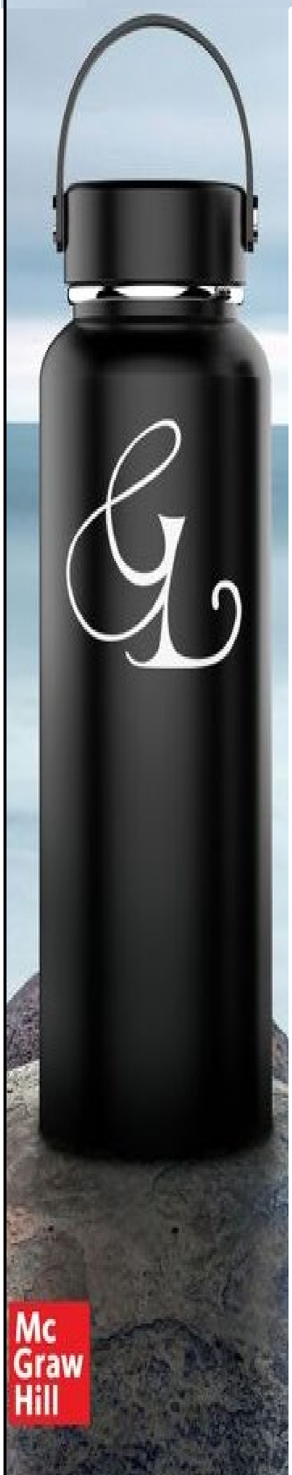

March 2022

Dear Professor,

We are delighted to inform you that Marketing 8e has published. This exciting new edition provides the power of Connect with **SmartBook** 2.0, which continually adapts to individual students' needs, creating a personalized and productive learning experience. This helps students come to class better prepared and ready to learn, allowing you to transform your classroom experience. The 7th, edition will feature 8 **new Video Cases**, assignable Marketing Analytics exercises, assignable Marketing Mini Sims and much more, all within Connect. In addition, McGraw-Hill has recently introduced a new Marketing Insights Podcast series as well as a new Marketing Video Library, both updated monthly!

We are thrilled to provide the Grewal/Levy newsletter to empower you to provide current, cutting-edge examples of marketing in the classroom.

The newsletter includes abstracts of current articles, notes on the applicable chapters in the textbook, and discussion questions. The newsletter also features current videos. We hope you will find the visual and comprehensive topic coverage useful. The newsletter is also accessible at **grewallevymarketing.com**. We encourage you to tell us how you use the newsletter. Please send your feedback to **mlevy@babson.edu**.

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Sincerely,

Dhruv Grewal
Michael Levy

This newsletter summarizes article abstracts for the following topics:

VIDEOS	
How Home Depot Cracked the Home Professional Market The Treasury Yield Curve Can Reliably Predict Recessions. Here’s Why.	
Boots on the Bits: Timberland Launches Immersive Online Gamified Platform Exploring Shoe Brand's Past and Future	3
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Videos:

How Home Depot Cracked the Home Professional Market

- Home Depot is the world's largest home-improvement retail company, with a net woth of about $350 billion. Here's an inside look at how it became the dominant player in home improvement by catering to its professional customers.
- 6:34 min
- **Video Link**

The Treasury Yield Curve Can Reliably Predict Recessions. Here's Why.

- An inversion of the U.S. Treasury yield curve has been seen as a recession warning sign for decades, and it looks like it's about to light up again. WSJ's Dion Rabouin explains why an inverted yield curve can be so reliable in predicting recession and why market watchers are talking about it now.
- 3:26 min
- **Video Link**

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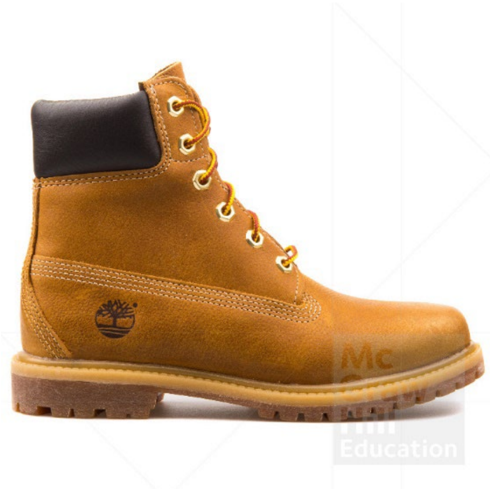
Boots on the Bits: Timberland Launches Immersive Online Gamified Platform Exploring Shoe Brand's Past and Future

