MBAD 560 – Special Topics:  
Go-to-Market Strategy & Management  
Express II, Fall 2019

Contact Information
Instructor: Douglas Boyle  
Adjunct Professor
Cell Phone: 713-853-7799 (9am-5pm weekdays)  
Email: boyleds@cofc.edu
Office/Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays 10:45-11:45am (immediately after class)  
Available for phone calls or email correspondence most weekdays.

Class Sessions  
Tuesdays/Thursdays 8:00-10:40am  
Jewish Studies Center – Room #233

Course Objectives
The course is designed to build understanding of the strategic design and operational management of marketing channels. Following completion of the course, the student will be familiar with how to:

- Formulate a “go-to-market” or channel strategy based on an assessment of customer needs, channel capabilities, competitive position and company objectives.
- Manage performance and address key challenges to the strategy arising from either external factors (customer, competitive) or participants (distributors, franchisees).

School of Business Learning Goals
The Go-to-Market Strategy & Management course is also designed to support student development in the following areas:

- Communication skills: Students demonstrate the ability via both written and spoken work, to effectively present, critique, and defend ideas in a cogent, persuasive manner.
- Intellectual innovation and creativity: Students demonstrate their resourcefulness and originality in addressing extemporaneous problems.
- Synthesis: Students demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines incorporating learning from both classroom and non-classroom settings in the completion of complex and comprehensive tasks.

Course Overview
Go-to-market channels are systems that firms use to make their goods or services available to end-customers. Channels may be entirely direct (all customer interface & support in-house), but most firms now rely on a network of other companies to deliver optimal customer & business value. In today’s increasingly global, digital and ‘solution-oriented’ environment, channels are changing rapidly and achieving a competitive edge in customer delivery is becoming ever more important.

The course will review and practice application in both the strategic design and management of marketing channels. It will cover a broad range of industries and channel relationship models (e.g. distributor, VAR, franchise, JV) and address the unique challenges associated with integrating on-line channels with traditional 3rd party models such as brick-and-mortar retailers.
The course begins by focusing on strategic design elements: channel mapping and value-chain optimization. Customer, competitive and channel assessments form the foundation for the creative and value-creating decisions associated with designing a new go-to-market strategy. The second half of the course focuses on operational management: how to increase channel power and navigate key challenges such as channel conflict, change management, channel motivation and performance issues. Throughout the course, the professor will argue from the premise that Channel Stewardship (in short, active management of channels to maximize customer value delivery & satisfaction) is essential to superior and sustained business performance.

The session agenda is summarized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1       | • Course introduction & overview  
          • GTM Strategy: Channel Stewardship |
| 2       | • GTM Strategy: Channel Mapping |
| 3 & 4   | • Independent Strategy Review research  
          (No class meeting) |
| 5       | • Channel Power  
          • Franchise Channel review |
| 6       | • Outside Speaker: Franchisee perspective  
          • GTM Strategy: Building & Updating the Value Chain (Design decision) |
| 7       | • Option Development & Assessment  
          • Distributor & VAR Channel review |
| 8       | • Alliances & JVs as Channel vehicles  
          • Legal & Regulatory environment |
| 9       | • GTM Strategy: Aligning & Influencing Systems (Management of channels) |
| 10      | • Conflict Management |
| 11      | • Outside Speaker: Multichannel management perspective  
          • Change Management |
| 12      | • Sales & Performance Management |
| 13      | • Course wrap-up & Summary  
          • Student Feedback |

Learning Method
The principles of effective go-to-market strategy & management will be provided by a few key readings and the Professor’s presentation slides. This ‘theory’ offers the framework for assessment and decision-making, but the emphasis of the course is on ‘real life’ application.

Practice in ‘real life’ application will be achieved through a variety of learning methods: frequent in-class review & discussion of news articles, written case and independent strategy reports and outside speakers from both the marketer and channel perspective. Insights and learning from these exercises will be discussed in-class to ensure that all benefit.

