

HACKATHON CHALLENGE

A. BACKGROUND

Welcome to the Hackathon challenge! 😊

But first things first, what is a Hackathon?

THE LINGO:

The Hacker Ethic: A new approach to the way you can get to data in today's digital world - it's all about using what is available at your fingertips to "hack away" at a business question.

Hackathons: Bringing together a group of colleagues to "hack away" at a singular business question, making significant progress in a few short hours, using data that is available online.

The concept of a Hackathon was inspired by software programmers in Silicon Valley who were revolutionizing the way they approached work. This way of working was later adopted by major digital players and inspired big companies to think about how they too could leverage this mindset and forum to their competitive advantage. The major shift toward a digital world opens new possibilities to use consumer-generated data in a myriad of ways, such as identifying latest consumer and market trends and opportunities, better understanding certain consumer segments, identifying new brand building opportunities and ultimately, creating a competitive advantage.

B. TOOLS

Here are some tools you can use in a Hackathon. These are some of the top tools, but just as there is an endless amount of consumer-generated data online, there too are countless tools available to look at. Feel free to add your own!

- **INFOTHEQUE!** Should be the preferred resource for richness and robustness of available information.
- **Google search, Google trends (trends.google.com):** use Google trends to identify trending search terms, related searches, markets where this search is most relevant, etc.
- **Think with Google (thinkwithgoogle.com):** many interesting consumer insights and industry analyses.
- **Instagram, X, Tik Tok (or other social channels and brand forums):** use # search to look for specific tags on brands or explore brands' channels to see what they post and how consumers are commenting.
- **YouTube Search:** look at trending topics / searches and related videos. Learn from consumers about why and how they use certain products and brands.
- **Amazon Ratings & Reviews:** use customer ratings and reviews to better understand how they experience certain products, what they like / dislike, what they wish for etc.

C. YOUR ASSIGNMENT

- 1) **Form a team** of 4 - 5 people
- 2) **Have a dedicated leader** to keep the team on track (manage timing, logistics, take notes)
- 3) **Select 1 of the following 3 topics to work on:**
 - I. You are a **beverage company** (non-alcoholic), who wants to launch a new **drink**. What are some of the latest trends in the beverage industry? Are there any new and innovative brands that stick out? What do they do differently? What would you launch and to which target?
 - II. You are a **beauty company** and want to understand what the next big idea is. What are the major trends in this industry? What are the smaller starts-ups doing to challenge the large multinational companies? What would you launch and to which target?
 - III. You are a **world foods importer (ethnic foods not native to Switzerland)** and wish to capitalize on the next big trend in ethnic eating. What is currently available in CH? What areas of the world would you explore to find an interesting market opportunity and who would you target in CH? Who are the players / competitors or possible suppliers? What would you launch and to which target?

Hints: When choosing your topic, **define the scope** – i.e. geographically, CH for example, but taking inspiration from global trends. **Look at the market situation BEFORE you decide on what product to launch**, I will be looking to see the link between your data and what you chose to do. Inventing a brand name might be a fun way to go and help you with your target and positioning.

- 4) **If you have time, go to a supermarket / store** near you to check out some of your insights – do you see some of the products on the shelf? How do they communicate? How present are they vs. competitors or other product segments? What else do you notice?
- 5) **Remember it's about progress not perfection-** use the Hackathon to make as much progress as you can on your business question, you will surprise yourself and your team with how far you can get! But remember it's okay if you end without a fully baked answer to your question.

D. DELIVERABLES

Please summarize your findings in 5-10 ppt slides to be presented **without notes** in class in a MAX 10-minute presentation.

All team members should speak as part of the presentation.

The slides should contain the following:

- Slide 1: topic chosen, research process, sources used, any challenges encountered
- Slides 2-4: your research results
- Last slides: your recommendation for the product / brand future decisions and strategy

There is no report to be handed in. You will be graded on your group presentation and content only (10% of final grade).