

# TRENDS AND TECHNOLOGIES IN PRODUCT AND CUSTOMER MANAGEMENT

**International MBA IMBA-EN SEP-2024 S-PS**

Area Marketing and Communication

Number of sessions: 15

Term: Concentrations

Category: regular

Language: English

Professor: **YOUSOUF TRAORE**

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Youssef Traore is a venture builder, investor, and educator with a deep focus on technology, innovation, and emerging markets. With experience spanning venture capital, startup acceleration, and corporate innovation, he has played a pivotal role in shaping ecosystems that bridge cutting-edge technology with real-world impact.

Currently, Youssef is setting up an African-focused fund, backing startups founded by African entrepreneurs or operating in Africa, and leading the launch of a Venture Studio dedicated to AI in Europe. In addition to his investment work, Youssef has been instrumental in launching accelerators, including efforts in Málaga, and forging collaborations with key institutions, such as the city hall of Barcelona and C10 Labs, to support startup ecosystems. He has also worked extensively with deep tech startups, particularly in areas like AI, quantum computing, space, and sustainability-driven technologies.

As an educator, Youssef brings a practitioner's perspective to the classroom, blending firsthand insights from the front lines of venture building with strategic frameworks that help students understand how emerging technologies shape product and customer management. His approach emphasizes practical applications, real-world case studies, and engagement with industry leaders to prepare students for the fast-evolving landscape of digital business.

Through his course, Trends and Technologies in Product and Customer Management, Youssef aims to equip MBA students with the skills, mindset, and network to thrive at the intersection of product innovation, AI, and customer experience in today's rapidly changing economy.

## Office Hours

Office hours will be on request. Please contact at:

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## SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

In today's digital-first world, product managers and business leaders must navigate rapid technological advancements, shifting consumer expectations, and evolving business models. This course explores cutting-edge trends and innovations reshaping product and customer management. Through real-world case studies, hands-on projects, and insights from industry leaders, students will develop the strategic mindset and technical fluency required to lead in the modern business landscape.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will:

- Understand key technological trends shaping product and customer management
- Apply frameworks such as design thinking, agile, and PLG to real-world scenarios
- Gain insights from industry leaders on best practices and emerging innovations
- Develop skills to drive customer engagement and product-led growth in a competitive landscape

## TEACHING METHODOLOGY

IE University teaching method is defined by its collaborative, active, and applied nature. Students actively participate in the whole process to build their knowledge and sharpen their skills. Professor's main role is to lead and guide students to achieve the learning objectives of the course. This is done by engaging in a diverse range of teaching techniques and different types of learning activities such as the following:

Learning Activity	Weighting
Lectures	30.0 %
Discussions	10.0 %
Group work	40.0 %
Individual studying	20.0 %
TOTAL	100.0 %

## AI POLICY

In this course, the use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is encouraged, with the goal of developing an informed critical perspective on potential uses and generated outputs.

However, be aware of the limits of GenAI in its current state of development:

·If you provide minimum effort prompts, you will get low quality results. You will need to refine your prompts to get good outcomes. This will take work.

·Don't take ChatGPT's or any GenAI's output at face value. Assume it is wrong unless you either know the answer or can cross-check it with another source. You are responsible for any errors or omissions. You will be able to validate the outputs of GenAI for topics you understand.

·AI is a tool, but one that you need to acknowledge using. Failure to do so is in violation of academic honesty policies. Acknowledging the use of AI will not impact your grade.

Suggested format to acknowledge the use of generative AI tools:

I acknowledge the use of [AI systems link] to [specify how you used generative AI]. The prompts used include [list of prompts]. The output of these prompts was used to [explain how you used the outputs in your work].

If you have chosen not to include any AI generated content in your assignment, the following disclosure is recommended:

No content generated by AI technologies has been used in this assignment.

## **PROGRAM**

### **SESSION 1 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

Introduction to the class

A session to ask every person taking this class to introduce themselves.

- Where are you from?
- What did you do before the IMBA?
- Why did you take this course?
- What are your expectations?
- What are your plans post-IMBA?

Some of you may believe that this is not a good use of a session, I disagree.

### **SESSION 2 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

#### **Sustainability Topics:**

- Governance

#### **Introduction to Product and Customer Management in the Digital Era**

Welcome to the world of product and customer management! In this session, we will lay the foundation for the course by exploring how emerging technologies, shifting consumer behaviors, and digital transformation are reshaping the role of product managers.

We will cover:

- Key Trends Shaping the Industry – The rise of AI, automation, and data-driven decision-making.
- The Role of Product Managers – How responsibilities vary across industries, from tech to healthcare and finance.
- What Makes a Great Product Leader? – Essential skills, mindset, and frameworks for success.

#### **Key Questions to Consider:**

- How has product management evolved in the digital era?
- What are the main challenges and opportunities for product managers today?