Reading Materials
The reading list for the course is summarized on page 10 of this syllabus. Published Case studies and Notes/Articles can be purchased directly from the Harvard Business Publishing site (link to course pack: https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/626274). Newspaper and journal articles can be accessed via links included on page 10 of this syllabus and in the Session tabs on the Oaks course site. Students will need a Wall Street Journal subscription to access the news articles. A subscription can be established at no cost to the student via the following link: https://partner.wsj.com/enter-redemption-code/COCH03bhbnrk?mod=wsj_CofC1. Additionally, the Professor’s presentation slides will be posted to Oaks approximately a week before each class and should be reviewed prior to each session and in preparation for the Examination.
Grading

Course grading will be based on the following criteria and weighting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Component</th>
<th>% Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation, including news article &amp; role-play activity</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topical Reports</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 4 x 6 pts each</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Reports</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 3 x 12 pts each</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Strategy Review project</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All grade components are individual assignments (no team projects). Guidance on each component follows:

- **Topical Reports**
  Topical Reports are **brief, 1-page responses** to a question about a news article or mini-case. These will be used through the course to provide immediate application and reinforcement of lecture topics. The schedule of Topical Reports, questions and due dates is listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Question for Report</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Channel Evolution</td>
<td>“The Age of Alexa”</td>
<td>Looking at consumer products in the AI age, what types will be drawn to a Push strategy, and which to a Pull strategy?</td>
<td>October 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel Selection</td>
<td>“Sell Direct.. or through Amazon?”</td>
<td>Should PedalSpark sell through Amazon?</td>
<td>November 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Management</td>
<td>“Beer Battle Brews”</td>
<td>“Should Craft Brewers seek to expand the ‘direct sales loopholes’?”</td>
<td>November 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Management</td>
<td>“Ace Hardware makes a big bet”</td>
<td>“What priorities does CEO Venhuizen need to focus on to ensure a successful e-commerce program?”</td>
<td>November 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Topical Reports should be drafted in line with the following guidelines:
- Reports are limited to 1 page, 1.0+ line spacing with normal font.
- Reports must be uploaded to the course Dropbox on Oaks by the start of the class session (8:00am ET) on the date outlined. As the case will be discussed in the class session, late submissions will be penalized by 10 points (and that will increase for additional lateness).

- **Case Reports**
  Case Reports are **more complete, 3-4 page responses** to a more fully fleshed out business situation. The cases used in this course have been selected to focus on each of the 3 strategic steps of channel management: mapping, design and management. The schedule of Case Reports, questions and due dates is listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Questions for Report</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Channel Mapping</td>
<td>FormPrint Ortho500</td>
<td>How are the hospital &amp; clinic segments different? What implications does this have on channel design?</td>
<td>October 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel Design</td>
<td>Xiameter</td>
<td>Profile the Xiameter customer and their needs. What approach should Dow take for the future?</td>
<td>November 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel Management</td>
<td>Clique Pens</td>
<td>Assess Clique’s market position and business goals. What short &amp; long-term actions would you recommend to Elise Ferguson?</td>
<td>November 26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case Reports should be drafted in line with the following guidelines:

- Reports are limited to a maximum of 4 pages, 1.0+ line spacing with normal font, exclusive of appendices. Please use appendices to visualize your argument or provide data tables but use good judgment on length.
- Case reports must be uploaded to the course Dropbox on Oaks by the start of the class session (8:00am ET) on the date outlined above. As the case will be discussed in the class session, late submissions will be penalized by 10 points (and that will increase for additional lateness).
- Cases are meant to be assessed and actioned with only the information given in the case. Please do not do any additional research on the company as part of your preparation.

**Independent Strategy Review**

The Independent Strategy Review (ISR) project provides an opportunity for students to conduct a more comprehensive assessment and strategy recommendation than can be done on a published case, and to do this work on a business of personal interest. Students should select a business they are familiar with (one where they, their parents, friends or relatives work or have worked) or one that interests them from a career or news standpoint.

