



In academic  
affiliation with



**GULF COLLEGE – MUSCAT – SULTANATE OF OMAN**

**UNDERGRADUATE BUSINESS PROGRAMME**

**ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016 – 2017**

**First Semester**

## **ASSIGNMENT**

Module Title : Strategic Management	
Module Code: BLB10089-6	
Method of Assessment : Assignment	
Weighting : 75%	Module Credits: 15
Level : 6	Semester/Teaching Block: 1
Morning/Evening Session: Both	Examiner: Dr. Gina G. Jocson
Additional Information (if any): 2,200 words	

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT  
BLB10089-6

Module Title :  
Module Code :  
Weighting : 75%  
Module Leader : Dr. Gina G. Jocson  
Date of submission : January 8-10, 2017

You should hand in one copy of your assignment by the time and date above to the appropriate 'hand-in location' at the Gulf College. Fill in the front cover (staple together with acknowledgement will be given to you upon receiving your assignment. This is your receipt, keep it. You can submit work by post, but you must send it recorded delivery, it must be postmarked two days before the deadline date and a copy must be kept by you in case it is lost in the post. Faxed assignments will not be accepted.

Assignments must be submitted by the due date. The only circumstance in which assignments can be submitted late is if an extenuating circumstance work may be submitted up to 2 weeks late only. If the same time. In these circumstances are upheld, the assignment will be graded; otherwise a 0 will be extenuating circumstances are upheld, the assignment will be graded; otherwise a 0 will be awarded.

**Maximum Word Length:** 2,200 words plus up to four pages of appendices.

The font type must be either Arial or Times New Roman with a size 12 font and with 1 inch (2.5 cm) margins at the sides with 1.5 line spacing. All sources must be clearly referenced using the Harvard system.

State the number of words used at the end of your assignment. You may include diagrams, figures etc. without word penalty. A sliding scale of penalties for excess length will be imposed according to the amount by which the limit has been exceeded. Please take this seriously

Up to 10%	Excess words	No penalty
11-20%	Excess words	10% penalty
21-30%	Excess words	20% penalty
31% plus	Excess words	The work will be capped at a pass i.e. 40%

NB: None of the above penalties will be used to change a student mark which is above the pass mark, to one that is below the pass mark. Therefore the **maximum penalty** for exceeding the word limit will be a reduction to a pass grade.

## Assessment Criteria

To achieve a 'Pass' grade of 40% or above

In order to achieve a pass grade the student must demonstrate an understanding of the concepts and principles of Strategic Management at Level 6. The work to be produced must apply appropriately Strategic Management concepts and frameworks in order to address the areas specified in the assignment. There should be also a clear evidence of research and reading, with reference to appropriate sources.

To achieve a grade of 70% or above

In order to achieve a grade of 70% or above, as well as satisfying all of the outlined criteria for a 'pass', the student must demonstrate a detailed understanding and application of the concepts and principles of Strategic Management models. The submission will be well organized and contained all relevant data. It will show evidence of appropriate investigation including research from a range of academic literature and other secondary sources of information. Detailed answers will be given to each of the questions with appendices where appropriate. There will be an evidence of wider reading through appropriate supporting references.

## This assignment will assess learning outcomes

1. Demonstrate a systematic understanding and critical evaluation of the key aspects of the strategic management process;
2. Demonstrate the ability to compare different theories and perspectives of strategic management and use and appraise them appropriately;
3. Critically evaluate theories and concepts of strategic management. Analyse and apply appropriate problem solving techniques plus knowledge learned to solving complex business problems;
4. Demonstrate the ability to communicate complex issues.

## The Case Study

### **The Competitive Strategies of Lenovo in the Corporate Market**

By: Mingshir Lin Kyriakos, et., al.

## Executive Summary

In recent years, the personal computer manufacturing company Lenovo has utilized unique competitive strategies to achieve a rapidly increasing share of the computer and notebook market. After acquiring the IBM brand name and laptop division, Lenovo soon became a

Version 2

Take note of the  
case

major player in the corporate market, inheriting along with IBM's notebook division technology and executive staff a reputation and branding that allow Lenovo a 19% market share in the international corporate notebook computer market. However, Lenovo is continuing to optimize their strategies for competing in a market dominated by major players Hewlett-Packard and Dell who account for 21% and 54% of the international corporate market, respectively. In the next year, Lenovo will be losing the rights to use of the IBM branding on their Thinkpad notebook series. This poses an interesting strategic problem: how can Lenovo continue to improve their share of the corporate notebook computer market once it has lost the IBM brand name? This case situation attempts to address issues and analyse Lenovo's outlook critically,

