week 12: The Personal-Level Value Proposition

Lecture Description
This week, students will be exposed to the fifth derivative value proposition: the personal. We will discover the connection between this derivative and the corporate application of value proposition students have learned over the duration of the course.

Readings
- Marketer as Philosopher — Reflection(s) 39-40
- Reality in Advertising — Chapter(s) 34-36 (p. 138-151)
Reinforcement Assignment
Create a value proposition statement and evidentials that you could use in your efforts to secure a promotion or new position in your current company.
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3 credit hours

Course Overview

The essence of marketing is the message. So, what makes an effective message? What makes a headline impactful? What makes a call-to-action powerful? How can copy be crafted so as to generate the greatest number of responses from customers?

This course provides a systematic methodology for increasing the probability of a customer response. Students will learn to apply the critical concepts and theories of offer response optimization, including techniques for creating compelling offers, in order to optimize responses in both digital and mobile environments.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Summarize the Conversion Heuristic and label the key elements of offer response optimization
- Explain the sequence for properly optimizing a message through the Offer Optimization Sequencing Heuristic
- Extrapolate a customer's core motivation in response to a particular offer
- Distinguish between rational and irrational anxiety in message response
- Eliminate the elements of an offer that generate psychological friction or anxiety in customers' minds
- Determine the ideal incentive for a particular audience as well as the appropriate stage to employ it to increase customer motivation
- Compose copy that effectively conveys a company's value proposition argument in both long and narrative forms from a short-form argument
- Conduct a Conversion Index Analysis (CIA) on marketing collateral
- Translate offer response optimization principles into a mobile device environment

Required Texts


• Course Packet

• Additional readings are assigned throughout the term and are available in digital format on Canvas in their respective assigned weeks.

**Weekly Detail**

**Course Introduction and Syllabus Video**
Introduction to course, instructor, lecturers and grading assistants

**Week 1: Introduction to Offer-Response Optimization**

**Lecture Description**
This week will be an introduction to the concept of offer-response optimization. The class will learn what offer-response optimization entails and why it is important. They will then learn the conversion heuristic and how to use it.

**Readings**

- *Scientific Advertising (Claude Hopkins) — Chapter 1-11 (p. 4-34)*
- *Designing Web Usability — (p. 8-14)*

**Reinforcement Assignment**
Examine marketing collateral and list out 3-5 examples of what you think they do well and what you feel could be improved.

**Linking Activity**
Select a page and write a summary discussing how you would optimize the page to increase online subscriptions.

**Week 2: Defining Conversion and the Proper Sequence of Optimization**

**Lecture Description**
This week will be an introduction to the concept of conversion. Students will learn to define conversion and the factors that influence it. Students will then be given instruction on the proper sequencing of optimization and why it is important.

**Readings**

- *Scientific Advertising (Claude Hopkins) — Chapter 12-21 (p. 35-58)*
Reinforcement Assignment
Recreate the experiment from the session to determine the new optimal price point after the introductory offer and graph the data to visualize the new ideal pricing zone.

Linking Activity
Choose between two PPC ads and write a one-page essay explaining why you believe it will perform the best and why.

Week 3: Understanding the Impact of Customer Motivation

Lecture Description
This week focuses on the impact of customer motivation on conversion. The class will learn why it is weighted so much in the conversion heuristic and how to leverage customer paths as well as data to identify a customer’s core motivation.

Readings
- 22 Laws of Marketing — Chapter 4 (p. 18-25) and Chapter 11 (p. 62-67)
- Storyscaping — Part 2 (p. 77-106)

Reinforcement Assignment
Identify how customer intent was reinforced from a select sample of marketing collateral and discuss what else could be done to better reinforce intent.

Linking Activity
Using the value proposition framework craft three separate value proposition statements.
Week 4: Leveraging the Full Force of Your Value Proposition

Lecture Description
This week, students will learn how to leverage the force of a value proposition in marketing collateral. Students will learn how not only to identify a value proposition, but also express it holistically in marketing collateral.

Readings
- 21 Laws of Marketing — Chapter (p. 34-37) & Chapter 7 (p. 38-43)
- The Digital Marketer — Chapter 6 (p. 157-176)

Reinforcement Assignment
Evaluate the expression of the value proposition of online marketing campaigns. Discuss how you would increase the force of the value proposition.

Linking Activity
In a one page essay, identify how you would boost the sales of one particular product for a client and explain.

Exam 1

Week 5: Finding and Adding the Ideal Incentive

Lecture Description
This week focuses on using incentives. The class will learn what an incentive is and how to use incentives effectively. The class will go through the steps to find the ideal incentive for specific audiences.

