School of Information Technology

**MIT 851: Digital Economy**

Lecturer: Prof Carina de Villiers

Last Revision: 10 June 2016

© Copyright reserved

### WELCOME

A warm welcome to you! We hope you are going to enjoy MIT 851!

Table of Contents

[WELCOME 2](#_Toc453318103)

[Section A: Information about the course 3](#_Toc453318104)

[Course description 3](#_Toc453318105)

[Course objectives 3](#_Toc453318106)

[Recommended study material 3](#_Toc453318107)

[Structure of the course 3](#_Toc453318108)

[Section B: Administration 4](#_Toc453318109)

[Lecturers’ details 4](#_Toc453318110)

[Lecture schedule 4](#_Toc453318111)

[Section C: Assessment 4](#_Toc453318112)

[Composition of marks 4](#_Toc453318113)

[Assessment plan 4](#_Toc453318114)

[Assignments 4](#_Toc453318115)

[Individual Assignment (Due date: Thursday 25 August 2016 before 14:00) 5](#_Toc453318116)

[Group Assignment (Due date: Thursday 22 September 2016 before 14:00) 5](#_Toc453318117)

# Section A: Information about the course

## Course description

Digital economy is a broad term that covers a wide range of commercial activities that are performed by means of an electronic web that can connect trading partners. The Internet and WWW are dramatically changing the way we transact goods and services. In this course we are going to examine how new information technologies and networks are changing the exchange of goods and services between buyers and sellers.

The course will provide you with the tools, skills and an understanding of the technology, business concepts and issues surrounding the emergence of the digital economy. You will develop an understanding of the current practices of electronic shopping, electronic distribution and electronic collaboration. We also explore several of the problems surrounding the digital economy such as security, legal aspects and adoption resistance amongst others.

## Course objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should have a general understanding of the:

* Internet and WWW
* Current obstacles for electronic business and its future
* Potential influence of the digital economy in general, with special reference to the Value Chain
* M-commerce
* Being able to develop the electronic business opportunities in an organisation
* The role of social networking in e-Commerce
* Disruptive technologies

## Recommended study material

Your course material will consist mainly of material which you researched yourself while completing the assignments:

* Where applicable, articles which will be made available on ClickUP and handouts may be provided during lectures
* Where selected videos may be recommended to be viewed by students; a URL will be provided.

## Structure of the course

During your preparation for assignments, it will be expected of you to research and work through academic articles and other material on your own. We will only cover certain parts of the topics during lectures and will spend more time in the lectures for other aspects of the digital economy, discussions and listening to guest lecturers.

The text book by Chaffey (e-format) is available on ClickUP in PDF format for personal use.

# Section B: Administration

## Lecturers’ details

Prof Carina de Villiers ([carina.devilliers@up.ac.za](mailto:carina.devilliers@up.ac.za))

Prof Alta van der Merwe ([alta.vdm@up.ac.za](mailto:alta.vdm@up.ac.za))

## Lecture schedule

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Time** | **Venue** | **Comments** |
| Thursday 21 July | 14:00 – 16:30 | Tswelopele | Lecture 1: Introduction to Digital Economy (Prof Carina de Villiers)  HCI and web site design (Prof Helene Gelderblom) |
| Thursday 25 August | 14:00 – 16:30 | Tswelopele | Lecture 2: Digital Economy (Prof Carina de Villiers) |
| Thursday 22 September | 14:00 – 16:30 | Tswelopele | Lecture 3: Presentation of Group Assignments (Prof Carina de Villiers) |
| Thursday 20 October | 14:00 – 16:30 | Tswelopele | Lecture 4: Disruptive Technologies (prof Alta van der Merwe) |
| Friday 18 November | 13:00 – 16:00 Open book examination | | |

# Section C: Assessment

## Composition of marks

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Semester mark | Individual Assignment  Group Assignment | 20  30 |
| Total semester mark | | 50 (need at least 40% to qualify for examination) |
| Examination | | 50 (subminimum of 40% for the exam) |
| Final mark | | 100 (need at least 50% to pass) |

