Managing IT Resources

ITWS 4310

Fall 2018

Week 7 Assignments

1. Tuesday October 9, 2018
   1. Term Project Initial Sections: Each team should submit a draft of initial sections of your Term Project as discussed in class by 11:59 pm as a MS Word document. You should also submit the CBA Excel file and Gantter Project file for your project. The narrative sections are to include:
      1. Client Organization and Description
      2. Project Team
      3. Problem Statement
      4. Concept and Scope of IS/IT Solution
      5. IS/IT Requirements
      6. Cost-Benefit Analysis including Risk Management Analysis & Plan
      7. Project Plan/Schedule (with separate Gantter project (.gantter) file)
   2. Read the Current Events Articles posted on LMS
   3. Read Chapter 4, *Netflix in Two Acts: The Making of an E-Commerce Giant and the Uncertain Future of Atoms to Bits,* in the Gallaugher textbook. This chapter will be treated in class as a business case.
   4. **Watch the 2½ minute Nicholas Negroponte lecture** on bits and atoms at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qOb1IJJGXpQ>. Be prepared to answer and/or discuss the following questions in class:
   5. Study the financials of “Netflix” (stock symbol NFLX.O) and the “Internet Services” Industry, and the Technology Sector at [www.google.com/finance](http://www.google.com/finance) or [www.finance.yahoo.com](http://www.finance.yahoo.com)
      1. Specifically research the stock price of Netflix over the past 5 years.
   6. Be prepared to answer (verbally) in class these questions in order to answer the written questions and to prepare for the Mid-Term Exam.
      1. What are some key points in Netflix’s history?
      2. How/why did Netflix come to dominate in the DVD-by-mail space?
      3. What is the “long-tail” concept? How does it relate to “economies of scale” and doing business via the internet?
      4. What is collaborative filtering? How did it provide a competitive advantage to Netflix?
      5. What are ways in which Netflix has focused on their customer relationships?
      6. How does the shift from atoms to bits present both advantages and disadvantages for Netflix?
      7. What is the “Porter Five Forces of Competition” analysis for the “Internet Services” Industry?
   7. **Write a one to two page response to the following questions and submit it to the assignment link on LMS prior to class on October 9 (before 10am – hard deadline).**
      1. A key question raised at the end of the chapter is whether or not Netflix “deserves the hype”. Based on your research of the industry, the competitive landscape, the external forces, and Netflix financials including stock price over the past 5 years, do you think that Netflix is worthy of the high praise? (“yes or no” answer, not “yes and no”)
         1. If yes, why? And what must they do in the future to solidify this praise and reach the goals analysts are expecting?
         2. If no, why? And what do you believe should be changed to get on track to achieve what analysts expect?
            1. You must provide at least one quantitative and one qualitative reason to support your position.
            2. Use information from the case and outside research to support your answer to the question.
            3. Use concepts from the text to formulate your answer as needed.
            4. Incorporate your knowledge of the industry and the competitive situation. Show insight.
            5. Use professional English language, spelling, grammar, and referencing. Use the MLA citation format or equivalent. See RPI’s Center for Communications Practices at <http://www.ccp.rpi.edu/resources/> and the associated MLA citation page at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>.
2. Thursday October 11, 2018
   1. Read the Current Events Articles posted on LMS
   2. Read Chapter 7, *Amazon: An Empire Stretching from Cardboard Box to Kindle to Cloud,* in the Gallaugher textbook. This chapter will be treated in class as a business case.
   3. Study the financials of “Amazon” (stock symbol AMZN.O) and the “Internet Services” Industry, and the Technology Sector at [www.google.com/finance](http://www.google.com/finance) or [www.finance.yahoo.com](http://www.finance.yahoo.com)
      1. Specifically research the stock price of Amazon over the past 5 years.
   4. Be prepared to answer (verbally) in class these questions:
      1. What is the history of Amazon?
      2. In what businesses does Amazon compete?
      3. Who are Amazon’s competitors?
      4. What was the competitiveness of the “Internet Services” industry based on the Porter “Five Forces” analysis done in the Netflix Case?
      5. What is the competitiveness of the “Department Stores” (industry designation of [www.reuters.com/finance](http://www.reuters.com/finance) for Amazon, e.g. Wal-Mart, Target, Amazon, Taobao) Industry based on the Porter “Five Forces analysis.
      6. What is the “Extended Value Chain” or “Ecosystem” for Amazon
      7. How has Amazon used “Scale” and “Selection” as a competitive advantage?
      8. How has Amazon used “Network Effects” as a competitive advantage?
      9. How has Amazon used “Low Costs” as a competitive advantage?
      10. How has Amazon used “Customer Experience” as a competitive advantage?
      11. How has Amazon used “Data” as a competitive advantage?
      12. How has Amazon used “Logistics” as a competitive advantage?
      13. How has Amazon used “Machine Learning” and “AI” as a competitive advantage?
      14. How has Amazon used “Cloud Computing” and “AWS” as a competitive advantage?
      15. How has Amazon used “Brick and Mortar” Retail Stores as a competitive advantage?
      16. What are the Revenues, Gross Profit Margins, and Net Profit Margins of Amazon, Alphabet (parent company to Google), Netflix, Intel, and Cisco for the past one year (TTM – Trailing Twelve Months) and the 5 year average as viewed at [www.investing.com](http://www.investing.com).
      17. What is the Stock Price Comparison for Amazon, Alphabet, Netflix, Intel, and Cisco for the past 5 years as shown at [www.google.com/finance](http://www.google.com/finance) or [www.investing.com](http://www.investing.com)?
      18. Which Company, Amazon, Alphabet, Netflix, Intel, or Cisco will have the largest percentage increase in Stock Price from now over the next 5 years? Why?
   5. **THERE IS NO WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT FOR THIS CASE.**
      1. Use your time to study for the midterm and work on your team projects.
      2. Be aware however that class participation on this case will be “graded harder” in order to make up for the lack of a written assignment. Be sure to come to class prepared for the case as a result!