

Marketing

Lecturer: Dr. Leul Girma| Berlin



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Course & Class Inform

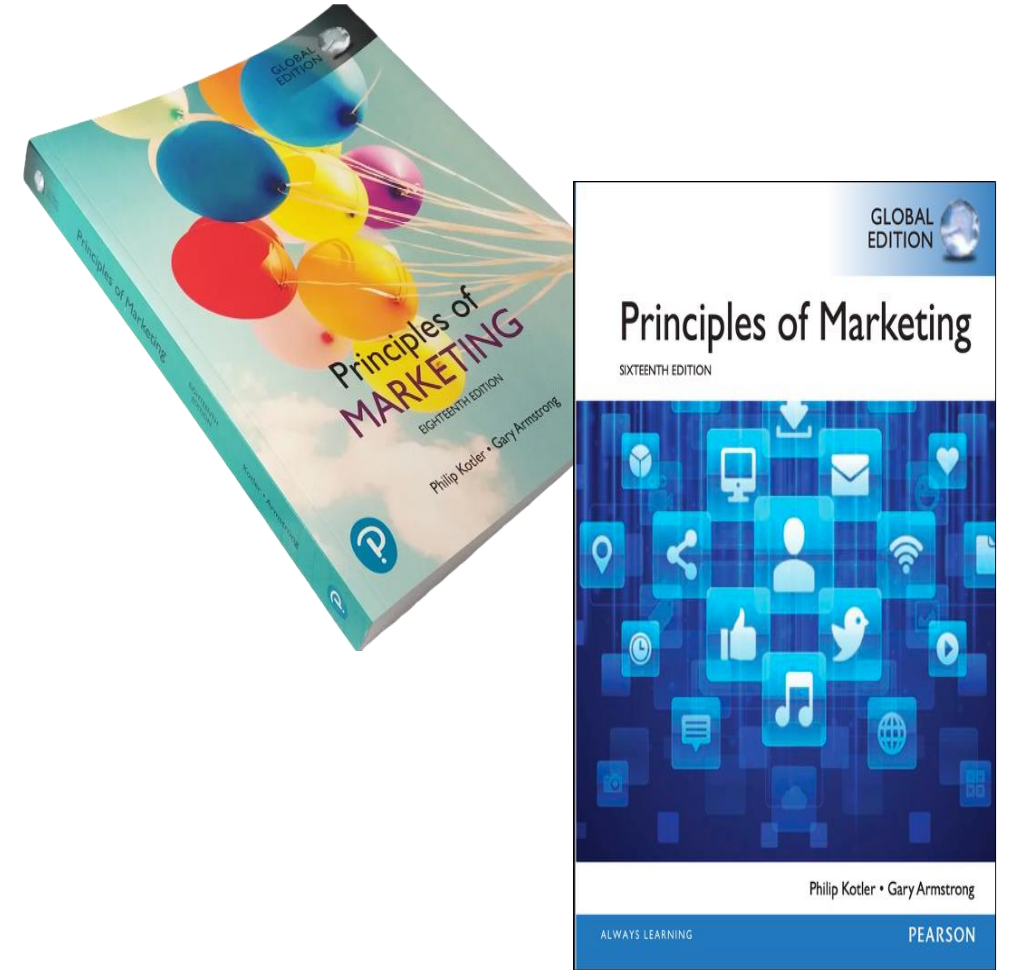
- **Course:** Marketing
- **Program:** Bachelors in Business Administration and Management
- **Credits:** 6 ECTS
- **Mode:** Onsite / Blended
- **Class 6 — Product & Branding Strategy: Designing the Market Offering**
- **Instructor:** Dr. Leul Girma

Main Teaching & Learning Materials

- Core textbook
- Instructor lecture slides and notes
- Case studies and real-world examples
- Academic articles and selected readings

Digital resources:

- Company websites and annual reports
 - Online marketing platforms and tools
- (e.g., Google Analytics demos, social media dashboards)



Objective and Learning Outcomes

Objective:

To develop students' understanding of **product strategy and branding** and enable them to **design a product offering** that delivers **customer value**, **creates differentiation**, and supports a **clear market position**

By the end of this class, YOU will be able to:

- Explain the concept of a **product**
- Apply **product levels** to design a product offering
- Identify product differentiation
- Develop a clear **brand identity**
- Align product and **brand with positioning**

Promise → Product → Brand

Part I

Product and Product Strategy

What Is a Product?

A **product** is anything that can be offered to a market to satisfy a **need** or **want**, including **physical goods, services, experiences, or ideas** (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021).