Tom Ryan, "Will Timberland's Stories Lure Customers into the Metaverse?" RetailWire, February 18, 2022; Steven Asarch, "Exclusive: Timberland Launches Innovative New Digital Experience With Fat Joe," Complex, January 28, 2022; Stephen Garner, "Timberland Enters the Metaverse with Gamified Digital Experience Celebrating its Original Yellow Boot," Footwear News, January 31, 2022; Elad Natanson, "Play to Pay: Gamification Is the Future of Retail Apps," Forbes, June 1, 2021; "38% Report Familiarity with the Metaverse, but Less than One in Five Americans (16%) Can Correctly Define the Term," Ipsos, January 24, 2022

Use with Chapter 3, "Social and Mobile Marketing"



Does the real world seem like a terrible place sometimes? Are you simply spending too much time struggling through it these days? The footwear company Timberland has a solution: Come back online, through its immersive digital platform, called TimbsTrails.

Instead of putting on shoes to take a hike on an actual trail, Timberland invites consumers to use TimbsTrails, a gamified digital experience that involves exploring Timberland's history as a brand, through the course of five chapters that explore different aspects of the company's history and brand. These chapters include the launch of The Original Yellow Boot in 1973—a boot so iconic that the name The Original Yellow Boot is even trademarked. Following chapters cover its international successes in Tokyo, London, and Italy in the 1980s and 1990s, then its emergence and achievement of a stronghold in "urban" markets in the 1990s. There's a chapter on sustainability, and another on collaborations.

Users who take the time and effort to collect boot badges can unlock a sixth chapter—we can't tell you what that one's about, because we haven't yet gotten that far in the game. Players can win prizes like gift cards and free boots.

Those prizes and goals are what constitutes the gamification; that term means deploying elements of game playing in other aspects of life, like the "metaverse." (If you aren't sure what that word means you're far from alone. A recent Ipsos poll found only 38 percent of Americans say they know what the metaverse is, and only 16 percent can correctly define it. Become one of the well-informed crew: It's a digital space where humans can, in some way, engage with a virtual world.)

The purpose of the TimbsTrails platform is to give fans of the brand something new to be engaged with and excited about—in other words, to make sure Timberlands are on their mind no matter which device they're using, as well as on those rare occasions they aren't on a device at all. As the company recognizes, "The consumer lives seamlessly in all these environments … in the real world, in the digital world, and in the meta. There's no distance anymore between these three kinds of realities … so for us, our mission is to be where they are. And to interact and to engage as a brand in these spaces … and to do that journey with them together."

Timberland isn't the only brand asking consumers to take a trip with it to the metaverse. RetailWire notes that Nike, Ralph Lauren, and Samsung are among the companies that already have launched gamified digital experiences. Expert observers predict this retail trend will continue to grow and expand massively in coming years. Get on TimbsTrails today, and you can bet your boots a lot of brands will follow the same path.

Discussion Questions

1. Are gamified digital experiences are a good way for companies to engage consumers? Why or why not?
2. Why did Timberland launch TimbsTrails?
3. Which companies do you think are well-suited for gamified digital experiences? Which would you most like to see, create, or play with?

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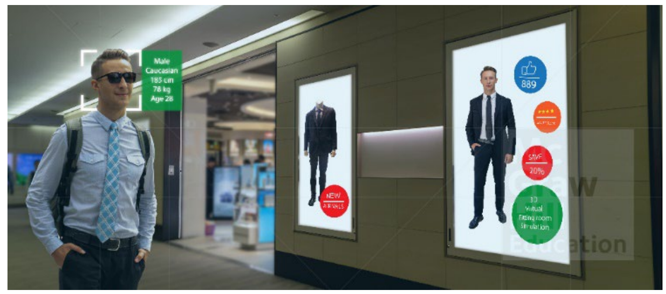
What Are You Doing, Computer? Computer Vision Has Promising, Troubling, Retail Applications

