

University of Southern California  
Marshall School of Business

BUAD 307  
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Marketing Fundamentals  
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**Appendix J**  
**BRIEF INTERDISCIPLINARY PAPER GUIDELINES**

**BACKGROUND**

This brief assignment intended to provide you with an opportunity either to (a) find a way in which marketing principles can be applied within the context of another discipline or (b) how concepts which you have studied in another course are relevant to marketing.

**EXAMPLES**

Below are some examples of how concepts from other disciplines have implications for marketing.

Accounting

- What are the implications of inventory valuation policy for marketing? For example, what are the implications of the use of “Last-In, First-Out” (LIFO) valuation on the willingness of a firm to deplete its inventories?
- How can the value of a brand be determined?
- How can accountants, discouraged by professional standards from advertising, communicate the quality of their services?

Finance

- How should risky projects—such as new product introductions— be evaluated?
- What is the value of patents, copyrights, distribution access, brand names, and marketing knowledge of a takeover target?

Macro Economics

- What types of products are most vulnerable to consumer cutbacks in bad economic times? Are there products whose sales actually increase? Note that counter-intuitive examples are more interesting.

Sociology

- To what extent do brand preferences in one or more product categories “transfer” from parents to their sons and daughters?
- Do immigrants to the U.S. who are fluent in English tend to prefer advertisements in English or in their native languages?

### Information Systems/Operations Management

- Uses of information system technology in marketing decisions.
- Simulation of the impact of product introduction.

### Fashion Design

- What types of attire are more effective for sales persons to wear? Does this depend on the product category and/or other factors?
- Some research shows that men's wear tends offer greater durability than women's wear does. One hypothesis advanced to explain this phenomenon is that that women tend to prefer to switch to new clothes more quickly than men do. Is this correct? Could there be a market for more durable women's wear?

### Statistics

- How can future demand for a product be estimated or forecast based on past sales and/or other factors?

### Physics

- Aluminum manufacturers have advertised that beverages in cans cool more quickly than in glass and plastic bottles. What causes this difference, how large is it, and how can this best be communicated to consumers?

### Music

- To what extent and how does music played in retail stores affect the behavior of consumers?
- Under what circumstances is the use of music in advertising more likely to be effective?

### Organizational Behavior

- How can marketing effectively relate to other functions in the organization?

### International Business/Anthropology

- What are some differences between cultures that have caused companies to experience problems in transferring products and marketing strategies between countries?

### Psychology

- How can companies that manufacture fragile or dangerous products increase the likelihood of consumers reading and complying with instructions and warning labels?
- Is it useful to mention something positive (but not very important) about competitors' products in your advertisements? Research on two the persuasiveness sided arguments has something to say about that.
- How many shades of red lipstick do you need to have a complete line? Do estimates by males and females significantly differ?
- What, if anything, can airlines do to attract customers who are scared of flying?

### Engineering

- The cost of producing a product tends to decline dramatically with 'experience" or cumulative production. What are the implications of this for product introduction and pricing strategies?

### Political Science

- How are principles of positioning useful in political campaigns?
- How can candidates of the two major parties best appeal to independent or “swing” voters without losing votes in their main constituency?

#### Sports Management

- To what extent does the athletic success of a university affect the number of applications received and student choice on which institution to attend? Are any sports other than football especially important here?
- Under what conditions are product endorsements by athletes likely to be more impactful?
- In what ways do athletes tend to “brand” themselves, both for purposes of getting product endorsement deals and to influence how they are perceived by fans?

#### IMPORTANT NOTES:

- You should expressly identify the specific course with which you are making the comparison.
- You should make *express reference to issues discovered in course or the textbook for the course*.
- Merely discussing the marketing of a specific product is *not* sufficient. **You must integrate ideas from another discipline.**

### SOURCES OF INSPIRATION AND INFORMATION

- *Textbooks from other courses.* Do some concepts seem to have implications for marketing, or could marketing principles be applied to some ideas?
- *Lectures and other classroom materials from other courses.*

### RESEARCH AND WRITING

This is intended to be a modest assignment, and you are not expected to put a great deal of time into it. Your write-up should not exceed two and a half pages, double spaced.