

UNIVERSITÉ PARIS 1 – PANTHÉON-SORBONNE

ÉCOLE DE MANAGEMENT DE LA SORBONNE / DÉPARTEMENT DES  
LANGUES

LICENCE DE GESTION ET ÉCONOMIE D'ENTREPRISE

EXAMEN DE RATTRAPAGE D'ANGLAIS APPLIQUÉ À LA GESTION,  
SEMESTRES 3 & 4

Enseignant responsable : Jean-Toussaint PINDI (MCF)

Date : 24 juin 2015

Sujet rédigé par Élisabeth LEVY (ATER) et Cyril SELZNER (MCF)    Durée : 2 heures

*No documents allowed. Write your answers on the official answer sheets provided.*

## **PART I. READING**

*Read the text below entitled “What are brands for?” and address the ensuing vocabulary and comprehension exercises:*

### **What are brands for?**

*Brands are the most valuable assets many companies possess.*

Brands are the most valuable thing that companies as diverse as Apple and McDonald's own, often worth much more than property and machinery. Brands account for more than 30% of the stock market value of companies in the S&P 500 index, reckons Millward Brown, a market research company. Everyone knows that a Ralph Lauren Polo shirt costs more than a polo shirt; Coke without the logo is just cola.

Yet arguments rage about how much brands are worth and why. Firms that value them come to starkly different conclusions. Brands, of course, vary. Some identify products that are distinctive (like *The Economist*, we hope). Others confer distinction on products that are otherwise hard to tell apart, such as cola.

The idea of brand equity arose in America in the 1980s after a bout of cut-throat discounting by consumer-goods companies, which prompted them to look for less-savage and more enduring ways to boost sales. Patiently building brands became the preferred alternative. They would allow companies to hold on to customers, win new ones and provide launching pads for new products. David Aaker, a business-school professor who helped spread the idea, identified three main components of brand equity: consumers' awareness of a brand, the qualities they associate with it (BMW summons up German engineering, Ryanair says “cheap”) and loyalty. The arguments now are partly over how important each element is.

Loyalty is what excites marketers and advertising folk. So-called “lovemarks” such as Apple and Coca-Cola are trademarks that inspire loyalty beyond reason. They have legions of fans, command a price premium and, most important perhaps, are forgiven when they fall short.

Brands are a promise to consumers, it is often said; they also serve as an insurance policy to cover the cost of breaking it.

Much marketing gospel flows from this view, such as the idea that brands must differentiate, appeal to distinct groups of consumers and foster fidelity. Loyal consumers “really drive brand profitability,” believes Millward Brown.

A second view holds that brands are “a shorthand for choice”. They make it easier for shoppers to cut through the information bombardment that rains down upon them. On this analysis, awareness matters more than loyalty or passion.

Apple’s computers, for example, may have a strong brand; but they command only a little more loyalty from buyers than do customers of less-ballyhooed makes of computer. Harley-Davidson, a motorcycle company, is well known to have a devoted fan base. But in fact such fanatics account for only a tenth of its customers and just 3.5% of its revenue.

On this view, companies that strive to differentiate themselves from their competitors’ brands are mostly wasting their time. Take fizzy drinks. Data show that less than one-fifth of the people who quaff them think there is anything unique or special about Coke, Pepsi and the like. A consumer-goods brand that aimed its marketing at its most fervent fans would lose sales: a typical Coke drinker buys one or two bottles a year.

What constitutes brand equity is physical and mental availability, which means the opportunity for consumers to find products in shops and their propensity to think of the brand when shopping. That is achieved through traditional methods of mass marketing, such as television advertising, packaging and celebrity endorsements, rather than through the fashionable targeted sort made possible by the Internet.

Even this argument is too starry-eyed for Itamar Simonson and Emanuel Rosen, authors of a book, “Absolute Value: What Really Influences Customers in the Age of (Nearly) Perfect Information”. They argue that consumers are becoming more rational and need brands less.

The original job of brands was to assure consumers about the quality of a product or service. Some, such as Sony in electronics, still seek to do this. But now customers can review products on shopping websites, talk to each other through social media and consult reviews websites like cnet.com and TripAdvisor. Brands thus have a reduced role as a quality signal. Shopping websites also make it easier for consumers to find the sort of product they like and filter out the sort they don’t. So brands are less needed as a mental shortcut. “Brand equity is simply not as valuable as it used to be,” the authors contend.

People have been predicting the death of the brand since the birth of e-commerce. It has not happened because people are lazier, and reviews less useful, than the seers assume. Consumers have come to expect decent products at good prices. Brands guide them to the ones they want. They are likely to survive the age of (nearly) perfect information, though experts will continue to debate why.