Guest Speaker: **Francisca Merchan, Senior Manager, AWS**

By the end of this session, you will have a clear understanding of what it takes to succeed as a product leader in today's fast-paced, tech-driven world.

### **SESSION 3 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

#### **Sustainability Topics:**

- Social Challenge

#### **Customer-Centric Product Development – Designing for Real Needs**

Great products start with a deep understanding of the customer. In this session, we will explore how design thinking and user research can help product teams build solutions that truly resonate with users.

We will cover:

- Understanding Customer Needs & Pain Points – Techniques for gathering insights through research and data.
- Design Thinking Methodologies – Empathizing with users, defining problems, ideating solutions, prototyping, and testing.
- Case Studies from Industry Leaders – How top companies prioritize customer-centric design.

**Key Questions to Consider:**

- How can product teams uncover hidden customer pain points?
- What makes a product truly customer-centric?

Guest Speaker: TBA

By the end of this session, you'll understand how to create user-first products that solve real problems and drive engagement.

## **SESSION 4 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

**Sustainability Topics:**

- Governance

**AI and Data-Driven Decision Making – The Power of Intelligent Products**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming product management by enabling predictive insights, automation, and hyper-personalization. This session will explore how data-driven approaches are shaping the future of customer engagement and decision-making.

We will cover:

- Leveraging AI for Product and Customer Insights – How companies use AI for user analytics, A/B testing, and personalization.
- The Impact of Machine Learning on Product Development – From recommendation engines to chatbots and predictive modeling.
- Ethical AI and Bias in Data – Ensuring fairness, transparency, and responsible AI usage.

**Key Questions to Consider:**

- How can AI improve customer experiences and business outcomes?
- What are the risks and limitations of AI-driven decision-making?

Guest Speaker: **Maria J. Alonso - CEO QALEON (AI)**

By the end of this session, you'll understand how to harness AI to create smarter, data-driven products.

## **SESSION 5 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

**Sustainability Topics:**

- Social Challenge

**Sustainable Product Innovation & Green Technologies – Designing for a Greener Future**

Sustainability is no longer a niche concern—it's a driving force in modern product innovation. Companies across industries are rethinking how products are designed, manufactured, and consumed to reduce environmental impact while maintaining profitability. This session will explore the strategies, challenges, and opportunities in developing sustainable products and integrating green technologies.

We will cover:

- The Shift Toward Sustainable Innovation – How companies are responding to environmental challenges and consumer demand for eco-friendly solutions.
- Green Technologies in Product Development – Exploring breakthroughs in materials, energy efficiency, and circular economy models.
- Balancing Sustainability & Profitability – Strategies for aligning business goals with environmental responsibility.

**Key Questions to Consider:**

- How can businesses integrate sustainability without compromising growth?
- What role do emerging technologies play in reducing environmental impact?
- How do companies measure the success of sustainable innovation?

Guest Speaker: **Eduardo Paz ex-CEO FELTWOOD**

By the end of this session, you'll understand how businesses can drive innovation while making a positive environmental impact.

## **SESSION 6 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

**Sustainability Topics:**

- Economic Development

**Platform and Ecosystem Thinking – Building for Network Effects**

Platforms are transforming industries, from marketplaces to social networks. This session will explore how companies build and scale platform-based businesses that thrive on network effects.

We will cover:

- The Rise of Platform Business Models – How companies like Airbnb, Uber, and Shopify built dominant platforms.
- Understanding Network Effects – How more users create exponential value.
- Monetization Strategies for Platforms – From transaction fees to subscriptions and advertising.

**Key Questions to Consider:**

- How do platforms gain a competitive edge?
- What are the challenges of building a successful platform?

Guest Speaker: **Myriam Pereira Rico - CEO Unitás Ex-Microsoft**

By the end of this session, you'll understand how to build, scale, and monetize platform businesses.

## **SESSION 7 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

**Sustainability Topics:**

- Governance

**The Role of IoT & Edge Computing – Connecting the Physical and Digital Worlds**

The Internet of Things (IoT) and Edge Computing are revolutionizing the way products interact with users, generating real-time insights and enabling smarter decision-making. In this session, we will explore how connected devices are transforming industries, from smart homes and wearables to predictive maintenance in manufacturing and logistics.

We will dive into:

- Smart Products & Connected Experiences – How IoT is enabling seamless, data-driven interactions across industries, from healthcare to retail.
- Predictive Maintenance & Real-Time Insights – The power of sensor data, AI, and edge computing to prevent failures before they happen.
- Industry Applications & Case Studies – Examining real-world examples of IoT-driven business models and competitive advantages.

**Key Questions to Consider:**

- How are companies leveraging IoT and Edge Computing to create more personalized and efficient customer experiences?
- What are the security and scalability challenges of managing billions of connected devices?
- How does edge computing reduce latency and enable real-time decision-making in critical applications?

