

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON
FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND LAW
MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

MODULE: MKTM028 Strategic Marketing

2019-2020

Module Code MKTM028	Level 7	Credit Value 20	
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Assessment Brief

Assessment title:	Assessment One MKTM028: Marketing Audit
Weighting:	40% of Module Marks
Deadline:	See NILE
Feedback and Grades due:	See NILE
Resit Date	See NILE

Please read this assessment brief in its entirety before starting work on it.

Purpose of the Assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to produce a marketing audit that would support a marketing plan. The audit should be produced for **a company (or business unit)** of your choice **in one sector** from; mobile network providers, gaming, fragrance or charity and should focus **on one country only**.

Assessment Task

Conduct independent research using quality sources fully referenced to provide the evidence to support your analysis e.g. Mintel, MarketLine Advantage, ABI Global, newspapers, journals, company websites etc.

This Marketing Audit is limited in scope and should contain the following areas:
(A full Audit, based on Kotler's format, can be seen in Appendix 1 of this brief)

- Macro analysis (PEEST)
- Micro analysis (market, customers and competitors)
- Internal analysis (strategy, functions, productivity)
- One-page TOWS matrix and key strategic challenges summary

- Appendices (up to 4 sides of supporting information/analysis, not included in word count which must include the Company Overview)
Appendix 1: One-page Company Overview to include; name, type, size, key competitors, customers, products/services. Specific area of focus for your audit – company or business unit and country.
Appendix 2: supporting Macro model/framework application
Appendix 3: supporting Micro model/framework application
Appendix 4: supporting Internal model/framework application

This should be in **report** format. Your analysis should be succinct and the use of models and tables is encouraged. This should be addressed in a level 7 (MBA) academic style. It should show:

- critical awareness in relation to the identification and application of relevant models/frameworks, analysis, evaluation, synthesis and original insights
- appropriate academic English for level 7 work
- appropriate support from secondary literature supported by appropriate UoN Harvard referencing.

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes that are being assessed in this assignment are:

- a) Identify, analyse and integrate information from a range of sources, drawing heavily on current research, academic publications and appropriate primary sources.

- d) Devise and sustain an argument, supported by valid and evaluated evidence, including some elements which offer new insights.

- e) Identify and analyse complex strategic marketing tasks.

Your grade will depend on the extent to which you meet these learning outcomes in the way relevant for this assignment. Please see the grading rubric at the end of this assessment brief for further details of the criteria against which you will be assessed.

Word Limits

The word limit for this assessment is **1600 words**. As such your analysis should be succinct and the use of models and tables is encouraged.

In accordance with the [Assessment and Feedback Policy](#), as stated in section 4.40 where a submission exceeds the stipulated word limit by more than 10%, the submission will only be marked up to and including the additional 10%. **Anything over this will not be included in the final grade for the assessment item.** Cover, contents, abstracts, reference lists, appendices and footnotes are excluded from any word limit requirements.

In line with section 4.41 of the same Policy, where a submission is notably under the word limit, the full submission will be marked on the extent to which the learning objectives have been met.

Assignment Support

Sessions 2 to 6 are related to this assessment and your Tutor will provide face-to-face support in class and/or online Collaborate sessions. In addition, on-line materials on Nile (articles, slides) will show a variety of models and frameworks that can be applied in this Audit. Feedforward advice will be provided on-line prior to assessment submission.

You should also use the **SkillsHub**: <https://skillshub.northampton.ac.uk>

Generic Grading Criteria

You will find the generic grading criteria for achievement at [University Grading Criteria](#). Also explained here are the meanings of the various G grades at the bottom of the grading scale.

Assessment Submission

To submit your work, please go to the 'Submit your work' area on the NILE site and use the relevant submission point to upload your report. The deadline for this is 11.59pm (UK local time) on the date of submission. Please note that essays and reports must be submitted as word documents and not PDFs.

Written work submitted to TURNITIN will be subject to anti-plagiarism detection software. Turnitin checks student work for possible textual matches against internet available resources and its own proprietary database.

When you upload your work correctly to TURNITIN you will receive a receipt which is your record and proof of submission.

N.B Work emailed directly to your tutor will not normally be marked. The only exception to this is when you are instructed to do so because TURNITIN is down.

Late submission of work

For first sits, if an item of assessment is submitted late and an extension has not been granted, the following will apply:

- Within one week of the original deadline – work will be marked and returned with full feedback, and awarded a maximum bare pass grade.

- More than one week from original deadline – maximum grade achievable LG (L indicating late).

At the second opportunity deadline (resits) work submitted late will be awarded a LG grade. There is no opportunity to submit work late for a bare pass.

Extensions

The University of Northampton's general policy with regard to extensions is to be supportive of students who have genuine difficulties, but not against pressures of work that could have reasonably been anticipated.

