



Module report for July 2019 assessment session

Level: Level 4

Module: Digital Marketing

Please refer to the July 2019 assessment

Overarching performance:

A very good performance from the majority of candidates.

Candidates that performed very well submitted work that was indicative of the strengths listed below. Submissions often had a very commercial focus, offering practical and relevant recommendations for digital marketing.

There were for a number of reasons for failures, predominantly identified in the list of weaknesses below and there was often a lack of application of referenced theory.

Strengths

- Some outstanding practical and professional submissions. Clearly following the scenario of supporting customer acquisition and in the context of their chosen organisation.
- Evidence of wider reading and secondary research that was intelligently applied in order to answer the tasks.
- Excellent structure and professional writing, offering a professional, business-like set of documents but still addressing the academic audience.
- There was some very contemporary digital marketing knowledge in evidence in the plans developed for Task 2.

Weaknesses

- Limited analysis and assessment where requested in Task 2(a) and 3(c). Critical thinking skills, including assessing, analysing and justifying were often limited.
- The scenario and need to focus on customer acquisition were often neglected, especially in Task 2.
- Limited usage, and application, of the Harvard Referencing System.
- The integration and coordination of both digital marketing communications and more traditional offline communications lacked focus in Tasks 1(c) and 3(a).
- Lack of credible sources used to underpin work. An over-reliance on blog articles that lack credibility, relevance and validity.
- Where asked to 'illustrate', there were a lack of relevant examples provided.
- Using word count to explain theory, for example SMART for objectives, as opposed to applying the framework correctly in order to answer the given task.
- Use of support images, tables and graphs without reference or explanation/rationale for inclusion.

Task	Strengths	Weaknesses
Task 1(a)	Good use of headers and presentation of task. A breadth of information that offered insight across all required sections.	Listed some basic information, often not using the full A4 page. Lack of balanced focused across all required sections. Included visuals (brand logos and product imagery), tables and data not required but also not explained.
Task 1(b)	Most candidates identified clear and varied benefits. There was some good contextualisation to the chosen organisations. The concept of a vision was clearly linked to the benefits identified.	Weak answers were able to identify some benefits but lacked contextualisation with the organisation. A lack of research and wider-reading resulted in benefits identified being speculative and lacking reason. There was a lack of joined-up thinking between the vision and the benefits to online activities.
Task 1(c)	This was often well referenced, candidates showed evidence of wider reading and good secondary research. Some excellent examples of integration across online and offline marketing. Intelligent consideration of supporting customer acquisition linked to each example. Strong visual content used to illustrate key points made.	Some candidates failed to provide real-life examples of integration, offering hypothetical ideas or recommendations. Customer acquisition was not considered in examples; so not focused on the scenario.
Task 2(a)	Clear evidence of reading and secondary research to analyse the online behaviour of a chosen segment. Online behaviour linked to customer acquisition.	Analysis, a detailed examination, was often neglected with candidates offering a description in its place. Customer acquisition was not considered in relation to online behaviour; so not focused on the scenario.

Task 2(b)	Detailed personas or profiles were produced using referenced.	Failed to follow guidance and present findings in a professional way, such as a persona or profile.
	Able to intelligently apply the SMART framework/5Ss when developing digital marketing objectives.	Objectives were generic and did not focus on supporting customer retention, often erring towards customer acquisition.
	Digital marketing objectives were focused on the given context, customer acquisition.	Offered a breakdown and explanation of SMART and/or 5S models with no application.
Task 2(c)	Linked recommended objectives clearly to the online behaviour considered in Task 2(a)	Lacked links between the analysis of online behaviour in Task 2(a) and the recommendations made.
	Recommended digital marketing mix had synergy with objectives and included a clear focus on customer acquisition.	Basic answers outlined plans with limited creativity in terms of the mix. This was often limited to a focus solely on a narrow range of digital communications tools, with a limited commercial focus.
	Use of referenced theory to support the recommended elements of the digital marketing mix was evident and added weight and credibility to recommendations.	The recommended mix was often basic, with generic sales-driven objectives and a range of activities that did not link to the objectives.
Task 3(a)	The recommendation made linked to the analysis of online customer behaviour conducted in Task 2(a).	All of the 7Ps were considered and many activities within this were not digital or were very narrow in focus and only provided limited digital communications mixes.
		Limited focus or word count utilised in the answer to this task, which was surprising as the task was worth 18 marks.
	Wider consideration of coordination across the mix recommended in Task 2(c).	No consideration of the recommended mix in Task 2(c).
Task 3(b)	Identification of relevant digital hardware utilised by both organisation and customer.	Narrow or incorrect focus on software and/or optimisation of digital content.
		Coordination limited to the 4Cs model applied to communications and not the wider mix.

