I-CORE DELIVERABLE 2

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PROPER FORMAT FOR A NEW PRODUCT FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS

When organizing a deliverable there are key points to keep in mind. Deliverables are analyses not reports. There is a fundamental difference between these two types of submissions. Analyses are written objectively with no judgmental words or phrases, such as 'great', nor do they contain any reference to the writers. Analyses should be written concisely. In business writing, 'concise is nice'. Comparatively, reports may include the same information, but many times also include personal reactions to the information, a discussion of the processes employed and extraneous information such as history or definitions.

The document should read as one document, not two or three separate works placed together. Instructors, and possibly company representatives, will read the entire document even though the instructors will only grade the section that pertains to their specific course. Instructors will look for continuity of writing, consistency of information, and integration of strategies.

Writing a deliverable, and organizing the oral presentation, is an opportunity to apply the marketing skill of designing around the target market or audience. The writer should write what the audience wants or needs to know, not what the writer wants to tell them.

FORMAT

Deliverables are to be written in a narrative format in eleven-font with 1.5 line spacing. Dot points or lists of any kind should not be used unless specifically required. However, a dot or numbered list is preferable to five or ten items separated by a comma in one sentence. Using headings and sub-headings is appropriate. Be careful to avoid too many sub-headings as the document then becomes a list. The deliverables should have a good flow, meaning there is no difference in writing or tone between sections. With several people contributing to the document, this can be difficult to achieve. A concerted effort must be made to ensure the tone, writing structure, and amount of detail is consistent throughout the document. Each deliverable is to be submitted as a **single document**. For some deliverables, an Excel file may also be required. If needed, this will be specified in the detailed section guidelines. Please submit the non-excel portion as a pdf. **DO NOT USE THE EXCEL FUNCTION THROUGH GOOGLE DOCS.** The document must be checked carefully as the document will be graded as submitted.

All students have met the writing pre-requisites for I-Core. Therefore, there should not be any writing errors in submitted work. Everyone in the team is responsible for proofreading the entire submission. Failure to communicate in a professional manner can result in a substantial downgrade.

Deliverables should be written in complete sentences with logically structured paragraphs, and with no misspelled words or errors of English grammar or usage. If a submission is not written perfectly, why would anyone trust the writers' analysis or opinion, or be willing to invest in their proposal? Do not write in a conversation style. Do write the narratives in the third person (objective style). In other words, do not discuss you, your team, etc. For example, the words "Team 1A", 'us', 'we', 'our', etc. should NEVER be used in deliverables. Nor should the team's process be discussed. An analysis is not about the team or what the team has done. *The exception is the Team Dynamics and Leadership portion which may have a different requirement. Check with the instructor.* Another frequent error is to refer to a business or company as 'they' or 'their.' A business is an 'it.'

Poor writing and tone is a frequent issue in the quality of deliverables. At this point of the student's academic career, the writing should be perfect and professional. Students are expected to use all the writing skills taught in the pre-requisite classes. Students need to proofread carefully and use the Writing Center if appropriate. The most typical problems are sentence structure, tone, and wrong word tense/use. Remember, writing should be clear, concise, and to the point.

PROPER STRUCTURE

Title page

Each deliverable should start with a title page which includes the title of the report, who the deliverable is prepared for, who prepared the deliverable, including the team identification (i.e., 1A) and alphabetical list of team members, and the date. There should also be a one or two sentence description of the project (including the name of the new product or service innovation), ***not*** what is in the deliverable. In other words, the reader should be able to glance at the cover page and know what is being analyzed (e.g., "This is an analysis of Crew Car Wash's possible addition of a cat washing service called Kitty Kleaners.") **DO NOT USE THE COMPANY'S LOGO!** The logo is the company's protected trademark. **Tip:** Insert a page break at the end of the Title Page so the Table of Contents will always start on a new page. Continue to insert page breaks in between sections, as appropriate.

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The title should be centered.

The major sections of the deliverable should be listed in order. The respective starting page number of that section should be listed to the right. Do not use periods or ranges. Be sure the page

numbers are neatly aligned. When uploading documents, the spacing sometimes change. The authors need to be certain to proofread and adjust for those errors.

Major sections should be listed. Sub-headings only need to be included if there are substantial elements of the section. Appendices should be individually labeled and listed with their respective starting page numbers. **Tip:** Let Word do the formatting work for you by selecting "Table of Contents" from the "References" menu.

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is to be no more than one page. **It is not an Introduction.** The Executive Summary informs the reader of the purpose and results of the document. It should be the last part of the document that is written. The reader should be able to read the Executive Summary and not have to read anything else. They have the option of reading the rest of the document for details.

The Executive Summary should start with a summary of the company and the project idea followed by a paragraph for each of the major sections of the paper. **Tip:** Again, insert a page break after the Executive Summary so the Introduction always starts at the top of the next page.

Content

After the Executive Summary, there needs to be an Introduction to the paper. The Introduction explains what the following information is about and why it is being presented. Do not confuse Introductions with the Executive Summary which is providing a condensed version of the main text.

Headings and sub-heading should be used throughout the narrative. Using sub-headings should be limited to avoid the narrative appearing as a list.

Graphics and exhibits should have a sentence or two preceding them to explain what the reader will see. They should be labeled as well.

References

All work needs to be cited properly. Students are required to use the citation format specified in the Library Research Guide on the Canvas I-Core site and in the Research Workshop.

Appendices

Appendices should be individually titled, be on separate pages, and should be designed with the reader in mind. In other words, any supplemental material that is presented should be carefully and

thoroughly explained. A typical error is to present mathematical justification of numbers presented in the deliverable without proper labeling or providing a thorough explanation of the process and where the numbers originated.

General Comments

The narrative length for each section is specified in the guidelines for that section. However, not all sections will have a page guideline. Any guidelines given do not include appendices or the citations page. Do not talk to Alexander Avis, or any other librarian, about how to format the report, grammar, etc.; for these questions, go to the campus writing center. Librarians are available to help you with research, resources, and the format for citations within your references only. The Campus Writing Center has documents available on their website that can help with sentence structure, proper grammar, etc.

OPTIONAL RUBRIC - Each instructor will grade deliverables differently. The following rubric MAY be used to grade the writing of the deliverable. * Adapted from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) Assessment Writing Rubric

GRADING RUBRIC FOR WRITTEN WORK			
Criteria	**Poor**	**Satisfactory**	**Strong**
Organization	Writing is not concise and tends to ramble; lack of direction interferes with audience understanding. lacks clear topic sentences	Focus and direction of writing are acceptable and do not interfere with audience understanding; minor errors in cohesion	Writing is concise and clear; information is easy to understand; focus and direction of writing are obvious to audience
Introduction and Conclusion	Main idea or purpose is not established in the appropriate paragraph; conclusion does not include contact information, end date, goodwill, or future relationship	Main idea or purpose is established in the appropriate paragraph; conclusion is satisfactory but lacks at least one important statement	Introduction not only establishes main idea or purpose as appropriate, but also has an interesting hook; conclusion includes every necessary action or statement
Punctuation and Spelling	Writing contains numerous and/or significant errors which distract from the message	Writing contains occasional errors, which do not distract from the message	Writing is nearly error free with no item that distracts from the message
Sentence Structure and Transitions	Sentence structure lacks readability and/or is awkward; connections between topics, ideas, or arguments lack clear transition	Most sentences build within paragraphs for readability. A few sentences lack transition	Sentences are clear, well developed, and express concise ideas; transitions create strong readability
Background and Critical Thinking	Ideas lack support or are expressed with personal views; no original thoughts that show critical thinking	Ideas are supported with occasional citations or class lessons; some individual, original ideas are expressed	Arguments are supported with cited references or relevant facts; strong use of originality is shown throughout the message
Professional Format	Document is not professionally formatted; tone and language are inappropriate	Document follows most of the traditional format guidelines but has at least one distracting error; tone and language use are fair	Professional format style is obvious; all aspects of the tone and language lend to audience's verbal and non- verbal understanding

MARKETING REQUIREMENTS

There should be a heading for each of the sections. The typical length for the required sections combined is three pages. The typical number of citations for this submission is less than ten.

Product Analysis

Objectives:

- Students will assess new product strategies through a product analysis.

Methodology:

Discuss the product aspect's (core, actual, augmented, and promised) in light of the persona. Then evaluate the Product Life Cycle: what stage is the product in? why? What are the implications? This understanding will give guidance on product decisions as well as the decisions in the remaining marketing mix elements (i.e., price, place, promotion) that will be addressed in a future submission. Do NOT go into detail on the other marketing mix elements, just a general sentence each is sufficient.

Then discuss how the new product changes the current product mix and the sustainable competitive advantage the organization's new offering will provide. Provide detailed decisions regarding the product include branding, packaging, and labeling requirements. Even if a tangible product is not being offered, all these things need to be considered as well as the required accompanying services. Packaging and labeling apply to services, as well as tangible goods. Consider the visuals (i.e. website) and information provided (where?).

Be sure to use content from the marketing class extensively in the analysis to demonstrate understanding and appropriate application. The product element is being analyzed from the marketing perspective which is more holistic than in operations. Do not get dragged down into the technical details of the product; that is the domain of the operations component.

Sales Forecast

Objectives:

- Students will use research to construct a five-year sales forecast.

Methodology:

The sales forecast needs to be computed in terms of units (visits, downloads, units, licenses, etc.) and in revenue. Please note that the forecast may change over the progression of this project as new information is discovered or as decisions (i.e., pricing) are changed. Keep in mind that forecasting should be conservative though a best-case and worst-case scenario can be useful.

This area is going to be difficult. Students will not be able to look it up; instead the 'best' possible methodology will need to be employed. It is best to try at least two different methods to determine the sales forecast to build the confidence of your readers. *See the instructional videos in 'Modules' on the I-Core Canvas site for assistance with the sales forecast. Students should view these before asking for help with the forecast.*

A sales forecast for five years is appropriate. In a traditional industry, a company offering a new product might hit 50% of the computed sales potential the first year, 75% the second and 100% the third through the fifth year. However, if it is an industry with very few competitors initially, the entrance of new competitors into the industry should be considered. If information can be found regarding adoption rates for the type of product being offered, please use those.

If possible, one method to verify the reasonableness of the forecast is by contacting someone in the **industry**. Do NOT ask someone from the company being analyzed. If it is possible to have a conversation with someone in the industry, do **NOT** tell them *how* you arrived at your numbers (# of clients, $) but ask if the final forecast numbers seem reasonable. It is best to do this in person (zoom). They will NOT give feedback over the phone or email. They do not know who they are talking to for sure, and they are not going to share their expertise with just anyone. However, they are usually willing to spend 10 or 15 minutes with students and answer questions. These experts do not have to be familiar with the exact product being analyzed but just with the **industry** in general.

When presenting the forecast in the paper, it should be just one paragraph. There should be a brief explanation of any assumptions made but do not include any numbers except the final forecast (*dollars and units*) for the five years. These may be presented in a chart format. However, the detailed computations should be in an appendix. Be sure the numbers are labeled so it is clearly understood what was done. Also, be sure to source the numbers appropriately in the endnotes.

Common errors:
- Course concepts are included but not used appropriately – do not "force fit" concepts though.
- Terminology is used but not in a way that indicates depth or understanding or purpose of the analysis.
- The appendix supporting the forecast is not clearly explained so that the reader cannot understand how the final forecast was determined.

Grading: See the I-Core Canvas site for grading rubric.