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**ICTICT517**

**Task 2**

**Student ID:** 83126277

**Project Task:**

**Client - Bazaar Ceramics (attached file)**

Part 1: Write a gap analysis report and a list of options to meet strategy

You are required to write a gap analysis report comparing the current system with the strategic plan. You should:

* Review the critical issues and strategic objectives in the **Bazaar Ceramics strategic plan** (Attached file).
* Review the current IT system described in the current **Bazaar Ceramics IT infrastructure inventory** (Attached file).
* Compare the critical issues and strategic objectives against the current IT system and develop a Gap Analysis report based on this comparison. Use the **Gap analysis report template** (Attached file).

**Answer**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Gap analysis – Current state and goals** | | | |
| **Currently in place** | **Objective** | **Implications** | **Reccomendation** |
| Most sales are done in the gallery | Online shop | Current system targets effectively only the local market. | Develop e-commmerce website and appropriate IT infrastructure |
| Orders are processed manually by employees | Automated process | Manual processing is laborious and prone to human error | Sales and orders recording automated by an integrated system |
| Products from remote workers need double handling | Direct shipping process | Risks of breackage and augmented costs involved in double handling. | Web application accesible online from remote workers to access customer information relevant to direct shipping. |
| Increase in prodcution, legal and operational costs is causing decrease in profits | Reduction in operational costs | Paper based promotions, processes and record keeping unnecessarily bloat the cost of operations | Significantly reduce promotional and marketing costs by incresing online presence |
| Remote orders are submitted by email or fax | Automated ordering process | Remote client can be discouraged by a cumbersome ordering process | Orders placced directly from e-commerce website |
| There is no in-house technical staff | In house technical staff to handle the new technologization of the company | The company needs to rely on costly third party contractors. | Hire in-house IT professional |
| Showroom space is limited and insufficient | Online gallery | Only a limited amount of products can be displayed to a limited local audience | The current online gallery could be integrated with an e-commerce solution. |
| Production of redundant and obsolete items | Avoid production of un-saleable items | Money wasted in creating products that do not appeal to the market | Integrated application with real time data capture and creation of current sales statistics |
| The main advertizing channel is paper based (brochures, magazines) | Online gallery | Updating brochures or buying advertizing space on magazines is costly and reach a marginal part of the market | Integrate e-commerce solution and implement an online marketing campaign |
| Competitors are taking over the market due to better online presence | Increase online presence | Disadvantage compared to competitors and negative impact on company’s image | Integrate e-commerce solution and implement an online marketing campaign |

Part 2: Develop list of Solution Options

Prepare the report of your findings. This report should elaborate the proposed changes, gaps, and improvement suggestions. The impact of change on the organisation should also be elaborated. In the end this document should be submitted for the approval to concerned stakeholders.

