1.1 Client Identification

My client, Shahida Rahman, is an Author, and the Director and Secretary of Perfect Publishers Ltd, which has been a publishing company since 2005. She published her first book through Perfect Publishers Ltd, and this was when the company was born. She is 42 years old and is a mother of 4 children. Shahida uses computers to deal with online enquiries and to publish books from all over the world. Furthermore, she also produces the royalty statements for each book twice yearly. Aside from this, she has little experience with computers. Shahida generally uses a computer for research, social networking and reading the news. Every book is outsourced to an Editor and a Cover Designer. When the book is fully edited and formatted to the right specifications, they return the ready to print files to Shahida, who sends the books off to print. They track the books and their details manually using a database on an Excel Spreadsheet. Currently, it is difficult to keep all the data up to date and it is rather disorganised. Shahida would like to be able to look up a book/number of books in the system by using the details, such as the Author/Title/Date etc. She would also like the new system to link this database with information about the royalties of each book, and when they are needed to be paid every six months. The system could send an email to her, updating her about these. Shahida also wants the system to be able calculate the royalties by using the details given by the user.

1.2 Define the Current System

The system that is currently being used consists of Shahida entering the book and its details into the spreadsheet. These details are taken from the enquiries that she receives via email, and include; author, book title, size, number of pages, hardback/paperback, mat or gloss, crème or white paper, font and font size. She also records their details in a separate spreadsheet, which includes their email, phone number, and address. Subsequently, Shahida waits for full payment and then sends the customer an invoice. She then contacts her editor and her illustrator to start work on the book. Shahida refers to her readily calculated prices for books in order to correctly price the book, in accordance to the book’s details. Once the book is finished, the book is sent off to print, and the author receives 25 copies.

1.3 Problems

There are numerous problems with the current system. First of all, the usage of the spreadsheet makes it harder to find a customer and their details, and their book’s details. This is because the spreadsheet is much disorganised. Furthermore, it is harder to keep track of the details of each book, meaning it is difficult to update the details of the book when necessary. Also, if the same author makes an enquiry about another book, her details must be entered into the spreadsheet again, which could cause inconsistencies in the data, because for instance, the customer may move house, meaning their address would need changing, and it would be difficult to find and update all entries where their address is recorded.