FOR YOUR TEAM · BRAND ARCHITECTS

Brand Architects

Marketing & Brand Management

Build and defend a brand, quarter by quarter, against rival teams and two established competitors.

Learning objectives

- Write campaign concepts that actually solve a brand problem, not just look good.
- Balance long-term brand building against short-term activation, and explain why short-term returns flatter activation.
- Allocate and pace a marketing budget across channels and quarters, reading share of voice against market share.
- Build brand equity as a multi-quarter compounding asset — consistent positioning, fresh execution, and the pricing power it earns.
- Respond to crises in a way that protects Brand Love rather than just defending the legal position.
- Read cultural moments and decide when to engage vs. when staying quiet is wisest.

How it runs

1. **Brief drops**
   Quarter opens. Brief lands with positioning challenge, audience, and budget cap; some briefs come with a change in the market.
2. **Campaign + budget**
   Team writes a consumer insight, positioning, tagline and 100-180 word concept, splits the budget between brand building and activation, and allocates it across 6 channels.
3. **Focus group pre-test**
   Run the campaign past 3 in-character LLM personas before submitting. They quote what lands, what falls flat.
4. **Crisis (sometimes)**
   A crisis may fire mid-quarter. Team writes a public response within a tight window — graded on speed, tone, transparency.
5. **Quarter close**
   The Creative Panel scores the campaign, the same 3 personas react as the launch audience, and the market runs for the whole class. Brand health, share, revenue and profit move.
6. **Results + reflection**
   See what moved each gauge, share of voice vs. market share, and short- vs. long-term return on marketing. Each student writes a short role reflection.

Pillars & scoring

CREATIVE QUALITY
Average Creative Panel score across the quarters played; a quarter with no campaign counts as zero.

CAMPAIGN RESPONSE
Crisis handling (unanswered crises cost the most), nudged by the fit of any cultural moments joined.

BRAND LOVE
How much shoppers prefer the brand: the biggest part of Brand Health, and it compounds across quarters.

MARKETING RETURN
Long-term return on marketing: season gross profit above a no-marketing "ghost" of the brand, per dollar spent.

Key features

- **Focus Group + launch audience**
- **Creative Panel**
- **A shared market**
- **Brand building vs. activation**
- **Crisis Desk**
- **Cultural Calendar**

Light roles

Fit & format

PACING

5 quarters in the five-week format · 8 quarters in the eight-week or 14-week semester format. The professor sets each quarter's close; one quarter a week works well.

COHORT SHAPE

Designed for ~15-30 students in teams of 4 (one per role; 2-5 works). All teams share one market, and each starts with the same brand.

BEST FOR

Undergraduate or MBA marketing courses, brand management, integrated marketing communications, advertising and creative strategy.

WHAT SETS IT APART

Only sim where teams pre-test creative with LLM personas and then hear the same personas react to the live campaign, in a market the whole class shares. Visual identity is moodboard / creative-agency, not Bloomberg-terminal.

LMS

Canvas, Blackboard, Brightspace, Moodle via LTI 1.3. Students launch from your LMS with single sign-on; one-click grade publish posts scores back with the rubric breakdown as the comment.

PRICING

$20 / student

Founding Faculty: free in spring 2027, then $10 / student

Per semester. No platform fee, no per-section charge, no seat minimums. Institutional invoicing available.

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