

What is the Marketing Management Major? With Dr. Bill Ryan, Jessica Lundgren and Hannah Smolicz

[00:00:00] **Emma Bjorngard-Basayne:** [00:00:00] Welcome to our next episode of the launch podcast. I am Emma Bjorngard-Basayne, academic advisor at the Stamford campus,

[00:00:14] **Kayla Hogrefe:** [00:00:14] and I'm Kayla Hogrefe, academic advisor for the school of business at the UConn Hartford campus.

[00:00:19] **Emma Bjorngard-Basayne:** [00:00:19] This episode is all about the marketing management major and to really get an in-depth view of the major. We are bringing you two interviews today. So in the first interview, Jessica Lundgren marketing major at the Stamford campus talks to Hannah Smolicz marketing management major at the Stamford campus about the marketing management major and her experience in the major.

[00:00:42] **Kayla Hogrefe:** [00:00:42] And then Emma and I also, in this episode, speak to Dr. Bill Ryan, who is the director of the marketing management major and a faculty member within the marketing department. And he's a great ambassador for the marketing management major, especially because he's so knowledgeable about the field of marketing, [00:01:00] having worked within the field for a long time before teaching.

[00:01:03] And he's really a champion for students in terms of internships. And gaining really good solid experience within the fields that will lead to great internships and jobs.

[00:01:15] **Emma Bjorngard-Basayne:** [00:01:15] I really enjoy listening to bill talking about the marketing management major. He is very excited and passionate about the major and helping students be successful within it.

[00:01:25] One thing that bill highlighted was that as students can declare a concentration within the major so for marketing management, it's digital marketing and analytics. And this is a very exciting opportunity for them to focus some of their coursework and really be very intentional about the classes that they're taking.

[00:01:45] **Kayla Hogrefe:** [00:01:45] Yeah. And analytics is really highly in demand by employers right now. So students with those skills are look really great when they're applying for internships and jobs. And that's just one of the great features of the marketing management [00:02:00] program. So please enjoy this conversation between Emma Bill Ryan and I, and the conversation between Jessica Lundgren and Hannah Smolicz.

[00:02:17] **Jessica Lundgren:** [00:02:17] Thank you for joining us. I have a few questions to ask you. So I'm Jessica, I'm a senior marketing major at the Stamford campus. And I work for the marketing department writing the weekly newsletter that we send out called marketing today. And if you wanna maybe give us like a brief intro on yourself and then I'll get into the quest.

[00:02:34] **Hannah Smolicz:** [00:02:34] Yeah, of course. So my name is Hannah Smolicz. I'm a sophomore at the Stamford UConn campus. And I recently just declared a major in marketing management and a minor in sociology actually. I'm originally from Berlin,

Connecticut, but I really just loved being in Sanford because the city area. So, I'm really glad to be here.

[00:02:53] **Jessica Lundgren:** [00:02:53] That's great. A lot of fun. I'm sure. What made you decide on being a marketing management major?

[00:02:58] **Hannah Smolicz:** [00:02:58] Well, so I was [00:03:00] originally a business admin major because I knew since high school that I really wanted to go into business, but I also knew I was a little more interested in the marketing side rather than, you know, finance or accounting.

[00:03:12] So when the marketing management major popped up, I was like, I definitely rather do that. And I feel like it's going to give me a more. You know, focused road to a career path.

[00:03:23] **Jessica Lundgren:** [00:03:23] Do you have any ideas for after graduation of where you hope to take your career in marketing?

[00:03:28] **Hannah Smolicz:** [00:03:28] Yeah, actually, I really, my main goal is to move to New York city and work in the fashion industry and be on the more operative management side.

[00:03:37] **Jessica Lundgren:** [00:03:37] Yeah. That's exciting. Have you had any work experience or internships that are related to fashion or anything in marketing so far in fashion yet?

[00:03:46] **Hannah Smolicz:** [00:03:46] I haven't been able to find a lot of people in that industry. But for marketing, I actually started an internship in high school at Remax, and I was mostly doing marketing work for them.

[00:03:57] And then after that, I [00:04:00] started an internship, my freshman year of college at a marketing firm called . And then after that, actually I was at Stamford innovation week for the launch show and I was doing marketing for them with social media and different newsletter information. So it's been a lot

[00:04:17] of fun.

