



BUAD 307
MARKETING FUNDAMENTALS
Fall, 2007

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Blackboard: <http://blackboard.usc.edu>

CLASS TIMES/ LOCATIONS	Day	Time	Location
Lecture Session	Tuesday	2:00-3:50 p.m.	Edison Auditorium (HOH)
Discussion Sessions:	Tuesday	4:00-5:50 p.m.	HOH 304
	Wednesday	12:00-1:50 p.m.	HOH 305
	Wednesday	6:00-7:50 p.m.	HOH 305
	Thursday	2:00-3:50 p.m.	HOH 305
	Thursday	4:00-5:50 p.m.	HOH 304
OFFICE HOURS	Wednesday,	3:00-5:00 p.m.	
	Thursday,	11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.	

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Understand the role of marketing in firms that function in an increasingly global and competitive market;
- Understand basic concepts and ideas used in marketing;
- Develop knowledge and tools necessary to design and implement effective marketing programs;
- Understand the advantages, disadvantages, opportunities, and tradeoffs involved in different marketing strategies and choices;
- Appreciate ethical implications of marketing decisions; and
- Appreciate the dual roles of formal analysis and creativity in designing and implementing effective marketing programs.

COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION: “BUAD 307 is a fundamentals course. Emphasis is placed on providing a solid grounding in basic marketing terms and concepts. The course also begins to develop a general management viewpoint in the analysis, development, and evaluation of marketing decisions.”

PREREQUISITES: None.

READING: Charles W. Lamb, Joseph F. Hair, and Carl McDaniel (2008), *MKTG 2007 Edition*, 1st ed., Thompson South-Western, ISBN 0324548141.

Online *Wall Street Journal* Subscription
 Subscription can be obtained at <http://subscribe.wsj.com/buad307/>
 The *Wall Street Journal* can also be accessed for free through the Marshall Library. See course web site for information.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS¹				
Week	Session	Date	Topics and Events	Reading
1	Lecture	8/28	Course Introduction	
	Lab			Text, ch. 1
2	Lecture	9/4	Marketing Overview Strategic Planning	Text, ch. 2
	Lab			
3	Lecture	9/11	Social Responsibility, Ethics, and the Marketing Environment Secondary Market Research	Text, ch. 3
	Lab		Library Visit	
4	Lecture	9/18	Global Marketing Consumer Behavior PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE	Text, ch. 4
	Lab			Text, ch. 5
5	Lecture	9/25	Consumer Behavior Business Marketing EXAM #1 (will take approximately the last half of the class meeting). Please bring a #2 pencil and your USC ID. Cell phones, PDAs, and other electronic equipment must be turned off during the exam unless documented as medically necessary.	
	Lab		Consumer Behavior In-Class Experiments	Text, chs. 5, 6
6	Lecture	10/2	Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning Marketing Research and Decision Support	Text, ch. 7
	Lab			WSJ article
7	Lecture	10/9	Marketing Research and Decision Support Product (covered on final exam) CHOICE OF ASSIGNMENT #1 (SECONDARY MARKET RESEARCH) OR #2 (CONSUMER BEHAVIOR) DUE. (Please upload to Turnitin through Blackboard).	Text, chs. 8, 9
	Lab			WSJ article
8	Lecture	10/16	Product (covered on final exam) Win-Win and Non-Profit Marketing	Text, ch. 10
	Lab			Text, ch. 11

¹ Topics and events may be rescheduled if opportunities for guest speakers develop or if warranted by other circumstances..

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS¹

Week	Session	Date	Topics and Events	Reading
9	Lecture	10/23	EXAM #2. Please bring a #2 pencil and your USC ID. Cell phones, PDAs, and other electronic equipment must be turned off during the exam unless documented as medically necessary.	
	Lab		Marketing Audiovisual Experience	
10	Lecture	10/30	Distribution	Text, chs. 12-13
	Lab			WSJ article
11	Lecture	11/6	Promotion	Text, ch. 14
	Lab		CHOICE OF ASSIGNMENT #3 (PRIMARY MARKET RESEARCH) OR #4 (SEGMENTATION, TARGETING, AND POSITIONING) DUE.	Text, ch. 15 WSJ article
12	Lecture	11/13	Promotion	Text, ch. 16
	Lab			WSJ article
13	Lecture	11/20	Pricing	Text, chs. 17-18
	Lab		Tuesday and Wednesday: Optional discussion Thursday: No class	
14	Lecture	11/27	Internet Marketing and Electronic Commerce FINAL PROJECT DUE. (Please upload to Turnitin through Blackboard).	
	Lab			WSJ article
15	Lecture	12/4	Customer Relationship Management	Text, ch. 19
	Lab			WSJ article
<p>FINAL: Thursday, December 13, 2007, 2:00-4:00 p.m. Location to be announced. Please bring a #2 pencil and your USC ID. Cell phones, PDAs, and other electronic equipment must be turned off during the exam unless documented as medically necessary.</p>				

GRADING

The Marshall School has a stated average grade target of 3.00 for this class. It is anticipated that final grades will approximate a “straight” scale, but no guarantees can be made in terms of percentages associated with a specific grade. There are pros and cons to this policy, but it is beyond the control of the instructor.

For those students who attend at least 75% of all class sessions (*in their entirety*) in which attendance is measured will be graded as follows:

Component	Points possible	Proportion of total points
MT I	50	0.083
MT II	100	0.167
Final	120	0.200
Attendance/participation*	60*	0.100
Project proposal	50	0.083
Two best preliminary papers, 75 points each	150	0.250
Final paper	60	0.100
Research participation	10	0.017
	=====	=====
Total points possible	600	1.000

*May become a negative number if an excessive number of classes is missed.

Students who attend less than 75% of class sessions will have their total number of accumulated points reduced by one half the proportion of classes missed in excess of 25%. For example, if a student has accumulated 486 points and attends 55% of sessions, his or her adjusted score would be $486 - 0.5(.75 - .55) * 486 = 486 - 0.5 * 0.2 * 486 = 486 - 48.6 = 437.4$. This is *in addition* to a low or even negative score on class participation.

