ISM3001: Information Systems

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Assignment 3: Apply your Knowledge

Introduction: Assignment # 3 will be in the form of one group task with two parts: a written management summary and a PowerPoint presentation. The overall goal is to apply to a real-world business scenario what you have learned about information systems and e-commerce in the past chapters. Think of your group as a project team inside a company. It is your job to develop an e-commerce strategy and a plan for setting up a corporate web site. The target audience of your paper and of the presentation is your company's **executive** management. That means, **you must be able to deliver all necessary information in a very concise manner.**

Group building: You must team up with at least five other students (that is, the minimum group size is SIX!) and not more than eight others (maximal group size = 9). **Choose your group immediately and name a group leader!** The group leader must send an e-mail with
   - a list and e-mail addresses of the group members
   - and a name for the group (choose one) to
                        mhepp@computer.org

before April 4, 2004.
As soon as you can, agree upon the type of business for which you want to solve the task. Examples are a shop for fishing gear, biking, snow skiing, scuba diving, sailing, or similar sports equipment. You must define the range of products (= the type of business) early, because a good grade will depend on the specifity of your findings!

Description of Your Current Business: Your company is operating multiple retail stores in Southwest Florida selling equipment for the sports activity XYZ (with XYZ being the range of products that you agreed upon, see above) and related products. Assume that there are currently no e-commerce activities and not even a corporate web page.

Due Dates and Grading:
Your group must turn in
   • a PowerPoint presentation (see below) and
   • a very concise, **three-page** proposal (see below)
by e-mail to mhepp@computer.org **not later than April 14, 2004, 6:00 p.m.**

You will have to present your PowerPoint presentation **during a class session on April 15** during regular class hours. The presentation (PPT file and presentation in class) and the paper (management proposal) will make your grade for assignment 3. There will be one single grade for both.

Each group can only turn in ONE paper and ONE presentation. You must collaborate and mutually improve your contributions.

How to Get a Good Grade:
1. Make specific statements! Describe **exactly** what actions you suggest and explain the reasons for your decision.
    a) BAD: „Our company must serve customers effectively and efficiently. *(That's something every company must do, at least in the long run ☺)*
    b) GOOD: „Many car owners don't know the size of their tires. Thus, we will provide a database which lists all suitable tire sizes for a given car make and model. Customers can then buy suitable winter wheels without going to their car port."
2. Read and revise your paper multiple times. Avoid spelling mistakes and other flaws which show a lack of due diligence.
3. The better the structure, the better your grade.
        Example:
            - **Motivation** (this includes the current situation, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities)
            - **Requirements** (limitations, conditions that must be met, etc.)
            - **Proposal** (concise description of what needs to be done)
4. Find solutions to problems, don't just report problems.

The grade will ***not at all*** depend on whether I share your opinion, but instead on how good you develop and present your solution.

Task Description:

Preparation and Organization:
1. Contact all your team members and exchange contact information.
2. Assign a team leader who will coordinate the flow of communication and who will watch internal deadlines.
3. Meet with your group members. Split the assignment into multiple tasks; assign tasks and responsibilities (who does what); agree upon consequent meetings and internal deadlines. Reserve some time for a review at the end! It is a group project – you must get your group organized and coordinated in order to achieve the goal!
4. Use the Internet to learn about the given type of business, product characteristics, customer information needs, specific obstacles, etc.
5. Visit the Web sites of at least three competitors and learn of their product and company philosophy.

Main Tasks:
1. Develop a **project proposal for going online**. The output shall be a well-structured paper which describes how your company should use the Internet. You may use the E-Commerce Model shown on page 325 in the textbook in order to structure your proposal. **Your paper must cover the following aspects:**

    a) **Commerce:** Which are the main characteristics of your products? Could you sell them to customers via mail-order? Why / Why not? Is it easy for a potential customer to find which product he needs? **Identify typical products which cannot be easily sold online. Explain precisely the obstacle and develop a**

proposal on how to handle those product segments. If some or all products are not suited for a classic online shop (i.e., the Amazon way): How could your web site support sales in your shops?

b) **Content:** Identify content that would be very valuable for your target group. Find information which can be used to attract potential customers. **Define the necessary elements of the future corporate home page.**

The maximum length of the proposal is 3 pages (Letter size). Include the name of your group and the name of all team members .

2. Prepare a very short **PowerPoint presentation** of the project proposal. The total time available for your presentation will be 5 minutes. That means you cannot show more than TWO slides. The presentation should focus on your concise proposals with regard to commerce and content (as above). Check with a watch that you can cover the included issues in the given time. If not, condense it. Expect a well prepared audience – don't waste time telling e-commerce principles. Focus on your findings and recommendations.
3. Revise and proof-read your paper and the presentation. Discuss it and agree upon the final version.
4. Send both files by e-mail to my account mhepp@computer.org. **The deadline is April 14, 2004, 6:00 p.m.** Ask your group leader (or the group member who will send out this final version) to include all of you to the list of recipients so that you know it has been sent out.

Good Luck!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail at mhepp@computer.org or come to my office during my office hours (Tuesdays/Thursdays, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m., AB3, #152).