

IS & DB Project Part 1

Project Part 1 – Management Reports

Deadline: Friday 21/10/2016 @ 23.55hrs

Hand in: via Moodle; Word Limit: 1500

To complete this part of your project you will need to read through the case study and:

1. Produce a **comprehensive description** of the **problems with the current paper based system** at Ray's Rentals [20].
2. Set out the **system requirements** for a proposed new computerised database system (e.g. **explain what** Ray and his colleagues will **need the system to be able to do**) [10].
3. **Explain** what **data enquiries** and **management reports** are and the **different types of management reports** that are used [20].
4. **Outline** several **data enquiries** and **management reports** that you think **will be of use** to Ray's Rentals (these enquiries and reports will be created later on in the last part of the assignment using SQL), providing diagrams and figures as necessary [30].
5. **Present your findings in a report** with an **executive summary** [5] (that will serve as an introduction) and a **conclusion** [5].
6. **Complete a log book** entries on Piazza for your group [10].
 - To include:
 - entries for each part documenting the initial work allocation, and progress; that is four 'notes' and associated 'follow ups', one 'note' for each part of the assignment including one for this part (e.g. covering presentation work and final report compilation)
 - all posts should have a date that matches note history on Piazza and include work allocation for each group member
 - **all steps (1-4) should involve all students (some steps might only involve students checking work)**
 - any absences should be noted (were group forewarned? what was done to keep in communication with absent group member, and ensure he/she could continue to contribute?)
 - any work allocated but not completed should have been noted
 - place record of log book in an appendix, with log book entries copied, pasted and appropriately formatted
7. One assignment should be handed in per group in the form of a Word document or alternatively a rich text format (.rtf) file.
8. Each student should also use Piazza to submit a peer assessment of each member of the group, in terms of percentage contribution to Part 1. This should be sent privately to your tutor only (use 'Post to' > 'individual students/instructors' and choose your tutor). This is often equal between students, so any large differences in percentage allocations will need to be justified by one or two sentences (tutors can check log book for details).

Note that all students need to participate in some way to steps 1 - 4.

If students in a group do not contribute equally to the project, the grade will be divided between students according to peer assessments, as well as your tutor's assessment of the log book evidence.

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You will receive summative (formal) feedback for this part of your project, including a grade for report writing skills. This grade will be **worth 10% of the final unit mark**. You are expected to include evidence of reading and referencing in your report. Your research can be as broad as you see fit. Recommended reading for management report types can be found on Moodle under the heading “Introduction to IS: Management Reports” (this content will also be covered in week 3’s lecture) and the reference for this book extract is provided below:

Whiteley, D. (2013), 'Introduction to Information Systems', Palgrave Macmillan

Guidance Notes:

This part of the overall project has a tight deadline and so you should probably start working on it in your independent study time this week. You may be better to wait until after the lecture in week 3 to deal with Parts 3 and 4 of this assignment (since in this lecture you’ll cover material relevant to these parts).

All parts of this assignment should have input, in terms of ideas, from all group members; try using brainstorming: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brainstorming>. Each of these parts can be answered using bulleted lists.

As is implied in the question, we expect you to focus to some extent upon the generation and use of management information, which will need to be harvested from a database. It is important that, rather than simply stating “use a database” (which should be obvious), you sketch some broad details about this. (It is understood that these details will be vague at first, and that your ideas will become more concrete as you move through the unit and start modelling the scenario.)

The data enquiries and management reports that you outline in part 4 need to be very specific:

- What data is needed?
- What ways might staff wish to look it up? (i.e. by product code? by product name? by staff number? by staff name?)
- What time period should the report cover?
- How should it be displayed?

For data enquiries you need to think about what tasks Ray’s Rentals are likely to need to complete on a day to day basis, how best they can complete them, and what information is needed to support these tasks. For management reports you need to think about what would be useful for tactical and strategic decisions. This requires some thought and is an opportunity to be creative.

Do not reference Wikipedia in your assignment. If you find something useful on Wikipedia, then find the reference for it (which should be at the bottom of the page), go to the original source and use that.

PR and Personal Development:

Learning to present yourself well (both in person and) in writing is important for several reasons. It is important to be able to communicate well to argue the case for a particular development; communication skills are also seen as being very important by almost all employers; and finally written communication skills are absolutely essential for your final year project. For these kinds of reasons written communication skills are taught as core in most, if not all, computer science degrees.

This is a quote from a student who completed this assignment previously:

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'The first lesson that I have learnt is the fact that preparation and outlining what we believe and want to happen is incredibly important. We first started by creating a report about the different types of Management Reports. And initially, I had thought that it was pointless. But as we have worked on the project, I have found that it helped greatly as we progressed. It meant that creating queries was not as tough as we first thought.'