

**MKTG635: Electronic Marketing
Spring 2007
Group Term Project Instructions**

College of Business Administration
Kansas State University

Project Overview

The purpose of the group project is to expose you to the real world business environment where skills such as dividing the workload, accepting responsibilities, coordinating individual efforts, communicating effectively, effective resolution of conflict, and written and oral presentations are immensely valuable. In addition, the group project will provide you with an opportunity to integrate and apply the material learned in this class in the development of real-world marketing strategy. Your task is to pick an e-business company that is currently struggling, analyze the situation, and come up with a set of recommendations on marketing strategy.

As a team, you will choose the company you are to analyze in this project yourself. As part of your research on the market, it is expected that you will collect and summarize some primary data (i.e., needs, wants, attitudes, intentions, behavior, knowledge structures, demographics, psychographics, etc.) from 40 – 50 people in your new target market using a questionnaire.

The assignment consists of preparing a written report and making a formal presentation in class. As you may be aware, leaving all the work to the last couple of weeks of the semester is tempting but ultimately counterproductive. Consequently, in addition to the final report and presentation, there is an intermediate requirement; interim report. Since the purpose of this requirement is to help you make steady progress on the term project, you will not be graded on them.

Timeline for Group Project

GROUP ASSIGNMENT

ANNOUNCEMENT DATE: JAN 23

You will work on this project in groups of 4 to 5 people. Like group projects assigned by your future employers, group projects in school can sometimes be a frustrating experience. It is often difficult to pick convenient times for everyone to meet and group members sometimes feel that the division of labor is not equitable. As frustrating as this may be, it is important for each of you to learn how to manage group work.

All problems arising within the group related to relative contributions of the group members are to be handled internally by the group. This is an essential part of the group project experience. You will, however, have an opportunity to evaluate your group members at the end of the semester based on the quality and quantity of the contributions. Your grade can go down based on these evaluations. A group peer evaluation form is attached at the end.

INTERIM REPORT

DUE DATE: MAR 1

Each group is required to submit a project interim report to show the progress the group has made for the project. The interim report should explain the tasks you have already completed and a brief description of future work your group plans to do to complete the project. A one-page (single-spaced) memo should be sent to the instructor as an email attachment by midnight on the due date.

FINAL PROJECT REPORT**DUE DATE: APR 10**

The written report must be a professional and polished document, no longer than **twelve** double-spaced, typed pages. Be sure to cite all references used throughout the paper. This reference section will not count toward the page limit. Any charts and tables can be included in an appendix and do not count toward the page limit. List your sources of information, including articles, interviews, etc. Do not forget to cite them where appropriate in the body of the paper. All language and ideas not your own must be properly footnoted, either at the bottom of the page or at the end of the paper. Please provide the questionnaire as an appendix and summarize all of your findings in the appendix (even if you do not use them in the body of the paper.) Cite the relevant results of your data collection where appropriate in the paper.

Papers must include a cover page with the names of all group members. The first page of the report must be an executive summary that provides a brief overview of the report (i.e., product chosen and your market repositioning concept.) You are also expected to submit a peer-evaluation form on the last day of presentation.

FINAL PRESENTATION**APR 12, 17, 19, & 24**

The final presentation must be professional, interesting, and must convey clearly both the strength of your repositioning concept and the soundness of your marketing plan. Plan on presenting no more than 15 minutes of material, leaving roughly five minutes for questions. You are expected to attend and actively participate in all presentations.

The following outline has been provided as a sample structure for your group project. It is not meant to be all-inclusive and should be modified where necessary to fit the specific context within which your product is marketed. Your marketing plan should draw on as many topics covered in class as possible.

Outline of Group Project**SECTION I: COMPANY BACKGROUND**

- ✍ Past and present performance of the company
- ✍ The recent challenges that are critical to the company's survival: What's wrong?

SECTION II: 4C ANALYSIS: UNDERSTANDING THE FIRM AND THE MARKET

- ✍ Company analysis: SWOT, Business model
- ✍ Consumer analysis: Target market characteristics, Consumer behavior and education
- ✍ Competitor analysis: Dynamic competition structure
- ✍ Climate analysis: Technology innovation, laws and regulations

SECTION III: CURRENT MARKETING MIX (4P'S) EVALUATION

- ✍✍ Product strategy: Current strategy and its problems
- ✍✍ Pricing strategy: Current strategy and its problems

✍ Promotion strategy: Current strategy and its problems

✍ Distribution strategy: Current strategy and its problems

SECTION IV: MARKETING MIX RECOMMENDATIONS

✍ Core competence of the company

✍ Product strategy: Recommendations

✍ Pricing strategy: Recommendations

✍ Promotion strategy: Recommendations

✍ Distribution strategy: Recommendations

✍ Sustainability of the advantages obtained from the recommended actions

✍ Relationship with the offline component of the business

Points to Consider in The Project Write-up and Presentation

The heart of the project is your identification and creative analysis of the current problems the company of interest is facing. Here is your opportunity to apply many of the concepts, models, and theories we will discuss during the semester. What are your suggestions for using these concepts to help study, understand, and interpret the basic issues underlying the problems of the company? Be sure to present your ideas in explicit and concrete terms; examples help here.