Task 3(b)	Excellent knowledge of relevant measurement methods and metrics that linked to the recommended activities in the digital marketing mix. Clear examples of TWO benefits offered in context. Benefits were justified through the application of relevant theory and/or practical evidence.	Knowledge of platforms and methods that could be employed to support the measurement of the digital marketing mix was limited. Answers often lacked research or evidence of wider-reading to support what was stated. A quantity over quality approach was evident and lists of metrics and benefits were provided lacking application. Lacked suitable examples to support the 'illustration of TWO benefits'.
Task 3(c)	Detailed assessment of the opportunities was offered through the application of theory and in the context of the chosen organisation. Examples chosen were illustrated through relevant and clear description and/or visual content. Many of the examples were contemporary and insightful, demonstrating a solid understanding of internet enabled technology.	The command word 'assessment' was not considered, and descriptions were offered instead. There were limited examples of internet enabled technology, with a narrow focus on software. Opportunities to the chosen organisation were not identified or explained.
Format and presentation	Excellent structure, with clear headings and subheadings throughout. Briefing Paper and Report formats clearly understood and correctly presented. All sources, academic and evidential, were Harvard referenced in the main body and also acknowledged in the bibliography	Poor structure, not following instructions in the brief. Lacked headings and reference to task numbers. Limited or no referencing undertaken. The omission of bibliographies is of particular concern. Use of sources that have no credibility or relevance. Exceeding the maximum word count.

		Weaker submissions reverted to a listing approach, offering no development of the content in their answers.
Task	General Issues	
Task 1	Not covering all points required in the organisational summary or adding additional content that detracts from what was required. Lack of relevant headings used to structure answers. Generic benefits were identified as opposed to those specific to having an online vision. Illustrative examples not used. Lack of focus on the scenario, customer acquisition when considering the integration of online and offline marketing activities. Lack of focus on the mark allocation so that tasks were not weighted in relation to this.	
Task 2	Rather than conducting an analysis of online behaviour there was merely a simple overview of the segment with no referenced data or evidence provided. The objectives often lacked a focus on supporting customer retention as outlined in the context and scenario. The digital marketing mix was often basic and lacking in creativity and contemporary digital marketing practice. The digital marketing mix lacked synergy with the recommended objectives and analysis of online behaviour for the key customer segment. Some submissions considered the full 7P marketing mix and relied on describing activities, as opposed to recommending relevant digital marketing activities drawn from relevant elements of the digital marketing mix. Answers lacked references or were poorly referenced, not following the Harvard System as required.	
Task 3	Coordination of the recommended mix was not considered with more generic coordination being the focus. Coordination limited to simple optimisation of communications content. A lack of focus on the benefits of monitoring and measurement, more focused on recommending measures.	

	Failed to assess opportunities that internet enabled technology could offer. Lacked theory and underpinning to support answers given.
Format and presentation	A lack of referencing and bibliography in-line with the Harvard system. A lack of intelligent structure, indicating where each subtask is being addressed alongside clear and relevant sub-headings. Poor understanding of what constitutes a briefing paper and report format. Exceeding maximum word count. Over-use of visuals (diagrams, charts and screengrabs) that were not explained, contextualised or referenced.
Task	General Recommendations
Task 1	Organisational summary should incorporate content relevant to all headings given in the guidance notes. Marketing terminology in areas such as competitor, customer and digital marketing activities should be used. Content should be as detailed as the page count allows and specific to the chosen organisation; do not list basic points. The scenario must be acknowledged and adhered to in order to maximise marks – throughout all task and sub-tasks where it is asked for. Wider reading and research are needed to develop a more in-depth understanding of key marketing concepts. All visual content must be referenced and supported by an explanation/rational for inclusion.
Task 2	Ensure that command words given are understood and followed. Critical thought is required with command words such as assess and analyse. All theories used must be referenced to the author or text used. These should be credible sources, such as the MyCIM resources, not random blogs or other websites. The scenario must be acknowledged and adhered to in order to maximise marks, many objectives and subsequent digital marketing mixes failed to observe the multichannel scenario and context.

	Recommendations through the requested stages of the digital marketing plan need synergy, each should relate to the previous. All findings presented must be supported by referenced evidence or they can only be considered as subjective opinion.
Task 3	Ensure command words are understood and met in answers, such as illustrate (requiring examples) and assess (requiring judgement of value/usefulness). Where links to content from previous tasks are required this should be clearly considered. Development of a clear understanding of concepts, such as 'internet-enabled technology' and 'coordination', is required to support the production of an intelligent answer to the tasks. The breakdown of marks should be considered when allocating word count for responses to each subtask.
Format and presentation	Using headers and paragraphs as well as presenting the answer in a professional format. This approach should be applied throughout the assignment and help candidates to deliver professional work in their future careers. Relevant theory and evidence should be researched and drawn from a variety of sources (textbooks, journals, credible websites) and included in all answers (with possible exception of Task 1(a)). The Harvard Referencing System must be used throughout the assignment – both in text and for the bibliography.