

B2B Marketing

Course Module in Marketing Management

Course Modules help instructors select and sequence material for use as part of a course. Each module represents the thinking of subject matter experts about the best materials to assign and how to organize them to facilitate learning.

Each module recommends four to six items. Whenever possible at least one alternative item for each main recommendation is included, as well as suggested supplemental readings that may provide a broader conceptual context. Cases form the core of many modules but we also include readings from *Harvard Business Review*, background notes, and other course materials.

1. Overview of suggested content (HBS case unless otherwise noted)

Title	Author	Product Number	Publication Year	Pages	Teaching Note
1. Introduction					
Marketing Reading: Developing and Managing Channels of Distribution (HBP Core Curriculum)	Cepedes & Narayandas	8145	2014	30p	8146
2. Researching and Targeting Corporate Customers					
ThoughtWorks (A); Targeting and Positioning Basics for a Services Firm (Kellogg case)	Tybout & Ragsdale	KEL113	2004	12p	KEL178
Alternative: <i>Centra Software</i>	Deighton & Poliquen	502009	2001	17p	503074
3. Launching Services and Products					
3a. Office Tiger	Lassiter & Blaxall	804109	2004	24p	807039
Alternative: <i>Communispace</i>	Keinan	510018	2009	15p	511120
3b. KONE: The MonoSpace Launch in Germany	Narayandas & Swartz	501070	2001	21p	503068
Alternative: <i>Atlantic Computer: A Bundle of Pricing Options</i> (HBP Brief case)	Bharadwaj & Gordon	2078	2007	10p	2079
4. Managing Customers, Distributors and Partners					
Purolator Courier Ltd.	Lal & Ross	508054	2008	32p	510087
Alternative 1: <i>CMR Enterprises</i>	Narayandas & Caravella	501012	2000	21p	502070

<i>Alternative 2: Soren Chemical: Why is the New Swimming Pool Product Sinking?</i> (HBP Brief case)	Rangan & Yong	4188	2010	8p	4190
Supplement: <i>From Volume to Value: Managing the Value-Add Reseller Channel at Cisco Systems</i> (CMR article)	Kalyanam & Brar	CMR442	2009	27p	--
5. B2B Marketing and Selling on the Internet					
<i>Jewellworld.com: A Jewellery Industry B2B Portal</i> (Hong Kong case)	Yim & Lee	HKU562	2006	9p	HKU563
<i>Alternative 1: Arrow Electronics, Inc.</i>	Narayandas	598022	1998	20p	500111
Supplement: <i>Realizing the Promise of E-Business: Developing and Leveraging Electronic Partnering Options</i> (CMR article)	Chatterjee, Segars & Watson	CMR345	2006	26p	--
6. Capstone Materials					
<i>Marketing Simulation: Managing Segments and Customers V2</i> (HBP simulation)	Narayandas	7018	2010	--	4048
<i>Alternative: Siebel Systems: Anatomy of a Sale, Parts 1 to 3</i>	Deighton & Narayandas	503021 503022 503023	2002	9p 4p 7p	504087
Supplement: <i>Building Loyalty in Business Markets</i> (HBR article)	Narayandas	R0509H	2005	9p	--

II. Rationale for selecting and sequencing the items in this module

The essentials of business-to-business (B2B) marketing share much with marketing in general, such as researching and targeting customers. But there are many important differences, especially in recent years as the Internet has further broadened and intertwined the fields for sales, marketing, and supplier relationships in business markets. The selected items for study reflect this increasing complexity, including cutting-edge capstone materials that will put students in the center of the B2B mix.

Section 1 introduces key issues in the management of corporate customers. The main selection, *Business-to-Business Marketing*, provides a comprehensive review of the fundamental concepts and theories related to aspects of business-to-business (B2B) marketing. This Reading discusses five core elements of B2B marketing: 1. Links between business-to-business marketing and business strategy. 2. The impact of market and account selection. 3. The complexity of buyer behavior. 4. The need to understand and communicate buyer benefits. 5. The importance of organizational alignment.



The theme of understanding customers better is made more concrete in **Section 2**. In the main selection, *ThoughtWorks*, the leaders of a small IT firm face the problem of their inability to build a brand. Later, they come to recognize that they know little about the customers they already have. Students can evaluate the results of an aggressive marketing research project that yields some surprising results. The alternative case, *Centra Software*, focuses on targeting customer segments to maximize value.

In **Section 3**, we split the subject of product launch into its basic categories: launching of a service and launching of a physical product. The *Office Tiger* case in Part One features a professional outsourcing company and its endeavors to market a new idea to potential customers who are skeptical of trying something new. The alternative *Communispace* case looks at a leader in creating and managing online communities for major corporate clients, as its client challenges the company to help the launching of a new brand by using a new marketing technique. Part Two features the *KONE* case, covering an elevator company facing strategic and tactical challenges in launching a new elevator product to corporate customers. As an alternate, the *Atlantic Computer* case considers a range of pricing approaches being evaluated by a product manager who's focused on business markets for a new generation of server.

Section 4 covers managing customers, distributors and partners. *Purolator Courier* explores how a vice president at one of Canada's leading package delivery companies addresses the challenge of managing a portfolio of customers to maximize the value of the company. *CMR Enterprises* offers an alternative approach to managing customers through describing how a cabinet making company tries to understand why relations with an important business customer have begun to deteriorate. A second alternative, *Soren Chemical*, follows an executive who tries to determine why a consumer brand has not performed well by looking at channel strategy, distribution partners, pricing, and other potential problem sources. As a supplement, a *California Management Review* article takes an in-depth look at a value-based channel management model used at Cisco Systems.

As Philip Kotler has observed in his textbook on marketing, the impact of the Internet on B2B transactions is significant and is still playing itself out in unpredictable ways. **Section 5** offers various approaches into this topic. It begins with *Jewellworld.com*, a case about the B2B platform for Hong Kong's jewelry industry whose owners explore growth options through evaluating the adoption of cutting-edge technology for the business. A proposed alternative is *Arrow Electronics*, an HBS Premier case that explores the abiding challenge of cross-selling and managing a portfolio of products and services in the age of e-commerce. The segment ends with a supplemental article on "Realizing the Promise of E-Business" through B2B synergistic relationships facilitated by the Internet (called "digitization initiatives") in four domains—strategic congruency, organizational design, technology infrastructure, and relational campaigns.

This module culminates with capstone materials in **Section 6** that ask students to apply many of the insights about B2B marketing found in this module to a particular case. The main selection is an HBP simulation, "Managing Segments and Customers." Authored by an HBS thought leader in B2B marketing, Das Narayandas, the simulation asks students to assume the position of a CEO of a medical motor manufacturer who must execute a successful B2B marketing strategy over a period of twelve fiscal quarters. As an alternative we offer *Siebel Systems*, another HBS Premier case. This case is comprised of three short parts that looks at a B2B buyer-seller relationship from three different angles. These capstone materials are supplemented by an HBR article, "Building Loyalty in Business Markets," which reminds business leaders that the foundation of B2B success ultimately lies in a company's ability to manage customers individually, showing how its products or services can help solve each buyer's problems.



Additional Core Curriculum Readings concerning some related marketing contexts in which business-to-business marketing plays a role include [Marketing Reading: Framework for Marketing Strategy Formation \(#8153\)](#) and [Marketing Reading: Global Marketing \(#8182\)](#).