

Department of Marketing

LSU Flagship Agenda Strategic Plan

Introduction

E.J. Ourso College of Business Administration Department of Marketing faculty members met recently to begin the planning process for the 2002-3 through 2009-10 planning horizon stipulated in the LSU National Flagship Action Agenda. This document describes three strategic plan components that faculty members believe have good promise to distinguish the LSU Department of Marketing so it will be competitive with the AAU peer institutions identified by the Chancellor.

Core Plan Component I: Brand Management Concentration in MBA

As the centerpiece to its strategic plan, the Marketing Department has decided to undertake a complete revision and reorientation of the Marketing concentration in the Masters of Business Administration program. In this undertaking, the Department seeks to develop, launch, and perpetuate a **Brand Management** concentration. Details must be deliberated, but the key aspects of the Brand Management concentration that have been identified include:

- Strategic partnerships with Louisiana businesses
- Development of new MBA Brand Management courses in the areas of:
 - Database management and analysis
 - Customer loyalty and relationships
 - Brand management consultation
 - Data mining
 - Brand management internship
- Aggressive recruitment of top students with limited enrollment in the Brand Management concentration
- Dovetailing of the Brand Management program and strategic partnerships with the Ph.D. and undergraduate marketing programs (see Plan Components II and III below)
- Creation of company data access to serve as case study vehicles for Brand Management majors and to provide highly valuable data sources for faculty research programs.

Benefits of the Brand Management Concentration

The Department envisions a number of benefits and opportunities of the Brand Management MBA concentration that figure into LSU's National Flagship Actions

Agenda. In the initial planning meeting, Department faculty identified the following benefits/opportunities that speak in various ways to the Chancellor's National Flagship Action Agenda.

- **A unique identity** for the Brand Management concentration that teaches students skills that are sorely needed in the database-rich, information-laden environments that most companies are wrestling with and which will increase in the foreseeable future. This identity will service to distinguish the LSU Department of Marketing from other academic departments of marketing.
- Institution of a **concentrated faculty research programme** (spelling intentional to imply the model of some European university academic departments where these faculty all ascribe to a particular theory or method) in brand management/brand loyalty that will serve to galvanize faculty research and foster doctoral dissertation research by generating synergies across faculty academic research programs.
- Ongoing **relationships** with **Louisiana companies**¹ that will provide learning laboratories (for projects and internships) and exchanges (speakers or executives in residence). These relationships will serve to assist the economic development of Louisiana companies.
- Access to company databases and customer lists that will allow faculty members and doctoral students to **perform academic research** in database modeling, scanner data analysis, and with online panels. This access will overcome the convenience student sample bias that severely delimits the generalizability of academic marketing research
- Establishment of an **online survey panel** (using Websurveyor[®] or other web-based survey technology) for access by faculty and doctoral students for academic research and for access by Brand Management MBA's for practitioner research. This online panel feature will capitalize on technology developments in marketing research and further distinguish the LSU Department of Marketing from others.
- The opportunity to develop a **post-doctoral program** for individuals with doctorates in related areas who wish to transition into the academic marketing field. A post-doc program effectively utilizes in-place resources (i.e., the current doctoral program in marketing) and increases the size of this graduate program.
- Creation of a Brand Management **undergraduate concentration**, possibly an honors track. Developing specific academic and other requirements for entry, this concentration will increase the quality of undergraduate majors.

¹ Examples of companies that the LSU Department of Marketing has worked with in the past are: Eatel, Community Coffee, Allstar Automotive, Hibernia Bank, Ochsner Health, and Cox Communications.

