

MODULE: **MT301 – Business Strategy**

SUMMER PAPER

PROGRAMME(S):

BSI	Business Studies (with INTRA)
AF	BA in Accounting and Finance
BS	Bachelor of Business Studies
MINT	BSc Marketing, Innovation & Technology
INTB	Bachelor Business Studies International
AMPS	BSc in Aviation Management
EBF	BA in Global Business (France)
EBG	BA in Global Business (Germany)
EBS	BA in Global Business (Spain)
BSE	Bachelor of Business Studies (Exchange)

YEAR OF STUDY: 3,4 (2024)

ASSESSMENT 50% of total module

EXAMINER(S):

Dr. John Loonam
(Internal)
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(Internal)
Mr. Sean Dempsey
(Internal)
Dr. Jonathan Lavelle
(External Examiner)

DUE DATE: **Friday 12th April 2024 @ 4pm**

SUBMISSION DETAILS: Please submit via the dedicated link on loop only. Email submissions will not be accepted.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer ALL Questions on the **Architect Systems Case Study** below.
Question 1 is weighted 20 Marks. Q2 & Q3 are weighted 40 marks each.

WORD COUNT: 3,000 words (+/- 10%). Please note that References and Appendices are not counted as part of Word Count

CRITERIA & FORMATTING: Your submission should include a minimum of FIVE academic references.

Submission should be 1.5 paragraph spacing. Include a word count on the title page of your submission. Please use Font 12 Arial or Times New Roman

Please review the case of Architect Systems as presented below and respond to ALL questions

“Architect Systems powers a path towards value creation”

Architect Systems is a small-medium-sized enterprise (SME) within Ireland that manufactures premium commercial wind and solar power equipment for the European market. The newly appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who takes over from the family founder, has promised to focus on organizational modernization and to push for global growth over the next five years. The new CEO, Tom Boland, has worked within a number of industries, with a particular interest in digitalising traditional businesses. In a recent interview with the ‘Sunday Business Post’, Boland noted the critical importance of understanding the organization and its capabilities prior to implementing any digital transformation. Businesses, he felt, could get ‘caught up in the ‘bright lights’ of digital technology, hooked by vendor promises, without actually realizing any business benefits or return on investment’. He noted, therefore, that the leadership team needed an in-depth understanding of the business, ‘its legacy and history, its flaws and wounds, and the processes that could be reimagined to yield new value creating opportunities’.

Architect Systems has three key ambitions to achieve over the next five years. Firstly, it is seeking to develop a global strategy. The continued growth in its sales within the EU has opened the conversation about expansion. Global decarbonisation targets have increased markets for sustainable-centric products. In particular, commercial energy suppliers, challenged by a lack of industry expertise in manufacturing large-scale wind and power equipment solutions, are offering lucrative medium-term contracts. A second ambition for Architect Systems is to focus on the digitalization of its business. As Boland recently noted, ‘our business is becoming less about parts and more about data’. Continued innovation has increased the usage of software and sensors in its product manufacturing, resulting in new service-centric opportunities. As Boland reveals, ‘within the forthcoming decade there is every likelihood that we will think more like a software company than as a manufacturer today’. Finally, its third ambition is to develop a more professional culture within the organization. Since its foundation Architect Systems has excelled at an entrepreneurial pace. Many of its recent product lines have been developed out of gaps in the marketplace. Its entrepreneurial spirit has kept the business flexible and reactive to emerging trends. The objective now is to balance entrepreneurial flair with managerial accountability.

As Boland reflects on these ambitions, a number of prospective challenges come to mind. Whilst global opportunities abound within this industry, navigating a route that would protect patent copyrights will be critical. Equally, understanding the macro-environment and competitive landscape will be vital to ensure effective strategic positioning. Digitalisation has become a ubiquitous term, as Boland notes “depending on who you are talking to [digital] means so many things to so many people”. Plotting a digital strategy that makes sense for the business will be a key priority. Finally, Boland is only too aware of the demands in curtailing the entrepreneurial spirit within a family-run business. Previous experience has taught him that this ‘entrepreneurial spirit’ can be a term used for ‘chasing after every opportunity’. As CEO, he will need to balance ‘opportunities’ with organizational capabilities and strategic value.

Loonam, 2024

Answer the following THREE questions based on the case study above.

Q 1

What are the key strategic issues that Architect Systems is facing from the situation depicted above?

(Total 20 marks)

Q 2

What recommendation would you make to Architect Systems management in addressing ONE of the strategic issues that you have identified? Justify your recommendation with reference to business strategy literature.

(Total 40 marks)

Q 3

Critically reflect on the case above using a blue ocean strategy perspective to create value innovation. Justify your answer with reference to supporting business and case literature.

(Total 40 marks)