Responding to a Request For Proposal (75 pts.)
MIS 214 Fall 2001, Instructors: Knox/Mesher/Miller

Preliminary Network Design Due Date (Required): Thursday, Nov. 1st, 2001 (10 Points)
Final Design Due Date: Tuesday, December 4th, 2001 (65 Points)

I. Introduction: what is an RFP?
In this assignment, you will respond to a request for proposal (RFP) by writing a network proposal. RFPs are valuable when the buyer’s needs are complex since the RFP spells out the customer’s requirements. They typically use competitive bidding, ensuring a balanced consideration of both quality and cost. By writing a response to an RFP, your lab group will act as a networking contractor, providing your group with a valuable introductory lesson in network design and allowing you to apply the knowledge you have already gained in this course. In addition, it will be to your advantage to do some of your own research (such as talking to knowledgeable computer store employees) for this RFP.

II. Sacto Telecom: RFP for a Satellite E-Commerce Web Farm.
Sacramento Telecommunications is issuing an RFP for potential vendors (this means you). Sales have been good and so the company is expanding by building an e-commerce web site on the grounds of its satellite office in Roseville. The concept for the web site is to create an online automated sales environment. Initially, 10 workers will handle incoming orders at the new facility. Marketing estimates based on current business activity indicate the facility will initially receive 1,500 orders/week. Sacto Telecom plans to ramp this up to 5,000 by the end of 2002.

Proposals for the new network must address the following network and project details:

0. Executive Summary
1. Project Overview (including Timeline and Budget)
2. Local Area Network
3. Wide Area Network
4. Security
5. Maintenance and Reliability Planning
6. Disaster Recovery Plan

0. Executive Summary: a one-page proposal summary of the highlights of your proposal.

1. Project Overview: present a detailed project budget along with a timeline for its completion.

2. Local Area Network. The new Roseville warehouse facility will use a gigabit Ethernet backbone consisting of computer and networking hardware, administrative, office application and network software along with the associated services of designing, installing and configuring the network. The site will need to have the following specifications determined:
   1. Employees will be furnished with laptops and other associated network hardware.
   2. Software and hardware must also be supplied to support a generic office environment.
   3. A description of the proposed network, including hardware and software components
   4. Network diagram

3. Wide Area Network
The network must be able to communicate with the company’s main office in downtown Sacramento and also have Internet access. In order to avoid any possible capture of the
company’s most sensitive financial information, a special communications link will need to be set up between the Roseville office and the company’s downtown Sacramento headquarters as well.

4. **Security**: you will also need to address security network concerns related to unauthorized access to network resources (especially the firewall and encryption of outgoing files).

5. **Maintenance and Reliability Planning**: What sort of system reliability will be possible? How will the network components be maintained/supported?

6. **Disaster Recovery Plan**: A Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) for restoring the network in the event of a natural disaster, an attack, etc., that could potentially cause network failure will also be needed. Fitzgerald and Dennis (p. 308) provide a checklist for an effective disaster recovery plan. Some important points to keep in mind in completing this assignment:

- How will recovery of the network be implemented following a disaster?
- Will the DRP involve a redundant network maintained by the organization or will it be contractual from out-sourced service provider?
- What will it cost? Both initial and on-going maintenance.
- What are the risks and penalties to the business if a DRP is not included in the RFP?

The DRP section needs to be 3-5 pages in length. Since the goal will be to provide enough information for a non-technical manager to make an informed decision on including a DRP as part of the network plan. A separate budget section should be included for the DRP.

III. **Project Submission Guidelines**: 

0. **Preliminary Proposal Submission: Due November 1st, 2001**

*Three weeks after the RFP is issued, a 3-5 page preliminary proposal will be submitted by each group containing draft version of the following sections: Project Overview, Equipment List, Initial Network Diagram, Preliminary Budget Estimate, and Project Timeline. Note: the preliminary proposal is required. Failure to turn in the preliminary proposal will result in an overall score of 0 for the project.*

1. **Formatting**: The proposal must be doublespaced, using Times New Roman, 12-point font and have 1” margins all around. Proposal length should be about 15-20 pages long (excluding reference materials) and include the following elements: cover page, table of contents, page numbering. **DO NOT** use a special binder for this report.

2. **References**: Because this is a research assignment, information presented in the proposals must be adequately documented. All proposals must include a bibliography and references should be made according to MLA style. In store visits and/or phone calls, must be footnoted and include the time and date and name and location of the company, name of the contact person, contact number and e-mail for the person contacted.

3. **Grading**: Your grade will be based on a combination of factors including:
   - Quality of the presentation (was it neatly done and clearly written)
   - Thoroughness of the bid (were all of the details of the bid adequately considered)
   - Quality of the research (how extensive and detailed was your research)