

Name: Lum Chee Xiang Michael (Lan Zhixiang)
Student ID: 111102750
Assignment 4

Module: Information Systems – Foundation of E-Business
Module number: CO1108-01

University of London International Programmes
BSc in Computing and Information Systems – Information Systems: Foundation of E-Business
Module number: CO1108-01
Assignment 4

Question 1

Using your knowledge of the internet, write a 500-word proposal outlining the advantages and disadvantages of Best Properties UK creating an online version of their business. Propose a set of the business processes needed to allow a customer to rent a house online using the Best Properties website. Also draw a value chain containing primary and secondary activities that would need to be performed by Best Properties UK.

*Assumptions:

- Best Properties wants to establish an e-commerce website that is capable of facilitating all forms of essential property-related transactions over the Internet.
- Best Properties UK is in charge of not only helping home owners sell / rent out their properties, but also collecting payment on behalf of them as an added service
- The act of having property agents seek out leads and potential sellers on their own will be replaced by having home owners contact BPUK directly with the introduction of the e-commerce website, with agents subsequently being assigned to various clients based on availability
- 500 word count limit applies to the entire proposal, including the portions regarding the value chain and the businesses processes needed to facilitate such transactions over the Internet.

**Abbreviations (used universally unless otherwise stated):

- Best Properties UK → BPUK
- Business processes → BP
- Value chain → VC

Answer

Proposal: Establishment of online business

Introduction: This report will outline the advantages and disadvantages associated with establishing an online version of BPUK's business and the processes needed to facilitate housing-related transactions over the Internet

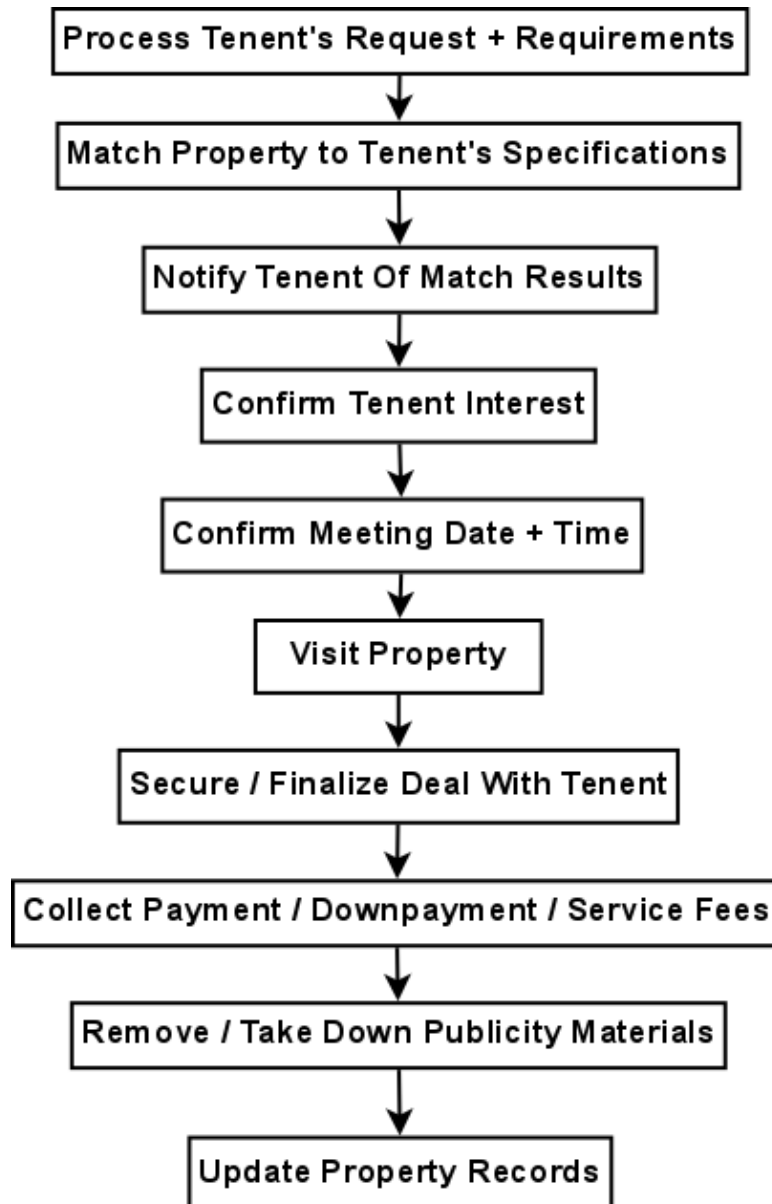
Context: A list of criteria BPUK needs to ensure are in place before a successful establishment of an online version of its business can occur

