



**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
BUS 1410 – MARKETING  
FALL 2017**

**GROUP PROJECT OUTLINE**

The purpose of this project is to provide you with an opportunity to apply the various marketing ideas and concepts discussed in class in a real-life situation. Teams will prepare a presentation (15-20 minutes) and accompanying report (20-30 pages - including appendices) addressing the issues listed below, as well as any others that the team feels are important.

**Formation of Teams:**

Teams will consist of roughly 4-5 students (depending on class size). There will be no more than twelve groups total in the class. Please note that ALL teams must be formed by the fourth week of classes. Students not in a team by then will be assigned to a group by the instructor.

Because this is a GROUP project, equal participation of each team member is crucial and expected. ***I take this issue very seriously.*** Individual participation in the project will be assessed by both me and detailed anonymous group-peer evaluations. Consistent negative feedback will adversely impact a student's grade. It is YOUR responsibility to let me know as soon as possible if there are problems within the group.

**Grading and Deadline:**

The complete project assignment will account for thirty (30) percent of the final grade with the presentation and written report accounting for 10%, and 20% respectively.

Your grade on the team project and presentation will be based on:

1. How well-researched and thoughtful your team's analysis is;
2. How well your team is able to integrate marketing concepts into your analysis;
3. Whether your team's recommendations are appropriate and well-supported;
4. How well your research and analysis is presented in both written and oral formats;
5. Feedback given by team members.

Student final written reports (softcopy in "WORD" format and hardcopy) must be submitted by the beginning of class on **Thursday, November 23.** Late submissions will not be accepted. Presentation dates are November 23, 28, and 30.

**I will be available on a regular basis to provide direction and suggestions. It is your job as a group to get in touch with me in order to receive constructive feedback regarding your progress.  
Do not wait too long to ask for assistance if a challenge should arise!**

**GOOD LUCK AND HAVE FUN!!!**

## General Information

Each team must create a fictional product or service that they would like to bring to the market. The main objective of this project is to provide a clear, accurate, and detailed marketing plan for that new product/service.

### GENERAL OBJECTIVES:

In general, the project will require you to conduct three main tasks:

**1. An industry analysis**

You will need to analyze the industry of the product/offering you have created. This basically corresponds to the uncontrollable and environmental analysis conducted by most firms. Therefore, this examination must have a comprehensive and informing coverage of all the relevant macro-environmental issues, market analysis, competitor analysis, and other related material. Trends, opportunities and threats of the industry must also be carefully outlined and analyzed.

**2. An assessment of the new company or product/offering**

This analysis will include assessing the company (new or existing) being studied and essentially requires an internal marketing audit of the company (or your team if you will make up the company) including a deep and critical assessment of its internal strengths and weaknesses.

**3. Summarize your proposed marketing efforts (the marketing plan)**

In this task, you will bring all you work together into a comprehensive marketing plan. While the structure of a marketing plan will often differ from one company to another, most marketing plans including five main sections:

- a. Executive Summary and Table of Contents
- b. Situation Analysis
- c. Marketing Strategy
- d. Financial Projections
- e. Implementation Controls

A brief description of your team's proposed research project (hard copy) is due at the beginning of class on **Tuesday, October 17**. The document must include:

1. An identification of the new product/service and a few words about the team's main objectives.
2. A **very brief** discussion of why (at this stage) the team believes there may be a business opportunity stemming from introducing this product/service.

The document should be limited to 1-2 page and each member must sign this document agreeing to undertake the task listed. This is NOT a graded component of your project but rather a simple commitment to the work/topic. However, not submitting this proposal on time and as expected WILL negatively impact your grade as a group.

## **The Written Report (MARKETING PLAN)**

The following outline offers a sequenced structure for your written report and is very similar to a typical marketing plan. Please follow this outline for the written assignment. Some sections will be longer (or more important) than others due to the particular nature of the product/market being analyzed. Please refer to the appendix in the text for another example of a marketing plan.

### **1. Table of Content**

### **2. Executive Summary**

The main objective here is to give the reader (me) a quick overview and give you (the group) the first opportunity to “sell” your idea. While not always the case, this section is often written after all other sections are completed.

### **3. Company Description**

This section offers the reader insights into your team (company) and the proposed product/service.