**Answer**

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| **Findings** |
| Bazaar Ceramics took steps toward implementing a modern approach to marketing by creating a brochure website to display their products. Although this potentially widen their reach on the global market, many of the issues identified are not addressed by this solution.  **Solution:** Customer should be able to purchase items online. The sales should be recorded in a databse and the figures used to produce reports on-demand. |
| The costs of running Bazaar Ceramics operations are increasing. Some of this costs are outside of the company’s control and affect them as much as their competitors, such as the costs connected to changes in the legislation. However, optimization of current practices and substitution of obsolete processes and systems can positevely impact the costs related to production and other company’s operations (marketing, order processing, record keeping, etc.)  **Solution:** Process automation would reduce the time required and the related costs of these procedures, also requiring less staff and improving performances. |
| Physiscal, retail sales done in-locum, currently represent a double edged blade for the company. On one side they are the major source of income for Bazaar Ceramics, with walk-in clients being the most common buyers. On the other side, the gallery generates costs and offers limited opportunities to exapnd the company’s reach on a wider market.  **Solution:** A properly developed online gallery, to easily navigate and sort items, would partially solve the problem. Another aspect that needs to be considered is marketing. An online marketing campaign, specifically targeted to potential customer, would increase the relevance of the online gallery, possibly even over the showroom. |
| A modern approach to sales and marketing relies heavily on the use of technology. Bazaar Ceramics doesn’t have any in-house IT staff and needs to rely on external contractor for any technology related issue. With technology becoming more and more prevalent nowdays, the cost of these contractors can become significant and is expected to increase over time.  **Solution:** Hiring IT personnel. The cost of the IT personnel would be amortized by the reduction on the number of overall staff needed to run the company, and down the line would save money from hiring external contractors. |
| Sales figure and statistics are produced manually upon management request, often providing outdated and possibly incorrect information, taintinthe decisional process and leading to mistakes that cause the company to lose money.  **Solution:** Sales and orders can be handled by a software automatically, reducing costs and increasing efficiency. |
| Competitors are implementing technological solutions with positive results. Modern customers consult the internet for nearly everything. Even when they need to buy something physically from a store, it is common that they check the shop website for infomration about availability, or operating times, and given the option, many would rather just buy online.  A website is the first contact a potential customer often has with the store. Baazar Ceramics is lagging behind in this regard.  **Solution:** Creating a modern, mobile first, web store. |
| Although ultimately capable to withstand the needs identified, the current hardware and software used by Bazaar Ceramics are dated.  **Solution:** Updating the IT infrastructure. |

Part 3: Develop recommendations based on gap analysis.

You are required to develop recommendations for which options to adopt to meet Bazaar Ceramics business needs. You should:

* Write Gap Analysis Findings based on Gap analysis and your list of Solution Options. Use the **Recommendations template** (Attached file).
* Summarise your recommendations based on the following –
  + What were the difficulties encountered during the change?
  + How will you justify that these changes are appropriate for the organisation?
  + The comparative report elaborating the financial impact of this change should also be a part of the solution.
* Also obtain the feedback from the stakeholders and analyse it.

**Answer**

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| **Reccomendations** |
| **Server:** For their server software, Bazaar Ceramics heavily relies on Microsoft propietary products. Although they are extremely solid and powerful technologies, backed by a tech giant company and therefore reliable and well known, the products themselves can be costly and require specialists expertise to be set up and maintaned properly. These products are best suited for an enterprise environment, where an aggressive online presence and an around the clock, top level support are required.  For Bazaar Ceramics, switching to open source and free to use technologies, protected by more relaxed licenses, can be a viable option. Some of the available products are extremely popular (even more so than Windows) and are actively being maintained by a huge community of developers. The money saved could be redirected to the hiring of technical in-house staff which would ensure that the system is always in optimal functional state and would contribute in the continuous development of the company’s website and infrastracture. |
| **Systems:** Although functional, the current machines used by Bazaar Ceramics are dated. For basic administrative tasks they serve their purpose, but considering the company’s expansion and their desire to redirect their focus on the online market, an upgrade of the both the hardware and the software used is advisable.  An upgrade to the internal server would result in a significant leap forward in terms of performance and of the 10 machines currently used within the company, at least some should be upgraded, especially those used for cpu intensive tasks (eg. if internal techical staff is hired). |
| **Online presence:** Bazaar Ceramics is doing well in what they’ve always done. Retail sales are constantly growing and in the local market they are well established and recognized in their niche.  It seems reasonable to question if a bigger online presence is necessary at all for a company so reliant on the environement they are in.  Some considerations come into play when deciding if it makes sense to recommend investing money in the creation and the management of a website:   1. Expansion on foreign markets seems promising. The major obstacles in this direction seems to be the difficulty in keeping the marketing materials updated and the convoluted and ancient system currently in place to contact the company by potential customers. 2. The company already has a brochure website, but there are no features that facilitate contact between customer and company. 3. It’s not uncommon nowdays that potential customers consult online resources before to make a purchase even on the local market. Often when customers reach a shop, they already have a precise idea of what they are after. This trend is expected to become more and more prevalent in the upcoming years. A relevant and suitable online presence is expected to become a determining factor in the success, or failure of organization in the near future. 4. With the speed at which technology evolves, tech trends get outdated quickly and a company has to put constant effort in polishing and mainting their public image online. An old, obsolete website can be more damaging to a company than having no website at all, because it would simply divert customers away (eg. A customer that find the company’s website old, ill maintained and uninteresting, may decide to actively avoid that company, while a customer that doesn’t find any online information about the company but still stumble upon it by chance, may still decide to give it a chance and check it out in person).   As stated above, Bazaar Ceramics already has an online presence, but if they do not modernize it and update it to modern standards, they would be better off by simply removing it. |
| **Staff:** The company’s desire to expand their reach on the online market would require the development of an e-commerce website. The development, update and overall maintenance of the website can either be outsourced to an external contractor, or specialized staff can be hired to take care of it.  While outsourcing may seem like the most convenient choice in the short term, it would have a bigger financial impact on the long run. The required maintenance of both hardware and software, especially when the company becomes more reliant on them, would increase significantly. Having in-house staff, familiar with the products, the standards, the needs and the procedures of the company would provide a bigger return of investment in the long term.  Another factor to consider is the website availability. Compared to external contractors, in house staff would have a quicker response time to any event that may cause down time, ultimately saving more money to the company. |
| **Adminstration:** Many of the administrative costs the company is facing are due to tasks that could be effectively automated. Order processing, customer billing and overall book-keeping processes can be implemented as functionalities in the admin side of a web application. The same applies to reporting and marketing, where statistics and figures would be available to management on demand with no need for human processing. |