Cleber Ikeda, "How Far Should Retailers Go With the Use of Computer Vision?" RetailWire, February 17, 2022; Chris Ciabarra, "AI vs. Privacy: Does Computer Vision Violate Your Right to Privacy?" Forbes, December 18, 2019; Nick Babich, "What Is Computer Vision & How Does it Work? An Introduction," Xd Ideas, July 28, 2020; Shemmy Majewski, "5 Ways Computer Vision Is Transforming Retail Industry," DLabs.AI, October 13, 2021; Jenn Halweil and Skylar Walters, "From Black to White to Technicolor: Debiasing Racism in Computer Vision," Interesting Engineering, August 9, 2021; Jay Peters, "IBM Will No Longer Offer, Develop, or Research Facial Recognition Technology," The Verge, June 8, 2020; Allied Market Research, "Computer Vision Market to Reach $41.11 Bn, Globally, by 2030 at 16.0% CAGR: Allied Market Research," PR Newswire, January 13, 2022

Use with Chapter 4, "Conscious Marketing, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Ethics"



You might not always understand your computer, but increasingly, it understands you. The specific field of artificial intelligence (AI) that pertains to "computer vision" involves teaching computers how to "see" and interpret the world and its residents, much like humans do. And they've gotten very good at it, at least in some ways.

Retailers have outfitted computers with high-definition cameras and put them to work doing things like spotting customers who skip items in the self-checkout line, helping customers try on clothes in a virtual dressing room, and even providing recommendations to customers about things they may want to buy. But of course there are a few catches.

A big one is that the computer vision programs are, it turns out, rife with bias: racial bias, gender bias, and age bias, to name a few. Most facial recognition software, for example, is highly accurate when it comes to identifying people with lighter skin, but not so much for people whose skin is darker. The technology also presents serious privacy concerns.

These problems are so pervasive that Amazon and Microsoft both announced they would stop selling their facial recognition tech for use by law enforcement agencies. IBM went so far as to announce, in a letter to Congress, that it would no longer offer, develop, or even research facial recognition technology because of its problematic uses, noting: "IBM firmly opposes and will not condone uses of any technology, including facial recognition technology offered by other vendors, for mass surveillance, racial profiling, violations of basic human rights and freedoms, or any purpose which is not consistent with our values and Principles of Trust and Transparency." The company's CEO Arvind Krishna went on to propose starting a "national dialogue" about this particular technology's good and bad uses and how to protect against the latter.

So what does all this mean for retailers and customers? It may be too soon to say how precisely the ethical and logistical issues will be resolved (if at all). Yet experts still keep issuing their predictions about the vast growth of the industry in coming years. According to a report that Allied Market Research released in January 2022, the value of the worldwide computer vision market will increase from $9.45 billion in 2020 to $41.11 billion by 2030. Seems like enough time to train the computers to be less racist … we hope?

Discussion Questions

1. What are some ways retailers can use computer vision to engage and attract more customers, or increase their profits?
2. What are some of the key problems associated with using computer vision?
3. Do you feel comfortable with law enforcement and/or retailers using computer vision applications on you?
4. What should be done to eliminate bias from computer vision applications?

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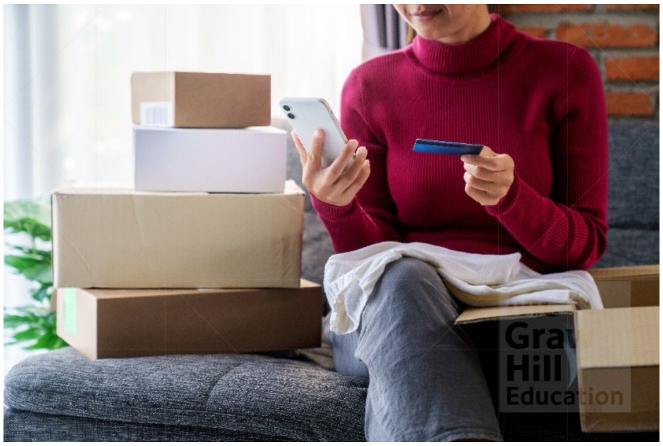
Do You Like Shopping Online or in the Store? Hybrid Shoppers Say, Why Not Both?

Tom Ryan, "Has a New, Hybrid Shopper Emerged out of the Pandemic?" RetailWire, February 16, 2022; Maghan McDowell, "Hybrid Shopping: Retail’s Big Story this Holiday Season," Vogue Business, November 9, 2021; Matt A.V. Chaban, "Bits and Mortar: Why Hybrid Shopping Is Happening Everywhere," IBM.com, June 25, 2021; Zia Muhammad, "Hybrid Shopping May Be the Next Big Trend," Digital Information World, January 18, 2022; "Retail Industry Reshapes with Hybrid Cloud and AI to Help Meet Shifting Consumer Shopping and Sustainability Preferences," newsroom.IBM.com, January 13, 2022

Use with Chapter 6, “Consumer Behavior”



Back in the day, if you wanted to buy something—a dress, say, or some tomatoes, or a car—you had to go to the mall or the grocery store or the car lot to see, select, purchase, and collect said item. There was the advantage of seeing and touching and trying the goods in question before plunking down the money to buy them, but your choice options also were limited to what the store actually had in stock at any given moment. Those moments were limited too; few stores stayed open all night, for example.

