



POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA
IN
STRATEGIC BUSINESS IT



**MODULE:
STRATEGIC BUSINESS ANALYSIS**

**ASSIGNMENT TITLE:
GOOGLE**

DECEMBER 2009

Important Notes:

- ❖ Please refer to the Assignment Presentation Requirements for advice on how to set out your assignment. These can be found on the NCC Education *Campus*. Scroll down the left hand side of the screen until you reach Personal Support. Click on this, and then on Policies and Advice. You will find the Assignment Presentation Requirements under the Advice section.
- ❖ You must familiarise yourself with the NCC Education Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Policy and ensure that you acknowledge all the sources which you use in your work. The policy is available on *Campus*. Follow the instructions above, but click on Policies rather than Advice.
- ❖ You must complete the ‘**Statement and Confirmation of Own Work**’. The form is available on the Policies section of *Campus*. Scroll down the left hand side until you reach Personal Support. Click on this and then click on Policies and Advice.
- ❖ Please make a note of the recommended word count. You could lose marks if you write 10% more or less than this.
- ❖ You must submit a paper copy and digital copy (on disk or similarly acceptable medium). Media containing viruses, or media which cannot be run directly, will result in a fail grade being awarded for this module.
- ❖ All electronic media will be checked for plagiarism.

Marker's comments:

Moderator's comments:

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Introduction

This assignment requires you to research and write a profile of *Google*, the search engine company, and to analyse its business strategy. You should use the analytical tools and techniques covered in this module to frame your thinking and findings.

This is predominantly an online research exercise, as the growth of Google is extensively documented on the World Wide Web. A useful overview can be found on Wikipedia, at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google>. Do not rely only on this Wikipedia entry. You will need to carry out deeper research to answer the questions set in the Tasks below.

Word Limit: 8, 000 words, plus/minus 10% (excluding diagrams, visuals and appendices).

Task 1 – 15 Marks

Present a profile of Google Inc. Including:

- An historical perspective, detailing its origins and growth
- Its products
- Its financial status to date
- Insights into its people and culture
- Its business model

Task 2 – 25 Marks

Evaluate Google's strengths and weaknesses, through an analysis of its resources and competitive capabilities. This should include a review of at least:

- Markets served effectively
- Key technologies
- Quality of personnel
- Capital base and revenue streams

Task 3 – 25 Marks

Evaluate Google's opportunities and threats, using appropriate tools and techniques of environmental and competitive analysis. Your evaluation should include at least:

- Consideration of broad marketplace trends
- The actions and reactions of major competitors, such as:
 - Yahoo
 - Microsoft
 - Amazon

Task 4 – 25 Marks

In 2007, Steve Ballmer, CEO of Microsoft, was reported as saying, in a presentation to Stanford University business students, that Google's business strategy was "insane" (www.theregister.co.uk/2007/03/16/ballmer_google_insane/).

Ballmer asserted that Google was growing too fast, and had failed to make a success of efforts to diversify beyond search with ads. The implication was that Google's various other projects, including staff personal projects, might not add value.

Do you consider this to be an accurate reflection of Google's strategy for the future? Give your balanced view, which should include:

- Reflections on the company's mission statement.
- Appraisal of the companies acquired by Google, their strategic fit and revenue potential.
- The building of a sustainable competitive advantage through innovation projects, recruitment of creative and highly skilled personnel, appropriate company culture and consumer acceptance and support.

Task 5 – 10 Marks

Assemble your work (the answers from Tasks 1-4) into one document, with:

- Table of Contents
- Reference List
- Appendices and
- Bibliography

Guidance

Please refer to the assignment presentation requirements.

Your document ought not to exceed 8,000 words, so you need to be precise in your thinking and succinct in your written commentary.

NOTE: It is important you show your thinking and provide evidence to back up your views.

Research extensively and with care, and be sure to acknowledge your sources.

If in doubt on any issue, consult your course tutor.

Submission Requirements

One single word-processed document as described in Task 5 above.

A digital version must be submitted on disk or similarly acceptable medium.

Warning: All media must be virus free!

Media containing viruses, or media which cannot be run directly, will result in a FAIL grade being awarded for this module.

**You must read and understand NCC Education's policy on 'Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism'.
You must complete the 'Statement and Confirmation of Own Work' form and attach the completed form to
your assignment.**