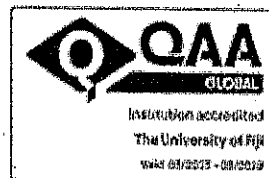




The University of Fiji
(An Entity of Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji)



SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

Department of Management

Semester 2, 2025

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER

MGT206: MARKETING PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIES

Important Instructions to Students:

1. Read the questions, instructions carefully and answer the questions.
2. You are allowed an **extra 10 minutes reading time** (during this time, you are not allowed to write with pen) and **180 minutes (3 Hours) to complete this paper.**
3. Silent, non-programmable calculators are allowed, but not supplied.
4. Write all your answers in the answer booklet provided. If you need extra sheets, please ask from the supervisor. Write your name, course code and student identification number in the answer booklet and in the attendance sheet.
5. This paper contains three (3) sections A, B and C. All questions are compulsory to answer **except** section A and B which have choices.
6. Write all your answers legibly. The marker has the right to award zero for answers that are not legible.
7. This is a **Closed Book Examination**. The University views plagiarism, cheating and dishonest practice as serious offences and if found, offenders are penalized.

Examination Paper Content (Format):

<u>Section</u>	<u>Question</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Marks</u>	<u>Suggested Time</u>
A	1-7	Short Answer Questions (Choose Any FIVE out of Seven)	40	60 minutes
B	1-4	Essays (Choose Any TWO out of Four)	40	60 minutes
C	1-4	Case Study (Answer ALL the Questions)	20	60 minutes
		TOTAL	100	180 Minutes

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Registration Certificate Number (RGN0020/11)

SECTION A:**SHORT ANSWERS****(40 MARKS)**

Attempt any five “5” questions only. Each question is worth 8 marks.

1. Imagine you are about to purchase a new laptop. Explain how you would progress through each of the five stages of the consumer buying decision-making process. Provide examples. (8 Marks)
2. Explain how the product life cycle, new product development and the product adoption process are linked. Provide examples. (8 Marks)
3. What are the key characteristics that differentiate business markets from consumer markets, and how do these differences impact marketing strategies. Explain using examples. (8 Marks)
4. Explain the four main elements of the promotion mix and explain how each contributes to a company's overall marketing communication strategy. Provide examples. (8 Marks)
5. Choose a company or brand you are familiar with and explain how it applies the 7 Ps of marketing to create a successful marketing strategy. (8 Marks)
6. Explain the roles of labels, packaging, and branding in product marketing, and how each element impacts consumer behaviour. Provide examples. (8 Marks)
7. What are the major challenges in the marketing of services? What measures can marketers take to ensure service quality? Explain using examples. (8 Marks)

Attempt any two “2” questions only. Each question is worth 20 marks.

1. Explain the main physical distribution activities performed within the marketing channel and how they contribute to cost reduction and customer satisfaction. Discuss how supply chain management functions and the impact of disruptions in the system. Provide examples. (20 Marks)
2. What is E-marketing and what are some of its advantages and disadvantages for consumers and marketers in today's digital economy. What are some ethical and legal challenges that companies must overcome to succeed in E-marketing? Explain in detail using examples. (20 Marks)
3. Explain the key factors a retailer should consider when selecting a store location. In your discussion, examine how elements such as target market, foot traffic, accessibility, competition, and cost influence the success of a retail store. Provide local examples to support your discussion. (20 Marks)
4. Discuss the different types of pricing strategies that marketers can adopt when setting prices for their products and services. In your answer, explain the key factors that should be considered when determining the most appropriate pricing strategy. Provide examples. (20 Marks)

Attempt all the questions. Each question is worth 5 marks.

Trolled Brands and the Digital Backlash

In today's digital world, social media platforms serve as powerful tools not only for promotion and customer engagement, but also for public criticism and activism. A single tweet or Facebook and Instagram post can trigger a viral backlash, putting global brands under intense scrutiny. What once might have been a minor customer complaint can now evolve into a full-blown PR crisis. From McDonald's, KitKat to Fair & Lovely, Vegemite, and Air New Zealand, many well-known companies have been brutally trolled online due to tone deaf marketing, cultural insensitivity, or poor communication. One of the world's largest fast-food chains, McDonald's, found itself at the centre of a social media storm with the launch of its McPlant burger. Marketed as a plant-based option for vegans and vegetarians, it was quickly criticized for being cooked on the same grill as beef patties. This revelation led to backlash from vegan consumers who felt misled. Memes mocking the campaign flooded social media, with many accusing the brand of greenwashing a term used to describe marketing that falsely promotes environmental friendliness. Initially, McDonald's failed to communicate clearly about the product's preparation, which only fuelled the outrage. However, the company later clarified its cooking methods and, in certain regions, even provided fully vegan cooking processes. This situation underlined the importance of transparency and proactive communication, especially when dealing with niche consumer groups who value ethical standards.

