

MBAK 6895

Case Analysis Report Assignment

In study of the case method, you learned about the six sections of a case analysis report:

- I. Background
- II. Problem Definition
- III. SWOT Analysis
- IV. Identification of Alternatives
- V. Analysis of Alternatives
- VI. Recommendation

You will follow the six steps of the case method in analyzing Build-A-Bear Workshop, a company offering delivery services for food, beverage, and groceries. The aim of the case analysis assignment is to recommend a marketing strategy that Build-A-Bear Workshop should pursue to support an organization objective of business growth.

The six sections of the case analysis report are summarized in terms of content and recommended approach to take.

Background (10 points)

In this section, you will introduce background facts about the company, Build-A-Bear Workshop. The section establishes the context of the case. The key to writing this section is to strike a balance between identifying relevant facts and events in company history without going into an exhaustive historical account of the company. A misstep observed in many case reports is an author's Background section is so long they "run out of gas" by the time they get to crucial sections of Analysis of Alternatives and Recommendation.

Your approach to this section should be to demonstrate you have an understanding of the company's business and awareness of key characteristics or events that shaped the company's direction. In short, you understand how the company got to its current position as of the writing of your report.

Problem Definition (10 points)

In this section, you should briefly identify the marketing problem facing Build-A-Bear Workshop. Notice the emphasis on marketing; given this course is about marketing strategy the problem should not focus on finance, human resources, or other functional area. Could problems in other

functional areas affect marketing? Yes, but if that is the case be sure to emphasize the impact on marketing.

This section should be concise, not more than one paragraph. The problem can be a negative or positive situation faced by the company that has implications for marketing strategy. Note that the section title is singular; identify one problem and one problem only.

Situation Analysis (20 points)

Before identifying possible solutions to the problem, you must first conduct a situation analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Your SWOT Analysis should have four subheadings (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats).

Use bullet-point format to present the SWOT characteristics. For each characteristic you list, it should be followed with a brief explanation (1-2 sentences) to justify inclusion in the analysis and its classification (i.e., why it is relevant).

Identification of Alternatives (10 points)

In this section, you should list possible alternatives for resolving the problem identified in the previous section. You should list three alternatives; maintaining current strategy (status quo) can be an option if you believe it is a viable choice. Be specific in the alternatives identified. For example, "change pricing approach" is too broad; "use penetration pricing to gain market share" is a more actionable alternative.

Note: Set up a separate section heading rather than combining Identification of Alternatives and Analysis of Alternatives.

Evaluation of Alternatives (30 points)

This section will be where you thoroughly evaluate the three strategic options you have identified. It should contain subheadings that correspond with your three alternatives. Discuss both the pros and cons for each alternative. Incorporate facts from your research to provide support for your evaluation of pros and cons of each alternative.

The purpose of this section is lay out relevant facts for and against an alternative. Ideally, thoroughly weighing facts in this section should lead you to a clear recommendation.

Recommendation (15 points)

This section of the report should identify the alternative you recommend. It should also have a rationale for why it is the best alternative. Also,

communicate why your recommendation is superior to the other two alternatives. You must choose one and only one alternative!

Notes

- In addition to the point values for each report section, writing quality is worth 5 points of the 100-point total for the case analysis report (spelling, grammar, organization and following guidelines).
- Your own research on Build-A-Bear Workshop is essential for understanding its background as well as internal and external factors relevant to the company. Cite sources in a Bibliography section at the end of the document using APA style. To streamline the research process, you are encouraged to contribute to a class bibliography of information sources. You may use any sources from the shared bibliography as long as you cite them in the bibliography for your report.
- The report is due by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, October 9. Upload to the dropbox folder for this assignment.
- Utilize the discussion topic set up for your case. You and 5-6 other students are in a discussion group. Use the discussion topic to ask each other questions, float ideas, or discuss the case in general. Keep in mind that you will submit your own work; the discussions are to help you during preliminary work on the case.
- This assignment is worth 20% of overall course grade.

Document Preparation

- Report should have cover page with case name and your name, course info, & date
- Entire document should have 1" margin on all sides
- Use 12-point font, double-spaced
- Insert page numbers
- The six sections are the major headings (e.g., Background, Problem Definition)
- In Evaluation of Alternatives section, each alternative should be discussed under its own subheading
- Any sources used should be cited where appropriate in the report and listed in a bibliography at end of report.