Some additional examples:

Total course points possible	Points	Counted classes	Attended (entirely)	Pctg. w/o mk-up	Mk-ups completed	Pctg. w/ mk-up assigns.	At least 75%?	Adjustment factor	Adjusted course points
600	509	22	20	0.909	0	0.909	Yes	1.000	509.000
600	509	22	15	0.682	5	0.909	Yes	1.000	509.000
600	509	22	15	0.682	0	0.682	No	0.966	491.648
600	509	22	15	0.682	2	0.773	Yes	1.000	509.000
600	509	22	10	0.455	4	0.636	No	0.943	480.080
600	509	22	22	1.000	0	1.000	Yes	1.000	509.000

If a class session is missed for legitimate and compelling reasons, a make-up assignment may be turned in to make up for the class session in part or in its entirety (depending on quality). Unless special arrangements have been made due to compelling circumstances, make-up assignments, along with any supporting documentation, must be turned in within one week of the missed class or by the day of the last class meeting of the semester, whichever is earlier. Please see instructions in [Appendix B](#) for making up assignments.

Additional grading issues are discussed in [Appendix A](#).

COURSE COMPONENTS

EXAM I. A short preliminary midterm, taking approximately half of the class meeting, is scheduled for September 25, 2007. The main purpose of this exam is to expose you to an actual exam experience with smaller stakes than those of the second exam and the final.

Exam I will cover up to and including secondary market research and textbook chapters 1-3. It will consist of twenty multiple choice (40 points) questions and two short answer questions, out of which you will be asked to answer any one (10 points). This and subsequent exams will tend to cover substantive issues and implications for firms. It is unlikely that you will be asked to regurgitate definitions or provide specific numbers (unless you are specifically warned in class of specific figures that should be remembered). A sample Exam I will be posted on the course web site.

EXAM II. The main midterm for the semester is scheduled for October 23, 2007. Exam II will cover material from the beginning of the course up to and including market research and decision support and textbook chapters 1-8. It will consist of forty multiple choice questions (80 points) and three short answer questions, out of which you will be asked to answer any two (20 points).

FINAL. The final, scheduled for Thursday, December 13, 2007 from 2:00-4:00 p.m., will consist of fifty multiple choice questions (100 points) and two short answer questions, of out which you will be asked to answer one (20 points). The final is cumulative for material covered in class, but material since the midterm will be emphasized. Textbook chapters 9-19 are covered. A sample final will be provided.

PROJECT. For this course, you will be asked to select

- **A new product or service not currently in existence;**
- **An existing product or service that has potential to be targeted to a segment or type of consumers that currently does not use the product (or has very low usage rates)—** e.g., video games marketed to senior citizens (who want to preserve mental agility and/or play with their grandchildren). The product may need to be modified (e.g., senior citizens may not like violent or explicit video games);
- **An existing product or service that could achieve significant additional sales if distributed through a new channel.** This channel must be realistically available—i.e., retailers, wholesalers, and other intermediaries must want to carry it—e.g., mobile manicurists who show up at a customer’s home or work site; or
- **An existing product that is sold in one or more countries and can be introduced in another specific country where it is currently not widely used (e.g., fortune cookies are actually not used in Mainland China).**

You will be asked to complete:

- A brief online form proposing the project and responding to selected questions on the target market , product logistics, and business structure;
- At least two out of four preliminary assignments in which you discuss issues related to chosen topics as these relate to the project; and
- A final report that includes an executive summary, response to questions raised by the instructor on the assignments, and a tentative assessment of the prospects for the venture based on your analysis.

If you turn in more than two of the four assignments, the best two will be counted.

The project is discussed in more detail in [Appendix D](#). For now, the assignments briefly involve:

Assignment 1—Secondary Market Research: A list of at least fifteen articles or other information sources and a discussion of the significant issues you see. You should use a library database such as Lexis/Nexis (and not an Internet search engine) to find articles. **Web sites not sponsored by the U.S. Government or the World Bank are generally not acceptable.**

Assignment 2—Consumer Behavior. A discussion (based on article research, consumer observation, and/or interviews) of issues in consumer behavior that have implications for success (e.g., search strategy, level of category involvement decision making process, shopping occasion, and product category knowledge).

Assignment 3—Primary Research: A discussion of primary research that should be done to help a firm decide whether, and if so how, to proceed with this market. You should discuss

- Information needed, outlining clearly why this information is essential;
- The preferred method(s) and why these are most suitable (including any tradeoffs relative to other method(s));
- Any specific design (e.g., questionnaire items or an interview outline)
- Information that would be “nice to have” but may not be cost effective to collect

Assignment 4—Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning. A discussion of issues relating to segmentation, targeting, and positioning as these relate to your new product, service, population, and/or channel.

Assignments must be uploaded to Turnitin.com through Blackboard. Instructions for uploading to Turnitin are available on the course web site.

Please note:

- Creativity (within limits of good taste) is strongly encouraged!
- All assignments must be your own work. Although it is acceptable to have other people proof-read and comment on your papers, copying other people’s work or other forms of academic dishonesty will be taken very seriously. Plagiarism may result in very serious sanctions from the University and the issuance of a failing grade in this course. **If more than three consecutive words are used from a source, these words must be put in quotation marks.**
- You should consider any ethical implications of your ideas and analyses.
- The assignments are intended to be fun and to “tap” your ability to apply marketing ideas to managerial situations. Therefore, there is often great latitude in the exact outcome of your assignment. The most important thing to ask yourself is, “Would this kind of analysis be valuable to a manager paying me as a consultant?”
- Real marketing problems rarely if ever have clear, precise, and objective numerical answers. Thus, it would not be useful to give you “cookie cutter” assignments. There will be some subjectivity in the grading of assignments, but the grading will be more objective than evaluations you will receive at work and your feedback will be much more precise than what you can expect in a job setting.

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION. During most discussion sessions, and in up to nine lecture sessions randomly selected, one or more in-class assignments will be given out. Those who

attend and complete these will usually receive credit for attending. To be eligible for points for in-class assignments, you must arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class. It is assumed that up to two class sessions may be missed entirely or in part for legitimate reasons. If classes beyond that number are missed for legitimate reasons, a make-up assignment may be done to receive credit for the day as discussed in [Appendix B](#). For classes missed in their entirety or in part after the second one, it is likely that approximately ten points will be deducted from the standard class participation score. Thus, the class participation score may become a net negative number for individuals missing an excessive number of classes. This is in addition to adjustments made if fewer than 75% of measured classes are missed entirely or in part.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodation based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the instructor by September 13. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Their phone number is (213) 740-0776.

Please note that it is the student's responsibility to manage the scheduling process with the DSP. Failure to meet any DSP scheduling deadlines will likely mean you will not have special accommodations.

