



MBA 560 Milestone One Guidelines and Rubric

This milestone establishes your chosen organization's direction within the marketplace. This is important because it drives the subsequent activities, milestones, and the final project. Without a strong sense of the organization's purpose within the marketplace, knowledge of consumer trends, and how to meet target market needs at the appropriate price, management is less likely to maximize the efficiency of business activities and more likely to miss fully meeting the needs of its chosen target market. This milestone establishes how the organization will differentiate itself from its competition through branding with a unique product or service offering designed to meet specific consumer needs or desires that are shaped by their demographics, personality, or buying style.

Specifically, the following **critical elements** must be addressed:

Section Two: Branding and Idea Context

Building on your project idea from MBA 515, write a short paper that addresses the following:

- Corporate mission and how the new product or service aligns with it
- Defining features of the product(s)/service(s)
 - How the product will be marketed internally and externally
 - How the company is differentiating from competition
 - Alignment of pricing with market position and corporate mission
- Your substantiated opinion of brand effectiveness

Section Three: Defining Product or Service Need

For your idea, continue your paper by addressing the following:

- Behavioral and/or lifestyle demographics of the targeted consumer or buying style of organizational buyer and why they are a good choice
- What unsatisfied need the product/service fulfills
- How the customer/buyer seeks information to fill the need
- How the product is purchased (characterize the buying situation)
- Why your chosen target market is the best choice

Section Six: Pricing

Using the idea that you have chosen, finish your paper by covering the following:

- Explain the fixed and variable costs and how these fit with the company's short- and long-term goals. Use a narrative with a table to show calculations for cost categories. Provide reasonable estimates for each of the categories. Specific or in-depth financial analysis is not necessary.
- Examine competitors' pricing and explain reasoning for differences.
- Estimate how much you think the target market is willing to pay for your product/service. Is this due to preferences for social responsibility, ethical behavior, or other intangibles?
- What pricing strategy (skimming, penetration, economy, or premium) is most appropriate and why?

Guidelines for Submission: Milestone One should utilize double spacing, 12-point Times New Roman font, one-inch margins, and discipline-appropriate citations. It should be 8-10 pages in length and follow all APA formatting requirements.

Critical Elements	Proficient (100%)	Needs Improvement (70%)	Not Evident (0%)	Value
Context: Defining Features	Lays out the key defining features of company's brand and how these features drive business decisions	Lays out defining features of company's brand and how they drive business decisions, but response omits key features, contains inaccuracies, or connections between brand and decisions are perfunctory	Does not lay out defining features of company's brand and how these features drive business decisions	8
Context: Fits	Assesses how new idea fits with company's existing brand and how that impacts business plan, supported by relevant research and analysis	Assesses how new idea fits with company's existing brand and impact on business plan, supported by research and analysis, but response is cursory, omits key details, contains inaccuracies, or support is not relevant	Does not assess how new idea fits with company's existing brand and how that impacts business plan, supported by research and analysis	8
Context: Effectiveness	Evaluates effectiveness of existing branding efforts, including implications for new product or service, supported by relevant analysis	Evaluates effectiveness of existing branding efforts, including implications for new product or service, supported by analysis, but response is cursory, omits key details, contains inaccuracies, or support is not relevant	Does not evaluate effectiveness of existing branding efforts, including implications for new product or service, supported by analysis	8
Need: Target Market: Basic Demographics	Analyzes key demographic features of target market, supported by relevant research	Analyzes demographic features of target market, supported by research, but response is cursory, omits critical features, contains inaccuracies, or support is not relevant	Does not analyze key demographic features of target market, supported by research	8

Need: Target Market: Other	Analyzes other behavioral or psychographic characteristics of target market, supported by relevant research	Analyzes other behavioral or psychographic characteristics of target market, supported by research, but response is cursory, omits key characteristics, contains inaccuracies or support is not relevant	Does not analyze other behavioral or psychographic characteristics of target market, supported by research	8
Need: Want or Need	Analyzes how new product or service meets a specific want or need of target market, supported by relevant market research	Analyzes how new product or service meets a specific want or need of target market, supported by market research, but response is cursory, omits key details, contains inaccuracies, or support is not relevant	Does not analyze how new product or service meets a specific want or need of target market, supported by market research	8
Need: Why	Defends choice of target market relative to product success, based on analysis of target market's characteristics, needs, and wants	Defends choice of target market relative to product success based on analysis of target market's characteristics, needs, and wants, but defense is cursory, illogical, contains inaccuracies, or is not well-supported	Does not defend choice of target market relative to product success, based on analysis of target market's characteristics, needs, and wants	8
Pricing: Costs	Determines fixed and variable costs associated with new good or service and how costs fit with company objectives, supporting narrative with table showing calculations and assumptions	Determines fixed and variable costs and how fit with company objectives, supporting narrative with table showing calculations and assumptions, but response omits key details, contains inaccuracies, or is based on faulty assumptions	Does not determine fixed and variable costs associated with new good or service and how costs fit with company objectives, supporting narrative with table showing calculations and assumptions	8
Pricing: Pay	Judges how much target market is willing and able to pay for product or service, using target market analysis and research on close competitors' prices to justify response	Judges how much target market is willing and able to pay for product or service, using target market analysis and research on close competitors' prices to justify response, but response is cursory, contains inaccuracies, or is not well-supported by research and analysis	Does not judge how much target market is willing and able to pay for product or service, using target market analysis and research on close competitors' prices to justify response	8
Pricing: Preferences	Evaluates whether targeted consumers are willing and able to pay more for product or service if it aligns with their preferences for socially responsible and ethical behavior, justifying response with evidence	Evaluates whether targeted consumers are willing and able to pay more for product or service if it aligns with their preferences for socially responsible and ethical behavior, justifying response with evidence, but response is cursory, contains inaccuracies, or is not well-supported by evidence	Does not evaluate whether targeted consumers are willing and able to pay more for product or service if it aligns with their preferences for socially responsible and ethical behavior, justifying response with evidence	8

Pricing: Strategy	Justifies pricing strategy and price selection for new product or service in light of analysis	Justifies pricing strategy and price selection for new product or service in light of analysis, but justification is cursory, illogical, contains inaccuracies, or is poorly-supported	Does not justify pricing strategy and price selection for new product or service in light of analysis	8
Writing (Mechanics/Citation)	Minor errors related to organization, grammar, style, and citations	Some errors related to organization, grammar, style, and citations	Major errors related to organization, grammar, style, and citations	12
Earned Total				100%