



**University of
Zurich^{UZH}**

Personal Branding Applications II

Syllabus

Each Fall Semester

Experiential and experimental

Chair for Marketing and Market Research
University Research Priority Program on Social Networks
Department of Business Administration
University of Zurich, Switzerland

© Zurich, 2026. All rights reserved. Last edit: 26.08.2026

PREAMBLE

Welcome to our “Personal Branding Applications” syllabus!

**«Personal branding is not about you.
It's about putting your stamp on the value you deliver to others. »**

William Arruda

Today, the Internet and a plethora of social media platforms and applications offer various possibilities to build brands and market their value. These tools help to **differentiate** a brand from its competitors, communicate its **unique selling proposition (USP)**, and position it to **target audiences**. Therefore, understanding the **mechanisms of digital marketing** is core to today's marketing discipline. This course should therefore be seen as an essential course not only for every marketing student but probably for every student in management.

In this course, we'll focus on **personal branding** through the Internet, AI, and social media tools. Personal branding is an important tool for individuals, job seekers, and young startup companies to define, communicate, and sell their strongest attributes and uniqueness to a target audience. Becoming a brand seems to be an important first step today to becoming a thought leader in one specific field.

This seminar is a **follow-up course** to the **Personal Branding and Digital Marketing** class offered each fall and offers a **highly specialized** setting for a smaller number of **former students** to work and **improve their own personal brands**. The focus of this seminar is on the marketing, creativity, and branding perspectives, not on legal or funding topics. By the end of the seminar, students should have a digital marketing toolbox of ideas on how to further improve their personal brands.

In this course, we:

- discuss individual students' **personal brand as an important professional asset**;
- **analyze** all individual **brands** based on marketing, branding, and creative aspects;
- **mentor individual brands progress**;
- talk about different **branding strategies** for each of the brands;
- emphasize which **social tools** can be used to improve the individual brands;
- set up individual **social media ecosystems**;
- **create new ideas** for each individual brand to improve the value they offer to their target audience.

This seminar will always take place in the **fall** semester. It is **required** to participate successfully in the class “Personal Branding and Digital Marketing” before this seminar or have already developed a personal brand.

Furthermore, we expect that all participants in this seminar have already either created or have **very concrete ideas** about their personal brands. This is **not a beginner’s class**.

All necessary information concerning the course can be found within this syllabus.

We are pleased to welcome you to this course.

QUICK OVERVIEW

Instructors:

Prof. Dr. René Algesheimer
Fei.Wang@business.uzh.ch

Office: Plattenstrasse 14, 8032 Zurich, Switzerland
Phone: +41 44 634 2918
E-mail: market-research@business.uzh.ch
Web: www.market-research.uzh.ch

Office hours by appointment.

Type:

Seminar

Target Audience:

Master students assigned to the “Wahlpflichtbereich” BWL 4.

Frequency:

Each fall semester.

APS (ECTS):

3

Workload Statement:

Part	Workload	ECTS
Course Preparation	15h	
Class attendance (meetings)	20h	
Individual work and assignments	40h	
Final Presentation	15h	
Total	90h	3

Maximum Number of Students:

8

Content:

Hands-on work on students' individual personal brands. The seminar is made up of an interactive workshop.

Language:

English

Basic Literature:

1. Salenbacher, Jürgen (2021): **Creative Personal Branding**, BIS.
2. Godin, Seth (2018): **This is Marketing. You Can't Be Seen Until You Learn To See**, Portfolio Penguin.
3. Godin, Seth (2020): **The Practice: Shipping Creative Work**, Portfolio Penguin.
4. Clark, Dorie (2013): **Reinventing You**, Harvard Business Review Press.
5. Gladwell, Malcolm (2011): **Outliers: The Story of Success**, Back Bay Books.
6. Ferris, Tim (2016): **Tools of Titans: The Tactics, Routines, Habits**, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
7. Tan, Chade-Meng (2012): **Search Inside Yourself**, Harper One.

Additional literature, videos, tools, individuals to follow and some other recommendations will be given in class.

Prerequisites:

1. Personal Branding and Digital Marketing: Course successfully passed.
2. Students individually develop a personal brand and have access to all necessary platforms, such as websites, Google Analytics, social platforms, etc.

Course Number:

03SM22MO0259

Registration:

Officially register using the new module booking tool at the University of Zurich. An individual application for this class is necessary. You are required to upload to the system a: a) Motivation letter; b) Presentation of the state of the art of your brand; c) Document with expected achievements as of Dec 2027 (draft).

Please review the course catalog for information on the application dates.

Grading:

Grades are based on the following criteria:

- Final Powerpoint discussing a three-step brand development process (50%);
- Final report on discussant brand (30%);
- In-class participation (20%).