Academic Integrity

Please ensure that all of your work is done with the utmost integrity. Based on the Marshall Instructional Guide & Procedures Handbook, the following represent behavior that would be judged academically dishonest. This list is not intended to be exclusive or exhaustive.

1. Examination Behavior: Any use of external assistance during an examination, including, but not limited to the following:
 - Communicating with another student.
 - Copying material from another student's examination.
 - Allowing another student to copy from your examination.
 - Using unauthorized notes or aids.
2. Fabrication: Any intentional falsification or invention of data or other information
3. Plagiarism: The appropriation and subsequent use of another's ideas or words as your own. If another person's ideas or words are used, acknowledgement of the original source must be made.
4. Other Types of Academic Dishonesty include, but are not limited to:
 - Submitting a paper written by or obtained from another individual.
 - Using a paper or essay in more than one class, without the instructor's express permission.
 - Obtaining a copy of an examination in advance, without the knowledge or consent of the instructor.
 - Using another person to complete class assignments, without the knowledge or consent of the instructor.

RESEARCH PARTICIPATION. You will be asked to participate as a respondent in two research studies sponsored by Marketing Department faculty. This is a requirement of the Marketing Department and is beyond the control of the instructor.

- Each market research session will not last more than 50 minutes.
- Different studies covering different marketing topics will occur throughout the semester. Students may select the session that fits their schedule.
- Available times and dates will be announced in class and/or via e-mail.
- Sign-up procedures will be explained in class.
- Students not honoring their reserved seat for a research study will not be penalized for their first “no-show.” Each subsequent “no-show” earns a 5 point deduction. A “no-show” occurs when a student cancels less than 24 hours before the study or simply does not attend.

Individuals who do not wish, for philosophical reasons, to participate in research or are not eligible to participate may complete a substitute assignment for each of the two experiments. Please see [Appendix C](#) for details.

POLICIES

1. Classes should be missed only under truly compelling circumstances. Please see instructions in [Appendix B](#) for making up classes missed for compelling reasons.
2. Extensions assignments may be granted under *exceptional* circumstances. You must petition the instructor as soon as possible after finding out the circumstances that you believe to justify an extension. Unless an explicit waiver is obtained in advance, extensions are expressly contingent on continuous attendance between the original due date and the extended deadline. Makeup examinations require serious and compelling reasons and appropriate documentation. If at all possible, these should be requested in advance.
3. University regulations on academic integrity are in effect. All work submitted must be your own. **In writing papers, if you take any more than three consecutive words from any source—even if placed in footnotes or in tables—these must be put in quotes.** Even if you do not quote directly, you must still give credit, by way of a citation, to any author’s ideas you use. The university provides serious sanctions for plagiarism. It is my policy to assign a failing grade for the course to any individual found to have engaged in plagiarism. Please see <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/cat2006/academic/standards.html> .
4. Section 11.31 of the [Student Conduct Code](#) prohibits “Dishonesty, such as furnishing false information to any university official, faculty member or office.” It is my policy to assign a failing grade for the course for such violations.
5. Students are responsible for having a correct e-mail address on record with the instructor. If you do not have an e-mail address, you can obtain a free account on sites such as Yahoo or Hot Mail.
6. Individuals who wish to claim as an excuse that “the dog ate [their] homework” must furnish proof of ownership of a dog of sufficient size to be plausibly able to consume an assignment of the size in question.

A PERSONAL NOTE

I have a mild case of Asperger's Syndrome, a neurological condition that in effect involves a "trade," albeit involuntary, of certain abilities for others. My symptoms are modest but frequently noticeable—the most significant ones involve difficulty in maintaining effective eye contact (I am often perceived as "staring"), impaired transmission and interpretation of non-verbal communication, excessive sensitivity to noise and other stimuli, poorly controlled body movements, limited spatial ability, and extreme difficulty in "learning" faces. Please understand that my mannerisms are not an indication of lack of interest or regard, that it may take me several weeks to learn your name even if I have a photograph of you available, and that I may need several extra moments to recognize you if we run into each other outside class.

Appendix A GRADING ISSUES

Marshall School of Business norms. The Marshall School of Business requires instructors to maintain an average grade target of 3.00 for a course of this nature—a "straight" B. Note that it is mathematically impossible for everyone—or even a large majority—of students to be "above average." A significant number of individuals will invariably be "below" average.

Course grading. Grades for this course will be assigned based on the total number of points accumulated by each individual throughout the term. **Only when all scores are available will it be possible to meaningfully determine a "curve" or grade distribution.** Letter grades are not assigned to specific numerical scores on papers, exams, and other material. Attempting to average letter grades on individual assignments and exams will *not* give the same result as that obtained from grades assigned based on total point accumulated for two reasons:

1. *Non-proportionality of the continuous percentage scale and the discrete four point letter grade scale.* Note both (a) the sharp breaking points between two grades—e.g., C+ and B- and (b) the difference magnitudes. For example, on a traditional straight scale, there is only a 20 absolute percentage point difference between a C and an A, but the 4.0 grade point weight is twice the 2.0 weight.
2. *Regression toward the mean.* On any given project or exam, an individual's score is likely to be based in part on both (a) typical performance level (which may result from study habits, aptitude, or other variables) and (b) situational factors (e.g., having a good or bad day; "luck of the draw" in the selection of questions). Therefore, in a grading environment with a mean score of 3.0, it is much more impressive to receive an A- twice in a row than it is to receive it once; and much more unimpressive to receive a D twice in a row. The result of two consecutive Ds, for example, may translate more into a cumulative effect of D- or F. Grades based on total points are more "diversified," and thus random fluctuations are likely to play a smaller role.

It is my hope to be able to assign grades that, as closely as possible, reflect a "straight" scale, with adjustments made in a manner roughly proportional to the discrepancy with the grade target that a "straight" scale would yield (subject to the disproportionality issue discussed above). However, because the highest scoring students face a "ceiling" effect on their scores, any proportional adjustment made may have to be lower in the higher range to ensure that it remains mathematically and realistically possible to receive an A grade in the course. As an extreme illustration, consider the situation where the course unadjusted average is 95% and the adjusted average needed to reach the grade target is 79%. If a uniform adjustment were used, unadjusted percentage scores would have to be multiplied by $(.79/.95)=.83$. That would mean

that, even if one had 100%, it would be impossible to receive a score greater than 83%. The situation in this class is, of course, not quite that extreme.