### **4. Situation Analysis**

This section focuses on understanding the current (and future) states of the market. SWOT analysis is one of the most used situation analysis tools to assess a firm’s status within its environment. While, formats of SWOT analyses differ across companies, most will take on the following general format:

| <b>Internal Factors</b> | <b>Strengths</b>     | <b>Weaknesses</b> |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Management              |                      |                   |
| Offerings               |                      |                   |
| Marketing               |                      |                   |
| Personnel/HR            |                      |                   |
| Finance                 |                      |                   |
| Manufacturing and R&D   |                      |                   |
| <b>External Factors</b> | <b>Opportunities</b> | <b>Threats</b>    |
| Consumer/Social         |                      |                   |
| Competitive             |                      |                   |
| Technological           |                      |                   |
| Economic                |                      |                   |
| Legal/Regulatory        |                      |                   |

The idea is to list all possible issues that could have a positive or negative impact on the company or business venture. However, listing isn’t a goal in itself; marketers **MUST** develop insights (deep understandings) of the main and critical issues. Specifically, you will need to use your SWOT to provide detailed analyses of the following:

#### **a. The Industry: What are the main trends in the market?**

The team must provide a detailed review of the relevant industry including the definition and size of the industry as well as general trends and growth projections.

#### **b. The Competitor(s): Who will we compete against?**

The team must identify the major competitors in the industry and their market sizes. This section will also include a discussion of any differential advantages and liabilities of these key competitors have in terms of product lines and/or marketing strategies.

**c. The Customer: What insights do we have into customer trends and behavior?**

The group must provide a detailed discussion of what they know about customers in the market. What drives consumer behavior? What are their needs/wants? What are their perceptions of value? The section will also provide the reader with the group's insights into the segments existing in the market.

**5. Marketing Strategy**

**a. Mission**

A broad statement of the strategy you wish to pursue. Answer the question: why does our company exist?

**b. Marketing and Product Objectives**

This section provides the reader with the key marketing and financial objectives for your company within a certain time-frame (usually 1 or 5 years). It should include a clear statement of the overall goals of your marketing strategy. Goals should be specific and measurable (such as sales, market share, profit, growth rates, etc.) or more strategic goals (such as "capturing a leading position in a certain market"). Be as specific as possible and lay out as many goals as you feel are appropriate to guide the strategy. Goals can be both non-financial and financial in nature.

**c. Target Market(s)**

In this section, the group must define and discuss the segment the company plans to target and *why*. Support this discussion considering competitive issues, consumer trends, etc. as well as criteria discussed in class. Groups should also attempt to calculate the potential of this target market and their expected share of that market given the company marketing program.

**d. Point of Difference(s)**

This section should include a clear and concise discussion of the positive points of difference that makes your company's product/service stand out relative to competing products/services. The points of difference should be the focal point of a unique selling proposition. Answer the question: Why would a consumer buy our product/service?

**e. Positioning**

This section offers a general discussion of how your company wants the product or service to be viewed or perceived in the consumer's mind relative to the competition.

**6. The Marketing Program**

**a. Product/Branding Strategy**

This section includes a brief discussion of the product/service including differentiating points (features, packaging, performance, etc.). Description of any research & development needed in support of your product strategy. What (if any) branding strategy will you pursue? How will you develop and enhance brand equity for your product(s)? Are there any unique elements to the service associated with your product that will help you generate a competitive advantage?

**b. Price Strategy**

This section includes a broad description of pricing strategy (parity, premium, price leader, etc.). Are there any novel (differentiating) features of pricing strategy?

**c. Promotion Strategy**

This section includes the different ways the company will promote the product/service including: advertising, personal selling, direct marketing, sales promotions, and/or publicity

**d. Place (physical distribution) Strategy**

This section will include a broad description of the distribution strategy (channel structure, number of intermediaries, etc.). Are there any novel (differentiating) aspects of your distribution strategy (e.g., selling direct or through the internet when the competition does not)?

**e. Customer Service**

This section discusses any elements needed to deliver acceptable levels of customer service.

**7. Financial Data and Projections**

What human resources, funds, corporate assets, training and anything else will be required to make your strategy work (be as specific as possible but do keep in mind this isn't an accounting course!). Think: breakeven analysis, sales forecasts, expense forecasts, etc.

**8. Implementation Plan**

Develop a step-by-step plan to roll out your product/service (this might be done as a month-by-month plan, for example)

**9. Contingency Plan**

What are the main difficulties and risk(s) you may face? What are the worst/best-case scenarios?

**10. Epilogue**

While not part of most marketing plans, for the sake of this assignment, students must provide a final 1 or 2 page reflection on what they learned about the company and industry studied (i.e. what did you not know at the start of the project that you do now?)

**11. References**

Students must provide a detailed bibliography and list of all sources of information used. Any accepted style of references is accepted but particular claims or information within the paper must be cited as footnotes on the same page. For Internet references you must include detailed information in the bibliography, not just the URL.