Then came the Internet, which vastly expanded the world of goods that consumers could purchase at 3:00 in the morning, from the comfort of their own homes. With the instant gratification of internet shopping came the delayed gratification of waiting for the U.S. Postal Service or some other logistics provider to show up—a problem exacerbated by recent challenges and slowdowns across both supply chains and shipping services. Nor can consumers always be totally sure what they will be getting (is the color of the pink shirt pictured online more blush, or is it bashful?), so they are forced to learn a lot about various merchants' return policies.

What's a customer to do, if they want the advantages of both in-person and online shopping, and don't relish limited selection, the presence of other people, or long wait times? Insert that "why not both" gif here.

A new model has taken hold, intensified and expanded during the pandemic: hybrid shopping. Hybrid shopping integrates digital and real-world shopping experiences. Often it refers to customers shopping online, then picking up their purchases from a brick-and-mortar store on that same day, but it can include things like self-checkout at a physical store, mobile payments, and grocery delivery services too. Hybrid shopping's growing popularity over the last couple of years makes sense, for some obvious reasons. Think curbside pickup of your groceries, or no contact purchases from Target that you can select and pay for online, then have placed in your car trunk by a nice person in a red vest—and a mask.

If that doesn’t sound all that exciting, because it’s just totally normal to you now, well, you're correct in that too. A new report put out by IBM indicates that 27 percent of customers now say the hybrid model is their preferred way to shop, with that number reaching 36 percent among Gen Z consumers. In other words, we have seen the future, and it's a mix of shopping in person and online—at least until someone invents the next, even better method of getting you the things you want, when and how you want them.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the advantages of hybrid shopping models? Are there any downsides?
2. Do you think hybrid shopping is here to stay?
3. To whom does hybrid shopping appeal most, and why? Who might feel left out of using this model?

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Hugo Boss Would Like to, Once Again, Dress the Boss

André Wheeler, "Can Hugo Boss Actually Be Cool?" The New York Times, January 26, 2022; Roxanne Robinson, "How Hugo Boss's CEO Is Revamping the Brand to Cater to Gen Z and Millennials," Forbes, January 26, 2022; Lucy Maguire, "Inside the Big Hugo Boss Rebrand," Vogue Business, January 26, 2022; "Hugo Boss Exceeds 2021 Sales Target After Strong Q4," Reuters, January 18, 2022; "Hugo Boss Sinks to 2020 Loss On COVID-19 Impact," TradingView, March 11, 2021; Sarah Provan and Olaf Storbeck, "Hugo Boss Slumps to Lowest Level In Nine Years After Profit Warning," Financial Times, October 11, 2019; Angelina Rascouet, "Hugo Boss Seeks to Double Sales Under New CEO Daniel Grieder," Bloomberg, August 4, 2021; Olivier Guyot, "New Hugo Boss CEO Daniel Grieder Targets €4 Billion Sales by 2025," Fashion Network, August 25, 2021; Melissa Foong, "#BeYourOwnBoss: Lee Min-ho, Kendall Jenner, and More Star in the Boss SS2022 Campaign." Lifestyle Asia, January 28, 2022

Use with Chapter 9, "Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning"

Who's the boss, and how can Hugo Boss get them to wear its clothes again? These are the pressing questions confronting the German luxury brand, once known for its pricey power suits, particularly in the modern age of sweatpants and athleisure.

It may come as no surprise, but suits were not in high demand during the pandemic. Hugo Boss's sales dropped by about one-third in 2020, as shops (and everything else) around the world closed, and people stopped wearing pants at all, let alone fancy ones. But it wasn't all COVID's fault. Hugo Boss had already been in decline, beginning in 2018. That year, the company blamed disappointing sales on bad weather: "The long, hot summer in Europe affected our business," then-CEO Mark Langer said. The next year, the issues to blame included "persistent macroeconomic uncertainties" in North America and "political unrest and demonstrations" in Hong Kong. Of course, no one needs reminding what happened in 2020. But some expert observers suggest that the main problem is not external influences; it is that clothing buyers are no longer purchasing so many suits, and Hugo Boss failed to pivot to offer appealing, sufficient alternatives.

