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| **mh** | Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Science |  |

**Assessment Cover Sheet and Feedback Form** 2019-20

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| Module Code:  IS3S661 | Module Title:  Strategic IS Management | | Module Team:  Dave Kidner, Paul Jarvis | |
| Assessment Title and Tasks:  Milestone 1: Evaluate e-commerce organisations | | | | Assessment No.  1 |
| Date Set:  **01-Oct-19** | | Submission Date:  **15-Nov-19** | | Return Date:  **13-Dec-19** |

**IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP RECORDS OF ALL WORK SUBMITTED**

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| **Marking and Assessment** |
| This assignment will be marked out of 100%  This assignment contributes to 25% of the total module marks. |
| **Learning Outcomes to be assessed** (as specified in the validated module descriptor [https://icis.southwales.ac.uk/](https://icis.southwales.ac.uk/studentmodules/13807/studentmodulespecifications) ):  1) To select, use and critically evaluate appropriate strategic management techniques.  2) To reflect on how a manager might employ various strategic management techniques. |
| *Provisional mark only: subject to change and / or confirmation by the Assessment Board* |

**Assessment Task:**

Evaluate e-commerce organisations.

(1) Select a product or service you might like to purchase on-line. Find two consumer-oriented e-commerce organisations that sell that product or service and briefly describe them. Notes:

* The organisations you choose must be significantly different from each other in some way. For example, one might be a “clicks and mortar” organisation and the other a “dot.com”. Or one will use direct sales and the other is a broker.
* Please ensure the two companies are actually different organisations, not two brand names for the same organisation (e.g. Sheilas' Wheels and Esure, hotels.com and Ebookers).
* Also ensure that your organisations actually sell the product/service themselves to the consumer and are not just ‘conduits’ for third parties, like price comparison and auction sites. (Hint: Establish who the consumer’s contract is with.)
* Don’t forget to identify the real name and domain name of your chosen organisations in your report!

(2) Evaluate the business strategy of each e-commerce organisation. You should use one strategic environment analysis technique and one capability analysis technique on each organisation. Justify your choice of analysis techniques. Summarise your findings. Notes: SWOT is not suitable for this assessment. Unless you have a really good reason, you should use the same two techniques on both organisations.

(3) Evaluate the e-commerce service itself. Based on news reports, on-line reviews, and any other sources, indicate how well the company satisfies its stakeholders (customers, shareholders etc.)

(4) Compare and analyse the results from your evaluations, and identify the lessons learned. Were there any recurring themes? How well does the organisation work towards its strategy? How well does the strategy support the organisation’s work? Did you identify any best practice from your organisations? You should then make recommendations on how you would create a successful e-commerce business.

(5) Try to keep the word count to about 1500 words (± 20%); that doesn’t include references and any wordy material that you include in appendices at the end of the report. For example, you might want to include screen images from each e-commerce site to demonstrate the points you are making (as long as they are captioned and referred to in the text of your report).

(6) You should work individually on this assessment; it is not team-based.

(7) As far as possible, don’t copy/paste material verbatim from existing sources; paraphrase into your own words. If you *must* quote verbatim, put the words in quotation marks, or – if you are quoting a paragraph – indent the paragraph. Whether you are quoting verbatim or paraphrasing, cite and reference your sources using the Harvard System; marks are awarded for doing this correctly.

(8) Be careful about using copyright images in your report. The rules for including images are different from the rules for including text. Including screen shots of a website for criticism and review in an academic work is normally considered ‘fair dealing’ under law. However, using company logos merely to ornament your report may not be ‘fair dealing’.

### **Submission Instructions**

You must submit both a digital AND a paper copy.

* The digital copy must be submitted through Blackboard before 23:59 on the submission date. Please ensure that your student number appears in the page header. The name of your file should be IS3S661\_CW1P1M\_Sam00000000.docx where 00000000 is your student number. There is no need to upload any of the pages from the assignment brief; just the report.
* The paper copy should be submitted to your tutor on the submission date (or soon thereafter). The front cover should be the Assessment Cover Sheet with your student number typed in the appropriate box. Staple the report in the top left-hand corner. Please do not use poly pockets or other protective covers.

### **Hints for getting better grades:**

(a) Try to identify an original theme for your report. Use this to unite the various parts of the report in a coherent way. In the past students have used “Direct sales vs. brokers” and “Covering the entire sales life-cycle” as a way of making their reports distinctive.

(b) If the two organisations are too similar, you might not learn much. For example, try selecting one organisation that has a good reputation and one with a bad reputation.

(c) You have a free choice of market sectors and organisations, so choose organisations for which publicly-available information is plentiful. Don’t choose organisations that have little or no publicly-available information then complain later that you couldn’t find out much.

(d) Justify your decisions. Why did you choose these organisations? Why did you use these strategic analysis techniques? Why did you evaluate the e-commerce organisation this way? Do any authoritative published sources support your reasoning?

(e) Think about what factors are likely to make you buy a product or service from each organisation. Is there something about that organisation that makes it more attractive than the others? Do they sell what you want at a competitive price? Would you trust them?

(f) When checking the variety of products/services available and value-for-money, try searching for a predetermined “shopping list” of what you’d like to buy. Alternatively create a few imaginary customers – perhaps of different ages and gender – who are searching for something that suits them.