Philosophical issues. Some people have referred to having “points taken off.” This is *not* a meaningful way to view grades. Papers are *not* presumed to be perfect, with points being “deducted” for “imperfection.” Rather, grades are based on the overall impression of the work. It is not just a question how many “flaws” exist in the paper, but rather, how much quality overall exists. Receiving a perfect score on anything—and especially receiving such scores repeatedly—takes a nearly (if not completely) superhuman person.

It should also be noted that, although for the population as a whole, there is likely to be a high correlation between the amount of effort put into work and the final outcome, effort does not guarantee outcome. “Working hard” on an assignment—or in the class as a whole—does not guarantee a high grade, and the amount work put into a class or a project cannot be used as a legitimate rationale for the assignment of a higher grade.

Grade changes. Once grades have been turned in, it is generally *not* possible for the instructor to change a grade except if an outright mistake has been made in recording, transcription, or computation. As stated in the *USC Catalogue 2006-2007*:

A grade once reported to the Office of Academic Records and Registrar may not be changed except by request of the faculty member to the Committee on Academic Policies and Procedures on a Correction of Grade form. *Changes should be requested only on the basis of an actual error in assigning the original grade, not on the basis of a request by the student or special consideration for an individual student.* Students are not permitted to complete course work after the semester has ended. [Emphasis added].

This means, for example, that it is generally *not* possible to change a grade even if it is concluded, in retrospect, that another cut-off between letter grades might be more reasonable or that a paper deserved a higher score.

Please see <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/cat2006/academic/standards.html> and <http://www.usc.edu/dept/ARR/private/forms/Gradebook.pdf> . With a class this large, many people will be close to the boundary. During the past two semesters, several people were only one point away from a respective higher grade. It was simply not possible to make cutoffs that had wider distances under the circumstances.

Please show the decency and professionalism not to request grade changes that are not consistent with university guidelines.

Appendix B MAKING UP CLASSES MISSED FOR LEGITIMATE REASONS

In general, each individual can miss up to two class sessions without penalty.

If more than two class meetings—discussion sessions or lecture sessions in which an in-class assignment is given—are missed for legitimate reasons, an assignment can be completed to make up for each absence in whole or in part.

For up to two missed classes beyond the initial two—that is, for missed classes numbers three and four—evaluation of reasons for missing the classes will be relatively lenient. After that, you must have a compelling reason for having missed the class session to be eligible to make up the class. Absences that result from sloth, unwholesome lifestyle choices (e.g., alcohol intoxication or lingering effects thereof), incarceration, or other manifestations of moral depravity are generally not eligible for make-up.

Note that the assignment provided must be of a sufficient quality to justify credit for the day. Papers of inadequate quality may receive no credit or credit for a fraction of the day, depending on the quality. This is not intended to be an easy assignment that can be completed quickly.

Makeup papers should generally be turned in no later than one week after the missed class meeting in question unless a waiver is obtained in advance for compelling reasons.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please read
 - a) The textbook chapter(s) relevant to topic(s) covered on the day in question and
 - b) At least three articles from trade or business publications that are relevant to the implications of the topics for a firm of your choice. These articles must come from legitimate periodicals—web sites are generally not acceptable.
2. Please write and turn in:
 - a) A brief description of the reason for the missing the class session.
 - b) A paper—usually ranging from 4-6 pages double spaced pages—discussing implications of the textbook chapter(s) and articles you have read for the firm you have chosen. You must cite each article and the textbook at least once.

Appendix C ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENTS IN PLACE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

The Marketing Department has mandated that participation in two research studies must be part of the requirements for this course. The philosophy is that there is some educational value in getting a feeling for what marketing experiments are like and, further, that since marketing knowledge is heavily based on research, those who study marketing will be asked to help "give back" to the discipline and future students by helping expand this knowledge. Details on this requirement and participating instructions will be posted by the end of the first week of the semester at

<http://www.buad307.com/PDF/ResPart.pdf>. The guidelines provide that those who object to participate in the research, or are not eligible, may complete substitute assignments to attempt to obtain the points available. If you would like to take this route, you may, for EACH of these two experiment requirements, complete a paper similar to the assignments to make up for classes missed in excess of two as discussed in Appendix B. You

may choose freely from any topics covered in the course at any time. Your options, then, are to:

1. participate in two experiments;
2. write two papers; or
3. participate in one experiment *and* write one paper.

Please note that full credit for papers is contingent on quality and is not guaranteed. Those electing to write one or two papers should turn these in no later than November 20.

Due to the "onslaught" of final papers and exams I will have to read at the end of the semester, late substitute papers will ordinarily be accepted only under truly compelling circumstances.

Appendix D PROJECT GUIDELINES

For your project, you will be asked to complete at least three out of six preliminary assignments and one final paper on the potential for introducing one of the following:

- A new product or service not currently in existence;
- An existing product or service that has potential to be targeted to a segment or type of consumers that currently does not use the product;
- An existing product or service that could achieve significant additional sales if distributed through a new channel; or
- An existing product that is sold in one or more countries and can be introduced in another specific country where it is currently not widely used

A new product or service not currently in existence—e.g.,

- *A traffic decision support system* that tells drivers when it is safe to switch lanes and make other changes in dense traffic.
- *Secular values training and leadership programs for children of busy parents not involved in organized religion.* Many church groups and religious organizations such as the Boy Scouts provide values training for children. However, many parents who are not actively involved in religious groups might be uncomfortable with this. At same time, such parents may face time pressures that make it difficult for them to devote as much time as they would like to working with their children to develop good values. This type of program could involve fun activities, making it popular to children, which may make the participants more receptive to the message provided.
- *Discipline consulting services.* Many parents today have limited time to discipline their children and also feel uncomfortable making the children feel bad. They may view certain disciplinary practices as being outdated, but yet not know of clear alternatives and the likely consequences of different choices. A consultant may help parents set up a discipline program that weights the parents' values while adding in the experience that can be related by the consultant. An alternative would be a program to train "certified discipline consultants" who would then provide the services.
- *Delivery of prescription medication to the consumer's work setting.*

An existing product or service that has potential to be targeted to a segment or type of consumers that currently does not use the product (or has very low usage rates)—e.g.,

- *Video games marketed to senior citizens* (who want to preserve mental agility and/or play with their grandchildren)
- *Ergonomic clip-on earrings for toddler girls.* In recent years, technological advances has made it possible to create non-pierced earrings that are relatively comfortable to wear. These are currently quite expensive and are being bought mostly by professional adult women. At the same time, many girls today are having their ears pierced at an increasingly early age. Creating a comfortable alternative may allow the girls to hold off having their ears pierced until they can make a personal informed decision.
- *Noise cancelling headphones for children vulnerable to distraction.* Many children (and adults) suffering from attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and related conditions are very vulnerable to distractions in the environment. Currently, Bose makes some very high end noise cancelling headphones that are typically used by high income professionals and executives during travel. Many families may not be able to afford the current price of several hundred dollars, depending on the model. However, if the marginal (variable) cost of producing additional units, once the product has been developed, is relatively low, it may be possible to create a cheaper version for children. Making this set bright pink or orange would discourage the original segment from choosing this cheaper version.