In June 2021, Hugo Boss brought in a new CEO, Daniel Grieder, formerly of Tommy Hilfiger, who announced plans to revamp the company's image to entice younger consumers. Grieder boldly claimed he expected Hugo Boss would double its sales by 2025—to $4.75 billion, noting during his first strategy talk with employees that, "Our potential is incredible. Of course, consumers must be at the center of all our efforts. Consumers must become more than mere consumers. They must become our fans. We need fans."

And where else to find fans but through social media, right? In early 2022, Hugo Boss launched its major rebrand, focused on two of the company's subbrands: Hugo and Boss. Boss is the brand for "older" consumers—Millennials in the 25–40-year demographic. (People older than that, well, they maybe should just keep looking/clicking.) TikTok superstar Khaby Lame—and his 134.6 million followers—are among the brand ambassadors who have been hired to help promote Boss. Never mind that Lame is only 21 years of age. Kendall Jenner, Hailey Bieber, Lee Min-ho, and Future are among the other influencers starring in the #BeYourOwnBoss campaign. The clothes include a collaboration with Russell Athletic, featuring suits so comfortable and immune to wrinkles that Grieder says "you can sleep in that suit and you can get up and it still looks like you just put it on."

Then the Hugo subbrand is targeting at Gen Z shoppers. Featured items include bucket hats, loose pants, and its own roster of international social media stars to wear the clothes and use the hashtag #HowDoYouHUGO on TikTok and whatever other platforms young people are using these days.

If it's too soon to say whether Hugo Boss will become the blockbuster go-to brand for the stylish under-40-year set, sales have been rising. A preliminary report shows that Hugo Boss's sales rose 43 percent last year—to end up down just 1 percent relative to its status before the pandemic started.

Discussion Questions:

1. Will young people respond to Hugo Boss's new marketing campaigns? What would draw them to buy these clothes, or turn them off from buying them?
2. Is the pandemic responsible for Hugo Boss's lagging sales? What are some other factors that played a role?
3. Do people want to buy or wear a suit that they could sleep in? How would you redesign some other traditional garments to be more appealing to consumers in today's world?
4. Is achieving approximately the same level of sales it had before the pandemic a signal of success for Hugo Boss or not? Explain your answer.

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Global Sanctions and Global Supply Chains: The Implications of the Ukraine War

Sapna Maheshwari and Vanessa Friedman, "No Ikea Shelves, No Levi's: The Retail Exodus from Russia Is On," The New York Times, March 9, 2022; "Here Are Some of the Businesses that Have Pledged to Cut Ties with Russia," The New York Times, March 9, 2022

Use with Chapter 8, "Global Marketing," and Chapter 16, "Supply Chain Management"

Following the invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces, the United States, its NATO allies, and various other countries imposed strict sanctions on the aggressor. The sanctions aimed to limit Russia's economic functioning and undermine the threat posed by Vladimir Putin by eliminating sources of revenue for his widely condemned aggression against a sovereign nation.

In response, a long list of retailers and marketers announced their plans to stop doing business in Russia, whether in terms of selling their products, sourcing materials, or investing in local companies. The responses vary in their intensity and planned duration.

For example, some firms announced they would temporarily suspend their operations while the aggression was ongoing. Nike, adidas, Apple, H&M, and most of the major luxury brands paused their sales in Russia. McDonald's also halted sales, for the time being.

IKEA indicated it would halt all import and exports but continue operating a manufacturing plant, to supply local consumers of its goods. Similarly, PepsiCo announced its intention to stop cola sales but persist in producing and selling baby food and dairy products, which it presented as a humanitarian effort to avoid harming innocent civilians.

With even stronger responses, companies such as TJX (which owns TJ Maxx and related brands), Yum Brands (Pizza Hut, KFC), and Starbucks indicated they would be closing their stores and divesting from the local companies in which they had ownership stakes.

A few companies have chosen to remain, like Uniqlo, though whether they will be able to move products as need throughout the country is unclear. All the major logistics providers, including UPS, DHL, and FedEx, halted shipments in Russia and Belarus. Furthermore, credit card providers have imposed limitations, such that Russian-issued cards will not work outside the country, nor will foreign-issued credit lines be available within it. At the same time, many energy companies have suspended their operations, and the U.S. ban on purchases of Russian oil means that the physical movement of goods may soon become nearly impossible.