Guest Speaker: **Álvaro Everlet - CIO Allo World**

By the end of this session, you will have a clear understanding of how IoT and Edge Computing are reshaping the future of product management, customer experiences, and business innovation.

## **SESSION 8 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

**Sustainability Topics:**

- Economic Development

**The Subscription Economy & Monetization Models – The Business of Retention**

One-time purchases are being replaced by subscriptions, memberships, and recurring revenue models. In this session, we will explore how companies optimize monetization strategies to build long-term customer relationships.

We will cover:

- The Shift from One-Time Sales to Recurring Revenue – Why companies are moving to subscription models.
- Pricing Strategies & Customer Retention – How to design attractive and sustainable pricing.
- Case Studies from Leading Subscription Businesses – Lessons from Netflix, Spotify, and SaaS platforms.

**Key Questions to Consider:**

- What are the advantages and challenges of the subscription model?
- How do companies prevent churn and increase customer lifetime value?

Guest Speaker: **TBA**

By the end of this session, you'll understand the mechanics of the subscription economy and how to implement retention-driven business models.

## **SESSION 9 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

**Sustainability Topics:**

- Social Challenge

### **Customer Experience & Omnichannel Strategies – Seamless Interactions in a Digital World**

Customers expect smooth, integrated experiences across digital and physical touchpoints. This session will explore how companies create seamless omnichannel strategies.

We will cover:

- Creating Unified Customer Experiences – How digital and physical channels work together.
- Data Integration Across Touchpoints – Using AI and analytics to personalize interactions.
- Industry Examples from Retail, E-Commerce & Banking – What best-in-class omnichannel looks like.

#### **Key Questions to Consider:**

- How do businesses design frictionless experiences across platforms?
- What role does AI play in delivering personalized omnichannel experiences?

Guest Speaker: **Eve Regagnon - Head of Strategy & Innovation - Marketing & distribution - CNP Iberia**

By the end of this session, you'll know how to craft cohesive customer journeys that drive satisfaction and loyalty.

## **SESSION 10 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

### **Sustainability Topics:**

- Governance

### **The Role of Blockchain and Web3 in Customer Management – The Future of Digital Trust**

Decentralization is reshaping digital interactions. This session will explore how blockchain and Web3 technologies impact customer engagement, loyalty programs, and identity verification.

We will cover:

- Decentralization and Trust in Customer Interactions – How blockchain enhances transparency and security.
- NFTs, Loyalty Programs & Digital Identity – Real-world use cases in customer engagement.
- Challenges & Opportunities in Web3 Adoption – What's hype vs. real innovation?

#### **Key Questions to Consider:**

- How can blockchain be used beyond cryptocurrency?
- What are the biggest obstacles to Web3 adoption in mainstream businesses?

Guest Speaker: A Web3 entrepreneur or blockchain expert will share insights on the future of decentralized customer interactions. **Jorge Antolinez - CBO- IOBUILDERS**

By the end of this session, you'll have a clear understanding of how Web3 could transform customer engagement.

## **SESSION 11 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

### **Sustainability Topics:**

- Economic Development

### **Product-Led Growth (PLG) Strategies – Let Your Product Drive Adoption**

Some of the fastest-growing companies today rely on their product—not marketing—for customer acquisition. This session will dive into Product-Led Growth (PLG) strategies that drive user adoption.

We will cover:



- How Companies Grow Through Product Adoption – The mechanics of PLG models.
- Freemium vs. Premium Strategies – When to use free trials, tiered pricing, and upselling.

**Key Questions to Consider:**

- How can product design drive user acquisition and retention?
- What are the key metrics for measuring PLG success?

Guest Speaker: TBA

By the end of this session, you'll understand how to build and scale a product-led business.

## **SESSION 12 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

**Sustainability Topics:**

- Environment
- Social Challenge

**Sustainable and Ethical Product Management – Balancing Profitability with Impact**

With growing awareness of environmental and social issues, businesses must integrate sustainability into their product strategies. This session will explore how companies navigate ethical considerations while maintaining profitability.

We will cover:

- The Role of ESG in Product Strategy – How environmental, social, and governance factors shape decision-making.
- Balancing Profitability with Purpose – Can businesses do good and do well?
- Case Studies from Sustainable Companies – How Patagonia, Tesla, and Fairphone integrate sustainability into their business models.

**Key Questions to Consider:**

- How can businesses measure and communicate their sustainability impact?
- What are the challenges of making a product both sustainable and commercially viable?

Guest Speaker: **Kuzi Charamba CEO and Founder TESE**

By the end of this session, you'll understand how to incorporate sustainability into your product strategy without sacrificing business goals.

