

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO
College of Business Administration

MIS 182 - Topics in MIS

Assignment 1 - Vision and Strategic Plan

Points: 25

Due: Tuesday, October 7

Please meet in your groups to discuss a project that you would like to pursue for an e-commerce endeavor. As we have discussed in class, an important initial step is having a long-term vision for your enterprise (i.e., vision statement), including what it (enterprise) should be, an image it should project to the public and its stake- and shareholders, and the avenues of business it should pursue. Based on your vision, a strategic plan can be assembled as it will embody all of the points in your vision statement.

Vision Statement

Please keep in mind that vision statements are (1) an expression of leadership, (2) long-term, (3) usually not achievable, but clearly express the endeavors the organization will always pursue (very much like the elusive “dream” we pursue), and (4) a guide for committing an organization to its activities. Statements can be lengthy, such as the MIS Department’s (<http://www.csus.edu/mis/>), or short, such as the College’s (http://www.csus.edu/cba/cba_vision_statement.htm). In contrast to a vision statement, a mission statement is short-term (3 to 5 years) and therefore evolves over time. Because they are short-term, many of the points they embody are attainable.

For example, a vision statement can express industry leadership as “the innovator of leading edge technology in providing customers with the means for establishing quality personal communication” versus “a market leader in providing customers with high-speed personal communication” (mission statement). Being “the innovator of leading technology” will require the organization to continually commit its resources to overcoming challenges from competitors and other external forces. “The means for establishing quality personal communication” suggests that the organization will always have to examine technologies other than the current. Today, this could mean mobile (or cell phone) technology, but in the future, it may include satellite technology, a combination of technologies or technologies not currently on the market. In contrast, “a market leader” is an achievable position based on total sales or the number of units sold. “High-speed” is relative to the current state of technology and can also be achieved (at one time a 56K modem was considered high-speed, but with broadband communication, the standard for high-speed has shifted although it is still achievable).

Strategic Plan



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A strategic plan embodies the organization's vision, mission and strategy. Although it does not convey specific actions to be taken or activities that the organization should be engaged in, it establishes the scope and boundaries of activities, and reflects urgency. As suggested by Rockart and Bullen, the definition of strategy involves the following:

Strategy: Pattern of missions, objectives, policies, and significant resource utilization plans stated in such a way as to define what business the company is in (or is to be in) and the kind of company it is or is to be. It defines

- The product line, markets and market segments for which products are to be designed
- The channels through which these markets will be reached
- The means by which the operation is to be financed
- The profit objectives
- The size of the organization
- The image which it will project to employees, suppliers and customers

For this assignment, please concentrate on bullet points 1, 2 and 6.

Robert Anthony defines strategic planning as follows:

Strategic planning is the process of deciding on objectives of the organization, on changes in these objectives, on the resources used to attain these objectives, and on the policies that are to govern the acquisition, use, and disposition of these resources.

Thus, the strategic plan is a document of strategies including goals and objectives, and guided through a process.

For you assignment, include in your strategic plan the following:

- The products and/or services you plan to pursue with the target market(s) you hope to profit from and the channels you will exploit to capture those targets,
- The image that you want to establish to the public, stakeholders and shareholders (do you want to be the *Wal-mart* of the industry and emphasize affordability, or the *Nordstrom* and be more selective?),
- Given the prior two bullet points, establish your goals and objectives. Goals are measurable and attainable (e.g., 20 percent market share in Internet consumer electronics sales in 3 years). Objectives are *do-ables* in light of these goals and stated as a verb (e.g., to engage in risk-sharing partnerships with vendors, to maintain a high standard level of product and service quality across all vendors that minimizes returns and refunds to 2 percent of gross sales, to reduce post-purchase confusion through quick delivery times, etc.).

Remember, your vision statement and strategic plan will determine the path you take in designing your web site.



