

Coursework A1 Guidelines

SBMA 7112 E-Business Strategy

Coursework 1 Requirements

Part A (75% of the assessment for this module, 5000 – 6000 words)

- Select **one** from the following list of questions – relating to aspects of information management strategy in e-Business/e-Commerce development.
- Choose a business sector or business context within which to analyse and discuss the potential for e-business development and implementation – **within a specific functional area of business operations.**
- Provide secondary data sources, analysis and **argument** that contribute to your critical evaluation of the possible answers to the question selected.
- Give a reflective and balanced argument in support of your preferred answer to the question – providing up-to-date (primary or secondary) evidence from the business sector selected.
- Cite appropriate research literature and comparison case studies to back up your argument.
- Make a careful evaluation of the (business) benefits and risks associated with your proposed answer to the question.
- Ensure that all sources of primary and secondary data are appropriately referenced and acknowledged.
- *You should refer to the MBA programme's referencing guide to ensure that you know how to reference your work and to quote from the contributions of others.*

Coursework A1: Questions 1

- *Technologies for e-Business*: Security of information and communication for B2B and B2C interactions via the Internet is less a problem of network technologies; it is more of a human problem. Do you agree or disagree with this claim? Explain and illustrate - in relation to specific examples of either B2B interactions / transactions or B2C interactions / transactions - your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing.
- *B2B e-Commerce*: “Successful content management for B2B electronic commerce (especially e-procurement via portals and mediated online catalogues) must deal with several challenges: extracting information from rough sources; classifying information to make product data maintainable and accessible; reclassifying product data; personalising information; and creating mappings between different information presentations” (Fensel D. et alia, 2001).

These challenges may be overcome (it is claimed) by greater standardisation in knowledge management tools and languages (like UNSPSC - the US ‘Universal Standard for Products and Services Classification’ - and XML based intelligent ‘information extraction’ engines).

To what extent do you agree with this claim? Choose an example and offer arguments and illustrations to defend or reject this claim, in relation to e-procurement processes and systems for a specific type of business.

Coursework A1: Questions 2

- *Impact of e-Publishing development upon print journalism:* Print media are under threat from digital, (online) publishing. No segment is under more threat than newspapers. Some of the oldest titles in the UK are contending with a combination of dwindling print sales and declining advertising revenues.
The Times (newspaper) has placed most of its online content behind a paywall. While this has led to a lower online readership compared to its free-to-view competitors, it is growing its online subscriber numbers which could support subscription revenue (Marketline 2014).

Critically evaluate the benefits and the challenges of digital/electronic publishing with specific reference to *The Times*' e-business model in comparison with the strategy of at least one other UK broadsheet newspaper

- Operational management and decision-support: Choose **one** from the following three functional areas of operational management. What are the arguments and evidence – relating to a **specific** business context – which illustrate the benefits to be gained from developing an e-Business solution to operational problems in that functional area?:
 - a. manufacturing production control;
 - b. inventory management;
 - c. financial management and budgetary control.

Coursework A1: Questions 3

- *ERP and Cloud Computing:* Does the arrival of outsourced SaaS / Cloud-based solutions for data management and business intelligence signal a decline for in-house ERP systems offering integration of information requirements across business divisions? Evaluate the potential benefits and risks in adopting SaaS / Cloud-based solutions for information management when compared with “on premise” ERP solutions.

Locate your evaluation in a specific business sector and select at least **two** functional areas for your evaluation.

- *Globalisation and CSR:* With the advent of global networks for SCM, workforce recruitment, outsourcing of non-core business functions, in medium to large enterprises, to what extent have policies for corporate social responsibility (CSR) become increasingly difficult to implement and monitor across regional and international borders? Investigate how CSR policies are implemented and monitored by **at least one** globalised MNC (in a specific business sector).

Consider and offer justifications for recommendations you believe would overcome some of those difficulties.

Coursework 1 Requirements

- The focus of your submission must be upon **answering the question** selected!
- Your answer should present an **argument** (with evidence) which supports the answer you are giving.
- Your argument and evidence should relate to the business context and functional area of business activity you have chosen.
- A balanced argument should also consider possible **alternative answers** and reasons for not accepting those answers.
- The point of your submission is **not** to describe solutions or answers – it is to **justify** (your answer) and **persuade** (your readers) why it is right.

Assessment Criteria	% of marks
The extent and quality of your contributions to discussion and collective knowledge-building undertaken during the lectures, workshop activities and online forums	15%
The clarity, coherence and critical reflection of your written report, showing that you have referred to a range of academic theories and then developed and clearly stated your own argument for your ideas in relation to the business context chosen.	30%
Your choice of resources and the way in which you use them as evidence to support your evaluation and intellectually underpin your ideas with the theory and through examples from your experience, and from relevant secondary sources.	35%
Your accurate use of the author/date Harvard referencing system. This criterion relates to whether you have used the author/date appropriately and accurately, not to whether you have made a good selection of resources.	10%
Your written presentation including appropriate use of headings to structure the work; grammar and spelling; page numbers; use of word count; writing style and labelling.	10%