To complete the project, the student is expected to research the firm’s overall business strategy, market and competitive environment, and channel practices for the firm and the broader industry. It is strongly recommended that the student interview relevant company personnel (if it’s a company they have relationships with) or study the firm and industry via public documents (annual reports, news articles, etc). It’s best to target Managers in the Sales, Marketing or Customer Service functions or senior executives for interviews as they will have the best understanding of the issues to be explored.

The focus of the paper is to *complete the Channel Mapping process for your firm, including the identification of Options for future evaluation* (I’d like to see how creative you can be in formulating potential solutions for the issues you identify in Mapping, but do not expect you to be able to assess as an outsider). If your company is large, it’s usually best to focus on a specific brand so that focus on a specific customer target and set of needs.

The attached document provides more detailed guidance for ISR completion:

Finally, it is recommended that students discuss their proposed firm and research plan with the Professor before beginning the project. Coaching is available throughout the study and writing period if needed.

**Participation in Class discussion**

Active involvement in class discussion is critical to your learning and the learning of other students. Quality of contribution is more important than quantity, but top grades will be provided for comments such as:

- Insightful diagnosis of root cause issues or anticipation of problems
- Proposing potential solutions with rationale and key success factors
- Building on other student comments & proposals, either as an enhancement or constructive challenge
- Thoughtful questions for outside speakers

Each student’s contributions will be evaluated after each session against the following rating standard:

- Non-Participant: Present but did not contribute or missed class. No participation credit for grading purposes.
- Minimal Contributor: Ideas offered were not substantive or not particularly constructive. Little new perspective added.
- Good Contributor: Active and constructive contributions provided. Good preparation and reflection on theory or cases evident. Arguments well substantiated.
- Outstanding Contributor: Contributions reflect exceptional preparation and insight, connecting material to broader business context. Arguments are well substantiated and persuasive.
In addition to participation throughout each of the class sessions, the course has been structured to include discussion of news articles and role-play. Students are expected to take turns leading a class discussion of articles or role-plays. It is expected that every student will participate in at least one news/role-play exercise during the term.

Policies
The following policies will apply to the course:

- **Attendance**
  Because attendance is crucial to fully understanding strategic marketing principles and benefiting from classroom discussion on practical application, students are expected to attend all classes. To minimize gaming, the only ‘excused’ form of absence is when a student is acting as an official representative of the College (e.g. academic or athletic competition).

  Please note the following:
  - Consistent with a professional environment, students are expected to arrive before the start of class (8:00am). Late arrival will be noted and students should discuss with the professor the reasons for their delay at a class break.
  - If you are not able to attend a class session, please send me a text or email before the start of class.
  - A sign-in sheet will be used in each class session – please remember to sign-in at the start of each class!

  Students are allowed one ‘unexcused’ absence for the course for any other reason. Please contact me as early as possible when you determine that you will need to miss a class – I appreciate the notice and it gives us an opportunity to discuss assignments or class topics.

  Students should expect to receive a Withdrawn Excessive Absences (WA) grade if they have two or more ‘unexcused’ absences.

- **College of Charleston Honor Code and Academic Integrity**
  Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

  Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to a misunderstanding will handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file.

  Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

  Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration—working together without permission—is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others’ exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance. Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.

  Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the *Student Handbook* at [http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php](http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php)
• **Cell Phones, Laptops & Tablets**  
  Cell phones should be turned off during class session. Please let me know prior to class if you are facing extraordinary circumstances and need to keep your phone on. Laptop and Tablet computers should be kept in a closed position during class session.

• **Disability**  
  Please contact me if you have a disability that will impact your work in this course. Students will need to apply to the SNAP Office (Lightsey Center, Suite 104) for approval, but I would be glad to work with anyone requiring accommodation.
# Course Schedule – Sessions #1 – 5

