Group Project Outline

Objective
The primary purpose of the group project is to provide you with an opportunity to apply the critical information from the course to an area in the real world. Additionally, this project will also expose you to the real world business environment where skills such as dividing workload, accepting responsibilities, coordinating individual efforts, communicating effectively, effective conflict resolution, and written and oral presentation are immensely valuable. Each group is responsible for agreeing upon, establishing and abiding by its own work norms and expectations equitably. Normally I will assume that each team member has contributed a fair share to the project. If you feel these assumptions are breaking down in your group, you must first raise and discuss the problem with the group without a delay. If no quick solution is reached you must contact me ASAP and most definitely well in advance of the submission of the final report.

Group Formation
Each group will consist of three to four students (teams must self-form by September 09, 2003. If, however, you are still not in a group, I will step in and assign you to a group.

Grading
The grading for the group project will be made based on the quality of the report, the content and the organization of the presentation, and how well the group responded to the other groups’ questions. Grading for the group project may or may not be the same to all students in the same group. In addition, your contribution will also be evaluated by your peer at the end group presentations. The breakdown of the 65 points for group project is discussed below.

Specific Tasks
Imagine yourself to be a marketing research expert. A company has approached you with a marketing problem or opportunity and has asked you to conduct some preliminary marketing research for them. Now your group will define the marketing research problem or opportunity, design a marketing research project, develop questionnaire, conduct field work, analyze findings, and develop a set of recommendations to address the marketing problem. A few examples are given below for illustrative purpose. Your group may, however, choose any marketing problem/opportunity you wish, based on personal experience or interest in a real world company.

1. You may choose a well-established product category (e.g. Ready-to-eat Cereals or Health-foods, or SUV’s), choose a well-established brand (e.g. Kellogg Raisin Bran or Campbell’s Hearty Country Vegetables, or PT Cruiser) and reposition it to meet the needs of a new target segment.
2. You may look at durable product category (TV, computer, or any product that we use over a period of time); think about the needs and wants of their current/potential consumers and suggest product reformulation or new product.
3. You could look at services (tourism, retailing, financial services, e-tailing, airlines, universities etc.) or industrial products (like tires, chemicals, transportation etc.) and address one of the above issues.
4. You may also consider a new online shopping outlet for a particular product category (e.g. health services which may be different from WebMD, or handcrafted art products etc.). You need to study literature to first briefly explain why dot.com’s failed and what your recommended site will learn from the past and serve consumers’ needs effectively and efficiently.
5. You may simply explore questions, such as,
   a. Do younger consumers have different attitude toward computers than older consumers?
   b. Did boys exhibit a difference shopping behavior during this back-to-season than girls?

Group Project Components and Dates
Preliminary Project Proposal (3 points): Each group must email to me a 2-page memo indicating its preliminary thoughts on two or three topic ideas by the start of lecture on September 16, 2003. The memo should briefly indicate what you are interested to do and why you think you have an interesting problem. Also, mention who will act as the contact person for the group. After reviewing the ideas and upon discussion with the group (if necessary), I will select one idea and return the proposal to you by October 07, 2003. For a sample proposal see course homepage. I would give the sample proposal a score of 2 out of 3.

Any proposal turned in late will reduce final project score by 25%.

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Final Project Proposal (7 points): Upon receipt of my response groups must turn in (by email) the complete title and description of their project topic by the start of lecture on September 25, 2003. Here, you should cite at least five secondary data sources to motivate the objective of your research.

For a sample proposal see course homepage. I would give the sample proposal a score of 5 out of 7. While their introduction and background were very good, their approach to the problem, (hypotheses and research component questions) and primary research section were not well thought out. Your score will depend on how well your proposal identifies the problem and subsequently addresses the issues you highlight in your problem identification section as well as clarity and appropriateness of the questions and the professionalism of the entire proposal.

The format of the final proposal should be as follows:

- **Introduction:**
  - Not to exceed 1/3 (one-third) page.
- **Environmental Context/Background of the Problem:**
  - Not to exceed 2/3 (two-third) page.
  - Use at least five secondary data sources.
- **Problem/Opportunity Identification and Formulation:**
  - Not to exceed 1/2 page.
  - Introduce management decision problem and marketing research problem.
- **Approach to the problem:**
  - Not to exceed 1 page.
  - Introduce research component questions and hypotheses.
- **A list of secondary data sources:**
  - Not to exceed 1/2 page.
  - Sources you have used and/or will be using to support/explain your findings from the primary research.
- **Primary data collection:**
  - Not to exceed 1 page.
  - Describe what data collection method you plan to use to get answers to research component questions and test the hypotheses (survey/focus group/experiment/observation?).
  - Explain who your survey respondents or experimental subjects will be and why.
- **Breakdown of the responsibilities among group members (who will be in charge of what).**

**Review of data collection method (5 + 5 points):** You need to turn in (by email) a draft of the questionnaire or an outline for focus group discussion by the start of lecture on October 21, 2003. Reading Chapter 11 from your text will be very helpful. Also, do individual problem set 2 and participate in the case discussion on October 16. Finally, you are most welcome to discuss the format and design of the questionnaire with me. I will approve the final questionnaire before you administer them. Prior to your field work, email me the final questionnaire by the start of lecture October 28, 2003.