[00:04:18] **Jessica Lundgren:** [00:04:18] That's great. Having so much experience. So early in your time at UConn, from the internship experiences that you've had so far, is there a memorable experience or a lesson that you've taken away from those

[00:04:28] **Hannah Smolicz:** [00:04:28] The best lesson that I've learned throughout all those marketing internships? Is that I think I want to be in more of the big picture marketing and promoting, because with all those internships, of course, I'm a young student and I was just doing the nitty gritty of social media posts, doing things for clients, which of course both are important, but that's really where my interest is.

[00:04:50] **Jessica Lundgren:** [00:04:50] That's great.

[00:04:51] Alongside all of your work experience, have you had any student involvements that you think have been helpful in your time at UConn?

[00:04:58] **Hannah Smolicz:** [00:04:58] Yeah, of course. [00:05:00] So at UConn, I'm a member of the BCLC, which has been really great, just getting to know other business students. You know, it's led me to be able to connect with business professionals in the area and take advantage of all their resources.

[00:05:14] But I'm also an international vice-president of a business organization called DECA, which has been an amazing experience. And it's just different this year, obviously because it's spiritual, but it's really marketing focused organization and tries to help business schools go into their career path.

[00:05:31] So it's really great being able to help students like me as well.

[00:05:34] **Jessica Lundgren:** [00:05:34] That sounds like a great resource. I personally was I'm in the BCLC here at UConn at the main campus and it was a great experience. So I'm glad we have that in common. So anything for the regional students that you might have for advice either on like coursework or any of the different extracurriculars that you can get involved in?

[00:05:53] **Hannah Smolicz:** [00:05:53] I think my biggest piece of advice for anyone at a regional campus is to try to take advantage of [00:06:00] what's unique about that campus. So, you know, for people at a branch like me and especially at Stamford, cause there's just so many businesses around us in New York just to take advantage of that. Okay.

[00:06:11] **Jessica Lundgren:** [00:06:11] And one last question for you for any of the marketing classes that you've taken at Stamford, are there any that stood out to you that you found especially helpful or interesting?

[00:06:19] **Hannah Smolicz:** [00:06:19] So I actually haven't been able to take a marketing course yet. My first business course will actually be next semester and it's a management course.

[00:06:28] But I'm definitely looking forward to the marketing courses. I have a little background knowledge of, you know, the basics of marketing because I took two courses in high school. So I've been excited about it, but of course, Yeah, you have to get your prereq's out of the way.

[00:06:42] **Jessica Lundgren:** [00:06:42] Yes, that's very exciting.

[00:06:44] Thank you for sharing all of this with us. I can tell that you've definitely taken the initiative to get involved with marketing and a lot of different areas. So it's great to hear about your experience and I appreciate you sharing it.

[00:06:56] **Emma Bjorngard-Basayne:** [00:06:56] So what is your name and what do you do at [00:07:00] UConn?

[00:07:00] **Bill Ryan:** [00:07:00] Yes, hi, my name is Bill Ryan, and I'm an assistant professor in the UConn marketing department. I've been at UConn now for 10 years and I run our professional sales leadership program and our marketing and sales leadership programs in private UConn. I was a marketing executive at Gillette Pepsi-Cola and travelers.

[00:07:17] **Kayla Hogrefe:** [00:07:17] Can you tell us about the marketing management major and what types of skills students develop through the major?

[00:07:23] **Bill Ryan:** [00:07:23] That's a great question, Kayla. Students will learn both the theoretical and application sides of marketing students will learn how effective marketing strategy is developed using data analytics and proven marketing approaches.

[00:07:35] We teach students how to evaluate business situations and determine the correct marketing course to follow, to drive growth and profitability.

[00:07:42] **Emma Bjorngard-Basayne:** [00:07:42] So what experiential learning opportunities are available to marketing management students such as internships, practicums, or anything that you want to talk a little bit more about?

[00:07:53] **Bill Ryan:** [00:07:53] That's a great question. Marketing is a very hands-on type of discipline. In the classroom, you know, we have students work on [00:08:00] case studies of real business challenges. You sent online simulations that allow you to make the marketing decisions required to run a business and, you know, conduct market research and field studies.

[00:08:10] But we also stress that students complete two to three marketing internships during their time at UConn. This real-world experience allows students to actually practice marketing and sets them up for a better career opportunity after graduation from UConn.