## Assessment plan

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Due Date** | **Assessment** | **Topic** | **Marks** |
| Thursday 25 August before 14:00 | Individual Assignment | Website design | 20 |
| Thursday 22 September before 14:00 | Group Assignment | E-business | 30 |
| Friday 18 November 13:00 – 16:00 | Exam |  | 50 |

## Assignments

**Please ensure that you use the correct MIT cover page for your assignments. All references must be listed at the end of your assignment. Use the correct referencing technique. You may not only use Internet sources – academic journals must be included. Marks will be given for language and structure. Avoid plagiarism.**

**Assignments (hard copy) must be submitted in class and uploaded on ClickUP by the due date.**

### ****Individual Assignment (Due date: Thursday 25 August 2016 before 14:00)****

1. Give a brief overview of at least (but not limited to) ten best design principles and practices for Web sites.
2. Select any THREE JSE listed South African companies with Web sites that are used to conduct some form of E-commerce. Critically analyse these 3 companies with reference to their design and usability by applying “best design practices” to each one. Motivate any statement and suggest ways for improvement of any aspect you criticize.

HINT: For Question 2, tabulate your answer in matrix form so that the three companies can be easily compared by the reader. Suggested layout:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Design Principle | Company #1 | Company#2 | Company#3 | Narrative | Motivation |
| 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| n |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Whilst completing question 2 above, also critically evaluate the websites in terms of their use of social media. Define what is meant by social media, what it comprises of, which components these companies are using and what your recommendation in terms of the use of social media for the companies are (both from an internal and external perspective).

NOTE: A guest lecture will be presented by Prof Helene Gelderblom illustrating the concept of eye tracking in web design as part of the lecture on 21 July 2016.

### Group Assignment (Due date: Thursday 22 September 2016 before 14:00)

You are required to form your own groups with not more than 5 persons per group. It is VERY IMPORTANT that every member contributes to the assignment and students are reminded that they may indicate where a member did not contribute in a fair manner, in order to protect those students who worked hard and the group risks of a low mark.

Presentations must consist of Power Point slides as well as text in support of the Business plan and key features of the proposal. This must be handed in on the day of the presentation in bounded hard copy with ALL participants’ names clearly indicated as well as a statement that all members contributed to the completion of the group assignment.

In this assignment you have to develop the concept of an electronic business for a **South African** business. You may choose an existing business (without a web presence) or create your own business as no doubt many of you are budding entrepreneurs.

Step 1: Set up a business plan for your electronic business site. You may use any form of business plan that you know of or consult the following web sites:

<http://www.pitt.edu/~galletta/iplan.html>

<http://www.bplans.com/>

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/247574>

The business plan should not be more than fifteen typed pages and should include at least a paragraph on each of the following topics:

* Executive summary
* Pro forma budget: some of the estimate costs and direct or indirect revenues (if applicable).
* Advertising plan: overall budget and use of different media.
* Competitor analysis
* Target market analysis: Who are the customers?
* Startup: How are you going to get this off the ground? Eg: what ‘tools’ are you going to use?
* Site evaluation plans: How will you evaluate the success of your web site.

Step 2: You must provide an example of your proposed website’s key pages. You are NOT expected to build a fully functional web based application but use any means to create representations of the key pages of your proposed site for your business using any tools that you wish (HINT: there are many free ways of doing this so start on Google!). We expect you to use your creativity here, as well as what you will learn during the course on e-business, m-commerce and social media.

Step 3: You will be required to present your business plan and your website using example pages to the class on Thursday 22 September and will be allocated 10 minutes for your presentation and 5 minutes for Q&A. You will be evaluated by both your fellow class mates and your lecturers. These time constraints will be managed very diligently in order to allow equal presentation time for all groups.

**Very important:**

The business plan must be in such a format that you can use it to convince the CEO of the business that it is a good idea to create an electronic business, as well as be convincing to a bank manager to give you a loan to develop the electronic business. And as for your website example, make it something that you are proud of and could sell conceptually!

1. Chunking