

Qualitative Marketing Research

MARK 70150

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Module Four 2008
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Required Texts:

Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping (2000), Underhill
Analyzing Social Settings (1995), Lofland and Lofland
The Total Package (1997), Hine
Emotional Design (2004), Norman
Case Packet

Recommended Texts:

Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods in Marketing (2007), Belk
Doing Anthropology in Consumer Research (2007), Sunderland and Denny
Ethnography for Marketers (2006), Mariampolski
Creating Breakthrough Ideas (2002), Squires and Byrne
Beyond Disruption (2002), Dru
The Savage Girl (2001), Shakar
Qualitative Research Methods (2000), Berg
Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes (1995), Emerson, Fretz and Shaw
The Long Interview (1988), McCracken
Focus Groups (1990), Stewart and Shamdasani
Contemporary Marketing and Consumer Behavior (1995), Sherry
Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman (1997), Du Gay et al
Why Things Bite Back (1997), Tenner

Recommended Equipment:

Field notebook
Inexpensive microcassette recorder
Single-use camera(s)
Video camera (will be provided)

Course Description:

(See <http://www.nd.edu/~markdept/020812/academics/gcourses.html> for elaboration)

This course will help you distinguish the *actual* worldview and ethos of consumers from the *assumptions* of the firm. You will conduct primary field research into consumption use-systems. Your thick description and rich interpretation of these systems will enable you to identify marketing opportunities and propose creative responses to your discoveries. Our effort is trained on the managerial implications of prolonged engagement with consumers.

Learning Objectives

The conscientious, diligent and insightful student completing this course will be able to:

1. Interpret the cultural ecology of consumer behavior;
2. Understand the interplay of experiential and functional dimensions of product/service/brand essence;
3. Conduct rapid appraisals using qualitative methods;
4. Supervise diagnostic qualitative research into consumer experience;
5. Design empathic marketing interventions against unarticulated consumer wants and needs.

Policy and Procedure

Participation and Attendance: The class will observe a seminar-workshop format. You are expected to prepare for and contribute to each session. Class work will complement, not duplicate, assigned reading, and thus will weigh significantly in your final evaluation. Because field immersion is such an integral component of your skill development, you will be expected to spend the bulk of your class preparation time in the field, onsite, working with consumers. About 60% of your 8 hr/wk homework budget* should be devoted to fieldwork. You will presumably soon want to spend additional time in the field, commensurate with your other course load responsibilities. Contextual inquiry is *extremely* labor-intensive. Continuous, timely preparation and intelligent verbal participation are essential for the course to succeed.

While our workshop format demands the use of laptops, non-70150-related usage is deemed a violation of the honor code, a breach of decorum, and a measure of contempt of scholarly community. You will be banished for an audible ringtone.

Term Project

Although you are building a portable skill bank of individual techniques, you will exercise these skills within the context of a group project. Groups may range widely across categories, such as *consumer* products/services (e.g., food), *high-tech* products/services, (e.g., iPods), *b2b* products/services (e.g., mis) and *servicescapes* (e.g., flagship brand stores). Using contextual inquiry techniques, each group will describe and interpret the *consumption use-system* of the product/service create a *cultural biography* of the product/service, identify *marketing opportunities* arising from the inquiry, and make specific *recommendations* for acting upon the group's discoveries. While the final results will be presented orally and in *white paper* format (15 pp., exclusive of appendices), interim progress will be demonstrated in classroom *workshops* examining your emergent data sets. Each group will prepare *draft* presentation materials – overhead/ppt. slides of transcripts, verbatims, photographs, videotape, etc. - to facilitate discussion on assigned dates. Finally, each group will submit its annotated *data sets* for evaluation near the middle and end of the term. Your grade will be apportioned as follows:

*per Dean Conlon's calculation

Term Project (cont'd)

Class co-facilitation (20%)

Project presentation (20%)

Data sets (30%)

White paper (30%)

You will also be required to evaluate your group members' contributions, using a confidential instrument to be submitted to the instructor.

Data Sets:

Each group will submit a portfolio of materials that will include annotated examples of:

- Informed consent forms
- Archival sources
- Field notes
- Photographs
- Videotapes (spontaneous/naturalistic and scripted)
- Depth interview guides/transcripts/tapes
- Focus group guides/transcripts/tapes
- Projective task stimuli/responses
- Autodriving
- Member checking

This portfolio can be selective, but should also be instructive. For example, include examples not only of your greatest hits, but also of your near misses or abject failures. The latter are often very effective learning opportunities.

Coping with Readings:

While I expect each team member to digest all required reading, I realize that individual time budgets and skill facilities will vary widely. Thus, I expect the *team* to parse the reading using its collective wisdom, and monitor knowledge flow to ensure the most effective development of skills. Individuals may be responsible for brokering literature to the team, and facilitating discussion of key technical or theoretical issues. Insightful interpretation depends upon both breadth of coverage and depth of understanding. Challenge your teammates to push beyond your own synthesis and integration of the reading. Teach each other what you've mastered, and build a solid, organic instrument.

Conferences:

You are invited to discuss course-related issues and interests with me during the office hours listed above. In the event that our hours conflict, an appointment for a mutually convenient time may be arranged after class. I expect to meet at least once with your entire group during the quarter.

Course Schedule:

The following schedule indicates specific content areas to be addressed this quarter. Rigid adherence to this schedule is not anticipated. You may regard the timetable as tentative insofar as I intend to remain flexible enough to accommodate emergent personal interests that appear fruitful.

Session	Date	Topic	Prepare for Class Discussion*	Assignment
1	3/18	Context, Experience and Interpretation		
2	3/20	Skill Build: Participant-Observation	<i>Shopping 1-4, Analysis 7-5</i>	Identify field site(s)
3	3/25	Workshop	<i>Package 1-3, Design 1-2</i>	Observations, images
4	3/27	Skill Build: Depth Interview	<i>Shopping 5-9, Analysis 6-7,</i>	
5	4/1	Workshop	<i>Package 4-6, Design 3</i>	Guides, transcripts, tape
6	4/3	Skill Build: Focus Group	<i>Shopping 10-14, Analysis 8,</i>	
7	4/8	Workshop	<i>Package 7-9, Design 4-5</i>	Guides, transcripts, tape
8	4/10	Skill Build : Projective Techniques	<i>Shopping 15-19,</i>	Date Set Due
9	4/15	Workshop	<i>Design 6</i>	Stimuli, responses
10	4/17	Data Reduction	<i>Analysis 9, Design 7</i>	
11	4/22	Data Analysis	<i>Analysis 10,</i>	Coding, annotation
12	4/24	Framing Interpretations		Managerial speculation
13	4/29	Presentations		
	5/6			Data Set Due Project Due

*Additional technical & professional reading available as CD archive.