

Horticulture Marketing Syllabus  
HRT 407, Fall Semester

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Dr. Simone Valle de Souza is an Assistant Professor in the MSU Department of Horticulture. With expertise in horticulture economics applied to controlled environment agriculture (CEA), Dr. Valle de Souza's research focuses on the economic viability and sustainability of CEA systems, specifically exploring profitability, cost-effectiveness of technologies, and the economic benefits of sustainable agriculture. In addition, Dr. Valle de Souza has expertise in marketing and consumer behavior analysis. Her research explores market segmentation and consumer attitudes towards produce attributes, providing insights into consumer preferences and measurements of willingness to pay for economic modelling. Dr. Valle de

Souza earned a MS in Economic Studies and a PhD in Resource Economics from the University of New England (UNE), in Australia. She also holds an MBA in Finance and Accounting and a BA in Business Administration from the UFPR, in Brazil.

*Horticulture companies face the ongoing challenge of effectively marketing their products, services, and experiences in a way that generates value for both consumers and the business. This involves understanding consumer behavior, emphasizing product features and benefits, and creating effective communication strategies that resonate with their target market. Additionally, pricing and promotion strategies play a crucial role in ensuring products reach the right audience and generate consistent demand. In this course, students will develop key marketing skills and apply concepts specifically to the horticulture industry. Through a variety of learning methods, including case studies, article and book discussions, students will enhance their ability to identify and communicate product features and benefits and effectively use marketing principles to succeed in their future careers within the horticulture sector.*

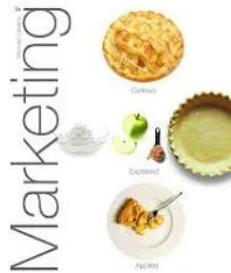
**Course Objectives:** The objectives of this course are to:

1. To learn marketing skills, concepts, and application of those to the horticulture industry.
2. Most students will enhance their marketing skills through a variety of learning methods to use marketing principles in their future workplaces.

**Learning Outcomes:** This is a list of what you should be able to do upon successfully completing the course:

1. Define and describe marketing principles and theory.
2. Use marketing principles, concepts, and theory to construct a marketing plan.
3. Evaluate advertisements and marketing materials in horticulture.
4. Develop an understanding of marketing information available to the horticulture industry professionals and how this information can be used profitably in businesses.

**Textbook (Required):**



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*Defined, Explained, Applied 2nd Edition by Michael Levens.*

*Note: You may use older editions but check the chapter titles (numbers vary by edition). Be sure you are reading the correct content by checking the chapter title.*

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**Required articles:**

Students are responsible for acquiring these articles and reading them prior to discussing them in class. Look in the “Readings” folder in D2L for instructions on how to download these articles free from the business library.

1. Levitt, T. 1960. Marketing Myopia. *Harvard Business Review*, (July-August): 45-56.
2. Treacy, M. and F. Wiersema. 1993. Customer Intimacy and Other Value Disciplines. *Harvard Business Review*, 71 (January-February):84-93.
3. Mohammed, R. 2018. The Good, Better, Best Approach to Pricing. *Harvard Business Review*, 96(Sept-Oct):106-115.
4. Anderson, E. and D. Simester. 2003. Minding Your Pricing Cues. *Harvard Business Review*, 81(September):96-103.
5. Shankar, V., L.L. Berry, and T. Dotzel. 2009. A Practical Guide to Combining Products and Services. *Harvard Business Review*, 87(November):95-99.
6. Porter, M.E. 2008. The Five Competitive Forces that Shape Strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, 86(January):79-93.
7. Anderson, E.T. and D. Simester. 2011. *A Step-by-Step Guide to Smart Business Experiments*. *Harvard Business Review*, 89(March): 99-105.

**Contact:** Students are encouraged to discuss issues or concerns with me as soon as they arise. I find it more effective to schedule a time to meet with you (email [valledes@msu.edu](mailto:valledes@msu.edu)) without having regularly scheduled office hours. I will reply to emails within 48 hours.

**Equal opportunity:** Students may vary in their competency levels to these abilities. You can expect to acquire these abilities only if you honor all course policies, attend classes regularly, complete all assigned work on time, and meet other course expectations of you as a student. Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at rcpd.msu.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation (“VISA”) form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.).

**Grades** will be posted on D2L. It is the responsibility of the student to verify their grade is posted correctly. All grade adjustment requests must be made before the last day of class. Students should be proficient in the use of D2L to stay current with course assignments and grades.

