Question 01: Apple has scored a big hit in online retailing with iTunes and then a follow up with the iPod, iPhone, and iPad. In your opinion

(a) What is Apple's competitive strategy?

Apple Inc.'s generic strategy is broad differentiation. This generic strategy focuses on key features that differentiate the company and its information technology products from competitors. Through the broad differentiation generic strategy, Apple stands out in the market.

Apple uses product development and market penetration as its main intensive strategy for growth.

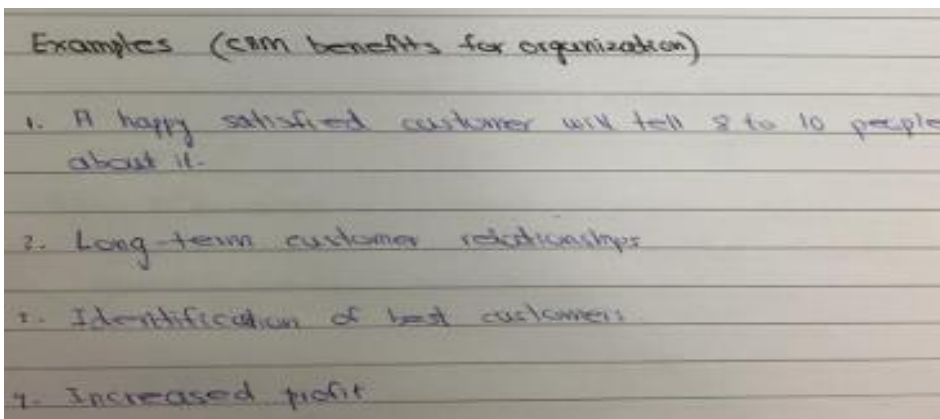**(b) Who can be Apple's future competitors?**

The top 10 **competitors** in **Apple's** competitive set are Microsoft, Dell, Samsung, Lenovo, HP, Sony, ASUS, Google, Huawei, Philips.

(c) Can Apple sustain its advantage against all of the current and future competitors that are likely to contend for this market?
(d) Suppose you were to establish and e-business with direct competition to Apple; what strategy would you use to get ahead of Apple and sustain that advantage. Has someone already done that?

Question 02: Explain your understanding about CRM systems. Explain with the help of examples what benefits does an organization get after successfully implementing CRM systems.

▪ Manages all ways used by firms to deal with existing and potential new customers

▪ Business and Technology discipline

▪ Uses information system to coordinate entire business processes of a firm

▪ It provides end to end customer care

▪ Provides a unified view of customer across the company

Examples (CRM benefits for organization)

1. A happy satisfied customer will tell 8 to 10 people about it.

2. Long-term customer relationships

3. Identification of best customers

4. Increased profit

Question 03: Plant Away is an Oregon-based retailer and distributor of trees and shrubs. They have hundreds of smaller nurseries based around the country that grow the plant stock. The majority of their business is conducted online. Consumers purchase typically small quantities of products online and Plant Away coordinates the shipping from the most appropriate nursery. What strategies can they adopt to enhance the sale of their products?

- Provide as Much Detail About Your Plants as Possible
- Online promotion of Your Garden Center
- Run a Gardening Competition
- Promote Your Garden Center on Social Medias
- Create a Garden Center E-newsletter
- Optimize Your Garden Center Homepage
- Engage with Your Customers

Question 04: What are the benefits of enterprise systems? What are the challenges of enterprise systems?

BENEFITS OF ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS

Firm structure and organization: one organization

Management: Firm-wide knowledge-based management processes

Technology: Unified platform

Business: More efficient operations and customer-driven business processes

CHALLENGES OF ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS

Difficult to build: Require fundamental changes in the way the business operates

Technology: Require complex pieces of software and large investments of time, money, and expertise

Centralized organizational coordination and decision making: Not the best way for the firms to operate

Question 05: You are consulting for Lucky's, a chain of gas stations. What types of e-commerce opportunities, if any, are relevant to Lucky's? Could Lucky's make use of any Internet business models for this opportunity?

