

AD420 • ME444 • MKTG594 Elkay Project
Fall Semester, 2007**Stephen Melamed**, Industrial Design, College of Architecture+Arts
Michael J. Scott, Engineering, College of Engineering
Albert Page, Marketing, College of Business Administration**Assignment** **No. 1** Background & Field Research: **Elkay**, the company and its products**Project Description**

This semester (academic school year), the IPD client/corporate sponsor is **Elkay Manufacturing Company**. Elkay is a 100 year old family run company that has grown to become a family of companies that is now the worldwide leader in stainless steel sinks, drinking fountains and kitchen cabinets.

Go to the company web site, **www.elkay.com**, and take some time to get a good sense of how the company presents itself to the public. Next, visit various types of retail outlets that represent each different channel of distribution and see the products first hand (primary field research). Inspect the product samples closely for materials, color palettes, manufacturing processes, packaging (if applicable), point of purchase display (if applicable), retail price points, sale price points, locations within the store (shelf, wall, or end cap), etc. Also take note of competitive products within these same venues.

Immerse yourself into the their industry, their product categories, the company, and it's competition. At the end of this exercise, each student should have a good understanding of Elkay and the industry, as well as be familiar enough to be able to discuss any of the aspects mentioned above in class. This preliminary background and field research will help each student acquire a general understanding (big picture overview) and basic sensibilities of Elkay Manufacturing Company.

Project Requirements

1. Visit and thoroughly explore the Elkay company web site.
2. Field Research: On site visits to at least one store within every channel of distribution (eg. mass merchant/big box - Home Depot; service provider store - plumbing supply house; kitchen design center. Close examination of Elkay products and thorough review of their current competition.
3. Who are their key competitors? How does Elkay differentiate itself in the marketplace? Who are their customers? What is the perception of the Elkay brand?

Due Date

Tuesday, September 4, 2007