Dates:

1. Meeting: September 21, 2026, 10.15h-15.45h: kick-off & brand presentations, KO2-F-173
2. Meeting: September 28, 2026, 10.15h-15.45h: brand presentations, KO2-F-173
3. Meeting: October 20, 2026, 10.15-12.00: mid-term presentations, GLT-A-04
4. Meeting: November 10, 2026, 10.15-12.00: check-in, GLT-A-04
5. Meeting: November 24, 2026, 10.15-12.00: final presentations, GLT-A-04

Location:

Please see the respective information posted on our website and in the VVZ.

Note:

This information in the syllabus supports the official information in the electronic university calendar (VVZ – Vorlesungsverzeichnis). In cases of doubt, the official information at the VVZ is valid.

1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

1.1 Course Purpose & Objectives

Branding is one of the core marketing disciplines. It describes the process involved in **creating a unique name and image** for a product, or a service in the consumer's mind through **consistent communication** themes. Branding aims to establish a significant and differentiated **presence** in the market that attracts and retains loyal customers. The purpose of this course is to **apply the ideas of branding to building a personal brand**. The course is a hands-on introduction to branding, personal branding, and digital marketing tools to build up and foster a personal brand. The class is made up of an **interactive, ongoing workshop**.

The objectives of this course are to become accustomed to, understand, and apply branding techniques that are typically used in **digital marketing**. The course will motivate and encourage students to **practice** these concepts in practical exercises, develop a spirit of problem-solving, and enhance their ability to think in business terms. The course presents **popular digital marketing and social media marketing tools with practical exercises** to familiarize students with both the theoretical and practical aspects of marketing methods.

This course should (a) support students in creating an understanding of personal brands and branding strategies, (b) demonstrate the advantages and disadvantages of using different social media platforms, (c) build up an ecosystem of social media platforms supporting a brand-building process, (d) help students to feed, grow, automate and analyze social media activities, and (e) apply these ideas and principles to a personal brand.

1.2 Course Contribution towards Marketing Management

The course includes a comprehensive presentation of the **main tools** that are typically used in **digital marketing** management and branding. These elements are discussed in class and supported by examples. The approach adopted encourages students to critically evaluate given marketing situations and solutions, to discuss their applicability, as well as to solve given marketing decision problems.

1.3 Course Contribution towards Analytical Competence

The course presents the main analytical tools in social media marketing necessary to obtain and use data that are applied in the professional world, and which help marketing managers use data appropriately, analyze marketing situations, formulate marketing strategies and plans, and evaluate their impact on the personal brand building process. The students' understanding of these analytical instruments, taught to them from basics, is realized through theoretical discussions, examples, exercises, and practical assignments.

1.4 Course Contribution towards Correctly Understanding and Applying Marketing Instruments

One course objective is to show how digital marketing instruments can support a personal brand-building process. The tools presented and discussed in class provide students with an image of the complexity and pitfalls of typical digital marketing problems.

1.5 Course Contribution towards Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills

As all digital tools are directly applied to realistic situations in the brand-building process of each student, students need to formulate the related marketing problems they perceive and marketing questions to these given situations. Problem-solving skills are developed as a consequence of applying these digital tools and discussing alternatives. To foster critical thinking, the whole brand-building process is accompanied, interpreted, and critically analyzed.

1.6 Course Contribution towards Ethical and Social Responsibility

The cases that are presented in class integrate ethical questions to develop a sense of ethical and social responsibility and to actively generate an understanding of different cultural perspectives. An open-minded, tolerant, and respectful atmosphere within the class is necessary to maintain this. The pedagogical approach adopted in this course encourages students to participate by contributing their opinions, experience, and comments to the discussions developed around the presented marketing methods and to seriously consider and discuss each other's opinions.

1.7 Course Contribution towards the Development of Good Teamwork and Communication Skills

The capability to effectively work in teams and to communicate during the working process is

an essential skill for marketing managers. If possible, with the class size, group work encourages students to develop interpersonal communication skills, as well as to debate and negotiate ideas and decisions during their group work. Finally, students are obliged to use both verbal and written communication during their course work which reinforces these skills.

2. COURSE MATERIAL

Students can access our web-based **e-learning platform** (OLAT) to download the slides presented in class and find other relevant material, such as literature and templates. Students also benefit from complementary information available online and in the library.

Note on recordings: classes **will not be recorded**, and alternative learning methods (e.g., flipped classroom) are not available for this course due to its unique and practical setting.

3.1 Recommended Online Tutorials and Resources

Students wishing to improve specific operational skills should go through some online tutorials and resources below. This process enables course participants to gain familiarity with the most common digital marketing management practices.

