

Marketing Ethics and Global Business Video Questions

Posted on July 27, 2022

View this essay online:

<https://academic-master.com/marketing-ethics-and-global-business-video-questions/>

Introduction

The three business-learning topics in this assignment—marketing decisions, ethical leadership, and international market entry—are connected by one underlying requirement: organizational choices must align the promise made to customers with the capabilities and responsibilities of the firm. McDonald's provides a useful example because its global system combines standardized brand elements with local adaptation, while the Steve Jobs discussion of brand values illustrates how companies use meaning rather than product features alone to create identity. International-entry frameworks then show how the amount of control a company seeks must be matched with capital, knowledge, risk tolerance, and legal responsibility. These ideas are most useful when treated as integrated business decisions rather than separate textbook lists. McDonald's reported 45,356 restaurants at the end of 2025, approximately ninety-five percent of which were franchised, demonstrating how global scale can be organized through locally operated businesses within a common system (McDonald's Corporation, 2026). The same structure creates governance obligations: local knowledge supports adaptation, but food safety, brand standards, labor practices, marketing accuracy, and customer trust remain shared concerns across the network.

Coordinating the Marketing Mix Across Markets

The **marketing mix** works only when product, price, promotion, and place reinforce the same target value proposition. For McDonald's, the product is more than food; it includes portion, ingredients, packaging, service speed, digital ordering, cleanliness, consistency, and brand experience. Local religious, dietary, agricultural, and cultural conditions can make menu adaptation necessary, but each change also affects supplier qualification, kitchen procedures, labeling, training, and cost. Pricing must reflect purchasing power, competition, tax, rent, wages, delivery fees, and franchise economics rather than simply converting one U.S. price into local currency. Promotion must communicate accurately in a language and cultural style appropriate to the audience, while place now includes restaurants, drive-through, mobile applications, kiosks, pickup, delivery, and the supply network behind them. A culturally adapted item can still fail if ingredients are unavailable, service capacity is weak, or promotion creates demand the operation cannot fulfill. **Marketing strategy** becomes coherent when each element supports the same customer promise and when local flexibility remains

consistent with global brand standards.

Research, Consumer Behavior, and Evidence

Marketing research and consumer behavior provide the evidence needed to coordinate those elements. Research should begin with a decision problem—such as whether a market needs a vegetarian breakfast product, why repeat visits declined, or whether users understand a digital offer—rather than with indiscriminate data collection. Interviews and observation can reveal motives, surveys can estimate patterns, experiments can test causal responses, and transaction data can show what customers actually do. Consumer decisions are influenced by culture, family, income, habit, convenience, emotion, social identity, and situational context, so a global company should avoid treating an entire country or generation as one homogeneous segment. McDonald's locally operated franchise system can provide practical knowledge about regional demand, but local intuition should still be tested against data. Research also creates ethical responsibilities involving privacy, sampling, valid measurement, and the distinction between consumer vulnerability and legitimate persuasion. The Federal Trade Commission requires advertising to be truthful, nondeceptive, fair, and supported by evidence where claims require substantiation, while areas such as endorsements and marketing to children involve additional safeguards (Federal Trade Commission, 2026). Commercial insight becomes strategically valuable only when it is gathered and used responsibly.

When Legal Compliance Is Not Enough

The second learning outcome concerns the difference between legality and ethics. Law creates enforceable minimum requirements, while [business ethics](#) asks whether conduct is honest, fair, responsible, and consistent with legitimate stakeholder interests even when regulation is silent. A privacy notice may technically satisfy a disclosure rule while being designed so that ordinary users cannot understand or refuse tracking; an advertisement may avoid a literal falsehood while creating a misleading overall impression. The Steve Jobs discussion of values-based branding is useful because it shows why enduring brands communicate what they stand for rather than simply listing product specifications. That insight should not be confused with proof of ethical performance. Values become credible when they constrain operational decisions involving labor, sourcing, privacy, product design, accessibility, environment, and treatment of employees. Senior managers create the practical ethical code through incentives, resource allocation, promotion, discipline, investigation, and their response to bad news. Inspirational language matters only when employees can see that stated principles still apply when complying with them is expensive or inconvenient.

From Values to Ethical Systems

Compliance-based and integrity-based ethics systems are strongest when they operate together.

Compliance establishes nonnegotiable boundaries through policies, training, monitoring, reporting channels, investigation, and consequences for violations. It is essential in areas such as food safety, anti-bribery, privacy, workplace safety, and advertising. Its weakness is that employees may learn to ask only whether conduct can be defended legally. An integrity-based system adds judgment by asking whether a decision is consistent with organizational purpose, stakeholder rights, fairness, and long-term trust. Its weakness is vagueness when values are not translated into authority, examples, and accountability. Corporate social responsibility should likewise focus on the effects of core business rather than function as philanthropy that distracts from harm. A company cannot offset deceptive marketing through charitable donations. Practical ethical review identifies affected stakeholders, verified facts, legal requirements, benefits, harms, conflicts of interest, vulnerable groups, alternative options, and the precedent a decision creates. The process is more reliable when concerns are raised before a launch becomes politically or financially difficult to reverse, and when managers protect good-faith reporting rather than rewarding silence.

Choosing an International Entry Mode

The third learning outcome concerns why firms enter international markets and how they choose an entry mode. Global expansion can provide customers, scale, inputs, knowledge, diversification, and access to capabilities, but it also creates currency, logistics, political, regulatory, cultural, and reputational risk. Exporting normally requires less capital and can test demand while keeping production at home. Licensing transfers defined intellectual property for fees or royalties but can reduce control over quality or create future competitors. Franchising transfers a broader business format and combines local investment with standardized systems, as McDonald's demonstrates. Strategic alliances share capabilities without necessarily creating a jointly owned entity, while joint ventures create deeper shared ownership and governance. Foreign direct investment through acquisition or greenfield development provides the greatest direct control but also exposes the firm to the greatest capital commitment and exit difficulty. Comparative advantage helps explain why countries can benefit from specialization based on relative opportunity cost, yet commercial strategy must also consider labor standards, environment, national security, adjustment costs, and local law. Entry modes are therefore alternatives that should fit the product and market, not stages every company must follow in sequence (Porter, 1986).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the three topics converge on the importance of strategic alignment. McDonald's shows that a global brand can combine common standards with local knowledge, but its predominantly franchised system also means that corporate direction and local execution must remain coordinated (McDonald's Corporation, 2026). The marketing mix is effective only when product, price, promotion, place, research, and consumer understanding support one coherent value proposition. Values-based branding becomes ethically credible only when the organization's incentives and operations support

the values communicated, while compliance and integrity systems together provide both enforceable boundaries and judgment in situations the rules cannot anticipate. International expansion creates opportunity when the chosen entry mode matches the company's desired control, resources, knowledge, and responsibilities. Exporting, licensing, franchising, alliances, joint ventures, and direct investment each distribute risk and authority differently; none is universally superior. The broader lesson is that sustainable business cannot be built from disconnected decisions. Market promise, ethical conduct, operating capability, and international structure must reinforce one another, because customers and stakeholders ultimately experience the company as one system rather than as separate departments or classroom concepts.

References

Federal Trade Commission. (2026). *Advertising and Marketing Basics*.

McDonald's Corporation. (2026). *2025 Annual Report*.

Porter, M. E. (1986). *Competition in Global Industries*. Harvard Business School Press.