**Grading Policy:** Course grades will be determined using the following scale:

4.0 = 90% and above	2.0 = 70% to 74.9%
3.5 = 85% to 89.9%	1.5 = 65% to 69.9%
3.0 = 80% to 84.9%	1.0 = 60% to 64.9%
2.5 = 75% to 79.9%	0.0 = below 60%

<b>Point schedule and assignments:</b>	<b>Points</b>
Marketing Plan: written report	250
Marketing Plan: oral presentations	50
Attendance and participation	50
Midterms (2) @ 100 points each	200
Final exam	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>750 points</b>

**Assignment Policies:** All course work will be submitted electronically on the D2L website. No papers, materials, or assignments will be accepted as a hard copy or by email. Exams are online, cumulative, multiple-choice format with some true/false. Final exam changes are made only for students with 3 or more final exams on the day of this final exam after discussion with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the end of class. Late work is not accepted. Make-up exams are not given. No extra credit is offered

**Semester Project:** Build a Marketing Plan

Companies face the challenge of marketing their products, services, and experiences in a way that generates value. To successfully market products, services, and experiences, managers must design and implement a marketing plan. Your group must develop and present an original marketing plan for a chosen firm that incorporates key marketing concepts discussed in class. The written plan is to be typed using 12-point font, one-inch margins, and written in complete sentences, and submitted as a single PDF file. You should address all the points in the outline

with any additional information you feel necessary. You are expected to use external sources/references and properly cite them in APA style. Write your marketing plan as a narrative to the company using active voice. Your narrative must include all the sections identified in the marketing plan outline, in addition make a cover page and a table of contents. A comprehensive outline of the topics to be covered in the marketing plan will be provided in class. You should use any resources at your disposal, including your group members' experiences, past courses, instructors, Internet resources, librarians, chambers of commerce, radio stations, newspapers and anything else that provides information to you on your project.

Assignment audience: For this assignment, you and 3 classmates have been "hired" as a marketing consultant team for a horticultural business (no individual projects or pairs). Each marketing consultant team will choose a 'client'. This client must be a currently active firm, selling a horticultural product, including landscape and floral crops, fruits and vegetables, services, and experiences. The team will present their 'client' in class on Week 2. The client's name, website, and any presentation materials the team intends to use must be emailed to the instructor by the day before their presentation.

Group Work: Working with others is essential in every workplace; this project will give you more team experience. Your group decides how the plan is written and presented; not all members must participate in all aspects. You will evaluate your own performance as well as learn to constructively evaluate the performance of your peers. Your assigned team-mates are your colleagues in the development process and may (or may not) have a defined role in the group. It's your group, so you decide how the work gets done and who does it. You have the option of "firing" a teammate who does not actively participate. We will use the "three strikes" rule before the person can be fired. Copy Dr. Valle de Souza on the three strikes emails (first offense, second, and third). The firing must be a unanimous decision of the group after three strikes (they are out on the third strike). The fired teammate will be permitted to complete the assignment alone.

Oral presentation: In addition to the written report (in PDF format only), your team is required to make and post (on D2L) a video recording of a maximum of 10 minutes to summarize your marketing plan and present your five key recommendations to our client (only MP4 format accepted). Only one file for the written plan and one file for the video will be accepted.

Cloud Etiquette is important for keeping things organized and working smoothly when collaborating online. Follow these simple tips to make sure everyone is on the same page:

- Name Files and Folders Clearly: Label files and folders in a way that makes it obvious what's inside, so no one has to open them just to check.
- Ask Before Deleting: Always ask before deleting any files or folders, especially if you didn't create them, to avoid accidentally losing someone's work.
- Watch File Sizes: Don't upload huge files that take up too much space. Keep things organized and delete unnecessary files to make room for what's needed.

- **Set Clear Permissions:** Make sure everyone knows who can access and edit each file or folder to prevent accidental sharing.
- **Keep Track of Edits:** Be mindful of who's editing what to avoid confusion and ensure that the right person is responsible for final changes.

**Assignment deadlines:** The D2L website shows the deadlines for draft portions and final portions of the marketing plan. This will be your only reminder of these deadlines, so please add them to your planning tool.

**Lab hours:** Dr. Valle de Souza will meet with your group during lab hours to discuss progress, for you to ask questions, and to help keep your group on track. You may request additional meetings.

**Meeting Times:** Mondays and Wednesdays: 11:30 AM - 12:20 PM, Plant & Soil Science Bldg, Room A159. Lab meets in person on Fridays from 11:30 to 1:20 pm, Plant & Soil Science Bldg, Room A152.

**Honors Option:** Students can participate in an Honors Option if they are members of the Honors College. Students should initiate a project description (e.g., format, timeline, and scope), that will be agreed upon by the instructor, preferably no later than the end of the second week of the semester. The Honors Option Agreement form is located on the Registrar's website by selecting "Student-Instructor Agreement", last entry in the Other Links column on the right (will require logging in as an official MSU student). Note that the Honors designation is awarded only for work that is of high quality and more intensive and/or extensive than is required of the non-honors students in this course (thus, a high grade for regularly required work does not in itself warrant the awarding of the H-designation). Furthermore, the quality of an H-Option project does not affect the grade assigned for this course; however, a minimum grade of 3.0 must be earned before the Honors credit associated with the H-Option can be awarded.

**Attendance:** Students are required to attend both lectures and laboratory sessions. Class attendance and participation will be recorded and will account for 50 points.

