



INTERNATIONAL WINTER SCHOOL 2026

SYLLABUS

Academic year 2025/2026





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Academic and language requirements

Courses are open to Undergraduate and Graduate students providing that applicants have the **pre-requisites** specified in the course's syllabus.

Courses are taught and assessed in English. For non-native speakers of English, B2 (CEFR) or equivalent (TOEFL IBT 72, IELTS 5.0, TOEIC 750) is highly recommended.

Additional information

For details about study programmes offered by EM Normandie please contact:

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COURSE TITLE	From Blockbusters to Superstars: Entertainment Marketing Today		
Catchphrase	<i>"Exploring the Power of Human Brands in the Entertainment Industry"</i>		
Session & Campus	International Winter School from 04 to 13 February 2026 in CAEN		
Teaching delivery	On campus, attendance mandatory		
Workload (1h = 60 min)	30 class-hours + Independent learning hours	ECTS credits	6
Professors	Dr. Julian HOFMANN jhofmann@em-normandie.fr Full Professor of Marketing		
Pre-requisite(s) for attending the course / Level of studies	At least one basic marketing course (such as "Introduction to Marketing") passed.		
Learning goal(s)	▪ To develop and implement a marketing and sales strategy. ▪ To innovate and to adapt this strategy to its environment.		
Learning objective(s)	▪ To analyze macro environment, benchmark, and develop a marketing strategy. ▪ To develop a business strategy and implement a marketing plan. ▪ To develop decision-making support tools. By the end of this course, participants are able to: ✓ Comprehend the power and importance of human brands in entertainment programming. ✓ Understand how marketing campaigns are created to advertise and promote entertainment programming. ✓ Examine the impact of successful branding on a project's success and how it structurally fits within companies will be understood.		
Learning outcome(s)	▪ To explain why individuals (e.g., artists, influencers, executives) increasingly act as strategically managed <i>human brands</i> in contemporary media and communication contexts. ▪ To explain why managing entertainment products requires a special understanding of the product and market characteristics. ▪ To distinguish how personal branding differs from classical product or corporate branding in terms of positioning, communication, and audience engagement. ▪ To justify how human brands reduce uncertainty and create value in hedonic and experience-based markets such as entertainment, culture, and media. ▪ To detect differences between a classical marketing mix and an entertainment product's marketing mix.		
Course description	Content: This course explores the growing importance of human brands within the broader context of the entertainment and media industries. Entertainment products and personalities share creative and hedonic characteristics—both are consumed primarily for experiential enjoyment, symbolic meaning, and emotional connection rather than for functional utility. As a result, success in these markets is difficult to predict, as it depends heavily on subjective audience perceptions, authenticity, and trust. The course therefore examines		

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how individuals—such as artists, influencers, or executives—can be strategically positioned and managed as brands to create value, reduce uncertainty before consumption, and strengthen long-term audience relationships in an increasingly digital and reputation-driven environment.

Structure:

1. **The Fundamentals of Entertainment and Human Brands**
 - Defining entertainment as an experiential and symbolic product category
 - Understanding human brands and their role in the entertainment and media ecosystem
 - The emotional, creative, and hedonic nature of both entertainment products and personal brands
2. **Economic and Managerial Specificities**
 - Why entertainment and human brands are unique: key product and market characteristics
 - Risk, uncertainty, and the economics of attention
 - Value creation through emotional engagement and audience identification
3. **Business Models in Entertainment and Personal Branding**
 - Revenue structures and monetization logics for entertainment products and human brands
 - The interplay between creators, platforms, and audiences
 - The evolving relationship between content, celebrity, and community
4. **Human Brands as Quality and Risk-Reducing Signals**
 - Brand personality, authenticity, and credibility as trust-building mechanisms
 - Parasocial relationships and symbolic attachment
 - Managing reputation, identity, and public perception
5. **Digital Branding and Platform Strategies**
 - The strategic use of social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and LinkedIn
 - Self-presentation, narrative design, and storytelling for entertainment and personal brands
 - Aligning communication across paid, owned, and earned channels
6. **Integrated Marketing Strategies for Experience-Based Industries**
 - Product, communication, distribution, and pricing decisions in hedonic markets
 - Designing consistent audience experiences through cross-media integration
 - Creating and managing both blockbusters and niche offerings
7. **Future Directions in Entertainment and Human Branding**
 - Convergence of content, identity, and technology in modern brand management
 - The artist, influencer, or executive as a strategic brand platform
 - Sustaining authenticity and relevance in rapidly evolving media environments

Methods:

Class time will be devoted to lectures by the instructor, in-class exercises and case studies linked to the lectures as well as discussions on readings. In addition, students are expected to read the recommended articles and to work independently as well as in groups on the course material. Lecture slides, case studies and/or exercises will be available to the students through the school's eLearning platform. Through assigned

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	readings, case discussions, and presentations, students will learn how to think strategically, creatively, and entrepreneurially. They will study the actual work being done today in the entertainment industry, observe current marketing activities and trends, write short papers, present them to the class, and develop an overall marketing plan. Guest speakers -- executives in the industry -- as available may be invited to supplement.	
Teaching Material	- Lecture slides - Case studies - Management reports	
Evaluation criteria	Continuous assessment: 40% - Group project with presentation	Final assessment: 60% - Individual closed book exam covering questions and/or case studies about the course content
Recommended readings	Consult teaching materials (will be accessible on moodle platform during class period) as well as: • Clement, M., Proppe, D., & Rott, A. (2007). Do critics make bestsellers? Opinion leaders and the success of books. <i>Journal of Media Economics</i>, 20(2), 77-105. • Elberse, A. (2007). The power of stars: Do star actors drive the success of movies?. <i>Journal of marketing</i>, 71(4), 102-120. • Hofmann, J., Schnittka, O., Johnen, M., & Kottemann, P. (2021). Talent or popularity: What drives market value and brand image for human brands?. <i>Journal of Business Research</i>, 124, 748-758. • Hofmann, J., Clement, M., Völckner, F., & Hennig-Thurau, T. (2017). Empirical generalizations on the impact of stars on the economic success of movies. <i>International Journal of Research in Marketing</i>, 34(2), 442-461. • Mathys, J., Burmester, A. B., & Clement, M. (2016). What drives the market popularity of celebrities? A longitudinal analysis of consumer interest in film stars. <i>International Journal of Research in Marketing</i>, 33(2), 428-448.	