**A. COMPREHENSION (5 POINTS)**

*Say whether the statements below are True (T) or False (F). For each question, justify your answer with a sentence from the text. Indicate paragraph and line numbers and **write down the whole sentence, underlining the relevant elements.***

1. There is a general consensus of opinion on the value of brands for companies. (T/F)
2. The notion of brand equity appeared in the 1980s because companies needed an alternative to price cutting policies in order to expand their market share. (T/F)
3. The development of brands was expected to help companies increase their sales. (T/F)
4. Consumers who trust their brand would be turned away if the brand happens to disappoint them at some stage. (T/F)
5. Targeting a brand's fan base is a marketing policy that usually generates huge profits. (T/F)
6. Brands enjoy a good reputation when their promotion is done through the Internet. (T/F)
7. No company believes in the idea of 'brand as quality signal' anymore. (T/F)
8. E-commerce has transformed customers' purchasing behaviour because they no longer need to go to stores to see the product. (T/F)
9. Simonson and Rosen claim that brands should still be considered as the most valuable way of promoting products to consumers. (T/F)
10. According to the author of the article, the Internet has made the promotion of products through brands less attractive to consumers. (T/F)

**B. VOCABULARY (5 POINTS)**

*1. Find the word or short phrase in the text which corresponds to the definition below. Give the paragraph and line number.*

- a. Market for trading equities.

- b. The gathering and evaluation of data regarding consumers' preferences for products and services.
- c. Ability to generate or yield financial gain.
- d. Advertising campaign that involves a well known person using their fame to help promote a product or service.
- e. Management process through which a company encourages people to buy its goods and services by deciding on product, price, place and promotion.

2. Find a synonym for the following words or short phrases in the text. Give the paragraph and line number.

- a. Purchasers of goods
- b. Resources of economic value
- c. Business organizations
- d. Rivals in business
- e. To retain customers

## **PART II. GRAMMAR (5 points) –PHRASAL VERBS**

1. Choose appropriate verbs from the box to complete the sentences below. Use the correct tense. (0.5 pt each)

Verbs: put up / fill in / carry on / take over / turn down
--

- a. We will not ..... with his absenteeism any longer.
- b. Microsoft ..... their offer of a merger a month ago.
- c. Fiat ..... Chrysler a few years ago.
- d. Could you ..... these registration forms for me, please?
- e. HP is expected to ..... with the split according to plan.

2. In the sentences below, replace the words in *italics* with a phrasal verb from the box that has the same meaning. Use the phrasal verb in the correct tense. (0.5 pt each)

put off / tie up / throw away / put through / run out of
--

- a. Stock out is looming, we *are short of* supplies in our inventory.
- b. Could you *connect* me to your boss, please?
- c. This meeting has been scheduled far too early; we should *postpone* it until next month.
- d. I cannot find last year's customer files, have you already *disposed of* them?
- e. Inventory can be seen as dead weight as it *immobilizes* capital that could be wisely invested elsewhere.

### **PART III. ESSAY WRITING (5 points)**

*In a minimum of 250 words and a maximum of 350 – using the text, your personal knowledge and your own experience as a consumer – answer the following question:*

**Is the promotion of brands through traditional marketing methods still relevant today?**

*You will be assessed on the contents of your analysis as well as on the quality of your English. Please indicate your word count at the end. You lose one point if you fail to do so or if you write more or fewer words than required.*

