

## BUSINESS STUDENTS PRESENT STRATEGIC INITIATIVES TO VALPAK



Eighty students in the USF St. Petersburg Kate Tiedemann College of Business presented strategic initiatives to [Valpak](#) as part of their semester-long Strategic Management Capstone Course project. To support their broader strategy to reach the on-demand home service market, the students created product prototypes, apps, websites, and a [demo video](#) to illustrate their strategic vision for [Valpak](#) in the on-demand home service market.

"I always work with a company for this course," said Dr. Steve Diasio, faculty of Management at the Kate Tiedemann College of Business who collaborated with [Cox Target Media – Valpak](#) this year to help develop the projects and provide feedback. Last year, he worked with representatives of The Moorings, a yacht chartering company that is headquartered in Clearwater. "This industry-classroom participation is the future of business schools; we are breaking down the classroom silos and preparing students with the skills they need to be successful in the marketplace."

Throughout the capstone course, students learn how to apply the strategic toolkit they learn in class and to work collaboratively in groups. They also gain experience working with big name companies and their executives and hiring managers—a collaborative industry experience that helps to differentiate them in the marketplace.

As part of the project with [Valpak](#), the students worked to find a solution to a real world business dilemma: How can [Valpak](#) take advantage of the emerging trend associated with the demand economy (think: the "Uberfication" of businesses) to deliver more value to consumers and home service businesses alike, and grow [Valpak](#) revenue?

"The ideas and strategic plan developed far exceeded our expectations in terms of the student teams' understanding the business problem and the demand economy, brainstorming new and out-of-the-box ideas, as well as preparing and delivering a wide variety of business designs and concept prototypes to help us grow our [Valpak](#) advertising business and deliver relevant consumer value," said Fred Steube, Senior Director of Emerging Technology at [Valpak](#) and Cox Target Media, who worked with Diasio and the students throughout the semester.

"The consultative value to [Valpak](#) is enormous," Steube added, saying the students provided a wide range of ideas and models that included charity-based contribution concepts that would allow consumers to 'give back,' gamification and social media plans, and leverage of strategic partnerships with other home services players and media companies using mobile app technologies. "We are deeply appreciative of the partnership we have with USFSP and Dr. Diasio, and are busy evaluating how [Valpak](#) can utilize these strategies to grow our business."

"Working with [Cox Media – Valpak](#) has been an extraordinary learning experience," said Joe Weatherford, an Entrepreneurship major who said he was able to further build his communication and leadership skills through the project. "Not only did we have the chance to get a behind-the-scenes look at the opportunities and obstacles present, we had the chance to actually try and solve the problems troubling them."



*Dr. Steve Diasio*

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