

# Branding

## Track Description

### Definition (short):

Branding studies how brands are created, managed, and leveraged to build awareness, loyalty, trust, and value for consumers, firms, and society. It examines brand identity, positioning, equity, relationships, and evolution, integrating psychology, culture, strategy, and analytics to guide long-term brand value creation and protection. Increasingly, this includes how brands maintain meaning and trust in the face of technological disruption, strategic choices around technology adoption, and uncertainty in global markets.

### Definition (long):

Branding is the branch of marketing scholarship that investigates how brands are created, managed, and leveraged to generate awareness, associations, loyalty, trust, and value for consumers, organizations, and society.

The domain examines:

- Brand creation and identity: how names, symbols, design, storytelling, and heritage shape brand meaning;
- Brand positioning and differentiation: how brands occupy distinctive mental and cultural space relative to competitors;
- Brand equity and performance: how brands create intangible value, affect consumer decision making, and influence firm outcomes;
- Brand relationships: how consumers develop trust, attachment, love, and advocacy;
- Brand trust and credibility: how brands establish, maintain, and repair trust when the foundations of consumer-brand relationships are under pressure;
- Brand evolution and technology adoption: how brands navigate decisions around emerging technologies, balancing the risks of early adoption against the costs of missed opportunity;
- Brand authenticity and synthetic media: how brands protect meaning and credibility in environments shaped by AI-generated content and algorithmic mediation;
- Brand resilience in global markets: how brands adapt to geopolitical disruption, shifting trade conditions, and country-of-origin dynamics;
- Brand evolution: including brand extensions, co-branding, rebranding, crises, and managing brands across digital and global contexts.

Branding research integrates consumer psychology, cultural analysis, strategy, and data analytics to understand and guide long-term brand value creation and protection. As the environments in which brands operate become increasingly dynamic and uncertain, the field faces pressing new questions about resilience, authenticity, and strategic adaptation.