In terms of B2B e-commerce, Lucky's might be able to procure goods over the Internet, use a private industrial network to coordinate their supply chain with suppliers and manage inventory. Depending on the structure of the gasoline retail business, industry net marketplaces and exchanges might be of use. In terms of B2C e-commerce, there are not many opportunities, as it is inefficient to sell gasoline over the Internet. Lucky's could make sure that its stations are listed in popular location-based mobile services that help drivers find nearby gas stations.

Question 06: Describe TPS, MIS, and DSS and differentiate between them.

TPS	MIS	DSS
Focus: collects, stores, modifies & retrieves the data transaction	Focus: Information processing, operational efficiency	Focus: Analysis, decision support
Principle use: tracks daily routine transaction	Principle use: control, monitor, & decision making	Principle use: Plan, organize, staffing & control
Used by users	Used by middle & low level management	Used by senior managers & analyst

Question 07: What are B2B, B2C, C2C and G2C strategies for business/services? Explain with examples

Business-to-consumer (B2C)

- Business-to-consumer refers to the process of businesses selling products and services directly to consumers, with no middleperson.
- B2C is typically used to refer to online retailers who sell products and services to consumers through the Internet.
- Online B2C became a threat to traditional retailers, who profited from adding a markup to the price.
- However, companies like Amazon, eBay, and Priceline have thrived, ultimately becoming industry disruptors.

Business-to-business (B2B)

- Business-to-business (B2B) is a transaction or business conducted between one business and another, such as a wholesaler and retailer.
- B2B transactions tend to happen in the supply chain, where one company will purchase raw materials from another to be used in the manufacturing process.
- B2B transactions are also commonplace for auto industry companies, as well as property management, housekeeping, and industrial cleanup companies.
- Meanwhile, business-to-consumer transactions (B2C) are those made between a company and individual consumers.

Consumer-to-consumer (C2C)

- Customer to customer (C2C) is a business model that enables customers to trade with each other, frequently in an online environment.
- C2C businesses are a type of business model that emerged with e-commerce technology and the sharing economy.
- Online C2C company sites include Craigslist, Etsy, and eBay, which sell products or services through a classified or auction system.
- Some C2C companies have problems, such as a lack of quality control and payment guarantees.

Government-to-Citizen (G2C)

- The goal of **G2C** is to provide one-stop, online access to information and services to individuals. Citizens should be able to find and access what they need quickly and easily.
- The category of e-government that focuses on interactions between government and citizens to support transactions such as tax payment, licenses, and obtaining passports
- Can facilitate involvement and interaction with the government, enhancing the quantity and quality of public participation in government.
- **G2C** interactions can allow citizens to be more informed about government laws, regulations, policies, and services.

Question 08: You have been hired as a consultant for an established bicycle parts manufacturer to assist senior management in planning a new ESS. What factors will you advise management to take into consideration?

A major challenge of building executive support systems has been to integrate data from systems designed for very different purposes so that senior executives can review organizational performance from a firm-wide perspective. ESS must be designed so that high-level managers and others can use them without much training. One area that merits special attention is the determination of executive information requirements. ESS need to have some facility for environmental scanning. A key information requirement of managers at the strategic level is the capability to detect signals of problems in the organizational environment that indicate strategic threats and opportunities. The ESS need to be designed so that both external and internal sources of information can be used for environmental scanning purposes. Implementation of the ESS must be carefully managed to neutralize the opposition of managers at the lower levels of the organization, because ESS potentially could give top executives the ability to examine their work without their knowledge.

Question 09: Your aunt has asked you for your suggestions to make her business, a local sandwich shop, more efficient. Describe at least three types of business processes that a sandwich shop has. Can any be better coordinated through the use of information systems?

