# Unit:
# eBusiness

# Assignment title:
# Established retailer adopting e-commerce

# Sample Assignment

## Important notes

- Please refer to the *Assignment Presentation Requirements* for advice on how to set out your assignment. These can be found on the NCC Education website. Click on 'Policies & Advice' on the main menu and then click on 'Student Support'.

- You must read the NCC Education documents *What is Academic Misconduct? Guidance for Candidates* and *Avoiding Plagiarism and Collusion: Guidance for Candidates* and ensure that you acknowledge all the sources that you use in your work. These documents are available on the NCC Education website. Click on 'Policies & Advice' on the main menu and then click on 'Student Support'.

- You **must** complete the *Statement and Confirmation of Own Work*. The form is available on the NCC Education website. Click on 'Policies & Advice' on the main menu and then click on 'Student Support'.

- Please make a note of the recommended word count. You could lose marks if you write 10% more or less than this.

- You must submit a paper copy and digital copy. Media containing viruses, or media that cannot be run directly, will result in a fail grade being awarded for this assessment.

- All electronic media will be checked for plagiarism.

# Introduction

This assignment requires you to demonstrate knowledge and skills you have acquired throughout the course of this module by producing a 4,000 word, fully referenced, academic report that addresses the tasks given below. In order to complete the assignment, you will need to choose an industry and an appropriate organisation within it to research.

## Choosing an appropriate organisation

Step 1: select a retail sector in which you are interested. For example, clothing, footwear, electrical, sports equipment, food, books, supermarkets, department stores, etc.

Step 2: select a business that was established as a "bricks and mortar" company prior to developing an e-commerce presence. A feature of these sorts of businesses is that they:

- Have originally established a market share and reputation in their sector as a traditional "bricks and mortar" company

- Have subsequently launched an e-commerce platform through which to sell their products online

- Have developed a successful multichannel operation through which they sell products to both online customers and customers in traditional high street stores

- Have established a strong brand presence in each of the channels they sell through

## Researching your organisation

You can use web resources to enable you to understand the context in which your selected organisation operates.

Do not limit yourself, however, to web-based sources of information. You should also use academic, industry and other sources.

**Example – Argos (NOT TO BE USED BY THE STUDENT)**

**NB. You will not be expected to submit your background research, it should be used purely to help formulate your responses.**

Argos, established in 1972, is a high street catalogue retailer operating in 850 stores in the United Kingdom and Ireland, selling electronics, home and garden products, clothing, toys and sports equipment.

In 2012, having conducted research on customers' expectations, the company was determined to position itself as a leading digital retailer. The results to date are impressive with Argos receiving 1.2 billion hits to its website every year and claiming the title of the third most visited retail website in the UK (after Amazon and eBay).

The overall approach of Argos has been to adopt a multichannel strategy whereby it offers its customers a choice between visiting a physical store, using the Argos.co.uk ecommerce site or taking advantage of the Argos mobile app. The key is 'consistency', so that irrespective of which channel the customer is using they should expect a consistent experience from the retailer.

Currently around 60% of its sales are now derived online. However, 80% of these are either fulfilled in-store using its 'Click and Collect' service or sent out via its 'Fast Track' service, with the remainder sent using traditional courier services. With Click and Collect, customers are able to order products online and then visit the nearest Argos store to physically collect the product. Meanwhile the Fast Track delivery service is able to fulfil orders to 90% of UK households within four hours.

Innovation is key to keeping up with the fast moving world of e-commerce and Argos has combined Click and Collect with voice commerce, launching a service that enables customers to use the 'Voice Shop' feature to order products on their iOS or Android phones which they can pick up from one of the 850 stores on the same day.

Effective fulfilment is clearly important to Argos and it places great emphasis on real time stock management at a local inventory level to ensure customer requirements are met. It also pays attention to reverse logistics as a way of embracing the omni-channel nature of ecommerce, thereby providing a better service to customers whilst also generating value from returned goods.

In 2015, Argos was the first multichannel retailer to generate £1billion of mobile commerce revenue in a single year. Currently, of all digital sales, 70% come through mobile – either smartphones or tablets. So it is important that the digital experience across mobile devices continues to improve and develop.


Sources of information on this business include:

https://econsultancy.com/what-makes-argos-the-uk-s-top-multichannel-retailer/ (accessed 13/01/2020)

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-34460149 (accessed 13/01/2020)

https://realbusiness.co.uk/argos-results-the-importance-of-balancing-innovation-with-tradition/ (accessed 13/01/2020)

https://www.essentialretail.com/news/argos-online-and-physical-retail/ (accessed 13/01/2020)

Do NOT use Argos as the basis of your assignment. This is just an example. You must choose the organisation yourself.

Please note, this assignment must be your own work as it is designed to test your abilities. Submitted assignments will be checked for plagiarism. For more information, please refer to NCC Education's Academic Misconduct Policy, which can be found on the website.

## Instructions

Answer all SIX (6) questions.

## Task 1 – 20 Marks

a) Analyse the main challenges the retail organisation faced in adopting a multichannel approach to its online and offline business operations. (20 marks)

## Task 2 – 20 Marks

a) Examine the range of marketing approaches and techniques that have been used by the organisation to promote its products to both existing and potential online customers, identifying THREE (3) that you believe have been particularly successful, giving your reasons for your choice. (20 marks)

## Task 3 – 20 Marks

a) Evaluate why real time stock management is important for the organisation in adopting a multichannel strategy. (10 marks)

b) Analyse the role of reverse logistics in your chosen organisation's supply chain, paying particular attention to how it could be used to generate value from returned goods. (10 marks)

## Task 4 – 10 Marks

a) Identify the range of both established and innovative types of online payment methods offered by your chosen organisation and discuss the importance of providing customers with a wide choice of such payment methods. (10 marks)

## Task 5 – 10 Marks

a) Using your research, evaluate the impact of any reported security breach on the organisation (or one of its competitors) in terms of the threats it posed, how effectively it was dealt with and the impact it had upon its brand and reputation.

(10 marks)

## Task 6 – 20 Marks

a) Using your research, identify the key objectives of the organisation's overall e-commerce strategy and discuss how effective it has been in achieving these.

(10 marks)

b) Discuss why it is important that the organisation's e-commerce site is both feature-rich and easy to use, giving THREE (3) examples of how it has achieved these objectives.

(10 marks)

## Guidance

Consult with your tutor if you are uncertain about any aspect of this assignment.

## Submission requirements

You must submit a word-processed report.

Your report should answer Tasks 1 to 6. The word count for your report is **4,000 words**.

## Candidate checklist

Please use the following checklist to ensure that your work is ready for submission.

| | |
|---|---|
| Have you read the NCC Education documents *What is Academic Misconduct? Guidance for Candidates* and *Avoiding Plagiarism and Collusion: Guidance for Candidates* and ensured that you have acknowledged all the sources that you have used in your work? | ❑ |
| Have you completed the *Statement and Confirmation of Own Work* form and attached it to your assignment? **You must do this.** | ❑ |
| Have you ensured that your work has not gone over or under the recommended word count by more than 10%? | ❑ |
| Have you ensured that your work does not contain viruses and can be run directly? | ❑ |