## KEY TO ANSWERS AND GUIDELINES FOR MARKING

### PART I. READING

#### A. COMPREHENSION (5 points)

**Marking:** award 0.5 point per correct answer with proper reference. Nothing to be awarded, if otherwise.

11. **FALSE:** “But no one agrees on how much they are worth or why” (headline) **or** “Yet arguments rage about how much brands are worth and why. Firms that value them come to starkly different conclusions.” (§2 – lines 1-2 / text lines 6-7)
12. **TRUE:** “The idea of brand equity arose in America in the 1980s after a bout of cut-throat discounting by consumer-goods companies, which prompted them to look for less-savage and more enduring ways to boost sales.” (§3 – lines 1-3 / lines 10-12)
13. **TRUE:** “They would allow companies to hold on to customers, win new ones and provide launching pads for new products.” (§3 – lines 3-5 / lines 12-14)
14. **FALSE:** “They have legions of fans, command a price premium and, most important perhaps, are forgiven when they fall short. Brands are a promise to consumers, it is often said; they also serve as an insurance policy to cover the cost of breaking it.” (§4 – lines 2-5 / lines 19-22)
15. **FALSE:** “A consumer-goods brand that aimed its marketing at its most fervent fans would lose sales: a typical Coke drinker buys one or two bottles a year.” (§8 – lines 4-5 / lines 36-37)
16. **FALSE:** “That is achieved through traditional methods of mass marketing, such as television advertising, packaging and celebrity endorsements, rather than through the fashionable targeted sort made possible by the Internet.” (§9 – lines 3-5 / lines 40-42)
17. **FALSE:** “Some, such as Sony in electronics, still seek to do this.” (§11 – line 2 / line 47)
18. **TRUE:** “But now customers can review products on shopping websites, talk to each other through social media and consult reviews websites like cnet.com and TripAdvisor.” (§11 – lines 2-4 / lines 47-49)
19. **FALSE:** “‘Brand equity is simply not as valuable as it used to be,’ the authors contend.” (§11 – lines 6-7 / lines 51-52) [NB: doesn’t mean it has no value at all...]

20. **FALSE:** “It has not happened because people are lazier, and reviews less useful, than the seers assume.” (§12 – lines 1-2 / lines 53-54)

## B. VOCABULARY (5 points)

**Marking (both sections): 0.5 point per correct answer with adequate reference. 0.25 point for a correct answer with no/incorrect reference. Nothing to be awarded for translations.**

3. *Find the word or short phrase in the text which corresponds to the definition below. Give the paragraph and line number.*

- f. Market for trading equities: **stockmarket** (§ 1- line 3)
- g. The gathering and evaluation of data regarding consumers' preferences for products and services: **market research** (§ 1 - line 4)
- h. Ability to generate or yield financial gain: **profitability** (§ 5 – line 3 / text line 25)
- i. Advertising campaign that involves a well known person using their fame to help promote a product or service: **celebrity endorsement** (§ 9 – line 4 / text line 41)
- j. Management process through which a company encourages people to buy its goods and services by deciding on product, price, place and promotion: **marketing** (§5 line 1 / text line 23)

4. *Find a synonym for the following words or short phrases in the text. Give the paragraph and line number.*

- f. Purchasers of goods: **customers** (e.g. § 3 – line 4/ line 13) – we should also accept **consumers** (e.g. § 3 – line 6 / line 15)
- g. Resources of economic value: **assets** (caption)
- h. Business organizations: **firms** (e.g. § 2 – line 1/line 6) or **companies** (e.g. § 1- line 1)
- i. Rivals in business: **competitors** (§ 8 – line 1 / line 33)
- j. To retain customers: **to hold on to customers** (§ 3 – line 4 / line 13)

## PART II. GRAMMAR (5 points) – AHRASAL VERBS

**NB: 0.5 point for correct verb + correct form/tense; 0.25 point for correct phrasal verb but incorrect tense / form; nothing for incorrect verb but correct tense/form.**

### 2. Choose appropriate verbs from the box

- a. We will not **put up** with his absenteeism any longer.
- b. Microsoft **turned down** their offer of a merger a month ago.
- c. Fiat **took over** Chrysler a few years ago.
- d. Could you **fill in** these registration forms for me, please?
- e. HP is expected to **carry on** with the split according to plan.

### 3. Replace the words in italics with a phrasal verb that has the same meaning

- f. Stock out is looming, we **are running out of** supplies in our inventory.
- g. Could you **put me through** to your boss, please?
- h. This meeting has been scheduled far too early; we should **put it off** until next month.
- i. I cannot find last year's customer files, have you already **thrown them away**?
- j. Inventory can be seen as dead weight as it **ties up** capital that could be wisely invested elsewhere.



## **PART III. ESSAY WRITING (5 points)**

**“Is the promotion of brands through traditional marketing methods still relevant today?”**

Marking (1+4 points)

- Award 1 point as a bonus for requisite length. Nothing to be awarded, nor any penalty point to be deducted for inadequate or excess length.
- Please read, correct and comment the whole description and score as follows:

0.5 point = Very little substance. Poor discussion rendered in poor English.

1 point = Attempt to address the issues raised. Frequent spelling, vocabulary and grammar mistakes. No fluency of expression.

2 points = Good attempt to address the issues raised. All the questions are answered to some extent. Some regular spelling, vocabulary or grammar mistakes. Problems with the writing style.

3 points = Good substance or discussion on the whole. All the questions are addressed. Very few spelling, vocabulary or grammar mistakes and a good writing style.

4 points = Excellent discussion. High level English including fluency of expression and a very good writing style. Perfect spelling and good lexical and grammatical choices. No mistakes at all.

- Finally, please add the score to the bonus point, if any, and award the overall mark of the section.