**Field work:** Preferably between October 28 and November 06, 2003.

**Data Analysis:** Preferably between November 11 and 18, 2003. Be sure to attend November 04 and 13 computer lab sessions to learn more on data analysis with SPSS.

**Final Report (20 points):** All group project reports must be submitted at the start of lecture on December 04, 2003. Do not email me the final report. Turn in two hard copies of your report.

Your report should be at least 10 pages long (1.5 spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margin, Times New Roman font) but not exceed 12 pages. FYI, the font size of this course outline is 10 point. This length does not include appendices. It should be spiral bound and contain everything described below in the format of the report.

For a sample report see course homepage. Remember, the sample report is for illustrative purpose only. Because of its special goals and focus on distributors (instead of end-consumers) its format is not necessarily completely representative. Your report should contain relevant information to address the questions you have in mind. While
the sample report was a very good one, I would give the report a maximum score of 16 out of 20. It was too long (single-spaced 16 pages!). You need to be concise!

The format of the report should be as follows:

- **Executive Summary**
  - Not to exceed 1 page.
- **Table of Contents**
- **Environmental Context/Background of the Problem**:
  - Not to exceed ⅔ page.
  - **Use at least five secondary data sources.**
- **Problem/Opportunity Identification and Formulation**:
  - Not to exceed ½ page.
  - Introduce management decision problem and marketing research problem.
- **Approach to the problem**:
  - Not to exceed 1 page.
  - Introduce research component questions and hypotheses.
- **Choice of Method of research (Primary data collection: A Survey)**
  - Not to exceed 1 page.
  - Describe what data collection method you used to get answers to research component questions and test the hypotheses (survey/focus group/experiment/ observation?).
  - Explain who your survey respondents or experimental subjects were and why.
  - Discuss what variables you will be using in your analysis and rationale for them.
- **Findings – Present and discuss your findings in three sub-sections**:
  - Sub-section 1: Start with this. Include a brief introduction to your survey respondents (who they were, demographic distribution etc.)
  - Sub-section 2: Descriptive part of the findings. It should contain a few relevant tables and graphs to describe what you found.
  - Sub-section 3: Analytical part of the findings. It should contain statistical analyses of the data. It can include any or all of the following analyses:
    - At least a couple of tests of means or proportions.
    - T-tests
    - Correlation analyses and/or a regression analysis
- **Implications and Recommendations for Management** – this section must be based on your findings.
- **Conclusions** – this section should end with a summary of findings, limitations of your research, and future extensions and possibilities.
- **Appendices** – include the following in the order stated below:
  - Additional graphs and tables that you did not include in the main body of the report
  - Handout size print (6 slides per page) of your PowerPoint presentation.
  - Final questionnaire (blank)
  - Preliminary proposal
  - Final proposal
  - Preliminary Questionnaire
  - All filed out questionnaires ( unabridged)

Your score will depend on how well you address each of the issues above. Additionally, your writing style/clarity, effort, and creativity will also contribute to your score.

*Group Presentation (20 points)*: On December 02, 04, and 09, 2003 groups will make presentations in the following order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Groups</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tue, 12/02</td>
<td>5, 1, and 8</td>
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<td>Thu, 12/04</td>
<td>3, 7, and 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue, 12/09</td>
<td>9, 4, and 2</td>
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- Presentation length: Minimum 15 minutes, maximum 20 minutes per group
Presentation tools:
✓ Microsoft PowerPoint slides. (In case you decide to use overhead projector let me know at least a week prior to your presentation so I can arrange it for you.)
✓ Number of slides: maximum 15 slides; preferably 12 slides (to be within time limit).
✓ Follow the format of your report to structure your presentation with relatively more emphasis on your primary data collection methods, findings, implications, and recommendation. For a sample presentation see course home page.
✓ Business attire required for presenting group.
✓ Attendance is mandatory regardless of presentation.

Also, each group will turn in a floppy diskette containing electronic copies of both the final report and the PowerPoint presentation.

Peer Evaluation (10 points): On December 09, 2003, after all group presentations are complete each team member will be responsible for evaluating the performance of other group members. These evaluations are not shared among any group members and will be held confidential. This is your opportunity to evaluate the contributions made by your team members.

Group Information at a Glance (Save this for your record)

Group # __________________________

Members:

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<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
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• Group leader: __________________________________________

• Project Title: __________________________________________
