IDEAS FOR GROUP EXERCISES

EXERCISE 1A: DETECTING TRENDS WITH SOCIAL MEDIA (30 MINUTES IN CLASS)

Goal: Students use social media and web resources to gather information and identify consumer trends. They face a similar situation as L’Oréal in 2011.

Organization: Students can work individually or in groups of up to 4. Each group or student (if working individually) will need a computer with an internet connection. They will need about 30 minutes to complete the exercise. Students can be given an area to research (technology, fashion, beauty, food, etc.) or can choose an area that interests them. Using Google Trends and Rising Terms can be a good way to start gathering information.

Questions for students:

1. You are a social media manager(s) for a consumer products company in 2011 (The instructor should choose what company students will be part of). Using only online information available until 2011, identify consumer trends of interest to your company.
2. Identify two trends of interest to your company in 2011.
   a. What are the keywords that will help you track the trends?
   b. What social media outlets have information about these trends?
3. Once you have identified the trends, which one do you believe will be enduring?
   a. What information (which sites) did you use to select this trend?
   b. Why does this trend seem a better option than other trends?
4. Create two slides detailing which trends you chose, which sources led you to choose those trends, and then why you chose the enduring trend.

Variations on Exercise 1a:

1. Students can perform this exercise in the present using all available information on the web.
2. Groups can be tasked with finding the next “Ombré” product.

EXERCISE 1B: DEVELOP A MARKETING PLAN FOR A TREND (20 min)

Goal: Student groups (or individuals) act as marketing managers for a product to be launched based on a trend identified online (The instructor should choose what trend students focus on). With a minimal marketing budget, the groups must design a social media strategy for the launch.

Organization: Students can work individually or in groups of up to 4 and will need about 30 minutes to complete the exercise. Students can be given an area to research (technology, fashion, beauty, food, etc.) or can choose an area that interests them.
Questions for students:

1. You are marketing manager(s) for a consumer products company. You have been given a limited budget to launch a new product based on a trend identified online and you need to develop an effective marketing plan.
2. Which social media outlets and channels will you use to create awareness and why? Be sure to consider more than just YouTube.
3. [If the trend chosen by the instructor is the same as in Exercise 1A: how does the marketing plan build on the information gathered online in Exercise 1A?]
4. Create two slides detailing (1) your marketing objectives and (2) the social media outlets and channels you will use in the plan and why.

EXERCISE 2: SOCIAL MEDIA LISTENING FOR COMPANIES (30 MINUTES)

Goal: Students identify what industries (other than beauty, the focal industry in the case) could leverage social media listening. The exercise allows the students to apply the techniques they learned about in the case and see how other industries can learn from what L’Oréal did.

Organization: Students can work individually or in groups of up to 4. Each group should have a computer with an internet connection. (The exercise will work without the computer and internet connections, but the recommendations will be broader and more general). They will need about 30 minutes in class to research industries or companies outside the beauty industry that could benefit from a social media listening strategy.

Questions for students:

1. You are a social media listening consultant. What industry would you pick to pitch a social media listening strategy?
2. Pick a company within the industry you chose, and describe to the company (your potential client) how the firm could engage in systematic listening. Make sure you state:
   a. What should the firm listen to?
   b. Where would the information come from?
3. How would the information the firm gathers be leveraged? e.g., for better customer service? new product development etc?.
4. Create a slide describing the industry and company you selected and why you chose it. Then, explain the information the company would be able to gather and how the firm could use the information (how value will be created, and where?)