In marketing, a product represents a bundle of **benefits** that creates **value** for the **customer** (**need satisfaction, benefits, value**)

Think about your product concept:

- What **customer need or problem** does your product address?
- What **benefit** does the customer receive from using it?
- What type of **offering** is it? (**physical product, service, digital platform, etc.**)

Output : Customer need + main benefit + type of offering clearly identified

Product Strategy

Product strategy is the set of **decisions** about a product's **features, design, quality, and value** that enables a firm to deliver its **positioning** to a chosen **target market** (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021).

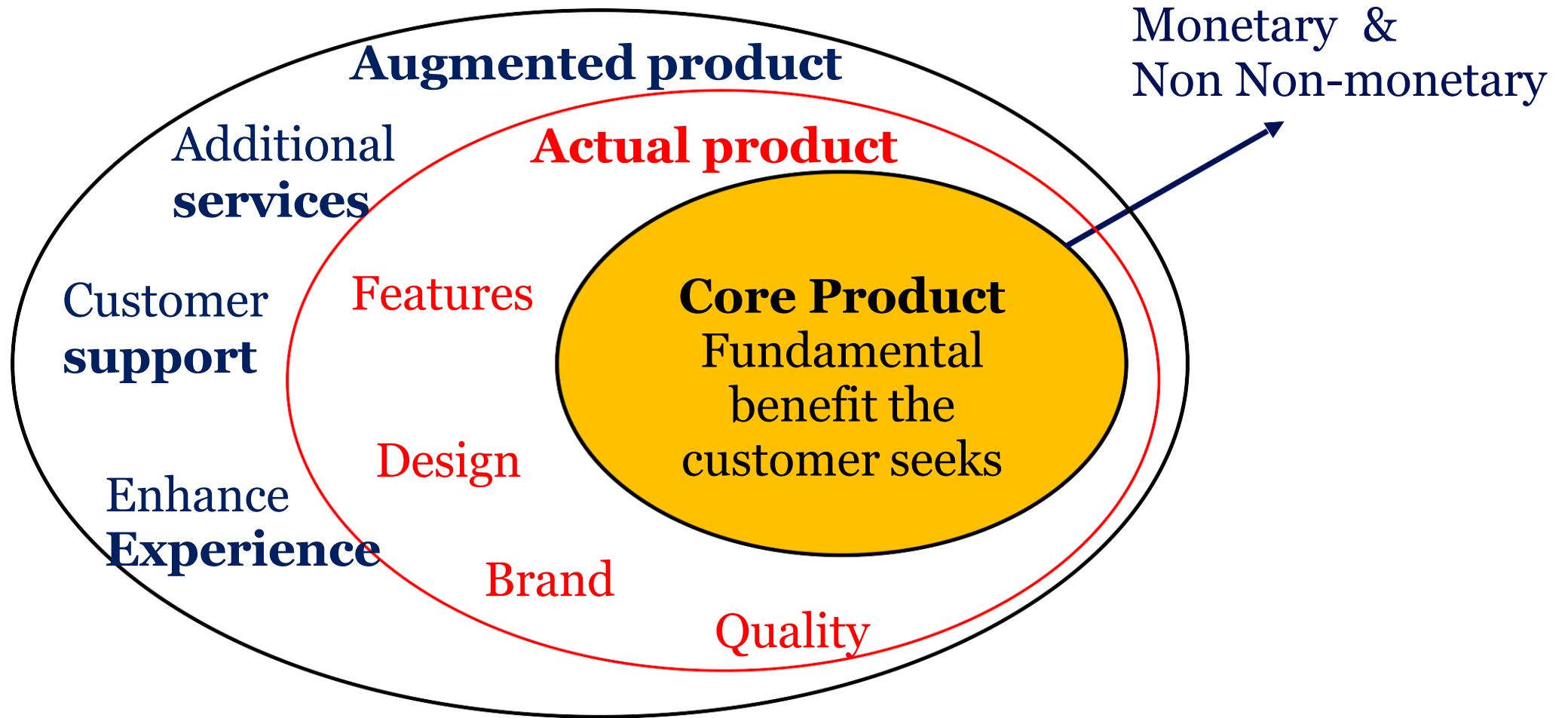
Think about the **product concept** you are developing:

- What **feature** delivers the promised **benefit**?
- What **quality** should customers expect?
- What makes the product **different** from competitors?

Output: One key feature + one quality element + one differentiation idea identified

Understanding Product Levels

Products deliver value through different **levels of benefit** that together form the complete **product offering** (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021).



