

MARKETING PLAN ASSIGNMENTS
COMM 296: Introduction to Marketing
Section 107 – September 2017

Marketing analysis and planning are significant activities for the majority of firms. The purpose of this series of assignments is for you, *working as part of a team*, to apply the concepts you learn in your coursework to marketing analysis and planning for a real good or service.

Each assigned team of 4-6 students will choose one of the **B2C (business-to-consumer) companies** linked from the “**Researching Companies**” tab on the [COMM 120/296/465/420 Research Guide](#) of the David Lam Library. These Company Guides/Profiles have been created by the reference librarians of the David Lam Library to jump start your research (but additional research will be expected!).

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Jump Start Your Research – (1%) – due Sunday, September 24 @ 6 pm (UBC server time) to Connect. See Course Policy re: late penalties.

The David Lam Library reference librarians have created a video to help guide you in effective research strategies. After viewing the librarians’ presentation, complete the “Jump Start Your Research” worksheet to organize your approach to your assignment research.

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Situation Analysis (Marketing Environment) & SWOT – (9%) – due Sunday, October 8 @ 6 pm (UBC server time). See Course Policy re: late penalties.

Effective marketing strategies can only be created after a thorough situation analysis of the current and future internal and external conditions under which a company will compete.

Part A: Introduction – Briefly introduce your brand (i.e. who you are and what you do). Briefly describe your scope for the report: will you focus either on the entire company or on a specific strategic business unit, geographic area, product line, or product? Maximum 5 sentences single-spaced.

Part B: Situation Analysis – Research and analyze the immediate and macro environments of your chosen company/product. Maximum 3 pages single-spaced, either point-form or brief paragraphs. Cite all sources using in-text citations or footnotes.

The questions below are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive (that is why I have written “etc.” at the end of each subset); they are simply examples of the types of questions asked by organizations to learn about their environment and make better informed marketing decisions. Think for yourselves to ensure you ask the right questions in your research!

- **Customers/Consumers:** Who are the current customers? What is the estimated size of the market? How do customers buy and use the product? What factors do they consider when choosing between competitors? How loyal are customers? What products do customers consider to be competitive (direct, indirect, marketplace competitors)? etc.

- **Company & Corporate Partners:** Summarize the company's relevant history and background, mission/vision, culture, resources, key success factors, etc. Summarize its current key product, pricing, promotion, and distribution strategies. How has the company been successful so far? What types of partners (e.g. suppliers, service providers, consultants, etc.) help it succeed, and what are their strengths/weaknesses? What types of partners is it missing? etc.
- **Competitors:** How intense is the competition in this category? Is the category growing or shrinking? Are there many small competitors, or is the industry dominated by several large players? Are there substitutes/indirect competitors? How easy/hard is it for new entrants to start up? etc.
- **CDSTEP:** Describe the characteristics of the macroenvironment in which the company competes, using CDSTEP to cover all main points. What cultural, demographic, social, technological, economic, and political-legal factors influence the industry, the company, and consumers?

Part C: SWOT Table – Based on your analysis from Part A, summarize in a SWOT table the company's key Strengths and Weaknesses (internal) and the key Opportunities and Threats (external) it faces. You should have at least 6 items listed under each SWOT category in your table. Maximum 1.5 pages single-spaced, either point-form or brief paragraphs.

Part D: SWOT Analysis – Highlight the most important point(s) under each of S, W, O, and T and explain if/how they all relate to each other and should shape the company's marketing strategies. Maximum 2 paragraphs single-spaced.

Part E: References – Provide a References List of all secondary sources used in developing your situation analysis. A minimum of 8 distinct secondary sources is expected, and there is no upper limit. No page limit, single-spaced. Assignments that are inadequately referenced (either lacking detail or improper format) will be subject to penalties.

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STP Plan & Strategy Analysis – (8%) – due Sunday, October 29 @ 6 pm (UBC server time). See Course Policy re: late penalties.

Segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) form the foundation for a company's entire marketing plan – all strategies must align with these components – so clearly defining them is critical to the company's success.

Part A: Segmentation – Describe 3 worthwhile (existing or new) consumer segments for your chosen company/product, using multiple segmentation variables from multiple segmentation bases for each segment. Maximum 1 page single-spaced, either point-form or brief paragraphs.

Part B: Targeting – Choose 1 segment from Part A that you would target, and justify your choice using all five segmentation attractiveness criteria. Maximum 2 paragraphs single-spaced.

Part C: Positioning and Explanation – Write a positioning statement for your chosen company/product, targeted to your chosen segment from Part B. Remember to include your brand name, target segment, frame of reference, point(s) of parity, and point(s) of difference. Briefly explain your point(s) of parity and point(s) of difference. Maximum 5 sentences single-spaced.

Part D: Strategy Analysis – Critique the effectiveness of the company's current marketing mix (all 4Ps) in light of your chosen segment from Part B and your positioning statement from Part C. Consider what the brand is doing well and what mistakes it is making. Maximum 2 pages single-spaced, either point-form or brief paragraphs.

