## Week 4: Organizational Strategy, Information Systems, and Competitive Advantage; Smart HR

### Intended Learning Outcomes

ILO1: Describe how IS can be used to gain and sustain competitive advantage.

ILO1: Describe the role of information systems in supporting business processes.

ILO5: Demonstrate good communication and interpersonal skills in proposing and presenting creative information management solutions.

### Activity 1. Interim Group Report 1 Reminder

Challenge 1: Does the current products or business processes create competitive advantages for your selected firm?

Each team should draft a 1-page report summarizing products and business processes implemented by a selected company, conducting appropriate industrial structure analysis, e.g., Porter’s 5 Forces model, and evaluating the competitive advantages of the firm in its industry. One student of a team should submit your report in the format of LX\_TeamX.docx where TeamX is your team name and LX is your tutorial session.

Reminder: a) No plagiarism!

b) No late submission!

c) Deadline: This Sunday, 11:59pm

**Activity 2. Tutorial Discussion [20 mins]**

Log on to Canvas and complete Tutorial 4 Discussion. It carries a bonus participation of 0.5% for correct answer. Before our discussion, let’s watch a video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ao8_KE8_bM>

Topic for discussion:

1. “Can SMACIT help generate competitive advantages? How do companies succeed in the digital era?” [15 mins]

Suggested Readings: Ross, J.W., Beath, C.M., and Sebastian, I. (14th January, 2015), Harvard Business Review, “Why Nordstrom's Digital Strategy Works (and Yours Probably Doesn't)” <https://hbr.org/2015/01/why-nordstroms-digital-strategy-works-and-yours-probably-doesnt>

2. “How does IM/IS help fight 2019-nCov? What technologies can improve” [5 mins]

Suggested Readings: Woodie, Alex. (3rd February 2020), Datanami, “ How the Coronavirus Response Is Aided by Analytics” <https://www.datanami.com/2020/02/03/how-the-coronavirus-response-is-aided-by-analytics/>

### Activity 3. Discuss as A Team [25+ mins]

Use a HR startup business as an example to apply Porter’s 5 forces in a business setting. Student teams are supposed to simulate discussions in a company meeting to illustrate the use of five forces model vs strategy, etc.

## Experiencing MIS and Smart HR

Suppose you decide to start a business with your friends that recruits students for summer jobs. You will try to match the students who are available with the corresponding positions. You need to learn what positions are available and what kind of students are available for filling those positions based on their skills. In this kind of business, you will be competing with local newspapers e.g., hk.jobsdb.com, and with your college. You will probably have other local competitors as well.

Please break into teams and briefly discuss the following questions with your teammates for **8~10 minutes**.

1. Analyze the structure of this HR industry according to Porter’s five forces model. Consider the party that provides job information to be supplier and the party that uses the information to apply for jobs to be customer. (Focus on the ***2 forces*** discussed in the lecture only). [5~7 mins]
2. Given your analysis in part a, recommend a competitive strategy for your company (recall there are four types of strategies). [5~7 mins]
3. Describe the information systems that could be used to support your business with respect to the five-component framework. Explain how the systems reflect your competitive strategy (e.g., how you can better make use of the system to lock in suppliers/customers, raise the entry barrier, enhance the services, etc,) [5~7 mins]

**Activity 4. Preview of Next Tutorial Readings**

Topic for next tutorial discussion:

“Big Data: A Challenge or an Opportunity? How do Firms Ride on the Wave of Big Data?”

Suggested Readings:

1. Noyes, K. (19th August 2015), ComputerWorld, “Why Big Data Isn’t Always the Answer?” <http://www.computerworld.com/article/2973436/big-data/why-big-data-isnt-always-the-answer.html>
2. Chamorro-Premuzic, T. (19th December 2016), Forbes, “Forget Big Data: What You Need is Deep Data”, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/tomaspremuzic/2016/12/19/forget-big-data-what-you-need-is-deep-data/#154bc60156e4>