For full details please refer to the [Extensions Policy](#). The module leader can, where appropriate, authorise a short extension of up to two weeks from the original submission date for first sits only. There are **NO** extensions for resits. The TWO weeks means 14 calendar days including weekends and any University closed days.

Mitigating Circumstances

For guidance on Mitigating circumstances please go to [Mitigating Circumstances](#) where you will find detailed guidance on the policy as well as guidance and the form for making an application.

Please note, however, that an application to defer an assessment on the grounds of mitigating circumstances should normally be made in advance of the submission deadline or examination date.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

The work you produce must be your own with work taken from any other source properly referenced and attributed. The University of Northampton policy will apply in all cases of copying, plagiarism or any other methods by which students have obtained (or attempted to obtain) an unfair advantage.

If you are in any doubt about what constitutes plagiarism or any other infringement of academic integrity, please read the University's [Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy](#). For help with understanding academic integrity go to [UNPAC](#) and follow the [Top Tips for Good Academic Practice](#) on the student hub.

Please note that the University of Northampton puts all written assignments through detection software which detects if work has been plagiarised (copied) from other students (past or present and whether at UON or any other university), books, journals or internet sources. Copied materials WILL be detected. The penalties for copying work from another source without proper referencing are severe and can include failing the assignment, failing the module and expulsion from the university.

Feedback and Grades

These can be accessed through clicking on the Feedback and Grades tab on NILE. Feedback will be provided by a rubric with summary comments.

Grading Rubric/feedback guidance

The table on the following page serves as the specific grading guide to assist you in preparing, structuring, presenting and evaluating your own work. Tutor feedback will also include specific remarks on strengths and aspects for improvement as well as overall comments on the assessment

Learning Outcomes addressed through this assignment	No Submission / No Evidence	Fail	Pass	Merit
	<i>Work submitted is of no academic value / nothing submitted</i>	<i>Evidence included or provided but missing in some very important aspects</i>	<i>Of satisfactory quality, demonstrating evidence of achieving the requirements of the learning outcomes</i>	<i>Of high quality, demonstrating which is rigorous and appropriate to the task</i>
To identify and analyse complex strategic marketing tasks by <u>undertaking a Macro Analysis via PEST</u> for your chosen company (LOe - 10%)	Work submitted is of no academic value / nothing submitted.	You did not sufficiently identify and analyse the expected issues. A greater depth of analysis is required to achieve a pass mark.	You identified and analysed the expected issues in sufficient depth to pass. However, much more depth of critical analysis is required at this level.	You identified and analysed the expected issues very well. A greater depth of critical analysis is required to achieve a pass mark.
To identify and analyse complex strategic marketing tasks by <u>undertaking a Micro Analysis examining the market, customers and competitors</u> for your chosen company (LOe - 30%)	Work submitted is of no academic value / nothing submitted.	You did not sufficiently identify and analyse the expected issues. A greater depth of analysis is required to achieve a pass mark.	You identified and analysed the expected issues in sufficient depth to pass. However, much more depth of critical analysis is required at this level.	You identified and analysed the expected issues very well. A greater depth of critical analysis is required to achieve a pass mark.
To identify and analyse complex strategic marketing tasks by <u>undertaking an Internal Analysis examining the strategy, functions and productivity</u> for your chosen company (LOe - 20%)	Work submitted is of no academic value / nothing submitted.	You did not sufficiently identify and analyse the expected issues. A greater depth of analysis is required to achieve a pass mark.	You identified and analysed the expected issues in sufficient depth to pass. However, much more depth of critical analysis is required at this level.	You identified and analysed the expected issues very well. A greater depth of critical analysis is required to achieve a pass mark.
To devise and sustain an argument through evaluated evidence from <u>presenting a TOWS matrix and summary of key strategic challenges</u> faced by your company (LOd - 20%)	Work submitted is of no academic value / nothing submitted.	You did not sufficiently devise and sustain an argument through evaluated evidence for the expected issues. A greater depth of critical insight is required to achieve a pass mark.	You devised and sustained an argument through evaluated evidence in sufficient depth to pass. However, much more depth of critical insight is required at this level.	You devised and sustained an argument through evaluated evidence in sufficient depth to pass. However, much more depth of critical insight is required at this level.
Quality of <u>appropriate research</u> which helps to identify, analyse and integrate information from a range of quality academic sources (LOa - 10%)	Work submitted is of no academic value / nothing submitted.	Your answer did not locate and/or use a sufficient variety of relevant resources. At this level, higher quality and/or more sources are required to pass an assessment.	You demonstrated that you located/ used a sufficient variety of relevant resources. However, to score a good mark, you must locate/use a much greater variety of quality academic sources (Journal Articles).	You demonstrated that you used a good variety of relevant resources. If you can locate/use a much greater variety of quality academic sources, you have the potential to score well in future assessments.
Use of <u>Harvard Referencing</u> which helps to identify, analyse and integrate information from a range of quality academic sources (LOa - 5%)	Work submitted is of no academic value / nothing submitted.	Deficient standard shown, through weak referencing and citing style which does not consistently conform to the Harvard referencing style.	Satisfactory standard shown. Some sources accurately cited, with appropriate reference list provided. Mainly in the correct style. However, there are many inconsistencies in style/sources outlined.	Good standard shown. Some sources accurately cited, with appropriate reference list provided. Major inconsistencies in terms of style. However, there are some inconsistencies in terms of style/sources outlined.
Quality of <u>structure and presentation</u> which helps to identify, analyse and integrate information from a range of quality academic sources (LOa - 5%)	Work submitted is of no academic value / nothing submitted.	Deficient presentation/layout for the type of assignment. Does not conform to the majority of assessment brief instructions. Figures, tables and/or diagrams ignored in text or not used where clearly needed. Poorly structured. Fails to refer to included appendices within text.	Satisfactory but inconsistent presentation/layout. Conforms to some but not the majority of the assessment brief instructions. Acceptable use of figures, tables and/or diagrams. Logically structured with satisfactory but inconsistent format. Limited in-text reference to the included appendices.	Good, consistent presentation/layout and for the type of assignment. Conforms to assessment brief instructions. Effective use of figures, tables and/or diagrams. Logically constructed with appropriate format is used. Appendices referred to in text.