All Class Sessions held in Jewish Studies Center #233, 8:00-10:40am

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Topics:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Thursday, October 10 | Course outline & overview  
GTM Strategy: Channel Stewardship |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading &amp; Cases:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Rangan, “Developing & Managing Channels”. Sections 1 & 2.1 (pages 3-7)  
WSJ: “It’s All About Business Model Innovation, not New Technology”  
Professor’s slides (posted 1 wk before class) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Understand course objectives and requirements  
Understand the basic types of channel structure, roles of participants and common applications  
Understand ‘Stewardship’, a framework for designing & managing go-to-market channels |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No assignments due for this class</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 2</th>
<th>Topics:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, October 17</td>
<td>GTM Strategy: Channel Mapping</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading &amp; Cases:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Rangan, “Developing & Managing Channels”. Section 2.2 (pages 7-12)  
Dawar, “Marketing in the Age of Alexa” article  
WSJ: “Tesla is betting it can sell cars online, without a test drive”  
Rangan & Yong, “Soren Chemical” case  
Professor’s slides (posted 1 wk before class) |

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objectives:</th>
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</table>
| Understand key components and perspectives required to complete Channel Mapping.  
Apply Channel Mapping method to the Soren Chemicals case |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Channel Evolution Topical Report: “Looking at consumer products in the AI age, what types will be drawn to a Push strategy, and which to a Pull strategy?” (Alexa article)  
Due to Dropbox before class start (800am) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 3 &amp; 4</th>
<th>Topics:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday/Thursday, October 22 &amp; 24</td>
<td>ISR Research Days</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| No class sessions |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading &amp; Cases:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cespedes, “FormPrint Ortho500” case</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Practice Channel Mapping with the FormPrint case report.  
Complete the Channel Mapping and Option Identification steps on a business of personal interest (ISR). |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments:</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Channel Mapping Case Report: “How are the hospital & clinic segments different? What implications does this have on channel design?” (FormPrint case)  
Due to Dropbox on October 24th by 500pm |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 5</th>
<th>Topics:</th>
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</table>
| Tuesday, October 29 | FormPrint case discussion  
Channel Power  
Franchise Channel overview |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading &amp; Cases:</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Gompers, “Note on Franchising”  
WSJ: “McDonald’s Franchisees Plan Push for Stronger Sales”  
Professor’s slides (posted 1 wk before class) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objectives:</th>
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</table>
| Understand the sources, uses and limitations of Channel Power.  
Gain insight into Franchise model, its key strengths & limitations. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No assignments due for this class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Course Schedule – Sessions #6 – 9

**All Class Sessions held in Jewish Studies Center #233, 8:00-10:40am**

### Session 6
**Thursday, October 31**

**Topics:**
- Outside Speaker: Franchise Perspective, Joe Norton, Tazi ki’s
- GTM Strategy: Building & Updating Value Chain

**Reading & Cases:**
- Rangan, “Developing & Managing Channels”. Section 2.3 & 2.5 (pages 13-18, 24-27)
- Professor’s slides (posted 1 wk before class)

**Learning Objectives:**
- Better understand Franchise value proposition, operational challenges & business dynamics through experience of outside speaker.
- Become familiar with process of designing & selecting a go-to-market strategy.
- Gain practice through application of strategy development process to Soren Chemical case.

**Assignments:**
Independent Strategy Review projects due to Course Dropbox before class start (800am)

**Session 7**
**Tuesday, November 5**

**Topics:**
- Development & Assessment of Options
- Channel Management Framework (CMF)
- Distributor & VAR Channel overviews
- ISR learning & conclusions

**Reading & Cases:**
- Teixeira, “Sell Direct ... or thru Amazon?”
- WSJ: “Domino’s Pizza Goes It Alone on Delivery”
- Professor’s slides (posted 1 wk before class)

**Learning Objectives:**
- Strengthen ability to identify new channel alternatives and assess fit. Understand use & role of CMF.
- Understand key capabilities of Distributor & VAR channels, strategic choices and typical management challenges.
- Discuss learning from ISR projects

**Assignments:**
Channel Selection Topical Report: “Should PedalSpark sell through Amazon?” (HBR article)
- Due to Dropbox before class start (800am)

**Session 8**
**Thursday, November 7**

**Topics:**
- Alliances & JVs as channels
- Legal & Regulatory environment

**Reading & Cases:**
- Hughes & Weiss, “Simple Rules for ... Alliances”
- Stobaugh, “Note on use of Alliances”
- Yao, “Note on Antitrust & Competitive Tactics”
- Professor’s slides (posted 1 wk before class)

**Learning Objectives:**
- Complete review of channel design decision with focus on Alliances & JVs as a route-to-market and Legal/Regulatory constraints.