Designing the Core Benefit

Customers do not buy products **only for their features**; they buy the **benefit** that solves a **need** or **improves their situation** (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021).

Focus on the **core benefit** of your product:

- What **problem** does your product solve?
- What **benefit** does the customer gain?
- Why is this **benefit valuable** to the target customer?

Output: One clear problem + one core benefit defined

Designing the Actual Product

These elements shape how the product is experienced and evaluated by the **customer**. (**features, design, quality**) (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Focus on the **actual product** you are designing:

- What **features** deliver the core **benefit**?
- What **design or style** should the product have?
- What **quality level** should customers expect?

Output : Key features + design idea + quality level defined

Designing the Augmented Product

These elements can increase **customer satisfaction** and strengthen **perceived value (services, support, added value)** (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Consider how you could enhance your **product offering**.

- What **service** could support the customer after purchase?
- What **additional benefit** could improve the customer experience?
- What could make the product more **convenient or reliable**?

Output: One service + one added benefit defined

How Do Products Become Different?

Differentiation can be achieved through **features, quality, design, performance**, or the overall **customer experience**. (**distinct value, comparison, advantage**) (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021).

Think about how your product **could stand out in the market**:

- What **feature** makes your product stand out?
- What **quality or performance** makes it better?
- What **experience** could make customers prefer it?

Output: One clear differentiation idea identified

Different Does Not Always Mean Better



Identifying Key Differentiation

A strong product concept usually relies on **one clear point of difference** that reinforces the product's **value proposition** (**distinct value, customer relevance, competitive advantage**) (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021).

Focus on the strongest **difference** your product could offer.

- Which **difference** matters most to your **target customer**?
- Which **competitor** do you want to stand apart from?
- What single **advantage** should customers remember?

Output: One clear point of differentiation defined

Part II

Branding

What Is Branding?

Branding is the process of creating a distinct **name**, **symbol**, and **identity** that distinguishes a product from **competitors** and helps customers **recognize** and **trust** it (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Think about the **brand identity** for your product:

- What **name** could represent your product?
- What **image or personality** should customers associate with it?
- How should your brand **stand out** from competitors?

Output : Brand name + brand personality + one differentiation idea defined

Why Brands is Essential?

For customers, brands simplify **choice** and reduce **perceived risk**. For firms, strong brands strengthen **differentiation** and **long-term relationships** (**recognition, trust, loyalty**) (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Think about the **brand role** in your product idea:

- How will customers **recognize** your brand easily?
- What could help customers **trust** your brand?
- Why would customers **choose** your brand over others?

Output: One recognition element + one trust element + one reason to choose the brand

Defining Brand Personality

A clear brand personality helps create emotional **meaning**, strengthen **identity**, and support **differentiation** in the market.(**character, identity, emotional connection**) (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Think about the **personality** your brand should communicate:

- What **character** should the brand express? (e.g., **innovative, premium**)
- What **feeling** should customers experience when they see the brand?
- How does this personality support your product's **positioning**?

Output: One clear brand personality defined

Creating Brand Elements

Brand elements are the visible and verbal components that help customers **identify, recognize, and remember** a brand, such as the **name, logo, symbol, or tagline** (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Think about the **brand elements** for your product.

- What **name** could represent your brand?
- What **symbol or visual idea** could help customers recognize it?
- What short **tagline** could communicate the brand's promise?

Output: Brand name + visual idea + tagline defined

Part III

Strategic Integration

Aligning Product & Brand with Positioning

Effective marketing requires that the **product**, **brand**, and **positioning** communicate the same **value promise** to the **target customer** (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021).

Review your **product concept** and **brand idea**:

- Does the **product** deliver the promised **benefit**?
- Does the **brand identity** support the same **positioning**?
- Is there any **inconsistency** between product and brand?

Output: One adjustment to improve product–brand alignment

From Positioning to Product Strategy

Effective marketing strategy connects **target customer**, **positioning**, **product decisions**, and **brand identity** into a coherent offering (**target**, **positioning**, **offering**) (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021)

Review the full **concept** you developed:

- Who is the **target customer**?
- What is the **positioning statement**?
- How do the **product** and **brand** support this promise?

Output: Target + positioning + product + brand clearly summarized

In Class Activity

Task

1. Explain your product design

1. Core Benefit
2. Actual features, design, quality, and value
3. Augmented Product

2. Differentiation

1. What makes the product **different from competitors**?

3. Branding

1. What character represent your brand identity ?
2. What may customer feel when they see your brand?
3. What short tagline could communicate the brand's promise?

Thank you



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