

Task 1 – 75% - 3500 words

General guidelines

1. Cover page – clearly indicate your full name, module code and title, your lecturer’s name, and title of the assignment (e.g., BMSW5106 Task 1)
2. DO NOT add any ‘table of contents’ page and ‘introduction’ and/or ‘conclusion’. Just write the questions and provide your answers.
3. You MUST submit one single MS Word file with both Part 1 and Part 2 of your Task 1.
4. Your work should be properly structured with clearly labelled headings/questions. The font size and style should be consistent throughout. Make sure you use double spacing (2.0) throughout.
5. You can write 10% more or 10% less words than the required word count. Any deviation beyond 10% will result penalty points.

Task 1 – Part 1 (Case Study – SABRE) – 40% (75%) - 2000 words

Specific guidelines

1. Read the case study at least a couple of times. Try to understand the context. Take notes.
2. Do additional desk research to find out more information on SABRE. Some good sources to start with could be:

(1) <https://www.ibm.com/ibm/history/ibm100/us/en/icons/sabre/>

(2) <https://www.sabre.com/files/Sabre-History.pdf>

3. **Question 1:** Describe how the overall approach adopted by American Airlines incorporated the basic competitive strategies of cost leadership and product differentiation. – **650 words**

You need to apply Porter’s Generic Strategy model to answer this question. Check Slide Number 20 in Week 5 lecture on Moodle.

Reference: Kim, E., Nam, D. I., & Stimpert, J. L. (2004). The applicability of Porter’s generic strategies in the digital age: assumptions, conjectures, and suggestions. *Journal of Management*, 30(5), 569-589.

4. **Question 2:** In what ways did SABRE provide American Airlines with a competitive advantage? Your analysis should refer to concepts related to the strategic use of information systems, for example, entry barriers. – **650 words**

This question is a key question for you. Based on your research and reading of the case study, you need to explicitly mention the unique competitive advantages that American Airlines enjoyed through incorporation of SABRE. Your analysis must utilise Porter's Five Forces model and Porter's Value Chain model, especially the following elements of the two models: Entry barriers, Switching costs, Operational efficiency, Lock in customers and suppliers.

Check Lecture Slides 3 – 17 in Week 5 lecture on Moodle.

References: (1) Porter, M. E. (1980). *Competitive strategy: Techniques for analysing industries and competitors*. New York: Free Press. (2) Porter, M. E. (1985). *Competitive advantage: creating and sustaining superior performance*. New York: Free Press.

5. **Question 3:** Although SABRE was undoubtedly successful, American Airlines was not able to maintain its competitive advantage beyond the late 1980s. What factors played a part in the erosion of the company's lead over its competitors and how did the company react? – **650 words**

You need to explain the reasons why American Airlines couldn't maintain its competitive advantage of SABRE for a longer period. You need to draw on your desk research to answer this question using elements of Porter's Five Forces and Value Chain and Generic Strategy models. Please thoroughly consult Week 5 lecture slides before attempting to answer this question.

References: (1) Porter, M. E. (1980). *Competitive strategy: Techniques for analysing industries and competitors*. New York: Free Press. (2) Porter, M. E. (1985). *Competitive advantage: creating and sustaining superior performance*. New York: Free Press. (3) Kim, E., Nam, D. I., & Stimpert, J. L. (2004). The applicability of Porter's generic strategies in the digital age: assumptions, conjectures, and suggestions. *Journal of Management*, 30(5), 569-589.

Task 1 – Part 2 (Information Systems) – 35% (75%) - 1500 words

1. You need to consult Week 6 slides before attempting to answer these questions.
2. **Question 1:** Define an information system – **150 words**

Give a simple definition of information system with two practical examples.

3. **Question 2:** Describe the categories of computer-based information systems, providing relevant business examples for each category identified – **550 words**

I would suggest that you answer this question with a table. In column one, you can write the different categories of computer-based information system. In column two, you can provide description of each category. In column three, you can provide at least two examples for each category.

4. **Question 3:** Explain how computer-based information systems can support managers at each level of an organisation – **800 words**

You need to provide a detailed explanation of how computer-based information systems can help employees or managers at each level of an organisation. For example, how such systems can help employees at the bottom level of the organisation, how such systems can help managers at the mid-level of the organisation and how such systems can help senior people at the topmost level of the organisation.