The product may need to be modified (e.g., senior citizens may not like violent or explicit video games).

An existing product or service that could achieve significant additional sales if distributed through a new channel. This channel must be realistically available—i.e., retailers, wholesalers, and other intermediaries must want to carry it—e.g.,

- *Mobile manicurists* who show up at a customer's home or work site;
- *Financial planning programs sold through churches, synagogues, or mosques.* Many individuals fail to plan and save adequately for retirement and large expenses such as their children's college expenses. Some people may not trust any financial advisors and others do not get around to seeking one out. However, an advisor screened by the religious organization is likely to be more credible. If appropriate, issues of financial planning, as they relate to the religion, could be discussed during services to increase motivation to seek out appropriate services.
- *Groceries being delivered to car pool or van pool departure sites.* Many consumers with long commutes have difficulty finding the time and energy to go grocery shopping. There are services that deliver groceries to people's homes, but this is difficult when the consumer is not home during the day time, especially when perishable products are being involved. Some communities provide parking lots where people drive locally, park, and join a car or van pool. Orders could be taken in the morning for delivery at that same location in the evening. For car or van pools that pick and drop off passengers directly at their homes, a brief stop could be made at a pick-up site.
- *Native American crafts sold through catalog as fundraisers for organizations*

whose members distribute the catalogs and take orders. Many Native American crafts are produced on reservations that are often far from densely populated areas. Different tribes or groups in different regions are also likely to produce products of different styles. By offering a catalog that featured a large number of different products from different regions, consumer choice would be greatly increased. Various organizations that seek to raise revenue and participate in socially responsible activities at the same time may find this type of arrangement attractive.

An existing product that is sold in one or more countries and can be introduced in another specific country where it is currently not widely used--e.g.,

- *Fortune cookies, which are actually not used in Mainland China.* These might be positioned as something Western.
- *Colored nail polish in China.* Although sales of makeup in China have grown at very high rates for the last decade, very few Chinese women wear colored nail polish.

After completing the online project proposal form, you will be asked to complete:

- Two out of four assignments (which must include either assignments numbers 1 or 2 so that one is turned in by October 9) throughout the term and
- A final report that includes an executive summary, response to questions raised by the instructor on the assignments, and a set of conclusions and recommendations.

If you turn in more than two assignments, the best two will be counted.

The preliminary assignments should not exceed ten double spaced pages in length. Although quality is more important than quantity, it is expected that typical preliminary assignments will run from 4.5-7 double spaced pages and that the final project will run 6-8 pages. Conciseness and bullet points, when appropriate, are highly encouraged.

Papers 1-4 should start out with a brief statement—no more than five lines—reminding the reader of the proposal. For example:

PROPOSAL: SeniorVideo would offer video games for senior citizens who wish to maintain their mental and sensory motor agility.

Preliminary Assignments:

Assignment 1—Secondary Market Research: Using appropriate library databases and other resources discussed in class, you should identify at least fifteen articles, books, reports, or other *credible* information resources that provide information using in evaluating the potential for and planning your venture. You should search using one or more library databases such as Lexis/Nexis (and not an Internet search engine) to find articles. **Web sites not sponsored by the U.S. Government or the World Bank are generally not acceptable.**

You should turn in:

1. *A list of at least fifteen articles or other information sources and*
2. *A discussion of the significant issues you see from your research.*
Relevant issues will vary among ventures, but some issues that may be of interest are:
 - Characteristics, resources, and potentials of direct or indirect competitors for your venture;
 - The extent of dissatisfaction with the current situation or offerings among members of the target market;
 - The ability and willingness of the target customers to pay for the product;
 - Societal and/or other environmental changes that may favor or complicate the proposed offering; and
 - Issues of technological feasibility.
 - Your discussion should emphasize issues of managerial importance—considerations in whether and how you might introduce this product. The managerial implications should be discussed explicitly.

Please note that your information search may need to be done on an industry categorization that is broader than your specific product. For example, if you are interested in introducing odor eliminating jogging wear, you may need to research athletic wear in general. In some circumstances, you may need to do your research on a related industry. For example, if you are interested in introducing “environmentally friendly” ammunition that avoids lead contamination, you may want to research the handgun and/or hunting rifle markets, as appropriate.

You may use any reasonable format, but **your citation should, at a minimum, include:**

- **Author’s name, if available.**
- **Title of article and periodical, or title of book or other publication.**
- **Year of publication.**

It is irrelevant where you retried an article—“Lexis-Nexis” is or the hyperlink address for the article found within a periodicals database—is not part of the citation.

CHECKLIST:

- The paper starts with a brief reminder of the proposal description (no more than five lines).
- The research is based on legitimate books, periodicals, and other quality and objective materials. Most web sites not associated with quality periodicals are *not* acceptable.
- All sources are clearly cited.
- Managerial implications are highlighted.
- Reasoning for conclusions is clearly articulated.
- Any assumptions are clearly identified.

Assignment 2—Consumer Behavior. A discussion (based on reading, consumer observation, and/or interviews) of issues in consumer behavior that have implications for success--e.g.,

- Consumer information search strategy

- Level of category involvement in the decision making process;
- Typical characteristics of the shopping occasion;
- Consumer product category knowledge;
- Social influence on product choice and/or selection;
- Means-end associations with the product;
- Consumer attitudes toward the product category and/or brands involved;
- Family member influences and roles; and
- Situational influences relevant to the product category, target market, and distribution channel.

In your discussion, you should be sure to highlight managerial implications of the consumer behavior implications. You may want to discuss ethical issues—e.g., consumer decision making approaches for certain low involvement products that make them vulnerable to deceptive or confusing marketing claims.

If you perform primary research (e.g., interviews or surveys), you should clearly state your procedure and the sample size involved.