[00:08:25] **Kayla Hogrefe:** [00:08:25] And speaking of careers after graduation, our students always want to know what our recent alumni are doing and what kind of career paths they can pursue with the marketing management program.

[00:08:36] So the marketing management major was recently renamed from the digital marketing and analytics major. Right. So do you have a feel for what recent graduates are doing? Whether it's students who graduated from the digital marketing and analytics major or the marketing management major.

[00:08:51] **Bill Ryan:** [00:08:51] Great question, Kayla, many students pursue careers in digital marketing or brand management, some in market research and many go to advertising [00:09:00] agencies. Some also go directly into professional sales. There are really many local opportunities for students in Connecticut, and we have many students that relocate to Boston, New York city, or other major cities around the country.

[00:09:12] **Emma Bjorngard-Basayne:** [00:09:12] Okay. So we know that the marketing management major has a concentration. Could you talk a little bit more about it? So the digital marketing and analytics concentration, and why do you think students should consider adding a concentration?

[00:09:26] **Bill Ryan:** [00:09:26] Yes. We offer a concentration in digital marketing analytics.

[00:09:29] It allows the student to go deeper into the understanding of digital marketing. It positions them well with employers who are often looking for new graduates that have digital marketing knowledge and experience. Digital marketing is still growing in leaps and bounds for the foreseeable future. And new graduates are making that happen at companies.

[00:09:47] **Emma Bjorngard-Basayne:** [00:09:47] Can I ask you a quick follow-up question to that? Sometimes students will ask you the analytics component requires a lot of quantitative skills. So I was just curious if that's like the [00:10:00] focus. Do you think students should be nervous if they were like, you know, I like math, but it's not like my best strengths or something like that.

[00:10:07] Can they still go for it?

[00:10:09] **Bill Ryan:** [00:10:09] I would say yes, absolutely. We hear that all the time from students in the marketing major, you know, anecdotally, oftentimes students will say I went into marketing because I don't like math and things like that. And I'm always quick to respond to them that they're more than capable of doing math.

[00:10:25] They wouldn't be at UConn if they weren't good at math. And so while it might not be what they're Yeah, what they want to focus their whole career on, you know, analytics and math, if you will, you know, there's always that component in marketing as well as any other discipline that you have to be fairly strong in the analytical side.

[00:10:40] So specific to the digital marketing courses, we have one course digital marketing it's called is really more strategy focused. So more on social media and website design, things like that. The other course, which is called digital analytics to your question is, you know, a deeper dive into how you actually.

[00:10:57] No complete digital analytics type [00:11:00] work. So it is a little more you know, spreadsheet and database oriented, but it is not it is not overly difficult in the sense that students won't be able to handle it. It will definitely challenge them, but you know, that's why they're here to be challenged. And I think it's in line with other courses they'll be taking anyway.

[00:11:17] So as part of the marketing management major, or really any business major they're taking OPIM courses, That, you know, spend a fair amount of time working on databases and doing analytical work. So I think it's in line with that kind of work. So students will be fine getting through those courses and that knowledge that they gain, they'll definitely be able to put to use because when you work in marketing and especially in digital marketing, it isn't just about.

[00:11:41] You know, creating some cool social media message. It's also about measuring the, you know, the impact that, that message or that strategy has on the consumer. And that's what digital analytics is all about. You know, you have to be able to measure all these great creative, digital ideas, and that's what digital analytics gets them too.

[00:11:58] So really important part of [00:12:00] marketing management.

[00:12:01] **Kayla Hogrefe:** [00:12:01] Bill what's the what's the difference between marketing and advertising.

[00:12:05] **Bill Ryan:** [00:12:05] That's a good question. We get that all the time. You know, I think advertising, I get it. It's really just a subset of marketing. So if you think of marketing, we sometimes will say big marketing.

[00:12:14] And what does that encompass? And that really encompasses everything from making business decisions, to doing digital marketing. Advertising think of it as you know, advertising is really a form of communication. So it's a way that we influence consumers, which is really what part of what marketing is all about.

[00:12:30] How do we connect and engage and influence consumers and advertising is just one way, one method of doing that. So I would look at it that way.

[00:12:37] **Emma Bjornsgard-Basayne:** [00:12:37] What makes you excited about the marketing management major that's available in Hartford and Stamford.

[00:12:43] **Bill Ryan:** [00:12:43] I mean, I'm very passionate about marketing. I spent my career in marketing and so, you know, when I look back on my career and I look forward to what students are getting into in the world of marketing today, it really is a very rewarding field to enter for college graduates.