### **General Writing Tips and Format Guidelines for Papers**

- Keep your audience and your purpose in mind. Your goal should be to "express," not "impress." Therefore, when choosing words and constructing sentences and paragraphs, keep it clear, keep it simple, and keep it moving.
- Projects should be stapled, not bound.
- All pages must be numbered.
- Use 1 inch top, bottom, and side margins.
- Use 12 point font.
- 1.5 space lines throughout.
- All tables, figures, and exhibits must be labeled and titled.
- If tables or figures show data from some other published source, the source must be noted.
- Appendices, tables, figures, etc., must be referenced in the body of the paper, and must be written such that the reader need not read the appendix in order to grasp your key points.
- Proofread your paper carefully and correct all errors.

### Advice and Suggestions for Presentations

1. Use visual aides to organize the presentation. Prepare your presentation using software such as Microsoft PowerPoint or Prezi. Spend most of your time on the presentation content, with less time allocated for selecting color, fonts, pictures, etc.
2. Use PowerPoint slides as your "notes" during the presentation. Don't put all of the detail on these slides.
3. Consider other visual aids that will help the audience better grasp your ideas.
4. Use body language (i.e., hand movements, smile) for emphasis and to show your enthusiasm for the presentation and topic. "Sell" your ideas to the audience!
5. Maintain eye contact with people in the audience. If you are nervous, seek out friendly faces first, which will give you confidence to look at others.
6. Move around, but not excessively.
7. Use the presentation to communicate your knowledge of the project, command of the marketing language and topics.
8. Dress, act, and speak professionally. Dress code for the presenting teams is business. Remember that I will rely on verbal and nonverbal cues in assessing the quality of your team, ideas, and presentation.
9. Practice your presentation a minimum of three times as a group. Time constraints in your oral presentation often require you to address only those issues which you think are most important. Be prepared!
10. The presentation will be graded based on the following weighted average scale:

| Attribute                         | Importance<br>(W <sub>i</sub> ) | Instructor's Belief (grade)<br>(B <sub>i</sub> ) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |           |    |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----------|----|
|                                   |                                 | Poor                                             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Excellent |    |
| 1. Presentation (Content)         | 4.00                            | 1                                                | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9         | 10 |
| 2. Professionalism                | 2.50                            | 1                                                | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9         | 10 |
| 3. Quality and use of Visual Aids | 1.50                            | 1                                                | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9         | 10 |
| 4. Questions / Discussion         | 2.00                            | 1                                                | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9         | 10 |

$$\text{Oral Presentation Points} = \sum_{i=1}^4 (W_i)(B_i) = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} / 100$$

## **Academic Code of Conduct**

### **UPEI Code of Conduct Statement**

Students in this course and in all classes at UPEI are expected to complete their course work, assignments and exams with a high level of honesty and integrity. Academic dishonesty on the part of a student, such as plagiarism, cheating, falsification and fabrication of documents and records, unauthorized collaboration, unauthorized use of recording devices, submitting a piece of work from another course for credit, or aiding other students' academic dishonesty, will be subject to academic sanctions as outlined in the UPEI Academic Regulations 20. For more detailed information about academic dishonesty and how such incidents will be handled by your instructors and by the institution you are encouraged to familiarize yourself with the contact at <http://www.upei.ca/programsandcourses/regulation-20-academic-dishonesty>.

Students committing these offenses are also subject to penalty ranging from a "0" on the assignment or test, to an "F" for failing the course. Furthermore, the Dean's and the Registrar's offices will be notified of any instances of academic dishonesty and will obtain the respective documentation for their records.

### **A Few Words about Plagiarism**

The most common offense in the case of semester projects is plagiarism. Plagiarism is the act of using another person's words, ideas, or solutions without acknowledging the source and includes the unacknowledged (undocumented) use of someone else's idea, even if it isn't their exact words (May and May, 1996).

The simplest form of plagiarism is the use of small portions of the written work of another (either word for word or paraphrased). More complex and severe instances include the use of the outline and bibliography of another person's paper, copying significant portions of another person's work (e.g., entire sentences, paragraphs, or sections), and the misrepresentation of an entire paper as your own work (e.g., the purchase of a paper or the use of an entire paper from a previous semester). Plagiarism can also apply to non-textual material (e.g., graphs and figures).

Wilhoit (1994) lists the following as types of plagiarism (p. 161-164):

- Buying a paper from a research service or a term paper mill
- Turning in another student's work without that student's knowledge
- Turning in a paper a peer has written for the student
- Copying a paper from a source text without proper acknowledgment
- Copying materials from a source text, supplying proper documentation, but leaving out quotation marks
- Paraphrasing materials from a source text without appropriate documentation
- Turning in a paper from a "free term paper" website

Plagiarism also includes looking at former students' work, using unacknowledged Internet solutions, and any other act that represents others' thoughts or work as your own.

### **What to do?**

Semester project are normally completed using information from other sources. This is appropriate as long as the material you include in your assignment is properly cited and referenced. There are several generally accepted styles of referencing used in academic work. I am available for any questions you may have regarding styles.