1. **Google Digital Garage** - Online courses on the fundamentals of digital marketing
<https://learndigital.withgoogle.com/digitalgarage/course/digital-marketing>
2. **Google Analytics Academy** - Online courses and certifications for web analytics
<https://analytics.google.com/analytics/academy/>
3. **Facebook Blueprint** - Step-by-step tutorials for Facebook and Instagram marketing
<https://www.facebookblueprint.com/student/catalog>
4. **HubSpot Academy** - Practical online training for digital marketing, sales, and service
<https://academy.hubspot.com>
5. **Moz** - The beginner's guide to Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
<https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo>
6. **Twitter for Business** - Resources for digital marketing managers
<https://business.twitter.com/en/resources.html>
7. **TikTok for Business** - Resources for digital marketing managers
<https://www.tiktokforbusinesseurope.com>

3.2 Recommended Digital Marketing and AI-based Tools

An always-updated list of Digital Marketing and AI-based Tools is provided via OLAT under “Tool.” As this software can significantly **increase productivity** and improve brand performance, students are highly recommended to take some time to explore available services.

Please note that several tools are available as a **freemium version**; thus, users might be asked to pay for advanced features. Students are responsible for reading the usage terms and payment conditions before subscribing.

3. COURSE CONTENTS

3.1 Overview of Meetings

1. Meeting: September 21, 2026, 10.15h-15.45h: kick-off & brand presentations, KO2-F-173
2. Meeting: September 28, 2026, 10.15h-15.45h: brand presentations, KO2-F-173
3. Meeting: October 20, 2026, 10.15-12.00: mid-term presentations, GLT-A-04
4. Meeting: November 10, 2026, 10.15-12.00: check-in, GLT-A-04
5. Meeting: November 24, 2026, 10.15-12.00: final presentations, GLT-A-04

3.2 Details of Classes

This is the preliminary outline for Fall 2026. This is subject to change and additional literature might be given in class.

Preparations Before the Seminar

Before we start the course, we ask you to review the documents ‘**Personal Branding Canvas**’ and ‘**Personal Swot Matrix**’, **which we send you by email**. Please, use the key elements and questions contained in the template to design your kick-off presentation.

During your presentation, instructors and colleagues will provide you with feedback. Please use them to complete the overview of your brand and fill out the ‘Personal Branding Canvas’. The **finalized canvas** of your personal brand should be sent to **Fei.Wang@business.uzh.ch** by **October 1st**.

After the kick-off meeting, all discussants will highlight the recommendations provided to the brand owner with respect to the elements of the canvas as part of their own report.

M1: Kick-off and Workshop

Outline:

In this first meeting, we'll get together for the very first time. For that, we are going to instruct you on the ideas, objectives, and procedures of this seminar. Afterward, we start directly into the workshop.

We will also discuss the possibility of using ideation tools, to support us in creating new ideas. In the workshop, each of the participating students will introduce their own personal brand by introducing us in **15min** about:

- The history of the brand
- The core idea and unique selling proposition
- The big dream
- The business model (how to earn money from the brand)
- The brand itself and the identity system
- The strategy to reach the dream state
- The marketing strategy and operational steps (website, social channels, monetization,...)
- The outlook.

After this introduction, all students discuss the brand (**45min**) and give detailed feedback on how to improve the brand.

➔ **Discussant:** Each student will **protocol all feedback and write a seminar thesis about another student's brand**, the core ideas, and how to improve that focal brand with marketing and branding strategies.

Objectives:

- (1) Introduction to the seminar
- (2) Presentation of personal brands
- (3) Discussion

M2: Second Workshop

Outline:

In this second meeting, we'll follow the path of the first day, and more students will introduce their brands.

In the workshop, each of the other participating students, who didn't present on day 1, will introduce their own personal brand by introducing us in **15min** about:

- The history of the brand
- The core idea and unique selling proposition
- The big dream
- The business model (how to earn money from the brand)
- The brand itself and the identity system
- The strategy to reach the dream state
- The marketing strategy and operational steps (website, social channels, monetization,...)
- The outlook.

After this introduction, all students discuss the brand (**45min**) and give detailed feedback on how to improve the brand.

➔ **Discussant:** Each student will **protocol all feedback and write a seminar thesis about another student's brand**, the core ideas, and how to improve that focal brand with marketing and branding strategies.

Objectives:

- (1) Introduction to the seminar
- (2) Presentation of 4 personal brands
- (3) Discussion

Individual Mentoring

Outline:

About four-six weeks after the initial kick-off presentations, we'll invite you to your personalized mentoring sessions (1h each) with your instructors and your discussant. Within this 1h you can ask all your questions and get many questions back to streamline your brand presence. Within the class, we'll communicate the dates and then ask you to arrange individual appointments.