CHECKLIST:

- The paper starts with a brief reminder of the proposal description (no more than five lines).
- The analysis emphasizes managerial implications—that is, what does the research suggest about opportunities, the strategies that should be taken, and how the marketing program should be implemented?
- Any assumptions are identified.
- Any sources used are cited.
- Any primary research performed is clearly documented.

Assignment 3—Primary Research: A discussion of primary research that should be done to help a firm decide whether, and if so how, to proceed with this market. You are not expected to actually collect this data. That is a job that can be delegated in industry, your task here is to identify your information needs and how this information can be most economically and effectively obtained. You should discuss

- Information needed, outlining clearly why this information is essential and would be useful in making decisions on the venture;
- Any hypotheses, if appropriate, that you may have
- The preferred method(s) and why these are most suitable (including any tradeoffs relative to other methods) and the rationales for choosing the specific method(s) rather than other methods;
- The subject population of interest (e.g., married women between 25-45 who have no children) and why this population choice is appropriate; and
- Any specific design (e.g., questionnaire items or an interview outline).
- Any confounds that you may anticipate.

For some purposes, one research method—e.g., only questionnaires—may be sufficient. If you choose to propose more than one research method, you should

carefully discuss how results from the different studies would be integrated into a coherent analysis. You should also emphasize

- The sequence of the studies, if appropriate.
- Any way that later studies would depend, or follow up, on previous studies. This discussion should be as specific as possible. For example, if you plan to run a series of focus groups before going on to mall intercept surveys and would like to follow up on issues raised in the focus groups when doing the mall intercept, you should discuss as specifically as possible what types of issues you expect to arise.

CHECKLIST:

- The paper starts with a brief reminder of the proposal description (no more than five lines).
- The primary research information needs for the venture are clearly described.
- Reasons why the sought information is useful—and its implications for decision making—are clearly articulated.
- Reasons for your choice of specific research methods are clearly stated.
- The relationship between consecutive studies, if any, is clearly discussed.
- The relevant population from which sampling is done is clearly identified.
- Instrument design—including samples—is discussed.

Assignment #4: Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning. A discussion of issues relating to segmentation, targeting, and positioning as these relate to your new product, service, population, and/or channel. These notes provide some additional suggestions for issues that you *may* want to address. Note that it would be unrealistic to attempt to address all of these, and you may not actually want to address any, choosing instead other issues you see as more significant. Also keep in mind that there are many other issues that could be discussed. The important thing is for you to choose and emphasize those issues you see as most important for your venture.

CHECKLIST:

- The paper starts with a brief reminder of the proposal description (no more than five lines).
- If segmentation is discussed, both methods of segmentation (e.g., demographics, benefits desired), specific variables (e.g., gender), and levels (e.g., male, female) are discussed.
- If appropriate, segments are based on the combination of variables (e.g., “males under 25”).
- The reasoning for segmentation choices is discussed clearly.
- The analysis highlights managerial implications.
- Any assumptions are identified.
- Any sources used are cited.
- Any primary research performed is clearly documented.

SEGMENTATION

If you are proposing a venture that involves an existing product category, you might address issues such as:

- **Identification of the most appropriate product category.** You will need to toe a delicate balance between being too narrow (e.g., household cleaning supplies) and too specific (e.g., orange fragrance furniture polish) in naming the relevant product category. Which category best describes products that are likely to constitute the direct competitors? More remote substitutes often constitute serious competition; you may want to address these within the context of positioning or in terms of segments of users of those product categories that are more or less likely to be attracted to your product.
- **Identifying the most useful bases for segmentation.** Before we identify the actual segments of individuals (e.g., in the shoe market, price sensitive females), we should identify the bases for segmentation, or the *variables* that we use to differentiate consumers (in this case, price sensitivity and gender). You may also want to identify different *levels* of each variable (e.g., for gender, male and female; for price sensitivity, high, low, and medium). Ideally, these variables would be selected based on research (e.g., industry reports and/or articles). If you cannot find information about user types in sources such as trade journals or industry reports, you might examine how various competitors' products differ and see if you can "work backwards" to identify how each may have been created to serve the needs of a respective segment. If you cannot readily identify demographic or psychographic differences between different types of customers that might prefer different types of product variations, you might instead focus on segmentation on *benefit desired*. Sometimes, some consumers just prefer one thing and others prefer something else. There is no real tradeoff of benefits. Some examples:
 - *After shave.* Some men may mostly want the soothing feeling while others like a strong fragrance.
 - *Video games:* Some consumers like violent themes and fast action; others may prefer peaceful games that emphasize planning and strategy. Some like games where they represent the good guy; others like to be the bad guy. Some don't care if they are the good or bad guy as long as they get to kill a lot of people. Some people do not care whether they get or kill or not so long as there is constant, loud action.
- Are there any tradeoffs that one might have to make? Some examples:
- *Digital photography:* you may need to trade off the quality of pictures with difficulty of use and cost. Some people are willing to spend a lot of time to learn how to take an optimum picture under different circumstances and then adjust a number of settings before taking each photo. Others will settle for a lower quality photograph if they can have a camera is easier and faster to use.
- Automobiles, important tradeoffs may be between speed and gas mileage. Some consumers will value one characteristic more than the other.

Another basis of segmentation that may be relevant *is usage heaviness or the frequency and quantity of use*. Some consumers buy products frequently and/or in high quantities while others use a product less frequently or in smaller quantities. Cell phone service is a prime example—some consumers are willing to pay for a large number of minutes while others use the phone more for emergencies. There may be other variations here. For

example, private individuals may find night and week-end minutes satisfactory; most business users need more minutes during work time. Although heavy users buy more product, competition for that market is likely to be heavy. Competition for the segment of infrequent aftershave users may be modest. Targeting that group, you may persuade prospects to keep a bottle on hand.

- **Identifying and evaluating actual segments.** At this time, you may be able to identify different segments. You might evaluate the attractiveness of one or more of these based on factor such as:
 - How well different segments are served by existing competitors.
 - Fit of segment needs and usage patterns with technical and other core competencies and reputation of your firm.
 - Feasibility of serving the segment, including cost effectiveness.
 - Distinctive tastes or behaviors that lead to a relatively consistent product preference or response.
 - Ability to reach (through distribution channels) and communicate with your segment (through media preferences that may dominate this segment— e.g., tendency to watch certain TV programs or channels or reading certain magazines).

If your product is not part of a meaningful existing product category, segmentation and targeting may have been implicitly addressed in the proposal and/or prior papers. This may be an opportunity to reassess your initial thoughts here. You might think about exiting products and services that serve a similar need (i.e., more remote substitutes), although possibly incompletely, and consider which segments within those markets are more likely to “defect” to your product.