The business processes of a sandwich shop include: Taking orders, making sandwiches, selling to the customer, ordering supplies, opening the store, closing the store, cleaning the store, paying employees, hiring employees, paying creditors and vendors, creating financial statements, paying taxes, managing cash.
Many of these processes could be helped by better information systems, specifically those that require recorded data, such as any financial processes (payments, cash management, taxes, and salaries) and information gathered from and distributed to employees

Extra Question: The pet products chain you work for, Pets Galore, has noticed that one of its brands of dog food is not selling nearly as well as anticipated. What information systems of the business will you use to determine the reason for the poor sales? Discuss what information you will retrieve from which system. Which of the information systems will be most important for your analysis? Which of the systems will be least important?

- You might query operational level TPS to make sure that the product is actually getting to the stores and being restocked.
- You could query MIS to see average sales levels according to geography, location, and other factors to see if there are any specific factors affecting the sales.
- You might query ESS to see if the same faucets are being sold by competitors and what these prices are.
- You might use DSS to see what factors could increase sales.

Assuming that the faucets are being properly stocked at the stores, the most important systems to query are the managerial-level systems: MIS for summaries of sales records to help pinpoint any other factors; ESS to check competition, and DSS for higher-level analysis to forecast possible solutions.

Extra Question: Zoom Vacuum, a family-owned manufacturer of high-end vacuums, has grown exponentially over the last few years. However, the company is having difficulty preparing for future growth. The only information system used at Zoom is an antiquated accounting system. The company has one manufacturing plant located in Iowa; and three warehouses, in Iowa, New Jersey, and Nevada. The Zoom sales force is national, and Zoom purchases about 25 percent of its vacuum parts and materials from a single overseas supplier. You have been hired to recommend the information systems Apex should implement in order to maintain their competitive edge. However, there is not enough money for a full-blown, cross- functional enterprise application, and you will need to limit the first step to a single functional area or constituency. What will you choose, and why?

A TPS focusing on production and manufacturing to keep production costs low while maintaining quality, and for communicating with other possible vendors. The TPS would later be used to feed MIS and other higher level systems (because TPS is a major source of data for other systems)

Question 10: Apex Vacuum, a family-owned manufacturer of budget vacuums, has grown exponentially over the last few years. However, they are having difficulty in preparing for future growth. The only information system used at Apex is an antiquated accounting system. The company has one manufacturing plant located in Arkansas, and three warehouses, in Arkansas, Delaware, and California. The Apex sales force is national, and Apex purchases about a third of its vacuum parts and materials from a single overseas supplier. You have been hired to recommend the information systems Apex should implement in order to maintain their competitive edge. However, there is not enough money for a full scale, cross-functional enterprise application, and you will need to limit the first step to a single management level. What will you choose, and why?

I will recommend to Apex Vacuum the use of management information system (MIS) for its management of core functions. This MIS will be include HRM, Accounting and financial management, Marketing, Operations, Research & Development etc. An organization can only get competitive edge over its competitors when it will use each and every business transactions for the purpose of making itself as a leader.

One thing which must be considered to take cost advantage that is phase wise development of MIS with most important aspect of business. For example, it must be start recording stock in and stock out for the organization. The management should take feedback from its employees so as to build a more sophisticated as well as utility having MIS. This MIS will be firstly cater the needs of first line managers of the organization. They will be told the importance of this MIS for making upper edge in their routine business operations. A proper training will be organized for first line managers by the management.

Extra Question: The retail home improvement chain you work for, DIY Discount, has noticed that one of its brands of faucets is not selling nearly as well as anticipated. What information systems of the business will you use to determine the reason for the poor sales? Discuss what information you will retrieve from which system. Which of the information systems will be most important for your analysis? Which of the systems will be least important?

The most important are use TPS to production and manufacturing to keep production cost lower while the maintaining quality. Also you can use MIS to see average sales level according to location, and other factors and to see if any factor affecting sales. Use ESS to see if the same product are sold by their firm and what the price. Use DSS to see what product will increase sales. The least important are finance and accounting system because they record data and they aren't affecting the sales of product.