## Background

Lenovo Group is a Chinese personal computer manufacturer that has grown to be the third largest personal computing company in the world. Since its acquisition of the IBM Personal Computing Division in 2005, Lenovo has been a player on the international stage, expanding operations rapidly and seeking to develop an international reputation for the Lenovo brand name. By 2006, Lenovo had acquired and set up significant investments and centers in the United States, and had begun marketing Lenovo branded products outside China for the first time. An internal analysis of markets for both notebook and desktop sales shows that Lenovo continues to manufacture and sell about an equal number of laptops and desktops each year. Roughly half the sales of Lenovo products (including IBM branded products) continue to be sold in Asia, while the rest are relatively evenly split between sales in the Americas and in Europe.

In recent years, it has been the stated goal of Lenovo Group Chairman to "challenge perceptions of Chinese companies as mainly producers of cheap, low-end products." Lenovo has begun marketing high-end models of notebooks under the IBM brand, like the ultra-thin ThinkPad X300. As a result, Lenovo has not rolled out a range of low-end products outside of China. However, Lenovo has plans to release a wide range of products, at both low and high-end levels.

## International PC Market Viability

Despite the slowly growing PC market in the US, the corporate market continues to demonstrate a healthy growth rate. The total corporate market size in the US grew from \$664 billion in 2004 to \$778 billion in 2007. Dell, HP, and Lenovo have dominated the corporate desktop and laptop market with 87% of enterprises purchased their desktops and 84% of enterprises purchasing their laptops from these three manufacturers in 2006, and the trend is expected to be the same in the next two years.

## **Customers**

Customers in the corporate PC span the range from small and medium-sized businesses to large enterprises. Desktops have dominated the enterprise computing arena for decades because they are cheaper, more powerful and easily upgraded and repaired. However, increased needs for mobility and rapid increase in laptop performance-to-price ratios have resulted in a recent upswing in the share laptops have in the corporate market. Even as performance and price remain priority, additional factors like energy-efficiency, size, weight, and noise have become increasingly important. The ratio of desktops to laptops evolved from 75/25 in 2004 to 70/30 in 2006 and desktop managers reported in 2006 that their laptop usage plans over the next two years were 1.5 times greater than their desktop usage plans.

## **Brief Competitor Profiles**

Dell is currently the top enterprise desktop and laptop supplier in the world. Dell supplies both desktops and laptops to more than half of North American and European enterprises, doubling its closest competitor in both notebook and desktop PC sales. In North America, Dell is winning 60% of the desktop and 58% of the laptop market. Dell's strengths lie in its low prices and product support. However, low R&D budget prevents Dell from producing new innovative products.

HP maintained its solid No. 2 desktop supplier status and recently overtook Lenovo for laptops, supplying desktops to 27% and laptops to 21% of North American and European enterprises. HP has also improved significantly year-over-year, especially across laptops. It gained 6% in the North American enterprise laptop market and 5% in the European enterprise laptop market in the last year. These gains will continue, since HP recently refreshed its entire lineup of Intel-based laptops in 2007 with Intel's Santa Rosa release. However, HP is behind in product quality and product support, according to surveys of customer satisfaction.

## **The Problem**

Lenovo faces major obstacles to dominance both in the strength of its current competitors as well as in its impending loss of the IBM brand name for ThinkPad products. Lenovo to optimize the utilization of current borrowed brand image and to offer plans for the business future to achieve an improved share of the corporate market for notebook computers over the next several years.

Source: <http://www.managementparadise.com/AyeshaShaikh83/documents/24024/lenovo-competitive-strategies-for-dominance-in-the-corporate-market/>

## Assignment Tasks

In this case study you need to do the following tasks:

1. Critically analyse the current state of international corporate PC market to get a better sense for the environment to address the problem of Lenovo. Use the concept of Porter's Six Forces.
2. Write a critical SWOT analysis on Lenovo's outlook in order to get a better sense of the corporate market and the impending loss of the IBM branding.
3. Explain the implications of competitive strengths gained by Lenovo applying the appropriate theory of strategic choices. Focus on the organisation's perspectives in expanding product differentiation strategies.
4. Design a strategic plan that can structure Lenovo's challenges for market sustainability in the Sultanate of Oman.

