Unit:
eBusiness

Assignment title:
The evolution of an established e-commerce organisation

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. Hover over 'About Us' on the main menu and then navigate to 'Policies and Procedures' then scroll to the 'Student Support' area.

- You **must** read the NCC Education document *Academic Misconduct Policy* and ensure that you acknowledge all the sources that you use in your work. These documents are available on the NCC Education website. Hover over 'About Us' on the main menu and then navigate to 'Policies and Procedures' then scroll to the 'Student Support' area.

- You **must** complete the *Statement and Confirmation of Own Work*. The form is available on the NCC Education website. Hover over 'About Us' on the main menu and then navigate to 'Policies and Procedures' then scroll to the 'Student Support' area.

- 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 (on disk or similarly acceptable medium). 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

Assignment Title – The evolution of an established e-commerce organisation

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 an organisation that is established as an e-commerce business that has been trading for more than 5 years. The organisation does not need to be solely trading online but the focus of your research will be within the e-commerce element of the business.

Step 2 – Research how the business has evolved and developed since it began trading online, through to the present day, identifying how the business has diversified and responded to changing buying habits and expectations of consumers. Things to consider as a minimum are:

- What was the product/service offer initially and how has this changed or developed?
- What is the reputation of this organisation in terms of brand presence and service delivery?
- What platforms were utilised initially and how has this developed or changed over time?
- Has the organisation's e-commerce offer increased/decreased and how is this related to cultural and lifestyle changes in society?
- How has the organisation utilised online advertising and how effective is this?
- How effective is the organisation's supply chain and what potential failures are present?
- How does the organisation utilise loyalty and rewards for online payments
- How effective is the information given to customers to inform on security processes?

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.

Scenario

Example – Sainsbury's (NOT to be used by students)

Sainsbury's is a supermarket chain that first opened its doors to customers in 1869.
In 1995 after many years of successful trading, Sainsbury's developed its first remote purchasing activity, offering wine bought over the phone through 'Wine Direct'.
In 1996, on Monday 30 December it was announced that Sainsbury's had joined forces with Hewlett-Packard for the development of an Internet-based supermarket offering a full range of products.

In 1998 Sainsbury's launched their first products and services using e-commerce – 'Orderline' a Telephone, fax and Internet service for home grocery delivery. This initial activity does not resemble the current e-commerce activities we associate with businesses today – ordering could only take place up until midnight, it was only available from 7 stores and there were very specific requirements for software and hardware required to access the platform, taking into account that consumers were new to e-commerce and often did not own the equipment that was compatible with the website software.
They also released a booklet called 'Your guide to shopping online' and sent out postal advertising, introducing the service and a discount voucher for either home delivery or collection.
It was noted in the annual report from 1998:
'It is still too early to tell whether home shopping will be a major new market, but we are ready to respond as it develops'

Soon after this Sainsbury's carried out its first large scale e-commerce advertising campaign by linking with several websites such as thisislondon.com and lineone.com where customers can search for recipes linked to Sainsbury's through banner advertising and also click through to Sainsburys.co.uk to sign up for a newsletter. By 1999 they had interacted with 90,000 consumers using this platform and had a click through rate of between six and nine percent.

This initial e-commerce activity was the basis for the online growth Sainsbury's have seen since 2000.
On 23 March 2000 Sainsbury plc announced a business-to-business e-commerce venture and on 12 April 2000 the home shopping service was re-branded 'Sainsbury's to You' and 'Sainsbury's entertain You'.

The company closed down its online entertainment home shopping service in 2007 due to losses, with a slimmed down range complementary to the core grocery shop.

In July 2009 Sainsbury's launched 4,500 non-food products online, increasing to 8,000 products by September 2009.
In 2014 Sainsbury's announced that their online sales had reached £1 Billion and launched their mobile website.

In 2015 they launched 'Click and Collect' services where items can be purchased online and collected in store the next day. Later this year they also increased their online presence with 4 twitter accounts, a Facebook page, a YouTube channel and a Flickr profile.

In November 2020 the brand launched targeted advertising opportunities across their digital platforms to other businesses.

In November 2021 the chief executive confirmed that Sainsbury's plan to maintain and drive further growth in digital sales, after being the biggest winner of market share in the online grocery sector during the reporting period. Roberts confirmed Sainsbury's now has a 21.3% share of the UK online grocery market by value, beaten only by Tesco.
8.2 million consumers use their digital Nectar Card loyalty and reward scheme as of November 2021.

Over the years Sainsbury's have diversified their product and service offerings to include Sainsbury's bank, Sainsbury's mobile and Sainsbury's Compare and Save - a digital platform where Sainsbury's customers can compare energy prices. They also launched Sainsbury's entertainment' in 2010, an online only service for customers to download or stream DVDs, films and E-books.

https://www.sainsburyarchive.org.uk/catalogue/search/sabra5521-guide-to-orderline-booklet/c/1
https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/online-advertising-campaign-month-sainsbury-s-recipe-online-ad-success/124318
https://www.annualreports.com/HostedData/AnnualReportArchive/j/LSE_GB0767628_1998.pdf
https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Sainsbury%27s_Online

https://sainsburyarchive.org.uk/
https://www.marketingweek.com/sainsburys-digital-marketing-push/
https://www.ukessays.com/essays/business/social-media-marketing-strategy-of-sainsburys.php
https://www.about.sainsburys.co.uk/~/media/Files/S/Sainsburys/documents/reports-and-presentations/annual-reports/annual-report-2014.pdf

Aim

To demonstrate understanding of how organisations develop their e-commerce activities over time and how they respond to changing buying habits and expectations of consumers, whilst ensuring high service levels, secure transactions and an effective supply chain.

Task 1 – 15 Marks

Analyse the initial product and service offers of the organisation and compare this with their current offer. Identify how the organisation has evolved and developed their ecommerce model over time and why, and the advantages and/or limitations of this for the organisation.

(15 marks)

Task 2 – 20 Marks

Analyse the online advertising methods used by the organisation and evaluate their scope and effectiveness. Identify TWO (2) other forms of eMarketing that are currently not used by the organisation and justify why these methods would be beneficial.

(20 marks)

Task 3 – 20 Marks

Identify the typical customer journey through the supply chain of the organisation from initial contact to after-sales services, by creating a customer journey map. Identify the stages of the journey where there is a possibility of supply chain failure and evaluate ways in which this could be minimised.

(20 marks)

Task 4 – 15 Marks

Analyse the utilisation of vouchers and rewards used by the organisation and how these can be used to make online payments, including any limitations and restrictions within this offer. Identify TWO (2) benefits of this payment method for the organisation and TWO (2) benefits of this for the customer.

(15 marks)

Task 5 – 10 Marks

Examine the information given by the organisation on the e-commerce platform to reassure consumers their private information and payments will be held securely and used fairly, within the law. Evaluate the detail, content and strength of the information provided and explain why this information is important for the organisation.

(10 marks)

Task 6 – 20 Marks

a) Using your research, identify TWO (2) e-commerce activities that the organisation has developed in the last TWO (2) years, that were not offered previously. Evaluate the benefits of these activities to the organisation.

(10 marks)

b) Identify TWO (2) e-commerce projects, activities or functionalities the organisation does not currently utilise and justify your selection by identifying how this would improve engagement.

(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 **4000 words**.

Candidate checklist

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

Have you read the NCC Education document *Academic Misconduct Policy* 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? ❏