You should also offer creative suggestions for developing marketing mix strategies to accompany the target market and repositioning scheme that you have identified. These strategies involve aspects of product strategy, advertising, sales promotion, pricing, and distribution. Be as specific as you can.

I will evaluate your choice of the key issues involved in the marketing problem, the creative way in which you analyze the 4C's and 4P's, how you select and use concepts from the class to help solve the segmentation and repositioning problem, the originality and soundness of the strategies that you recommend, and how well these follow from your data analysis.

Some hints on effective report writing:

- ? Make the report look nice and readable.
- ? Number the pages.
- ? Divide the report into sections with appropriate headings.
- ? Have a table of contents with page numbers.
- ? Do not give too much statistical information in the main body of the report. Have a separate appendix with tables of numbers that the reader can refer to.

- ? Do not include the SPSS or any statistical software output in the paper. You are supposed to create your own tables and charts by using the numbers from the output.
- ? Avoid using technical language unless needed. This is particularly important when writing the executive summary.
- ? Remember that your audience is relative novice in terms of research -- they are most interested in the findings and the implications those findings hold for their business.

Some hints on effective oral presentation:

- ? Aim for an 15-minute presentation.
- ? Use PowerPoint, transparencies (overheads), or handouts to summarize what you plan to say throughout the talk. A recommended strategy is to have "bullets" ("points") on the transparency, and to explain each point in more detail as you go along.
- ? Be prepared for questions from the audience.

Suggested Outline of Presentation:

- ? Background (on the industry and company) and the problems (what's wrong?)
- ? 4C analyses and marketing mix evaluations
- ? Research purpose and information needs
- ? Survey methodology: sampling procedure, sample size, response rate, sample representativeness
- ? Results (main findings)
- ? Managerial recommendations on marketing mix

Plan on spending most of your time on the last two topics.

Remember!

You should plan for your presentation to take 15 minutes, with additional 5 minutes for questions. Practice to make sure that you can complete the presentation in this time period. You will be allowed no more than 15 minutes total for your presentation.

Remember that this is a marketing class and that effective communication requires competent and interesting presentation techniques. Style counts in and of itself, but it also counts in how it helps you communicate your ideas. Make your presentation style work for you. Be professional. In the past, the biggest problems I have seen in presentations such as these include:

- ? Ineffective use of visuals -- throughout the presentation, you should use some kind of visual to help the audience follow your logic/ideas. These visuals should not have too much writing on them and should be in a font size that people can see.

- ? Inadequate explanation of survey findings. You need to walk the audience through each result -- tell them what questions were used to obtain the data in the table, how the data were tabulated (is this a count or a mean? how were the percentages calculated?), and what the implication of the result is. Organize your discussion of the findings around the key research issues.
- ? Too much time spent discussing detailed information that could be better obtained by reading the report. For example, you do not have to describe each and every question in the questionnaire, nor do you have to describe the results of pretesting in great detail. You do not have to provide the t/z values for statistical tests, though you might mention whether or not a difference is significant. You do not have to describe the intricacies of SAS, SPSS, or of any other statistical package that you have used.
- ? People reading their section of the presentation, rather than speaking naturally. You should develop an outline to follow -- don't read from the paper or from note cards!

Note

Your primary job in this project is to demonstrate your understanding and ability to apply the concepts and frameworks of marketing. Do not get so carried away with presenting facts about the industry, the firm, or the product that you fail to explicitly relate them to marketing concepts.

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Peer Evaluation Form

PRODUCT: _____

You have 10 points for every member of your group. This means that if there are 4 people in your group you have 40 points.

Allocate the total number of points that you have among the group members according to their effort and contribution to the entire project. Remember, this covers the whole project and it can affect others' grades so take your time and think through everyone's involvement carefully. Grades can only get adjusted downward depending upon the degree of contribution of each member.

Print each person's name on one of the blank lines below. Be sure to include yourself on the first line. Then, allocate points for each member of the group.

Make any specific comments you wish to either to justify the points allocated to a group member or if you think it is relevant to their evaluation.

NOTE: You do NOT have to turn in this form if you are going to report equal contribution by everyone in your group. This form is intended to report lack of contribution by any member(s) in your group.

Number of people in the group: ____ X 10 = ____ Total points to allocate

Name	Points	Comments
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
Total	_____	