Before moving to establish an online version of its business, BPUK needs to be aware of the advantages and pitfalls associated with e-commerce in today's digital age. This table will illustrate some common characteristics and how they apply to the company

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Convenience (Rosenoer, 1999, p. 19)</p> <p>BPUK's website can automatically process requests even during non-operational hours, thus potentially increasing profits and revenue.</p> <p>Also allows BPUK to easily communicate and network with stakeholders via a standard platform via individualized content, which potentially increases customer and supplier intimacy</p>	<p>Potential hidden costs (Stephens, 2011, paras 13 – 14)</p> <p>The costs involved in setting up a professional website capable of meeting the company's needs and marketing it may offset any potential costs savings in the short to medium term.</p>
<p>Global presence (McEachern & O'Keefe, 1998, p. 34)</p> <p>Establishing a website allows BPUK to establish a presence on the global network; this is useful if BPUK intends to expand its customer base beyond its domestic market</p>	<p>Typical Internet-centric threats (Stephens, 2011, paras 15 – 16)</p> <p>A e-commerce website requires the creation of both an intranet and extranet: opening up an extranet without sufficient security in place can lead to security breaches which will have an adverse effect on customer and supplier intimacy</p> <p>Other Internet-centric threats include spoofing and phishing which will also affect BPUK's integrity.</p>

<p>Dynamic and rich content</p> <p>Technological advancement has made it possible to embed rich content (eg: videos, social networking applications, etc) into webpages to provide visitors with a unique experience.</p> <p>The dynamic nature of the Internet allows for easy modifications and updates to information by the company to ensure accuracy and timeliness</p> <p>Cost savings (“Advantages of e commerce”, 2012, para 2)</p> <p>Any transaction performed over the Internet is usually significantly lower than its traditional counterpart. Properly exploited, this can lead to tremendous cost savings.</p> <p>Establishment of competitive advantage (Iyer, n.d., para 4)</p> <p>The aforementioned cost savings will free up more resources for use in establishing a competitive advantage, which can potentially further improve customer intimacy and ensure survival in the properties market.</p>	<p>Competition (“Pros and cons of Internet marketing, n.d., para 7)</p> <p>The barriers involved in setting up an e-commerce website are little to none: regardless of its reputation, BPUK will be just one of many similar such e-commerce sites dealing with property-related transactions and will need to invest resources in marketing itself to its customers.</p> <p>Lack of human interactivity (“Pros and cons of Internet marketing, n.d., para 6)</p> <p>BPUK prides itself on its ability to deliver personal customer service; this may be affected with the introduction of an e-commerce website as information sharing and queries will be handled by intelligent reply-bots, emails and FAQs instead of human-to-human interaction.</p> <p>(empty)</p>
--	--

Possible business processes involved in facilitating online rental (from Organization's POV)



Name: Lum Chee Xiang Michael (Lan Zhixiang)
Student ID: 111102750
Assignment 4

Module: Information Systems – Foundation of E-Business
Module number: CO1108-01

Value chain

Question 2

Using your understanding of resistance to change and the case study above, write a 500-word report informing the Best Properties management team of ways in which it could minimise the levels of resistance to change associated with the introduction of the new website.

*Assumptions made:

- The act of having property agents seek out leads and potential sellers on their own will be replaced by having home owners contact BPUK directly with the introduction of the e-commerce website, with agents subsequently being assigned to various clients based on availability
- BPUK's property agents are grouped into teams, and are under the direct supervision of a 'team leader' who keeps track of each agent's performance
- BPUK currently has a large number of receptionists and customer support staff under its employ due to its emphasis on providing a high level of personal service
- With the completion of the new website, all transactions between BPUK and its stakeholders will shift from a mixture of traditional paper-based records and digital records to full-digital records.