The pressure thus appears largely consistent, though whether it reflects an ethical stance by the companies or else a calculated attempt to avoid risk remains to be seen. When Russian oligarchs lose access to their bank accounts, for example, luxury brands have little incentive to remain open: No one could buy their luxury goods anyway. They thus can claim to be on the right side of history, even if their motives are somewhat more calculated that that.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some likely long-term implications of the sanctions on Russia for global supply chains?
2. Are companies ethically responsible for leaving countries engaged in illegal acts of war? Is there an ethical argument to be made for staying to supply local consumers?

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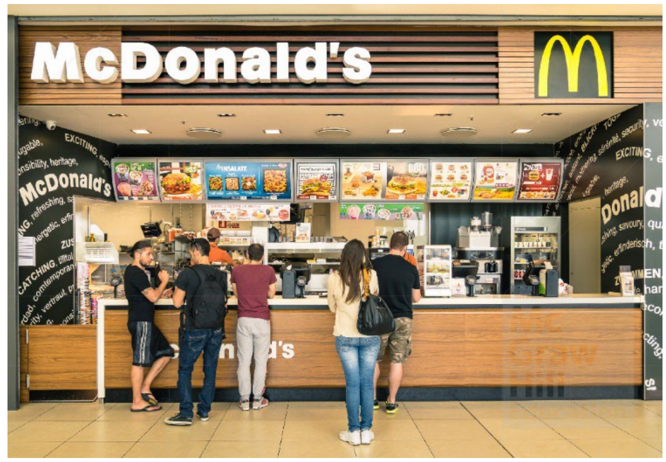
What Happens to the Global Fast Food Culture When McDonald’s Leaves a Country?

Julie Creswell, “Food Companies, Long Symbols of the West in Russia, Pause Operations,” The New York Times, March 8, 2022

Use with Chapter 5, “Analyzing the Marketing Environment” and Chapter 8, “Global Marketing”



For companies going global, the BRIC countries have long been focal targets—growing, increasingly open and welcoming regions in which they could access new consumer markets. For consumers in these rapidly developing economies, the most popular entrants often came bearing food. Westernized menu items like hamburgers, coffee, and sweets appealed to consumers who sought a cutting-edge, hip, and cosmopolitan image.

But with Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine, consumers in one of those BRIC nations find themselves without any access to the Big Macs and Frappucinos they have grown accustomed to finding. McDonald’s, Starbucks, KFC, and Pizza Hut all halted operations and closed their company-owned stores throughout Russia in the weeks following the invasion. These moves meant the closures of hundreds of store locations throughout the country.

However, it does not necessarily mean the brands are disappearing completely. Most of them rely on franchising models, such that they maintain some restaurants owned by the parent corporation but license others to local franchisees. Those local owners might choose to keep the restaurants open for a while, at least until sanctions leave them unable to replenish their supplies.

In addition to these complicated relationships with franchisees, the brands must determine what to do about the tens of thousands of local employees who work for them. Sanctions make it difficult to continue paying them, but the brands also express an unwillingness to leave their individual employees completely bereft and without any income. Similarly, for brands like McDonald’s that have worked to build local supply chains for their meat and potatoes, abruptly halting all orders threatens to harm small suppliers and vendors that likely have come to rely on the purchases it makes.

The decision to leave, whether in the short term or for good, is also difficult from a strategic and financial perspective. Businesses logically must consider their long-running, determined efforts to enter the markets and the beneficial profits they make there. For McDonald’s for example, the Russian market is highly profitable. It accounts for about 3 percent of the restaurant corporation’s operating expenses, but it provides 9 percent of its revenues. Overall, the fast food sector has exhibited substantial growth in Russia in recent years too, so leaving means a painful loss of revenue.

But the situation and the grave risk to Ukraine it constitutes, as well as the legal sanctions imposed by the United States and other nations, mandate that the companies drastically limit their operations. Still, if and when the war comes to an end, they might regret giving up whatever gains they have made in the Russian market; the hope (whether reasonable or not) might be that they will be able to return to a different Russia, one in which customers fed up with the damages of Vladimir Putin’s warmongering reject his government and express longing for closer connections with, and purchases from, the West.