TARGETING

The target market for your product may already be implicit in your idea. If it is not, you might assess which segments might make the most appropriate targets based on the segment evaluation issues discussed above.

Here, you may also think about media and other strategies that are best suited for reaching your target market. Which media (e.g., specific magazines, newspapers, radio programs, TV programs or stations, billboard encounters, and/or online sites) are most likely to reach this target? You may want to consider efficiency. For example, it may be quite possible to reach teenagers on mainstream network TV programs such as *Law and Order*, but if you only want to reach teenagers, a lot of the advertising will be “wasted” on others not in your target market. On the other hand, advertisements on myspace.com and in youth oriented periodicals, or on certain specific cable channels, may be much more efficient.

POSITIONING

Positioning essentially involves implementing your segmentation and targeting strategies. Now that your target has been identified, you might think about:

- Realistically speaking, how much can your product be differentiated from those of competitors, especially from the point of view of your segment? For example, some teenage males may know that some brands of aftershave are more expensive than others; but some may be hard pressed to detect, let alone describe, differences in fragrance.

- Is your product differentiated from that of the competition in terms of specific attributes that can be concretely described (e.g., the soothing, “odor free” aftershave) or is the differentiation more “abstract” and centered on “style” or “image?”
- The most important features and/or characteristics of a product aimed at your chosen segment, if appropriate.
- Marketing communication medium most suitable for bringing across your message. For example, expert photographers may want a great deal of information that could be effectively conveyed in a full page newspaper ad; casual photographers may respond better to a TV ad that shows the sequence of how easy it is to aim, click, and transfer photos to an automatic online album.
- A concise statement of why the customer should buy your product. Often, your “shot” at the customer’s attention will be brief. If the product is not an extremely high involvement one, you may need to be able to make a compelling case in twenty-five words or less. Ten would be better, if feasible! If applicable, specific ways that your brand differs from that of competitors may be an important part of this position statement.
- The vocabulary and communication style used by your target market.
 - You will likely know more about the product than your target customer does, so you need to resist “engineering speak.”
 - Your particular target market may use different terms than would another group may. For example, men would probably use a less detailed vocabulary to discuss and think about shoes than would women (although there are large variations within each group). Older married men (who have had years of exposure to the terms used by their wives) might use the term “fragrance” to describe the smell of aftershave whereas teenage males who have just started to shave may use a less elegant term. “Dedicated” photographers who are willing to put in more effort in return for superior quality pictures may be conversant with more photo terms than are more casual, convenience oriented photographers. Some people may talk generically about MP3 players; others may use the brand name iPod loosely to refer to MP3 players in general; some may not think much about the idea that alternatives to the iPod exists.
- If applicable, you look into perceptual mapping. You might ask a few friends how they see different products in the category to differ from each other.

A possible, “experimental,” source of insight into consumer product perceptions: Over the last several years, a number of “photo share” services such as <http://www.Webshots.com> have started to make a lot of digital photographs available in a readily searchable manner. Even if these photographs actually include people’s faces, they cannot always be taken at “face” value since many are staged. Nevertheless, you may think about searching for photographs that come up with your product category as a search term. For example, if your product is related to cellular phone or iPods, you can see a lot situations when these products are used. Sometimes, it is useful to see not just how the album “owner” is portrayed, but also the comments that he or she makes another person and his or her product choice or use. For example, someone may remark on the worn (or “new” or “flawless”) appearance of another person’s iPod or the “beautiful” or “shocking” shade of a friend’s manicure.

Assignments must be uploaded to Turnitin.com through Blackboard. Instructions for uploading to Turnitin will be provided.

FINAL PROJECT GUIDELINES

The final project is an opportunity to synthesize the issues that you have analyzed in your project papers throughout the term.

Please note that papers containing the term “etc.” are likely to be viewed with considerable skepticism!

The paper should contain five sections:

1. A brief **executive summary** (no more than one double spaced page) in which you summarize the contents of this report. This summary should help a busy reader decide whether it would be useful to read the entire report. Although you may choose a different approach, the executive summary might take the following form:
 - a) Brief discussion of the venture.
 - b) A brief statement of your tentative assessment as discussed in section #3 below.
2. Replies (no more than three double spaced pages in total) to substantive comments (as appropriate) and questions raised in previous papers. This includes both responding to outright questions and to comments such as “It is not clear...”
3. A tentative assessment (no more than three double spaced pages) of the prospects, contingent on specific findings of the research discussed above, for your venture. Some “prototypical” conclusions might be:
 - a) “Based on everything seen so far, it appears that the venture has strong potential for the following reasons.... [Discussion] Questions remain about the following issues, which would need to be assessed through research.... [Discussion].”
 - b) “Although the product would appear to fill a serious need and may have good commercial prospects, the feasibility of the product is subject to the following very serious limitations and/or complications.... [Discussion] The following research is needed to help assess prospects, problems, and complications....”
 - c) “Although the product seemed a promising idea when proposed, the following complications suggest that the idea is not feasible (in the current market or with current technology for the following reasons....” [Discussion].

Where appropriate, you may “cut” and “paste” from earlier papers (subject to the maintenance of appropriate conciseness) so long as you put the material in quotes and credit the specific paper.

Regardless of whether you turn in your paper electronically or in hard copy, you must also upload your paper to Turnitin through Blackboard. If you are quoting from your previous paper, it is OK if this leads to a score of some “non-original” material.

All material—the paper, comments on previous papers, and previous papers—should be put into *one* file and should be uploaded to Turnitin through Blackboard.

APPENDIX E QUALITY OF SOURCES USED IN

Sources That Are Likely to Be of Higher Quality:

- Books

- **Periodicals**—can be found through library databases such as Lexis-Nexis and ABI/Inform
 - **General news** (Note: These sources are sometimes available online and it is fine to use any online version).
 - **Newspapers**—e.g., *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*
 - **Magazines**
 - **Business oriented**—e.g., *Business Week*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *American Demographics*.
 - **General**—e.g., *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Economist*
 - **Specialty magazines**—if appropriate and relevant—e.g., *PC Magazine*
 - **Trade publications**—e.g., *Air Cargo World*, *Ice Cream Reporter*
- **Reference materials published by a reputable source**—if relevant and appropriate—e.g., encyclopedias and almanacs
- **Directories**—e.g., *Best Customers*
- **Government publications**—e.g., *Statistical Abstracts of the United States*
- **Selected web sites from credible sources:** U.S. Government, United Nations, World Bank. (Note: Most other web sites are not appropriate).