**University Attendance Policy:** REPORTING NON-ATTENDANCE. In compliance with federal regulations governing financial aid and veterans' education benefits, instructors are required to report students who stop attending or who have never attended class. After the first week of classes, through the middle of the term of instruction, instructors who identify a non-attending student should notify their departmental office. Upon receiving a report of non-attendance, departmental representatives are encouraged to initiate an administrative drop. "Attendance" is defined as physical attendance or participation in an academically related activity such as submission of an assignment, an examination, participation in a study group or an online discussion, etc. Instructors who do not take attendance may utilize key assessment points (e.g. projects, papers, mid-term exams, and discussions) as benchmarks for participation.

DROP FOR NON-ATTENDANCE. Students may be dropped from a course for non-attendance by a departmental administrative drop any time after the fourth class period, or the fifth class day of the term of instruction, whichever occurs first.

**University Policy on Religious Observance:** It has always been the policy of the University to permit students and faculty to observe those holidays set aside by their chosen religious faith. The faculty and staff should be sensitive to the observance of these holidays so that students who absent themselves from classes on these days are not seriously disadvantaged. It is the responsibility of those students who wish to be absent to make arrangements in advance with their instructors. Please let me know within one week from the beginning of class if you need to be absent for Observance of a Religious Holiday or Festival. Additional information on this MSU policy can be found at <https://reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/ReligiousPolicy.aspx>

**Additional College and University Policies:** All other general college and university policies applicable to this course are available at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/academics/courses/policies>. Please review these policies.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities** (from the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD): Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at [rcpd.msu.edu](http://rcpd.msu.edu). Once your eligibility for accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation (VISA) form. Please present this form to the instructor by the end of the second week of class.

**Academic integrity** is essential to success in college just as integrity is essential to success in business and life. Academic integrity means being honest about your intellectual work. Interacting with other people is a natural way for students to learn, but each person must construct his or her own knowledge in the process. Michigan State University has an all-university policy concerning Academic Honesty and Integrity. Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the Department of Horticulture adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: [www.msu.edu](http://www.msu.edu).) You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you have completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. You may not have any individual not enrolled in the course create or submit any portion of any assignment for you. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact me if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also <http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/dishonestyFAQ.html>). Some students are

challenged with the definition of academic integrity. Simply stated, don't share your writing or files with other students. Don't have any family member or friend create or modify any part of any assignment you submit for a grade. Penalties for unethical conduct are largely at the discretion of the instructor and include failing the assignment or failing the course. The instructor will file an academic dishonesty report which then requires the student to complete an online course regarding ethical conduct. The second offense becomes a permanent part of the student's transcript. I use "Turn it in" as one way to assess the plagiarism in this course.

**Generative AI tools:** The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas.
- Fine tuning your research questions.
- Checking grammar and style.

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts assigned to you or content that you put into a Zoom chat.
- Completing group work that your group has assigned to you.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs or papers to complete class assignments.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within university policies on [academic integrity](#) and the [Spartan Code of Honor Academic Pledge](#). See these resources for [APA guidance](#), and for [other citation formats](#). Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways will be graded zero. If you are in doubt about permitted usage, please ask for clarification.

### Schedule of Lecture and Lab Topics for Fall Semester

If necessary, a revised schedule will be posted on D2L and students will be notified by in class and by email of the changes as they are made.

Syllabus and semester project discussion, MDEA Chapters 1 and 2	Week 1
MDEA Chapter 11 Marketing Plan and 'Client' Introduction for Semester Project	Week 2
MSU library staff on conducting consumer research online MDEA Chapter 12 Products and Services	Week 3
MDEA Chapter 3 Planning and Marketing, and <b>Article:</b> Marketing Myopia MDEA Chapter 7 A Perspective on Consumer Behavior	Week 4
MDEA Chapter 8 Marketing Research MDEA Chapter 10 Segmenting, Targeting, & Positioning, Customer/Product Matrix	Week 5
MDEA Chapter 13 Pricing Strategies <b>Article:</b> Customer Intimacy and Other Value Disciplines	Week 6
<b>Articles:</b> Good, Better Best Pricing and Mind Your Pricing Cues Exercise: Understanding Consumer Willingness to Pay and the Demand Curve	Week 7
MDEA Chapter 14: Supply Chain and Distribution Strategies Value Chain vs Supply Chain	Week 8
MDEA Chapter 15: Retailing and Wholesaling Strategies	Week 9
MDEA Chapter 16; Advertising and Sales Promotion Strategies MDEA Chapter 17: Personal Selling and Direct Marketing Strategies	Week 10
MDEA Chapter 18: Communications Mix Contemporary Communications	Week 11
<b>Articles:</b> A Practical Guide to Combining Products and Services and A Step-by-Step Guide to Smart Business Experiments Direct marketing and farm marketing	Week 12
MDEA Chapter 4: A Broader Perspective on Marketing and Consumer concerns about the environment International marketing	Week 13
MDEA Chapter 6: Value for Customers, Customer Delight & Loyalty Programs <b>Article:</b> Five Competitive Forces that Shape Strategy	Week 14
Marketing Ethics Course summary and review for final exam	Week 15
Final Examination	TBA