**Assignments:**
No assignment due for this class

**Session 9**
**Tuesday, November 12**

**Topics:**
- Xiameter case discussion
- GTM Strategy: Aligning & Influencing Systems

**Reading & Cases:**
- Rangan, “Developing & Managing Channels”. Section 2.4 (pages 19-24)
- Kashani, “Xiameter: Past & Future of a Disruptive Innovation”
- Professor’s slides (posted 1 wk before class)

**Learning Objectives:**
- Practice Channel design decisions with the Xiameter case.
- Understand the key elements of managing GTM systems, how to achieve internal & external organizational alignment and manage performance successfully.

**Assignments:**
Channel Design Case Report: “Profile the Xiameter customer and their needs. What approach should Dow take for the future?” (Xiameter case)
- Due to Dropbox before class start (800am)
# Course Schedule – Sessions # 10 – 13

*All Class Sessions held in Jewish Studies Center #233, 8:00-10:40am*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 10</th>
<th>Topics:</th>
<th>Reading &amp; Cases:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Thursday, November 14 | • Conflict Management | • Whitler, “Country Market Collection”  
• WSJ: “Nike didn’t think it needed Amazon ...”  
• WSJ: “Netflix fights to keep its most watched shows: ‘Friends’ and ‘The Office’”  
• Professor’s slides (posted 1 wk before class) |

**Learning Objectives:**
- Understand the different causes of channel conflict, which forms are most dangerous and how to address
- Practice conflict management skills via a Country Market case role play.

**Assignments:**
- No assignment due for this class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 11</th>
<th>Topics:</th>
<th>Reading &amp; Cases:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Tuesday, November 19 | • Outside Speaker: Multichannel management perspective  
• Change Management | • Bucklin, “Are you tough enough to manage your channels?”  
• WSJ: “Beer battle brews between Craft-Beer Makers and Distributors”  
• Professor’s slides (posted 1 wk before class) |

**Learning Objectives:**
- Gain deeper understanding of the operational challenges of multi-channel marketing systems through discussion with local business manager.
- Understand the importance of Change Management programs for effective management of channel partners

**Assignments:**
- Channel Conflict Topical Report: “Should Craft Brewers seek to expand the ‘direct sales loopholes’?” (WSJ article)  
  — Due to Dropbox before class start (800am)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 12</th>
<th>Topics:</th>
<th>Reading &amp; Cases:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Thursday, November 21 | • Sales Management  
• Performance Management | • Kotler, et al, “Ending the War Between Sales & Marketing”  
• WSJ: “Ace Hardware makes a big bet on e-commerce”  
• Professor’s slides (posted 1 wk before class) |

**Learning Objectives:**
- Understand key elements of how to structure, align and motivate channel sales organizations.
- Discuss application of change management learning though Ace Hardware topical report.

**Assignments:**
- Change Management Topical Report: “What priorities does CEO Venhuizen need to focus on to ensure a successful e-commerce program?” (Ace Hardware article)  
  — Due to Dropbox before class start (800am)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 13</th>
<th>Topics:</th>
<th>Reading &amp; Cases:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Tuesday, November 26 | • Clique Pens case discussion  
• Course summary & feedback | • Cespedes, “Clique Pens” |

**Learning Objectives:**
- Practice strategy implementation through the Clique Pens case
- Reinforce key GTM strategy and management principles.

**Assignments:**
  — Due to Dropbox before class start (800am)
Reading List

Background Notes/Journal Articles:


Cases:


Topical Reports:


Journal Articles


News Publications:

• “Ace Hardware makes a big bet on e-Commerce”, *Wall Street Journal*, August 9, 2019: [https://www.wsj.com/articles/ace-hardware-makes-a-big-bet-on-e-commerce-11565350264](https://www.wsj.com/articles/ace-hardware-makes-a-big-bet-on-e-commerce-11565350264)