[00:12:58] It's you know, if you're the kind of [00:13:00] person that likes to make decisions and kind of influence where a company goes. And really, you know, have, have an impact on their success. I think marketing management is a great field to pursue. It's also a growth industry. It pays well right out of college.

[00:13:13] And with more experienced over time, you can really do quite well financially and really feel like you are doing something enjoyable and meaningful every day, which I think, you know, is important to everyone. And especially students coming out of school today.

[00:13:26] **Emma Bjornsgard-Basayne:** [00:13:26] In terms of our students graduating. Do you see that they go to graduate school?

[00:13:30] And if they do, is it more often like after a couple of years of work or right out of their undergrad?

[00:13:38] **Bill Ryan:** [00:13:38] That's a great question. I mean, personally, I'm a big proponent. Yeah. You know, being a lifelong learner. And I definitely feel for marketing majors, but also other majors as well, getting a graduate degree at some point in the future is really important just to development, but also, you know, it'll have benefits to your career.

[00:13:54] And I don't know if you have to go directly out of undergrad, some students will. But I think that, you know, most [00:14:00] of the, most of the top business schools, for example, graduate schools Requires students to work two to three years at a minimum before going to grad school. And so I think that's a good kind of marker to follow.

[00:14:11] So I think it's important to come out of undergrad, worked for a few years, kind of get your feet wet, learn about marketing or whatever fields you go into, and then really make that decision to go to grad school. And then when you go to grad school with that experience, I think you'll, you'll be very you'll know why you're there.

[00:14:27] And you'll know why you're doing it and why you're making that investment of time and money. And so that's, that's what I would recommend that said, I think that some students do pursue like a part-time MBA, like right after they graduate. There's still a number of companies that will pay for part or most of your.

[00:14:42] You know, graduate education, so it can hurt to be working and also getting your MBA. It may take, you know, three to five years, but then you've got that combination of you have your MBA and you have five years' work experience, and hopefully most of it has been reimbursed by your company, which is nice.

[00:15:00] [00:14:59] **Kayla Hogrefe:** [00:14:59] Can I ask, do you have some specific examples of types of positions or companies where students marketing management students have interned or gotten their first jobs after they graduated?

[00:15:11] **Bill Ryan:** [00:15:11] Yeah, I think there's all kinds of opportunities in, in the local markets. So we have students who will go work for Cigna.

[00:15:17] We'll go work for Aetna or we'll go work for travelers. So one of the major insurance companies in Connecticut in the Hartford area and they offer great opportunities and marketing where students can come in and go into different areas of marketing and over. You know, three to five-year period, work at different in kind of different aspects of marketing.

[00:15:34] So we see a number of students go in that direction. We also see other students go to companies like Minson Hoke or Cronin and company or Decker, which are local advertising agencies. So students will go there. But we also see students more and more students are kind of drawn to either startups or tech companies.

[00:15:53] So we also see. More and more students going to companies up in the Boston area that are more technology focused. And [00:16:00] we also see students, you know, go to different companies around the country. Students who want to pursue like the kind of traditional kind of brand management will pursue companies like black and Decker, which is local, you know, new Britain, but also companies like Whirlpool, which are out in Michigan.

[00:16:14] So we see students go near and far to these different companies, large and small.

[00:16:19] **Emma Bjorngard-Basayne:** [00:16:19] With the internships that students might pursue, do they usually find them on their own or can they to like the marketing department, for example, and say like, Oh, I'm looking for an internship. Do you have any collaborations with companies or, or are they more encouraged to go out and take that step and find it, and then come to the department?

[00:16:42] **Bill Ryan:** [00:16:42] That's a great question. Emma, I think one benefit of being a marketing management major is do you do get the support of both the marketing department and the career services group, you know, within the school of business and within the university. And yes, we work very hard to identify internships for students.

[00:16:58] We have ongoing, [00:17:00] we have a weekly newsletter that goes out to all students. In, in the major and within that is a list of internships and full-time opportunities. And so we we do our best to kind of identify those. And also, you know, we're working ongoing with career services. So, any opportunities that are kind of identified with companies or certain companies that we would like to see students go work for a while, we think they may have some good marketing opportunities.