Discussion Questions:

1. Consider the analysis of the Russian market in Chapter 8. Have there been any hints of the risks of investing in this BRIC nation in the recent past? Should companies have anticipated the potential threat of a geopolitical crisis?
2. How might brands use the experience of the war in Ukraine to establish contingency plans for their global operations in other potentially unstable settings?

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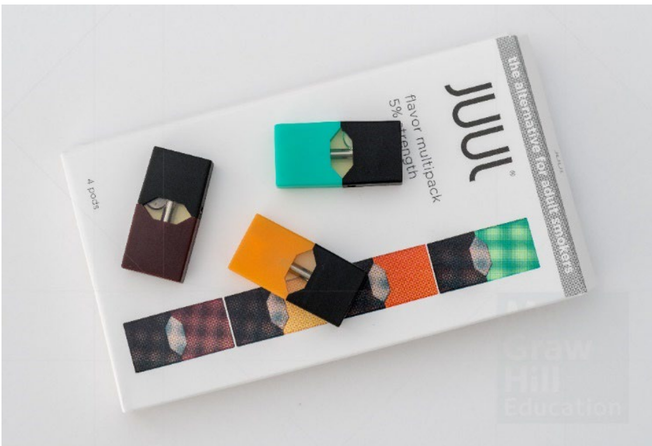
Product Innovation as a Means to Skirt the Rules Seeking to Restrict E-Cigarettes

Christina Jewett, "The Loophole that's Fueling a Return to Teenage Vaping," The New York Times, March 8, 2022

Use with Chapter 11, "Product Branding and Packaging Decisions"



In response to increasing restrictions on the sale of conventional cigarettes, companies such as Juul innovated to come up with e-cigarettes, which they claimed were safer, less addictive, and less harmful to consumers. The reduced harm allegedly came from the removal of the smoke; rather than inhaling burning tobacco, users could vape the steam, which also reduced second-hand smoke concerns. In addition, the vaping products offered new flavor profiles.

This new innovation quickly raised new problems, including a massive uptick in nicotine use among children and teenagers, who were attracted by the candy-like flavors that the e-cigarettes could add to their smoking habit. In addition, physicians soon learned that vaping caused substantial damage to users' lungs, even without the smoke. Thus, regulators introduced new rules, determined to address what was quickly becoming an epidemic.

But, again, the companies have leveraged their innovative capabilities to find a workaround that, again, they claim is less harmful, though, again, without solid evidence in support of those claims. The new product innovations contain no tobacco, but they still offer a dose of nicotine, created synthetically. As a result, the Food and Drug Administration formally has no authority to regulate the products, because its legal scope in this domain is limited to regulating products that contain tobacco.

Some limited studies of the synthetic version of nicotine indicate it may be less addictive than the tobacco-derived molecule, but the researchers who conducted those studies are careful to note that no large-scale trials involving human or animal users have been conducted at all. That is, we have no evidence regarding how synthetic nicotine might affect consumers, especially over the long term.

Together with the new product formulation, producers such as Puff Bar have innovated new packaging that is smaller and disposable. Rather than investing in an e-cigarette pen and buying cartridges to refill them, the disposable vape pens are cheap and can be easily tossed by, say, a student caught with the prohibited device in a school bathroom. The creative marketing of these products also seems determined to target young consumers, because they continue to come up with sweet, sugary, candy-inspired new versions. Its sales channels are pretty innovative too; consumers can readily and easily buy the products from online sites, few (if any) of which require any proof of age to confirm that the buyers are legal adults.

The innovations have worked, seemingly as intended: An estimated 11 percent of high school students currently vape. Sales of the disposable devices rose by an astounding 290 percent, with sales of 6.46 million devices every single month, in 2021. The tobacco-based e-cigarettes that had been subjected to regulations instead suffered dramatic sales losses. That is, the new product innovation has essentially driven the existing version out of the market, in nearly no time.

Thus, vape pens filled with synthetic nicotine follow a traditional pattern of innovation, such that they have come to dominate the market in nearly no time. It represents a perfect example of how innovative ideas can create new opportunities for marketers. Unfortunately, it also offers a perfect example of how ignoring product harms and ethical standards can allow marketers to exploit and harm consumers with addictive and untested products.

Discussion Questions:

1. When is innovation a problem, rather than a benefit?
2. If companies can come up with creative ways to skirt the law, is it ethically acceptable or not?
3. Should the FDA regulate the use of synthetic nicotine?

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