KitKat India, a brand owned by Nestle, launched a promotional campaign featuring Indian temples printed on chocolate wrappers. The intention was to celebrate India's cultural heritage and promote domestic tourism. However, the campaign quickly backfired. Consumers criticized the brand for placing sacred imagery on disposable packaging, which could end up in trash bins or on the streets an act many viewed as disrespectful to religious sentiments. The backlash intensified on platforms like Twitter, where users accused the company of being culturally insensitive. In response, Nestle India acted swiftly by withdrawing the wrappers and issuing a public apology. The company acknowledged the public's concerns and emphasized that the campaign's intent was not to offend. This quick and respectful response helped to mitigate the damage, illustrating how acknowledging mistakes and taking responsibility can help brands recover from cultural missteps. Perhaps one of the most globally debated examples of brand criticism is that of Fair & Lovely, a fairness cream owned by Hindustan Unilever. For years, the brand promoted the idea that lighter skin was more desirable, with advertisements suggesting that fair skin was linked to beauty, success, and happiness. In a country like India, where colourism is a sensitive and deeply rooted issue, the brand's messaging came under increasing fire especially with the rise of global social justice movements such as Black Lives Matter. The online backlash led to calls for boycotts and the trending of hashtags like #UnfairAndLovely, with activists and influencers speaking out against the brand's regressive ideals. Initially slow to respond, Unilever eventually rebranded the product as Glow & Lovely, removing the word "fair" from its name and altering its marketing to focus on skin health and radiance rather than complexion. Although critics argued this was a surface-level change, it was still seen as a positive step toward more inclusive branding. This case highlights the need for companies to re-evaluate long-standing practices and align their values with modern social standards.

In Australia, the beloved food spread Vegemite faced ridicule after launching a new product name: iSnack2.0. Chosen through a public competition and unveiled with great fanfare, the name was supposed to represent a modern twist on a classic product. However, consumers reacted with widespread confusion and mockery. Social media exploded with memes and sarcastic posts mocking the name as a poor attempt to appear trendy or tech-savvy. Kraft, the company behind Vegemite, had clearly misjudged its audience. Australians felt the new name undermined the authenticity and heritage of the product. Fortunately, Kraft acted quickly. Just days after the backlash, they scrapped the name and re-engaged the public to suggest a more appropriate one. This demonstrated a willingness to listen to customer feedback, even if it meant admitting a mistake.

The Vegemite case shows how humour and humility when used correctly can help a brand bounce back from a marketing misfire. Air New Zealand, the national airline, has often incorporated Maori culture into its branding as a way to honour the Indigenous heritage of the country. However, in 2023, the airline faced a digital backlash after releasing new uniform designs that featured Maori-inspired patterns. Critics accused the company of cultural appropriation, arguing that the designs were created without proper consultation with Maori designers or community leaders. The controversy sparked outrage on social media, with hashtags like #NotYourCulture trending across platforms. Many felt the brand was capitalizing on Maori culture rather than celebrating it respectfully. In response, Air New Zealand paused the rollout and entered into consultation with Maori communities, pledging to adopt a co-design approach in the future. This case emphasized the importance of collaborative creation when using cultural elements, especially in a country with a significant Indigenous population.

To navigate such crises effectively, companies must follow clear best practices. First and foremost, they should respond quickly and honestly, as delayed or vague communication can intensify public backlash. Acknowledging mistakes and taking responsibility where appropriate helps build credibility, while actively listening to feedback allows brands to adapt and improve. Respectful engagement with consumers, free from arrogance or defensiveness, is essential, as is fostering internal awareness around cultural, ethical, and environmental sensitivity during product development. On the other hand, companies must avoid deleting or ignoring criticism, which often worsens the situation. Being overly defensive or dismissing concerns without empathy can further damage a brand's reputation. Additionally, rushing into superficial or performative changes without addressing deeper issues may be seen as insincere. Finally, exploiting sensitive topics such as race, religion, or culture purely for marketing purposes can lead to significant backlash and should be handled with great care and authenticity. As public conversations increasingly move online, companies must understand that their actions, whether well-intentioned or not are subject to immediate and widespread scrutiny. The cases of McDonald's, KitKat India, Fair & Lovely, Vegemite, and Air New Zealand reflect how easily branding missteps can ignite social media backlash. However, these same platforms also offer an opportunity for redemption when companies take responsibility, engage respectfully, and make meaningful changes. In the digital age, it's no longer just about managing a product, it's about managing public trust. And that trust, once broken, can only be rebuilt through honesty, accountability, and cultural awareness.

Source: Marketing, 2nd Edition by Elliott, Greg, Sharyn Rundle-Thiele, David Waller, John Wiley & Sons Australia, VitalBook file 2017: pp 84-85

Questions

1. Why did McDonald's face backlash after launching its McPlant burger, and how did the company respond? Explain using examples. (5 Marks)
2. What mistake did KitKat India make with its promotional campaign, and what lesson can be learned from it? Explain using examples. (5 Marks)
3. What was the public's main criticism of Fair & Lovely, and what change did the brand make in response? As a marketing manager how would you have handled this criticism. Provide examples. (5 Marks)
4. What are two things companies should avoid when responding to social media backlash, according to the article? Why is it important for companies to listen and respond quickly during a social media crisis? (5 Marks)

The End