[00:17:24] So We'll pursue them. And then if we can come to some opportunity, we'll post that and promote that for our students. So, we're definitely involved in that kind of ties into part of the marketing major, as well as that you can earn credit for completing a marketing internship. Typically, students will do it after their junior year.

[00:17:41] There is a requirement or prereq of you have to complete the, at least the initial marketing management course. So typically you'd have to be at at least a junior, but we have, I have a number of students every summer that completed and approved marketing internships. So, something that we review ahead of time, they worked during this time.

[00:17:57] And then the credit is actually offered [00:18:00] during the fall. So that works nicely for the students because they can kind of incorporate it into their course load. Many students actually take that course as their sixth course for the semester. So there's not a tremendous amount of work. There's a few papers that they have to do in the fall.

[00:18:13] Our thinking behind it is that most of the work is the actual internship. So most of the work happens in the summer and then a little kind of reflection work. We have, we have occurred during the fall. So that's quite popular with marketing management majors.

[00:18:26] **Kayla Hogrefe:** [00:18:26] Could a marketing management major work with you to do the practicum and professional sales as an option instead of doing like the four eight, eight one internship course.

[00:18:35] **Bill Ryan:** [00:18:35] Yes. So, student, if a student completes the sales internship, we can, they can get credit for 4882. Yes.

[00:18:50] **Emma Bjorngard-Basayne:** [00:18:50] Those were both very interesting, and exciting interviews. And I feel like I learned a lot from all of our interviewees. One thing that stood out to me [00:19:00] from the interview with bill Ryan was the conversation about having an internship and when to have it obviously internships look great on your resume. Was there anything that stood out to you about that conversation in particular, Kayla?

[00:19:14] **Kayla Hogrefe:** [00:19:14] We get asked about internships a lot by business students and prospective business students. And I think one of the strengths of the marketing program is the level of support with which the faculty helps students with the internship process.

[00:19:28] And specifically if a students want to do a summer internship and receive academic credit for it. And I think bill mentioned that typically students do that the summer between their junior and senior year students can complete the internship during the summer, but take the actual internship course during the semester, which is great because you can reflect on the internship after the fact through the course.

[00:19:50] But also just practically speaking, it ends up being a cost savings for students because they don't have to you know, pay for those credits during the summer session, they can roll [00:20:00] that three credit or however many credits they internship is they can roll those credits into their fall tuition and have that be one of their fall courses.

[00:20:08] So I just thought that was a, a really practical way that the marketing department able to support students with their internship endeavors.

[00:20:16] **Emma Bjorngard-Basayne:** [00:20:16] Yeah. And we mentioned this in the introduction and bill mentioned it throughout the interview as well, but they send out that newsletter where they highlight different internship opportunities as well.

[00:20:26] So you can read that. And if you see something that you're interested in bill said that he was more than willing to have conversations with students about opportunities and just how to get involved in the major in general.

[00:20:38] **Kayla Hogrefe:** [00:20:38] Right. And I think what's awesome about this program too, is that students can apply these skills across a variety of industries.

[00:20:46] So like we have students that are marketing management majors. Doing internships at companies like Sherwin Williams. And then we have other students doing internships with Apple and smaller, more local marketing firms, the insurance companies in [00:21:00] downtown Hartford and the Stamford area too. So it doesn't, you're not boxed in they're really applicable skills that students can take them with them across a variety of industries and use those internship opportunities to explore what you're interested in in terms of industry and what kind of company you want to work for,

[00:21:19] **Emma Bjorngard-Basayne:** [00:21:19] that kind of brings us to the conversation between Hannah and Jessica as well, because Hannah mentioned how one thing when you're at, for example, a regional campus, but, but any of the campuses is to take advantage of what makes sense.

[00:21:32] Your campus unique and to use those opportunities to your advantage. So you know, she was talking about Stamford in particular, but how she has access to certain kinds of internships. And you already mentioned, you know, some opportunities in the Hartford area and, and the same goes for Waterbury and just the store, sorry, as well.

[00:21:50] So I thought that was interesting and really fits in with a major, if you have this flexibility of, of doing an internship, for

[00:21:57] example, Both interviews gave us really good [00:22:00] information. And if students want to learn more, they can always reach out to bill Ryan. We'll put his email

address in the episode notes, or you can reach out to your academic advisor through the school of business on your campus.

[00:22:13] They're happy to help you as well. And with that, we

[00:22:15] will see you in our next episode.