*Abbreviations used:

- RTC → Resistance to change
- ERTC → Employee resistance to change
- ORTC → Organizational resistance to change

Answer

Report on RTC associated with introduction of e-commerce website

Introduction: Any sweeping changes to an organization's workflow or business model will definitely be subject to some form of RTC. This report will attempt to understand the reasons behind RTC, and how RTC can be addressed / minimized

Context: BPUK's adoption the use of e-commerce as a business strategy and the various sources of RTC that it can expect to deal with from such a move

By adopting e-commerce into its workflow, BPUK can expect to experience RTC from multiple sources, especially if the adoption has adverse effects on employee job security, responsibilities and workflow, among many other aspects (Daft & Noe, 2001, pp. 629 – 630). These are some possible areas where RTC may occur:

Source	Justification
Individual property agents and telemarketers	Property agents and telemarketers usually build relationships with and secure clients via informal networking; automating this process through the e-commerce site will affect their ability to secure 'exclusive' clients and resulting commissions.
Receptionists and customer support staff	Reduction in degree of personal service due to creation of online front may result in downsizing of related departments, thus causing such staff to fear about job security and possible deskilling.
Middle management staff (eg: team leaders)	Team leaders may find themselves made redundant since the new online system is capable of taking over their management duties.
Senior staff	Older staff may fear being replaced by younger workers who are more technologically adept than them.
Customers	Existing customers may be used to receiving a high degree of personal service from BPUK's frontline staff and may not take kindly to being a participant in

Name: Lum Chee Xiang Michael (Lan Zhixiang)
Student ID: 111102750
Assignment 4

Module: Information Systems – Foundation of E-Business
Module number: CO1108-01

	BPUK's business process.
--	--------------------------

These are some of the ways BPUK's management team can minimize any RTC associated with its adoption of e-commerce and still ensure customer and employee satisfaction in the process, where possible.

Approaches	Explanation
Education and communication	BPUK can provide full information about the changes that will be implemented with the adoption of e-commerce into its business model and assure its employees that education will be provided to ensure that they will not risk becoming deskilled when the changes take effect.
Participation	Participation involves employees helping to design and implement the proposed changes: by including its employees in the design process, BPUK can identify aspects of change that may affect its staff adversely, while its employees will feel that their concerns are indeed noticed by BPUK.
Manipulation	If the resistance to change is limited to a small but powerful group of employees, BPUK may resort to political tactics and favours to secure their approval for such changes to be implemented.
Negotiations	A more formal method of communication and participation which involves high-level meetings between BPUK's management team and its employees' representatives allows for legally binding contracts to be drawn up to ensure both parties' commitment in the matter.
Coercion	BPUK's management can use its legitimate power in the company to force the change on employees and threaten them with consequences (eg: dismissal) for non-compliance.

Word count: 490 (**excluding** ITCs)

Question 3

By applying your knowledge of different types of information systems and the case study of Best Properties UK, write a 500-word report describing the different types of information systems you believe Best Properties UK is (or should be) using, and provide examples of what they would be using each type of system for.

*Assumptions made:

- none

*Abbreviations used:

- Information systems → IS
- Transaction processing systems → TPS
- Management information systems → MIS
- Decision support system → DSS
- Executive support system → ESS
- Knowledge management system → KMS
- Business processes → BP

Answer

Report on IS used by BPUK

Introduction: Any large organization will need to have some basic IS in place to facilitate their workflow and business processes. This report will examine the possible IS an organization typically makes use of

Context: A list of IS BPUK currently employs (or should employ) in its day-to-day operations

As a successful real estate business in the UK, it is highly possible that BPUK has adopted various IS for use in facilitating its day-to-day business operations. The table below describes some of the IS that the organization is likely to have employed (or should employ) in its business:

IS type	Description	Examples
TPS	This is a fundamental IS that any organization is almost guaranteed to have; it facilitates the logging of critical raw data that is captured at the operational levels of the organization's Bps (Laudon & Laudon, 2012, pp 75 – 76). Some TPS have the capability to automate certain BPs as well.	Employee payroll system, computerized tenant query system, property records system, client data system, client/tenant payment system
MIS	Processes and presents raw data captured by an organization's TPS into human-intelligible information and formats. Typically used to provide middle management with status reports and summaries (Laudon & Laudon, 2012, pp 77 – 78).	Agent performance reports, client property and location reports
DSS	Used to support and facilitate low-level decision making processes due to its analytical capabilities, thus making it possible to generate unique solutions for unstructured, non-routine queries.	Property matching system for matching tenant's requirements and specifications to suitable property available
ESS	Used to support senior management in high-level decision making processes that affect the organization's strategic objectives, goals and vision. Contains both internal data captured by a TPS and external data about the organization's external environment, including but not limited to the political, environmental, social, technological, economical and legal environments.	

Name: Lum Chee Xiang Michael (Lan Zhixiang)
Student ID: 111102750
Assignment 4

Module: Information Systems – Foundation of E-Business
Module number: CO1108-01

KMS		
-----	--	--