(g) Make sure your report makes sense as a whole. If your conclusion is that factor ‘X’ is important, then ensure you included ‘X’ in your evaluations. (‘X’ could be trust, reputation, ethics, quality, low prices, wide choice, customer service, ease of use, speed, exclusivity, intellectual property…)

(h) In general, the ability to make your point briefly and clearly is a skill that will be rewarded; if your report is over-long or wordy or repetitive you are likely to lose marks. For example, you might decide to include a brief introduction; however the marking scheme allocates no marks for this, so keep it short.

(i) Large parts of your report will be your evaluation, so it’s fine to write the report using the first person singular throughout.

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|  | Fail | Narrow Fail | 3rd Class / Pass |  | Lower 2nd Class / Pass | Upper 2nd Class / Merit | 1st Class / Distinction |
| Description of your chosen organisations (10%) | * Poor choice of organisations * Description missing. Little research | * Poor choice of organisations * Description provides no clear understanding of the chosen organisations. Only basic research | * Basic description of two B2C organisations showing little evidence of research * It is unclear what makes these organisations distinctively different |  | * Two distinctively different B2C organisations selected * A reasonable description of them that shows evidence of some research | * Appropriate choice of two distinctively different B2C organisations selected * A clear description of them that shows evidence of research into their background, such as share price history | * Two distinctively different B2C organisations chosen to demonstrate an important theme * A well-formed description of them that shows unmistakable evidence of research into their background, such as financial stability |
| Evaluation of each organisations business strategy (25%) | * No rationale for choice of strategic analysis techniques * Inadequate basis for meaningful evaluation * Used SWOT | * Little rationale for choice of strategic analysis techniques * Inadequate basis for meaningful evaluation | * Weak justification for choice of strategic analysis techniques * Some analysis of the organisations' business strategies * Fails to evaluate some important criteria |  | * Brief justification for choice of analysis techniques * Acceptable analysis of the most important aspects of the organisations' business strategies * Deficient in this respect | * Appropriate choice of strategic analysis techniques with supporting justification * Clear analysis of major aspects of the organisations' business strategies | * Choice of strategic analysis techniques justified clearly and succinctly, with a special focus on the types of organisation chosen * Well researched and concise analysis of all major aspects of the organisations' business strategies |
| Evaluation of e-commerce service (25%) | * No rationale for approach to analysis of the service * Inadequate basis for meaningful evaluation | * Little rationale for approach to analysis of the service | * Evaluation of the service considers some important criteria, but omits others * Evaluation largely subjective * Little evidence provided |  | * Evaluation considers most important criteria * Evaluation a mixture of subjective and objective criteria * Some supporting evidence such as screen images provided | * Evaluation considers important criteria * Evaluation uses an appropriate mixture of subjective and objective criteria * Supporting evidence for the evaluations provided * Some originality shown | * Evaluation considers important criteria * Evaluation has a justified mixture of subjective and objective criteria * Appropriate evidence such as screen images, independent reviews etc. that supports the evaluations made * Originality clearly shown |
| Comparative analysis of evaluations, and recommendations (25%) | * Comparative analysis and recommendations missing * No rationale provided * No theme is developed | * Comparative analysis and recommendations inappropriate * Little rationale provided * No clear theme is developed | * Comparative analysis includes items not evaluated above * Recommendations not clearly related to comparative analysis * Arguments not very clear * Little awareness of issues raised * No theme is developed |  | * Comparative analysis draws out important lessons learned * Basic recommendations given that relate to the comparative analysis * Arguments reasonably clear but underdeveloped * Shows awareness of issues discussed in classes * A theme is developed | * Comparative analysis draws out useful and important lessons learned * Recommendations clearly address the problems identified in the comparative analysis * Clearly structured and logically developed arguments * Clear awareness and exposition of relevant issues * A useful theme is developed | * Comparative analysis draws out useful and important lessons learned in an original manner. Innovative and well-formed recommendations made * Clearly structured and logically developed arguments * Excellent understanding and exposition of relevant issues that shows insight and originality * An interesting and useful theme is developed |

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| Presentation, spelling and grammar (10%) | * Poor structure to report * Headings missing * Many spelling mistakes in each sentence * Many grammatical errors * Writing style unclear | * Poor structure to report * Many spelling mistakes in each paragraph * Many grammatical errors * Writing style unclear in places | * Report structure unclear * Many spelling mistakes on each page * Several grammatical errors * Meaning unclear in places * Some text may be verbose | * Report loosely mirrors criteria * Some spelling mistakes * Some grammatical errors * Most text has a clear message | * Report structure clearly reflects assessment criteria * Few spelling mistakes * Clear sentence construction, using appropriate punctuation * Brief and clear writing style | * Report structure well-formulated * Very few/no spelling mistakes in the report * Very clear sentences that make good use of punctuation * Writing style clear and informative without being verbose |
| Use of references (5%) | * No relevant background reading with many statements unsubstantiated * References and citations missing or contain many errors | * Little relevant background reading with many unsubstantiated statements * Sources not cited and/or referenced in Harvard format or contain several errors | * Evidence of reading only websites and class notes with some unsubstantiated statements * Sources cited and referenced in Harvard format with several errors | * Evidence of reading relevant sources (eg. books and quality web sites), with a few unsubstantiated statements * All sources cited and referenced in Harvard format with a few errors | * Evidence of reading several quality and relevant academic sources (eg. journals, books and quality web sites), used to justify points * All sources cited and referenced in Harvard format with only minor errors | * Evidence of reading many high quality and relevant academic sources (eg. journals, books and quality web sites), used to justify points clearly * All sources cited and referenced correctly in Harvard format |
| Overall (100%) | * Very poor Overall | * Poor Overall | * Satisfactory Overall | * Good Overall | * Very good Overall | * Excellent Overall |