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# Examiners' commentary

## 2018–2019

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### CO3323 Electronic commerce – Zone A

#### General remarks

Overall, the performance on this examination was satisfactory. However, candidates are reminded to pay attention to the presentation of their work. Please remember to write legibly and to structure your answers in a way that shows the logic of your thinking. Make use of underlining and clear paragraphs. Make appropriate use of headings. Please start each question or sub-part of a question on a new page.

Ensure that you read each question carefully and focus your answer on what is being required of you.

There were five questions on this paper. Candidates were required to answer three. Only the first three questions that appeared in a candidate's answer were marked.

#### Comments on specific questions

##### Question 1

- a. Good answers to this question gave a clear definition at the outset as to what is meant by first-mover and smart-follower advantage. This ensured that the examiners were aware that the candidate had an understanding of what is meant by each of these terms. In the case of first-mover advantage, it was particularly important that candidates understood what was meant by the term as the question required them to then go on and discuss the associated risks. In general, most candidates provided appropriate definitions but they fell down on being able to give examples of real world organisations that have followed these differing strategies.
- b. A challenge of this question was to provide **five** reasons why a 'bricks and clicks' approach is more effective than an online presence only. Candidates put forward a wide variety of reasons as to why this is the case, and most of these were acceptable. Where candidates scored less well was where they did not provide a full **five** reasons for why this is the case, only providing two or three examples. As marks were apportioned per reason given, those candidates who provided **five** good reasons scored high marks on this question.
- c. As in part (b) a wide variety of reasons were given for the changes in internet technology during the second wave of electronic commerce that has driven the growing consumption of online content. However, candidates who did not provide a full **five** reasons were not able to score full marks on this question but were only rewarded for the reasons that they provided.

##### Question 2

- a. Candidates who scored high marks on this question provided clear definitions of the concepts of a business model, revenue model, business activities, business processes and supply chain but also then related these concepts to a business example. The question only required that a single business be identified and examples of these concepts be related to that business. It was not necessary to give an example of a different business for each one.

- b. In answering this question, most candidates provided good definitions of both the business value chain and the industry value chain. However, many did not provide a drawing of each. This is surprising and the examiners wondered whether it was a result of not reading the question fully.
- c. Good answers to this question discussed the importance of continual communication and information sharing in building trust between parties. They then went on to describe how the capabilities of the Web enable this trust to be built. It was important too that candidates discuss not only how this trust can be built but also how it can be maintained as this formed part of the question. In order to obtain full marks, candidates were expected to consider both building and maintaining of trust.

### Question 3

- a. Good answers to this question described what is meant by both the IMAP Protocol as well as POP. Again, it was important for candidates to read this question carefully, as it only required a discussion of three advantages of IMAP over POP. The question did not ask for a full comparison of the two, rather to clearly highlight the advantages of IMAP.
- b. As this question was only worth four marks it did not require too detailed an explanation of these protocols. Appropriate answers spelt out what the initials TCP and IP stand for. It was important, however, that candidates dealt with each of these protocols separately. Good answers gave each protocol a heading and then described its function.
- c. Most candidates correctly addressed their discussion on this question to the fact that the exponential rise in internet users has led to the need for the increased IPv6 address space. Some excellent answers also discussed the increase in technologies such as mobile phones and the advent of the Internet of Things – all of which have led to increased demand.
- d. In general, candidates found this question challenging. Good answers described direct, indirect and open electronic interchange at the outset and then the differences between them. It was important that candidates did not then omit to answer the part of the question that asked them also to discuss VANs.

### Question 4

- a. Good answers to this question were those where candidates had ensured that they read the accompanying case study. Once again, a good way to start this question was by defining what is meant by 'viral marketing'. Thereafter, candidates proposed a wide range of slogans. Some of these were very innovative and captured the essence of the case study. Most scored well on their slogan. Candidates also provided a wide range of interesting suggestions as to how the public could engage in the viral marketing campaign. The part of the question that was less well answered was on a method to measure the effectiveness of the campaign. Excellent answers gave a definition of the criteria by which effectiveness may be measured and then discussed how these criteria could be measured.
- b. In answering this question, many candidates only provided descriptions of some of the methods of online advertising. In particular, many were unsure as to what is meant by pre-roll video advertising. Candidates who were able to discuss all five of these advertising methods and tailor their answers to the suitability of each method for Yikes did well on this question.

### Question 5

- a. Candidates were rather confused in answering this question. The confusion arose from not being clear on the differences between psychographic and demographic segmentation. Many treated these concepts as being the same thing. Where candidates lacked clarity on the two concepts, this resulted in their experiencing difficulties in being able to provide appropriate examples, specifically related to the Crystal scenario.

- b. Good answers to this question were those where candidates answered all parts of the question. It is important that candidates read the question carefully and ensure they answer all the parts of the question appropriately. In this instance, many candidates had very interesting and innovative suggestions for blog story posts, but placed insufficient emphasis on explaining what kind of segmentation each idea illustrated and why it would motivate people to buy Crystal's cards.