Table 1
Tentative Strategic Plan Timetable for the MBA Brand Management Concentration

Year	Activity or Milestone
2003-2004	Develop Brand Management Concentration: course development
2004-2005	Recruitment of Louisiana strategic partnership companies; Recruitment of Brand Management Concentration majors
2005-2006	Launch inaugural Brand Management MBA class
2006-2007	Program review and refinement
2007-2008	Launch post-doctoral program
2008-2009	Launch Brand Management undergraduate concentration
2009-2010	Achievement of national reputation in Brand Management education and research

Plan Component II: Revise and Reposition the Ph.D. in Marketing

Over the past several years, the Marketing Department has systematically evaluated its doctoral course offerings and developed new seminars that are consistent with cutting edge marketing doctoral programs in the U.S. While the Brand Management MBA concentration will serve the needs of MBA students, the needs of doctoral students are different and the nature of academic research in marketing is changing, and the Marketing Department fully intends to maintain pace with these changes.

Changes and challenges to academic marketing research include the following:

- Pandemic nonresponse to traditional surveys (such as telephone surveys) by the general public, and consequent move to Internet panels and online surveys
- Shifts away from surveys toward the use of databases such as panel or scanner data
- Adoption of new quantitative tools such as data mining, improved structural equation modeling software, and quantitative modeling techniques
- Search for moderator and mediator variables that help explain marketing phenomena
- Need to conduct field experiments (i.e. real people) rather than lab studies (i.e. student subjects)

As noted in the description of the Benefits of the Brand Management Concentration, it is anticipated that the strategic relationships with businesses will open up opportunities to work with business data and/or to access data bases and customer panels.

Table 2
Tentative Strategic Plan Timetable for Revision of the Ph.D. in Marketing

Year	Activity or Milestone
2003-2004	Continue the program as is, that is, improve it
2004-2005	Study aspiration peer PhD programs to ascertain emerging techniques, approaches, courses, etc.
2005-2006	Identify new program structure; Develop courses and submit them to the C&C process; Recruit outstanding students
2006-2007	Implement 1 st year
2007-2008	Implement 2 nd year; Launch post-doctoral program
2008-2009	Implement 3 rd year
2009-2010	Implement 4 th year

Plan Component III: Revitalize the Undergraduate Marketing Major Curriculum

As with its other programs, the Marketing Department has systematically evaluated its undergraduate course offerings and developed new courses (e.g. Internet marketing, Marketing Tools) that speak to changes in the practice of marketing in organizations. However, the Department has not undertaken a critical evaluation of the undergraduate marketing major for some years.

It will behoove the Marketing Department to coordinate the evaluation and restructuring of the undergraduate major in marketing with the Brand Management Concentration that will be the centerpiece of its 3 curricula as there are a number of synergies possible.

Cursory thinking has revealed the following possible opportunities that should be studied and evaluated.

- Ongoing internship relationships with business strategic partners may open undergraduate
- Extended live case studies wherein undergraduate teams work on real world marketing problems across semesters may be possible
- Undergraduate students may “shadow-for-a-day” marketing executives
- Marketing executives may mentor undergraduate students

- New analysis tools (e.g. data mining, GIS, web-based research techniques) may be integrated into current or emerging courses

It is anticipated that a number of improvements and opportunities will “fall out” for the undergraduate program as the Marketing Department develops and implements the Brand Management MBA Concentration. Of course, a major component of the plan early on will be intensive study of peer undergraduate marketing curricular to ensure that our plan is consistent with the competition.

Table 3
Tentative Strategic Plan Timetable for the Undergraduate Marketing Major Curriculum

Year	Activity or Milestone
2003-2004	Develop new courses/revise old courses as in the past; Study aspiration peer undergraduate curricula in marketing
2004-2005	Critically evaluate the undergraduate marketing; Develop a Brand Management Concentration or make this concentration the entire undergraduate curriculum
2005-2006	Develop course descriptions; Submit to C&C process
2006-2007	Launch new concentration or curriculum; Recruit undergraduate honors or “high achievers” group
2007-2008	Launch honors track; Develop internships for undergraduates; Recruit strategic partners for on-going undergraduate team live case studies
2008-2009	Consolidate and expand strategic business partners relationships to fold in undergraduate marketing major elements.
2009-2010	Assess performance of the revitalized undergraduate marketing major curriculum; Fine tune it as needed