Readings
- 21 Laws of Marketing — Chapter 13 (p. 76-83) and Chapter 14 (p. 84-87)
- Storyscaping — Part 2 (p. 107-164)

Reinforcement Assignment
Examine a sample marketing campaign and generate ideal incentives for a sample of audience segments.
Linking Activity
Identify 10 specific changes you would make to the provided marketing collateral and write a brief description explaining your rational behind it.

Week 6: Real-World Optimization: Value

Lecture Description
This week focuses on live optimization of value on webpages. The class will learn how to examine real-world marketing collateral for deficiencies in the value being offered.

Readings
- TBD

Reinforcement Assignment
Examine a sample marketing campaign and identify what aspects of the page are reducing offer acceptance. Then, apply the conversion heuristic to increase the value offered.

Linking Activity
Examine a piece of marketing collateral that included a lead-capture pop-up. This pop-up increased the number of submitted leads but also increased the amount of visitors leaving the site. Identify key elements that lead to the increase in submitted leads, and also the customers leaving the page.

Week 7: Addressing Psychological Friction

Lecture Description
This week focuses on psychological friction. The class will learn what friction is and how it impacts the customer’s thought sequence in the conversion process. The class will learn the two most common forms of friction and how to reduce them.

Readings
- 21 Laws of Marketing — Chapter 17 (p. 98-103) and Chapter 18 (p. 104-109) and Chapter 19 (p. 110-113)
Reinforcement Assignment
Select a webpage and identify the friction present. Label each point of friction as either length or difficult and detail how they could be minimized.

Linking Activity
Assess a sample marketing campaign and identify what might be causing drop off in website visitors. Explain a specific remedy you could test in order to decrease the visitor drop offs.

Week 8: Addressing Rational and Irrational Anxiety

Lecture Description
This week focuses on anxiety and the emotional response of the customer to elements on a webpage. The class will learn what rational and irrational anxieties are, how they influence the sales funnel and how to minimize their effect.

Readings
- 21 Laws of Marketing — Chapter 20 (p. 114-119) and Chapter 21 (p. 120-123)

Reinforcement Assignment
Select a webpage and identify key moments where anxiety is experienced and determine how the company reduced this anxiety using either specificity, proximity, or intensity.

Linking Activity
Evaluate the given scenario and discuss why visitors are leaving the provided page. Compose an essay explaining your reason and detailing what you would do to overcome.

Exam 2
Week 9: Real-World Optimization: Cost

Lecture Description
This week focuses on live optimization of cost on webpages. The class will learn how to examine real-world marketing collateral for instances of friction and anxiety.

Readings
- TBD

Reinforcement Assignment
Examine a sample marketing campaign and identify what aspects of the page are causing friction and anxiety for the customer.

Linking Activity
Examine a piece of marketing collateral and discuss ways in which you would improve the copy on the page.

Week 10: Crafting Effective Copy — Part 1

Lecture Description
This week will take the methodology taught up this point and apply it to the writing of copy. Students will learn how to match the customer motivations through the use of story.

Readings
- Principles of Screenwriting — Chapter 1 (p. 11-30) and Chapter 3 (p. 67-78) and Chapter 6 (p. 110-134)
- 10 Steps to Effective Copywriting

Reinforcement Assignment
Find 2 landing pages that utilize the compelling copy framework and label the individual steps for each.

Linking Activity
Evaluate and improve a product description page using the key elements learned from this session.
Week 11: Crafting Effective Copy — Part 2

Lecture Description
This week will continue to develop the concepts and theories from the previous week as applied to the writing of copy. Students will learn how to match customer motivations through story.

Readings
- Principles of Screenwriting — Chapter 10 (p. 233-251) and Chapter 12 (p. 288-302) and Chapter 13 (p. 303-316)

Reinforcement Assignment
Craft effective copy for either the School of Journalism or this particular certificate program.

Linking Activity
Develop your own conversion heuristic that matches your buying preferences

Week 12: The Web as a Living Laboratory

Lecture Description
Marketers make the grave mistake of underestimating the true value of their organization's website. It is not just another channel through which to pipe their message. It is a living laboratory for testing the company's customer theory. When used properly it can be the center of the dialog between the company and its customers. The Web is, without a doubt, the most remarkable breakthrough in the history of behavioral research. For the first time, we can measure, even monitor, human response, en masse, and yet down to the level of the individual customer, in real-time.

Readings
**Reinforcement Assignment**

Either choose an existing product, or create your own (imaginary) product. Write a one-page summary plan for how you would pre-test your product using the web.

**Final Examination**