Appendix 1.

MARKETING AUDIT - notes and audit questions D L Clewes MKTM028 Module Leader

Many companies today are finding that their current strategic marketing is growing obsolete in the face of a rapidly changing environment. This is happening to company giants as well as smaller firms that have not provided a mechanism for reviewing their marketing strategy. The audit offers one major mechanism for pursuing this necessary task.

The marketing audit is one important answer to the problem of evaluating the marketing performance of a company or business unit. Marketing audits are distinguished from other marketing exercises in being comprehensive, independent, systematic, and periodic. A full marketing audit would cover the company's (or business unit's) external environment (Macro and Micro/task), and internal environment; strategies, organization, systems, productivity and functions. If the audit covers only one function, such as marketing communications (promotion), it is best described as a marketing function audit rather than a marketing audit. Marketing audits can be more or less detailed dependent upon the scope of the marketing planning activity.

A SWOT analysis can summarise the Audit findings with opportunities and threats coming from external analysis and strengths and weaknesses coming from internal analysis. Key strategic challenges arising from this can be stated to demonstrate synthesis and encourage focus on key success factors. A TOWS matrix allows the matching of these factors to generate original insights for strategic alternatives - possible future strategic initiatives/projects that should maintain or improve the performance of the organisation under analysis.

The findings of an audit should be summarised in a 1-page SWOT or TOWS matrix with key strategic challenges identified, with each point rank ordered.

The marketing audit is carried out in three steps: developing an agreement as to objectives and scope; collecting the data; and presenting the report.

COMPONENTS OF A MARKETING AUDIT

N.B. Questions to consider – not an exhaustive list. Also, Audits can be limited in scope so not all areas would then be considered.

The Marketing Environment Audit

I. Macro-Environment

Political-Legal

1. What laws are being proposed that may affect marketing strategy and tactics?
2. What federal, state, and local agency actions should be watched? What is happening in the areas of pollution control, equal employment opportunity, product safety, advertising, price control etc., that is relevant to marketing planning?

Economic-Demographic

1. What does the company expect in the way of inflation, material shortages, unemployment, and credit availability in the short run, intermediate run, and long run?
2. What effect will forecasted trends in the size, age distribution, and regional distribution of population have on the business?

Environmental

1. What is the outlook for the cost and availability of natural resources and energy needed by the company?
2. What concerns have been expressed about the company's role in pollution and conservation, and what steps has the company taken?

Socio-Cultural

1. What attitudes is the public taking toward business and toward products such as those produced by the company?
2. What changes are occurring in consumer life-styles and values that have a bearing on the company's target markets and marketing methods?

Technology

1. What major changes are occurring in product technology? In process technology?
2. What are the major generic substitutes that might replace this product?

II. Micro (Task) Environment

Markets

1. What is happening to market size, growth, geographical distribution, and profits?
2. What are the market segments? What are their expected rates of growth? Which are high opportunity and low opportunity segments?

Customers

1. How do current customers and prospects rate the company and its competitors, particularly with respect to reputation, product quality, service, promotion and price?
2. How do different classes of customers make their buying decisions?
3. What are the evolving needs and satisfactions being sought by the buyers in this market?

Competitors

1. Who are the major competitors? What are the objectives and strategies of each major competitor? What are their strengths and weaknesses? What are the sizes and trends in market shares?
2. What trends can be foreseen in future competition and substitutes for the company's products?

