

**Nils Baker**

## **Case Study Guidelines**

MSAN 601 – Fall 2016

- Complete this case in groups of 2; you can choose your own groups. If you are unable to find a partner, contact me and I will find you one. If you do not contact me I will assume you have a partner.
- If you are unable to complete this case in a group of two (either you are alone or your group exceeds two people), you must come see me to be granted an exception, otherwise this is not permitted.
- You must submit a **paper copy** as well as upload an electronic copy of the case study to Canvas by October 5<sup>th</sup> at 5pm PST. The paper copy needs to be stapled. No plastic covers please. Late submissions are not permitted and will receive a grade of 0.
- The case is competitively graded on a scale of 0 – 100.
- The deliverable should include the following (in this order):
  - An executive summary of no more than 250 words explaining, with extreme concision, your findings in a non-technical fashion. This section should be geared toward a non-technical executive.
  - A more detailed write-up, roughly **5-10 pages**, on your method, your results, your conclusions, and any open questions you may still have and/or additional data you may want to gather to further explore outstanding issues. This section should contain limited (if any) tables and/or graphs, and only those that are central to your findings; additional figures and tables should be included in the appendix. This section should be geared toward a mix of management and technical persons: a manager should be able to follow the text and seamlessly skip over the technical jargon, whereas a more technical person should not be left wanting for details (think of a textbook with proofs that can be skipped over without losing the flow).
  - An appendix containing all relevant graphs, model output, iterations, and anything a technical person might be interested should be housed here in a coherent manner. If you include multiple graphs, please put 4-8 graphs per page to save space. Try to keep your appendix under **20 pages** if possible.

- Remember
  - If you do something—perform a test, examine a plot—and you don't tell me, I have no idea you did it. If you do something critical to the process, even if the result is good, expected or unexceptional, a few words letting me know you did it is important so that I know your approach is correct.
  - Style matters. A nice, clean deliverable in a legible font, well-spaced lines, graphs that are not cut off with axis-labels in legible fonts, etc., is important. You need not worry about printing in color, but if you have a graph that has multiple components that are differentiated by color, be sure to adjust so that the reader can interpret in black and white.
  - **Most importantly, be creative.** Think of this as your one shot to get a great job with a great company, and all you have to do is submit this one great deliverable. You cannot get any more data than what is available, but if you have burning questions that might necessitate additional data, explain why and what type of data you would need. Immerse yourselves in the case, do not approach this as a well-scoped homework, but as the ugly, ill-defined problem that it is.
  - **Be succinct in your writing but not deficient.** If you can explain something in 5 words instead of 10, do it. If you can submit a 2-page case study analysis and say exactly what someone who submits a 10-page case analysis does, you will be rewarded with a significantly stronger grade.
  - The English language is important. Pay attention to grammar and syntax. Do not write colloquially, you are not tweeting, you are writing a formal case study. Poor writing will bring down your grade.

## Grading Scheme

Executive Summary	10%
Body of Report (Analysis)	50%
Appendix	20%
Presentation	20%