**Change management:** Some difficulty in adapting to the new changes can be expected. In the following table are listed options to mitigate the negative impact these changes may have on the company’s environmet. Some can be considered transitionary and as an organic part of a company’s evolution, meaning they require little to no action to be assimilated by everyone, while others can disrupt the previous status quo considerably and should be addressed with consideration for their practical and ethical aspects.

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| **Change** | **Impact** | **Reccomendation** |
| New Hardware | Minimal | No measures are considered mandatory, but some training may be required for staff members that may not feel comfortable in dealing with the new products. |
| New software | High | Staff needs to be trained in the new procedures and needs a working knowledge of the product, including basic trouble shooting skills. |
| Administration | High | Automation would drastically change the way records are kept and reports produced. Human interaction for these processes would be far less needed, making admin position less required.  Resources can be redistributed in other sectors or cuts in personnel can be expected. |
| Marketing | High | Inefficient and cost ineffective paper based marketing will be replaced with an Internet based more modern approach. Marketing personnel will need to shift focus to the new technologies and platforms, such as google ads and social media marketing. |

**Financial:** As already stated several times in the previous reports, the costs of developing and running a new e-commerce website are outweghted by the benefits it would introduce.

On top of attracting more customers and expanding the company’s reach, other financial advantages are represented by the money saved due to less human resources required for administrative tasks in the company, allowing management to divert those resources to marketing and production, activities more likely to generate profit.

**Feedback analysis:** The client was already aware of some of the benifts an e-commerce would carry and the reports provided to them so far, reinforced those ideas.

Points of particular interest for the client are the possiblity to implement modern cost effective and efficient marketing strategies and expansion on national and international markets.

The development of an e-commerce for the client should keep in consideration these factors and focus on website visibility, accessibility and the whole esthetic and presentation to the customers.

Part 4: Show your demonstration of Skill.

You will conduct the meeting (conversation) with another student who will be act as the stakeholder of the organisation. You will elaborate on the changes and plan you have considered for the task. It should be explained keeping in mind the objectives of the task. This meeting will be conducted for 5-7 minutes and should be clear and precise. The assessor will look for the thoughts discussed in the meeting along with the language used for the task.