Distributions and Dealers

1. What are the main trade channels bringing products to customers?
2. What are the efficiency levels and growth potentials of the different trade channels?

Suppliers

1. What is the outlook for the availability of different key resources used in the supply chain?
2. What trends are occurring among suppliers in their pattern of selling?

III. Internal Audit

Strategy Audit

1. Is the business mission clearly stated in market-oriented terms? Is it feasible?
2. Are the corporate and marketing objectives stated in clear form to guide marketing planning and subsequent performance measurement?
3. Are the marketing objectives appropriate, given the company's competitive position, resources, and opportunities?
4. What is the core marketing strategy for achieving the objectives? (Target market(s), positioning, marketing mix for each target segment) Is it a sound marketing strategy?
5. Are marketing resources allocated optimally to the major elements of the marketing mix i.e. product quality, service, on/off line promotion, distribution, pricing?
6. Are enough resources (or too much resources) budgeted to accomplish the marketing objectives?

Marketing Organization Audit

Formal Structure

1. Is there a high-level marketing manager with adequate authority and responsibility over those company activities that affect the customer's satisfaction?
2. Are the marketing responsibilities optimally structured along functional product, end user, and territorial lines?

Functional Efficiency

1. Are there good communication and working relations between marketing and sales?
2. Is the product management system working effectively? Are the product managers able to plan profits or only sales volume?
3. Are there any groups in marketing that need more training, motivation, supervision, or evaluation?

Interface Efficiency

1. Are there any problems between marketing and other business areas that need attention?

Marketing System Audit

Marketing Information System

1. Is the marketing intelligence system producing accurate, sufficient, and timely information about developments in the marketplace?
2. Is marketing research being adequately used by company decision makers?

Marketing Planning System

1. Is the marketing planning system well-conceived and effective?
2. Is sales forecasting and market potential measurement soundly carried out?
3. Are sales quotas set on a proper basis?

Marketing Control System

1. Are the control procedures (monthly, quarterly, etc.) adequate to ensure that the annual plan objectives are being achieved?
2. Is provision made to analyse periodically the profitability of different products, markets, territories, and channels of distribution?
3. Is provision made to examine and validate periodically various marketing costs?

New Product Development System

1. Is the company well-organized to gather, generate, and screen new product ideas?
2. Does the company do adequate concept research and business analysis before investing heavily in a new idea?
3. Does the company carry out adequate product and market testing before launching a new product?

Marketing Productivity Audit

Profitability Analysis

1. What is the profitability of the company's different products, served markets, territories, and channels of distribution?
2. Should the company enter, expand, contract, or withdraw from any business segments and what would be the short and long-run profit consequences?

Cost-Effective Analysis

1. Do any marketing activities seem to have excessive cost? Are these costs valid? Can cost-reducing steps be taken?

Marketing Function Audit

Products

1. What are the product line objectives? Are these objectives sound? Is the current product line meeting these objectives?
2. Are there particular products that should be phased out?
3. Are there new products that are worth adding?
4. Are any products able to benefit from quality, feature, or style improvements?

Price

1. What are the pricing objectives, policies, strategies, and procedures? To what extent are prices set on sound cost, demand, and competitive criteria?
2. Do the customers see the company's price as being in line or out of line with the perceived value of its offer?
3. Does the company use price promotions effectively?

Distribution

1. What are the distribution objectives and strategies?
2. Is there adequate market coverage and services?
3. Should the company consider changing its degree of reliance on distributors, sales, reps, and direct selling?

Promotion (Advertising, Sales Promotion, Publicity, Sales and Direct Marketing)

1. What are the organization's advertising objectives? Are they sound?
2. Is the right amount being spent in advertising? How is the budget determined?
3. Are the ad theme and copy effective? What do customers and the public think about the advertising?
4. Are the advertising media well chosen?
5. Is the sales promotion used effectively?
6. Is there a well-conceived publicity program?
7. Is the sales force used effectively?
8. Is the company making enough and effective use of direct and online marketing?

N.B. For service organisations then **People/Process/Physical Evidence** should also be reviewed for effectiveness.

NOTES

1. Adapted from: Kotler, P. and Keller, K. (2016) **Marketing management**. 15th edition. New Jersey, Pearson Prentice Hall.

2. Marketing Audit originally developed by Kotler, P., Gregor, W. and Rodgers, W.- see Kotler, P., Gregor, W.T. & Rodgers, W.H. (1989) The Marketing Audit Comes of Age, *Sloan management review*, vol. 30, no. 2, pp. 49 - 62.

3. The Marketing Audit is the first stage of the marketing planning process. Many marketing plan templates can be downloaded from the internet; an example which contains tables to complete and which might be useful for reference is: <https://www.thinkbusiness.ie/articles/free-marketing-plan-template/>