### Note:

Analyses, evaluation and explanation should be presented with relevant theories and convincing concepts to support the answer. The format should be well organised and easy to follow based on the structured marking criteria specified below.

ability  
choice  
action

### Marking Criteria

Criteria	Description	Weight (%)
Introduction ref	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Important overview of Strategic Management concept</u> needed in the organisation what is Strategic Management</li> <li>• <u>Brief profile of the case</u></li> <li>• <u>Objectives of the assignment</u> this assignment it aims to</li> </ul>	15
Analysis and Content	<p>3 circle why important</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Critical analysis of international corporate PC market; using Porter's Six Forces?</li> <li>2. SWOT analyses on Lenovo's outlook for a better sense of the corporate market and the impending loss of the IBM branding.</li> <li>3. Implicative explanation of <u>competitive strengths</u> gained by Lenovo focusing the conceptual parameter of:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. strategic choices</li> <li>b. Product differentiation strategies</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Designed-Strategic plan that structured Lenovo's challenges for market sustainability in the Sultanate of Oman.</li> </ol>	55

Version 2

→ Table form

Conclusion	• Summary of the important points of the discussion. It should be drawn according to the objectives of the assignment mentioned in the introduction	15
References	• Required number of references must not be less than 10 applying the Harvard Referencing system.	15
Total		100

### Plagiarism Warning:

#### Summary

- Plagiarism occurs if you use somebody else's work in an assignment or exam answer, but fail to state where you got the material from.
- It can happen in any type of assessment where you are given the questions or tasks in advance.
- If another student uses your work in their answer(s), both you and they will be punished when caught.
- Punishments for committing plagiarism can be very severe.

#### The details

Plagiarism is a form of cheating in which students use the work of others and present it as their own. Staffordshire University publishes a fully detailed description of what the term 'plagiarism' means on the University's main web-site under the heading '*Procedures for dealing with suspected cases of academic dishonesty*'. We strongly recommend that you go and read the full document at the above address. Meanwhile, here is an extract of some of the relevant content. You will have committed plagiarism and may be caught, reported and punished (as described below) if you:

- Copy extensively from the work of others (from sources such as books, magazines, journals, web-sites for example) and submit the work as your own. NB It is acceptable to refer to the work of others as long as you do not use too much, and

reference your sources properly. If you do not know how to do this, please follow the guidelines given in the document entitled 'Adding quotations and references to your written work' at this web-site address:  
<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/schools/business/bsadmin/staff/s3/jamr.htm>

• Copy another students' work and submit it for assessment under your own name.

• Allow another student to copy *your* work and they then submit it for assessment under *their* name

This last item is of particular importance; few students seem to understand what it means. If, for example, you allow another student to borrow your work and they subsequently copy some that work and present it as their own, you and they will *both* be punished even though someone else copied your work.

### **The risks of working with other students**

Some assessment tasks are explicitly designed for group work, and it will be made clear that a group answer is expected from you. All other tasks are intended as an assessment of your *individual* comprehension and performance, and group answers are not permitted. In individually assessed forms of assessment your work must be different from that of every other student. Plagiarism can occur in assignments and any examination where the questions are issued to students in advance. In both cases it is possible for you to ask other people about how best to answer the questions or complete the necessary tasks.

You should be aware that *different modules* and subjects may have *different* requirements. In some subjects, answers to questions may, for example, require every student on a module to employ or refer to the same diagram(s), concepts and the like in order to construct an acceptable answer. You should note, however, that even in these circumstances your explanations of what the diagrams mean, and any other writing referring to any common diagrams and concepts should all be *in your own words*. Moreover, the situation may be very different on other modules, where the submission of work that has a

very similar structure, or the use of very similar materials such as concepts, diagrams, quotations and the like, to that of another student, may lead to you being accused of plagiarism.

The picture is complicated and, unfortunately, it is not possible to give advice that is directly relevant to *every* module you study. If you are unsure about how to avoid plagiarism in any specific module, then rather than hoping and guessing, you should ask for guidance from the member of staff who delivers that module.

Our overall advice is straightforward; by all means discuss how best to answer questions or complete tasks with your colleagues, but when it comes to actually writing your answers - **DO IT ALONE!**

What happens if you get caught?

Contrary to some student rumors, getting caught and being punished for committing plagiarism is *not* an extremely unusual student offence. The Business School typically uncovers and reports for disciplinary action 25 to 30 students each year for plagiarism.

Examination Boards may punish offending students in any manner that they deem fit. Typical punishments Boards may choose range from reducing grades, making students re-sit modules, through to failing students on a module or an entire award. The University regards this form of cheating as a serious offence. Full details of the range of likely punishments can be found on the University's web-site under the heading '*Procedures for dealing with suspected cases of academic dishonesty*'.

**Please consider yourself warned.**