**Answer**

During the meeting many of the points included in the previous reports have been discussed and clarified with the client.

The client understood the advantages and implications of a new e-commerce website, how it would affect the company and what measures should be considered to ensure that any negative effect would be mitigated. The conversation than verted on the features and functionalities of the website. The client became more interested in exploring what could be done, how it would be done and various options available if any.

From the meeting the client came out with a better understanding of what to expect from the implmentation of an e-commerce website and the developers with a better understanding of what the client’s requirements may be.

Part 5: Develop Action Plan.

You are required to develop an action plan based on your recommendations. The action plan needs to list the tasks that need to be implemented. You need to consider costs, legal and HR issues, internal and external operating environment etc. Your action plan should have the target and implementation methods to achieve these. You can use the Gantt chart for the same. In the end the approval from the supervisor is required. Use the **action plan template** (Attached file).

**Answer**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action Plan** | | | |
| **Goal:** Decrease operating costs and increase sales and profits of the company Bazaar Ceramics by developing an e-commerce website | | | |
| **Activities** | **Responsibilities** | **Resources** | **Timeline** |
| Hire technical staff   * Advertise job openings * Conduct interviews * Hire suitable candidates | Manager | Manager  Finances for new wages | 1 to 2 weeks |
| Switch to open source server technologies   * Consider switching * Compare services and features * Compare costs | IT staff | It staff | 1 week |
| Upgrade hardware   * Identify company’s needs * Research viable options * Acquire products | IT staff  Manager | IT staff  Manager  Finances for new hardware | 2 days |
| Hire external contractor for website development   * Contact software companies * Compare offers * Select company | Manager | Manager  Finances for new contractor | 2 days |
| Conduct marketing research for new website   * Research competitors websites * Propose questionnaires to existing customers * Identify desirable features * Identify webite appereance | Contractor  Management  Marketing | Contractor  Management  Marketing | 1 to 2 weeks |
| Develop website   * Identify website requirements * Create software design * Develop website and implement features required * Test website * Launch website * Maintain website | Company management  Company staff  Contractor  IT staff | Company management  Company staff  Contractor  IT staff | 1 week |
| Implement Change Mangement   * Train staff on new technologies * Revise processes and procedures * Conduct meetings with staff to ensure workforce participation and commitment | Management  Staff | Management  Staff | Ongoing |
| Promote company   * Research marketing options * Design marketing campaign * Leverage social media marketing | Marketing staff | Marketing staff | 1 to 2 weeks |
| Website update and maintenance   * Collect customers feedback * Review feedback and develop strategy * Implement changes in website * Maintain website | IT staff  Management  Marketing | IT staff  Management marketing | Ongoing |
| **Evidence of Success:** | * Reduction of costs related to running and promoting the company. * Higher sales figures, especially on the broader national and international market. | | |
| **Evaluation Process:** | The company will track expenditures and profit for a given timeframe.  At the end of that timeframe, costs annd expenditures will be compared to the previous recorded figures. | | |

**Internal/External factors and constraints:** There are some factors to be considered that could harm or prevent the successful implementation of this action plan.

* The budget dedicated for the development of the website could run out before the completion of the project.
* The product doesn’t reflect the client expectations or the requirements agreed upon.
* The product is developed according to client’s expectations and requirements, but the results don’t match the client’s expectation.
* Lack of communication between the client and the development team resultS in increased expenses and improperly defined requirements.
* Staff don’t adapt to the changes

**Financial considerations:** An initial investment for the development of the website and the hiring of new techical staff is required. A transition period to fully implement the changes is also expected. During this time the company can expect to see an increase in the costs for running normal operations, due to the need to keep the previous structure functional, on top of the new one. Eventually the full integration of the website in the company’s operations should organically replace the administration and marketing functions it proposes to implement.

