You work for Hootsuite – a software developer in Vancouver specializing in tools for managing social media campaigns over multiple-platforms. They are the industry-leader in providing a single interface for companies to manage and co-ordinate their facebook, twitter, blogs and other social media. There are over six-hundred employees at Hootsuite, including 200-or-so developers.

Recently, you have been talking to the software developers, and they have been complaining that they need some software for internal discussions. They want to ask each other quick questions from their desks, without having to walk to another cubicle. They need something like MSN Messenger (which is unfortunately discontinued), or some other chatting/collaboration tool.

**Their requirements are:**

To log in easily, to copy/paste code to other developers, to attach graphical images and occasionally larger documents, and to add hyperlinks. Also, they would like a wide array of emojis, to keep the conversation light. A discussion archive with an easy search tool would also be helpful, so if the same question comes up at a later date, a developer can find the previous discussion and link to it, without having to type a new detailed response.

After talking it over with the developers, you take your list to your manager, Manny Schevitz. Here is your conversation with Manny:

You: Hi Manny, how is your day going?

Manny: Pretty good thanks. I heard that you are gathering requirements for a chatting tool for the developers. Thanks for taking that on – making a decision is not as simple as it seems.

You: What do you mean?

Manny: Well, the developers have their requirements that you have gathered, which is great. But there is also the question of software compatibility. We need something that is really platform-independent – it needs to run on Windows and Mac OS, but also on smartphones. So many of our developers are away from their desks at important times, but they all have smartphones. We need to find something that is reliable on all of these platforms.

You: That should be do-able. There are so many tools out there: HipChat, Slack, Quip, Ryver, Igloo, Podio …

Manny: Yeah, I know. There are so many to choose from. That’s why it’s so complicated to decide which one to go with. I think the best thing would be to set up some really simple criteria for decision-making, and then evaluate a few tools based on the criteria. Can you do that?

You: Sure! I learned how to write exactly that type of recommendation report in my Communication class at BCIT!

Manny: Great! So do you have all of the info you need to develop the evaluation criteria?

You: I think so, except … what about cost?

Manny: All things being equal, we should go with the cheaper solution of course. But I can get approval for almost any amount of spending, as long as it’s justified. I know that it will cost quite a bit for the software licensing, the installations, and any other infrastructure that we’ll need – for example we may need a dedicated server for hosting all of the chat logs. But that’s all part of our operating expenses. Really, I think cost is a secondary consideration. What we need is reliability and compatibility on smartphones and desktops. And whatever else the developers told you they want.

You: Ok, sounds great! I can have that report written in a couple of weeks.

Manny: Awesome. One other thing: Don’t knock yourself out trying to evaluate too many tools in the report. Just find three or four good candidates that seem to meet most of the criteria, and then decide from there. There is no point wasting time evaluating too many different tools. As long as your evaluation criteria are clear, you should be able to make a persuasive case for your decision.

You: Ok boss. I’m on it!

Manny: Man, I love these BCIT grads. They’re so positive!

**In this report, you will**

A – Determine the evaluation criteria

B – Evaluate at least three options according to your criteria.

C – Conclude logically about which software you recommend.

**In the Introduction, you should:**

* Determine the company and the type of users.
* Determine the needs of those users
* Explain the situation and determine the company’s needs
* Discuss any other relevant background information for the reader to understand the nature of your report – who, what, why, scope, etc.

**In the Criteria Section, you should:**

* Determine a minimum of three criteria for evaluation
* Rank the criteria
* Explain the criteria and the rankings fully and persuasively

**In the Evaluation section, you should:**

* Thoroughly discuss each one of the options according to your criteria
* Divide this section up into short, meaningful paragraphs with useful headings
* Include a visual summary of the options, after your complete discussion

**In the conclusion section, you should:**

* Logically select the best option, based on your criteria and your discussion. DO NOT introduce any new information in the conclusion.

**In the recommendation section, you should:**

* Discuss next steps – bulk discounts? installation considerations? etc. Now that you’ve made your recommendation, what comes next?

**References**

* Please provide complete and organized references, in alphabetical order, for the reader to follow-up on any relevant information.

*Feel free to add/invent information, as long as it doesn’t contradict the case provided above, and is reasonable based on your research.*

**Team project guidelines and peer evaluation**

For this project, you will work in groups of three or four. At the end of your report, please include a peer evaluation total identifying each team-member’s relative contribution, out of 10.

Full contributor: 1. Partial contributor, 0.1 to 0.9. Individual student marks will be based on my evaluation times that number.

E.g., if a team assigns 0.8 to a team-member, and the report grade is 10/10, that student will get 8/10.

*IMPORTANT*: Each peer determination must be agreed to by all other members of the team.