Part E: References – Provide a References List of all secondary sources used in developing your STP Plan & Strategy Analysis. A minimum of 8 distinct secondary sources is expected, and there is no upper limit. No page limit, single-spaced. Assignments that are inadequately referenced (either lacking detail or improper format) will be subject to penalties.

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Marketing Strategy – Video Project – (10%) – due Sunday, November 26 @ 6 pm (UBC server time). See Course Policy re: late penalties.

Developing a marketing strategy involves creating an integrated marketing mix (product, pricing, distribution, and promotion – the 4Ps) aimed at developing a long-term, value-oriented relationship with a clearly defined target market. Being able to succinctly and effectively communicate your analysis and recommendations is an important business skill and a component of your development in this course.

Project: Produce an engaging ~5-minute video (maximum 7 minutes) that summarizes your recommendations to build on/improve/redesign your chosen company’s marketing strategy to achieve your stated positioning in the minds of your chosen target segment. Resources will be provided to help teams create their videos; details will be provided in class.

- **Part A: Introduction** – Set the stage for an audience who has not read your written assignments to-date. Very briefly introduce your company and summarize the key features of the brand’s current environment. Briefly introduce and justify your target segment. Clearly state your positioning and provide a brief overview of your analysis of the marketing mix components of the current strategy as they relate to your target segment. In other words, set the stage for Part B by reviewing only the most important highlights of your Situation Analysis and STP Plan & Strategy Analysis assignments. Approximately 2-3 minutes.
- **Part B: Marketing Strategy Recommendations** – Recommend improvements to/additions to/deletions from/continuations of the company’s marketing strategy to make it effective for your chosen target segment in achieving your stated positioning (from your STP Plan & Strategy Analysis assignment). What changes, if any, would be required to achieve your stated positioning in the minds of your chosen target segment? Justify any changes that might be required to achieve your positioning; in other words, provide a sense of the strategic payoff of your recommendations. Approximately 4-5 minutes
- **Part C: End Credits** – End credits should include sources of ideas and facts as well as sources of images, video clips, music, software, etc. These can be “move style” and do not have to use APA format. End credits are not included in the time limit.

References: Provide a references list of all secondary sources (including ideas and facts as well as images, video clips, music, software, etc.) used in developing assignment content and video production. Assignments that are inadequately referenced (either lacking detail or improper format) will be subject to penalties. A minimum of 8 secondary sources is expected. No page limit; single-spaced.

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Peer Video Review – (2%) – due Sunday, December 3 @ 6 pm (UBC server time). See Course Policy re: late penalties. **NOTE: This is an individual assignment.**

Your professional development in this course includes practicing to objectively review the work of your peers and provide constructive feedback. This assignment is designed to provide a final opportunity to reinforce your understanding of marketing planning through your evaluation of four different team videos.

You will be provided with a rubric to evaluate your peers' videos using a variety of criteria, including depth of marketing analysis, logic and rationale, effectiveness of communication, creativity, engagement, and appropriateness of recommendations.

For each video that you review, you will also provide a brief (~100-word) critique explaining your rubric scores and providing additional feedback.

More details will be provided near the end of the course.

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WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT SPECIFICATIONS – These apply to the Situation Analysis and STP Plan Assignments; marks will be deducted for missing these requirements.

- **Readability:** Everything you deliver in this class is to be written in clear, grammatically correct English. Proofreading is absolutely required. Penalties will apply for consistent errors, and steep penalties will apply for consistent errors that interfere with comprehension.
- **Cover Page:** Must include course and section numbers, team number, team members' names and student numbers, assignment title, and date. Assignment page limits do not include the cover page.
- **Margins:** Minimum 1-1.25"
- **Line Spacing:** Single – but make good use of headings/subheadings and white space for maximum readability!
- **Font Size:** 11 pt.
- **In-text Citations/Footnotes:** All secondary sources must be cited using APA format, both as in-text citations within your writing and in separate References Lists. Penalties will apply for missing citations and inconsistent style.
- **Page Limits:** The stated page limit in each assignment part does not include the cover page, references list, and appendices. Respect the page limits outlined in each assignment part. Marks will be deducted for surpassing page limits, and work that extends beyond the page limit will not be graded.
- **Electronic Submission:** Written assignments will be submitted electronically in PDF format on the course Connect site through the assignment drop boxes. You must submit in PDF format. If your computer does not have a PDF file format, download one free from the internet. Only one copy of the assignment is required per team.
- **File Naming Convention:** Assignment documents must be saved using the following file naming convention: Sec#Team#AssignmentName.pdf (e.g. Sec107Team4SituationAnalysis.pdf). Assignments not named this way will receive a grade deduction of 10%.
- **Plagiarism Prevention:** All assignments will be submitted to TurnItIn.com, UBC's plagiarism prevention system. For information on plagiarism and plagiarism prevention, review the Academic Integrity Resource Guide: <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/resource-guides/avoiding-plagiarism/>.