

CS330 Winter 2005

Participation Assignment #2

As an up-and-coming expert in information systems, you want to use your expertise to develop a new knowledge-based commercial enterprise, which will be a fully digital firm, of course!

Your business will be strictly knowledge-based – it will create knowledge and sell it. This could include direct knowledge, such as what a lawyer or engineer or programmer does, or indirect knowledge, which is (loosely) defined as adding value to existing knowledge (such as someone who organizes or distributes or rearranges knowledge).

You need to describe two basic components of the business:

1. what its core activity will be
2. what the information architecture of the business will be

Some examples of a core business activity are: writing custom software, website development, organizing (acquiring & distributing) information such as rental housing information, consumer product warranty information (e.g. acting as a central repository for warranty information), consumer product-recall information (another “central repository” idea), book-keeping services, academic tutoring services, editing/proofreading services and so on. You’ve probably had an idea about a business – here’s your chance to analyze it.

The information architecture consists of identifying the core strategic systems that your business will need, plus the role of the other classic digital-enterprise systems: CRMs, SCMs, and KMSs.

Your mission: together with two or three other people in the class, write a one- to two-page proposal for a business. This needs to define the business and the basic information architecture. You should identify the customers and suppliers, and show how the classical enterprise systems could be used to implement your business. You should describe how customers interact with your business, how you acquire your “raw materials” (whatever it might be), and how you can deliver your product. If your business has an “after-sales support/service” component, think about how that would fit into your information architecture.

Use a combination of words and diagrams/pictures to describe your business and its information architecture. You might consider drawing a value chain for your proposed firm and identifying the strategic IS components your business will need.

What to submit: submit your proposal before the end of class. Handwritten submissions are acceptable. If you really want to work more on this, you can email me a document by 10:00 AM tomorrow (put “[PA2]” in the subject).

Expectations: I’m not looking for anything polished. I want you to think about the process of developing an information architecture and how it applies to a business. A couple of pages that show me your group has thought about the issues in the context of a “real” business are all I expect.