In the best case scenario, the passage from the old to the new system should provide significant results in a matter of a few weeks, provided the website and the marketing both meet their goals and expectations.

The rainy day scenario, in which the project would be deemed a failure, the company would lose the initial investment and nothing more, especially if a recovery plan has been designed.

**Legal considerations:** The autamtion and transmission of customers sensitive information over the internet implies some legal implications in the treatment of data. These obligations include security of the data, their usage, distribution and storage. It is the management duty to ensure that the development team implement solution to deal with these issues according to the law.

Hiring an experienced and reputable developing team would most likely guarantee guarantee compliance with laws and regulations.

**HR considerations:** The introduction of new technologies and procedures in the company environment would have an impact in the way staff and management would conduct their jobs. With some of the processes being automated, part of the staff may see their hours reduced, or could be made entirely redundant. Proper consideration should be given to these issues.

Extensive training should be provided to ensure that everyone would feel comfortable with the new hardware and software.

In case hours or personnel has to be reduced, appropriate measures to ensure ethical treatment and to give everyone the opportunity to find other options and solutions should be implemented.

## **Performance checklist criteria**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Trainer/ Assessor to complete** | | | |
| **Resources required for the unit assessment task** | * Unit assessment guide template * Access to live or simulated working environment * Interaction with others | | |
| **Does the candidate meet the following criteria** | **Yes** | **No** | **Trainer/Assessor Comments** |
| Part 1: Write a gap analysis report and a list of options to meet strategy |  |  |  |
| Part 2: Develop list of Solution Options |  |  |  |
| Part 3: Develop recommendations based on gap analysis. |  |  |  |
| Part 4: Show your demonstration of Skill. |  |  |  |
| Part 5: Develop Action Plan. |  |  |  |

# **Unit Assessment Result Sheet (UARS)**

## **Assessment Task 3 – Unit Project (UP)**

## **Student and Trainer/Assessor Details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Unit code** | ICTICT515 |
| **Unit name** | Verify client business requirements |
| **Outcome of Unit Assessment Task (UAT)** | |  | | --- | | **First attempt:** |   Outcome (please make sure to tick the correct checkbox):  Satisfactory (S)  or Not Satisfactory (NS)  Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_(day)/ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_(month)/ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(year)   |  | | --- | | **Second attempt:** |   Outcome (please make sure to tick the correct checkbox):  Satisfactory (S)  or Not Satisfactory (NS)  Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_(day)/ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_(month)/ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(year) |
| **Feedback to Student** | |  | | --- | | * **First attempt:** |  |  | | --- | | * **Second attempt:** | |
| **Student Declaration** | * I declare that the answers I have provided are my own work. Where I have accessed information from other sources, I have provided references and or links to my sources. * I have kept a copy of all relevant notes and reference material that I used as part of my submission. * I have provided references for all sources where the information is not my own. I understand the consequences of falsifying documentation and plagiarism. I understand how the assessment is structured. I accept that all work I submit must be verifiable as my own. * I understand that if I disagree with the assessment outcome, I can appeal the assessment process, and either re-submit additional evidence undertake gap training and or have my submission re-assessed. * All appeal options have been explained to me. |
| **Student Signature** |  |
| **Date** |  |
| **Trainer/Assessor Name** |  |
| **Trainer/Assessor Declaration** | I hold:  🗹 Vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered  🗹 Current relevant industry skills  🗹 Current knowledge and skills in VET, *and undertake*  🗹 Ongoing professional development in VET  *I declare that I have conducted an assessment of this candidate’s submission. The assessment tasks were deemed current, sufficient, valid and reliable. I declare that I have conducted a fair, valid, reliable, and flexible assessment. I have provided feedback to the above-named candidate.* |
| **Trainer/Assessor Signature** |  |
| **Date** |  |
| **Office Use Only** | Outcome of Assessment has been entered onto the Student Management System on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (insert date)  by (insert Name) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |