

**MET AD 648 ECOMMERCE - ONLINE****Summer 2015 May 12 – June 29****DR. KIP BECKER** www.bu.edu/goglobal kbecker@bu.edu

COURSE OBJECTIVES: The course provides a detailed examination of the history, infrastructure, security processes, social networking and marketing focusing on the strategic issues of digital business. A major focus relates to how businesses can successfully use digital technologies to achieve a comprehensive physical/digital competitive strategy. Students will depart the class with both academic and applied knowledge including application web design ability and understanding of how digital technologies are best utilized.

Read ALL the syllabus carefully to include appendix to fully understand detailed instructions and information



**INSTRUCTOR: KIP BECKER**

Dr. Kip Becker is an Associate Professor and the Department of Administrative Sciences Co-chair for International Operations. He has published over sixty articles and book chapters both nationally and internationally in the areas of international management, Electronic commerce, strategy, brand value and reputation management. He is on the Board of the International Management Development Association, the Chief Editor of the *Journal of Transnational Management* and a co-editor of the *Journal of Euromarketing* for technology and Ecommerce. He has owned a waterfront restaurant and is president of Northwind Management International which has conducted management training and consulting with companies, governments and associations worldwide. Prior to entering academe' Dr. Becker's experience included positions with: TDX systems of Cable and Wireless Ltd. in marketing, the U.S. Department of Justice as a special task force member in the President Regan administration and as a U.S. army helicopter pilot during Viet Nam and Desert Storm. He holds a second degree black belt in Taekwondo. For a complete resume and publications: www.bu.edu/GoGlobal.

COURSE LEARNING GOALS:

- Students will know the important technical issues (security, WEB and Internet systems, payment mechanisms, design, etc.) as well as the non-technical aspects (strategy, marketing) of Internet enabled business.
- Students will be able to create a comprehensive Internet enabled business plan
- Students will understand how technical and managerial skills are interwoven and be able to use application tools (WordPress) to create Blogs and websites to more fully understand the management issues involved in creating and administering a “good and value added” business site.
- Students gain a broad understanding of how web enabled business has created new international business models across all industry sectors; how businesses have used Internet technologies so as to create disruptive competitive advantages, and how Internet enabled business is affecting all aspects of operations, across all business sectors, by altering the manner in which business is conducted.
- To enhance virtual team working skills through contributions to the Live Company Case project.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND SOFTWARE:

	<p><i>Start Blogging with WordPress.com: You can have a professional website for free!</i> Kerry Butters, Andy Mckendry [Kindle Edition] \$3 at amazon I recommend this inexpensive online book to provide an introductory overview of WordPress. It is available by downloading the kindle app available for PC or Mac. NOTE: We are using the WordPress.com (not .org) version so if you consider additional reference materials watch for this difference.</p>
	<p>E-Commerce 2015, 11/E Ken Laudon, New York University, Carol Traver ISBN-10: 0133507165 • ISBN-13: 9780133507164 Note: Earlier versions do not have some of the material found in 11th edition which could be on the exam.</p>

Training for Adobe Connect. An important aspect of the class for live lectures and team communications.

Training available at: https://onlinecampus.bu.edu/bbcswebdav/courses/00cwr_odelements/help/liveclassroom.html

WordPress Software Downloaded Free at <http://www.wordpress.com>

We will use WordPress.com for the design of a blog and website as it offers free software and hosting.

Additional WordPress available Learning Aids:

- **Dr. Becker YouTube videos** on starting WordPress
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=kip+becker++
- **Mini-Lectures Boston University** information services and technology ‘how to’ do things in WordPress
<http://www.bu.edu/tech/services/comm/websites/www/wordpress/how-to/>
- **WordPress.com Website.** You will find excellent and easy to follow instructions on accomplish many tasks in the WordPress help area.
- **YouTube Videos.** Aside from my videos there are many quite good self-help videos found through the YouTube search engine or Google inserting the question topic.
- **Download the mobile apps on tablets and smartphones:** Adobe connect for live classroom attendance where ever you are and (2) blackboard so you can access blackboard on mobile devices.

LIVE CLASSROOMS LECTURES – The course will have live classroom lectures. Review the weekly assignments for times and dates. Review the blackboard instructions relating to adobe connect prior to the live class time so you do not experience difficulties trying to join the session. The lectures are recorded but you are strongly encouraged to participate live for the “BU” experience. This is also a great time to ask questions as you will definitely see quiz and exam questions taken from the live lectures.

COURSE GRADING: (also see in Appendix: Grading discussion and assignment descriptions)

Your final grade will be based upon the total points you earn from the following distribution:

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Discussions: 1 Blog plus 5 discussions (6 total) @ 5 percent each | (30 %) |
| 2. 2 quizzes @ 5 percent each | (10 %) |
| 3. Live Case Strategy Paper Assignment: Company Internet, Marketing, Strategy Paper and Website projects * | (30 %) |
| See appendix for project description. This project is designed to combine course content with a web design project to produce a knowledge skills based written project to demonstrate how a firm combines physical and Internet activities to develop an integrated competitive strategy. <i>Live Case Strategy Project Milestones are listed in weekly assignments, they are not graded, or turned in individually, but will be part of the total project. The purpose of the Milestones is to track the expected progress the team should be making toward project completion.</i> | |
| 4. Live Case Team Presentation, Online Live * | (10 %) |
| 5. Final exam 21 percent total | (20 %) |
| Total points available = | 100% |

*Note: To assist the grading of projects requiring team work each student’s contribution to the project needs to be clearly defined. Each team member will complete The Team Member Rating Form providing feedback on team member contributions (see appendix: Individual Rating Form).

GRADING – Further Information:

Students receive numeric grades for each of the areas graded. This allows students to track performance throughout the course. When all grades have been finalized the instructor may determine a need to "curve" the final letter grade distribution. While there is no fixed number of grades in any one level, it is important to note that higher grades reflect an excellence in the understanding of class material, organization of thought and presentation. "A" level grades (A and A-) denotes superior top of class work by students who have distinguished themselves *above* others in the class.

CLASS DISCUSSIONS: (See Appendix for full details and grading matrix)

There are two types of discussions for this class. (See Appendix). The first two discussions are debate format and the additional discussions are general discussions that provide the opportunity for you to bring insights about the topic as well as discuss the thoughts of others in your group.

Discussion Expectation: You need to be active throughout the week. Your first post needs to be early in the week (**Thursday at latest**) to stimulate discussion. You are then expected to (A) respond to other's posts to your thread and (B) post to the threads of others in a manner which is value-added, engaging and improve the section's understanding of the topic.

Why have discussions and what I am looking for in the discussion? Online discussions should be like classroom discussions. That is to say, they should be an educated discourse and ongoing throughout the week. I DO NOT WANT a series of isolated individual "small papers" on topics but a **good** discussion that engages the class on the topic. Informed discussion, however, is not to be confused with simply a personal opinion. Understanding what others believe, and why they believe it, is equally (if not more) important and may be what education is really all about. To move away from the posting of "papers" the last day, the grading for the discussion will reflect not only the initial posts but also the comments to others posts throughout the week. *Initial posts* should be insightful, present some issues for others to consider, be valuable to the topic, and if appropriate, referenced (<http://www.apa.org>).

How Long Should my Discussion Post be? Focus on quality not quantity: In the spirit of controlling length as a guide, we are looking for a maximum of 250-300 word initial posts. The exercise is really not about length but quality so going outside the length limits will not enhance a grade. Consider EMC² as having said it all in just 4 spaces.

QUIZZES:

There are two quizzes which will be true/false, multiple choice, fill in the blank covering information from lectures (online and live), discussions, readings and text. There will be fifteen questions from a question pool so not all students will receive the same questions. Quizzes open Thursday at 8 am and close on Sunday morning at 6 am EST.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM:

The comprehensive closed book and closed lecture final exam will cover information from lectures (online and live), discussions, readings and text. Final exam questions will be drawn from the prior quiz question pool with new questions covering weeks 5 & 6 (not covered by quizzes), additional new questions covering the course material and a short essay. The lectures and book are "closed" as we want to know what you know not what the professor or text author know which seems reasonable.

Makeup exams are rarely approved as: (1) the exam has a broad time frame and can be taken from any location in the world and (2) it is a disservice to others in the class who have organized their schedules to take the exam in the time frame. Any request to make up the examination must relate to a fairly tragic event which made fulfilling the requirement impossible.

A Note Concerning Proctored Exam:

The department requires proctored exams for our campus and online courses. By doing this we can offer the assurance that all students are on an equal playing field during the examination process, that we know who is taking the exam and that conditions for the exam are consistent for everyone. Because of the proctored process you can feel confident that we have done everything possible to protect the quality of your Boston University degree. It is something that you can be proud of and distinguishes us apart from most other online programs. An additional consideration is that while we do not experience many technical difficulties some happen and students have found it reassuring that a proctor was available to verify the difficulty and assist in correcting it.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND INTELLECTUAL HONESTY:

This course will strictly follow the Code of Academic Conduct of Boston University. The Metropolitan College Bulletin link to the academic code must be read by all class students and is found at:

<http://www.bu.edu/met/for-students/met-policies-procedures-resources/academic-conduct-code/>

ASSIGNMENTS DUE DATES AT A GLANCE

To be fair to all students due dates are set into the software which will automatically not take material after the stated time.

<u>Week</u>	<u>Live Classroom Lectures</u>	<u>Discussions</u> First Post by Thursday evening Closes Monday (following week) at 6am EST	<u>Quiz</u> Opens Thursday 8am Closes Sunday 6am EST	<u>Project</u>	<u>Presentation</u>	<u>Final</u>
1		<i>Personal Blog Posted</i> Graded as Discussion Ready for student viewing by 6 am Saturday EST Ready for instructor viewing 6 am EST Monday (of week 2)				
2	<i>#1 Tuesday 8-10pmEST</i>	<i>Infrastructure/Regulation</i>		<i>Milestone 1 (not graded)</i>		
3	<i>#2 Saturday 10amEST</i>	<i>Security /Payments</i>	<i>Quiz #1 Covers: Wk 1&2</i>	<i>Milestone 2 (not graded)</i>		
4		<i>Marketing Strategy</i>		<i>Milestone 3 (not graded)</i>		
5	<i>#3 Tuesday 8-10pmEST</i>	<i>Social Networks Reputation Management</i>	<i>Quiz #2 Covers: Wk 3 & 4</i>	<i>Milestone 4 (not graded)</i>		
6	<i>#4 Tuesday 8-10pmEST</i>	<i>Business Strategy</i>		<i>Milestone 5 Project paper posted by Wednesday 6am ET</i>	<i>Live Presentation: on Project</i> <i>Scheduled Thursday through Saturday</i>	<i>Team Rating Form Completed</i>
7						<i>Final</i>
Total Value		<i>6 @ 5 percent 30 percent</i>	<i>2 @ 5 percent 10 percent</i>	<i>30 Percent</i>	<i>10 percent</i>	<i>20 percent</i>

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1: May 12 - 17

INTRODUCTION TO ECOMMERCE, AND BLOGS

- **Note: see appendix concerning Blog assignment**
- Text : Start Blogging with WordPress.com This is a good short reading for an overview of WordPress before you start
- Loudon Text: Chapter 1: The Revolution is Just Beginning
- Online Readings:
 - Lecture: Fundamentals of Ecommerce
 - Lecture: World of Blogs
- Online assistance with WordPress
 - Mini Lectures Boston University information services & *technology* “how to” do things in WordPress
<http://www.bu.edu/tech/services/comm/websites/www/wordpress/how-to/>
 - Use WordPress Help section for good explanations of many WP tasks
 - Selected YouTube videos from Getting Started with WordPress , Videos by Professor Kip Becker
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=kip+becker++

ASSIGNMENT:

Assignment: Post the active URL to your blog and respond to other student blogs

NOTE: Specifics found in syllabus Appendix: *Blog with WordPress Assignment*

By 6 am ET: Saturday: Blogs are to be ready for review by students.

By 6am ET Monday (of week 2): All comments to student’s Blogs made & Blog ready for grading.

The assignment’s purpose is to get to know your classmates as well as to have you consider the attributes of a blog, its structure, content and organization from a management point of view. The assignment requires you:

- 1) Construct a blog
- 2) Create a discussion thread under the discussion blog heading “*Posting of Blogs URL*” for your blog.
- 3) Use your first and last name as the name of your post. (e.g. Kip Becker)
- 4) In the post list: 1) Your name, 2) The title of your blog and 3) The hypertext URL of the blog location using the “link” feature so it can be clicked on.
- 5) Now go to the Blogs of the other students in the group and post a note directly on their Blogs to let them know you have seen it.
- 5) Now go to the blackboard discussion post of each student and post to the student’s thread (in the “posting of Blogs” discussion area) a welcome and comments about the Blog of each of other students in your section. Your comments should, of course, be organized in a positive manner and should include what is good and also what could, in your opinion, make the blog better. Please recognize this is not a grading but your comments are assisting the author with thoughts on its construction. This will prove helpful not only for the blog but for reference as we move forward to websites.

WEEK 2: May 18 - 24**UNDERSTANDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNET: WHY IT WAS DEVELOPED, WHO SHAPED IT, AND WHO CONTROLS/REGULATIONS**

- **Online Live Lecture #1** : **Tuesday, 8 - 10 pm ET** (will be recorded)
Welcome course overview, lecture on history and infrastructure (WEB and Internet)
- Loudon Text: Chapter 3 Ecommerce Infrastructure and 8 Ethical, Social and Political Issues
- Online Readings:
 - Lecture: The Structure and Operations of the Internet

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Online Discussion: This week is a debate format which is explained in the online discussion section for the week as well as in the syllabus Appendix.
2. **Live Case Strategy Project Assignment (Specifics found in Appendix)**
Milestone 1. Milestone assignments are not turned in but serve as a reminder of where your minimal progress should be. This week you will be assigned to a team by your facilitator. Your team will be responsible for the Live Case Company strategy paper, website project paper and live presentation. This week you are organize your team, decide on the URL of your site (existing Blog site or new location) and select a company that you will do your project on. There is information in the Syllabus appendix relating to the paper as well as issues that a firm would use to organize a company strategy and website. Use this document to help you organize your paper, presentation and thinking on the development of your site. Keep in mind that several issues discussed in class will not be incorporated directly in your site (*e.g.* security, shopping carts, databases, etc.) however, teams will want to include a non-technical description in the paper of what you would do if this was an actual project demonstrating your understanding of the issues.

WEEK 3: May 25 - 31**INTERNET TRANSACTION SECURITY AND PAYMENTS**

- **Online Live Lecture #2** : **Saturday 10am – 12 EST** (will be recorded)
Lecture on Security and Payments. Discussion of team web project
- **Loudon Text: Chapter 5 Security and Payment Systems**
- **Online Readings:**
 - Security
 - On Point WBUR Recording on Mobile Money: *Wallet-To-Wallet, Peer-To-Peer: A Digital Payments Boomlet*
- **WORD PRESS VIDEOS:** YouTube Instructions by Professor Kip Becker
 - Video 3. Deleting comments
 - Video 4. WordPress menus

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Quiz #1 on Week 1 and 2 Opens Thursday 8am and closes Sunday 6am ET
2. Online Discussion: This week's discussion is a debate format which is explained in the syllabus Appendix as well as in the online blackboard discussion area for the week.
3. Milestone 2: Teams will want to discuss the security and payment components that would be essential to a company and then draft this section for live case strategy paper. While teams will discuss these issues, and include them in the paper and presentation, you will not actually have them incorporated in your site due to their technical nature as well as the limitations of WordPress,

WEEK 4: June 1 - 7**TOWARD AN INBOUND MARKETING STRATEGY: CONNECTING CONSUMERS,
DEVELOPING BRANDS AND PROTECTING IMAGE**

- **Loudon Text: Chapters 6 Marketing and Advertising**
- **Online Readings:**
 - Developing Communication and Branding Design Considerations
 - Coke Marketing YouTube video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LerdMmWjU_E

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Online Discussion (General Discussion Format) see week's discussion area
2. Milestone 3. This week you will consider the issues of marketing, marketing communications and advertising as they relate to the strategies of your company. You should also incorporate the issues of mobile ecommerce as they relate to your firm's overall business strategy. You are expected to continue your website development by enhancing your pages, placing pictures when necessary and you may wish to change your template if the one you are working on does not allow the features you now desire.

WEEK 5: June 8 - 14**TOWARD AN INBOUND MARKETING STRATEGY: CONNECTING CONSUMERS,
DEVELOPING BRANDS AND PROTECTING IMAGE CONTINUED**

- **Online Live Lecture #3:** Tuesday 17th: 8pm-10pm EST (will be recorded)
Shift from outbound to inbound marketing and understanding business use of social networks
- **Online Readings**
 - Lecture: Social Media Brand Reputation Management
 - Social media carve ads niche (Financial Times 11/30/ 2013 12)

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Quiz # 3 on Weeks 3 and 4. Opens Thursday 8am and closes Sunday 6am ET
2. Online Discussion (General Discussion Format) see week's discussion area
3. Milestone 4. You will want to incorporate the many issues relating to social networks to your Live Case Project paper as they relate to the business strategy of the firm. social media and reputation management should be broadly reflected in the firm's strategy and the team will want to address such SN areas as the nature and extent of social marketing the firm will engage in and what the strategy will be for the different SN communication platforms.

WEEK 6: June 15 - 21**DESIGNING THE COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY:
INTREGRATING PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL STRATEGY**

- **Online Live Lecture #4: Tuesday 24th: 8pm -10EST:pm ET (will be recorded)**
Lecture on strategy with a discussion of Final Exam, Presentations and Student Questions
- **Loudon Text: Chapter 2, and 12**
- **Online Readings**
 - Lecture: Business Strategy
 - Amazon.com audio interview Public Radio/On Point
 - Financial Times on Amazon.com
 - Postal Service to deliver for Amazon on Sundays (Boston Globe 11/11/13 B7)
 - Drive-through groceries (Boston Globe 11/29/13 B6)
 - Sears Bets Big on Technology at Expense of Stores (Suzanne Kapner, WSJ 12/17/04, A and A4)
- **ASSIGNMENT:**
 1. Online Discussion in General Discussion Format. See week's blackboard discussion area
 2. Milestone 5. This week you should consider the how the integration of physical and internet strategies combine to form the firm's comprehensive strategy designed to compete against competitors as well as meet the increasing demands of consumers.
 1. Company Written Project is posted to the assignments section for the week **by Wednesday 6 am EST.**
 2. Website posting information: the website URL is to be posted to "Project postings" section in blackboard discussion area by Wednesday 6 am EST for student's review prior to presentation. Create a team thread in the discussion area that is titled **"Posting of Website Addresses and PPT for Your Presentation"**. Team PowerPoint presentations are to be posted no later than the day before the presentation.
 - In the discussion thread list the: 1) name of the team members, 2) the name of your company site and 3) the website address as an active link and post PPT of your presentation if you are using one.
 - Use the "Team scheduling for presentation" located in the "My Groups" area to schedule your presentation time with your facilitator.
 3. Live presentation. (recorded) Teams present their paper and web project as an "Executive Summary". Presentations will be **Thursday through Saturday**. Each team is expected to 1) to present the site in a 15 minute presentation with 5 additional minutes for questions.

NOTE: Each student is encouraged to attend all section presentations but must attend a minimum of 2 presentations. Each team member is expected to be active in the discussion of the page they designed as well as in the overall business strategy discussion. Presentations will be graded for thoughtfulness, coverage of the lecture material, as well as their website content, format, layout, and consistency as it relates to addressing the overall strategy of the company. You are to assume this presentation is to firm's board so you want the presentation to be professional, concise and without technical problems. I strongly suggest that your team instructions posted in the Blackboard course and recommend practice using Adobe Connect to make certain that your system is configured correctly and you understand the presentation screen and audio connections.

WEEK 7: June 22 - 29

Exam: Wednesday – Saturday (closes 11:59 pm EST)

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

The exam will be structured to promote and reward learning, thinking and understanding. This will require memorization of important issues and terms as well as the ability to discuss concepts in an informed manner.

CONTINUED: PLEASE SEE FOLLOWING SYLLABUS APPENDIX

APPENDIX: BLOG WITH WORDPRESS ASSIGNMENT

The goal of introducing you to the blogging community is not so much for you to have a personal blog as to set up an assignment that is fun and interesting as you learn the concepts of blogging and how companies can use them to interact with consumers as well as how a unsatisfied consumer can damage brand reputation.

You are to produce a simple personal blog site (a one-page blog) to introduce yourself to your classmates. If you wish you can provide pictures of your dog or of your kids, so we can get to know you better. You will use WordPress to make your blog. Depending on how sophisticated you wish your site to be the time frame to accomplish this should run generally about four hours. With practice you can establish a very nice site in less than an hour. The nice feature of WordPress is that we can use the same software for the Blog and then again for the website construction. You may take down your blog at the beginning of the third week if you desire to do so for privacy reasons. I am sensitive to privacy concerns so limit your site to what you feel comfortable posting.

BLOG ASSISTANCE:

- **WordPress.com Website.** WordPress is widely used (and owned by Google) you will find excellent and easy to follow instructions on accomplish many tasks in the WordPress help area.
- **Mini-Lectures Boston University** information services and technology ‘how to’ do things in WordPress <http://www.bu.edu/tech/services/comm/websites/www/wordpress/how-to/>
- **YouTube Videos. Dr. Becker YouTube videos** on starting WordPress https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=kip+becker++
Aside from my videos there are many quite good self-help videos found through the YouTube search engine or Google inserting the question topic.

MINIMUM BLOG EXPECTATIONS

1. Have WordPress host your blog unless you have your own server availability
2. Create a title and description
3. Format date and tracking information
4. Create individual blog entries with comments area
5. Create links to relevant information/other sites if warranted
6. Create a profile with photo(s). Here I will leave it up to you to determine the extent of personal information that is posted
7. Publish your blog
8. List blog with directory service for greater exposure and note in your post one(s) you are listed with.

On to Making Your Own blog

I want you to have the experience of actually designing your own blog for several reasons.

1. Companies need to understand the power of blogs, how easy they are to create and the positive, or negative effects, they can have on the firm. Perhaps you will run the company blog and be envied by your peers.
2. By learning to create a blog you will essentially walk through what blogs are all about and the management issues involved in a way that is more meaningful than my trying to tell you about this.
3. You will leave the week with an “*I understand the issues*” as well as an “*I can do that*” feeling which is normally more satisfying than, “*I can talk about that*” ever is.
4. Creating a site personality is good way for you to start thinking about web design by considering the issues involved with the selection of colors, page style, fonts, links and the like.

1. YOUR BLOG:

Development of a personal blog with the blog location http: address is to be posted to the **Internet course site no later than Saturday 6 am EST of Week 1 AS A HYPERLINK**. While the site must be up by Saturday, **you may make changes until Monday morning at 6 am ET**. Monday is when the site will be reviewed by your facilitator for grading. You need to get the blog up no later than Saturday so your fellow classmates can get to know you personally. Post your site location as an active link in using the **HTML and LINK** features of the site to the Week 1 Discussion number 1 "Posting of blogs and Comments." Assuring you use a hyperlink (not just an address) will allow your classmates to directly access your blog rather than having to cut and paste to get to your blog. Having to cut and paste addresses will not be pleasing to those that want to view your work so failure to have an active link will result in a downgrading.

You are to create a BLOG using WordPress ([HTTP://WWW.WORDPRESS.COM](http://www.wordpress.com)). This is because we will use the WordPress product to later in the class make a website and it is free software and provides hosting. Once you understand the features of WordPress by making your blog this knowledge can later be applied toward the website construction. Another reason to use a standard application is that I and others in the class can help you if you run into trouble. Blogs are, of course, just one tool. A truly progressive company, wise in internet awareness, might utilize several approaches of consumer involvement each designed to reach a specific consumer need in a different manner.

2. YOUR COMMENTS:

Each student will make comments to each of the group members blogs in two different locations. **First (1) Make a short personal comment on the student's blog then (2) Post in the discussion thread (where student posted their blog address) specific comments relating to the blog itself.** Your comments should be positive in nature and can respond to the personal information (e.g. "Hi John, I am also from California and also work in the financial area") and the blog itself (e.g. Nice use of colors to make your point. The theme and color structure enhance each other). This will also help everyone to begin to think critically about what constitutes a good blog. Try to leave a personal positive note about something you liked about the blog and something that might be improved (and why). Remember you are NOT evaluating the blog. You are simply trying to provide helpful insights and learn from reviewing the different blogs.

APPENDIX: FORMAT AND GRADING OF DISCUSSIONS

FORMATS FOR DISCUSSIONS:

There are two different discussion formats for the class discussions. The first two discussions are in a debate format. The remaining discussions are in the standard class discussion format. These are more general and provide the opportunity for you to bring insights about the topic to the class as well as discuss the thoughts of others in your section.

1. DEBATE FORMAT:

Individuals in each section will be assigned to support one side of an issue relating to the weeks discussion topic using the standard “Harvard Debate Format”. Individuals will be randomly assigned to defend either the supportive “pro” position on the topic or required to defend the against or “Con” position. Since students are assigned to the position one might find they are defending a position not personally held. This is an academic discussion on important course topics and, as such, participation is meant not to change your mind but to broaden your understanding of the issues. This is an individually graded assignment however you are welcome to have coordinating conversations with others assigned to the same position.

The individual discussions to a particular side should add value to the overall argument for their side. That is to say, individuals will want to “build” on the discussion with new insights making it stronger. Individuals are to not only build a case for their “side of the argument” but it is important to also respond directly to the posts of the opposing position in an attempt to weaken/ counter that side’s argument.

2. STANDARD DISCUSSION FORMAT:

You should be active throughout the week. Your first post needs to be early in the week (**By Thursday at latest**) to stimulate discussion. This posting is then followed (A) responses to others in your thread and (B) additional posts throughout the week to the other student threads. Posts should be value-added, engaging and complement, improving the section’s discussion of the topic.

Why have discussions and what I am looking for in the discussion

Online discussions should be like classroom discussions and offer a value added analysis.. That is to say, they should be an educated discourse and ongoing throughout the week. To assure that we have discussions, and not the posting of individual “papers” the end of the week, the discussion grading will reflect not only the initial posts but also how the student interacts throughout the week. Understanding what others believe, and why they believe it, is equally (if not more) important and may be what education is really all about. In discussions we strive to provide an interaction as similar to the classroom as possible.

APPENDIX: DISCUSSION GRADING

Score	Description for Grading Each Week's Discussions
90 - 100	<p>Exceptional Participation – Met all of these conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Made original contributions and actively responded to other students in week's discussions and did so in an engaging and frequent manner. Student is engaged in discussions throughout the week and is commenting on others as well as submitting own work. Student used effective communication, which was concise and powerful, and did not get lost in technical matters or distracted by superficialities. The online behavior of the A-level student would be similar to a face-to-face classroom student that is actively engaged, well prepared with the week's readings, and involved throughout the class session. This grade reflects superior work at the top of the class level in content and presentation. <p>Exceptional quality of comments / discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displayed originality, clarity, and persuasiveness, and insightful application of course concepts to usefully illuminate the situations and topics under discussion. Brought in new insights and creative application of the readings. Is insightful and writes post that others wish to become engaged in. Application of concepts appears logical and meaningful. Use seems organic, not forced or containing a string of concepts thrown in without clear relevance. Shows deep thinking and maturity, rather than just "going through the motions." "Additive." In addition to his/her own original insights, student built on or usefully added to the insights of fellow students. Explored the comments of others and made very thoughtful contributions to their postings. Contributions do much more than merely recite the obvious facts of a case discussion or make recommendations without a clear basis for them. Posts explicitly and efficiently (swiftly and clearly, not belabored) show logical analysis or distillation of how the relevant aspects of the situation fit together, which concepts from the course describe them, and where they lead, and how any recommendations he/she makes flow from their analysis and specific concepts. Timing. Participation was early enough in the discussion week to have been read by most others and engaged others to explore the topic further. Consistency. Several exceptional-level contributions were made during the week. Shows awareness of key concepts and how to logically extend them for dissection or deconstruction, and understands the situation and topic of the assignment; Uses the concepts correctly and organically (i.e., not just throwing in strings of concepts, but being clear in their relevance and use). Anticipates potential objections or questions to your analysis, Recognizes the broader implications of what you are saying. <p>This level of assessed relative performance for the week typically represents about 20% of each Facilitator group, and is divided into A and A- grades based on the subjective appraisal of your facilitator.</p>
86-89	<p>High level Participation – Met all these conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively responded to several other students in week's discussions for each topic and did so in an engaging and frequent manner. Was involved actively throughout the week building on others discussions and making own submissions. Student used effective communication, which was concise and powerful, and did not get lost in technical matters or distracted by the superficialities. Submissions added a high degree of value. <p>High quality of comments – Much the same as for Exceptional, but without demonstrating quite the same consistent degree and totality of originality, insight, persuasiveness, meaningful application of theory, fluid logic of analysis and strong recommendations, additive contribution to the posts of others, and pro-active timing, as described above.</p> <p>This level of assessed relative performance typically represents about 25–30% of each Facilitator group.</p>
84-85	<p>High level Participation – Met all these conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively responded to several other students in week's discussions for each topic of the week and did so in an engaging and frequent manner. Is involved actively throughout the week building on others discussions and making own submissions. . Effective communications which are concise and powerful so do not get lost in technical matters or get distracted by the superficialities. Submissions added a high degree of value.High quality of comments – Much the same as for Exceptional, but without demonstrating quite the same consistent degree and totality of originality, insight, persuasiveness, meaningful application of theory, fluid logic of analysis and strong recommendations, additive contribution to the posts of others, and pro-active timing, as described above. <p>This level of assessed relative performance typically represents about 25% – 30% of each Facilitator group.</p>

80-83	<p>Average Participation – Met these conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively responded to a few other students in week's discussions for each topic. Tended to respond toward the end of the period so that it was more difficult for others to respond to the comments. <p>Average quality of comments – Student has been active in discussions during week and made contributions building on or responding to other's comments.</p> <p>Often these comments are accurate but mostly repeat what is obvious or already in the reading or implied by previous discussion. This level of assessed relative performance typically represents about 30% of each Facilitator group.</p>
75-79	<p>Lower Level Participation – Met all these conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited responses to other students in week's discussions for each topic. Would be considered to be generally below the average contributions of the class. <p>Lower quality of comments– Student has been active in discussions during week and made some contributions building on other's comments, but less of a creative or insightful quality. Often tends to be opinion not substantiated with evident logic rather than new material of a value added nature. Generally students whose level of relative quality is assessed at B- or below representing typically about 20% of each Facilitator group.</p>
70-74	<p>Minimal Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrequent postings or lack of response to other student' submission and/or low quality of comments. <p>Minimal be below acceptable quality of comments – Student has been in the discussion during the week but tends to repeat others or make unsubstantiated opinion statements, or statements not clearly relevant to the discussion and topic. Quite below average postings.</p>
Less than 70	<p>Inadequate Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No participation or very limited participation without contribution or recognition of others and would be considered failing level work. <p>Below acceptable quality of comments – Student's postings do not contribute to the knowledge of the course, and do not seem to indicate that they have read or thought about the case or the topics at hand. Postings are well below average as they restate information or provide personal opinions.</p>

APPENDIX: LIVE CASE STRATEGY PROJECT:**Information Concerning: Company Strategy Paper, Website Project and Presentation****Assignment:**

Students are assigned to a team of four or five members that will be responsible for the development of a “live case” strategy project. The objective of the assignment is to help you put all the different aspects of the course together into a comprehensive overview of a firm’s comprehensive physical and Internet enabled strategy. Your assignment is (1) a team project paper and (2) an executive presentation (recorded) of the team paper that discusses the company’s strategic combined physical and digital strategy for both competitive advantages as well as consumer value.

- Paper maximum length: 10 pages – there can be an appendix it is not to serve to get around the 10 page limit but provide reference information to support the paper when desired.
- Presentation length: 15 minutes (maximum 7 slides) with 5 additional minutes for questions.

The Firm Selection:

You will select a “for profit” or a “not-for-profit” company. I prefer “real” companies but am open to a new company the team might like to develop. If you choose an existing company I would like you to contrast the actual company strategy (as you have determined it to be) with your considerations of what a “better” comprehensive digital/physical strategy would be. Be sure to demonstrate how digital strategies enhance the overall company ability to meet consumer expectations.

Expectations for the Presentation:

- Each student is encouraged to attend all section presentations but must attend a minimum of 2 presentations of the other teams.
- During the live presentation each team member is expected to be active in the discussion of the page they designed as well as in the overall business strategy discussion. Presentations will be graded for thoughtfulness, coverage of the lecture material, as well as their website content, format, layout, and consistency as it relates to addressing the overall strategy of the company.
- You are to assume this presentation is to firm’s board so you want the presentation to be professional, concise and without technical problems. I strongly suggest that your team review the instructions posted in the Blackboard course. Teams should practice using Adobe Connect to make certain that your system is configured correctly and you understand the presentation screen and audio connections.

Expectations for the Live Case Strategy Paper:

- The team paper will provide a discussion of the firm’s overall combined physical/digital strategy including positioning, distribution, marketing, social network and website issues.
- When organizing the structure of the paper consider the items below to assist in the paper structure, presentation organization and thinking on the development of your site. Some of the issues you will discuss in your paper will not be incorporated in your actual working website (*e.g.* security, shopping carts, databases, etc.) due to knowledge, time and site limitations. The team should, however, provide a discussion of these items and a description of what you would do if this was an actual project to demonstrate your understanding of the issues.

The paper includes the course content as it relates to:

1. Company Information considerations:

- Description of the organization's information culture (attitudes towards information, information sharing, information load, information politics, information norms)
- Definition of the primary audience and whether there are potential secondary users
- Understandable demographics of the audience (age, sex, location if regional)
- Psychographics (metrics, like behaviors or psychological aspects of consumers)
- Primary user of the product or service
- Company strategic positioning for consumers and against present and future competitors

2. Infrastructure considerations:

- What are the physical and Internet aspects of the firm and how do these interrelate to accomplish the company's overall strategy? The infrastructure issues relating to "back office" applications, such as security issues, personal information database collection, storage and use, cookie management, and shopping cart needs. You will want to include a discussion of the platform the site may be primarily viewed (PC, netbook, phone, etc.)

3. Discussion of supply chain activities, product distribution,

- Marketing considerations -sales & consumer interactions. Types of advertising being considered.

4. How website is designed to meet the company's objectives and strategy

- The purpose of the site and how it is organized to assist with the accomplishment of the overall company strategy. The paper should underscore how the site has been designed to enhance the consumer/viewer relationship/interact.

5. Supporting Internet communication activities

- Such as social network and relationship building with the consumer.

6. Company Physical and Internet integrated strategy issues both current and future.

- This is a central issue to your paper as it relates to the current and future competitiveness of the firm as well as the company's attractiveness to consumers. Who are competitors and how are they positioned? What are the future activities for competitiveness: how will the firm be structured and what activities will be important to maintain or achieve competitiveness?

For Teams to Consider:

1. The course uses WordPress.Com as the software and hosting is free. Being free you will find it limited in function. An enhanced version, WordPress.org, is available as a "for pay" service and provides a fully functioning site with a shopping cart and other business applications. We use WordPress.Com as it provides basic technical skills and is a good platform for site management decision making discussions. WordPress.Org's limitations serve to keep the project at a consistent level so as to be fair to students with different technical levels/backgrounds. I expect a professional looking and well organized site, however, I *do not want* teams to attempt to increase grades by inserting payment based Apps. The objective of the project is not to "out app your classmates" but to gain managerial insights. This is important as the website is only one aspect of the Live Case Project and, as such, needs to have limits on the time devoted to it since a site can endlessly be improved.
2. Teams need to note which team member was responsible for what specific tasks? This must be clear in the paper and presentation.
3. Note the timeline milestones for deliverables. This is a significant project so be sure to be managing the progress and provide for a comfortable margin. The milestones will state where the team's progress should be. Keeping on track is your responsibility.
4. Assure that the paper's structure is logical, clear, and well aligned with the information covered in the course.
5. The Team's website design, and the individual pages of the site, should facilitate information access and navigation. The functional features, or applications, should be logical in their flow, design, and application while effectively supporting both the purpose of the site and strategy of the firm.

INDIVIDUAL TEAM MEMBER RATING FORM**Email this form directly to your facilitator****TEAM LIVE CASE STRATEGY PROJECT NAME** _____**(PRINT)****YOUR NAME** _____**(PRINT)**

This purpose of this form is help team members point out those individuals that deserve recognition due to their (a) superior contributions as well as those that did not contribute to an expected team level.

Please rate each group member's overall contribution by providing a score of 1, 2, 3, or 4 (highest level).

It is important to note that you are not grading your team mates. You are providing valued guidance that reflects, as well as possible, each member's contribution to the team's overall performance. That is to say a score of 4 is not a grade of "A" and score of 3 is not a grade of "B".

INDIVIDUAL RATING SCALE:

- 4. Means team member contributed more than rest**
- 3. Means team member contributed same as most others**
- 2. Means team member contributed less than most others**
- 1. Means was a team member, but did not contribute at all**

Team Member Rating (4 being highest and 1 the lowest rating)

LAST NAME NAME	FIRST	1, 2, 3 OR 4 GRADE	COMMENTS
1. YOU:		GRADE YOURSELF:	
OTHER TEAM MEMBERS (PRINT)			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			