Group Case 4

Inventory Decisions in Dell's Supply Chain, *Interfaces*, Vol. 34, No. 3, May–June 2004, pp. 191–205.

Case Analysis and Report: Suggested Approach

1. Read the case carefully and thoroughly.

2. Define the central issues. The case involves several issues. Identify the most important issues and separate them from the more trivial issues.

3. Define the firm's goals. Identifying the firm's goals will provide a guide for the remaining analysis.

4. Study the models and associated solutions. Discuss the model implementation and interpret the suggested solution. Remember, objectives and constraints have to be considered when discussing a solution.

5. Make use of the solution. Each case has a very specific modeling solution, but it is up to the analyst to suggest how the firm is to use the modeling solution. Discuss it in the case of this study.

6. Discuss the implementation plan. The final step in the analysis is to develop a plan for effective implementation of the decision. Lack of an implementation plan even for a very good decision can lead to disaster for a firm and for the analyst. Don't overlook this step.

Format and Rubrics for this Assignment

1. Problem 10%

Problem statement: present the context of the problem and any background needed to understand the report. It is also important to indicate the use of the modeling solutions (what are the firm's goals, how can the firm make use of the solution).

Assumptions made: clearly indicate the simplifying assumptions used in the analysis. This will allow the manager responsible for the decision to make a judgment on the usefulness of the report.

Solution Approach: briefly describe the mathematical model. If it is a standard model then just a statement indicating the model used is all that is needed. You should also indicate the software used.
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2. Problem Development 25%

Present the details of the problem, including, the data used in the model, the source of that data, and any intermediate calculations performed before the data is ready for use in the model.

3. Results 35%

Present clearly and concisely the assessment of the solution quality and discuss the viability of the solution for the company.

4. Sensitivity Analysis 10%

Present relevant contingencies that might result from changes in assumptions and parameters of the model.

5. Conclusion, Recommendation and implementation plan 10%

Summary: restate the aim of the report, the methods used and a summary of the results.

Overall Recommendation: this section involves considering both results and the sensitivity analysis. It should provide the decision maker with a set of options/solutions to the differing scenarios.

Implementation: how is the model solution going to fit into the firm's procedures?

Further analysis: The initial report may lead some insight on important but neglected components of the problem - these are indicated in the final section.

6. Learning Relevance 10%

Describe how the material learned in the course helped you to understand and analyze this case. Specify and clearly explain the learning units (or topics) of the course used in the case and provide references to sections or paragraphs in the textbook and/or equation numbers to support your statements. Finally, explain how the analysis of this case may have helped you to consolidate the material learned on the topics involved.