## **SESSION 13 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

**Sustainability Topics:**

- Social Challenge

**The Future of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) – Redefining User Experience**

As technology advances, the way we interact with digital products is changing. This session will explore the latest innovations in Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) and what they mean for product and customer management.

We will cover:

- AR, VR, and Voice Interfaces – How emerging technologies are shaping user interactions.
- The Evolution of UI/UX Design – From screens to immersive experiences.
- Real-World Applications – How industries like healthcare, retail, and gaming are leveraging new HCI trends.

**Key Questions to Consider:**

- What makes a great user experience in an AI-driven world?



- How can businesses prepare for the next wave of HCI innovations?

Guest Speaker: **Daniel Esteban-Ferrer, phd, CEO Vrain**

By the end of this session, you'll be equipped to design and manage products that leverage cutting-edge interfaces.

## SESSION 14 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

### Sustainability Topics:

- Economic Development

### Emerging Trends and the Future of Product Management – What's Next?

The world of product and customer management is evolving at a rapid pace. This final session will explore the key trends shaping the future and how professionals can prepare for what's next.

We will cover:

- Predicting the Next Decade of Innovation – AI, automation, and new business models.
- The Changing Role of Product Managers – How PMs must adapt to stay ahead.
- Expert Insights on Future Disruptions – What trends are investors and industry leaders betting on?

### Key Questions to Consider:

- What skills will product managers need in the next decade?
- How will AI and automation reshape the industry?

Guest Speaker: A futurist or thought leader in technology will share their vision for the next wave of innovation. **Carlos Kuchkovsky - CEO and Founder of QCentroid**

By the end of this session, you'll walk away with a roadmap for staying relevant in an ever-changing landscape.

## SESSION 15 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

### Final Exam and Course Wrap-Up

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

This is, above all, an interactive course. Therefore, class participation is paramount: if I don't remember who you are by the end of the course and I need to search for you in the class roster, that's a very bad signal. You learn when you engage, when you participate, when you discuss. Besides that, we will also use a "blue team, red team" methodology: each of the groups will be tasked with a topic, they will have to prepare both a report and a presentation, and will have 15 minutes in the corresponding session to present it. The rest of the class will be in charge of the questions, and those will count towards participation. Red team participation will have a higher weight than regular participation. Finally, we will also have a final individual assignment to get a more clear idea of your individual performance.

criteria	percentage	Learning Objectives	Comments
Final Exam	20 %		Final Exam in class last session
Individual work	20 %		Individual assignment (take home, two pages soft limit)

Group Work	40 %		Group work (5 pages soft limit)
Class Participation	20 %		Class interventions, graded by quality

## **FAILING GRADE AND REASSESSMENT**

When students receive a Fail in a course, they have the opportunity to present themselves for reassessment in order to earn the necessary credits toward graduation.

The reassessment of students should be scheduled between 5 and 10 working days after the review session takes place.

Grades for the reassessment are limited to a Low Pass and Fail.

Both, the initial Fail as well as the grade of the reassessment remain on the transcript. For the purpose of calculating the GPA however, only the grade of the reassessment is to be considered. Students receiving a failing grade in the reassessment of a course will not be able to continue in the program.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **Recommended**

- Clayton Christensen. (2016). *The Innovator's Dilemma: When New Technologies Cause Great Firms to Fail*. 2nd. Harvard Business Review Press. ISBN 9781633691780 (Digital)
- Marco Iansiti & Karim R. Lakhani. (2020). *Competing in the Age of AI: Strategy and Leadership When Algorithms and Networks Run the World*. 1st. Harvard Business Review Press. ISBN 9781633697621 (Digital)
- Eric Ries. (2011). *The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful*. Crown Business. ISBN 9780307887894 (Digital)
- Geoffrey A. Moore. (2014). *Crossing the Chasm: Marketing and Selling Disruptive Products to Mainstream Customers*. 3rd. Harper Business. ISBN 9780062292988 (Digital)
- Nir Eyal. (2014). *Hooked: How to Build Habit-Forming Products*. 1st. Portfolio. ISBN 9781591847786 (Digital)
- Andrew Chen. (2021). *The Cold Start Problem: How to Start and Scale Network Effects*. 1st. Harper Business. ISBN 9780062969743 (Digital)
- Madhavan Ramanujam & Georg Tacke. (2016). *Monetizing Innovation: How Smart Companies Design the Product Around the Price*. 1st. Wiley. ISBN 9781119240860 (Digital)
- Kai-Fu Lee. (2018). *AI Superpowers: China, Silicon Valley, and the New World Order*. 1st. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. ISBN 9781328546395 (Digital)

## **BEHAVIOR RULES**

Please, check the University's Code of Conduct [here](#). The Program Director may provide further indications.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Please, check the University's Attendance Policy [here](#). The Program Director may provide further indications.

### **ETHICAL POLICY**

Please, check the University's Ethics Code [here](#). The Program Director may provide further indications.