There are no requirements for these meetings, except for being well-prepared. You may use the "Personal Branding Canvas", the "Communication Matrix Canvas", and "Personal Business Model Canvas" to simplify your thoughts.

M3: Third Meeting (mid-term)

Outline:

In the third meeting, the protocolling student will introduce her/his ideas on how to improve the focal student's personal brand with marketing and branding strategies (**7min**). In this presentation, we'd like to see:

- A wrap-up of the focal brand
- Its strengths and weaknesses
- Ideas and actionable steps for improvement.

Objectives:

- (1) Introduction into actionable steps to improve the focal brands
- (2) Outlook

M4: Fourth Meeting (final)

Outline:

In this final meeting at the end of the FS semester, the focal students will present (**7min**) their personal brand again and show us,

- The brand itself and the identity system
- The strategy to reach the dream state
- The marketing strategy and operational steps (website, social channels, monetization,...)
- Achievements
- The outlook

Objectives:

- (1) Before/after comparison of personal brand
- (2) Concrete learnings and improvements are presented
- (3) Outlook

4. EVALUATION

Grades are based on the following criteria:

Presentation of Own Personal Brand (50%)

The own personal brand has to be presented in class on three occasions: kick-off, mid-term and end-of-term. You need to submit ONE Powerpoint presentation in the form of a report that comprises the three-step brand development process.

The content of this final presentation of the seminar is discussed in class. We evaluate:

- Completeness of presentation
- Clarity and path of the personal brand communicated
- The overall quality of the message

The written report has to be submitted up by **June 5th, 2026** to fei.wang@business.uzh.ch. There are no restrictions on the report. You may work in a text document or in a slide document, both with illustrations.

Report on Discussant Brand (30%)

Each student in the role of a discussant has to write a **report on another student's personal brand**, wrap up the original idea, history, marketing and branding strategy, the brand identity system, and most importantly, the feedback and insights on how to improve that brand. These recommendations are not only based on in-class discussions but also enhanced by your own ideas and thoughts. We evaluate:

- Completeness of report
- Thoughtfulness and actionability of improvements
- The overall quality of the report
-

The written report has to be submitted by **June 5th, 2026** to fei.wang@business.uzh.ch. There are no restrictions on the report. You may work in a text document or a slide document, both with illustrations.

Participation in the Seminar (20%)

We'd like to create a very interactive environment, in which we all participate and openly share our ideas in a kind way.

We evaluate:

- Activity level
- Thoughtfulness
- Quality of participation

5. ACADEMIC FRAUD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS

5.1 Academic Fraud

Academic fraud is an act by a student that may result in a false academic evaluation of that student or another student. The Honor Code of the University of Zurich applies to all work in this course and will be strictly enforced. The intent of the Honor Code in this course is to ensure that each student claims and receives credits for his/her own efforts. Violations of this are considered academic fraud.

5.2 Students with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustment or accommodations is requested to speak with the instructor during the first day of the course. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities will also need to contact the directors of the school.

5.3 Registration Cards

Registration cards will be handed out at the beginning of the course. Students will be asked to add a recent profile picture and some personal information. The information is kept confidential and is only accessible to our team.

5.4 Name Plates

Nameplates should be used regularly in class to learn the students' names. Name plates will be handed out on the first day of the course.

5.5 Getting in Contact

Emails should be short and to the point. Before sending an email, please check if an answer has already been provided on the public OLAT forum. Questions can also be asked at the beginning or during lectures and exercises.

5.6 Class Dismissal

Students are asked to remain seated and attentive until class is dismissed by the lecturer or teaching assistant.

5.7 Sound-emitting Devices

Everybody is expected to turn off/mute all devices that emit sounds and noises that may interrupt the class (e.g., mobile phones, pagers, and watch alarms). If an occasion arises in which a student may need to receive a phone call, they have to inform the lecturer or teaching assistant before class.

5.8 Laptops and Calculators

Laptops, tablets, mobile phones, and programmable calculators are allowed in class if indicated by the lecturer or teaching assistant and as far as their usage supports the individual

learning process. Otherwise, they are not permitted.

5.9 Important Deadlines and Class Schedule

Important deadlines and the class schedule are communicated in the first lecture. If a student cannot participate in this lecture, they must obtain any relevant information.

5.10 Declaration of AI Usage

Any usage of artificial intelligence has to be declared in the final presentation by:

/name of the platform

/purpose for usage

/prompts used

We are very much looking forward to meeting you in class.