Sources That Are Likely to Be of Low Quality and/or to Be “Suspect” in Some Way:

- **Most web sites:**
 - **Private sites.** The person who wrote this may not be qualified to discuss this issue, may have done a sloppy job, or may have a special interest. This includes sites hosted on “.edu” domains unless the writer is clearly identified as a professor or researcher. If the source is credible this way, you must identify this fact in the citation.
 - **Company sites.** These are glorified advertisements for the firm and are intended to make the firm look good. Accuracy may be less important to the firm than coming across well!
 - **Trade group sites.** These are supposed to make the industry look good. See above!
 - **Foreign government sites.** Many of these are intended to make the firm look good. Some countries do not have the resources to collect accurate information. Much of the information contained may represent wishful thinking rather than reality.
 - **Political, social, or organizational sites.** Sites run by religious groups, social or ethnic groups, political groups, or other groups that exist to promote one kind of viewpoint, policy, or “truth” cannot be taken at face value.
- **Company advertisements and annual reports.** Selected objective and audited information may be useful, but management opinions and claims are suspect.
- **Trade group brochures.** Again, the publisher has an agenda!

Yes, it is easier to try to find things through search engines such as Google rather than consulting a reputable source. It is also easier to guess! Neither approach is acceptable.

APPENDIX F: NOTES ON QUOTATIONS, PARAPHRASING, AND CITATIONS

Quotations and paraphrasing. Generally, it is better to *paraphrase* statements made in articles and other documents. A direct quote of more than a few words should ordinarily be used only under exceptional circumstances—e.g., when it is exceptionally succinct, insightfully phrased, ironic, otherwise forceful, or revealing, as appropriate, of a significant player’s personality, predisposition, or strategy.

Note that occasionally using just a few judiciously selected words from a quote may add a nice flavor. For example:

John Smith, lead petrochemicals analyst at Arthur Anderson & Co., remarked that it is “quite unlikely” that Nigeria will be able provide a “sufficiently dependable” supply benzene for major industrial customers.

Frequently, direct quotes tend to be longer than a good paraphrase, and the reader will not be spending time thinking about what kind of point the direct quote was intended to make.

If you do decide to use a quote, it must be *introduced* in some way--e.g.,

According to Jack Intrascopolus, a leading authority on “raponomics” (the economics of rap music), “The prospects for rap music in the Middle East, at the moment, appear to be....”

Citations. In all papers, you must cite your sources in the body of the text and provide a complete bibliography at the end of the paper. You must cite a source when you use information from it even if you do not quote directly. For example:

It appears that rap music has so far met success in North America, Western Europe, and certain more affluent Asian countries, with penetration in Latin America and the Middle East so far being quite limited. (Intrascopolus, 2000).

(The author’s last name and the year of publication are put in parentheses at the end of the sentence). The source should be listed completely (author, title, publication, date, and, if available, page numbers) at the end of the paper. E.g.,

Intrascopolus, James Q. (2000), “Rapping Against a Cultural Wall,” *International Journal of Rappology*, 4(2), 423-450.

APPENDIX G: INDICATORS OF SUPERFICIALITY: AVOIDING HYPERBOLE, CLICHES, AMBIGUITY, AND EMPTY “BUZZ WORDS”

The following are examples of statements made in cases that will tend to prejudice an educated and thoughtful reader against the writer.

MEANINGLESS AMBIGUITY

- “StarMedia should focus on the community it offers, which Latin Americans seem to be demanding, to maintain their early mover advantage.”
- “... StarMedia needs to, nonetheless, persevere and to establish itself as a leader in developing and tailoring the market to appeal to Spanish speakers. However, the company must be careful to steer clear of stereotyping and must always be educated and ware of the complexities and the uniqueness of the region.”

HYPERBOLE—general statements that at best represent exaggerations and ambiguity—e.g.,

- “[StarMedia] need only continue the following programs for prosperity in the future.” [First of all, unless the “programs” in question have been specified very precisely, the statement is not meaningful. Secondly, the term “prosperity” is not a business term and is overly vague. Thirdly, there is authority or compelling reasoning to suggest that the programs will continue to work in the future.]
- “Having all these partnerships make it difficult for StarMedia to lose overall market share...” [In truth, losing market share (unlike body weight!) is very easy. A more meaningful statement might be that these partnerships might “help ameliorate threats to market share.”]
- “Everyone has been trying to get a piece of the Spanish-speaking Internet market.”

CLICHES—“over-worn” phrases or “dime-store philosophy”—e.g.,

- “... has grown by leaps and bounds.”
- “Time will only tell what will become of StarMedia...”

EMPTY “BUZZ WORDS”—fancy terms mean very little when it is not demonstrated that the writer fully understands what they mean and how they apply in the respective context—e.g.,

- “Here are three factors that would allow StarMedia to succeed:
 - “Leveraging technological capabilities. [There is no indication that the writer has thought of how the term applies here—but it sounds fancy and profound!]
 - “Forging corporate partnerships early on. [When exactly should these happen? The firm has been in operation for some time now—is it too early, too late, or about time now? What kinds of partnerships should be forged?]
 - Collaborating with customers.” [How?]
- “StarMedia should compete in Latin America and the U.S. by being aggressive and leveraging its brand names, advertisers, and strategic partners.” [Easier said than done! Some relatively specific suggestions are needed for this mouthful to have any value.]

STATEMENTS WITHOUT ARTICULATED OR ADEQUATELY IMPLIED LOGIC [Note: Some of these conclusions might have had merit if supporting evidence or reasoning were to follow immediately after their assertions.]—e.g.,

- “[StarMedia] is the leading Internet site in Latin America, with many dependent customers, so it will continue to grow.”
- [StarMedia] has developed seven different versions ad... This is why StarMedia has survived and why it has been so popular, and why it will continue to be.”
- “One way for StarMedia to generate more revenues is to advertise more.”
- “With a low stock price, but with strong future annual reports, more investors will begin to invest.” [What is a “strong annual report” and how do we know that these will occur in the future?]

OVERLY GENERAL OBSERVATIONS—e.g.,

- “[It] would be more advantageous for Maytag to pursue entry into the Japanese market in conjunction with enterprises that are well entrenched in the market and can bring considerable knowledge and experience to the partnership. Simply, these partnerships should share complementary strengths in business, brands, and products.”